





PROGRAMME

# Jesuit Knowledge, Cultural Translations, and the Rules of Japanese Christianity (16th–17th c.)

6 SEP 2024 | 10 AM–5:00 PM | TURMCARRÉE & ONLINE | RÔMULO EHALT

- 10:00–10:15 **Welcome and introduction**  
*Rômulo Ehalt (mpilht)*
- 10:15–11:45 **Opening conference: *The Jesuit Compendia in Latin and Japanese: Text witnesses and textual history***  
*Sven Osterkamp (Ruhr-Universität Bochum)*
- 11:45–1:30  *Lunch*
- 1:30–2:30 ***Transferring Evil: Dialogical Understandings between Local and Catholic Normative Frameworks***  
*Victor Laubenstein (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)*
- 2:30–3:30 ***Relative Acculturation of Bateren in the Japan Mission***  
*Ikeda Mitsutake (Universidade de Coimbra)*
- 3:30–3:45  *Coffee break*
- 3:45–4:45 ***Translating the untranslated: Actor-driven strategies of knowledge transfer in the Japanese Compendia manuscripts***  
*Sophie Takahashi (Ruhr-Universität Bochum)*
- 4:45–5:00 **Closing remarks**  
*Rômulo Ehalt (mpilht)*





## *Jesuit Knowledge, Cultural Translations, and the Rules of Japanese Christianity (16th–17th c.)*

For more than two decades, Jesuit seminaries and novitiates in early modern Japan were instrumental in shaping Japanese individuals able to preach, hear confessions, and bring about conversions among the local populace. Central to our understanding of these efforts has been the *Compendia*, a collection of treatises on philosophy, theology, and astronomy. Originally penned in Latin in 1593, translated into Japanese by 1595, and subsequently enriched with additional content, these texts have been key to exploring the translation and transmission of European Catholic knowledge to Japanese learners. The recent discovery of a complete Japanese translation of the *Compendia* in Wolfenbüttel in 2019 has opened new

avenues for research, particularly in understanding the Jesuit interpretation and adaptation of Aristotelian philosophy, theology, and astronomy within the Japanese setting.

The workshop will feature three doctoral students from institutions in Japan, Portugal, and Germany who are at the forefront of research into the *Compendia*, offering new insights into cultural translation, the Jesuit mission in Asia, and the formation of normative knowledge within Japanese Christian communities. The event aims to foster discussion on the perspectives developed at the Department of Historical Regimes of Normativity within the context of Japanese and Jesuit history.

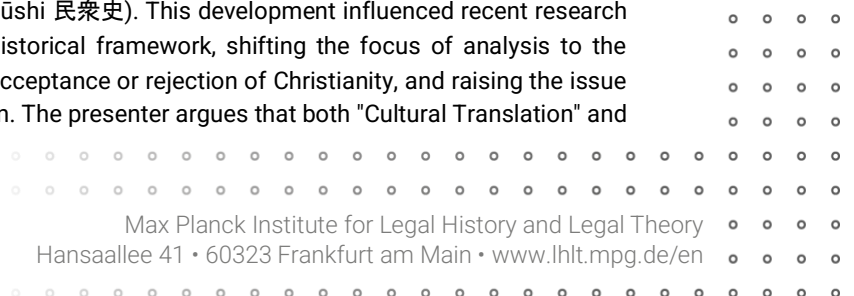
### Abstracts

#### *Sven Osterkamp – The Jesuit Compendia in Latin and Japanese: Text witnesses and textual history (Opening Conference)*

In 2019, a hitherto unnoticed manuscript of the Japanese version of the Jesuit *Compendia* of philosophy, theology and cosmology was identified at Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel. Unlike the single previously known manuscript witness it also comprises the third part, on cosmology. By comparing the two manuscripts of the Japanese version and the single known manuscript of the underlying Latin version it is now possible to elucidate the textual history of the *Compendia* and the revisions made to them over time. The Wolfenbüttel manuscript further offers us new insights into issues of authorship and the European models behind the *Compendia*.

#### *Victor Laubenstein – Transferring Evil: Dialogical Understandings between Local and Catholic Normative Frameworks*

Studies on Christianity in Japan have increasingly been incorporated into the field of Japanese Popular History (Minshūshi 民衆史). This development influenced recent research within the Catholic missionary historical framework, shifting the focus of analysis to the agency of the Japanese in their acceptance or rejection of Christianity, and raising the issue of epistemic change in conversion. The presenter argues that both "Cultural Translation" and





"Contractual Colonialism" can serve as key concepts for analysing the interaction between religious norms in 16th- and 17th-century Japan, thereby advancing the discussion on conversion. In this talk, Victor Laubenstein (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) will examine some of the tensions between local and Catholic understandings of "evil" through the appearance of Buddhist-related concepts in the Japanese version of the *Compendia*, highlighting dialogical elements in the moral reasoning within the texts.

### *Ikeda Mitsutake – Relative Acculturation of Bateren in the Japan Mission*

During the Christian Century in Japan (1549-1650), Jesuit missionaries introduced a range of previously unknown concepts to the Japanese, including Catholic theology, Aristotelian anthropology and philosophy, and Ptolemaic cosmology. Central vehicle for this cultural and intellectual exchange was their relative acculturation through *accommodatio*, aimed at the greater glory of God (*ad majorem Dei gloriam*). This presentation examines the influence of the series of Jesuits' *Compendia* (1593-?) manuscripts on the formation of a new Japanese philosophical tradition. Specifically, it explores the traces of the textual and conceptual *accommodatio* found in Kobayashi Kentei's (1601-1683) *Nigi Ryakusetsu* (1667), a Japanese interpretation on the Western *De Sphaera* tradition.

### *Sophie Takahashi – Translating the untranslated: Actor-driven strategies of knowledge transfer in the Japanese Compendia manuscripts*

Recently, scholars in legal history take a new interest in translation studies, sparked by its potential to examine legal transfer processes from a global non-Eurocentric perspective. This attention is prominent among research on actor-driven praxeological dimensions of the "Knowledge of Normativity" at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory. In an East Asian Catholic missionary context, the Japanese *Compendia* manuscripts are key sources of such pragmatic Catholic knowledge transfers, adhered to ecclesiastical authorities. Addressing the individual actors of (re-)translation, this talk by Sophie Takahashi (Ruhr University Bochum) will examine how religious and scientific key vocabulary remained untranslated in the *Compendia* manuscripts but was transmitted even so by manifold rivalling actor strategies."

