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“Drawing Boundaries, Defending Spaces: Microperspectives from the European Culture Wars”



PUBLIC LECTURE BY

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ABSTRACT Nothing but paper wars; this is how historians have generally viewed the conflicts that pitted Church and State against each other in large parts of post-1848 Europe (e.g. Clark/Kaiser 2009 [2003]). Although these “culture wars” were certainly not a pendant to the violence-ridden early-modern Wars of Religion, my book project argues that, as far as Western-Europe is concerned, protest and violence informed conflicts pertaining to public religion to a greater extent than historians have admitted. Drawing on local case-studies from Belgium, France and Germany, I aim to show that protest and violence enabled people, who did not possess political wielding power, to nonetheless participate in debates on the role of religion in modern political and civil society. In fact, popular protest functioned as a means to communicate dissenting opinions, negotiate differences and hence structure a conflict that was perennial to the post-revolutionary European world: the clash over the boundaries that distinguished the religious from secular spaces.

BIO Originally from the Netherlands, Eveline G. Bouwers is head of the Emmy Noether research group “Battles over Belief: Religion and Violence in Catholic Europe, 1848-1914”, which is affiliated with the Leibniz Institute of European History in Mainz (DE). She studied history, art history and political science at the universities of Utrecht (NL), Leuven (BE) and Amsterdam (NL). Eveline holds a doctorate from the European University Institute, Florence (I), and was a postdoctoral fellow at Bielefeld University (DE). She is the author of *Public Pantheons in Revolutionary Europe: Comparing Cultures of Remembrance, c. 1790-1840* (Basingstoke 2012). A source book on the history of blasphemy in modern Europe is due for publication in 2017.