

## The World Beyond the Pages of Books

*Mapping Inclusive Literary, Oral, and Visual Traditions of Premodern Globalities*

**ABSTRACT** The global turn in European medieval studies has attempted to present connections and comparisons that cover all corners of the Earth. Many of these histories rely on textual and material evidence for moments of encounter and exchange. This essay presents teaching strategies that center various approaches to mapping that look beyond the pages of books to include other oral and visual traditions. One approach is to engage with Indigenous ways of naming land, water, and region, and to meet with local Native communities especially for medievalists working in the Americas. Another is to model interdisciplinarity by looking to the history of science, conservation, climate, disease, and more to demonstrate how scholars can learn from other specializations. A final example involves mapping global pathways through museum collections and displays, with an example of finding premodern Africa in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. **KEYWORDS** critical early globalisms; indigenous art; Americas; mapping; African art in museums

In 1386, the scribe Petros completed the writing and decoration of a Gospel book at the Monastery of Manuk Surb Nshan in K'ajberunik', north of Lake Van in the Armenian kingdom. In a colophon to the manuscript, Petros recorded the names of his students, T'uma and Simeon, who polished the paper, and elsewhere identified Mkrtich' as another of his pupil-scribes. A depiction of the team working together appears on a page facing a scene of Pentecost, the moment when the Holy Spirit anoints the apostles with the ability to speak many languages (Fig. 1). Papermaking technology likely arrived in the region by way of trade networks with Tabriz (Iran) or Baghdad (Iraq) and ultimately with cities in China beyond. Decorative motifs throughout the manuscript reveal the hybridity of local Armenian and Seljuq, Mongol, and Chinese forms even in an isolated monastic site at the crossroads of Eurasia. The manuscript is now part of the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum (Ms. Ludwig II 6 [83.MB.70]). This single object suggests various possibilities for the future of the field of study now popularly called a "global Middle Ages."<sup>1</sup> First, the collaboration recorded in word and image privileges inclusion. Second,

I am grateful to Gerry Heng for encouraging me to write this essay, and to Suzanne Conklin Akbari, Tarren Andrews, Wallace Cleaves, Morgan Conger, Larisa Grollemond, and Thomas McClintock for conversations or suggestions that have informed its content. I dedicate this essay to Michael Zakian (1957–2020), whose mentorship and friendship I will always cherish.

1. For the origins of the term "global Middle Ages," see Geraldine Heng, "The Global Middle Ages: An Experiment in Collaborative Humanities, or Imagining the World, 500–1500 C.E.," *English Language Notes* 47.1 (2009): 205–216; Miri Rubin, *Emotion and Devotion: The Meaning of Mary in Medieval Religious Cultures* (New York: CEU Press, 2009). See also, Geraldine Heng, "Early Globalities, and Its Questions, Objectives, and Methods: An Inquiry into the State of Theory and Critique," *Exemplaria* 26: 2–3 (2014): 234–253; Geraldine Heng and

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FIG. 1. The Scribe Petros and His Pupils, Monastery of Manuk Surb Nshan in K'ajberunik', Lake Van, Armenian kingdom, 1386. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig II 6 (83.MB.70), fol. 13v. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program

the study of materials and motifs of this and other manuscripts (or objects) has the potential to chart pathways to many new locations. Third, the codex's place of creation—Lake Van in historic Armenia and now part of Turkey—reveals histories of imperialism and genocide, topics of relevance and resonance today. The presence of the codex in a public museum and its availability online through a digital surrogate ensures that international audiences can encounter a variegated premodern world.

Across the globe from about 500 to 1500, the production of manuscripts and printed textual objects of all formats (bound, rolled, and screen fold) was a collaborative undertaking. This process could involve the makers of writing surfaces (parchment, paper, palm leaves, and so forth), binding supports, scribes, pigment-makers and merchants, artists,

Lynn Ramey, "Early Globalities, Global Literatures: Introducing a Special Issue on the Global Middle Ages," *Literature Compass* 11.7 (2014): 389–394.

patrons, and eventually the readers, viewers, or listeners. Producing a book in print or for digital distribution today similarly involves many voices and many hands. This essay resulted from my reflections on the process of editing *Toward a Global Middle Ages: Encountering the World through Illuminated Manuscripts* and learning from the twenty-six authors involved.<sup>2</sup> I am writing primarily as a museum curator who also teaches as an adjunct professor, and my position is that of a White-passing, mix-race, queer individual.

