



Asia in the Middle Ages

Saturday, Feb. 3rd, 2018

Victoria Medieval Conference



Location: Bob Wright Centre, Rm B150
Ocean, Earth and Atmosphere Science Building, UVic Campus

Faculty coordinator: Dr. H el ene Cazes, Director
Medieval Studies Program

Sponsored by: The Program of Medieval Studies,
Faculty of Humanities, UVic

UVIC

Image: Mi Fu (1051 - 1107), *Mountains and Pines*

THANK YOU



The Medieval Studies program sincerely thanks the donors who supported students and initiatives in 2017. A new fund has been created in 2017 to support the Victoria Medieval Conference. If you can, help us keep our prices low!

Thanks to your gifts, the program has awarded 6 scholarships this year and supports students' training and travel (on competition). We are also able to invite musicians and lecturers to the Medieval Conference.

We express our gratitude to the vibrant community groups who make the Medieval Conference such a great event:

The Fairbank Calligraphy Society, The Pacific Association for Recreating the Middle Ages (PARMA), The Ancient Music Society of Victoria (AMSV), The UVic Bookstore, The UVic Library.

The students and volunteers of the Medieval Studies Program.
The presenters (who are also volunteers)
Our MEDI Program Assistant, Melanie Hibi
You, attendees, for your support and inspiration!



THE VICTORIA MEDIEVAL ASSOCIATION

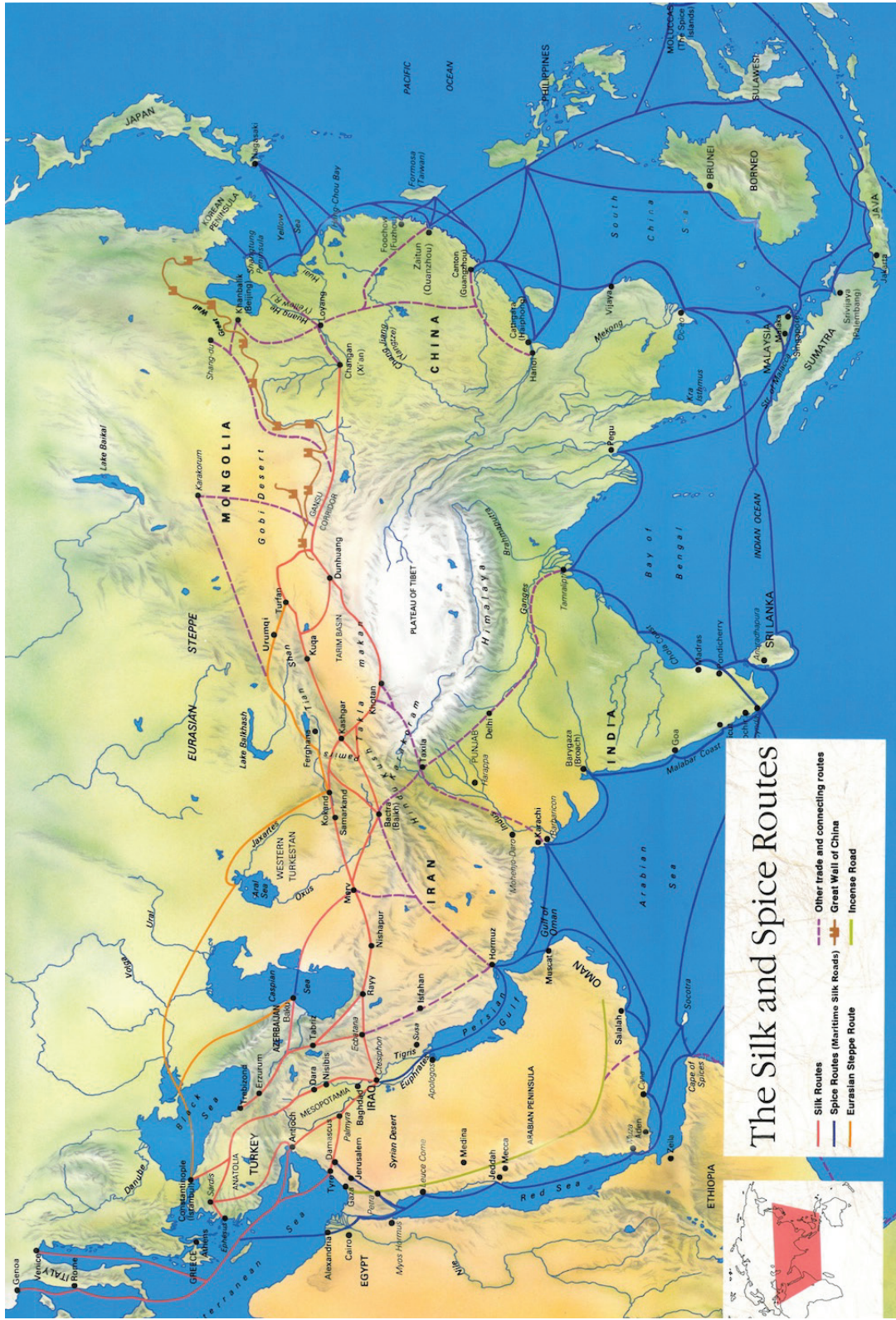
THE VICTORIA MEDIEVAL ASSOCIATION was founded in 1988 with the purpose of encouraging the large and "lively community of interest in the Middle Ages among people" of the Island and beyond. Managed through the program of Medieval Studies at the University of Victoria, the association is open to all and will sponsor events such as lectures, workshops, and a newsletter with the goal of circulating information and invitations to medieval events on the Island. Join by writing to medi@uvic.ca or by phoning 250 721 6271.

