Along with the ideals of Conversion and Salvation of the souls of newcomers, a strange and controversial covenant was established between the clerics and the associations of merchants of different nationalities headed by the Portuguese. This relationship was regarded as contentious at the time and remains controversial until the present day in what concerns the active conjunction between the Society of Jesus and slave trade. Along with silk trade, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean slaves were a key-product for the Portuguese in Japan. In the decades following the Portuguese settlement in Macau (ca. 1555-57), European and Asian merchants converged in this city, and through their overlapped networks slaves transited from there to various Asian, European, and American regions. A system of "permits" issued by members of the Society of Jesus in Japan and China made possible this traffic, enabling and justifying the flow of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean slaves to cities such as Lisbon, Malacca, Goa, Manila, Acapulco, Mexico City, and Lima.

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Please note that this lecture will be held at the Kyoto centre of the École Française d’Extrême-Orient.