

Special Issue

Ecclesiastical Tribunals and “Superstition” in Early Modern Europe (Fifteenth–Nineteenth Centuries)

Message from the Guest Editors

The editors of this volume seek to invite contributions about the ways in which Christian churches (both Protestant and Catholic) in Europe dealt with what theologians defined as “superstition”.

The first objective of the volume will be to focus on the differences in the approach to “superstition” by the authorities in charge of controlling the religious behaviors and beliefs of the Europeans. Editors will welcome contributions discussing the prosecution of “superstitions” for either doctrinal or legal reasons by all types of courts.

The second focus specifically concerns what the judicial sources document, often beyond their scope: trial records in fact reveal stories and descriptions of devotions, rituals, charms, spells, and exorcisms which are precious testimonies for scholars of popular traditions.

The third focus of the volume: investigating the changes that turned the “fight against superstitions” of the early modern period into the “recovery of popular traditions” which began throughout Europe in the late eighteenth century.

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (15 September 2024)



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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.

Religions is inviting innovative and comparative contributions. Please consider Religions as an exceptional, exciting enterprise ready to reward your trust, attention, and participation.

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