



Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture

## AHM Newsletter December 2023

*Dear reader, welcome to the Newsletter of the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM). AHM fosters a dynamic, interdisciplinary and transnational research of heritage, memory studies and material culture. As a research school and doctoral program, AHM is committed to the analysis of the remnants and narratives of the past in the present, as well as of the remaking of pasts into heritage, memory and material culture. The school stimulates scholarly cooperation in an international setting and organizes PhD training, seminars and lecture series, reading groups, public debates as well as international workshops and conferences. Please take a look at [our website](#) for more information. We wish you serene and happy holidays and look forward to seeing you in 2024.*

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### Upcoming Events

#### **Palestine Teaches: Commemoration**

**4 January 2024, 17:00 - 20:00**

**BG2, Amsterdam**

How does one commemorate an ongoing catastrophe? What are the roles of monuments in commemoration, and why do they become victims of destruction? In this workshop, participants will watch the short film "Al Hissan," which tells the story of how scrap metal was welded together by a group of young people in the West Bank, using materials originating from destroyed houses and cars. Cultural practitioners will share insights to help understand the aesthetic and political choices Palestinians make in creating monuments. After this event on 4 January, participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the role of memorialization and commemoration. The next session in the Palestine Teaches Series, on (An)Archiving, will take place on 1 February. More information can be found [here](#).

### Calls and Vacancies

#### **Call for papers for MSA Eighth Annual Conference. Deadline: January 15, 2024**

The Memory Studies Association is hosting their eighth annual conference, co-sponsored by AHM, on Memories in Transit and invites you to send a proposal before January 15th. The conference is to be held in person from 18 to 20 July 2024, at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú in Lima, Peru. Proposals are invited for panels, roundtable discussions, creative workshops and individual papers from members who are committed to attending the conference in person. The

## **Symposium: Dealing with Ghosts of the Past & Farewell**

### **Speech of Prof. Rob van der Laarse**

**12 January 2024, 12:30 - 17:00**

**Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam**

You are cordially invited to the symposium 'Dealing with Ghosts of the Past. On the Limits of Understanding the Legacy of Modern Violence and War' and the farewell speech of Prof. Rob van der Laarse to honour his retirement. During the symposium, several questions concerning uncomfortable heritage and the heritage of the camps and the Holocaust will be addressed. The programme consists of short presentations by speakers from different disciplines who, together with Rob van der Laarse, have been at the forefront of research and musealization of memorial camps over the years. More information about the programme and registration can be found [here](#).

## **Teach-In: History is Not Context, it's Reality; On Israel/Palestine**

**12 January 2024, 13:30 - 15:30**

**UvA Roeterseiland, Amsterdam**

Confused about what is happening in Israel and the Palestinian Territories? Want to learn more? Join academics and other experts for the teach-in "History is Not Context, It's Reality" – On Israel/Palestine. An ongoing interactive lecture series about the political and social reality in the region and how we got here. The next session on 'Colonialism and Genocide' is organized in cooperation with Decolonial Dialogues and is taking place on 12 January. More information about the Teach-in Series can be found [here](#).

## **PhD Skills: Bounce Back**

**16 January 2024, 10:00 - 13:00**

**Online**

Resilience is the ability to bounce back when life is getting difficult and is a very attractive and useful skill. People's resilience differs: some seem to be able to handle just about everything, while others are less stable. The good news is however that you can learn to be more resilient. This workshop teaches you the skills to do just that. Researching and writing a PhD is rewarding, exciting, difficult, and lonely work. Keeping it up for four years requires strength and perseverance at the best of times. Covid years and the aftermath made it even more challenging. More information about the course

conference will be structured around 12 central, interconnected themes, identified as core areas of work within the broader theme of Memories in Transit. For the full Call for Papers and the submission guidelines, please see the [website](#).

