INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

THURSDAY MAY 28 – SATURDAY 30, 2026
CAMPUS, CENTRAL BUILDING,
C40.704

LEUPHANA
UNIVERSITÄT LÜNEBURG

CONCEPT

The conference approaches the European Enlightenment as a product of intercultural encounters shaped by scholarly and literary engagements with the "Orient" and the "Americas", as well as by colonial expansion, violence, and, at times, dialogue. It foregrounds two different yet entangled trajectories: on the one hand, the realization and radicalization of Enlightenment claims to universalism in "peripheral" contexts — most strikingly in the Haitian Revolution. On the other hand, it highlights how intellectual exchanges with Indigenous American and Islamic traditions fed back into European thought, transforming its conceptions of reason, equality, and critique, and thereby decentering the Enlightenment's purportedly Western and Christian origins.

PROGRAM

Thursday | May 28
5 pm–6 pm | Maud Meyzaud and Oliver Precht, Hosts | Reception and opening remarks
6 pm–7:30 pm LIAS and Keynote Lecture Nick Nesbitt, Princeton: 'I am Toussaint Louverture': Who is the Subject of Radical Enlightenment?

Friday | May 29
9 am–12 noon | Conference panel "Decentering the Enlightenment", with: Elena Arigita, Granada, Michael Gaudio, Minneapolis, Kirsten Mahlke, Konstanz
1:45 pm–6 pm | Workshop "Oriental Illumination: Hayy ibn Yaqzan in the European Enlightenment"
Inputs by: Maud Meyzaud, Lüneburg | Opening Remarks, Stephan Milich, Cologne, Stefan Schick, Leipzig, Hanna Zoé Trauer, Munich

Saturday | May 30
9 am–1 pm | Workshop "Who enlightens whom? Indigenous Thought and European Projections in Lahontan's Dialogues avec un sauvage"
Inputs by: Élisabeth Décultot, Halle | Opening Lecture, Tomaz Amorim, Bochum, Johannes Kleinbeck, Berlin, Oliver Precht, Lüneburg

ORGANIZATION

Professorship for German and Comparative Literature,
IGL, Leuphana School of Culture and Society
Maud Meyzaud and Oliver Precht

In Cooperation with
Centre for Cultural Inquiry, University of Konstanz
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Leuphana Institute for Advanced Studies (LIAS) in Culture and Society

Registration and further information:
literatur.transkulturell@leuphana.de

The keynote lecture forms part of the LIAS Lecture series.

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lias: CULTURE AND SOCIETY

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Kulturwissenschaftliche
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