RelBib
Bibliography of the Study of Religion

https://relbib.de

Dear reader,

This is a self-archived version of the following article:

Author:	Freiberger, Oliver
Title:	“Modes of Comparison: Towards Creating a Methodological Framework for Comparative Studies“
Published in:	Interreligious Comparisons in Religious Studies and Theology: Comparison revisited London: Bloomsbury
Year:	2018
Pages:	53 - 71
ISBN:	1-350-05872-6
URL:	https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/interreligious-comparisons-in-religious-studies-and-theology-9781350058729/

The article is used with permission of *Bloomsbury*.

Thank you for supporting Green Open Access.

Your RelBib team

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN

UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK

3

Modes of Comparison: Towards Creating a Methodological Framework for Comparative Studies

Oliver Freiberger

Comparison, understood in the most basic sense, is a natural feature of cognition and of scholarship.[1] Scholars of all disciplines, like all human beings on a daily basis, constantly compare the new with the already known. Yet, as a method in the humanities and social sciences, including the study of religion, comparison has provoked, in the last few decades of the twentieth century, scepticism, discomfort, deep criticism or flat-out rejection. The target of that criticism was hardly its basic cognitive and academic function, but, rather, particular forms of cultural comparison – those that decontextualize, essentialize and universalize in ways that were regarded as problematic on a scale from being unhelpful and misleading to being colonizing and imperializing. Eventually, comparativists responded in defence of the comparative method, on a scale from accepting much of the critique and thus restricting the comparative effort to rehabilitating even the most heavily criticized comparative approaches.[2]

The debate has been useful in the sense that it forces comparativists to justify what they are doing, both intellectually and methodically. In the course of these discussions, a number of important points emerged that certainly need to be addressed. Yet, it seems surprising that the attack on the comparative method had such drastic paralysing effects – to the degree that comparison was widely shunned in the study of religion for decades. The main reason for this crisis, in my view, is that the discipline lacks an established methodology of comparison that is thoroughly structured and well-grounded. The existence of such a methodology – or of several competing ones, as is common for other methods – would have enabled comparativists to plausibly reject some critical objections and integrate others by modifying the method accordingly, rather than becoming paralysed. That is not to say that scholars of religion have not discussed comparison methodologically, but if they do, it is mostly either in a short section of the introduction to a comparative study or in more theoretical articles that often are too distant from the actual comparative work to provide structured methodical guidelines. Established guidelines of that sort do not exist – let alone

a comprehensive methodology. As Jonathan Z. Smith noted, 'In no literature on comparison that I am familiar with has there been any presentation of rules for the production of comparisons.'[3]

A good starting point for thinking about a methodological framework for comparison is to revisit the ways in which previous comparative studies were conducted. While several aspects need to be considered, it seems useful to begin with classifying general styles, or modes, before turning to more specific points. Luckily, we do not have to start from scratch. Some scholars have suggested typologies of modes of comparison, which I wish to present and discuss in this chapter. As we will see, such typologies fulfil a double function: they help to analyse and evaluate existing comparative studies in a more profound way, and they also provide a methodological backdrop for designing future comparative studies. The chapter will discuss three suggested typologies of modes of comparison – by Smith, Carter and Freidenreich and then identify two modes that appear most promising for the study of religion.

Smith's model: Ethnographic, encyclopaedic, morphological and evolutionary modes

To distinguish comparative approaches, I will speak of 'modes of comparison', a term coined by Jonathan Z. Smith. The generic character of the term 'mode' indicates that these are hardly sophisticated and carefully designed techniques, but, rather, styles of comparison that capture the spirit in which scholars compare and that reflect, to a certain degree, the goals of the individual study. In his article 'Adde Parvum Parvo Magnus Acervus Erit', originally published in 1971, Smith suggests four modes of comparison.[4] In his assessment, most comparative studies of religion that had been produced by that time were conducted in one of these four modes. He labels them 'ethnographic', 'encyclopaedic', 'morphological' and 'evolutionary'.

According to Smith, the first writings expressing the *ethnographic mode of comparison* are those of the Greek historian Herodotus in the fifth century BCE. In describing about fifty other cultures of his time, Herodotus arranged, according to categories, what Smith calls 'traveler's impressions': 'Something other has been encountered, and it is surprising either in its similarity or dissimilarity to what is familiar "back home".' Smith calls this impressionistic approach 'ethnographic' because it shares, in his view, a lot with twentieth-century ethnographic studies, including its problems. He describes this style of comparison as 'idiosyncratic, depending upon intuition, a chance association, or the knowledge one happens to have at the moment of another culture'.[5] This comparing-on-the-spot lacks a systematic framework and a substantial factual basis, which makes it difficult to build any form of generalization upon it.

The *encyclopaedic* approach has its roots in antiquity too, namely, in the description of curious, exotic and anomalous phenomena, or, as Smith says, 'contextless lists of strange things done by strange peoples in strange lands'. The key phrase for defining this approach is 'contextless lists'. Such works provide an enormous and sometimes

overwhelming amount of data in the form of lists, but the data are removed from their contexts and simply listed side by side under certain broad categories. A prime example in modern times is James George Frazer's massive work, *The Golden Bough*, which started as a two-volume work in 1890 and expanded into twelve volumes over the next decades. But also later works, especially out of the phenomenological school of religious studies, display encyclopaedic features.[6] Some books tend to present 'cross-cultural religious phenomena' by providing contextless lists of data, as if the sheer amount of these examples could validate the universality of the phenomenon. The problem with this approach is that it is, strictly speaking, not comparative. Or, to be more precise, the comparative act itself is presupposed and obscured, and only the result of the comparison is revealed, namely, having listed a certain item under a certain category. A closer look at particular examples, by recovering their actual contexts, often reveals that the comparison itself had been disappointingly superficial and impressionistic. Smith provides a telling example taken from Frazer's description of 'taboo':

> Burial grounds were taboo; and in New Zealand a canoe which had carried a corpse was never afterwards used, but was drawn on shore and painted red. Red was the taboo colour in New Zealand; in Hawaii, Tahiti, Tonga and Samoa it was white. In the Marquesas a man who had slain an enemy was taboo for ten days: he might have no intercourse with his wife and might not meddle with fire; he had to get some one else to cook for him. A woman engaged in the preparation of cocoa-nut oil was taboo for five days or more, during which she might have no intercourse with men.[7]

