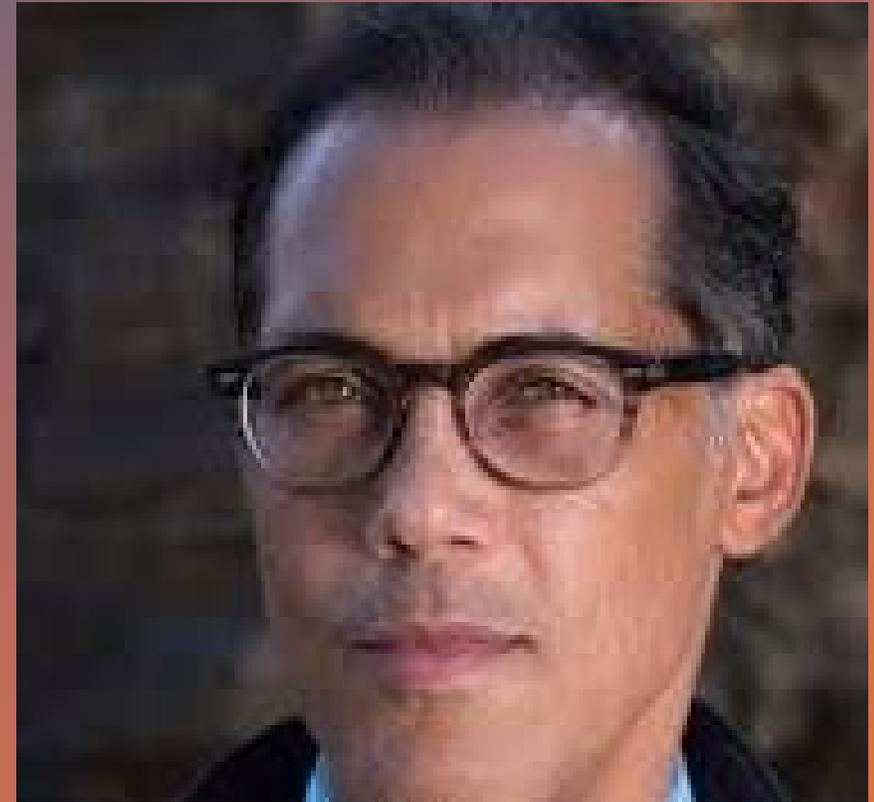


**17 September 2025,
Linklater Rooms from 5.15 pm**

Professor Matthew Smith, UCL

**'Twice Removed: Slavery, Big Data, and
the Cultures of Caribbean Ancestral
Histories'**

The transformations of the digital age have tremendously advanced historical research across the world. For the historian of the Caribbean longstanding blind spots in the narratives of British slavery and colonialism are now more clearly in view. At the same time historians must be aware of how the digital turn can also obscure the knotted histories of empire. This lecture will consider the benefits and challenges of digital frontiers of historical scholarship by looking closely at nineteenth century Caribbean history as represented in the archives and in the digital humanities. It draws on long experience working in various archival traditions in the Caribbean and the work being done at the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery. Special attention will be given to Black family histories, their challenges to researchers and their great potential for linking metropolitan British experiences with the Caribbean during and after slavery.



Matthew J. Smith is Professor of History & Director of the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery. He previously was Professor of Caribbean History at the UWI-Mona in Jamaica. He is a specialist on nineteenth and twentieth century Caribbean History. Among his publications are *The Jamaica Reader* (with Diana Paton), and *Liberty, Fraternity, Exile: Haiti and Jamaica After Emancipation*.

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