



THE FUTURE OF THE DEAD

**International Conference
at the University of Strasbourg**

**26 & 27
June 2026**



SuLiSoM
Subjectivité, lien social
et modernité

Argument

Too numerous in cemeteries, sometimes polluting, often too expensive, the deceased, whose numbers are increasing along with the global population, will soon no longer be able to be dealt with on or under the Earth. Demographers, funeral companies, bereavement associations, and activists supporting cremation and humusation highlight the complexity of this cruel reality.

The ethical and psychological question of what happens to the Dead lies in the permanent disappearance of the body, without any remains. However, the absence of bodies may lead to an inflation of means to make them "reappear." With voice reconstruction and animated holograms, the absence of loved ones, a sine qua non condition of mourning, will no longer be realized. What will the archaeologies of the future be like without access to the material remains of the Dead ?

Death has sculpted humanized landscapes: pyramids, temples, triumphal arches, or simply decorated caves; death has only been accepted on condition that it leaves traces to mark the enduring natural scenery. Human death has sculpted the planet. Collective cemeteries educate citizens, private mausoleums form the foundations of civilizations. Can culture survive without Death and the Dead ?

A debate pits materialistic convictions against purely spiritual expectations. The decomposition of the corpse is a difficult transition, so embalmed bodies and skeletons are preferred as repositories of memory. However, the choice of the virtual may prevail and give rise to new forms of remembrance. Will rationality lead us to abandon our mortal remains in favour of artificial substitutes? Will the nomadic bipeds known as sapiens leave their planet carrying a USB stick containing their ancestors ?

Program

Friday 26 June 2026

University Palace / Louis Pasteur Room

9:00–9:30 a.m. / Greeting by Marie-Frédérique Bacqué (Director of CIEM) and Olivier Putois (Director of SuLiSoM)

9:30–11:00 a.m. / Round Table: Current Situation

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. / Break preceded by a 5-minute video by **Lassad Essadi** : Day of the Dead in Mexico in 2025

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. / Round Table: Treatment of bodies and treatment of memory.

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. / Lunch

2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. / Oral presentations

4pm-4.30pm / Break

4.30pm-6pm / Oral presentations

The oral presentation sessions will take place at the Théodule Ribot Pavilion at the Faculty of Psychology.

6pm-7.30pm / A Day Without Hours : A Poetic and Musical Theater performance based on texts by **Juliette Kempf**.

Saturday, 27 June 2026

University Palace / Louis Pasteur Room

9h - 11h / Round Table : *Death in culture.*

11am-11.30am / Break

11.30am-1pm / Round Table: *Beliefs, places of remembrance for the Dead, spirituality.*

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. / Lunch

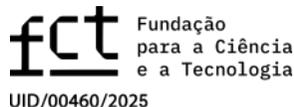
2:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. / Oral presentations at the Théodule Ribot Pavilion at the Faculty of Psychology.

4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. / Conclusion of the conference at the **Viaud Amphitheatre, Faculty of Psychology.**

Scientific and Organising Committee /

Ciem : International Center of Death Studies : Marie-Frédérique **Bacqué**, Christina **Alexopoulos**, Magali **Molinié**, Nicolas **Nieuviarts**, Guillaume **Rousset** et Pedro **Urbano**

SuLiSoM : Subjectivity, Social Link and Modernity : Olivier **Putois**, the entire SuLiSoM team and Sandrine **Amé**.



Call for papers

Send a 1,000-character summary, including spaces, with five keywords and a maximum of three references to bacque@unistra.fr. Indicate your topic from among the ten proposed.

Papers on the topics of the sessions proposed for Friday (June 26th) and Saturday (June 27th) afternoons, as well as free papers, will be evaluated by the scientific committee. Some sessions will be repeated depending on the number of requests.

Deadline for abstract submission: 25 February 2026. Feedback by 31 March 2026.

The proposed themes for abstracts are :

- 1 /** The new temporalities of mourning
- 2 /** Artificial intelligence in mourning
- 3 /** The ecology of Death: new treatments for bodies, new "remains"
- 4 /** Death Artists. Artistic practices of memory
- 5 /** Archaeologists of the future and the "new" traces of the Dead
- 6 /** The recomposition of the Dead through abstraction and symbolic objects
- 7 /** Mourning of the lost animal species and loss of landscapes
- 8 /** New places and locations for rituals
- 9 /** The psychopathologies of mourning in the absence of a body
- 10 /** Ethical and legal limits of AI in funeral ceremonies

Practical information

Registration fees for in-person attendance & videoconferencing (please specify in your application).

- Full price: €300 for both days.
- €150 for one day.
- Registration deadline for these prices: 31 March 2026.
- From 1 April 2026, the fees will be €400 for two days and €200 for one day.
- Students from outside Unistra, job seekers: €30
- Students from the University of Strasbourg: Free
- CIEM members: €30

Location

University Palace (Louis Pasteur room), Faculty of Psychology, Théodule Ribaud Pavilion (12 rue Goethe, 67000 Strasbourg)

Any questions should be addressed to Sandrine Amé at same@unistra.fr and Marie-Frédérique Bacqué (Director of the CIEM) at bacque@unistra.fr

CIEM : www.ciem-Thanatologie.com

SULISOM, UR 3071, (3071 Research Unit of the University of Strasbourg), 12 rue Goethe, 67000 Strasbourg
Bus stop no. 10 (Brant Université) and Tram C (Gallia or Université stops)

direct from Strasbourg Central Station.



CIEM/ SuLiSoM-COLLOQUE

CIEM : International Center for Death Studies
SuLiSoM : Subjectivity, Social Link and Modernity