

Special Issue

On the Origins of Western Psychedelia: Exploring Allegro's *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross*

Message from the Guest Editors

The articles that constitute this Special Issue are dedicated to analyzing the enigmatic career of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* scholar John M. Allegro (1923–1988) and the history of the reception of his book, *The Sacred Mushroom and the Cross* (1970). Bringing together scholars from across disciplines, this Special Issue explores three major vectors in the Allegro effect on psychedelic research and culture today: (1) the nature of Allegro's evidence and methods for his argument that the original Christian community was a fertility cult based on the sacramental use of the psychedelic mushroom *Amanita muscaria*; (2) the controversy and professional backlash generated by his thesis; and (3) the ongoing influence of his provocative thesis among academics, believers, and authors of popular fiction. For more detailed information, please visit the Special Issue's homepage. We look forward to your valuable contribution.

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (15 June 2025)



Religions

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Fresh developments in the disciplines that consistently make significant contributions to our understanding of religious personality, authority, devotion, and community – disciplines ranging from psychology, sociology, and anthropology to history, art history, philosophy, literary criticism, and political science – fuel general, as well as scholarly, interest in the world's religions.

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