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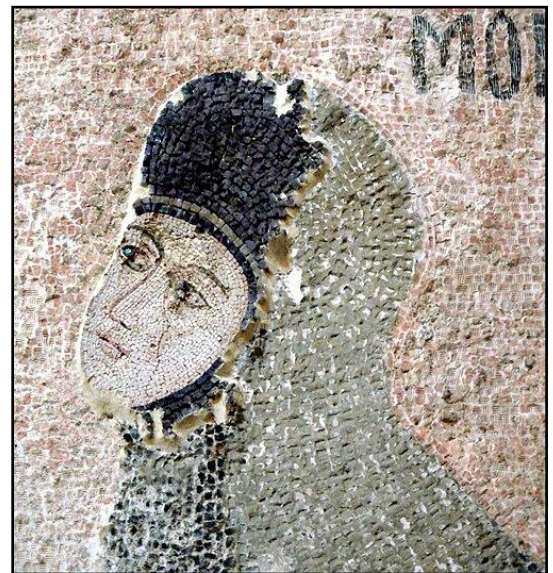
Prof. Ladan Niayesh
(Université Paris Cité)

**EARLY GLOBAL FEMALE MOBILITIES:
WHO? HOW? AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?**

Wednesday, 11 November 2026, 4:00–5:30 pm (EST; Toronto time)

Location: Jackman Humanities Building (170 St George St), Room 616; online at <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/89808267131>

Race, faith, and multilingualism have emerged in recent years as central strands in the global turn in studying early cultures. Travel writing, in particular, has offered unmatched opportunities to examine cross-cultural contact in the Global Middle Ages and early modernity. Female presence, however, still remains under-documented in such studies. Received historiography often overlooks women's mobility or their agency in the history of travel, while throughout that period and across the whole of Eurasia women largely engaged in nomadic migrations, bridal journeys, pilgrimages, and diplomatic or commercial transactions involving all strata of societies, from elite to enslaved. Then, as now, travelling as women challenged patriarchal boundaries in many cases, and brought about concerns for regulation, safety, or privacy, while also opening spaces of specific female agency and sociability that are yet to be explored in scholarship. Organised around a number of representative case studies, this project's ambition is to help fill that research gap through mapping out some varieties of female mobility from the late medieval to the early modern period.



LADAN NIAYESH is Professor of early modern English studies at Université Paris Cité. She has published extensively on the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, as well as on early modern travel accounts and travel drama. Her latest published volume is the coedited *Writing Distant Travels and Linguistic Otherness*, with Chloë Houston and Sophie Lemerrier-Goddard (Brepols, 2025). She is currently working on an edition of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* for the Arden 4 series.

Image: Maria Palaiologina ("Mary of the Mongols"). Byzantine mosaic in the Chora Church, Istanbul. Wikimedia CC BY 2.0