Contact us:



Medieval Studies
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UNESCO: <https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/about-silk-road>



PROGRAM SCHEDULE

- 9:00** **Opening remarks**
Dr. Chris Goto-Jones, Dean of Humanities
Dr. Hélène Cazes, Director of Medieval Studies, UVic
- 9:20** Iain Higgins, English, UVic
Asia in the Middle Ages
- 9:40** **Travels and Travelers I**
Niall Christie, History, Langara College
**“No Other Clime in the World Compares”:
Ibn Buttuta’s Travels in 14th-Century China**
Joseph Grossi, English / Hispanic & Italian, UVic
**“This is the Plain Truth”:
The Glories of Asia in the Travels of Marco Polo**
- 10:40** Refreshment break
- 11:00** **Travels and Travelers II**
Brian Pollick, History of Art, UVic
**The Club of Kings:
The Mission to the Mongols of Friar William of Rubruck**
Erin McGuire, Anthropology, UVic
Tales from the Tombs: Death and burial in Medieval China
- 12:00** Lunch break
- 12:45** **Concert**
Doug Hensley and Friends
Music on the Silk Road
- 2:00** **Middle Ages in Asia**
Cody Poulton, Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic
Japanese Courtly Love
Tsung-Cheng Lin, Pacific and Asian Studies, UVic
Poetry and Knight-Errantry of Seventh to Ninth Century China
- 3:15** Refreshment break
- 3:30** Wendy Swartz, Lansdowne Speaker, Rutgers University
**The Critical Mandate:
Early Medieval China’s Theories of Literature**
- 4:30** **Conclusions and closing**
Poster fair (MEDI students)

ASIA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The term “Middle Ages” is an invention of Early Modern times and originated in a specifically European context: Petrarch coined the phrase to express the contrast between the “rebirth” of civilization – with humanism and the return to classical texts – and the dull and obscure, though violent, interval between Antiquity and this Renaissance, the time in the “middle”. The Enlightenment took up the idea and painted the centuries preceding the Columbus expedition and the advent of printing presses as a period of intellectual stagnation and religious persecution against progress or science.

