Inventions of Enlightenment

The emergence and use of the concepts of Lumières, Enlightenment and Aufklärung between 1800 and 1980

Three online workshops
18 October / 25 October / 15 November 2021

Organization
Elisabeth Décultot
(Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies, University of Halle-Wittenberg)

Nicholas Cronk
(Voltaire Foundation, University of Oxford)

Workshop Venue
Online. The workshops will be conducted as a Zoom meeting. The languages are English and French.

Registration and contact
Mike Rottmann
mike.rottmann@izea.uni-halle.de

Few notions have played such a central role in the various fields of European intellectual, political, religious and cultural history as those of “Lumières”, “Enlightenment” and “Aufklärung”. Among the vast range of meanings associated with these terms, two broad types of usage stand out. On the one hand, in a normative sense, these notions refer to a certain number of concepts, phenomena or values that are universal and un- or trans-historical. In this context, the notion of ‘Enlightenment’ is primarily understood as a principle that may be realised in all times and places. On the other hand, and inseparable from this first meaning, this notion also refers to the period when these concepts and values were supposedly elaborated and became political and social realities, that is to say a broad period loosely centred around the eighteenth century.

Both these senses of the concepts of ‘Lumières’, ‘Enlightenment’ and ‘Aufklärung’ already exist in the eighteenth century. But it is from the nineteenth century in particular that they really develop, under the double impact of the historical distancing of the eighteenth century, and of the modern relevance of the ideas or values emblematically attributed to that century.

The object of the proposed workshops is to organise and analyse, in their multiple developments, the meanings and functions acquired by these concepts in the period 1800-1980.
PROGRAM

18.10.2021, 1 PM – 19th century

1 PM – Nicholas Cronk/Elisabeth Décultot
Welcome and Introduction

1.30 PM – Christian Helmreich (Halle)
La notion de Lumières chez Victor Cousin et François Guizot

2.15 PM – Daniel Weidner (Halle)
Unveiling or Inventing the Enlightenment? Bruno Bauer, David Friedrich Strauss, and the Tradition of Eighteenth Century Critique

3 PM – Elisabeth Décultot (Halle)
Alexis de Tocqueville et Hermann Hettner, 1856 : deux historiens face au XVIIIe siècle

4.15 PM – Francesca Iannelli (Rome)
Dealing with the Aufklärung: Hegel and the Young Hegelians facing the Enlightenment

5 PM – Stephane Zékian (Lyon/Paris)
Le XVIIIe siècle à l’épreuve des concours. Le cas du prix d’éloquence à l’Académie française (1844–1904)

25.10.2021, 1 PM – 19th and 20th century

1 PM – Brian Young (Oxford)
After Carlyle: English notions of the Enlightenment in the nineteenth century

1.45 PM – Andrew Kahn (Oxford)
The notion of »prosveshchenie« in Russia, c. 1850–1940

2.30 PM – Avi Lifschitz (Oxford)
Whelml Dilthey’s »Aufklärung«

3.45 PM – Nicholas Cronk (Oxford)
Gustave Lanson’s »Lumières«

4.30 PM – Annette Meyer (Munich)
Enlightenment as an Antidote. Forms of appropriation in the Weimar Republic

5.15 PM – Mike Rottmann (Halle)
Historical Scholarship and Political Action. Interpreted Enlightenment after 1930: From Hannah Arendt to Gershom Scholem

15.11.2021, 1 PM – 20th century

1 PM – Daniel Fulda (Halle)
»The time of enlightenment is here again« (A. Ruge). Activist Appropriations of Aufklärung in the pre-March and the post-WWII era

1.45 PM – Alexander Schmidt (Nashville)
Reflecting the Sonderweg: Ernst Troeltsch, Leo Strauss, and Enlightenment Natural Law in the Age of Democracy

2.30 PM – Gregory S. Brown (Las Vegas/Oxford)
The »Heavenly City« in Post-War America: The »Liberal Imagination« meets the »Brute Facts of Politics«. The Context to Peter Gay’s Enlightenment

3.45 PM – Ruggero Sciuto (Oxford)
The Venturi Antidote: Eleonora de Fonseca Pimentel and the Radical Enlightenment

4.30 PM – Philippe Büttgen (Paris)
Lumières et Aufklärung chez Michel Foucault

5.15 PM – James Schmidt (Boston)
Nihilism, Enlightenment, and the New Failure of Nerve: 1941–1947

The workshops will be conducted as a Zoom meeting. The languages are English and French.

Registration and contact: Mike Rottmann (mike.rottmann@izea.uni-halle.de)