

“Foreign Characters in Golden Ink: Diplomatic Correspondence of the Mongols in Southeast Asia” - Francesca Fiaschetti (The Hebrew University)

Abstract: Diplomatic correspondence between submitted countries and the rulers of the Mongol Yuan dynasty was entangled with symbolic elements and cultural peculiarities varying from kingdom to kingdom. After the conquest of China and further expansion in East and Southeast Asia, in fact, the contact with various cultures and polities led the Mongols to deal with various usages of the written word. Some examples will be analysed in this paper, to show how writing appears in the Chinese sources about the Yuan dynasty alternatively as a political statement (to display loyalty or resistance), as an element of ethnographical writing, as a product of elite building and population movement.