The development of Medieval Studies, as a (pre-)Romantic reaction to this reduction, has changed the Western concept of the Middle Ages, as scholars like the Grimm brothers, artists like the fictitious Ossian or the Pre-Raphaelite painters, along with bibliographers and editors, turned with nostalgia toward the medieval period for a sense of national identity, non-industrial and non-capitalist social organization, religious tradition, and even political inspiration: the Middle Ages had become roots for modern societies. Medievalism accompanied the rise of nationalism in Europe and its colonies. Within this historical configuration, the Middle Ages have been not so much a period as a geographical ensemble, centred around Europe and the Mediterranean. Religions of these parts of the world were essentially Abrahamic, and three or four learned languages – Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and Arabic – insured a relatively good communication between the actors.

In 2018, on the Pacific Rim, the context for Medieval Studies is a global world in the process of questioning national identities, colonial cultures, and learned traditions: travel studies, history of trade, and history of translation are all a way to renew and broaden

our conceptions of the past, beyond national prejudice and patriotic culture. The history of the Silk Road, the commercial route of spices linking Asia and Europe, attested since the Roman Empire, has been the symbol of these “New Middle Ages”. We’ll follow the route with our morning sessions. We’ll contrast the European and Middle Eastern encounters of Asia with Eastern perspectives on the Middle Ages. Afternoon talks will explore the notions of “medieval China” and “medieval Japan” through non-European lenses.

Seven different academic units engage today in a dialogue which revisits disciplinary traditions and proposes to explore our own society and its current transformations, as well as our historical legacies and our use of Medieval Studies. Questions will be asked, such as: Are there “Middle Ages” in non-European cultures? Which were, other than war, the contacts between radically different cultures? Can we measure the intellectual influence of these contacts? Is there a need for a “medieval” period in telling the history of the world? Let’s propose answers together!



The World according to Isidore. MS British Library, Royal 6 C I (Isidore, Etymologiae), fol. 108v° England, end 11th c.

Hélène Cazes, Department of French,
Program of Medieval Studies, UVic

SESSIONS

Iain Higgins (English)

ASIA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

A brief historical and geographical overview of Asia as it was understood in the medieval world and contrasted with contemporary understandings so as to lay a kind of foundation for the talks to come.

Iain Macleod Higgins has taught at the University of Victoria since 2001 in both the English Department and the Medieval Studies Program. His teaching and research interests include later medieval English, Scottish, and French literature, travel writing, utopian/dystopian fiction, and poetry both medieval and modern. He was the Director of the Medieval Studies Program from 2006 to 2009. He is currently a member of the editorial board of *The Malahat Review*.

Niall Christie (Langara University College, History)

“NO OTHER CLIMES IN THE WORLD COMPARES”: IBN BATTUTA’S TRAVELS IN 14TH-CENTURY CHINA

Ibn Battuta (d. 1368/69 or 1377) was a Moroccan religious scholar and traveller, who visited most of the Muslim world, and also travelled to China and Southeast Asia. We will examine Ibn Battuta’s description of China in particular, considering whether it tells us more about the country, or about Ibn Battuta himself.

Niall Christie received his PhD in Islamic History from the University of St Andrews, Scotland, in 2000. He teaches the history of Europe and the Muslim world at Langara College in Vancouver. He is the author of a number of books and articles, including *The Book of the Jihad of ‘Ali ibn Tahir al-Sulami* (d. 1106): Text, Translation and Commentary (Ashgate, 2015) and *Muslims and Crusaders: Christianity’s Wars in the Middle East, 1095-1382*, from the Islamic Sources (Routledge, 2014).



A Traveler, image from a Persian manuscript of the *Maqamat* (Al Hariri): PARIS, BnF, MS, Arabe 5847 51v°.

Joseph Grossi (English/Italian & Hispanic)

“THIS IS THE PLAIN TRUTH”: THE GLORIES OF ASIA IN THE TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO

Venetian merchant and diplomat Marco Polo (1254-1324) was one of the greatest travelers and accidental literary celebrities of the European Middle Ages. ‘Accidental’ is an appropriate word: we owe the existence of his famous travel account to the fact that Polo was a prisoner of war in Genoa and dictated his stories to his fellow captive. The *Divisament dou Monde* (Description of the World) achieved huge popularity with its claims of truthfulness and its stories of marvels.

