



EINLADUNG ZUM KOLLOQUIUM

**Prof. Dr. Rivka Feldhay
(Tel Aviv)**

Baroque Ghosts: The Jesuits between the Old and the New Science

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 role 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.

Rivka Feldhay, teaches the history of science and ideas at Tel Aviv University. Her areas of research and teaching are: knowledge, religion and faith in the early modern era; intellectual currents in the Renaissance; Copernicus and Galileo in context; science education in Catholic Europe and the culture of the Baroque and the New Science. Professor Feldhay has been fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center (1987-8); the Institute for Advanced Studies in Berlin (1998-9); the International Research Center for Cultural Studies in Vienna (1994); the Dibner Institute at MIT (1995); the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin (1997; 2005-6); and the Collegium Helveticum of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH) (2001). Between the years 1997-2003 she headed the Cohn Institute for history and philosophy of Science and Ideas in Tel Aviv University. Since 2009 she is sharing the directorship of Minerva Humanities Center at Tel Aviv university and the leader of the research group on migrating knowledge.

**Mittwoch, 12.06.2013
18 c.t. Uhr
Raum N.10.20**

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