

The Useful Enlightenment
Theories, Practices and Representations of Usefulness in the Long Eighteenth Century

Programme

Thursday 26 June

14h00 Welcoming words by Elisabeth Décultot (Director of the IZEA, Halle)
Introduction, Jean-Alexandre Perras (IZEA, Halle)

Session 1 – Learned societies – Chair: Jean-Alexandre Perras

14h30 – Marie Thébaud-Sorger (Centre Alexandre-Koyré, CNRS, Paris)
The invisible network of French sociabilities promoting the ‘arts’ in the 1780

15h00 – Giovanni Lista (IZEA, Halle)
The *Accademia Etrusca* in Cortona: What public utility?

15h30 – Damiano Bardelli (EHESS, Paris)
Learned Sociability as a ‘Useful Recreation’. Ideals and Practices of the Lausanne Literary Society

16h – Break

Session 2 –Chinese perspective – Chair: Despina Magkanari (CETOBaC -EHESS)

16h30 – Bichen Yan (Tsinghua University, Beijing / MPWIG, Berlin)
The Failure of Usefulness: A Case of the Dissemination of Western Mining Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century China

17h00 – Monica Klasing Chen (Heidelberg University)
Printed Garment Patterns in Late Imperial China: Textual Genres and Social Function

17h30 – Shih-Pei Chen (MPWIG, Berlin)
From Elite to Common Knowledge: Tracing the Source Material of Chinese Daily-Use Encyclopedias with Digital Methods

Friday 27 June

8h30 Welcoming

Session 3 – Ethics – Chair: Nicholas Cronk (University of Oxford)

9h00 – Kerstin Maria Pahl (MPIGD, Berlin)
The Moral Ends of “Useful Facts” Statistical Accounts and Emotional Discourse in Late-Eighteenth-Century Britain

9h30 – Malcolm Quinn (U. Arts London)
For Your Pleasure: Private Utility and Ethical Self-Knowledge

10h00 – Sándor Hites (Research Center for the Humanities, Budapest)
An Apology for Unproductivity: Evaluating Intellectual Labor in Classical Political Economy

10h30 Break

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Session 4 – Useful knowledge – Chair: Mikkel Jensen (IZEA, Halle)

- 11h00 – Martin Stuber (University of Bern)
Usefulness as criterion for evaluating knowledge. The reviewer Albrecht von Haller in the transition to the scientific community
- 11h30 – Patrycja Bąkowska (University of Ponzan)
(Truly) useful knowledge: On the Conversations and the Journeys of the Father and his Two Sons by Józef Wybicki
- 12h00 – Michèle Crogiez Labarthe (University of Bern)
Botany and politics: when Malesherbes combined useful knowledge with the public good

12h30 – Lunch

Session 5 – Politics of usefulness – Chair: Giovanni Lista (IZEA, Halle)

- 14h00 – Andrew Kahn (University of Oxford)
Virtue and Utility in the Russia of Catherine the Great
- 14h30 – Benjamin Marschke (California State Polytechnic University Humboldt / University of Trier)
The Useful and the Useless: Theories, Practices, and Representations of Usefulness in King Frederick William I's Prussia, 1713-1740
- 15h – Tibor Bodnár-Király (Ludovica University of Public Service, Budapest)
Enlightenment Usefulness and the Practicalisation of Political Knowledge in the Mid- Eighteenth-Century Sciences of the State

15h30 Break

Session 6 – Economic Enlightenment – Chair: Martin Stuber (University of Bern)

- 16h00 – Regina Dauser (University of Augsburg)
'Useful' technologies for agrarian improvement at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences
- 16h30 – Lothar Schilling (University of Augsburg)
Optimizing Land Use: Abolishing Fallows and Draining Wetlands as 'Useful' Practices of the Economic Enlightenment
- 17h00 – Jeffrey Wolf (Free University, Brussels)
Utility and Improvement in the Applied Chemistry of Dr. William Cullen (1710-1790)

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Saturday 28 June

9h00 Welcoming

Session 7 – **Aesthetics** – Chair: Gergely Fórizs (Institute for Literary Studies, Budapest)

9h30 – Stefan Uhlig (University of California, Davis)
Aesthetic Utility in Smith, Hogarth, and Kant

10h00 – Alessandro Nannini (IZEA, Halle)
Useful Uselessness. The Interesting as In-Between in the Aesthetics of the 18th Century

10h30 – Piroska Balogh (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest)
Utilitas aesthetica? A discourse on Johann Ludwig Schiedius' experiment to reconcile aesthetic value and social utility

11h00 –Break

Session 8 – **Dissemination and publication** – Chair: Benjamin Marschke (California State Polytechnic University Humboldt / University of Trier)

11h30 – Martin Urmann (Frei University, Berlin)
Useful Sciences and Idle Paradoxes. An Epistemological Debate in the Rhetorical Prize Contests of the French Academies

12h00 – Alfonso Calderón Argelich (University of Lleida)
The Contested Meanings of Utility in the Spanish responses to the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* (1782-1788)

12h30 – Thibault Debail (EHESS, Paris)
What's the use? Encyclopaedic knowledge and consultation reading in the eighteenth century (Western Europe, 1720-1780)

13h00 – General discussion and conclusion of the conference