Joseph Grossi is an associate professor of English and Italian at the University of Victoria. He has just finished a book on East Anglian regional identity in Anglo-Saxon literature and is starting a new research on the Great Western Schism in the Catholic Church from 1378 to 1



King Louis IX dispatches William of Rubruck on a mission to the Mongols in 1253. Cambridge University, Corpus Christi College: Corpus Christi MS 66A, f.67r.

(Courtesy of the Master & Fellows Corpus Christi College, Cambridge)

Brian Pollick (Art History and Visual Studies)

THE CLUB OF KINGS: THE MISSION TO THE MONGOLS OF FRIAR WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK

William of Rubruck (c.1210-c.1277) was a Flemish Franciscan who undertook a quasi-diplomatic mission to the Mongol ruler Sartaq on behalf of King Louis IX of France (1214-1270). William’s Asian travels (April, 1253 - June, 1255) took him through much of Central Asia and resulted in meetings with the three most powerful Mongol rulers, including Mongke, the Great Chan. Friar William wrote a highly detailed account of his journey, his impressions, and his interactions with the Mongols and others he came into contact with.

After a forty year career working in the Justice field, Brian returned to the University of Victoria to pursue his love of medieval art in the Art History & Visual Studies Department. He obtained his MA in 2011 and expects to complete his PhD in 2018. Brian has a strong commitment to medieval studies and, along with his wife Heather Lindstedt, has helped the University of Victoria to acquire a number of medieval manuscripts to ensure students have physical access to authentic medieval books.

Erin McGuire (Anthropology)

TALES FROM THE TOMBS: DEATH AND BURIAL IN MEDIEVAL CHINA

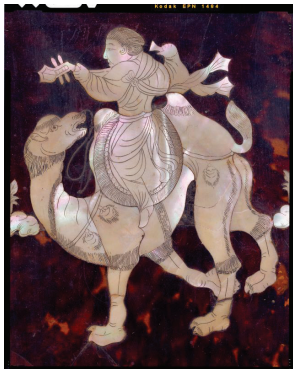
This talk explores selected case studies of recent archaeological research into burials from Medieval China, ranging from the spectacular tomb of the Chenguo Princess of the Liao Dynasty (907-1125) to evidence for kinship in Mongol burials from the Yuan Dynasty (1271- 1378).

Dr Erin McGuire is an Associate Teaching Professor in the Department of Anthropology. Her research interests include medieval funerary practices and experimental archaeology. In 2016, she was the inaugural winner of the University of Victoria's Award for Excellence in Teaching for Experiential Learning.

Doug Hensley

MUSIC FROM THE SILK ROAD, FROM VENICE TO PERSIA

A programme of music and sung poetry from the time of Marco Polo, beginning in northern Italy and traveling into the middle eastern territories of Persia, featuring medieval European as well as medieval Persian ensembles of Victoria-based musicians, directed and curated by Douglas Hensley.



*"Multicultural" Lute: Strings have been removed to better show an Iranian lute (barbat) player decorating the pick-guard on a 5-string biwa in 8th Century Japan!
(Imperial Household Agency, Japan)*



*Murasaki Shikibu.
Portrait by Tosa
Mitsuoka, late 17th
century*

Cody Poulton (Pacific and Asian Studies)

COURTLY LOVE IN JAPAN

This presentation will focus on what is arguably the world's oldest novel, The Tale of Genji and its eponymous hero, considered by many to be a paragon of male lovers. What was courtly love in medieval Japan? How did the roles and relations of men and women differ from medieval Europe? And how can we approve of Genji's behaviour in an age of #me too?

