



**Max Planck Partner Group**

*“The Production of Knowledge of  
Normativity and the Early Modern  
Book Trade”*

**3d Meeting**

***Legislation, Legal Authorship,  
and Visualizing Normativity***

Toledo

Universidad Castilla-La Mancha

15-16 January 2026

### **3d Meeting:**

#### ***Knowledge of Normativity and The Early Modern Book. Legislation, Legal Authorship, and Visualizing Normativity***

**Venue:** Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (Toledo),  
Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Sociales, Edificio San Pedro Mártir,  
Calle San Pedro Mártir 7 (Sala de Prensa).

This two-day workshop hosts the third meeting of the Max Planck Partner Group “The Production of Knowledge of Normativity and the Early Modern Book Trade”, led by Manuela Bragagnolo. The aim of the group members’ joint research is to investigate the extent to which, following the emergence of the early modern book trade, the production, circulation, and consumption of legal books had an impact on the production of knowledge of normativity. In this workshop, group members will explore the knowledge of normativity of different types, ranging from demonology to military discipline. Moreover, they will focus, among other things, on the following topics: early modern legislation regulating the production and circulation of normative books; the visualization of knowledge of normativity on printed books; and authorship of legal books.

We warmly thank the Universidad de Castilla La Mancha’s (UCLM) research group “DeReHis (De Re Hispanica)”, and the UCLM research seminar “Charta & Libri” for hosting the workshop.

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## PROGRAMME

15.01.2026

Toledo, Edificio San Pedro Mártir, Sala de Prensa

**14:00-14:15** - *Reception*

**14:15-14:30** - Manuela Bragagnolo (University of Trento - MPILHLT), Marius Buning (University of Oslo), Alberto Campillo (University of Oslo), *Introduction*

**14:30-15:00** - David Martín López (University of Castilla-La Mancha)

*Eternal sunshine of the primary sources: Researching and Teaching with manuscripts and printed books nowadays*

**15:00-16:00** - Marius Buning (University of Oslo), *Translating Normativity: Privileges and Print Culture in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*

Commentators: Andrea Ottone (University of Oslo); Matthew Cleary (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

**16:00-17:00** - Gastón García (Universidad Nacional de La Plata), *Peter Biensfeld's Enchiridion theologiae pastoralis (1591)*

Commentator: Michaela Valente (Sapienza, Università di Roma) [online]; Natalia Maillard Álvarez (Universidad Pablo de Olavides, Sevilla)

**17:00-17:30** - *coffee Break*

**17:30-18:30** - Laura Beck Varela (Madrid, UAM), *Authorship and Plagiarism in Early Modern Jurisprudence (Le Douaren)*

Commentator: Manuela Bragagnolo (Università degli Studi di Trento - MPILHLT)

**18:30-19:30** - Luca Giangolini (Sapienza Università di Roma), *Visualising discipline: typographic devices and images in military normative books published in Flanders and Italy (1588-1630) compared with notes by readers.*

Commentator: Marius Buning (University of Oslo)

16.01.2026

Toledo, Edificio San Pedro Mártir, Sala de Prensa

**9:30-10:30** - Alberto Campillo (University of Oslo), *The "Nuevo Rezado" in Spain: evolution of the legislation on production and circulation of liturgical books*

Commentator: Federico Palomo (Universidad Complutense Madrid)

**10:30-11:30** - Piotr Alexandrowicz (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań), *From the Margins to the Centre: A Visual Journey of Summaries in Early Modern Canon Law Books*  
Commentator: Laura Beck Varela (Madrid, UAM)

**11:30-12:00** - coffee Break

**12:00-13:00** - Valérie Hayaert (University of Warwick), *The Legal Document in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period: Visuality, Materiality and Performance* [online]  
Commentator: Renaud Milazzo (Venerable English College, Rome)

**13:00-14:00** - general discussion

## ABSTRACTS

**Marius Buning (University of Oslo)**

***Translating Normativity: Privileges and Print Culture in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic***

This chapter examines the interplay between early modern normativity and the use of the printing press through the lens of printing privileges granted by authorities in the Dutch Republic. It highlights the impact of these privileges on shaping the landscape of print culture, providing a framework not only for protecting intellectual property and economic investments but also for controlling the dissemination of sensitive or influential texts. The focus in the chapter is on translations, mainly of educational and religious literature in the seventeenth century. Combining data analysis with a series of short case studies in the form of vignettes, the chapter explores which translations were privileged, why these books were chosen, their intended audience, and the status of translators. This helps to understand the context in which translations of normative works became available on the turbulent seventeenth-century Dutch book market. After analyzing how printing privileges for translations influenced the intellectual landscape in the Dutch Republic, the chapter also attempts to place these findings in a wider international context and to see whether similar policies on privileged translations were implemented in other European jurisdictions. In doing so, the chapter emphasizes not only the role of privileges in shaping early modern print culture and normative values, but also how these norms were translated and disseminated across Europe.