Researching, exhibiting, and teaching the art and history of globality must be collaborative, as the skills, methodologies, and historiographies required are daunting for any one individual. I presented the core of what follows at the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America in a talk that grew out of my vocation as a curator and educator. Engaging with colleagues—academics, curators, conservators, and students—across disciplinary and geographic boundaries yields a diversity of perspectives that will expand the remit of what Geraldine Heng calls critical early globalisms.<sup>3</sup> I understand this term to involve the following: a need to continually decenter traditionally Eurocentric histories by distancing, eliminating, or being intentional about the use of the terms “medieval” or “Middle Ages” (which derive from European—in fact fourteenth-century Tuscan—teleology and periodization, as Jill Caskey has noted);<sup>4</sup> an inclusive study of all parts of the globe from numerous vantage points (for example through the lens of Southernization or Southern Theory); an active decolonization of the field of European medieval studies by creating welcoming spaces for BIPOC, as well as for LGBTQIA2+ and women scholars, and by citing their/our scholarship, and involving them/us in future projects from the beginning. One way that I approach critical early globalisms is by embracing a range of literacies and oralities (alphabetic, glyphic, aural, and oral), as well as flexible chronologies and fluid temporalities. Continuing to work to expand the remit of the study of the premodern globe, I advocate for collaborative methodologies as the only truly inclusive approach toward future studies on early globalities. This essay highlights several strategies that I have employed in the classroom, specifically the use of local collections and sites as starting points for student research complemented by online resources.

### CRITICAL EARLY GLOBALISMS

On four occasions from 2013–2019, I taught fourteen-week-long upper division university courses on “Global Manuscript Cultures” (alternatively titled “Illuminated Manuscripts and the Global Middle Ages” or “The Book in the Early Modern World”), and have had four separate opportunities to teach a global introduction to the humanities (with a four-week final unit on early globalities in art and literature 500–1500).<sup>5</sup>

2. Bryan C. Keene, ed. *Toward a Global Middle Ages: Encountering the World through Illuminated Manuscripts* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2019).

3. Remarks at the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America at the University of Pennsylvania, 7–9 March 2019.

4. Break-out group conversation with Jill Caskey at the Second Ethiopia Colloquium, University of Toronto, 11 October 2019.

5. I co-taught the first iteration of this course with Kristen Collins at Loyola Marymount University (2015). We focused on the theme of mapping, beginning with Rome and the theme of spolia, then followed by Constantinople

Following is an outline of the methodological underpinnings of the manuscript courses and a discussion of my approach to a cognitive, cartographic, and chronological remapping of a global Middle Ages.

#### Weeks 1–4: Mapping Native Lands

Maps present worldviews and reveal much about history through the use of language, naming, and the demarcation of boundaries. Over the last several years, I have mapped multiple long-distances trips across the land currently called the United States with the goal of learning more about the Indigenous art and history of this vast region of the world. These travels and meetings with individuals have greatly informed my outlook as a curator and educator. I have focused on contact zones—which reveal a great deal about the movement of peoples, ideas, and materials—and have specifically sought opportunities to study petroglyphs, pictographs, and arboglyphs. Indigenous perspectives about these rupestrian and arboreal arts emphasize that the forms are not alphabetic/glyphic and that their meaning likely relates to cultural memory and oral tradition, some of which is preserved in Ancestral time and place.<sup>6</sup> Following Elizabeth Boone’s approach to literacy in the Americas<sup>7</sup>—and keeping an eye toward the forthcoming *English Language Notes* special issue on “Indigenous Futures & Medieval Pasts,” edited by Tarren Andrews and Tiffany Beechy<sup>8</sup>—I find it helpful to include petroglyphs and pictographs (understood as memory aids or cosmographic/cartographic projections) in courses on book arts of a global Middle Ages (with the critical lens just mentioned) (Fig. 2). I also incorporate ceramic vessels, stonework, and jewelry to address ceremony, technology and production, and adornment. These themes readily find comparison across Afro-Eurasia and therefore

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and the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, then Addis Ababba and Lalibella, Aachen and Northwest Africa, Scandinavia to India (focused on the Helgo Hoard), the Mediterranean crossroads of Sicily, Jewish communities and religious expulsions from Iberia to Yemen, the Armenian kingdoms (from Yerevan to Isfahan), Central Italy and missionary activities, and ended with a look at collecting the world (colonialism, imperialism, and the enslavement of Africans). I am grateful to Cynthia Colburn for providing me opportunities to develop a global manuscripts course at Pepperdine University and the ability to teach it under the traditional “medieval” (2016) and “Renaissance / Early Modern” (2013, 2015) course structure. The intro humanities courses at Pepperdine (2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019) feature units loosely focused on the ancient, classical, and medieval worlds. At the time of writing this essay, I am teaching the seminar “Critical Globalisms in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Art: Europe in the World / The World in Europe,” also at Pepperdine with the same guiding principles.