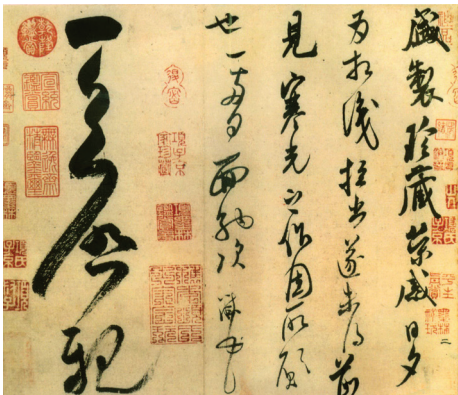
Cody Poulton is a professor of Japanese theatre and literature at the University of Victoria, where he has been since 1988. He is author of *A Beggar's Art: Scripting Modernity in Japanese Drama, 1900-1930* (University of Hawaii Press, 2010), co-editor of *The Columbia Anthology of Modern Japanese Drama* (2014) and translator of numerous works of fiction and drama from the Japanese into English.

Tsung-Cheng Lin (Pacific and Asian Studies)

POETRY AND KNIGHT-ERRANTRY OF THE SEVENTH TO NINTH CENTURY CHINA

Frontier poetry (biansai shi), a major poetic subgenre of shi poetry, distinguishes itself from other subgenres such as landscape poetry (shanshui shi) and bucolic poetry (tianyuan shi) by the special nature of its subject matter. As the name suggests, it is concerned with life on the frontiers. But how could the frontiers have become so important as to give birth to a major topic in Tang poetry and why there is such a close association between knight-errantry and Tang frontier poetry and why does the knight venture into the frontier?

Tsung-Cheng Lin is a professor of Chinese literature at the University of Victoria. He holds a PhD from UBC and has also studied in Kyoto. His primary research interests are: the narrative tradition in classical Chinese verse, poetry of late Imperial China, medieval Chinese poetry, poetic transition from 18th to early 20th centuries, and the tradition of knight-errantry in Chinese poetry



Calligraphy done by Mi Fu (1051-1107), an important calligrapher of Song Dynasty "Shengzhi tie" ("A Calligraphy Work to Thank you for your Master-piece")

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Wendy Swartz

THE CRITICAL MANDATE: EARLY MEDIEVAL CHINA'S THEORIES OF LITERATURE

Literary thought – both theory and criticism – is the prerequisite for situating literature and its function in a society, especially one that viewed letters as its preeminent civilizing enterprise. Over the course of early and medieval Chinese history, the character wen came to stand for the dynastic enterprise defined as a civilization of culture, scholarship, and literature. Literary critics helped to found and maintain this civilization through their transhistorical preservation of a wen that shaped Chinese literature's meaning and memory.

Wendy Swartz is internationally renowned for her expertise in history of Medieval Chinese Literature and Culture. She has published several books and papers on the topic, among which: *Reading Philosophy, Writing Poetry* (Harvard University Press, forthcoming) and *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook*, principal editor (Columbia University Press, 2014).

She will deliver another lecture on Monday February 5, 2018, at 1 pm in ECS 125: **How to be a Good Reader and Writer in Early Medieval China**

Further Readings on *Asia in the Middle Ages* *A non-exhaustive non-authoritative list*

GENERAL

- Belich, James and John Darwin, Margret Frenz, Chris Wickham, *The Prospect of Global History* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2016)
- Holcombe, Charles, *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)
- Ludden, David, *India and South Asia: A Short History* (Oxford: One World, 2013)
- Mansfield, Peter, and Nicolas Pelham, *A History of the Middle East* (Penguin, 4th ed, 2013)
- Murphey, Rhoads, *A History of Asia* (London : Routledge, 7th ed. 2016)
- Stearns, Peter N. and Michael Adas, Stuart B. Schwartz, Marc Jason Gilbert, *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*, (One Lake St., Upper Saddle River: Longman, 2011)

THE SILK ROAD

- Frankopan, Peter, *The Silk Roads : A New History of the World* (Vintage, reprint, 2017)
- Hansen, Valerie, *The Silk Road : A New History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012)
- Liu, Xinru, *The Silk Road in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)
- Liu, Xinru, *The Silk Roads: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford: Bedford Series in History & Culture, 2012)
- Tignor, Robert aliique, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: A History of the World: 600 to 1850, Vol. B* (W. W. Norton & Company: 4th edition, 2013)
- Ma, Yo-you and Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, *Along the Silk Road* (Washington D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2002)
- Millward, James A., *The Silk Road : a very short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)
- Witfield, Susan, *Life along the Silk Road*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015)
- website <https://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/>

