



**\*\*Pre-CfP\*\***

## **Public (Ab)Uses of the Early Middle Ages: Then and Now**

September 2020

@ Mercy College, New York City

**Networks and Neighbours** (N&N) is pleased to announce, and welcome you to, its fifth major international conference on the Early Middle Ages! We are particularly excited to be running this milestone event in partnership with Mercy College in Manhattan and in association with our longtime open-access partner, publisher and intellectual colleague Punctum Books. Reflective of N&N's new grounding in New York, N&N 5 will be our second international research event and the first major N&N conference to be held in New York City.

The lectures, prepared responses, formal discussions and informal conversations, the research of the conference, will explore the public "uses and abuses" of the early middle ages, at any time, from that of contemporary early medieval authors, builders, scribes, artists, etc. all the way to modern and twenty-first-century scholarship, literature, political engagements, etc. The boundaries of the conference are flexible; they will be narrowed as the program selection and formation process progresses.

We will engage a range of artifacts, historical methods and critical theories over a number of panels framed by two overarching categories "medieval representations" and "modern imaginations." The first will deal with the uses of the early middle ages in its time and up to modernity, at which point the second category emerges. The historical situations for each category will differ considerably, but so too will the interpretive modes for analysis. We hope that by bringing together conversation on the early middle ages across these categories we can, collectively as scholars of the period, work to elicit methodologically comprehensive paradigms that are sensitive to historical theoretical plurality and in so doing develop fresh historiographies on the way the early middle ages – as place, as identity, as category, etc. – has been and continues to be used for many, sometimes sinister, purposes.

The detailed structure of the event is still under consideration and will be shaped in part by the response to this pre-CfP and the formal CfP. At present, we imagine two keynote speakers (one for each category) and five established moderators across five panels composed of two speakers, who will be either (post)graduate students or early career scholars. Speakers will be chosen through a rigorous peer-reviewed selection process. The conference is entirely free and open to anyone, and we anticipate covering basic costs for presenters plus in-conference catering for all. The results of the conference will be published by N&N, in association with Punctum Books, as an open-access edited volume, subject to the regular double-blind peer-review process.

To register initial interest, suggest a paper or panel, or ask questions please contact us at [networksandneighbours@gmail.com](mailto:networksandneighbours@gmail.com). More information will be announced after the conclusion of N&N's 2019 research events.

