Definition of religion. Annotated bibliography. Studies in English on Buddhism, Chinese religion, Hinduism

Contents of this Section

The Problem of defining Religion

First Part: General studies in English:

A - Cas

Cav - Fuj

Gar -Kim

Kin - Owe

Pai - Sma

Smi - Z

Second Part: Studies in English on various religions:

Judaism, Christianity, Roman, Greek

Buddhism, Chinese, Hinduism

Islam, Shinto, Asian, African, Australian, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism

Third Part: Studies in English on various disciplines:

History of religions, Comparative religions

Anthropology, Sociology

Psychology, philosophy, phenomenology, law, politics

Bibliography

Buddhism

1. Almond, Philip C. 1988. *The British Discovery of Buddhism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
"The student of religion has been well served by a number of volumes devoted to the history of Christian thought in the nineteenth century.
But very few studies have been devoted to the nineteenth-century interpretations of non-Christian religions, or to the role that these played in the shaping of Victorian culture. This volume is intended partly to fill that gap by examining the creation and interpretation of Buddhism in Great Britain during this period. It is to be hoped that the examination of the way in which Victorian thinkers made sense of the East, and of the means by which Victorian Christians came to terms with an alien tradition both complementary to and opposite to their own, will cast some new light on a period which was seminal for the development of contemporary Western religious pluralism.
To a large extent, I have allowed the interpreters of Buddhism to speak for themselves. At one level, this is a means to show forth the subtle and complex connexions between the network of texts which comprise Victorian discourse about Buddhism. But at another level, a deeper one, it is intended to evoke in the reader not only a cognitive apprehension but a sense of, and a feeling for, those aspects of the discourse that are uniquely Victorian. My intention has been to supply as much detail as space allowed to enable the reader personally to encounter Victorian Buddhism." (*Preface*, p. IX)

2. Herbrechtsmeier, William. 1993. "Buddhism and the Definition of Religion: One More Time." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* no. 32:1–18.
Abstract: "This paper argues that the belief in and reverence for superhuman beings cannot be understood as the chief distinguishing characteristic of religious phenomena. The consideration of Buddhism has always been central to the discussion of what religion is, and this paper focuses on the limitations of the human-superhuman dichotomy as it might be used to apply to Buddhist traditions. The argument makes three points: a) There are important sects of Buddhism that do not rely on reverence for superhuman beings, and the concept "superhuman" is difficult (if not impossible) to use in cross-cultural studies because of cultural variations in what it means to be human; b) the insistence that "philosophies" should be systematically distinguished from "religions" is arbitrary and culturally biased; and c) Buddhist doctrines that assert that reality is ultimately "nondual" provide the conceptual context for understanding superhuman beings in Mahayana, and this conceptuality is not consonant with superhuman definitions of religion."

3. Houtman, Gustaaf. 1990. "How a Foreigner Invented 'Buddhendoi' in Burmese. From *tha-tha-na* to *bok-da' ba-tha*." *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford* no. 21:113–128.
"The use of concepts like 'Christianity' implies a degree of self-consciousness that it is but one possible faith among competing 'isms'. During my stay in Burma, I encountered several Bunnese who argued that, prior to colonization, there was no Bunnese term for 'Buddhism' equivalent to our term 'Christianity', and that it was the Baptist American missionary [Adoniram] Judson [1788-1850] who was putatively responsible for the introduction of the now popularly used term 'Buddha language/culture' (*bok-da' ba-tha*) into the Burmese language. I have not been able to substantiate whether this is true-indeed, I doubt that a single person could be held responsible for this. However, the fact remains that we are here less concerned with historical fact than with Burmese constructions of Buddhism in their own language. Certainly, it is beyond doubt that over the last century a new term has come to be much used by the Burmese themselves in reference to Buddhism. In this essay I will briefly describe the significance of this new terminology, which has not hitherto been described in Burmese dictionaries nor in the Western literature on Burmese Buddhism." (pp. 113-114)
References
Judson, Adoniram 1966 [1953]. Judson's Burmese-English Dictionary (2nd printing), Rangoon: Baptist Board of Publications.

4. Pyysiäinen, Ilkka. 2003. "Buddhism, Religion, and the Concept of "God"." *Numen* no. 50:147–171.
Summary: "It is here argued that, although the Buddha and the buddhas are not regarded as gods by Buddhists, they clearly fulfill the criteria of "counter-intuitive agents" as they have been presented by Pascal Boyer. To the extent that religion can be understood as human thought, action, and experience that involve counter-intuitive representations, Buddhism does not have to be the problematic touchstone for a global concept of religion."