This quote illustrates well, I think, why the encyclopaedic approach can cause fascination in general Western readers. Not only may the listed facts appear exotic, but they also seem all to be connected in a fascinating way. In his brief analysis of this quote, Smith shows, however, how these interesting connections are simply the result of Frazer's impressionistic gathering. Frazer jumps from one example to the next without studying any one of them in detail or discussing how he arrived at the conclusion that they actually belong to the same category of 'taboo'. Smith contends that such contextless lists are 'held together by mere surface associations rather than careful, specific, and meaningful comparisons'.[8]

Smith traces the *morphological* mode of comparison back to the German polymath Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) who coined the term 'morphology' to describe his classificatory system of plants. This system featured, on the one hand, the (ideal or arche)type of a plant, and, on the other, the concrete empirical plant. 'The type is by definition ahistorical, yet it stands in a complex relationship to the historical.'[9] Comparison can thus be done in two ways: by comparing the individual, empirical item with the archetype; or by comparing empirical items with other items of the same class. In the study of religion, Smith finds the most striking exemplar of the morphological mode of comparison in Mircea Eliade's work *Patterns in Comparative Religion*.[10] Here, too, we find archetypes, limited in number, and their many empirical manifestations or, as Eliade called them, hierophanies, 'manifestations of the sacred'. A similar approach can be found in other works of the phenomenological school. Friedrich Heiler's massive book bears the telling title *Manifestations and Essence of*

Religion (*Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion*),[11] and it was likely no coincidence that the English translation of Gerardus van der Leeuw's *Phänomenologie der Religion* (1933) was published under a title that is almost identical with Heiler's, namely, *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*.[12] We typically find in these works descriptions of the 'essence' of a religious phenomenon followed by a list of its 'manifestations'. To give only one example, Eliade introduces the chapter on 'The Sky and Sky Gods' in his *Patterns* with this remark: 'We shall look at a series of divine figures of the sky, but first it is necessary to grasp the religious significance of *the sky as such*' (my emphasis). He discusses the latter and concludes: 'The sky "symbolizes" transcendence, power and changelessness simply by being there. It exists because it is high, infinite, immovable, powerful. … The whole nature of the sky is an inexhaustible hierophany.'[13] Then Eliade lists and briefly describes instances of how this hierophany is manifest in religions of native Americans, Australians, Africans, Indo-, Poly- and Melanesians, Maoris and North and Central Asian peoples, in religions of Mesopotamia, Indo-Aryan religion, religions of Iran, Greece and the Roman empire, Nordic religion, Judaism, Chinese and Egyptian religions, Islam and many more.[14]

It is important to note that, according to Smith, Goethe's original morphological approach created hierarchical series of items (in a sequence from elementary to complex) without presuming a temporal development, let alone passing a moral judgement on simpler forms. The scholars of religion who deploy this mode equally insist that even the simplest (or 'most primitive') variants are manifestations of the phenomenon's essence (or 'the sacred') and therefore must not be depreciated. In spite of this principle, the Christian variant of a phenomenon often appears as the most complex and developed one. But the two more fundamental problems with the morphological approach are that it remains entirely unclear how the (arche)types or patterns ('the sky as such') have been identified (or created) – as they are explicitly and fundamentally distinct from any empirical data – and that the 'manifestations' tend to appear severed from their individual historical contexts and developments. Smith says about the two comparative operations in this mode of comparison: 'One may only compare within the system or between the pattern and a particular manifestation. Comparisons within the system do not take time or history into account; comparisons between the pattern and manifestation are comparisons as to the degree of manifestation and its intelligibility and do not take historical, linear development into account.'[15]

Finally, the *evolutionary* mode is based on the evolutionary approach in the natural sciences of the nineteenth century. Unlike the morphological mode, it focuses on historical developments, but combines this – illegitimately, for Smith – with an ahistorical, morphological approach. The cultural evolution of mankind is laid out by comparing cultural phenomena and arranging them according to their respective stage in this development. This type of classification has a broad historical frame, namely, the general, temporal evolution of culture, but each individual datum is morphologically and ahistorically placed next to seemingly analogous data. Smith quotes E. B. Tylor's 1871 work *Primitive Cultures*:

> Little respect need be had in such comparisons for date in history or for place on the map; the ancient Swiss lake-dweller may be set aside the medieval Aztec, and the Ojibwa of North America beside the Zulu of South Africa. As Dr Johnson

> contemptuously said when he had read about the Patagonians and South Sea Islanders in Hawkesworth's Voyages, 'one set of savages is like another.' How true a generalization this really is, any Ethnological Museum may show.[16]

Again, each item's particular historical context is mostly lost in this approach, while the arrangement of items is primarily governed by an evolutionary theory. With the concept of cultural evolution and social Darwinism going out of fashion, Smith notes, influential anthropologists became suspicious of generalizing comparison and abandoned it altogether. The same applied, says Smith, to religious studies.

It is remarkable that this article by Smith, which is now more than forty years old and was included, only seven years after its first publication, in his widely read collection *Map is Not Territory*, is rarely quoted. Granted, like many of his articles, it is no light read, it has loads of references to perhaps unfamiliar examples, and its title is in Latin, which might be slightly off-putting too. But one would think that a careful – and clearly critical – analysis of comparative approaches by one of the most sophisticated contemporary theorists in the study of religion should receive a wider recognition, especially among critics of comparison.