CHINA

- Bol, Peter, *This Culture of Ours* (Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1992)
- Dien, Al, ed., *State and Society in Early Medieval China* (Stanford : Stanford University Press, 1990)
- Kroll, Paul, ed., *Reading Medieval Chinese Poetry* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2015)
- Hinton, David, *Classical Chinese Poetry: An Anthology* (NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010)
- Lewis, Mark, *Chinese Between the Empires and China's Cosmopolitan Empire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2012)
- McMullen, David, *State and Scholars in T'ang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)
- Owen, Stephen, *The Making of Classical Chinese Poetry* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2006)
- Owen, Stephen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996)
- Pearce, Scott et al., ed., *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200-600* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2001)
- Swartz, Wendy et al., ed. *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2013)
- Swartz, Wendy *Reading Tao Yuanming: Shifting Paradigms of Historical Reception* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2008)

JAPAN

- Fenollosa, Ernest and Ezra Pound, *The Noh Theatre of Japan: With Complete Texts of 15 Classic Plays* (Dover Publications, 2011)
- Keene, Donald, ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature: From the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Grove Press, 1994)
- Hara, Katsuro, *The Beginner's Guide to Medieval Japan* (Didactic Press, 2014)
- Mason, R. H. P. and J. G. Caiger, *A History of Japan: Revised Edition* (Tuttle Publishing, 1997)
- Scott, A. C., *The Kabuki Theatre of Japan* (Dover Publications, 2012)
- Shibiku, Murasaki, *The Tale of Genji* (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, 2002)

TRAVELERS

- *The Book of John Mandeville: with Related Texts* ed. & transl. Iain Higgins (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Classics, 2011)
- *The Travels of Marco Polo*, ed. & transl. Ranald Lathan (Penguin, 2015)
- *The Description of the World*, ed. & transl. Sharon Kinoshita (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett, 2016)
- Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Battutah*, ed. Tim Mackintosh-Smith (London: Picador, 2003)
- Ibn Battuta, *The Travels of Ibn Battuta in the Near East, Asia and Africa 1325–1354*, trans. Rev. Samuel Lee (Mineola: Dover, 2004)
- Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveller of the Fourteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012)
- Website : The Travels of Ibn Battuta: <https://orias.berkeley.edu/resources-teachers/travels-ibn-battuta>
- *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck: His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253–1255*, transl. Peter Jackson, intr. David Morgan (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Classics, 2009)
- Dawson, Christopher, editor. *Mission To Asia: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966)
- Gaposchkin, Cecilia M. *The Making of Saint Louis: Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008.
- Golden, Peter B., *Central Asia in World History* (Oxford University Press, 2011)
- Morgan, David, *The Mongols* (Wiley-Blackwell; 2d edition, 2007)
- Stahl, Harvey. *Picturing Kingship: History and Painting in the Psalter of Saint Louis* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2008)

Quatrain on Heavenly Mountain, fan with quatrain poem attributed to Emperor Gaozong of Song (1107–1187; reigned 1127–62), the tenth Chinese Emperor of the Song Dynasty. Fan mounted as album leaf; ink on silk; 23.5 x 24.5 cm; four columns in cursive script. Part of the John B. Elliott Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



MEDIEVAL MUSIC

Organized in partnership with the Ancient Music Society of Victoria, Our next conference is conceived as a unique occasion to discover and enjoy the fascinating musical world of the middle ages. Musicians and scholars from Victoria and beyond are working hand in hand for a very special conference. Together, they will explain and perform medieval music from various traditions. Papers will provide historical and social context, as well as vivid insights into the life of the medieval musical actors.



Illumination from the 13th c. manuscript, EL ESCORIAL, MS B.I.2, containing the Cantigas de Santa Maria

February 2nd, 2019



UVIC

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