

Anthem Handbook of Critical Heritage Studies – Call for Papers

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The aim of the Handbook is to provide a state-of-the-art survey of current thinking and research, to set research agendas for the next few years, to highlight emerging areas of research and to provide guidance and ideas for future research activity.

Critical heritage studies (CHS) has been identifiable as a movement within academic and heritage practice for more than two decades. In 2011, the call was made to rebuilt heritage studies from the ground up, to engage in the ‘ruthless criticism of everything existing’ and to ‘ask serious questions about the power relations that ‘heritage’ has all too often been invoked to sustain’ (ACHS manifesto). The Handbook provides an opportunity to assess the achievements, failures and ongoing potentials of CHS and to reassess research directions and their relevance and impact on heritage, the built environment and museum policies and practices. Ideas and expressions defined as ‘heritage’ have become increasingly mobilised in local, national and global political movements and debates, both in the context of populist politics and progressive movements of resistance. At the same time, CHS, which are involved in the study of these phenomena, are themselves the subject of growing criticism in the broader field of heritage studies and related areas of research and practice. By denouncing the scientific materialism conveyed by the Authorized Heritage Discourse and reframing heritage studies, in many respects, within the realm of the social sciences, CHS has tended to marginalize ‘traditional’ heritage disciplines and practices, such as history and art history. A critical reflection on and assessment of the impact of CHS has become urgent. Insights into the interconnections between practice and theory in CHS and between CHS and public policies are needed to further develop insights and interventions into the social and political uses of heritage and its impact on identity, wellbeing, prejudice and equity, among other issues.

The editors are seeking papers that aim to provide not simply critical reflections on CHS and the different uses of heritage within different scales and contexts, but also papers that seek to move international debate forward and reconsider core concepts and assumptions. We are looking for papers that aim to facilitate ongoing self-reflexive and critically aware debate. We seek papers on the following themes, although submissions on additional themes will be considered:

- What is CHS? Are there identifiable core concepts, key terms, epistemologies and values that underpin the approach, how do we map the field of debate?
- What are the ontological and epistemological tensions within CHS?
- What does CHS ‘mean’ in different disciplinary and regional/national contexts?
- What tensions exist and remain between the Global South and North, between notions of ‘expertise’ and ‘communities’, policy makers, practitioners and researchers/academics and etc?
- How do/can traditional disciplines in both the humanities and social sciences contribute to CHS?
- How is CHS expressed in different linguistic contexts, in what ways does the dominance of Anglophone texts limit debate?
- How do we go beyond the idea of the Authorised Heritage Discourse?
 - o Has the identification of the AHD materially changed anything in policy and practice?

- Theoretically, are there more useful ways that we may express, understand and counterbalance or mitigate hegemonic practice and ideas in heritage policy and practice?
- Looking at methods and methodology: what are or could be creative ways of addressing the idea of heritage and its social consequences?
- How has CHS been translated within practice, policy and institutions?
- What have been the material consequences, if any, of CHS?
- What can CHS contribute to a politics of resistance?
- How may we understand the so-called 'soft-power' of heritage? Has this been transformed by CHS or because of CHS?
- What impact, if any, has CHS had on heritage institutions?
- How may we understand and develop the positionality of CHS scholars and practitioners with communities of interests and other stakeholders? Are there ways of usefully repositioning ideas of heritage stakeholders, including expert stakeholders, in policy and practice?
- What, if any, could be the core political values of CHS?

Abstracts of 300 words, and a short bio of all authors and co-authors of 150 words, should be emailed to: patrimoine@uqam.ca by Tuesday **March 31, 2026**.

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