

Precious Manuscripts from Late Antiquity to Renaissance (Turin, 18-20 Nov 26)

Turin (Italy), Nov 18–20, 2026

Deadline: Feb 28, 2026

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THE PURPLE AND THE BOOK.

Precious Manuscripts from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance.

International Conference.

Purple manuscripts represent a distinctive genre in Western bookmaking production, holding significant artistic and cultural value. Known since Late Antiquity, the purple colour imparts a high symbolic worth: a mark of imperial authority, it later became, with the advent of Christianity, a symbol of the blood of Christ, of martyrs, and of the authority of the Church. After a revival during the Carolingian era, which influenced Ottonian and Romanesque illumination, these manuscripts experienced renewed prominence during the Humanist and Renaissance periods.

This international conference, as the concluding event of the PURple Parchment LLegacy project (PRIN 2020; <https://purpleproject.it/>), brings together scholars from various fields, time periods, and traditions of book decoration. The aim of the meeting is to offer a comprehensive and multidisciplinary overview of purple manuscripts and the use of purple in manuscript decoration. In addition to invited keynote talks, there will be an open session dedicated to more focused themes and case studies.

Proposals are invited for papers (maximum 15 minutes) addressing, but not limited to, the following research areas, covering periods from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance:

- case studies on single works or small groups of manuscripts, with a particular focus on their historical-artistic context
- in-depth studies of techniques and materials (dyes, writing supports, bindings, etc.)
- research on written sources that contribute to the reconstruction of historical-artistic, documentary, and technical aspects
- the history of purple manuscripts, with attention to their provenance and collecting histories

Submissions from PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, and early-career scholars are especially encouraged, as well as presentations of ongoing research or projects.

Proposals should be submitted in a single document (Word or PDF format) by February 28, 2026 to: convegno.purple@unito.it. Submissions should include:

- Full name, email address, and current affiliation

- Paper title
- Abstract (maximum 2,000 characters, including spaces)
- Short CV (maximum 1,000 characters, including spaces)

Proposals may be submitted in Italian, French, English, or German, and will be reviewed by the organizing committee. The outcome of the selection process will be communicated by March 2026.

The conference will take place in person in Turin. Accommodation expenses will be covered by the organization (travel expenses will be the responsibility of the participants). The conference proceedings will be published following a peer-review process.

Reference:

CFP: Precious Manuscripts from Late Antiquity to Renaissance (Turin, 18-20 Nov 26). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 10, 2026 (accessed Feb 11, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51711>>.