



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

News Release

Issued: 28 July 2014

PHOTOCALL

2.00PM, TUESDAY 29 JULY

MAIN LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

GEORGE SQUARE EH8 9LJ

**** PLEASE MEET AT SIXTH FLOOR RECEPTION ****

700 year-old Islamic masterpiece brings ancient world to life

Lavish illustrations from a remarkable book depicting key moments in medieval history will be displayed in an exhibition to celebrate the 700th anniversary of its production.

The World History of Rashid al-Din is one of the artistic marvels of the Islamic world. It is generally considered the first illustrated history of the world and one of the University of Edinburgh's most treasured artefacts.

The manuscripts depict historical events from the Middle East India, China and Europe. They will be exhibited in the University's Main Library from Saturday (2 August).

Chronicling events up to 1314, the book was produced by physician and court historian Rashid al-Din in the city of Tabriz, situated in modern-day Iran. Before his execution for treason in 1318, Rashid al-Din wrote that his aim was to create one of the world's most important historical and artistic documents.

Exhibition curator Dr Yuka Kadoi said: "The World History is one of the most significant illustrated medieval manuscripts to have survived from the Islamic world. We are thrilled to offer visitors a unique chance to view the original illustrations."

The exhibition was curated in collaboration with the Centre for Research Collections and the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, both at the University of Edinburgh.

Professor Hugh Goddard, Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre, said: "Rashid al-Din's masterpiece offers fascinating insight into historical and artistic movements of the time. As well as learning about global events in medieval history, visitors are sure to be impressed by the lavish illustrations and calligraphy."

'The World History of Rashid al-Din' will go on show in the University's Main Library from 2 August – 31 October and is part of the Festival Fringe.

For further information please contact: Kathryn Dunlop, Press and PR Office:
kathryn.dunlop@ed.ac.uk; 0131 651 5587; 0787 539 5069

Ranked among the top universities in the world