Much more influential and, to this day, a common reference in the debate about comparison was his follow-up article 'In Comparison a Magic Dwells.'[17] In it, Smith summarizes the four modes and then reviews a few newer approaches in the study of Judaism, only to conclude that they each represented merely variants of one of the four modes. Yet this article did not receive attention because of the typology – which 'Adde Parvum ...' had laid out in much greater detail – but because it was read as a critique of comparison as such, a 'cogent and eloquent challenge to the very possibility of responsible comparison.'[18] Likely the most memorable point for many readers is Smith's analogy of comparison and magic, which, perhaps unfortunately, also made it into the article's title. As evidence of this reception, I wish to quote Kimberley Patton's and Benjamin Ray's introduction to *A Magic Still Dwells*, a book that includes many constructive responses to the postmodern and postcolonial challenges to comparison and can be regarded as an important milestone in the debate. While the book's title directly echoes Smith's article, which is also reprinted in the book, I wish to argue that Smith may not be the right opponent when it comes to defending comparison. Patton and Ray, who are committed comparativists, summarize his argument as follows:

> Smith's essay argues that comparison in the human sciences has been problematic and unscientific and lacking in any specific rules. It contains a kind of 'magic,' he asserts, like Frazer's idea of homeopathic magic, 'for, as practiced by scholarship, *comparison has been chiefly an affair of the recollection of similarity.* ... The procedure is homeopathic. ... The issue of difference has been all but forgotten.' For Smith, the unfortunate 'magic' of previous comparative studies lies in their resemblance to Frazer's notion of primitive magic, the association of ideas by superficial similarity, thus confusing subjective relationships with objective ones. Smith finds wanting several types of comparison in the history of religions for their confused, impressionistic, and unscientific character.[19]

While the content of this summary is certainly accurate, I would argue that it gives the rather playful analogy of magic too much weight. Certainly, one can be easily

carried away by Smith's rhetoric: if the options are magic or science, as he summarizes the issue,[20] which self-respecting scholar would want to end up on the side of magic? If comparison is magic, we had better shun it entirely! It seems ironic that this conclusion would presuppose the acceptance of the theory of homeopathic magic by James George Frazer, who is not exactly a role model for critics of comparison.[21] Rather than claiming that comparison was, in principle, a form of magic, Smith merely holds that previous comparative efforts in the study of religion resembled the Frazerian idea of homeopathic magic insofar as they were associative 'recollection[s] of similarity'. He then also states that 'thus far, comparison appears to be more a matter of memory than a project for inquiry; it is more impressionistic than methodical'.[22] And, again: 'In no literature on comparison that I am familiar with has there been any presentation of rules for the production of comparisons; what few rules have been proposed pertain to their post-facto evaluation.'[23] Rather than saying that such rules – or, for that matter, a successful comparative method – can and will never exist, he implicitly calls for them. Smith's is a retrospective critique, not a principled rejection of comparison.

This is most obvious in the conclusion of the article, which, by the way, does not return to the analogy of magic.[24] Instead, it suggests that the methodological problems of comparison are serious and fundamental and need to be addressed:

> We must conclude this exercise in our own academic history in a most unsatisfactory manner. Each of the modes of comparison has been found problematic. ... We know better now how to evaluate comparisons, but we have gained little over our predecessors in either the method for making comparisons or the reasons for its practice. There is nothing easier than the making of patterns; from planaria to babies, it is done with little apparent difficulty. But the 'how' and the 'why' and, above all, the 'so what' remain most refractory. These matters will not be resolved by new or increased data. In many respects, we already have too much. It is a problem to be solved by theories and reasons, of which we have too little. So we are left with the question: 'How am I to apply what the one thing shows me to the case of two things?' The possibility of the study of religion depends on its answer.[25]

Note the urgency in the final sentence, which is also the final sentence of the article. Addressing the problem of comparison, through new 'theories and reasons, of which we have too little' – and, I might add, by developing robust methodological models – is, for Smith, the most fundamental task for scholars of religion. So, again, the criticism of earlier comparative scholarship, which Smith chose to frame also with the 'magic' analogy, does not imply a general rejection of comparison at all. On the contrary, for Smith, the very 'possibility of the study of religion' presupposes a sound comparative method.

Rather than the reference to magic, to me the most interesting and fruitful aspect of 'In Comparison a Magic Dwells' and, even more, of 'Adde Parvum Parvo Magnus Acervus Erit', is the typology of modes of comparison. In fact, Smith seems to acknowledge this contribution when he correctly claims in his conclusion that 'we know better now how to evaluate comparisons'. The modes can, indeed, serve to analyse and evaluate existing comparative studies, but they can also be useful as

methodological signposts for aspiring comparativists. To be sure, Smith would not recommend applying any one of them. He states:

> We stand before a considerable embarrassment. Of the four chief modes of comparison in the human sciences, two, the ethnographic and the encyclopaedic, are in principle inadequate as comparative activities, although both have other important and legitimate functions. The evolutionary would be capable in principle of being formulated in a satisfactory manner, but I know of no instance of its thorough application to cultural phenomena. ... This leaves only the morphological. ... Yet, few students of religion would be attracted by this alternative. Because of the Romantic, Neoplatonic Idealism of its philosophical presuppositions, because for methodologically rigorous and internally defensible reasons, it is designed to exclude the historical. The only option appears to be no option at all.[26]

In spite of the slightly pessimistic note at the end, this should not be the end but the beginning of methodological reasoning. The four modes can continue to serve as analytical tools for analysis, and there are other useful typologies as well, as I will discuss below.

But first, I wish to suggest some slight modifications to Smith's model. A minor but important point is the name of the ethnographic mode. While Smith argues that it has much in common with certain earlier ethnographic approaches, today ethnography means something else, and labelling that mode 'ethnographic' seems misleading. I suggest the term 'spontaneous-associative mode' instead, which seems to capture what Smith has in mind, including a hint at its problematic nature. Another point is the fact, not explicitly addressed by Smith, that the modes are not mutually exclusive. As the examples above show, the spontaneous-associative mode and the encyclopaedic mode overlap in works like Frazer's, and studies in the phenomenology of religion (van der Leeuw, Heiler, etc.) have both encyclopaedic and morphological features. Further, the morphological mode, while being applicable to works like Eliade's,[27] seems too confining to cover the variety of classificatory approaches that exist in the study of religion. Like biological morphology, which has evolved since Goethe's time,[28] the study of religion has developed various ways of classifying religious phenomena. Smith himself substantially contributed to the discussion on classification and taxonomy,[29] to which I will return below. It should also be noted that identifying certain (problematic) modes in a study need not disqualify that study altogether. The modes should be used strictly as heuristic instruments for analysing the deployed comparative method; even if the comparison has weaknesses, that study may well have other important qualities. Finally, we may want to revisit Smith's claim that his four modes covered virtually all comparative efforts in the study of religion before 1971.[30] Apart from the fact that some more recent comparative studies, including his own,[31] can hardly be classified by using that model, there may also be earlier studies that are outside its scope – and less problematic.[32]

Qualified in this way, the model of the four modes seems useful for the analysis and evaluation of comparative studies. Apart from problems that concern the respective field of the study, such as the evolutionary mode for the study of cultural evolution,

the modes highlight particular methodological defects that comparativists should avoid, especially an undue use of intuition (spontaneous-associative mode), superficial categorization (encyclopaedic mode), decontextualization (morphological mode) and an unfounded positing of analogies based on a broader theory (evolutionary mode).

