

Mapping the Georgian world: global power & maps in the reign of George III

KING'S
College
LONDON



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Monday 9th October at 6.30 pm in the Edmond J Safra Lecture Theatre, Strand Campus, King's College London.

Free admission to all, but booking is required via Eventbrite: <https://mappingtheworld.eventbrite.co.uk>, where you can also learn more about the event.



Main speakers:

Peter Barber OBE (former head of Map Collections at the British Library)

Dr Max Edelson (University of Virginia, USA, and creator of the digital visualization platform MapScholar)

The session will be chaired by Professor Arthur Burns, Academic Director of the Georgian Papers Programme at King's, with Dr Max Edling as commentator.

Georgian Papers
Programme

world
service

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The Hanoverian British monarchy presided over a vast array of dominions spread across the globe, each presenting its own challenges to those who needed either to understand or to govern and exploit the different regions. Maps came to play a crucial role in confronting those challenges, transferring knowledge and opportunities across considerable distances, not least to those who never traversed them themselves. One such person was King George III – a monarch who, though in many respects defined in his reign by his relations with both North America and Europe, was unusual amongst his contemporary rulers in never leaving his own kingdom (and even England) at any point in his reign. Yet George had a keen interest in his dominions, and this found expression not least in his interest in maps, of which he became an avid collector and a patron to mapmakers.

This panel brings together Peter Barber, the leading authority on George III's map collection and former head of the Map Collection at the British Library, and Dr Max Edelson, a leading authority on the mapping of colonial America and a pioneer of its digital interpretation, to discuss the place of maps in the exercise of rule and authority in the eighteenth century.

These richly illustrated talks will provide a fascinating opportunity to reflect on the significance of these often beautiful and intricate objects in shrinking distance and creating understanding in the age of Enlightenment.

Speakers:

Peter Barber: After studying at Sussex University and the London School of Economics in 1975 Peter Barber became a curator in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library where, between 2001 and 2015, he was Head of Map Collections. He has written extensively on a wide range of aspects of the history of pre-modern maps, particularly on medieval *mappae mundi*, the map collections of the British Library, English maps in the sixteenth century, and maps at European courts between 1500 and 1800, especially at the courts of King Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth I, and King George III. He has curated or acted as consultant to numerous exhibitions both in the UK and abroad and has acted as consultant to and appeared in several radio and television documentaries. Since 2015 he has been a visiting professor in the Department of History, King's College London, and is a member of the academic steering committee of the Georgian Papers Programme. In 2012 he was appointed an OBE for services to cartography and topography.

Max Edelson is Associate Professor of History at the University of Virginia, where he teaches the history of cartography, early America, and the Atlantic world. His prize-winning first book, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* (Harvard University Press, 2006), examined the relationship between planters and environment in the Carolina Lowcountry as the key to understanding this repressive, prosperous society and its distinctive economic culture. His new book, *The New Map of Empire: How Britain Imagined America before Independence* (Harvard University Press, 2017), describes how Great Britain attempted to take command of North America and the West Indies in the generation before the American Revolution. He is co-director of the UVA-ICJS Early American Seminar at Monticello and creator of MapScholar, a digital visualization platform purpose-built for map history research and display

Commentator: Max Edling. A native of Sweden, he did his undergraduate studies at Lund University before taking an MPhil at the University of Dublin, and PhDs in history and political science from Cambridge and Stockholm Universities. He was awarded the Docent degree by Uppsala University in 2012 before joining King's College London in 2012. His research focuses on the American founding and the creation of the American state. His most recent project was an investigation of the fiscal system and public finances in the United States from the American Revolution to the aftermath of the Civil War, with a focus on the funding of war and territorial expansion. Dr Edling is currently working both on the origins of the US Constitution and the composite or imperial structure of the early American polity.