**Gastón García (Universidad Nacional de La Plata)**

***Peter Binsfeld's Enchiridion theologiae pastoralis: the history of a book and the process of Catholic confessionalisation***

In 1591, Peter Binsfeld (1546-1598) published his *Enchiridion theologiae pastoralis* for the first time. This work by the suffragan bishop of Trier is the fruit of both his theological reflection and his pastoral work in the

diocese. Educated in theology and philosophy at the Collegium Germanicum in Rome, and maintaining close ties with the Society of Jesus, Binsfeld was a fervent promoter of the renewal of the Catholic world and, in particular, of clerical reform under the precepts of the Council of Trent. Consequently, the heart of the treatise focuses on ecclesiastical discipline.

In this chapter, I propose to analyse the *Enchiridion* from the perspective of the history of the book and its materiality. Although it has not yet received sufficient attention from historians, this treatise was widely distributed, especially in Western Europe between the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with numerous Latin editions and French translations. After tracing an editorial history of the book, I will outline a cartography that identifies the printers and the centres of edition. In a preliminary assessment, it can be observed that the treatise is printed in cities such as Trier, Douai, Lyon, Paris, Rouen, Porrentruy, Saint-Omer, Köln, and Antwerpen, that is, predominantly in the western regions of the Holy Roman Empire, the southern Netherlands, Switzerland and France. Despite the dissimilarities between these regions, a common problem is evident: intense disputes and open confessional conflicts. I wonder, then, if there is any link between the dissemination of this work on pastoral theology and the Catholic politics of confessionalization and social and ecclesiastical discipline. In particular, I am interested in identifying the social actors who were involved in the publication of the *Enchiridion* -and sometimes even its translation- in these regions and the different authorities who may have been involved in these processes, with the aim of assessing the potential uses of the book in order to shape the behaviour not only the clergy but also of the laity. By advancing this analysis, I aim to consider the pragmatic dimension of this book and its contribution to the production of normative knowledge, as well as its circulation thanks to the technologies provided by the printing press, which made it adaptable to contexts different from those in which it was written.

**Laura Beck Varela (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid)**

***Authorship and Plagiarism in Early Modern Jurisprudence: François Le Douaren's De plagiariis et scriptorum alienorum compilatoribus (1549)***

Authorship and plagiarism, as fundamental concepts in the production of normative knowledge, were as shifting categories in the age of the manual printing press and the spread of the book trade as they are in the digital age of the information society.

Between the supposed emergence of the 'author' and the possible reinforcement of the 'auctor', this chapter explores one of the few jurisprudential sources that directly problematise the late medieval and modern notion of plagiarism: the epistle *De plagiariis et scriptorum alienorum compilatoribus, aliisque rebus cognitu dignis*, by the jurist François Le Douaren (1509-1559). Dated 1549 and addressed to his disciple François Baudoin, the work was composed following a dispute with other humanist jurists of the time, such as Coras and Cujas, over the misappropriation of some of his quaestiones. In this particular intellectual context, the primary objective was the restoration of classical knowledge, distilled of medieval interpolations and

falsifications. *Aemulatio*, *imitatio* and *compositio* were pivotal concepts, with plagiarism being regarded as a failure in the process of elaboration, a failure of memory, or of the process of 'digestion' of others' material, by not sufficiently adding something of its own (in terms of arrangement, style or usefulness) to the previous base. The concept of plagiarism was perceived as being comprehensive and adaptable, and not constrained by modern copyright as an individual right. It was not perceived as the antithesis of authorship; rather, it was regarded as one of its manifestations, indistinguishable from other forms of literary appropriation that were characteristic of a culture founded on tradition and authoritative texts.

One of the most significant novelties of Douaren's text consisted in suggesting a jurisdictional dimension to the phenomenon of plagiarism, placing it within the scope of the Lex Fabia (D. 48,15; Inst. 4,18) and of a possible *coercitio*, in addition to moral and intellectual reproach. In a renowned dissertation, more than a century later (1673), Jakob Thomasius resumed some of Douaren's theses, although sustaining the economic, non-judicial nature of plagiarism. For Thomasius, plagiarism should be confined to the extra-judicial sphere, and its control and condemnation should be the exclusive responsibility of the *respublica litteraria*. The present chapter seeks to shed light on the nuances of these debates, which formed part of a distinct anthropology of early modern writing, and to illuminate the normative uses of *auctor*, *auctoritas* and plagiarism in various legal and theological sources of the time.