Carter's model: Descriptive and explanatory comparison

There are other ways of identifying modes of comparison that are equally useful in analysing comparative studies. Jeffrey Carter distinguishes 'descriptive' and 'explanatory' comparison.[33] The former is generally employed in the description of phenomena. To describe a thing, one compares it with its environment as well as with pre-given categories that one brings to the material. Carter's example is a particular ritual mask which can be classified as belonging to the Yoruba people only by distinguishing it from other West African masks. And it can be described as a 'bearded mother' only by comparing it with what one knows about beards and mothers. This basic twin-technique, which underlies all academic description, Carter finds also in two of Smith's four modes. The ethnographic and the encyclopaedic modes, he argues, are descriptive comparisons that hold 'too firmly to the particular without balancing it with statements of generality'.[34]

Explanatory comparison, on the other hand, champions generality. By positing correspondences, it connects and combines phenomena in a generalized superstructure, a 'meaningful whole'. This superstructure is a theory that is placed over unorganized facts and that thus organizes and 'explains' them. Carter lists Smith's morphological and evolutionary modes as examples of explanatory comparison, which, in their respective ways of generalization, also fail to balance the particular and the general.

In order to achieve this balance and to be able to evaluate comparative studies more accurately, Carter suggests that comparativists should be aware of the variety of logical types involved in comparisons. Applying a theory of logical types that was first developed by the philosopher Bertrand Russell, he argues that descriptive and explanatory comparisons are two different, but related, logical types. This relation is that of a member of a class (e.g. grackle) and the class (bird) or, perhaps more palpable, that of territory and map. While territory is manifest in particular and individual data (hills, lakes, forests, roads, buildings, etc.) which can be 'described' by showing how each differs from its environment, a map 'explains' by connecting and organizing the data in a specific way and with a certain purpose. The latter process becomes particularly obvious when we think of a treasure map. But recalling various types of maps may suffice: maps produced for truck drivers, cyclists, wanderers and restaurant seekers can wildly differ from each other even when they 'explain' one and the same territory. Criticizing a map for not being identical with the territory would be absurd. Thus, explanatory, generalizing comparisons, too, must not be criticized for the fact that they generalize but, if need be, for the inappropriate degree of their abstraction in relation to its purpose. (Just as badly produced, misleading maps exist too, of course.) Carter notes that the gap between the logical types – the gap between description and explanation, and thus the degree of generalization – can vary in size.

Scholars must consciously determine this gap, and in this process four factors come into play: the *purpose* of the comparative work (instruction, prediction, exploration, etc.); the *audience* (scholars of religion and/or scholars beyond religious studies, students, the general public, etc.); the *scale* (various levels of detail and generalization); and the *theory* one employs at the level of explanation.[35]

As mentioned, each of Carter's two modes of comparison (descriptive and explanatory) corresponds to two of Smith's modes. Both scholars agree that each mode, deployed individually, yields unsatisfactory results. Carter, therefore, suggests a meaningful combination of his two modes that reflects an awareness of the four factors by which the scholar sensibly determines the gap between the two logical types (i.e. purpose, audience, scale and theory).

Freidenreich's model: Similarity and difference; genus and species

David Freidenreich suggests yet another model of classifying comparative studies of religion.[36] He reviews selected studies that appeared in the years between the publication of Smith's 'In Comparison a Magic Dwells' (1982) and of the volume *A Magic Still Dwells* (2000). Freidenreich arranges the selected studies according to four categories:

(1) The comparative *focus on similarity*. Here, scholars restrict their comparison to stressing similarities of religious phenomena or even asserting their identity. Differences are played down or not addressed at all. One example is a study of religious fundamentalists among Palestinian and Lebanese Muslims as well as Sikhs that limits itself to identifying similar features without further discussion or explanation.[37] Some authors also try to explain similarities by suggesting a historical relationship (i.e. 'influence') or conceptual commonalities (e.g. monotheism).

(2) The comparative *focus on difference*. Analogous to the first type, most such studies merely list differences without further analysis. One example given by Freidenreich is a study that compares Buddhism and Christianity primarily by demonstrating how they are different.[38] Sometimes differences are explained by simply referring to diverging historical developments or a lack of conceptual commonalities. Both the similarity and the difference approaches are often related to religious, theological, social or political debates that take place outside the academic study of religion. For example, focusing on the *similarity* of two religions might help to rationalize a conflict (e.g. between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland), and it might also remind the public of the existence of potentially dangerous movements within various traditions (e.g. fundamentalist extremism). Focusing on *difference* can help facilitate a deeper interreligious dialogue, and it can also posit the superiority of one religion over the other. Apart from the fact that neither of these is a popular or primary objective in the academic study of religion, Freidenreich points out that a comparative study that

stresses only the similarities or the differences produces few new conclusions and does not contribute much to a better understanding of religion more generally.

(3) Works with a comparative *focus on genus–species relationship* 'explore the relationship of a general aspect of religion with the similar yet distinct specific manifestations of that aspect in the religious traditions under examination'.[39] Some works construct (or deconstruct) a genus (e.g. religious nationalism, myth, scripture) by comparing species found in the history of religions and identifying similarities between them. Others use a top-down approach by comparing multiple species of the same genus in order to identify how they differ from each other. One example is a study that chooses the genus 'religious conservative women' and examines the views of orthodox Jewish, conservative Catholic and evangelical Protestant women (three species of that genus) regarding their respective attitudes towards feminist issues.[40] In general, Freidenreich's third category has much in common with Smith's 'morphological mode'. The studies he mentions, however, try to avoid postulating ahistorical archetypes. Rather, the genus, as a category, appears as an abstraction that displays shared characteristics of various species.

