




Pilgrimage to Jerusalem

Taking up the Cross

Medieval Travel Writing-UBC Library Database
<http://www.medievaltravel.amdigital.co.uk/>


Crusades

- ✦ **First Crusades 1096-1099 ff**
- ✦ **Second Crusade 1145-49**
- ✦ **Third Crusade 1189-92**



Fourth Crusade (1201-1204)

- **Pope Innocent III**
- **Venetian bargain**
- **Dispute over Byzantine Succession**




7

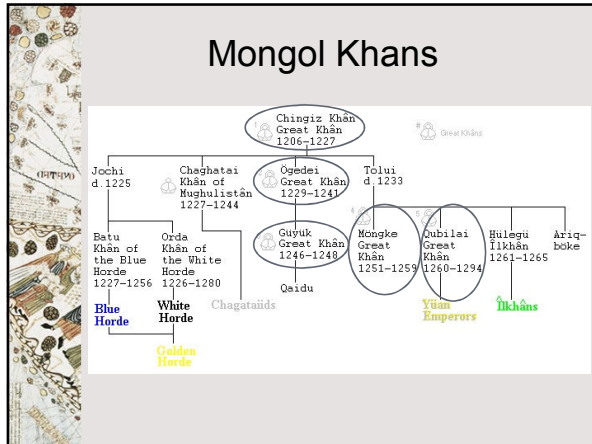
Taking Constantinople

- **Baldwin of Flanders, Emperor**
- **Latin Empire**
1204-1261
- **Greek restoration**
Venetian merchants expelled



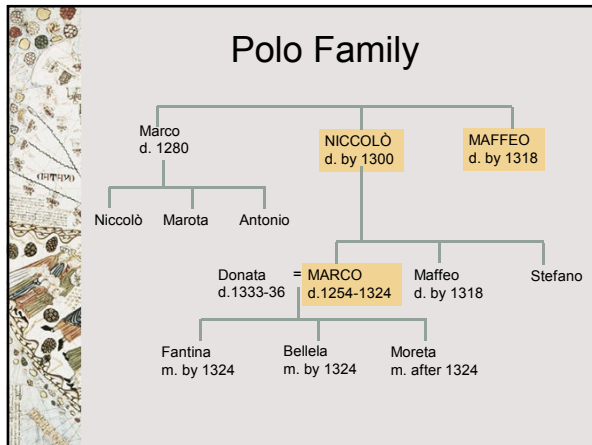
Gengis Khan's conquest, d. 1227





Mongol Map

<http://mapcollection.wordpress.com/2012/06/27/the-mongol-empire/>



Timeline

- 1354 Marco Polo born
- 1355-1260 Niccolò & Maffeo in Constantinople, travel to Crimea
- 1261 Latin Empire falls
 - Travel to Volga, trade with Barka Khan
- 1262 War, Hulegu v. Barka
 - Travel east to Cathay
- 1269 Polos Return to Acre, Venice
- 1271 Niccolò, Maffeo, and Marco (17) depart for Cathay
- 1292 Polos return to Venice, Marco (38)
- 1298 Marco captured by Genoese
 - Meets Rustichello of Pisa in prison, released 1299
- 1300 Niccolò dies, Marco (46) marries Donata
 - Three daughters
- 1310 Brother Maffeo dies
- 1318 Uncle Maffeo dies
- 1324 Marco Polo dies (70)

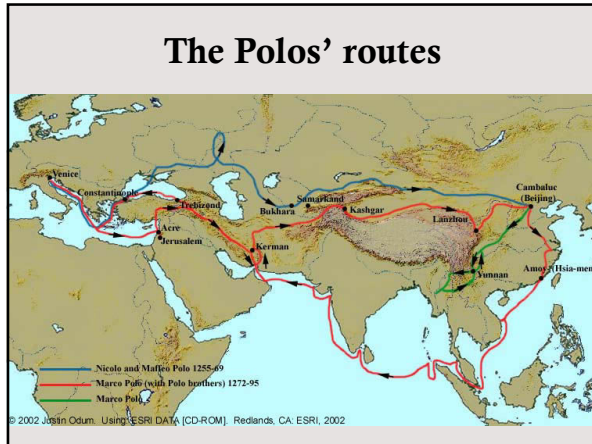
Venice

1400
Li Livres du Graum Caam
French

Bodleian Library
MS. Bodl. 264

Niccolò and Maffeo 1255-69

- Constantinople,
 - Emperor Baldwin
- Heading East,
 - Barak, Khan of the Golden Horde
 - Hulegu, Il-Khan of Persia



Did Marco Polo go to China?