6. J. Halley Cox, *Hawaiian Petroglyphs* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1970); Carol Patterson-Rudolph, *Petroglyphs and Pueblo Myths of the Rio Grande* (Albuquerque: Avanyu Publications, 1993); Timothy McCleary, *Crow Indian Rock Art: Indigenous Perspectives and Interpretations* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Stewart Green, *Rock Art: The Meanings and Myths Behind Ancient Ruins in the Southwest and Beyond* (Guilford: Falcon Guides, 2018); James Burr Harrison Macrae, *Pecos River Style Rock Art: A Prehistoric Iconography* (College State: Texas A&M University Press, 2018); Ekkehart Malotki and Ellen Dissanayake, *Early Rock Art of the American West: The Geometric Enigma* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2018); George Nash and Aron Mazel, *Narratives and Journeys in Rock Art: A Reader* (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing, 2018); Richard Rogers, *Petroglyphs, Pictographs, and Projections: Native American Rock Art in the Contemporary Cultural Landscape* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2018).

7. Elizabeth Boone, “Introduction: Writing and Recording Knowledge,” in *Writing Without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*, ed. Elizabeth Boone and Walter Mignolo (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 1994), 3–26.

8. For the call for papers on medieval indigeneity, see <https://www.colorado.edu/english-language-notes/call-papers> and <https://colorado.academia.edu/TarrenAndrews/CurriculumVitae>.



FIG. 2. Map Rock, Shoshone-Bannock People, Givens Hot Springs, Canyon County, southwestern Idaho, possibly 11th century. Photo: Kenneth D. and Rosemarie Ann Keene

demonstrate the possibilities for including the Americas and beyond to Austronesia within the framework of critical early globalisms. In addition to a comparative model that includes a study of the creative output of all peoples and places around the globe, a trans-hemispheric connective approach is possible prior to the colonial and imperial contacts that characterized the late fifteenth century onward if one combines archaeology, climate study, oral tradition, and manuscript cultures of the North Atlantic/Arctic or these same fields together with the lens from the scholarly turn to Southernization/Southern Theory (that is perspectives from the Southern Hemisphere) on the greater Pacific or other oceans.<sup>9</sup>

In my role as professor, mapping is a central focus throughout the courses I teach. On the first day of the manuscripts seminars, I ask students to download the app or to visit the site “Native Land,” both of which visualize the historic and living presence of Indigenous peoples and communities in North, Central, and parts of South America,

9. Lynda Shaffer, “Southernization,” *Journal of World History* 5.1 (1994): 1–21; Raewyn Connell, *Southern Theory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007).

as well as Greenland, the Arctic Archipelago, and the “sea of islands” in the Pacific.<sup>10</sup> I enter Los Angeles and make the following statement: “The land and waters around us are the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples.<sup>11</sup> On behalf of university leadership, I acknowledge our presence on this land, and pay respect to the Ancestors, Elders, and relatives of these groups—past, present, and emerging.” In recent years I have learned the importance of personalizing this message, so that it does not become rote or simply empty words.<sup>12</sup> I thank the members of these communities who have shaped our local history, and who have welcomed me, my colleagues, and students onto their lands and who have generously guided us in learning about the deep history of this region. And I emphasize that I am still in the process of getting to know this rich and multi-layered history. As a class we note the impact of settler colonialism evidenced by the very name of the Americas and by the Spanish names given to several of the Indigenous peoples based in proximity to the missions: Gabrielinos for those Tongva in proximity to Mission San Gabriel (1771); Fernandinos for those Tongva, Chumash, or Tataviam individuals living by Mission San Fernando Rey de España (1797); Ventureños or Barbareños for those Chumash living near Mission San Buena-ventura (1782) or Mission Santa Bárbara (1786), and so forth.<sup>13</sup> To the Chumash, the land on which I work and teach is called Humaliwu, meaning “where the surf sounds loudly.” In the Tongva language, this land is called “Tovangar,” meaning “the world.” And for the Tataviam, the word Cahuenga describes “the place of hills” and is now the name of a prominent boulevard in the city. I ask students to enter the name of a city in which they have lived, visited, or about which they have learned or been curious. This activity provides an entry point for a discussion of the artistic trends and trade networks across North America—limiting the focus based on where my students and I live, study, and work during our time together—in the major geographic regions: California, Northwest Coast, Plateau, Arctic, Sub-arctic, Great Basin, Southwest, Plains, and Woodlands. Complementary to this exercise, we explore the Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, an online resource of The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met), specifically the section dedicated to North America (divided between 500–1000, 1000–1400, 1400–1600).<sup>14</sup> Additionally, we study the Zuni Map Art Project from the A: shiwi A: wan Museum and Heritage Center, an initiative that draws upon petroglyphs, pictographs, oral tradition, and the history of Ancestral migrations to create counter-maps that expand the dimensionality of the painted surface.<sup>15</sup>

10. The Native Land application can be downloaded on smart phones free or accessed online at [native-land.ca](http://native-land.ca). Another similar application is *Whose Land*, which can be accessed online at <https://www.whose.land/en/>.