## **Apply for the Rijksmuseum & Bard Graduate Center Summer School**

**Deadline: February 2, 2024.**

This summer, the Rijksmuseum and the Bard Graduate Center (New York) will co-facilitate a unique international program devoted to object-based research within a museum setting. Between 8 and 19 July 2024, 16 participants will work closely with interdisciplinary teams from both institutions and experts in the field of object-oriented study. By focusing on how material objects provide primary evidence for historical research, the course introduces multiple techniques and perspectives for studying and unravelling the many stories that museum objects can tell. The summer school is open for MA and PhD Students and young professionals specialising in fields of history, history of art, archaeology, or anthropology. The application deadline is 2 February 2024. More information can be found on the [website](#).

## **Call for applications for the Laskaridis Fellowships**

**Deadline: March 1, 2024**

The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Amsterdam invites applications for two visiting research fellowships in the field of Modern Greek Studies for early-career and more advanced scholars, who

and registration can be found [here](#). For other PhD skills courses see [this](#) page.

### **OH-SMArt Metadata-Workshop**

**January 24, 2024, 13:00 - 17:00**

**BG2, Amsterdam**

Are you a restorer or a museum staff member using interviews as a research method in relation to collections? Then this workshop will be of interest to you. Learn more about depositing collection interviews, to publish and archive them in the new DANS Data Station Social Sciences and Humanities, under the guidance of Jetze Touber and Widia Mahabier of DANS, together with Laura Wolfkamp and Sanneke Stigter of the University of Amsterdam, from the Oral History - Stories at the Museum around Artworks (OH-SMArt) project. This workshop will be held in Dutch. More information about the event and registration can be found [here](#).

wish to pursue part of their research at the University of Amsterdam. For the academic year 2024-2025, 1 fellowship will be offered to an early-career scholar (with a PhD not earlier than 2018) for 5 months, and 1 fellowship will be offered to a more experienced scholar (with a PhD between 2004 and 2018) for 5 months. For more information and the application procedure click [here](#).

### **AHM Digital Heritage Reading Group Sessions**

**January 24, 2024, 15:00 - 17:00**

**1.12, OMHP, A.1.18C**

The AHM Digital Heritage Research Group is hosting its next reading group session on Wednesday, January 24. All AHM staff members are invited. The theme of the session will be confirmed later. If you would like to join, or would like to stay informed of any upcoming events and activities of the AHM Digital Heritage Research Group, more information can be found [here](#).

### **Soil and the Sea Screening**

**29 January 2024, 17:00**

**Spui 25, Amsterdam**

In Lebanon there are more than 100 untouched mass graves dating back from the Civil War, and thousands of families awaiting a missing relative or at least a bone to bury. The documentary *The Soil and the Sea* unveils the violence lying beneath a garden, a school, a cafe, a hotel, and other unremarkable landscapes. As the camera interrogates these everyday spaces, voices fill them with erased stories. More information and the sign-up link can be found [here](#).

### **Conference: Taboo in Cultural Heritage**

**1 - 2 February 2024**

**Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam**

Taboo is a subject, word, or action that is avoided or forbidden for religious, social or political reasons. Although certain taboos appear to be virtually universal, most taboos vary with cultures and times. Objects, sites, or practices appropriated as cultural heritage, can at a later moment in history be redesignated as problematic, no longer conforming to certain norms and values. Conversely, (former) taboos can be contested, eventually triggering the 'heritagization' and display of hitherto banned objects and sites. The international conference 'Taboo in Cultural Heritage', aims to reflect on the concept of taboo in relation to cultural heritage in the context of colonialism and national socialism and their reverberations in society. The keynote speakers include Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Sharon Macdonald and Michael Rothberg. More information can be found [here](#).

**Conference: The Aesthetics of Geopower****4 - 5 April, 2024****Amsterdam**

The two-day conference 'The Aesthetics of Geopower: Imagining Planetary Histories and Hegemonies,' is taking 4-5 April. This conference explores how geopower intersects with aesthetics, taken expansively as referring to art, film, literature, and other forms of cultural practice, as well as sensed materiality and embodied perception. The premise is that the aesthetic, far from being secondary or supplemental to the forces shaping the earth, is centrally entailed and embedded in dynamics of geopower. Sponsored by the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and Dutch Research Council, scholars are invited to explore how the human and nonhuman forces shaping and emerging from the earth are articulated in art and cultural practice. More information can be found on the [website](#).

