

Call for Articles to the Special Issue for the journal *European Review of History*:

Historical approaches to religious reinventions and social change in late modern societies

Guest editors: Dominika Gruziel and Natalia Núñez-Bargueño

Currently seeking contributions of max 10.000 words from historians focusing on selected examples of religious transformation and social change in Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism of the Greek rite, and Islam.

From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, religion played a continuous role in shaping societies worldwide. This period was marked by dramatic historical changes, including imperial expansion, decolonization, the devastation of two world wars, and the ideological tensions of the Cold War. Religious institutions, communities, and individuals actively engaged with all these phenomena, proving themselves to be co-creators of profound social, cultural, and political shifts.

The articles in this special issue for the *European Review of History*, aim to enhance our historical understanding of the dynamic reciprocal relationship between religion and society through eight case studies of selected religious transformations and their subsequent impact on specific social domains. The collection will offer insights on religious change in Catholicism of the Greek and Latin rites, Eastern Orthodoxy, Judaism, Islam, and Evangelical Protestantism in several polities at various historical moments from the 1850s to the 1980s. While contributors may employ diverse methodologies in their case studies, history remains the primary analytical approach, with Europe (understood in a broad sense in relation to the world and its former colonial possessions) as the central geographical focus. In addition, we invite contributors to address the following three overarching questions: 1) reformers' perceptions of a religious change; 2) interactions with other religious actors during the religious reform; and 3) the gender dynamics involved during and after the religious transformations.

Available research suggests that while religion undergoes transformations, these changes occur differently compared to shifts in other areas such as politics, science, or art. This difference is tentatively attributed to how religions construct their identities around fundamental beliefs that are assumed to be unchanging. The article in this collection intentionally places religious reformers' understandings of change at the centre of the analysis. How is the concept of broadly conceived change introduced onto the reformist agenda? How do religious actors advocate, theorize, and negotiate this change? This collection will reveal a wide range of engagements with a notion of change that ranges from explicitly discussing the ongoing transformations, to strategies for implementing significant alterations, while claiming continuity in doctrine and practice, to downplaying the impact of these transformations.

Research on religious reinventions shows that very often religious agents drive societal reform by forming strategic alliances with non-religious actors and secular ideologies. This special issue deepens our understanding of how religious groups mobilise for self-reinvention and social or political change, using a historical lens to examine interactions between religious traditions and their transformative impact on communities. We invite contributors to explore a diversity of cross-religious interactions, including competitive dynamics, parallel operations where faiths coexist without direct conflict, and ad-hoc and long-term collaborations that foster shared practices and values in different historical contexts (end of 19th century, imperial dynamics, migration,

displacement, world wars and cold war, international organisations, humanitarianism, developmentalism, welfare). Additionally, they might highlight the transfer of religious practices and ideas across different confessional and national boundaries, demonstrating how these exchanges help shape expressions of faith and belief systems in an increasingly interconnected modern and contemporary world. Through these analyses, the special issue will underscore the vital role of inter-religious interactions for religious transformations, in shaping societal norms and processes, and for overall social cohesion or social conflict.

Finally, we encourage authors to highlight how the strategic use of sexual and gender differences played a crucial role in facilitating religious transformations, and how such changes affected gender roles within specific religious traditions and in broader societal contexts. A significant aim of the volume is to discuss and reevaluate the role of men and women of faith in adapting to and negotiating new responsibilities, leadership roles, relations with authority, governability, heterodoxy, and liturgical practices as religious beliefs and non-religious contexts evolved.

Instructions for Submission of Article Proposals:

Researchers interested in contributing are invited to **submit a proposal** (abstract 500 words and short bio) **by September 30, 2025** to Dominika Gruzziel: dominika.gruzziel@gmail.com and Natalia Núñez Bargueño: natalia.nunezbargueno@kuleuven.be

Important deadlines:

- Submission of an advanced draft (4,000–7,000 words): November 3, 2025
- Final version (8,000 – 10,000 words) due: January 5, 2026
- Publication in *European Review of History*: planned for early 2027.