5. Smart, Ninian. 1994. "Theravada Buddhism and the Definition of Religion." In *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVI Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (I.A.H.R.), Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990*, edited by Bianchi, Ugo, 603–606. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
"It is an obvious, but yet not always recognized, fact that the Theravada does not fit substantial theistic and absolutistic types of definition of religion. There is no underlying Ground of Being. As a non-theistic religion, it, like Jainism, evades many of the Western characterizations of religion, in so far as these are tied to describing a certain core ultimate. If there is an ultimate in the Theravada it is not a God and not a Being." (p. 603)
(...)
"Let us look at the question from the end of scope, firstly, and then from the angle of balance, secondly. Do we want religion to cover secular symbolic systems or not? I consider it highly desirable, from various points of view. First, it is anomalous to have an aspectual study which does not cover all of its aspect. If what we deal with essentially is the religious and symbolic aspect of human life - rituals, ultimate beliefs, myths and so on - then it is bad if a whole chunk is left out, and it leads to confusion including scientific confusion. We have had studies in the past which begin from a particular worldview and interpret others from the categories and values of that worldview, notably in sociology (e.g. Berger's *The Sacred Canopy*). They can be illuminating, such studies, but they do not deal with the problem of distinguishing themselves from what regularly goes on in theology. There is a decent worldview-neutralism we should strive for, hard as it may be: because then at least our hypotheses are open to testing. But it does seem odd that we should analyse the ritual of the Theravadin temple and not that of the Sri Lankan State." (p. 604)

6. Southwold, Martin. 1978. "Buddhism and the Definition of Religion." *Man* no. 13:362–379.
Abstract: "The ethnography of practical Buddhism in Sri Lanka shows that theistic-type definitions and conceptions of religion are inadequate, as Durkheim argued. It is futile to follow Durkheim in seeking a better definition, as all such definitions must fail because religion is a polythetic class. The fact that it is a polythetic class is positively significant: it suggests that a religion is a compound of diverse elements. We should seek to understand why religions are compounded as they are. Buddhist cultures are particularly relevant because the compounding takes an unusual form. It is argued that Buddhism, though non-theistic, resembles other religions in depending on mystical notions; it is shown how this contributes to understanding the social functions of religions. Nevertheless dependence on mystical notions may not be fundamental for explaining religious behaviour."

Chinese religion

1. Barrett, Tim H., and Tarocco, Francesca. 2012. "Terminology and religious identity: Buddhism and the genealogy of the term *Zongjiao*." In *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative*

Perspectives, edited by Krech, Volkhard and Steinicke, Marion, 307–319. Leiden: Brill.

"While research on religious topics has been constantly growing during the last decade, the emergence in the nineteenth century of a novel conception of religion – a notion that was at considerable variance
with the ideas and practices of earlier periods – and of the terminology to describe it, are yet to be fully investigated. China, of course, lacked the lexical equivalent of the term 'religion' in its post-Reformation
acceptation as a discrete feature of culture and a matter of individual belief. The subject of the present short paper discusses the Buddhist bias intrinsic in the choice of the new term *zongjiao* to designate official discourse on religion in the twentieth century.

The work of Talal Asad may have alerted scholars everywhere to the problems involved in using the word 'religion' as if it were a universal category innocent of specifically European connotations. Yet, for the one fourth of humanity who live in East Asia and use forms) of writing based on the Chinese script, most scholars still seem content to accept a simplified account of the origins of the modern Japanese word s*hûkyô* and Chinese *zongjiao* that glosses over many of the complexities and ambiguities involved in its creation.(6) What is offered here, then, is a step towards a fuller account of the history of the term that gives due weight to the crucial but complex developments in the mid-nineteenth century. We believe that these developments, while they resulted in the adoption by so many contemporary language users, for better or worse, of a term now regarded as their word corresponding to 'religion', may be seen as pointing to a background in earlier discourse on religious topics. A close look at the evidence does not suggest a neologism especially coined to meet the needs of contact with the West, and so conveying no more and no less than the connotations of the word in Europe and America, but something much more nuanced. As we are at pains to point out in our conclusions, we do not see our work as definitive, and we have also striven to be fairly concise in the presentation of our findings, which might at a number of points bear more extended discussion. Even so, it is hoped that this brief communication may serve as a stimulus to further debate, and especially further research." (pp. 307-308 notes omitted)

2. Chen, Hsi-yuan. 1999. *Confucianism Encounters Religion. The Formation of Religious Discourse and the Confucian Movement in Modern China*, Cambridge, MA.

Unpublished Ph.D. thesis available at ProQuest Dissertations and Theses ref. n. 3226192.