11. The word “Chumash” is a Hispanicization of *Michumash*, meaning “bead-makers” to the Indigenous peoples.

12. See Tarren Andrews, “The Role of Land Acknowledgments,” *Modern Language Association Newsletter* (April 2020), 5.

13. For more on Indigenous methodologies or place names, see Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); RDK Herman, “‘Something Savage and Luxuriant’: American Identity and the Indian Place-Name Literature,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 39.1 (2015): 25–46.

14. For the Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, see <https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/>.

15. Jim Enote and Jennifer McLerran, *A: shiwi A: wan Ulohmanne* (The Zuni World) (Zuni, New Mexico: A: shiwi A: wan Museum and Heritage Center, 2011).

The course includes several similar activities that expand the contours of the medieval globe, while a roughly chronological syllabus provides structure to thematic discussions and problematizes periodization or chrononormativity (thereby allowing for heterochronicity that is resolutely queer, that is, disruptive to binaries and focused on revealing legacies of power and subjugation).<sup>16</sup> Whenever possible, I direct students to museum exhibitions (catalogues and websites) to facilitate an expanded discussion of periodization. We consider *Golden Kingdoms: Luxury Arts in the Ancient Americas* to address chronologies for Mesoamerica (900 to 1521 as Postclassic) and the Andes (600–1000 as Middle Horizon, 1000–1470 as Late Intermediate Period, and 1470–1532 as Late Horizon).<sup>17</sup> The tension between history/literacy and the periodization of the Americas (where the “medieval” is referred to, broadly speaking, as “ancient” or “prehistoric/pre-contact”) can also be glimpsed in scholarship on Austronesia. In Aotearoa (the Maori name for their land, which is currently also known as New Zealand), for example, Native chronologies refer to 900–1200 as *Nga Kakano* (The Seeds), 1200–1500 as *Te Tipunga* (The Growth), and 1500–1800 as *Te Puawaitanga* (The Flowering).<sup>18</sup> The phenomenon that Aotearoa (New Zealand) often does not appear on world maps filled social media platforms throughout 2018, effectively providing a real-time example about the politics of mapping.<sup>19</sup> I am working with Morgan Conger, senior project administrator at The J. Paul Getty Trust, to develop a future teaching essay about periodization in a global Middle Ages.

In teams, students develop presentations over a two-week period about the arts of the Pacific (Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia) or of the Americas, critiquing Pál Keleman’s little-utilized idea of “Medieval American Art,”<sup>20</sup> referring to the pre-Columbian Americas. Students consult a range of resources: Timothy Pauketat and Susan Alt’s edited volume *Medieval Mississippians: The Cahokian World*, its bibliography, and the related Global Middle Ages Project (GMAP) site;<sup>21</sup> and publications about Indigenous arts of the Americas and websites for museum collections.<sup>22</sup> During this time, I provide overviews of major

16. Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Keith Moxey, *Visual Time: The Image in History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

17. Joanne Pillsbury, Timothy Potts, and Kim Richter, *Golden Kingdoms: Luxury Arts in the Ancient Americas* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum and Getty Research Institute, 2017). For the exhibition websites, see [http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/golden\\_kingdoms/index.html](http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/golden_kingdoms/index.html) and <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2018/golden-kingdoms>.

18. Jesse Jennings, ed., *The Prehistory of Polynesia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

19. See <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/new-zealand-left-off-world-map>.

20. Pál Keleman, *Medieval American Art: A Survey in Two Volumes* (New York: Macmillan, 1943); Pál Keleman, *Medieval American Art: Masterpieces of the New World before Columbus* (New York: Macmillan, 1956).

21. Timothy Pauketat and Susan Alt, *Medieval Mississippians: The Cahokian World* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2015). For the GMAP project, see <http://globalmiddleages.org/project/north-american-middle-ages-big-history-mississippi-valley-mexico>.

22. To cite a few good catalogues for material on art of Indigenous North America, see Gilbert Vincent, Sherry Brydon, Ralph Coe, ed. *Art of the North American Indians: The Thaw Collection* (Cooperstown: University of Washington Press, 2000); Richard Townsend and Robert Sharp, ed., *Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand: American Indian Art of the Ancient Midwest and South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Bruce Bernstein and Gerald McMaster, *First American Art: The Charles and Valerie Diker Collection of American Indian Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005); Aron Crowell, Rosita Worl, Paul Ongtooguk, Dawn Biddison, ed., *Living Our Cultures, Sharing Our Heritage: The First Peoples of Alaska* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2005); Cécile Ganteaume, ed., *Infinity of Nations: Art and History in the Collections of the National Museum of the American Indian*

bookmaking centers around the globe and lecture on the structures, supports, and major subjects in codex cultures. Students are encouraged frequently to make use of a range of online resources, including the Heilbrunn Timeline and GMAP sites as well as the Global Medieval Sourcebook,<sup>23</sup> the International Center for Medieval Art’s “Resources for Teaching a Global Middle Ages,”<sup>24</sup> Qantara: Mediterranean Heritage,<sup>25</sup> Dr. Caitlin Green’s personal website and blog,<sup>26</sup> the British Museum’s *History of the World in 100 Objects* and “The Museum of the World” timeline,<sup>27</sup> the David Collection timeline of Islamic art by dynasty,<sup>28</sup> the detailed map of medieval trade routes in Afro-Eurasia,<sup>29</sup> and others. Social media can also provide a wealth of avenues of exploration, especially the hashtags #global-MiddleAges and #medievaltwitter.

