

Magic, Maths, Mamluks, and Mongols: History of Islamic Science at the Boundaries

Description:

This four-part seminar series will explore how deep theological controversy, dabblings in the occult, and a complex set of cultural and social hierarchies shaped the rich scientific culture of mediaeval and early modern Islam. This is a history of boundaries in at least two senses: disciplinary and geographical. On the former, the seminar will speak to the ongoing historical research programme that collapses and redraws our sometimes anachronistic distinctions between learned magic, art, and science proper. Geographically, the seminar highlights how Islamic science diffracted through Islam's porous boundaries, across and outside the Islamic world.

This series is open to anyone with an interest, and no previous knowledge of the Mongols, Mamluks, or the Islamic scientific tradition is assumed.

Time & Venue:

Thursdays at 17:00 at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, beginning Week 4 of Trinity Term

Organisers:

Yusuf Tayara (Wolfson College)

Speakers:

- **Week 4: Dr Dror Weil (University of Cambridge)**, *Between Philology and Philosophy: The accommodation of Islamicate sciences in Late Imperial China*
- **Week 5: Yusuf Tayara (Oxford)**, *The science of silence: alchemy, astronomy, and heresy in the work of al-Safadi.*
- **Week 6: Dr Fien de Block (Ghent University)** *'Ilm al-Nujūm in the fifteenth century Sultanate of Cairo Islamic astronomy/astrology and the importance of boundary work.*
- **Week 7: Dr Federica Gigante (History of Science Museum, Oxford)** *"To predict the success or failure of something, they use no other instrument than the astrolabe": astrology and artistry at the Safavid court.*