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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2007 Volume II: Voyages in World History Before 1500

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## **Two Twelfth-Century Couples: Heloise and Abelard of France and Li Qingzhao and Zhao Mingcheng of China**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.02.05  
by Niki LaMontagne

Relationships are an integral part of high school. Working in a large magnet high school, whose student body is populated by 20 surrounding school districts, I have witnessed the creation and demise of many student relationships. In history, there too have been many relationships built and destroyed.

The purpose of this unit is to take advantage of the historical figures Heloise and Peter Abelard, as well as Li Qingzhao and her husband Zhao Mingcheng to illustrate the variance of relationships amongst historical figures. These historical figures will also be used to teach the students about the culture of Medieval China and Europe.

Students will engage in classroom activities such as making predictions about Medieval Europe and China based on images and facts. The students will also participate in a variety of class activities that analyze primary sources from Heloise, Peter Abelard, and Li Qingzhao. Through the activities of the unit, students will critically examine the relationships presented in the literature of these figures in order to create a cross-cultural identification with the historical figures, as well as making a connection to the types of relationships that exist in the students' lives.

(Developed for World History, grade 9; recommended for World History, grade 9)

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