- **Documentary evidence**
 - Family wills, deeds, and contracts
 - 4 golden tablets of authority
 - Mongol headdress, "tartar" embroidery
 - Family wealth rises after 1291
 - Marco & daughters all married into Venetian elite
 - *fraterna compagna*
 - traded in musk
 - His routes can be mapped

The Great Khan presents the Polos with a Golden Tablet

Bodley MS 264, f. 219r

The Marco Polo digitized manuscript begins at f. 218r

<http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>

Marco Polo, *Le Livre des merveilles du monde*, 1298. Copié vers 1410. Manuscrit enluminé sur parchemin (43 x 30 cm). BnF, Manuscrits (Fr 2810)

<http://blog.bnf.fr/uploads/lecteurs/2012/05/qubilaa-donnant-une-tablette.jpg>

The Polos deliver letter from Pope Gregory

Bodley MS 264, f. 220r, 244r

<http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>

The Great Khan dispensing alms

Oyster Divers in Maabar and Ceylon, in your book, p. 261

Bodley MS 26, f. 265r, 266v

<http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>

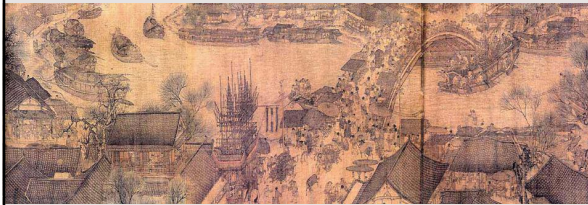
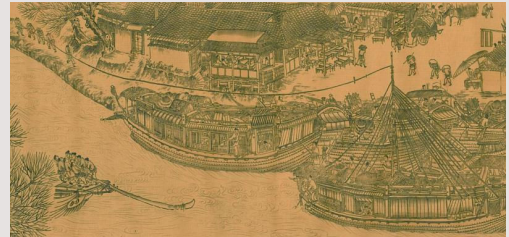
St. Thomas hand in judgment In Maabar



Bodley MS 264, f. 259r

<http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>

12C Qingming Scroll of Kaifeng



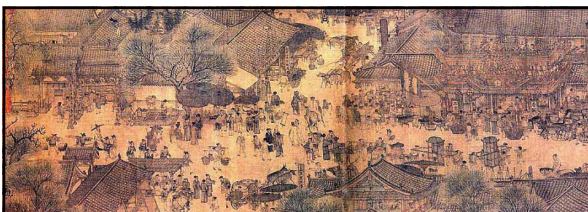
12C Qingming Scroll of Kaifeng

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/70/Qingming_Festival_3.jpg

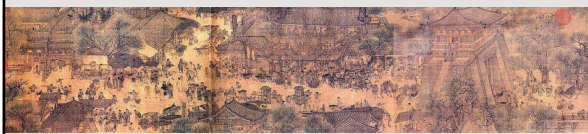


12C Qingming Scroll of Kaifeng


http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d4/Qingming_Festival_4.jpg



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1a/Qingming_Festival_5.jpg



The Khan at war
UB Graz Sig.: HB 15 210/P 778.



luc. Or tous ay comtre li homme il auint li vinnus auant ce tous
compreons auant chose.

Du plain jaun de fosuole et de la valce d'ormuz
Et at tous que le plain dunc nos nuby biau. v. rougrees.

Marco Polo accoste à Ormuz, sur le golfe Persique
http://classes.bnf.fr/idrisi/grand/8_04.htm

Marco Polo

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

What was his worldview? His centre of reference?

- ◆ Matured in world of the Tartar, Muslim, and Mongol
- ◆ Venetian merchant and commercial agent for Khans
- ◆ Court of the Mongols


The Romance of Alexander

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Rustichello of Pisa
Romance writer



<http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=msbodl264>



Who was John de Mandeville?

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The Book of John de Mandeville

Author / Compiler

Author = persona

- ✦ A typical "medieval" product of late 1350s
 - Sources, compiler/ narrator, copyists, translators, editors, some with an agenda
- ✦ French, either Anglo-Norman or Continental
- ✦ Translations
 - ✦ Middle English
 - ✦ Latin

Higgins' translation: first English translation from the French since 1400


Author / Compiler

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Two "backbone" Latin texts


- ✦ *William of Boldensele, Dominican pilgrim, 1332*
Book of Certain Regions beyond the Mediterranean, 1337
 - ✦ Orderly and skeptical memoir
- ✦ *Odoric of Pordenone, Franciscan missionary to India and China, 1320s*
Account, 1330
 - ✦ Miscellany, random account of pious missionary awed by foreign wonders

✦ *Both well modified, especially Odoric*



But not Marco Polo

(But Odoric did borrow from Polo's text)




Author / Compiler

◆◆◆◆◆

Purpose


- ✦ Stated in Prologue
 - ✦ But conveyed in the text?
 - ✦ Others?
- ✦ Vernacular French
 - ✦ Why?




Best-seller

◆◆◆◆◆


- ✦ Well researched, engaging, meant to satisfy its curious reader
- ✦ Read and rewritten by and for clerics, scholars, travelers, and "courtly" and urban elites
- ✦ Appeals to a public with inquiring curiosity
 - ✦ "Diversities" and "new things give pleasure"
- ✦ Bound with many other and varied works
- ✦ Reliable facts and fabulous marvels



<http://flemishamerican.blogspot.ca/2010/10/flemish-inspiration-and-travels-of-sir.html>



Digitized German 15thC version <http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/list/one/ssg/0016>



What does it reveal about the medieval worldview?

◆◆◆◆◆

- Who are the "other?"
- Are all others regarded the same?
- How does his attitude verge on syncretism?
- How does the text both confirm and challenge:
 - ✦ common medieval assumptions?
 - ✦ common modern assumptions?