(4) The *use of comparison to refocus*. Studies belonging to this category use comparison to understand phenomenon A better by examining it in the light of B, that is, with a 'refocused lens'. Blind spots in the conventional description of one religious phenomenon can be illuminated by comparing it with a similar phenomenon elsewhere. As this approach tries to learn from parallel cases to arrive at a better understanding of the case at hand, the two compared things do not appear on an equal level. Some scholars utilize an 'imaginative approach' which generates hypotheses rather than final conclusions. For example, the comparison of the Peoples Temple Christian Church in Jonestown, whose members committed mass suicide in 1978, with Dionysiac cults of antiquity and an early twentieth-century cargo cult in the South Pacific may generate hypotheses about the religious motives of the suicidal community without aspiring to develop a new interpretation of the Dionysiac or the cargo cults or to construct a broader genus.[41]

Modes with potential: The illuminative mode and the taxonomic mode

The three models summarized here may suffice for capturing the most common comparative styles in the study of religion. Considering a variety of typologies is useful because the three models offer different perspectives on the comparative modes, each highlighting different things. Yet we also saw that the models clearly overlap in many respects and that even the lines between categories cannot always be neatly drawn. Other typologies of comparison exist – for example in comparative history – that provide slightly different perspectives but also overlap considerably with the typologies discussed here.[42] Note that it is not the purpose of the present chapter to present the ultimate and universal typology. Rather, looking from various angles at modes of comparison helps to clarify the practical implications of choosing comparison as a

method. This awareness enables us to avoid common pitfalls in our own comparative efforts by adopting a mode of comparison that seems responsible and fruitful.

We saw that some variants of the presented modes are problematic or, at best, not helpful for advancing a better understanding of religion. The fact that some of these are still appearing today should not discourage us from trying to develop a more adequate method. Considering the criticism discussed above, the two most promising modes of comparison for the academic study of religion seem to be what I wish to call the *illuminative mode* and the *taxonomic mode*, which largely correspond to Freidenreich's fourth and third type of comparison, respectively.[43]

Comparison in the *illuminative mode* is used for illuminating a particular historical datum, especially assumed blind spots, by drawing on other cases. Studies in this mode are asymmetric in the sense that their goal is to understand one item while the other cases merely function to illuminate that phenomenon.[44] Scholars who study religion in a particular place and time use the illuminative mode of comparison regularly, often drawing on comparative data from the spatial and temporal vicinity – and mostly without bothering to discuss their comparative methodology. Using this mode of comparison in both directions may lead to what Arvind Sharma calls 'reciprocal illumination'.[45]

Comparative studies conducted in the *taxonomic mode* classify religious items and thus contribute to the taxonomic effort in the study of religion. Such studies are symmetric, meaning that all 'species' get equal analytical attention in the comparative process. They are based on empirical data and do not assume an inaccessible archetype which 'manifests' itself in history (like studies in the morphological mode). Rather, their categories are consciously constructed abstractions that are modifiable and, as such, subject to scholarly debate.

While it is rarely put in these terms, the study of religion has a strong taxonomic interest. It creates, deploys, discusses and constantly modifies metalinguistic terms and their relations to each other. Classifying a certain activity as a 'life-cycle ritual', a certain building as a 'shrine', a certain table as an 'altar' or a certain narrative as a 'cosmogonic myth' is such a normal activity for scholars of religion that some, who are critical of the taxonomic effort, do not even seem to realize that they classify too.[46] Aside from the taxonomy of objects, actions or narratives, the study of concepts, structures, systems, processes, etc., also requires classification, which is expressed in more abstract terms such as 'transmigration', 'hybridity', 'secularity', 'canonization', etc. Each such term can be assigned a certain rank (e.g. class, order, family, genus or species) within a hierarchical classification and thus put in relation to other terms. Let me illustrate this by locating 'life-cycle rituals' in a (highly simplistic) taxonomic hierarchy. Looking upwards in the hierarchy, 'life-cycle rituals' can be viewed as one *family* within the *order* of 'rituals', which, in turn, form just one order in the *class* of 'religious actions'. Looking downwards, within the family of life-cycle rituals several *genera* can be distinguished, such as birth, maturity, reproduction and death rituals. Within each of these, a large number of *species* in the history of religions can be identified.

We may rarely see it this way, but the classifying work in the study of religion appears to be not unlike that of biology, the discipline with the most sophisticated and advanced systems of taxonomy. Serious reservations against classification expressed by postcolonial scholars because of its potential for exercising power may certainly cause modifications of existing categories, but can hardly result in the rejection of

classification altogether, which would be, to quote Smith, no less than a 'rejection of thought'.[47] Contemporary biological taxonomists, too, are aware of potential pitfalls of classification, such as the risks of relying on inflexible categories and of underestimating convergence and change over time. They therefore stress the required flexibility and non-static nature of scientific taxonomies.[48]

Exploring the forms, the role and the value of taxonomy in the study of religion and also the usefulness of discussions in other disciplines like biology (or linguistics, or archaeology, or library science) is an important, yet rarely addressed task. Jonathan Z. Smith provided a good starting point in his short, but rich, article on classification.[49] Since any classifying act is comparative – whenever we put one item in relation to another item or a category, we compare – comparison is the very basis of the taxonomic effort. Thus, the term 'taxonomic mode' seems appropriate for comparative studies whose primary purpose is to create, deconstruct and reconstruct, or refine and improve classifications in the study of religion.

To be sure, suggesting the category 'taxonomic mode' does not answer the deeper epistemological questions that J. Z. Smith raises, and on the grounds of which he rejects the morphological mode: Where do the categories originate from? How can I know that two items may be selected for a fruitful comparison before actually comparing them? 'How am I to apply what the one thing shows me to the case of two things?' Clearly, these are important questions that need further discussion and exploration. For the purpose of the present chapter, it may suffice to observe that at least in one respect, the taxonomic work in the study of religion has been successful: classifications, some of them sophisticated, keep being suggested and are critically discussed within the academic discourse of the discipline. Some of these classifications are more explicitly theorized than others, but it is also important to note that the act of theorizing itself does not guarantee sophistication. Some great scholars have suggested well-respected classifications with little explicit theoretical justification. But, surely, adopting a pragmatic approach that grants the disciplinary discourse some value does not absolve us from the responsibility for simultaneously developing a more robust epistemological foundation for the comparative method.[50]

Finally, while the terms 'illuminative mode' and 'taxonomic mode' may be new, the scholarly activities that they describe are not.[51] As mentioned above, the illuminative mode is fairly common for comparisons within one historical context, but some studies also draw on more distant cases to illuminate the item at hand.[52] Comparisons conducted in the taxonomic mode, especially book-length studies, are sparser, but their number has started to grow again.[53]

