**Medieval Recreations**

**Proposed panel – call for contributions**

**Australian Early Medieval Association Conference**

**UWA, September 30-October 2, 2020**

<https://www.aema.net.au/conference.html>

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All consideration of past times entails recreation/re-creation in one form or another: either the gathering and assessing of demonstrable facts or imaginative speculation.

The theme of this panel for AEMA 2020 is not so much 'creative anachronism' or re-enactment, but rather how the medieval and modern can engage each other in a kind of colloquy. *Piers Plowman* opens with an examination of an allegorical figure named Lady Mede (literally, 'Lady Reward' or 'Lady Emolument'), who inspires industry and ambition but also corrupts values and government. In the light of Donald Trump’s recent impeachment and ‘acquittal’, Langland's critique of Lady Mede sounds as if it were written as an op-ed piece about current affairs only yesterday. Here the past delivers not a frisson of alterity but a *recognition*.

In this panel I am seeking co-presenters willing to speculate on how creative writing can allow the Middle Ages (or any other zone of antiquity, for that matter) to speak intelligibly to us about issues of perennial concern, then and now. I would particularly welcome contributions from those pursuing creative writing project,s but discussions of modern medievalist literatures and the experience of writers who are actively engaged in such endeavours would be equally welcome.

In my own contribution I’ll briefly discuss a few exemplary medieval texts, such as *Piers Plowman*’s Lady Mede or the existential anguish of *The Wanderer*, followed by short passages from my own creative writing projects, to illustrate how the voice of modern poetry or fiction can enter into a virtual dialogue with its distant predecessors.