

## Description for the general public

In the contemporary world there are norms rooted in various sources, which often interfere or even contradict each other. There are legal ones, social ones and religious ones, to name only the most important examples. It is a phenomenon noticed by legal science but there are a couple of theories on how to understand its nature: some try to define it as a state of 'legal pluralism' whereas some prefer to describe it as 'normative hybridity'.

The variety of norms is not something unique in legal history. It characterised many periods of legal history but it was particularly intensified in the early modern era (ca. 1500-1800). The legal scholars of that time developed various means to handle this problem. Among them there was a specific legal genre dedicated to the comparison of various laws, for example civil law and canon law, common law and local law, Roman law and state law. The focus in these works was on finding differences between laws and providing solutions leading to their reconciliation.

This project is dedicated to one type of comparison representing this legal genre, namely to the differences between civil law and canon law (*differentiae iuris civilis et canonici*). The main objective is to define the nature and method used by authors of *differentiae*, which has not gained a lot of attention in legal history so far. This genre may serve as a mirror to look at the early modern jurisprudence from a new angle. It is justified to use these sources to elaborate on the problem of normative hybridity in early modern period, on the relation between civil and canon law in times of confessional tension, on the profile of comparative approach at the dawn of modernity.

The research on *differentiae* in the early modern era will serve to gain knowledge which is also useful for contemporary legal science. Today the questions of legal pluralism, the significance of studies on law and religion or the constant search for functional comparative method are equally important as they were centuries before. While discussing these issues it may be useful to take into consideration also the experiences from legal past. It is not the aim of the project to transfer direct solutions from *then* to *now*, but rather to use conclusions on methodology of *differentiae* to enrich the current legal discussion in similar areas important for jurisprudence.