Conclusion

What can an aspiring comparativist learn from this pondering over modes of comparison? First, the discussion has shown that an overemphasis on particularity seems just as unsatisfactory as an overemphasis on generalization. Using Carter's terms, the spontaneous-associative (or ethnographic) and encyclopaedic modes, in their pure forms, 'describe' too much and 'explain' too little – as does any study that solely focuses on differences. The reverse is true for the morphological and evolutionary modes,

and for any study that solely emphasizes similarities – such approaches 'explain' too much and lack proper attention to detail and context. In other words, restricting oneself to studying particular spots in the 'territory' and abandoning the 'map' means forgoing generalization altogether and failing to contribute to a general theorizing of religion. Conversely, producing a map without having thoroughly studied the territory seems like a rather futile endeavour too. Perhaps the most fundamental conclusion we can draw from the typologies discussed above is that there is a crucial need for a meaningful combination of contextual, empirical work, on the one hand, and some level of classification and generalization, on the other.

Such a combination still allows for various degrees of generalization. Indeed, classifying modes of comparison not only helps to identify problematic approaches; it also reveals diversity among the more promising ones. This diversity can be mapped onto a scale that measures the degree of generalization, with the illuminative mode being located towards the 'lower' end and the taxonomic mode towards the 'higher' end. Clearly, to be useful for the academic study of religion, a comparative study must generalize, but the degree of generalization depends on the specific goals of the individual study. The illuminative mode generalizes to a degree that appears useful for illuminating the item at hand (e.g. studying a particular 'baptism' practice in light of other 'initiation rituals'). For some studies in the taxonomic mode, the genus and the species may be narrowly defined (e.g. 'baptism' in two Christian parishes), while others may choose a higher degree of generalization (e.g. 'initiation rituals' in Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism). Put in terms of biological taxonomy, the scope of addressing the classificatory ranks (class, order, family, genus, species, etc.) can be configured in many different ways. Thus, in this perspective, the distinction between taxonomic and illuminative mode is gradual, not substantial.

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss criteria for assessing and designing comparative studies. Asking in which mode(s) of comparison an existing study was conducted helps to highlight its strengths and weaknesses with regard to the comparative method. And reflecting upon the modes while designing one's own comparative study may result in sounder methodical work. Besides modes, as I plan to discuss elsewhere, other criteria may be defined to enrich the methodological analysis of comparisons: the scope of the study, which determines its temporal and spatial parameters; its scale, which determines whether it compares at a micro, meso or macro level; the various steps in its comparative process; and its goal and disciplinary orientation. By exploring such categories, we may not be able to formulate firm 'rules for the production of comparisons', which Smith found missing, but we may at least develop a methodological framework that helps to analyse and refine the comparative method in the study of religion.

Notes

1 This chapter was written during my stay as a visiting fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg 'Dynamics in the History of Religion' at Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany. I am grateful for the support.

2 This debate is complex and certainly needs to be studied carefully, with some distance, at some time in the future. It features different visions of what the study of

religion is about, different philosophical, epistemological and ethical approaches, and different disciplinary orientations, all of which will need to be sorted out. In its darker moments, it also features heavy polemics, low-quality empirical scholarship, superficial and unfair analyses of older studies that were produced by scholars who are too dead to reciprocate, and, of course, ordinary academic politics and power play. To get an impression of the breadth and depth of the debate, see the introduction and the contributions to Patton and Ray 2000; Segal 2001, 2006.

3 Smith 1982a: 21.
4 Smith 1978.
5 Ibid.: 248–9.
6 For example van der Leeuw 1967; Heiler 1961.
7 Smith 1978: 252; Frazer 1894: 16.
8 Smith 1978: 253.
9 Ibid.: 257.
10 Eliade 1958.
11 Heiler 1961.
12 Van der Leeuw 1967.
13 Eliade 1958: 38–40.
14 Ibid.: 40–111.
15 Smith 1978: 259.
16 Smith 1978: 261–2; Tylor 1958: 6.
17 Smith 1982a.
18 Patton and Ray 2000: 3.
19 Ibid.: 3. The quotation is from Smith 1982a: 21.
20 'We are left with a dilemma that can be stated in stark form, *is comparison an enterprise of magic or science?*' (Smith 1982a: 22).
21 Smith, too, is very critical of Frazer, both in 'Adde Parvum …,' as seen above, and in his analysis of *The Golden Bough* (Smith 1973). This alone should raise doubts as to whether he wishes to claim, without further discussion, that Frazer's theory of magic is so established and undisputed that it can even be transferred and applied to academic methodology. Rather, it appears as a playful, or even sarcastic, analogy that is meant to make a point, as Smith's short and easy transition indicates too: 'It requires but a small leap to relate these considerations of the Laws of Association in memory and magic to the enterprise of comparison in the human sciences' (Smith 1982a: 21).
22 Smith 1982a: 22.
23 Ibid.: 21.
24 In fact, the whole discussion of this analogy covers only two and a half pages towards the beginning of his sixteen-page article. The remainder includes a discussion of the four modes and how they may be applied to three more recent approaches. Thus, in Patton and Ray's summary quoted above, the actual bulk of Smith's article is, quite disproportionately, summarized only in the final short sentence. The reference to magic rarely shows up again in the article.
25 Smith 1982a: 35. The quotation is from Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 215.
26 Smith 1982a: 24f.
27 See Smith's careful analysis of Goethe's influence on Eliade in Smith 2000b, c.
28 See, for example, LaPensee 2009; Aberdein 2009; Cain 2014. After (Goethe's) 'idealistic morphology', approaches of 'comparative', 'functional' and 'experimental morphology' have been developed.
29 Smith 2000a, 2004.

