Astrology in Practice:
Europe, India, and the Islamic World

21 October 2006
Maison Française d'Oxford

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The purpose of this conference is to focus scholarly attention on how astrological theory is used and interpreted in actual practice. The conference will bring together specialists who work on astrology in different disciplines and different historical periods, in European, Islamicate, and Indian cultural contexts. The aim of the meeting is to have this group jointly consider questions that highlight the divide between the theory and the practice of astrology, such as whether the activity of astrologers is different from what the theoretical texts prescribe; how an astrologer is trained or qualified to practice his art; whether texts make prescriptions for, or give information about, how the astrologer should conduct a consultation or prescribe remedies or therapies; and finally, how, in answering these questions for earlier historical periods, we can overcome difficulties in the availability of evidence.

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PROGRAM

9:30	Opening
9:45	*The practice of astrology as seen through the Book of Curiosities.* Emilie Savage-Smith (Oriental Studies, Oxford)
10:15	*Pingree's contribution to the study of Indian astrological practices*. Christopher Minkowski (Oriental Studies, Oxford)
10:45	*Discussion.* *Chair :* Pietro Corsi (History of Science, Oxford)
11:15	*Pause*
11:30	*Quelques observations sur les pratiques présentes de l'astrologie au Yémen (hauts plateaux et plaine côtière de la mer Rouge).* Anne Regourd (CNRS et Musée du Louvre)
12 :00	*Wrath and rays. Planetary influence in contemporary Banaras (India).* Caterina Guenzi (Centre d'études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud, EHESS/CNRS)
12 :30	*Discussion.* *Chair:* Elisabeth Hsu (Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford)
13 :00	*LUNCH (provided at the MFO)*
14 :00	*Types of astrological inconsistency. Marsilio Ficino and other Christian writers.* John D. North (University of London and Museum of the History of Science, Oxford)
14:30	*Astrologie et astronomie au XVII siècle en France. La raison pratique comme frontière.* Hervé Drevillon (Université de Poitiers)
15 :00	*Usages princiers de l'image astrologique dans les manuscrits enluminés de l'Orient médiéval*. Anna Caiozzo (Université Paris VII)
15 :30	*Discussion* *Chair :* Yahya Michot (Islamic Studies, Oxford)
16 :00	*Pause*
16 :15	*Astrology and medicine in Early Modern England: The casebooks of Simon Forman revisited*. Lauren Kassell (History and Philosophy of Science, Cambridge)
16 :45	*From astrology to magic: The scientific and theological boundaries of the science of the stars in the Western Middle Ages*. Nicolas Weill-Parot (Université Paris VIII)
17 :15	*Discussion and concluding remarks*. *Chair:* Robin Briggs (History, Oxford)