Abstract: "This dissertation examines the complexities and flux in the conceptualization of the generic Western concept of "religion" in the course of social, cultural, and political movements from late-Qing to early Republican China. Central to the study is the indeterminacy of meaning in the transition from Chinese traditional discourse on *jiao* to the Western modem one on "religion," and how the collision of these two discourses affected the evaluation of Chinese elite of their traditions as well as their agenda on the transformation of China. Before "religion" was introduced into China, the traditional discourse of ' *jiao* (teaching)" defined cultural traditions. Confucianism was placed at the center of comparisons and considered to be the archetypal *jiao*. When the modem Chinese equivalent to the foreign concept of "religion / *zongjiao*" gradually overwhelmed the antiquated usage of *jiao* and became a legitimate category in cultural discourse, the religiosity of Confucianism became a point of controversy that has inextricably haunted the modem Chinese history since.

Mainly prompted by worldly concerns, the "Defending Confucianism" movement in the late Qing still oriented its discussions from within the traditional framework of jiao.

Regardless of their philosophical and political differences, Kang Youwei and his contemporaries shared the pressing need to popularize Confucianism and make

Confucianism more accessible to commoners, who had long been ignored as a source of support. As the predominance of Confucianism over other *jiao* was diminished along with the overthrow of monarchial order, the Confucian Religion Association (*kongjiao hui*) established in 1912 signifies that Confucianism had to compete with those *jiao* that were now categorized as "religious" groups. Initiated by the Confucian Religion Association, the debate over the enshrinement of Confucianism as the National Religion in the making of the constitution engenders much disjunction and confusion. This can be attributed to difficulties arising from trying to reshape the traditional relationship between *zheng* (government) and *jiao* (Confucianism) according to the Western notion of the modem nation-state on the one hand and the neologism "religion" on the other. In fact, the notion of a written "constitution," and the implications of a bifurcation between church and state were utterly foreign to the Chinese mind of the time, and are perhaps even still misunderstood by some to this day.

The neologism "religion" was inevitably imprinted onto Chinese discourse at the turn of the century as "Western jiao," with all the colored associations of the West's colonialist and proselytizing encounter with China. The Chinese perception of "religion," then, was evidently affected and deflected by their understanding of Christianity. This bias was consequently embodied in the partial convergence of the Anti-Religious Campaign and Anti-Christian Campaign in 1920s. Religion in general was delineated as a misleading "superstition" that would delude the populace. For many intellectuals the mission of "enlightening the populace" entailed the emancipation of all people from every form of "superstition," understood to be "religion." Consequently, the advocacy of the Confucian religion was engulfed by a counter-current to dereligionize Confucianism, a movement which has basically set the tone for many decades to come.

Yet, Confucianism as a "religion" was and is not doomed. While Western religious discourse has been questioning the identification of Confucianism, the ambiguous nature of Confucianism has also been challenging the fluid Western definition of "religion."

Now, at the end of this century, the demarcation between "religion" and *jiao* has become somewhat blurred again."

3. Chun, Shan. 2012. *Major Aspects of Chinese Religion and Philosophy: Dao of Inner Saint and Outer King*. Berlin: Springer.
Chapter 3: *The Definition of Religion*. pp. 29-33.
"Introduction
In my research and understanding, religion could be briefed concisely as ''faith established between human and his God'', but God is, of course, the equivalent term for any transcendent Being.
I think my short presentation about the concept of religion should be confined to the domain of contemporary Chinese scholarship, which includes the introduction and critical evaluations made by Chinese scholars toward western scholarship and their own contributions to the very concept. After this introduction and explanation, I beg to share my personal reflections on the concept with you and shall be happy to discuss it in this paper." (p. 29)

4. Dean, Kenneth, and Zhenman, Zheng. 2010. *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain: Volume One: Historical Introduction to the Return of the Gods*. Leiden: Brill.
Chapter Two: *Definitions of Religion in China*,(1) pp. 41-52.
"Within Western religious studies, a recent movement has carried out a critical reflection on the ideology of religious studies, and interrogated the processes of the invention of "world religions" and the study of comparative religions (McCutcheon 1997; Dubuisson 2003, Fitzgerald 2000, Masuzawa 2005). This critical movement questions the universalization of the notion of religiosity, which they traced back to Western theology. Some of these critics suggest instead a more selfconscious sociology of religion, based on paradigmatic changes to the field introduced by Stark and others who talk in terms of a pragmatics of religion as a set of rational choices within differing ritual marketplaces (Stark and Finke, 2000). An extended

sociology of comparative religion may not however completely escape the critique of the founding notions of the field as a whole. Within anthropology, Asad (1993) also called for the rejection of the term "religion" in place of the study of specific ritual traditions and disciplinary practices. In his subsequent work he has also urged the exploration of the impact of modernization theory, notions of secularization, and the institutionalization of Western definitions of religion on non Western societies (Asad 2003)." (pp. 45-46)

(1) Anthony Yu points out (2005:2–25) that the Chinese term "zongjiao" 宗教 (lit. ancestral teachings) which is usually translated as "religion", was introduced in the sixth century A.D. in reference to the foreign teachings of Buddhism. The term was later adapted in the nineteenth century by scholars in Meiji Japan to translate another foreign conception, that is, the Western notion of "religion". This re-defined phrase was soon taken up, along with a host of newly coined modern neologisms, or redefined expressions, by late imperial and Republican period Chinese writers.