A critique to studying a global Middle Ages through the pages of manuscripts is afforded by comparing accounts in textual objects with archaeological finds, or by interrogating the role that manuscripts played in colonial contexts. For example, comparing the *Vinland Sagas* of the Greenlanders or Icelanders—specifically their characterization of encounters with the Kalaallit and Tunumiit (Greenlandic Inuit)—with evidence from archaeology provides counterpoints to understanding how each group adapted to the environment and interacted with each other.<sup>30</sup> Introducing climate science provides further evidence and a counter-chronology: the Medieval Warm Period (ca. 900–1300) and the Little Ice Age (1300–1600).<sup>31</sup> The Spanish Missions of the eighteenth century offer another link to the past, through the pages of manuscripts and printed books. Mission San Gabriel, for instance, preserves a 1399 Latin deed for land in Spain,

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(New York: Harper Collins, 2010). See also Richard Townsend, ed., *The Ancient Americas: Art From Sacred Landscapes* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1992). For Polynesia, see Eric Conte, *Tereraa: Voyaging and the Colonization of the Pacific Islands* (Papeete: Collection Sorval, 1992); Patrick Kirch, *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands before European Contact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

23. For the Global Medieval Sourcebook, see <https://sourcebook.stanford.edu/>.

24. For a resource on teaching a global Middle Ages, see <http://www.medievalart.org/teaching-a-global-middle-ages>.

25. For the Qantara website on Mediterranean heritage, see <https://www.qantara-med.org/index.php?>.

26. For Caitlin Green’s personal website, see <https://www.caitlingreen.org/>.

27. For the British Museum’s timeline of world history, see [https://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/a\\_history\\_of\\_the\\_world.aspx](https://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/a_history_of_the_world.aspx).

28. For the David Museum’s overview of Islamic dynasties, see <https://www.davidmus.dk/en/collections/islamic/dynasties>.

29. For a map of Afro-Eurasian trade routes during the Middle Ages, see <https://kottke.org/19/02/a-detailed-map-of-medieval-trade-routes-in-europe-asia-and-africa>.

30. For the *Vinland Sagas* and medieval European constructions of race, see Geraldine Heng, *The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 257–286. For an archaeologist’s perspective on the encounters, see Brigitta Linderoth Wallace, “An Archaeologist’s Interpretation of the *Vinland Sagas*,” in *Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga*, ed. William Fitzhugh and Elisabeth Ward (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 228–231. See also Kirsten Thisted, “On Narrative Expectations: Greenlandic Oral Traditions about the Cultural Encounter between Inuit and Norsemen,” *Scandinavian Studies* 73,3 (2001): 253–296; Mikkel Sorensen and Hans Christian Gulløv, “The Prehistory of Inuit in Northeast Greenland,” *Arctic Anthropology* 49.1 (2012): 88–104.

31. Harvard University’s initiative *A Historical Ice Core from the Heart of Europe* provides an online resource with data sets aligning premodern descriptions of climatic events in manuscripts with evidence from ice cores in the Swiss Alps. See <https://sohp.fas.harvard.edu/projects>. For climate studies and the North Atlantic, see William Foster, *Climate and Culture Change in North America AD 900–1600* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012). See also Peter Sarris, “Climate and Disease,” in *A Companion to the Global Early Middle Ages*, ed. Erik Hermans (York, Arc Humanities Press, 2020), 511–537.