**Conference: Presenting Audiovisual Collections****26 - 29 May, 2024****Amsterdam**

On 26 - 29 May 2024, Eye Filmmuseum, the University of Amsterdam and the Laboratory for Experimental Museology (eM+) at École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) will present the 9th Eye International Conference. This year's topic will be 'Presenting Audiovisual Collections: Experiments and Explorations.' The conference is an opportunity for scholars, archivists, curators,

filmmakers, students, artists, and film enthusiasts from across the world to gather together and discuss contemporary professional and academic issues affecting audiovisual heritage today. More information can be found [here](#).

## News

### **New Research Project, *14Colours: Combining Dye and Radiocarbon (14C) Analyses to Date Anthraquinone-Based Colourants in Historical Textiles***

In this new research project, Maarten van Bommel (AHM-UvA), Laura Hendriks (HEIA-FR), Suzan Meijer (Rijksmuseum), and Ana Serrano (AHM-UvA) will develop a new protocol combining chromatography and radiocarbon analysis of red colourants in historical textiles to assess their origins. This cooperation between conservation scientists and textile conservators promotes interdisciplinary research to achieve supportive interpretations of the history of textiles and complement well-established art historical methods of textile provenance and date attribution. Moreover, it will enhance the objects' historical value in the museums' collections, possibly impacting future preservation, conservation and exhibition decisions. The project is financed by NICAS and the Branco-Weiss Fellowship - Society in Science. Click [here](#) to read more about the project.



*Figure caption: Detail of brocaded taffeta, Iran, 1250-1299. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, inv. nr. BK-NM-11566.*

### **NWO Open Science Fund awards OH-CORE**

Sanneke Stigter's project Oral History-Collaborative Open Science Research Environment (OH-CORE) has been awarded within the

NWO Open Science Fund. The project aims to lower the barriers that researchers encounter when analysing, depositing and re-using interview data, and to make collaboration possible between researchers and institutions when dealing with privacy sensitive data. The project will be carried out in collaboration with DANS-KNAW and SURF as an extension of the infrastructure research project Oral History - Stories at the Museum around Artworks ([OH-SMArt](#)). The goal is to significantly improve sustainable archiving and secure dissemination of unique resources for the social sciences and humanities. More information can be found [here](#).

#### **Prof. dr. Ella Hendriks receives NWO-Museum Grant**

Together with her colleague-researcher M.I. Albrecht from Kasteel de Haar, AHM's Ella Hendriks has received an NWO-Museum Grant for research into a 15th-century altarpiece in the collection of Kasteel de Haar, the biggest castle in the Netherlands. The ensemble of Spanish paintings is unknown to the public, something further research aims to change. The NWO-Museum Grants give museums the possibility to do short-term research, to encourage academic research in the museum field.

#### **4D Research Lab receives European funding**

How can Virtual Reality and 3D be used to take archaeological education to a higher level? The 4D Research Lab of the University of Amsterdam will be working together with the Open University and universities from Bonn, Oslo and Lund to connect local initiatives of VR education and develop these further. The consortium has been awarded a subsidy of €400.000 from the Erasmus+ program of the European Union. For more information on the project, please see the [website](#).

### **New AHM Members**

#### **Dr. Corina Apostol**

Corina L. Apostol is an assistant professor of social practice in contemporary art and culture at the University of Amsterdam. She also serves as the associate producer of CULTUS by the artist Zach Blas, an immersive exploration of AI Gods, spirituality, and Silicon Valley's techno-religion. She served as a curator and a member of

the steering committee for “Beyond Matter” (2020–23), an international, practice-based research project taking cultural heritage and culture in development to the verge of virtual reality. Dr. Apostol obtained her Ph.D. from Rutgers University, where she was the Dodge Curatorial Fellow at the Zimmerli Art Museum (2010–16). She is currently coediting the volume *Flora Fantastic: From Orchidelirium to Eco-Critical Art*, which is set to be released in 2024 by Routledge.