References

Yu, Anthony C. 2005. *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives*. Chicago: Open Court.

5. Feuchtwang, Stephan. 2010. *The Anthropology of Religion, Charisma and Ghosts: Chinese Lessons for Adequate Theory*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

Chapter 2: *'Religion' and its historical transfer into China*, pp. 11-28; Chapter 3: *'A Chinese religion exists'*, pp. 29-52.

"In sum, what I have sought to establish so far in this excursion into European history is that the category 'religion' emerges in conjunction with a distinct concept and discourse of 'politics' and a new subject of politics, a people and its country. Indeed, Machiavelli's *The Prince* was itself a treatise on establishing Italian territoriality. It is also clear that after Machiavelli 'religion' could refer to any system of truth, good conduct and divination, and that it could be treated as a fact, or instrument, of human rule." (p. 14)

"Conclusion

(,,,)

First is that the category 'religion', essential to any account of secularism, is an instrument of policy and that it comes in a cluster, with its pejorative and negative, condemnatory category 'superstition', and with the privileging above categorised religions of a moral, humanistic and possibly religious spirituality that is local but also a contribution to or special of humanity. In China, this has been identified with Confucianism, whose singularity was learned via European missionaries starting with the Jesuits' translations of *ru* into Latin as the civilisation of the literati, but preceded by an intimation of a supreme God. Translated back into Chinese republican states, a supreme deity disappears and is replaced by another singularity, similar to the singularity of all states representing a people and its unified nationalities, the singular spirituality of a civilisation is also a nation in its own narrative of progress and breaks from past. That spirituality will never be confined to the one moral philosophy of a sage figure, rather it will also include local traditions of order, representation and mutual responsibility, identified from the top in China presently and predictably as 'socialist'. This is a spirituality of conduct and the assumption by state leaders of the task of correcting popular conduct, which is still denotable by the Chinese word *li*. For the subjects of this state, it is the spirituality of self-cultivation and their own senses of proper conduct, often highly critical of the officials and leaders of the state.

Second, I add to the anthropology of the secular the distinctiveness of its temporality, which is centrally a narrative of progress and the project of modernity and of sciences, all three constituting their own irreversible breaks with a past, which is usually an ideological exaggeration.

Finally, I have added for further consideration that this progressive temporality coexists with the remnants and revivals of other temporalities – in China of ancestral or familial, sage and millenarian, and heroic-responsive temporalities, about which much more will be said in the chapters that follow." (pp. 27-28)

6. Ford Campany, Robert. 2003. "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)." *History of Religions* no. 42:287–319.
"What is involved when we invoke the categories "religions" or "a religion" (as distinct from "religion" in the generic sense and from "the religious," taxa with which I will not deal here)? To what extent are these categories helpfully invoked in the study of specific non-Western cultures and periods-for example, early medieval China?" (p. 288)
(...)
"That premodern Chinese "lacked a word for 'religion(s),'" has been noted for almost a century now,(6) does not, prima facie, constitute a reason for modern scholars not to use the term." (p. 289)
(...)
"That early medieval Chinese discourses lacked one-for-one "versions" of the Western category "religions" does not mean that they lacked some usages that are analogous -- ones that do something like the same work, ones invoked in the sorts of contexts in which "religions" would be invoked in modern Western discourses. Hence we must pay close attention to two cultural and temporal sets of linguistic usages and their metaphorical implications, and juxtapose these results.(9)
(...)
"In sum, my argument is not that we should cease speaking of religions in cultures that lack an analogous vocabulary because they lack that vocabulary; for, as I have shown, matters are not that simple, and even a culture as different from the modem West as that of early medieval China, with its situation of new religious imports and plurality, generated analogous usages. But, if we are to go on speaking of religions, we should at least find new metaphors for doing so. If possible, the new metaphors should avoid picturing religions as really existent things in the world; as organisms; as hard-sided, clearly demarcated containers of people and things; and as agents, because picturing them in all these ways falsifies the actual state of things and skews our research questions in unfortunate ways. Religions do not exist, at least not in the same way that people and their textual and visual artifacts and performances do.
And when religions are metaphorically imagined as doing things, it becomes harder to see the agents who really and non metaphorically do things: people.
(6) W. E. Soothill [*] noted as early as 1913 that the modern Chinese term *zongjiao* was a borrowing from Japanese and that the term had been coined recently in Japanese to translate the Western "religion" (cited in Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, p. 58).
(9) A recent work that, though not on the topic of religion(s), is exemplary in its careful attention to Chinese metaphors and the differences from Western analogues in their implications is Jane Geaney, *On the Epistemology of the Senses in Early Chinese Thought (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002). Edward Slingerland is also doing important work in this area.*
[*] 'The Chinese, recognizing this deficiency and feeling the need of a term meaning a religion, have recently adopted the term *Tsung-Chiao* from the Japanese, who had adapted it to suit their own need for a term to cover the Western idea of religion." (William Edward Soothill, *The Three Religions of China*, London, New York 1913, p. 6. [Note added by Raul Corazzon]