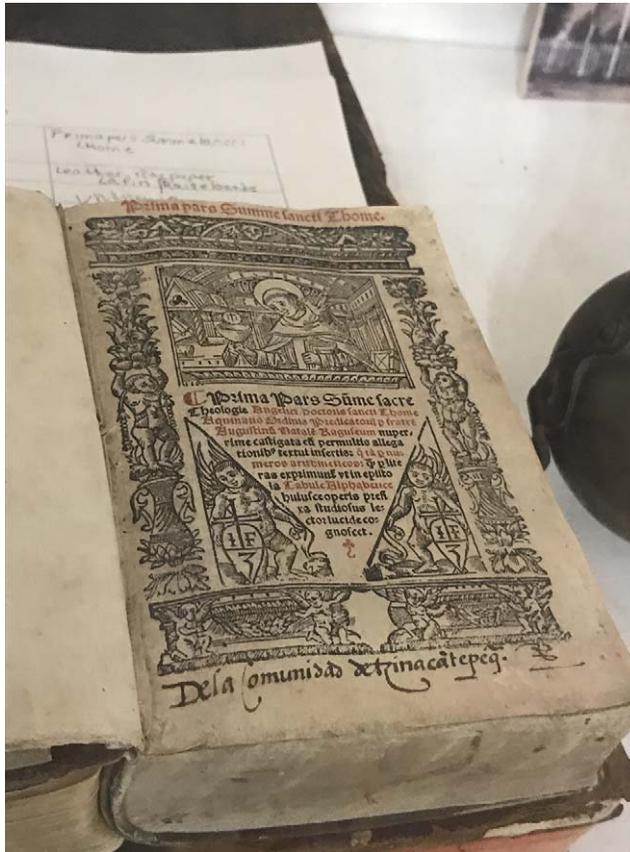


FIG. 3. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1488. From Toluca, Mexico, Mission San Miguel Zinacantepec, now Los Angeles County, Mission San Gabriel. Photo: Bryan C. Keene

a 1488 printed copy of Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* (Fig. 3), and dozens of additional codices produced in Europe prior to the Spanish foundations at the site.<sup>32</sup> Robert Rouse's concept of "indigenizing the medieval" through a look at Maori and Awabakal inscriptions in medieval manuscripts is a useful methodological approach to this material.<sup>33</sup> The framework of "Worlds Together, Worlds Apart" can help situate not only the Americas into a view of a global Middle Ages, but also locates the Pacific within such studies. As I have outlined in *Toward a Global Middle Ages*, incorporating oral tradition (globally) and Southerization/Southern Theory together with manuscript or codex cultures has the potential for uncovering large- and small-world networks and histories that incorporate peoples, perspectives, and histories of the entire globe.<sup>34</sup>

32. See Norman Neuerburg, "The Function of Prints in the California Missions," *Southern California Quarterly* 67.3 (1985): 263–280.

33. Robert Rouse, "Indigenising the Medieval; or How did Maori and Awabakal Become Inscribed in Medieval Manuscripts?" *Parergon* 32.2 (2015): 233–250.

34. See Bryan C. Keene, "Introduction: Manuscripts and Their Outlook on the World," in *Toward a Global Middle Ages: Encountering the World through Illuminated Manuscripts*, ed. Bryan C. Keene (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2019), 5–34.

At the end of the first month, I give a lecture titled, “Out of this World Connections in a Global Middle Ages.” I assign readings from Indigenous scholars and non-Native archaeoastronomers about the 1054 Supernova (SN 1054, called the Crab Nebula), an astral phenomenon visible around the world for about a two-year period.<sup>35</sup> Several textual traditions from around the globe (Japan, China, Iraq, Armenia, Central Europe) may record the cosmic event, and Indigenous peoples across North America may have represented it as petroglyphs. George Collins, William Clapsy, and John Martin provide a reinterpretation of the historical references to the supernova, arguing that the European and Chinese sources may point to the celestial sighting and that the Japanese texts derive from earlier materials.<sup>36</sup> Edwin Krupp and Richard Rogers independently provide a critical review of these theories in relation to the Americas—both reveal the non-Native influence on perpetuating these theories.<sup>37</sup> Together with Getty Research Institute Mary Miller and Getty manuscripts curator Larisa Grollemond, I have been thinking about the comparative potential of studying the astronomical content—specifically a focus on the planet Venus—in the twelfth-century Maya Codex of Mexico (formerly Grolier Codex) with contemporaneous miscellanies produced in the Mediterranean or Middle East (such as the French *computus* manuscript in the British Library, Ms. Royal 13 A XI, or the copy of ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi’s *Book of Fixed Stars* in the Bodleian Library, Ms. Huntington 212). We need not always look to lived connections of overland or nautical trade, travel, diplomacy, or artistic motifs, materials, or ideas to glimpse a global Middle Ages.<sup>38</sup>

#### Weeks 5–12: A Cartography of Codex Cultures

Throughout the course, I draw upon material I presented in the exhibition *Traversing the Globe through Illuminated Manuscripts* (2016), all of which is available online, and the themes developed in *Toward a Global Middle Ages*: intermediality, identity, and itineraries.<sup>39</sup> In the exhibition, I paired a ninth-century Qur’an from Tunisia with a contemporaneous ivory plaque from a Carolingian manuscript with purple-painted pages. This pairing allowed for a consideration of trans-Saharan and Mediterranean trade routes in gold, ivory, and pigments or dyes. Elsewhere in the gallery, a seventh to ninth-century Maya codex-style ceramic vessel showing a scribe was paired with a sixteenth-century pendant comprised of a pearl (likely from the Caribbean) to address early colonial contacts and the grim results of trans-Atlantic trade, which ultimately resulted in the destruction of the Maya and the majority of their codices (some of which date back to

35. Anthony Aveni, ed., *Foundations of New World Cultural Astronomy: A Reader with Commentary* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2008).

