

Enlightenment Decentred: Networks, Media, Practices

Magdalen College, Oxford
(Summer Common Room)
30 September – 2 October 2026

Convenors:

Avi Lifschitz (Oxford) & Anita Traninger (Freie Universität Berlin)

WEDNESDAY, 30 September

- 9.00 Welcome & Introduction
 Anita Traninger (Freie Universität Berlin) & Avi Lifschitz (Oxford)
- 9.15 Session 1
 Paris – Potsdam – Lausanne: the incomplete rehabilitation of Emperor Julian
 Avi Lifschitz (Oxford)
- Caracas – London – Istanbul: cosmopolitanism and patriotism in the life and readings of an
 Enlightened, revolutionary criollo*
 Mónica Bolufer Peruga (European University Institute, Florence)
- 11.15 Session 2
 Rome – Beijing – Seoul: a knowledge network and its media, 1644–1783
 Eun-Jeung Lee (Freie Universität Berlin)
- A methodology for intellectual independence: Enlightened strategies for modern knowledge in
 Guatemala, 1790s–1820s*
 Nicola Miller (University College London)
- 13.30 Session 3
 Europe – the Sinosphere: the Eurasian Enlightenment in two keys
 Chenxi Tang (University of California, Berkeley)
- An English Enlightenment from Lausanne and Göttingen to St Petersburg and Pennsylvania:
 Gibbon and Bentham in Venturi's shadow*
 Brian Young (Oxford)

THURSDAY, 1 October

9.15 Session 4

Oviedo – Polling – Parnassus: alternative routes to an Enlightened ars critica
Anita Traninger (Freie Universität Berlin)

Eger – Vienna – Rome: Catholicism and improvement across borders in the Enlightenment (1750s–90s)
László Kontler (Central European University)

11.15 Session 5

Berlin – Venice – Madrid – Lisbon – Recife: making the Portuguese Jewish Enlightenment in the eighteenth-century Dutch Republic
Alicia Montoya (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen)

Pierre Bayle: global history as Christian apologetics. Rotterdam – St. Andrews – Paris – Göttingen – Calcutta
Dmitri Levitin (Oxford)

14.15 Session 6

When the nomads met the naturalists: knowing and narrativizing the steppe from the Volga to the Amur
Shiru Lim (Leiden)

Florence – Châlons – Basel: Enlightenment projects of poor relief
Damiano Bardelli (Oxford)

16.15 *The Voltaire Foundation: an introduction*
Tom Wynn (Voltaire Foundation, Oxford)

FRIDAY, 2 October

9.15 Session 7

Berlin, Copenhagen and beyond: educational reform, public Enlightenment, and authority
Jonas Thorup Thomsen (Oxford) & Olivier Higgins (Oxford)

Enlightenment by comparison: Scotland and Naples revisited and continued
John Robertson (Cambridge)

John Pocock's decentred Enlightenment
Richard Whatmore (St. Andrews)

12.00 Concluding discussion

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