7. Goossaer, Vincent, and Palmer, David A. 2011. *The Religious Question in Modern China*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
"In recent years, with the reemergence of religious movements in the Chinese world and their impact on its domestic and international politics, there has been a great interest among scholars, intellectuals, the general public, and Chinese socials themselves in understanding what China's leaders have termed the "religious question" (*zongjiao wenti*).(2)
We use the same term to qualify the uneasy and constantly evolving mutual adaptation of religion and the modern political and social framework of Chinese societies, beginning with the first attempts at religious reform in 1898."

(...)
"Maybe more than in most other places, Chinese modernist secularism has actually created “religion” as a foil and autonomous category.
Looking back at the span of the twentieth century, we can see the tremendous diversity of the religious productions of Chinese society during this period. Before the twentieth century, Chinese religion was also characterized by diversity, but one with an ordering center of gravity: the religio- political state. The end of the imperial regime and the 1919 antitraditionalist May Fourth movement ejected this ordering center; the twentieth century was witness to a succession of substitutes, from the New Life movement to the Mao cult, which did not endure. The result is a decentered religious universe, exploding centrifugally in all directions. Since traditional Chinese cosmology and society were religiously structured, the result is a de- centered society, a de- centered China: a Middle Kingdom that has lost its Middle. Thus the religious question: will there ever be, once again, a spiritual center of gravity for the Chinese world?
Our aim in this book is to provide a comprehensive overview of how this question arose and persistently resurfaced as one of the central issues in the history of modern China, from 1898 to 2008." (*Introduction*, pp. 2-3)
(2) For Chinese books that define and discuss the religious question on the mainland, see Zhongyang dangxiao, *Xian jieduan; Wang Zuo’an, Zhongguo de zongjiao wenti*; Chen Jinlong, *Zhongguo gongchandang.*

8. Goossaert, Vincent. 2005. "The Concept of Religion in China and the West." *Diogenes* no. 52:13–20.
Abstract: "The religious question in China is not limited to the contemporary tensions between the Catholic and Protestant churches and the Beijing regime, the repression suffered by Tibetan Buddhists or Uighur Muslims and the problems associated with so-called ‘sectarian’ movements. Though these issues are very important and worthy of interest in themselves, they have to be understood in a wider context which takes in the totality of religious realities in China, including those we in the West do not see because they fall outside our representations of what is religious. Furthermore, the contemporary religious question assumes meaning only if we consider all the struggles between the Chinese state and society’s religious structures since the end of the 19th century. In another publication I have sketched out the modern history of relations between the Chinese state and the religious structures of the society.(1) Here I should like to show the importance of the concept of religion itself and of the controversies around it in the history of those conflicting relations. We shall see that the concepts, such as religion, used in the humanities and social sciences have consequences that go far beyond the context of academic debates and can help to feed repression and social conflict."
(1) Goossaert, Vincent (2003) ‘Le destin de la religion chinoise au 20ème siècle’, *Social Compass* 50(4): 429–40.

9. Hedges, Paul. 2017. "Multiple Religious Belonging after Religion: Theorising Strategic Religious Participation in a Shared Religious Landscape as a Chinese Model." *Open Theology* no. 3:48–72.
Abstract: "It is argued that the concept of Multiple Religious Belonging as normally conceived relies upon a problematic construction of “religion” which can be expressed as the World Religions Paradigm. This relies upon a modern Western Protestant bias as to how “religion” should be understood. It is argued that religion can be understood otherwise, and looking at the Chinese context an argument is made that participation in different religious traditions relies upon a very different construct from Multiple Religious Belonging via the World Religions Paradigm model. This is termed Strategic Religious Participation in a Shared Religious Landscape. It considers the way that Chinese religiosity does not have fixed borders in the same way as the World Religions Paradigm suggests. Indeed, asking whether there is Multiple Religious Belonging in traditional Chinese thought seems to misconstrue the situation. A final reflection asks whether this new paradigm, of Strategic Religious Participation in a Shared Religious Landscape, may be

appropriate to look at the contemporary Western context amongst a number of religious “nones”. Although no definitive answer is given to this question, the issue highlights that the World Religions Paradigm which shapes our sense of Multiple Religious Belonging may need to be rethought within different contexts."