**Luca Giangolini (La Sapienza Università di Roma)**

***Visualising discipline: typographic devices and images in military normative books published in Flanders and Italy (1588-1630) compared with notes by readers.***

The aim of this paper is to highlight how typographic devices and images function as instruments to convey military normativity. I will analyse case studies of normative military handbooks published in Flanders and northern Italy (Antwerp, Brussels, Milan) between 1588 and 1630, when many authors and readers were veterans of the Flanders theatre of war in service of the Spanish Crown, forming a cohesive epistemic community of professionals. At the time, the military bibliographies identified those normative handbooks as works on 'military art and discipline', which, between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries, focused on defining and organising actions, spaces, and time, using discipline as an instrument of legitimacy, control, and to increase the efficacy of soldiers. The pages of the handbooks reflect these necessities, not only in the texts but also through typographic devices and images. Normative military handbooks often featured illustrations. Sometimes, the authors themselves explicitly conceived them as pedagogical tools. I will compare those typographic devices and images with examples of notes, such as the ones compiled for Francesco Colonna, *maestre de campo* and steward of Flanders' fortresses between 1594 and 1604. This comparative approach could show how these devices interact with the texts to convey meaning and explore how they relate to the usage of books by professionals to retrieve information and produce normative statements.

**Alberto José Campillo Pardo (University of Oslo)**

***The “Nuevo Rezado” in Spain: evolution of the legislation on production and circulation of liturgical books***

This article proposes a rather bold hypothesis, derived from extensive research of primary sources, regarding the privilege granted by Philip II to the Monastery of San Lorenzo del Escorial. This privilege designated the Monastery as the sole institution authorized to grant licenses for the printing and sale of the Nuevo Rezado Books throughout the Spanish Monarchy's territories.

The hypothesis I aim to defend is that the Spanish monarch's provisions in this regard represent a dismantling of the traditional "privilege" system. Instead, these provisions implemented a model of partial cession of rights. In essence, the actual privileges—that is, the rights to the content of the liturgical books—were never fully transferred. What was ceded were merely the rights to print or market these works.

To elaborate on this, this presentation will be divided into two main parts. The first will compile the regulations governing the production and distribution of liturgical books in Spain between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. This compilation will illuminate the system's evolution and provide examples of how it transitioned from a system of broad "privileges" to one of partial rights cession. Finally, I will discuss the rules governing the distribution of these books and the conflicts that arose from them.

**Piotr Alexandrowicz (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)**

***From the Margins to the Centre: A Visual Journey of Summaries in Early Printed Canon Law Books***

One overlooked yet fascinating subject related to early printed legal books is the printed marginalia in the most important legal texts - the collections of civil and canon law (*corpora iuris*). Printers employed learned editors who provided new additions to the core source texts, leading to the development of a series of marginal paratexts, such as cases, glosses, commentaries, and more.

Small summaries (*summaria*), excerpted from late medieval handwritten legal commentaries, were transferred by editors to printed editions of legal sources. Initially, these summaries were placed in the margins, but they were soon moved to the central part of the page, which had originally been reserved for the authoritative text. This innovation proved highly successful. Today, it is almost forgotten that these summaries were not part of the original legal text but rather later additions. They gained prominence due to their central position, close to the legal text itself. Nevertheless, early printed editions also featured alternative placements for summaries or multiple summaries in both the centre and margins.

The evolution of page layouts in *corpora iuris* is just one example of how visual tools shaped the use of books. The case of the *summaria* illustrates how page layouts changed, how editors influenced the content of books, and how paratexts shaped the experiences of readers and users engaging with these works.

**Valérie Hayaert (University of Warwick)**

***The Legal Document in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period: Visuality, Materiality and Performance.  
Bartolus's Figurative Demonstration in River Law (Tyberiadis, 1335): A Practical Case of Concrete Geometry***

The treatise *De fluminibus* (or Tyberiadis), written by Bartolo da Sassoferrato (1314?-1357), during his stay in the hills above Perugia in 1335, contains woodcut depictions that the great jurist and teacher designed in his own hand. The juridical issue of the ownership of lands formed by the accumulation of alluvial deposits from a river is explained both by texts and images. For the lawyer, this means tackling the problem of practical geometry (Euclidian) since the legal case necessarily calls for a graphic visualization.

This work was a great success, as evidenced by the manuscript tradition, the numerous incunabula and translations of the Latin treatise into the vernacular. To get to the heart of the iconic analysis, I propose a case study, a comparison between one manuscript of this treatise in the Tournon collection (Lyons) with an earlier printed edition of Bartolus' treatise.

The problem to be solved requires practical geometry skills, a knowledge of the textual tradition of River Law and an aptitude for drawing. How do you divide the alluvium deposited by the river, a newly-formed island or a bank that has suddenly been uncovered? The treatise is in three parts, De alluvione, de insula, de alveo. Based on Bartolus' textual interpretation of the passages of Roman law that govern its provisions (Digest 41.1.7.1-6), we will examine the way in which the lawyer visually depicts a legal issue in a series of some forty geometric diagrams. We will then compare Bartolus' matrix with another contemporary manuscript, its variants and the way in which a legal question can be captured by a diagrammatic setting. How does practical geometry help us to understand this case? By drawing according to the pictorial conventions of the time, Bartolus proposes a singular image, which we need to assess in terms of its graphic materiality. The didactic aim of the whole is doubled by other dimensions: reference is made to the practical knowledge of surveying (agrimensores), and Bartolus' pictorial invention may be construed as a Denkbild (a thought-provoking image).

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