30 Smith says in 'In Comparison a Magic Dwells' that this paradigm was 'based on a survey of some 2500 years of the literature of anthropological comparison' (Smith 1982a: 22).
31 For example Smith 1982b.
32 See, for example, the early work of Joachim Wach, who, in his book *Religionswissenschaft*, lays out the programme for a 'systematic study of religion' that is empirical, inductive and based on comparison (Wach 1924: 165–92). His comparative method is sensitive to context and non-essentialistic. He also mentions the benefits of morphology in category formation, but in a much less idealistic way than Eliade will do later and with reference to the typological work of Max Weber (189). A reason why this book, which is also significantly different from Wach's later work, is rarely cited in the English-speaking world may be its rather inelegant and at times misleading English translation, *Introduction to the History of Religions* (New York: Macmillan, 1988).
33 Carter 1998.
34 Ibid.: 136.
35 Ibid.: 146.
36 Freidenreich 2004.
37 Sahliyeh 1995.
38 Lefebure 1993.
39 Freidenreich 2004: 88.
40 Manning 1999.
41 See Smith 1982b.
42 See Skocpol and Somers 1980, who distinguish three types: comparative history as 'parallel demonstration of theory', as 'the contrast of contexts' and as 'macro-causal analysis'. Tilly 1984 speaks of four types: the individualizing, the universalizing, the variation-finding and the encompassing. See also Braembussche 1989; Kaelble 1999: 25–47; Green 2004; Elliott 2012: 168–95; and also the useful historical survey of comparative history in Kedar 2009.
43 In some sense, they also reflect, yet complicate, Kaelble's general distinction of individualizing and generalizing comparison in comparative history, which goes back to Marc Bloch (1928). Individualizing comparison focuses on differences between individual comparands, generalizing comparison on discovering common rules in human societies (Kaelble 1999: 26–30).
44 The term 'asymmetrical comparison' is used in the same way by comparative historian Jürgen Kocka. He explains:

> By asymmetrical comparison I mean a form of comparison that is centrally interested in describing, explaining, and interpreting *one* case, usually one's own case, by contrasting it with others, while the other case or cases are not brought in for their own sake, and are usually not fully researched but only sketched as a kind of background. The questions one asks and the viewpoints one has are derived from case A and transferred to case B. Case B is instrumentalized for insights into case A, but not studied in its own right.

One of Kocka's examples of asymmetrical comparison is Max Weber's work on the rise of Western institutions and capitalism by contrasting it with other societies and religions (Kocka 2009: 33f).
45 Sharma 2005.
46 According to Smith's observation,

> many students of religion, with their exaggerated ethos of localism and suspicion of generalization, tend to treat their subject in an Adamic fashion

> as if they were naming entities, often exacerbated by their insistence on employing native terminology which emphasizes the absolute particularity of the data in question rather than deploying a translation language which already suggests that the data are part of a larger, encompassing category. ... Such approaches give every appearance of rejecting explicit taxonomic enterprises, although the use of geographical or linguistic nomenclatures, the deployment of categories such as 'living religions,' 'monotheism' or 'mysticism' suggest the presence of implicit taxonomies (Smith 2000a: 36).

47 'For many in the study of religion, when not asserting some ethos of uniqueness and locality (J.Z. Smith 1990; Moran 1992), classification is seen as an instrument of power (Foucault 1970), a point clearly illustrated in that rich series of studies of the Indian Census (Appadurai 1996) that build on the pioneering researches of B.S. Cohn (1987). But this is to present the study of religion with an occasion for rectification, not resignation or renunciation. For the rejection of classificatory interest is, at the same time, a rejection of thought' (Smith 2000a: 43). The well-known fact that taxonomic systems are not 'objective' or independent of the scholars' cultural context, as Lincoln points out (Lincoln 1989: 7f.), should certainly not result in trying to avoid classification altogether.

48 For a recent survey of biological taxonomy, see Cain 2014, from which I quote just a few remarks:

> The goal of classifying is to place an organism into an already existing group or to create a new group for it, based on its resemblances to and differences from known forms. To this end, a hierarchy of categories is recognized. ... The number of ranks that is recognized in a hierarchy is a matter of widely varying opinion. ... The number of ranks is expanded as necessary by using the prefixes sub-, super-, and infra- (*e.g.*, subclass, superorder) and by adding other intermediate ranks, such as brigade, cohort, section, or tribe. ... It cannot be too strongly emphasized that there are no explicit taxonomic characters that define a phylum, class, order, or other rank. A feature characteristic of one phylum may vary in another phylum among closely related members of a class, order, or some lower group. ... An order in one authority's classification may be a superorder or class in another. Most of the established classifications of the better known groups result from a general consensus among practicing taxonomists. It follows that no complete definition of a group can be made until the group itself has been recognized, after which its common (or most usual) characters can be formally stated. As further information is obtained about the group, it is subject to taxonomic revision. ... Some taxonomists insist that in an evolutionary classification every group must be truly monophyletic – that is, spring from a single ancestral stock. Usually, this cannot be ascertained; the fossil material is insufficient or, as with many soft-bodied forms, nonexistent. Definite convergence must not be overlooked if it can be detected. How far groups should be split to show phyletic lines and what rank should be given each group and subgroup thus are matters for reasonable compromise. ... If sufficient fossils are available, the resulting classification may be consonant with what is known about the evolution of the group or with what is merely conjectured. In reality, many classifications are conjectural or tendentious, and simpler and more natural ones might be closer to the available facts. See also Aberdein 2009.

49 Smith 2000a.
50 One practical solution to the apparently inescapable conundrum that the selection of comparands needs foreknowledge about their comparability may be a reciprocal procedure in which examining and narrowing down both potential sources and thematic categories inform each other until they are determined for that particular study. Making the selection criteria transparent by documenting this process enables the scholarly community to properly evaluate its plausibility. This needs further exploration, but for an outline and example, see Freiberger 2009: 33–7.
51 Nor are they mutually exclusive, as will be argued below.
52 See, for example, Schopen's use of Peter Brown's work on the cult of the saints in Mediterranean late antiquity for his study of Indian Buddhism (Schopen 1997) or Patton's study of Indian, Zoroastrian and Norse mythology to understand worshipping gods depicted on ancient Greek vases (Patton 2009). See also Bynum 2014 on studying the ritual treatment of Hindu statues for a better understanding of the Christian Eucharist.
53 Recent examples are the studies by McClymond on sacrifice (2008), Shushan on conceptions of the afterlife (2009), Bornet on rites of hospitality (2010), Freidenreich on identity formation through food restrictions (2011), and my own study on ascetic discourses (Freiberger 2009; see also Freiberger 2010).