10. Hermann, Adrian. 2018. "Distinguishing “Religion”. Variants of Differentiation and the Emergence of “Religion” as a Global Category in Modern Asia." *Soziale Systeme* no. 23:215–234.
Abstract: "The existence of religious diversity is mostly taken for granted in today’s world society. Despite all apparent differences, however, world society theory proposes the hypothesis of a single function system of religion. At the same time, in the case of religion a process of semantic unification is highly disputed. Until recently, such debates had not paid much attention to the “translingual practice” (Liu) that has produced “religion” as a global category over the last two hundred years. Drawing on recent studies, this article traces some semantic transformations in regard to “religion” in 19th and early 20th century Asia and highlights the importance of three contested distinctions connected with “religion”. It also relates these semantic changes to recent debates about the differentiation of religion in theories of secularization. Any visibility of regional differences in the religious system of modern world society should be understood as the result of the emergence of this global category. Such a focus on semantics highlights the way in which speaking of “religion” as a specific instance of “culture” in world society becomes possible and “religion” becomes observable to itself and from the outside only as a result of these transformations."
References
Liu, Lydia H. (1995): *Translingual Practice. Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900–1937*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

11. Krämer, Hans Martin Krämer. 2009. "Introduction: “Religion” and “Heresy” in East Asia Between Continuity and Discontinuity." *Bochumer Jahrbuch zur Ostasienfroschung* no. 33:5–16.
"Although the various polities and societies of East Asia had had contact with Europeans before the nineteenth century, the most prominent among them being Christian missionaries, consequences for the grasp of religious phenomena had been minimal." (p. 5, a note omitted)
(...)
"Yet, recent scholarship has come to different conclusions as to the novelty of approaches to the phenomenon of religion(s) in East Asia in the modern era. Below, the two schools of continuity and discontinuity between the premodern and the modern eras will be identified. Furthermore, one of the most important concomitants of the formation of a sphere defined by the modern concept of religion was a boundary-drawing exercise which excluded certain phenomena and entities. This is true both for the negatively labeled heresies, superstitions, or heterodoxies and for the more neutrally delineated philosophies or schools of thought. The essays collected here will focus on this excluding side of the process of concept formation and shed light on the question of continuity vs. discontinuity by transcending national boundaries and looking at case studies from China, Japan, and Korea, in the process highlighting commonalities and differences." (pp. 5-6)

12. Kuo, Ya-pei. 2010. "Before the Term: Christianity and the Discourse of “Religion” in Late Nineteenth-Century China." *Comparativ – Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* no. 20:98–113.
"In understanding the conceptual history of “religion” in modern China, much of the discussion has focused on “the term question.” As many have pointed out, the Chinese language did not possess an equivalent to the Western term “religion” until the beginning of the twentieth century. While the phrase *zongjiao,* which is the standard word for “religion” in modern Chinese, can be found in Chinese texts since the medieval period, it had different meanings and never functioned as the signifier of a category.(1) *Zongjiao* in its modern incarnation and as the designated

equivalent of “religion” originated in a loanword from the Japanese(2) As part of the linguistic circulation in East Asia, the Chinese graphs were gleaned from pre-modern texts to form a new vocabulary and to facilitate the importation of the Western-originated concept in Meiji-era Japan (1868–1912).(3)
The Chinese scripts of the Japanese word then traveled back to China as a neologism.
Ever since its inception in China, *zongjiao* carried a conspicuous tone of cultural otherness.
Liang Qichao, a participant in the 1898 reform movement and a journalist whose post-1900 writings significantly popularized the use of the term, claimed in a 1902 essay that China had never had religion.(4) Hu Shi, a self-proclaimed follower of Western liberalism and one of the most influential historians in the Republican era, upheld a similar though qualified position: Before the advent of Buddhism, the mainstay of intellectual orientation in China had been rationalist and thus non-religious.(5)" (pp. 98-99)
(1) For a discussion of the usage before the nineteenth century, see A.C. Yu, *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives*, Chicago 2005, p. 2-4; Chen H., “Zongjiao” – yige Zhongguo jindai wenhuashi shang de guanjianci (“Zongjiao”: A Key Term in the Cultural History of Modern China), in: Xin shixue 13/4 (2002), pp. 7–66, here: pp. 46–49.
(2) Chen H., “Zongjiao” (as in note 1); M. Bastid-Bruguière (Ba Sidi), Liang Qichao yu zhongjiao wenti (Liang Qichao and the Religion Question), in: Hazama N. (ed.), Liang Qichao, Mingzhi Riben, Xifang: Riben Jingdu daxue renwen kexue yanjiusuo gongtong yanjiu baogao (Liang Qichao, Meiji Japan, and the West: Reports of the Joint Research Conducted at the Institute for Research in the Humanities, Kyoto University, Japan), Beijing 200 , pp. 400–7.
(3) L.H. Liu, Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China 900– 9 7, Stanford 99 ; F. Masini, The Formation of Modern Chinese Lexicon and Its Evolution toward a National Language: The Period from 840 to 898, Berkeley 1993.
(4) Liang Q., Lun Zhongguo xueshu zhi bianqian dashi (On the Major Trend of Changes in China’s Scholarship), in: Wu S. et al. (eds.), Yinbing shi wenjidianjiao (Writings from the Studio of Ice Drinking, with Annotations), Kunming 200 , Vol. 1, pp. 2–84, here: pp. 2 6, 2 8.
(5) Hu S., The Chinese Renaissance: The Haskell Lectures, 1933 , Chicago 1934, pp. 78–93.

