



Memory Studies Association

9th Annual Conference "Beyond Crisis"

Prague, Czech Republic - July 14-18, 2025

Call for Papers

The **Memory Studies Association** invites proposals for its ninth annual conference, to be held from 14 to 18 July 2025 at Charles University and the Czech Academy of Sciences in the historic city of Prague. **This on-site** conference aims to carry over from earlier conferences a transdisciplinary conversation on memory and its social, cultural and public relevance. It welcomes scholars, practitioners, and activists from diverse fields to contribute to this vibrant exchange of ideas.

In 2025, we will globally commemorate many significant anniversaries, such as the end of World War II (1945) and the end of the Vietnam War (1975). We will mourn the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia (1995) and the massacres in Sudan (2005). Additionally, we will be half a decade removed from the onset of the COVID-19 lockdowns. With the theme Beyond Crises: Resilience and (In)stability, the conference seeks to explore how the memory of these events and other critical turning points has led to new tensions but also generated new possibilities. What patterns of decisive change can we observe? What is the role of memory in these processes, and how have they been commemorated? How have such critical turning points and their actors been collectively remembered and commemorated? And what can memory teach us amid the ongoing polycrisis?

Organized in the shadow of the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, the rise of populist and authoritarian tendencies all over the world, imminent climate collapse and humanitarian crises including ones in public health, Beyond Crises invites a multifaceted discussion on what memory scholars can learn from the memory of earlier crises and how that knowledge might be used to deal with ongoing political and social standoffs. Looking at shared and divided memoryscapes and the voices of marginalized communities, the conference will make a major contribution to the understanding of how societies remember and learn from crises.

The conference seeks to study, across different cultures and regions, the complex dynamics between remembering and forgetting, and between inclusion and exclusion, that take place in the aftermath of crisis. We will address instances where such memory constellations have led to dead-ends or backlashes; but also cases where they feed into an ongoing quest for justice, peace, and societal well-being. By focusing on themes such as hope, resilience, and reconciliation, we aim to understand how, and in which circumstances, communities and individuals can recover and rebuild after turmoil. The conference will investigate how the memory of earlier crises has inspired movements for change and social justice.

While we have identified several central thematic streams below, the conference is open to all fields of interest of the members of the MSA. We encourage interested scholars to treat these themes as guidelines for core areas of work within the broader conference theme of "Beyond Crises." The thematic strands may thus be interpreted widely and are intended to have a wide historical, geographical, social and cultural range:

- **Anniversaries and their societal importance:** Examining the politics of memory and commemoration practices both top-down and bottom-up.
- **Digital Memories:** Investigating the impact of digital technologies on memory formation, preservation, and dissemination.
- **Economic Memories:** Exploring the impact of collective memory on economic behavior, policy-making, and the socio-economic identities of communities.
- **Environment:** Examining how environmental changes and ecological memory shape collective and individual identities.
- **Gender, Belonging, Embodiment:** Examining how memory intersects with issues of gender, identity, and embodied experiences.
- **Health, Welfare & Care:** Reflecting on the memories associated with health, caregiving, and social welfare systems.
- **History, Theory, and Methods of Memory Studies:** Critically examining the foundational aspects of memory studies, focusing on the theoretical frameworks, historical contexts, and methodological approaches that shape the field.
- **Human Rights & Civil Society:** Analyzing memory's role in promoting and defending human rights and civil society initiatives.
- **Humanitarianism & Philanthropy:** Investigating the interplay between memory, humanitarian efforts, and philanthropic activities.
- **Materiality and Nostalgia:** Exploring the material aspects of memory and the sentimentality associated with nostalgia.
- **Memory Education:** Focusing on pedagogical approaches to teaching and transmitting memory.
- **Memory Politics and Populism:** Looking at the deployment of historical memories by both progressive and reactionary movements.
- **Memoryscapes Shared and Divided:** Studying the spatial and geographical dimensions of memory, including contested and shared spaces.
- **Migration and Displacement:** Investigating the memories of migration, displacement, and the diasporic experience.
- **Notions of Crises:** Exploring and interpreting the meaning of crisis within memory construction.
- **Public and Private Memory:** Analyzing the interplay between public commemorations and private recollections.
- **Resilience, Reconciliation, Mourning:** Discussing memory's contribution to processes of healing, reconciliation, and mourning.
- **Transformation, Activism, Social Justice:** Exploring the role of memory in social movements and transformative justice.
- **Violence, Justice, Trauma:** Addressing the memories of violence, justice processes, and trauma recovery.
- **Voices of Memory:** Highlighting underrepresented and marginalized narratives in the collective memory.



There will also be special events such as **workshops, exhibitions, and film screenings**. To embed the conference in the beautiful city of Prague, we will also feature a **cultural program** (excursions and city walks) by cooperating closely with local memory activists, cultural partners, and heritage sites.

In Prague, the conference will also host the **MSA Forward postgraduate workshop**. MSA Forward allows junior researchers to engage with other scholars in their field and receive feedback from established academics. As in previous years, we aim to provide a safe space for engaging in constructive discussions and an opportunity for networking and building lasting connections across disciplines. **More information on the theme and the application process will be published soon.**

A limited number of **travel grants and fee waivers** will be available for the conference.

Further information will be published on the [Conference Website](#). Stay tuned!

Submission Guidelines

Please note that in order to participate in the conference, you must be a member of the MSA. You can [become an MSA member here](#). Please note that you can become a member after your paper has been accepted.

We invite the submission of **individual papers, panels, roundtable discussions, book launches, workshops, and special events** from members committed to attending the conference **in person**. The MSA especially encourages complete sessions, such as panels, round tables, and workshops.

Please create your account [HERE](#) and follow the step-by-step submission guide.

Proposals should include:

1. Individual Papers: An abstract of up to **300 words**, including the title, research question, methodology, keywords, and key findings.
2. Panels: A panel description (up to **300 words**), abstracts for each paper (up to **300 words per paper**), and keywords. Each panel should consist of 4 presenters and a chair.
3. Roundtables: A summary of the roundtable topic (up to **300 words**) and brief descriptions of each participant's contribution.
4. Special Events (Film Screenings, Performances, Exhibitions, Workshops): A detailed description (up to **300 words**) of the proposed cultural activity, including its relevance to the conference themes, format, technical requirements, and any special considerations. Please also include a short bio of the creator(s) or performer(s). Please note that we have a limited number of slots for creative outputs and cannot cover conference participation costs, including travel, transportation of exhibits, and copyrights. We encourage you to contact the organisers if you have organisational or technical questions about a possible special event.

Please bear in mind that all conference papers must be submitted and presented in English.

Below are important information and dates regarding submissions:

- All proposals should be submitted via our online submission portal by **October 20, 2024**.
- Notifications of acceptance will be sent out in **December 2024**.
- We will provide the supporting documentation for those needing to apply for visas in **January 2025**. Please follow the information on the conference website
- Please note that participants may appear as **presenters only once in a panel** but may act as chairs in more than one panel.

The conference will be an **on-site event**. Unfortunately, the MSA does not have the financial or physical capacity to run a hybrid conference, nor does the venue have the necessary infrastructure. Nevertheless, the keynote and plenary sessions will be recorded and/or live-streamed to make these as accessible as possible.