36. George Collins, William Clapsy, and John Martin, “A Reinterpretation of Historical References to the Supernova of A.D. 1054,” *Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific* 111.761 (1999): 871–880; P. R. Vishwanath, “European Sightings of the Crab Supernova,” *Current Science* 81.11 (2001): 1394–1395.

37. Edwin Krupp, “Crab Supernova Rock Art: A Comprehensive, Critical, and Definitive Review,” *Journal of Skyscape Archaeology* 1.2 (2015): 167–197; Rogers, *Petroglyphs*.

38. An expanded discussion of this approach can be found in Keene, “Introduction,” 5–34.

39. The Getty Museum exhibition *Traversing the Globe through Illuminated Manuscripts* can be explored at the following website: <http://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/globe/>; Bryan C. Keene, “Il medioevo globale: visioni del mondo al Getty Museum,” *Alumina Pagine Minate*, no. 52 (Jan.-Mar. 2016): 46–51. 2018.



FIG. 4. Page from the Blue Qur'an (Surah 4:23-24), possibly North Africa, late 9th to early 10th century. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Nasli M. Heeramanek Collection, gift of Joan Palevsky, M.86.196; Vase with Seated Scribes, Guatemala, about 600–900. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, anonymous gift, M.2010.115.562; Ivory Plaque and Text Page, Rhine-Meuse, Carolingian, late 9th century. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig IV 1 (83.MD.73), cover and fol. 2v. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program

earlier centuries). The book arts of the Maya were also placed in time and proximity with the long-held and canonical cultures such as the Carolingian Empire and Aghlabid or Fatimid dynasties (Fig. 4). In this way, both synchronic and diachronic relationships were established to demonstrate early globalities and the potential of studying manuscripts in deep time. This focus on materials, trade, and eventual colonial contacts could also be addressed by looking at indigo in Afro-Eurasia—from the pages of the Blue Qur'an (possibly made in Fatimid Tunisia, Umayyad Al-Andalus, Kalbid Sicily, or Abbasid Iraq)<sup>40</sup> to Buddhist sutras in China, Japan, and Korea<sup>41</sup>—or cochineal in the Americas (examples of this red colorant in manuscript cultures include the Codex Mendoza of about 1540 from Mexico or Martín de Murúa's *Historia general del Piru* of 1619, the last of which chronicles the history of Inca rulership).<sup>42</sup>

Expanding the content beyond our local (national) context, I assign a series of focused mapping projects. One of these involves mapping the contents of a manuscript, lived and imagined. Mapping “saintly geographies,” as I call it, in books of hours or litanies or through events from the life of a holy figure (the Buddha, Jesus, or Muhammad) allows students to consider how a manuscript might allow a reader to travel imaginatively while sitting or standing still. Alternatively, locations across the Americas bear the names of saints, and this practice of naming affords students opportunities to research connections between colonizer and colonized site. Charting the place names mentioned in a chronicle, history, or romance allows for a similar glimpse at how authors or patrons conceived their world and everyone's place in it. Another task seeks to map the origin of the materials in a manuscript. Here I refer students to the wealth of conservation science

40. The literature on this manuscript is vast. See Jonathan Bloom, “The Blue Koran Revisited,” *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 6.2–3 (2015): 196–218.

41. See J. Sören Edgren, “Buddhist Illuminated Manuscripts in East Asia,” in *Toward a Global Middle Ages: Encountering the World through Illuminated Manuscripts* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2019), 112–120.

42. Carmella Padilla and Barbara Anderson, ed. *A Red Like No Other: How Cochineal Colored the World (An Epic Story of Art, Culture, Science, and Trade)* (New York: Skira/Rizzoli, 2015). The Codex Mendoza is housed in the Bodleian Library (MS. Arch. Selden. A. 1), Oxford and the Murúa manuscripts can be found in the Getty Museum (Ms. Ludwig XIII 16), Los Angeles and in the Sean Galvin Collection in Dublin.

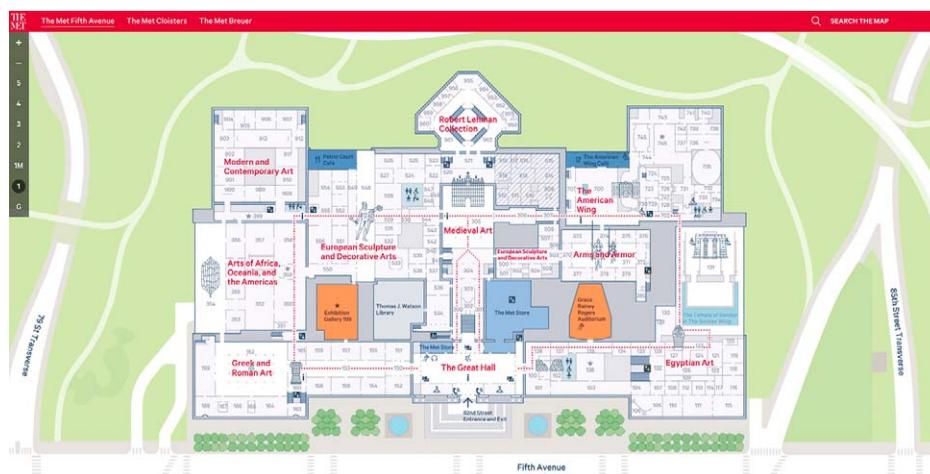


FIG. 5. Map of the First Floor of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

material available through the *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts* series<sup>43</sup> and the *Artists' Pigments* handbooks.<sup>44</sup> Trade in indigo and cochineal, mentioned above, can provide the starting point.