13. ———. 2017. "*Zongjiao* and the Category of Religion in China." In *Religion, Theory, Critique: Classic and Contemporary Approaches and Methodologies*, edited by King, Richard, 155–161. New York: Columbia University Press.
"The Chinese language did not possess an equivalent to the English term “religion” (as distinct from a corpus of teachings) until the turn of the twentieth century.(1) The lack of a proper term meant that religion was not cognitively demarcated from other realms of human activities. Religious motivations and outlooks, rather than articulating themselves in a distinctive voice, were often entwined in activities and discourses one might describe as secular. Scholars have noted that both the elites and the populace in premodern China viewed the human and superhuman worlds as one continuum.
Many ostensibly worldly endeavors and practices were underpinned by a religious ethos.
The introduction of the term *zongjiao* (religion) into the Chinese language at the beginning of the twentieth century, in this context, signified an epistemological shift.
The neologism gave recognition to religion as a category in its own right, indicating an awareness of its distinctiveness. This awareness, in turn, set in motion the sociopolitical process of marking religion off from other spheres of activities. The early twentieth century witnessed many social groups reforming themselves

according to one or another officially approved definition of religion.(...)" (p. 155, a note omitted)
(„.)
"The term *zongjiao* had been in use since the medieval period. Instead of denoting a category, it merely meant “to revere a doctrine,” “the reverence for a doctrine,” or “the revered doctrine.”(5) *Zongjiao* as a modern Chinese term was a borrowing from the Japanese word *shūkyō*. It was part of the linguistic circulation in East Asia: classical Chinese phrases were gleaned and recast to facilitate Japan’s translation and importation of Western knowledge in the second half of the nineteenth century. The very same phrases then traveled back to China as new vocabulary.(6) Although Japan’s influence on the emergence of the Chinese term is undeniable, tracing *zongjiao* to *shūkyō* was only half of the story. Scholars have agreed that in its early history, the term frequently implied simply Christianity. Anthony C. Yu, for example, claimed, “Whenever the Chinese term *zongjiao* was used, [Christianity] almost inevitably became its assumed standard referent.”(7) Yu was writing about China, but his generalization may be applied to Japan. In the second half of the nineteenth century, both countries were set upon by Western powers and witnessed the advent of Christian missionary enterprise, aiming at nothing less than a total conversion of their peoples. This shared experience facilitated the linguistic trade." (p. 156)
(1) 1. Wilfred C. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A Revolutionary Approach to the Great Religious Tradition* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1962), 58.
(5) For examples, see Anthony C. Yu, *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives* (Chicago: Open Court, 2005), 12–14; Chen Hsi-yuan, “ ‘*Zongjiao’—yige Zhongguo jindai wenhuashi shang de guanjianci*” (Zongjiao: A Key Term in the Cultural History of Modern China), Xin shixue 13, no. 4 (December 2002): 46–49.
(6) Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity -China, 1900–1937* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).
(7) Yu, *State and Religion in China*, 8.

14. Li, Xuedan, and Chen, Yuehua. 2024. "A reflection on making ‘Religion’ in China. The Genealogy of Zongjiao through cultural exchange."

Abstract: "The term *Zongjiao* [宗教] originally referring to the teachings of Buddhism and Chinese ancestral worship was not considered the equivalent for the English term ‘religion’ until the late 19th century when Japanese translated religion as *shūkyō* [宗教]. The later introduction of the concept of *Zongjiao* into China via Japan triggered a deep exploration of the differences between religion and *Jiao* among Chinese intellectuals like Liang Qichao, Kang Youwei and Peng Guangyu, representing Chinese scholars’ conceptualisation and reflections of Chinese traditional religious belief, practices and phenomena within the context of Western religious culture. Rather than a simple lexical selection, the translation of ‘religion’ essentially was a process of making the notion of ‘religion’ in China, which had provided valuable insight into the nature of Chinese Confucianism culture and was closely related to the understanding of the state–church relationship in China. With continuous cultural exchanges and integration, reflecting on this translation process will provide a more inclusive perspective on the complexity and diversity of religions and facilitate mutual learning."

