Virtual Event on the Political Thought of Thomas Spence: Beyond Poverty and Empire

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The Political Thought of Thomas Spence: Beyond Poverty and Empire

Matilde Cazzola

Thursday 16th December 19:00 CET

Register here

About the discussion

The discussion focusses on Matilde Cazzola's intellectual analysis of the political ideas of English radical thinker Thomas Spence (1750–1814), who was renowned for his "Plan", a proposal for the abolition of private landownership and the replacement of state institutions with a decentralized parochial organization. While he has long been considered an eccentric and anachronistic figure, the book sets out to demonstrate that Spence was a deeply original, thoroughly modern thinker, who translated his themes into a popular language addressing the multitude and publicized his Plan through chapbooks, tokens, and songs. Matilde's work is therefore a history of Spence's political thought "from below", designed to decode the subtle complexity of his Plan. It also shows that the Plan featured an excoriating critique of colonialism and slavery as well as a project of global emancipation. Her book on Thomas Spence is available for purchase from Routledge on November 19,
2021

About the author

Dr Matilde Cazzola is a Senior Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory in Frankfurt, Germany. She earned her PhD in History from the University of Bologna in 2019. Her work focuses on the political and legal thought of a number of administrators of the British Empire in North America, the Caribbean and India in the 1750s-1900s and on British imperial philanthropy.

Speakers include:

- Prof. Alastair Bonnett (Newcastle University)
- Prof. Harry Dickinson (Edinburgh University)
- Prof. Marcus Rediker (University of Pittsburgh)

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