

[The World in the Village: 18th-century Encounters with the 'Strange', 'Foreign' and 'Exotic' Beyond the Centres of Globalization](#)

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Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 9, 2021 to September 10, 2021

Location:

Germany

Subject Fields:

Early Modern History and Period Studies, European History / Studies, German History / Studies, Local History, World History / Studies

The 2021 Annual Conference of the *German Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (Deutsche Gesellschaft für die Erforschung des 18. Jahrhunderts, DGEJ) in Wolfenbüttel addresses the question, if and to what extent a growing presence of ideas, things and people considered 'foreign', 'strange' or 'exotic' define the eighteenth century as a period. Instead of focussing on the centres of early globalization, such as port cities, courts or trading companies, which are already quite well-researched, the annual meeting turns to the presence of the 'strange', 'foreign' and 'exotic' in seemingly peripheral areas between established "centres of calculation" (Latour) and large urban hubs such as Amsterdam, London or Rome. 'The village', thus, features less as a specific geographical unit. It is treated as a cipher for the secondary and tertiary spaces in which globalization was received. The conference's approach will broaden horizons beyond traditional loci of global exchange. With this thematic focus, the conference intends to follow the pathways of distribution of the 'foreign' (1), the local forms of its appropriation (2), as well as the often unintended consequences of its presence (3) with a focus on those regions of central Europe, which are otherwise often considered backwaters of globalization. What, specifically, denotes or merits the term 'backwater' or 'hinterland' and how its contacts with 'centers' took shape, should and can be specified in the individual contributions.

The organizers hope that infrastructures of distribution, the specific contexts in which people, objects, and ideas reached a local context, each with their specific rhythms, delays, and disruptions are going to become visible. Moreover, we wish to ask if the presence of 'the world' did not, in turn, lead to a more intimate consideration of one's own surroundings: Some years ago, Alix Cooper introduced the hypothesis of an "invention of the indigenous" denoting a growing turn to the local. If and to what extent this 'turn' resulted in a deeper integration of secondary spaces of reception into the unfolding globalization has rarely been analysed, however. Overall the meeting aims to extend research into the global

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<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/6647158/world-village-18th-century-encounters-%E2%80%98strange%E2%80%99%E2%80%98foreign%E2%80%99-and->

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integration of Europe beyond its 'hot' centres and to raise the question about the reach of global integration.

All disciplines dealing with the long 18th century are invited to contribute. Even though we put special emphasis on the Holy Roman Empire and its adjacent regions, we also welcome proposals concerning other regions. The conference will take place Sep 9-10, 2021 at the *Herzog August Bibliothek* in Wolfenbüttel. Pending decision on external funding, the organizers cover expenses for travel and accommodations.

From a set of questions, the following may serve as examples:

- By what avenues did 'exotica' reach the periphery? What forms of secondary, tertiary, pp. appropriation existed?
- What role did 'exotica' play in popular Enlightenment and reform movements?
- By what means and media did knowledge about the 'foreign' circulate?
- How did people come to terms with the presence of the unknown that were not confronted with it on a daily basis? What traces did 'exotica' leave that were only passing through?

Contact Info:

Please address all additional questions about the conference and submit abstracts of potential presentations (c. 500 words) and a short CV by 18 Dec, 2020 to Prof. Markus Friedrich, Hamburg University

Contact Email:

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