

Professeur Federico Marcon de l'Université de Princeton, historien du Japon et spécialiste d'histoire des sciences sera professeur invité à l'EHESS en avril-mai 2017. Il est l'auteur de *The Knowledge of Nature and the Nature of Knowledge in Early Modern Japan* (University of Chicago Press, 2015). Son projet de recherche en cours porte sur l'histoire de la monnaie dans le Japon des Tokugawa, en réunissant les sources sur les débats intellectuels et les pratiques financières des acteurs du terrain tel que les changeurs de monnaie.

Il interviendra aux dates suivantes :

Jeudi 20 avril 2017, 11h-13h

Money Talks: Monetary Disputes in Early Eighteenth-Century Japan

At the turn of the eighteenth century, as the lavish splendor of the Genroku era waned into a decade of economic stagnation and social unrest, two scholars debated on the nature of money and its proper administration. The dispute revealed not only the extent of the monetary integration of Japanese society after a century of Tokugawa rule, but also the sophistication of samurai's understanding of financial dynamics. The story of the clash of the two views of what money is, the bullionism of Arai Hakuseki and the contractualism of Ogiwara Shigehide and Ogyū Sorai, bespeaks a turning point in the economic politics of early modern Japan—a turning point of transnational relevance, as in contemporaneous England economic thinkers were debating analogous issues.

Dans le cadre du séminaire collectif du Centre de recherches sur le Japon « Histoire du Japon moderne et contemporain : permanences et ruptures », animé par Guillaume Carré, Annick Horiuchi et Aleksandra Kobiljski

Lieu : salle 7, EHESS, 105 boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris

Vendredi 21 avril 2017, 10h45-12h45

Between Truth and Accuracy: Nature Knowledge in Late Tokugawa Japan

Between the early seventeenth and the mid-nineteenth century, a field of natural history in Japan separated itself from the discipline of medicine, produced nature knowledge that questioned the traditional religious and philosophical understandings of the world, developed into a system (called honzōgaku) that rivaled Western science in complexity, and then seemingly disappeared. Its practitioners established protocols of observation and description able to convey authoritative knowledge about plants and animals. Faithful and accurate pictorial representations played a fundamental role in revealing species-specific morphological properties but also in training scholars to “see systematically,” to such an extent that by the late Tokugawa period accuracy in

descriptions became as important as textual and lexicographical research to produce truthful (shin) knowledge.

Dans le cadre du séminaire « Histoire et sociologie des croyances et des savoirs », animé par Matthias Hayek

Lieu : salle 481, Université Paris Diderot, Grands Moulins, bâtiment C, 5 rue Thomas Mann, 75013 Paris

Mercredi 10 mai 2017, 10h-12h

The Knowledge of Nature and the Nature of Knowledge in Early Modern Japan

Dans le cadre des Débats du Centre Alexandre Koyré, discutants : Antonella Romano et Annick Horiuchi

La formule des Débats du CAK: À l'occasion de la sortie récente d'un ouvrage d'histoire des sciences et des techniques (au sens large), Centre Alexandre Koyré invite son auteur(e) à débattre avec deux discutants privilégiés, ainsi qu'avec l'ensemble de l'auditoire.

Lieu : salle de séminaire, 5ème étage, Centre Alexandre Koyré, 27 rue Damesme, 75013 Paris

Jeudi 18 mai 2017, 11h-13h

The Happy, Risky Life of Moneychangers in Early Modern Japan

In the seventeenth century, Tokugawa Japan developed a complex and integrated productive system with a high volume of commodity exchange. Economic transactions were thoroughly monetized, and money mediated the daily lives of the inhabitants of the great urban centers of Edo, Osaka, Nagoya, and Kyoto, as well as the consumption of cultural products and leisure activities of their inhabitants. The byzantine complexity of the Tokugawa trimetallic monetary system sustained this economic growth, but as the three currencies—gold, silver, and copper, to which we should add the koku (a bushel of ca. 150 kg) of rice, the legal unit of account—had different routes and modes of circulation, different uses, and different accounting methods, licensed money changers (ryōgaeshō) came to play a fundamental role insofar as they controlled the actual rate of exchange currencies.

By controlling the actual exchange of different coinages, moneychangers played a key role in the financial life of the archipelago and de facto had the power to intervene in the fungibility and liquidity of the various currencies. They benefited immensely from the interests they imposed in actual exchange between currency, but they also benefited from the arbitrage that derived from their mediation between different markets: the silver market, the gold market, and those commodities that were traded for silver or for gold. In absence of a centralized banking system, moneychangers also operated as fiduciary institutions that established the creditworthiness of

borrowers and creditors and thus performed the accounting operations that created money in the form of credit instruments that, as assets, only rarely were realized in gold or silver coins. Most of these financial instruments of credit were often local and quite fragile, as they were not backed by the authority of the state but were simply collateralized in the form of interests on future agricultural yields (nobemai)—which, in the context of a preindustrial agricultural system, was inherently unstable.

This paper presents the happy but risky life of Tokugawa moneychangers as financial operators, arguing that the structural fragility of their investments favored the development of forms of corporatist social organizations as well as forms of morality that emphasized diligence, frugality, and social respectability that could contribute to curb the risks of a financial system fragile by design.

Dans le cadre du séminaire « Aux origines de la mondialisation : histoire économique comparée Asie Europe, 1500-2000 », animé par François Gipouloux

Lieu : salle A 751, 54 boulevard Raspail, 75006 Paris (à confirmer)