How is the past used (and abused) in the Middle Ages? To what purposes is it deployed in personal, social, religious, and political formation? How has the medieval served as a foundational past for post-medieval identities and practices? Recent scholarship demonstrates the importance of the past in the creation of medieval identity. In the words of Walter Pohl and Ian Wood, the past could be used “to create legitimacy, explain inclusion and exclusion, establish precedent, provide orientation, exemplify moral exhortation, inspire a sense of what was possible and what was not, to negotiate status, to argue about the right norms or to imagine the future.” Moreover, the medieval past has become a touchstone of current cultural memory, deployed in constructing our own present moment.

The Medieval Studies Institute welcomes scholars from a range of disciplines: history, literature, music, material culture, religion, politics, and law. We are especially interested in papers that explore global perspectives on cultural memory and the use of the past.

Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words to iumestsymposium@gmail.com by January 13, 2017.