

Call for Papers: 5th Edinburgh International Graduate Conference in Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Studies (4th-6th November, 2021).

Sites of Encounter and Cultural Exchange (500-1500 CE)

Sites of encounter and cultural exchange are crucial to the construction of meaningful narratives concerning the Mediterranean and West Asian past. These sites have at times been excluded from wider historiographical narratives which seek to centre them within the nation-state; such narratives exclude the marginalised and serve to other anything considered syncretic or alien. Scholarship has, in the last half century, acquired a new-found appreciation for the history of cultural exchange, and the spaces – be they physical, textual, or imagined – where such interpersonal and intercultural contact occurs. Our conference aims to bring together these multifarious ‘sites of encounter’ in order to gain a more complex understanding of the Mediterranean and West Asia in the period between 500 and 1500 C.E.

We invite papers and posters that address issues including, but not limited to:

- ❖ Sites of Encounter in Material Culture: Attestation of sites of encounter and cultural contact in material culture; the archaeology of physical sites of encounter; cultural encounter in Art History.
- ❖ Frontiers: Frontiers as sites of encounter; life on the frontier; the vision of states/societies from the periphery; the treatment of the frontier in texts.
- ❖ Marginality: Encounter with the socially marginalised on ethnic/gender/sexual (etc.) grounds; legal systems as sites of encounter between the marginalised and non-marginalised; encounters between the free and unfree.
- ❖ Multilingualism: Tracing multilingualism; intercultural contact and multilingualism; translation and the transmission of knowledge and texts.
- ❖ Religion as a Site of Encounter: Syncretic belief systems; the translation and cross-cultural reception of religious, spiritual, and magical texts.
- ❖ Mapping and Geographical Writings: Conceptualisations and articulations of geographic space; spatial representations in both images and texts; intercultural exchange of geographical knowledge.
- ❖ Commercial Networks and Trade: The reconstruction of regional and trans-regional commercial networks; trade networks as nexuses for intercultural encounter and contact; urban spaces and commercial exchange.

Additionally, we are pleased to welcome our keynote speakers, the eminent Byzantinist Leonora Neville (University of Wisconsin, Madison) and the equally eminent Armenologist and Islamic Historian Alison Vacca (University of Tennessee, Knoxville).

This conference will be hosted online by the Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Society of the University of Edinburgh on the **4th to the 6th of November, 2021**. We welcome papers and posters

from Postgraduate Students and Early Career Researchers from all disciplines with an interest in Late Antique, Islamic or Byzantine studies.

Papers: Presentation must be approximately 20 minutes in length, delivered in English.

Posters: Participants will present their research at a poster session held in individual break-out rooms; conference participants will have the opportunity to visit electronically those presenting. Posters will need to be confirmed by the **21st of October, 2021**. We strongly encourage undergraduate, masters and first-year PhD students to submit posters of their dissertations or research.

To apply, please respond with an e-mail including whether you hope to present a paper or poster, an abstract of no more than 300 words, and a small academic biography of no more than 120 words to edibyzpg@ed.ac.uk. The deadline for submitting papers and posters is the 30th of June, 2021.

Registration Fees:

Student Speakers: £15 before September 15th, 2021; £20 thereafter.

Non-Student Speakers: £35 before September 15th, 2021; £40 thereafter.

The committee intends to have the conference proceedings published in a peer-reviewed volume after the conference. Moreover, selected presenters may be invited to publish their studies by the peer-reviewed Edinburgh Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Studies Journal, a recently formed journal that will publish its inaugural volume in 2022.

Please address any questions to edibyzpg@ed.ac.uk

**Conference Organization Committee, Late Antique, Islamic and Byzantine Society,
University of Edinburgh,**

Ethan Schmidt, Kieran Hagan, Alice Greenwood, Chiara Fabrici, Sam Azzopardi, and Stefano Nicastro.