The Early Modern Section of the Research Group Polycentricity and Plurality of Premodern Christianities (POLY)

Frankfurt Lecture on Pathways through Early Modern Christianities

Tuesday 18 May 2021
6-8 pm CET, Zoom

Jean-Pascal Gay (Louvain):
“Publicity in French Catholicism”

Recent scholarship on intra-Catholic controversies in the early modern period has turned from intellectual history towards social and cultural approaches. Yet while the Habermasian notion of Öffentlichkeit fails to capture the specificity of early modern religious controversies, finding a new analytical framework for understanding the nature of publicity remains difficult. In this talk, building on the work of Michel de Certeau and Christian Jouhaud, I will argue that we can better explain the shifting sands of Catholic controversy by treating publication as action. This approach promises to reveal more clearly the processes of politicization (even ideologization) that shaped early modern Catholic confessional cultures—while also connecting cultural and religious histories. Illuminating the ways in which particular regimes of publicity formed and were formed, in turn, by a range of ecclesial communities, treating publication as action offers scholars new ways of understanding Catholic plurality over time and space.

Registration for the online-event at:
pluralchristianities@em.uni-frankfurt.de