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drupa Prize 2014 goes to 31-year-old Tobias Winnerling:

The focus of his work is on the missionary activities of Jesuits in India and Japan in the period from 1542 to 1574

Historian and doctoral candidate Tobias Winnerling has been awarded the drupa Prize 2014. drupa recognised the Mönchengladbach native for his dissertation entitled “Vernunft und Imperium. Die Societas Jesu in Indien und Japan, 1542-1574” (“Reason and Empire: Societas Jesu in India und Japan, 1542-1574.”). The prize was presented by Claus Bolza Schüenemann (Chairman of the Executive Board of Koenig & Bauer AG and President of the drupa Exhibitors’ Advisory Board 2016), Werner M. Dornscheidt (President and CEO of Messe Düsseldorf) and Prof. Dr. Dr. H. Michael Piper (President of Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf) during an awards ceremony at the Industry-Club Düsseldorf on 19 May.

In his award-winning paper, Winnerling discusses the Jesuits, the Catholic religious order founded by a circle of friends around Spaniard Ignatius of Loyola on 15 August 1534 and becoming known historically as the Society of Jesus (Societas Jesu). Tobias Winnerling sheds light on a specific topic hitherto neglected: The missionary activities by Jesuits in India and Japan in the period from 1542 to 1574. Missionary work played a particularly important role in Latin America, Africa and Asia in the context of 16th-century colonial politics, the period of the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal: It was an irrevocable, natural feature of the time. But what’s more, colonisation and conversion complemented and reinforced each other. Franciscans, Augustinians, Dominicans – and the Jesuits, of course – spread the word of God around the world and, in doing so, paved the way for Spanish and Portuguese conquerors. It’s probably undisputed from today’s perspective that conversion strategies did indeed contain imperialistic and racist approaches. However – and this is exactly the point of departure of Tobias



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Winnerling's dissertation – the actions of the past can't be judged by today's ethical standards. A different set of evaluation criteria is needed. It's precisely this phenomenon – mission work – that Tobias Winnerling examines in his 325-page dissertation, using the concrete example of the Jesuits and framing the order's activities in the context of the 16th century.

Tobias Winnerling was born in Mönchengladbach in 1982. After finishing his secondary education with the German *Abitur*, he first studied history and philosophy at the University of Hagen before switching to Heinrich Heine University (HHU) in 2002, where he received a master's degree in history, philosophy and contemporary Japanese studies in August 2006. He's worked as a research associate at the Philosophical Faculty of HHU Düsseldorf since April 2007.

About the drupa Prize

Every year, Messe Düsseldorf presents the drupa Prize to the best doctoral thesis at the Philosophical Faculty of HHU. Since 1978, it has honoured outstanding humanities works produced at the Düsseldorf university and promoted their publication and dissemination with prize money of EUR 6,000. The drupa Prize is awarded each year by an expert panel composed of the President and Vice-President of Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, the President of the drupa Exhibitors' Advisory Board and the President & CEO of Messe Düsseldorf.



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