References

Aberdein, Andrew (2009), 'Biology: Classification Systems', in K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner (eds), *Scientific Thought: In Context*, 167–76, Detroit: Gale.
Bloch, Marc (1928), 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes', *Revue de synthèse historique*, 46: 15–50.
Bornet, Philippe (2010), *Rites et pratiques de l'hospitalité: Mondes juifs et indiens anciens*, Stuttgart: Steiner.
Braembussche, A. A. van den (1989), 'Historical Explanation and Comparative Method: Towards a Theory of the History of Society', *History and Theory*, 28 (1): 1–24.
Bynum, Carolyn W. (2014), 'Avoiding the Tyranny of Morphology; or, Why Compare?', *History of Religions*, 53 (4): 341–68.
Cain, Arthur J. (2014), 'Taxonomy', *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Available online: www.britannica.com s.v. (last updated 26 August 2014; accessed 4 January 2015).
Carter, Jeffrey R. (1998), 'Description Is Not Explanation: A Methodology of Comparison', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 10: 133–48.
Eliade, Mircea (1958), *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, New York: Sheed & Ward.
Elliott, John H. (2012), *History in the Making*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
Frazer, James George (1894), 'Taboo', *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th edn, Vol. 23, 16–18, Chicago: Werner.
Freiberger, Oliver (2009), *Der Askesediskurs in der Religionsgeschichte: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung brahmanischer und frühchristlicher Texte* (Studies in Oriental Religions 57), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
Freiberger, Oliver (2010), 'Locating the Ascetic's Habitat: Toward a Micro-Comparison of Religious Discourses', *History of Religions*, 50 (2): 162–92.
Freidenreich, David M. (2004), 'Comparisons Compared: A Methodological Survey of Comparisons of Religion from "A Magic Dwells" to *A Magic Still Dwells*', *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 16: 80–101.

Freidenreich, David M. (2011), *Foreigners and Their Food: Constructing Otherness in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic Law*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
Green, Nancy L. (2004), 'Forms of Comparison', in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (eds), *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, 41–56, New York: Routledge.
Heiler, Friedrich (1961), *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion*, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
Kaelble, Hartmut (1999), *Der historische Vergleich: Eine Einführung zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag.
Kedar, Benjamin Z. (2009), 'Outlines for Comparative History Proposed by Practicing Historians', in Benjamin Z. Kedar (ed.), *Explorations in Comparative History*, 1–28, Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press.
Kocka, Jürgen (2009), 'Comparative History: Methodology and Ethos', in Benjamin Z. Kedar (ed.), *Explorations in Comparative History*, 29–35, Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press.
LaPensee, Kenneth T. (2009), 'Biology: Comparative Morphology: Studies of Structure and Function', in K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth (eds), *Scientific Thought: In Context*, 177–9, Lerner, Detroit: Gale.
Leeuw, van der, Gerardus (1967), *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*, Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith. [Translation of *Phänomenologie der Religion*, first published in 1933.]
Lefebure, Leo D. (1993), *The Buddha and the Christ: Explorations in Buddhist and Christian Dialogue*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
Lincoln, Bruce (1989), *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*, New York: Oxford University Press.
Manning, Christel J. (1999), *God Gave Us the Right: Conservative Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, and Orthodox Jewish Women Grapple with Feminism*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
McClymond, Kathryn (2008), *Beyond Sacred Violence: A Comparative Study of Sacrifice*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Patton, Kimberley C. (2009), *Religion of the Gods: Ritual, Paradox, and Reflexivity*, New York: Oxford University Press.
Patton, Kimberley C. and Benjamin C. Ray (2000), 'Introduction', in Kimberley C. Patton and Benjamin Ray (eds), *A Magic Still Dwells: Comparative Religion in the Postmodern Age*, 1–19, Berkeley: University of California Press.
Sahliyeh, Emile (1995), 'Religious Fundamentalisms Compared: Palestinian Islamists, Militant Lebanese Shi'ites, and Radical Sikhs', in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds), *Fundamentalisms Comprehended*, 135–152, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Schopen, Gregory, ed. (1997), 'On Monks, Nuns, and "Vulgar" Practices: The Introduction of the Image Cult into Indian Buddhism', in *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
Segal, Robert A. (2001), 'In Defense of the Comparative Method', *Numen*, 48: 339–73.
Segal, Robert A. (2006), 'Postmodernism and the Comparative Method', in Thomas A. Idinopulos, Brian C. Wilson and James C. Hanges (eds), *Comparing Religions: Possibilities and Perils?* 249–270, Leiden: Brill.
Sharma, Arvind (2005), *Religious Studies and Comparative Methodology: The Case for Reciprocal Illumination*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
Shushan, Gregory (2009), *Conceptions of the Afterlife in Early Civilizations: Universalism, Constructivism and Near-Death Experience*, London: Continuum.

Skocpol, Theda and Margaret Somers (1980), 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22 (2): 174–97.
Smith, Jonathan Z. (1973), 'When the Bough Breaks', *History of Religions*, 12 (4): 342–71.
Smith, Jonathan Z. (1978), 'Adde Parvum Parvo Magnus Acervus Erit', in Jonathan Z. Smith (ed.), *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*, 240–64, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Smith, Jonathan Z., ed. (1982a), 'In Comparison a Magic Dwells', in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*, 19–35, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Smith, Jonathan Z., ed. (1982b), 'The Devil in Mr. Jones', in *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown*, 102–20, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Smith, Jonathan Z. (2000a), 'Classification', in Willi Braun and Russell T. McCutcheon (eds), *Guide to the Study of Religion*, 35–44, London: Cassell.
Smith, Jonathan Z. (2000b), 'Acknowledgments: Morphology and History in Mircea Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1949–1999), Part 1: The Work and Its Contexts', *History of Religions*, 39 (4): 315–31.
Smith, Jonathan Z. (2000c), 'Acknowledgments: Morphology and History in Mircea Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1949–1999), Part 2: The Texture of the Work', *History of Religions*, 39 (4): 332–51.
Smith, Jonathan Z., ed. (2004), 'A Matter of Class: Taxonomies of Religion', in *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*, 160–78, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Tilly, Charles (1984), *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
Tylor, Edward B. (1958), *The Origins of Culture*, New York: Harper (originally published as vol. 1 of *Primitive Culture*, London: Murray, 1871).
Wach, Joachim (1924), *Religionswissenschaft: Prolegomena zu ihrer wissenschaftstheoretischen Grundlegung*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.