**Dr. Nour Munawar**

Nour Munawar is an archaeologist and cultural heritage expert. He obtained his Ph.D. in heritage studies from the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Munawar's expertise extends beyond the fields of heritage and memory studies, historical and contemporary archaeology, museum studies, and encompasses identity and heritage politics, uses of the past, narrative theory, heritage governance in national and international contexts, colonialism and postcolonialism, migration and diaspora, and decolonization of heritage and museology in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the Arab region, Eastern Europe, and beyond. Munawar was recently awarded a prestigious grant from the Dutch Research Council (NWO) through the 'NWO Talent Program – VENI scheme 2022' to conduct his research on 'Decolonial Futures: Heritage, Memory, and Narratives in the Making in MENA' at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), Netherlands.

**Dr. Ana Albano Serrano**

Ana F. Albano Serrano was appointed as Assistant Professor at the Conservation and Restoration (C&R) department on September 1st, 2023. She first joined the University of Amsterdam in 2022 as lecturer and course coordinator for the C&R textile specialization course. Serrano is specialized in the combination of conservation, art history and science for the interdisciplinary research of heritage textiles, and the future preservation of their tangible and intangible narratives. After obtaining her PhD in History in 2016 through the NOVA University and the Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed (RCE), she worked in several post-doctoral projects at the University of Amsterdam and the RCE. Serrano is currently involved in the [14Colours project](#), funded by NICAS.

**Dr. Joen Hermans**

Joen Hermans currently holds a position as Assistant Professor



Conservation Science, which is split between the Faculty of Humanities and the Van 't Hoff Institute for Molecular Science at the Faculty of Science. In addition, he has a position as researcher at the Conservation & Science department of the Rijksmuseum.

Previously, Hermans obtained a PhD degree on oil paint degradation from the University of Amsterdam, and was awarded a NWO-Veni grant in 2019. Hermans' research focuses on the chemistry of oil paint. With a combination of fundamental chemistry research methods and more applied methodologies, he tries to understand how the molecular structure of oil paint evolves over time, and how paint materials can deteriorate as a consequence of environmental conditions or conservation treatments. Additionally, he works on analytical methods that can help us understand the causes of deterioration in a variety of materials in art.

#### **Dr. Claire Stocks**

Claire Stocks currently holds a position as Assistant Professor at the Amsterdam Centre for Ancient Studies and Archaeology (ACASA) at the University of Amsterdam. Before coming to Amsterdam, she was Senior Lecturer for Classics at the University of Newcastle (2016-2023), and held lectureships at Radboud University, Nijmegen (2012-2016) and the University of Manchester (2011-2012). Stocks' research centres on two main areas: Roman literature, culture and memory studies and digital humanities (especially games) with a particular focus on how audiences conceptualize the past. Most recently she has worked with the Vindolanda Trust and Creative Assembly (makers of the *Total War* video game series) to produce the web-based game and online exhibition '[Vindolanda Adventure](#)'.

### **Past Events**

#### **AHM Research Community Day**

On December 18, the second AHM Research Community Day of the year took place. During the event, we heard more about the research projects of our PhDs and Postdocs and engaged in a plenary session with the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research (AIHR) about questions and issues concerning the research trajectory in the school and faculty. We ended the afternoon with an informal reception. A big thanks to our speakers Sarah Burkhardt, Nour Munawar, Mehmet Sülek, Lucy Gaynor, Janna Aerts and Mario Panico, to AIHR for answering our questions



and addressing our concerns, and to all those who attended. Keep an eye out for any future AHM Research Community events.

**Exhibition Opening: 'Gordel van Papier: About the Advent of the Printed Book in Indonesia.'**

From 21 September 2023 to 25 February 2024, Museum Huis van het Boek in The Hague presents the exhibition 'Gordel van Papier', about the emergence of the printed book in Indonesia. The exhibition covers the period 1816-1957 and presents an intriguing insight into the developments within the (post)colonial society of Indonesia. The exhibition was created by AHM's Prof. dr. Lisa Kuitert and Eline Kortekaas (PhD candidate), as an extension of their research. More information about the exhibition can be found [here](#).

The next AHM Newsletter will be published in March 2024. Contributions (including new publications) can be sent to [ahm-fgw@uva.nl](mailto:ahm-fgw@uva.nl).



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