Students can also map the global trajectories of objects and ideas presented by textbooks, in museums, and in exhibitions (in the galleries, catalogues, and online). For an expanded focus on worldviews across the globe and throughout time, I direct students to the digitized *History of Cartography* series.<sup>45</sup> We discuss conventions of naming and conceiving the world, a theme already introduced above, and we examine how medieval art is presented or displayed in museums by having the students “map” a chronologically fluid Middle Ages (roughly but not limited to 500 to 1500) in encyclopedic museums, especially The Met, the Art Institute of Chicago, and The British Museum. To experience “medieval Africa” in The Met, for example, is to traverse numerous galleries organized by curatorial division (Fig. 5): works from Ethiopia and West Africa are in the “Arts of Africa, Oceania, and Americas” spaces, devotional objects from Coptic Egypt feature beneath the grand staircase in one of the “Medieval Art” galleries (in proximity to the Jaharis Gallery for Byzantine Art), and art from Islamicate Africa (Umayyad, Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk, Ottoman) is presented in the “Art of the Arab Lands, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, and Later South Asia” suite (N.B. The Met Cloisters is devoted to the art and architecture of medieval Europe, which includes Christian art of the Iberian

43. Gillian Fellows-Jensen and Peter Springborg, ed. *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts* (Copenhagen: Kobenhavn Royal Library, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012); Matthew James Driscoll and Ragnheidur Mósésdóttir, ed. *Care and Conservation of Manuscripts* (Copenhagen: Kobenhavn Royal Library, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018).

44. Robert Feller, ed. *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of their History and Characteristics*, vol. 1 (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1986); Ashok Roy, ed. *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of their History and Characteristics*, vol. 2 (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1993); Elisabeth West FitzHugh, ed. *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of their History and Characteristics*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Barbara Bernie, *Artists' Pigments: A Handbook of their History and Characteristics*, vol. 4 (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2007).

45. For the *History of Cartography* series, see <https://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/index.html>.

Peninsula; and the 2020 ongoing installation *Crossroads* provides a promising opportunity to glimpse a global history of the premodern past in the Medieval Sculpture Hall, one of the “crossroads” within the museum).<sup>46</sup> I ask students to contrast the museum experience of “medieval Africa” with the presentation on the Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, and how those views of an entire continent compare or contrast with The British Museums web-based timeline called “The Museum of the World.”<sup>47</sup> We also explore museums in Paris—the Musée de Cluny, Musée du Louvre, Musée du Quai Branly (Jacques Chirac), Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet, Institut du Monde Arabe—and discuss how a collective, global medieval framework might inform an experience across town there, with consideration toward Indigenous and colonial-imperialist histories and perspectives. Each assignment requires students to think critically and expansively about the challenges, limitations, and opportunities for studying, presenting, or researching a global Middle Ages.

### Weeks 13-14: An Intersectional, Global Middle Ages

In 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality, “a lens through which you can see where power comes from and where it collides, where it interlocks and intersects.”<sup>48</sup> Crenshaw’s writings on the topic are groundbreaking works of Black Feminist discourse. The term intersectionality is at times understood today as describing the ways in which oppressive, fear-based institutions (racism, homophobia, transphobia, and so forth) are interconnected and must be examined together. Following this critique, I ask the following question on a PowerPoint slide: “If our art history, curatorial practice, museum work, and scholarship does not support all abilities, and if we do not work toward queer-feminist-trans-inclusivity and break down classism, religious prejudice, and racism, then who is our work supporting?” A global Middle Ages—or rather, critical early globalisms—must provide multivocal accounts of the past that are collaborative and that cross boundaries (disciplinary and institutional, as well as the hierarchies that abound). Collaboration and inclusive citational practices must be part of our praxis. Starting where we are—acknowledging the land and resources around us—is a good first step toward a more inclusive future of global medieval studies. ■

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46. For the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s *Crossroads* installation, see <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2020/crossroads>.

47. For the British Museums’s “The Museum of the World” timeline, see <https://britishmuseum.withgoogle.com/>

48. Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 18 (1989): 139–167. See an interview with Dr. Crenshaw here <https://www.law.columbia.edu/pt-br/news/2017/06/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality>. See also Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43:6 (1991): 1241–1299; Patricia Hills Collins, *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019).