



Call for contributions

Journal special issue

Accounting Practices and Religious Orders in Missionary Territories

While economic questions have long been almost entirely absent from research on Catholic missions, a growing body of scholarship has begun to point to the importance of an economic approach for an adequate understanding of the organization and the local practices of early modern missions. Following the ground-breaking work of Dauril Alden (1996), more recent studies have mostly focused on the economy of the Jesuits' missions (Crocitti: 2002; Tutino: 2021; Vu Thanh: 2016; Županov: 2012), with fewer studies also looking at other orders (Ye Junyang, Manel Ollé: 2021; Vu Thanh, Županov: 2021; Windler: 2018). This growing body of scholarship makes a fundamental contribution to our knowledge of important aspects of the history of missionary economies: e.g. their internal organization; the missionaries' participation in local economies; or the role played by the global circulation of objects and commodities in ensuring the economic viability of the mission. However, a key element of the economic organization of the missions remains largely absent from these studies: the accounting practices, that may be traced in surviving account books and missionary correspondences. Indeed, to date few scholars have worked on the account books kept by missionaries (Windler, 2018; Borges, 1994; Golvers, 1999; Vermote, 2018).

Departing from these considerations and inspired by works on religious orders' accounting practices in Europe (Lenoble, 2013; Bertrand, 2004; Cevins, 2018; Bériou, Chiffolleau, 2009, Röhrkasten, 2004; Quattrone, 2004), we are editing a journal special issue on accounting in early modern missions. Among the topic that the journal special issue will address are the following:

- Normative frameworks: what are the rules that regulated missionaries' production of account books? What might explain the absence of account books beyond the hazards of conservation?
- Recording practices: what kind of resources and expenses were recorded? How were they recorded?
- Account books as a source: how (and to what extent) can the study of account books contribute to our understanding of missionaries' economic activities and social integration, of the funding system they relied upon and of the organization of missions more generally?

- Functions: what role does accounting play in the economic organization of the mission and, more broadly, what were the functions of account books?

We welcome **abstracts** (of c. 300 words) for **original research articles** that intersects with these themes and a short professional bio (of c. 100 words) by the deadline of the **15th December 2022**. The deadline for the submission of a first draft of the articles will be the 30th November 2023. The authors will be invited to discuss their contributions at a conference in Rome to be held at the beginning of 2024.

The co-editors are Prof. Felicita Tramontana, Department of Political Science, Università degli Studi Roma Tre (felicita.tramontana@uniroma3.it), Prof. Hélène Vu Thanh, Department of History, Université Bretagne Sud/Institut universitaire de France (helene.vu-thanh@univ-ubs.fr) and Prof. Christian Windler, Historisches Institut, Universität Bern (christian.windler@unibe.ch), who will be pleased to provide further details and information.

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