Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The Jacques Loeb Centre
For the History and Philosophy
of the Life Sciences

The Jesuits: Transmitters and Transformers of Science

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My aim in this lecture is to tell a different historical story about the Jesuits than the one usually told. I will argue that the Jesuits' religious mission was not anti-science. On the contrary, it was precisely the religious mission that pushed them to explore, teach, criticize and argue with the ideas of those "savants" identified with the "moderns". Thus, what we now call "science" and the Jesuits named "physico-mathematics" – the exploration of physical phenomena with mathematical methods - had a central and very important place in Jesuit education. In the context of the Jesuit educational system, however, new ideas were presented in a form that seems alien to our modern view of science. It was not alien, I argue, to the historical practices of Kepler, Galileo and Descartes. I shall hence tell the story of how Keplerian or Galilean science was transformed and transmitted to generations of young Catholics and prepared them for modernity.

January 7th (**Monday**)
Building **39** (Biology), Room **106** (de Picciotto conference room), **16:15** to 17:45.

Coffee & refreshments will be available at 16:00

About the Seminars: The Jacques Loeb Centre seminars provide an interdisciplinary forum, in which historians and philosophers of science, as well as scientists, present and discuss new research related to science with a special focus on the life sciences. Case studies and surveys examine the impact of political, socio-economic and personal factors on the conduct of science, the ethics of research, and the causes of progress and setbacks. **Faculty and students from all disciplines are invited!**

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