15. Meyer, Christian. 2009. "‘Religion’ and ‘Superstition’ in Introductory Works to Religious Studies in Early Republican China." *Bochumer Jahrbuch zur Ostasienfroschung* no. 33:103–125.

"The concept of “superstition” played an important role in the reception of the discipline of Religious Studies (*zongjiaoxue*) in China. A general background of its introduction was the larger trend to adopt Western categories since the late Qing period. More specifically, public discourses on the role of religion in Republican China (1912–1949)led to the academic occupation with religion. While anti-

religious intellectuals subsumed religion under the category of “superstition”, apologetics of religion differentiated between the two. The examples of introductory works by the Christian authors Xie Songgao and Wang Zhixin reveal two different ways of introducing and applying categories of “religion” and “superstition” to the Chinese history of religions. Their writings can be understood partly as apologetic reactions to the fierce anti-religious attacks that dominated the debate in the 1920s. At the same time they represent a way of negotiating different biographical backgrounds, traditional Chinese and Christian, in their own identities."

16. ———. 2014. "How the ‘Science of Religion’ (*zongjiaoxue*) as a Discipline Globalized ‘Religion’ in Late Qing and Republican China, 1890–1949—Global Concepts, Knowledge Transfer, and Local Discourses." In *Globalization and the Making of Religious Modernity in China*, edited by Jansen, Thomas, Klein, Thoralf and Meyer, Christian, 297–341. Leiden: Brill.
"The issue of ‘Science of Religion’ *(zongjiaoxue*) in Republican China thus leads us to a prominent chapter of the Chinese genealogy of religion, that is, of how the category ‘religion’ was received, negotiated and appropriated in early ‘local’ intellectual discourses and conditions. These complex, multifaceted processes took place as an interplay of more or less effective channels of transfer, the interrelated discourses of modernization and national identity as well as diverging interests and positions. ‘Science of religion’ as an allegedly objective and neutral approach to religion thus appears to be no less contested than the category of religion itself. At the same time, the academic field with its controversies and efforts related to and combined with public debates on religion in the 1920s, which proved to be instrumental to the reception and appropriation of ‘religion’ as a concept within the Chinese context. In this sense, the modern academic field itself, conceptualized as separate from the religious as much as the public field and at the same time conceived of as a functional element within modern society, appears as a new global factor relevant to the transformation of the traditional ‘religious field.’ " (p. 332)

17. ———. 2015. "The Emergence of “Religious Studies” (*zongjiaoxue*) in Late Imperial and Republican China, 1890-1949." *Numen* no. 62:40–75.
Abstract: "This article contextualizes the rise of “early religious studies in China" with its apex in the 1920s within the heated debates on the role of religion in a modem Chinese society.
While the most recent development of religious studies {*zongjiaoxue*) in China (including Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) is well known, its early emergence in the late Qing and Republican periods (ca. 1890-1949) has been a neglected topic. The author demonstrates first how antagonistic anti-religious and affirmative positions, received from Western modernization discourse and informed by the contested character of the concept of religion itself, led to the emergence of this new discipline in Republican China as a product of broader discourses on modernization. Secondly, the article evaluates the limited institutionalization of religious studies as a distinct “full” discipline in relation to the broader interdisciplinary “field” of research and public debates on religion.
While the interdisciplinary character is typical of the field in general (also in the West), the limited degree of “full disciplinarity" depended on specific, local discursive and political factors of its time. As “religion” appears as an important modem discourse in East Asia, the early emergence of religious studies in China thereby reflects social, political, and intellectual transitions from Imperial to Republican China, and offers a unique perspective on Asian discourses on religious and secular modernities."

18. ———. 2022. "*Zongjiao* as a Chinese Conceptual Term for Religion? Genealogical Notes On its Development Since The Late Qing Period." *Journal of Chinese Religions* no. 50:115–140.
Abstract: "This article addresses the question of *zongjiao* as a modern translation for the Western term “religion.” Neither criticizing nor defending its application, it instead takes for granted the Western concept’s adoption and argues that the general

acceptance of the newly coined binome and its semantics can be best understood through a genealogical approach that includes global, especially Western, as much as local Chinese roots and discourses. The article builds on recent scholarship and adds new insights from a discursive perspective with a special focus on the important transformational period of the first half of the twentieth century. In particular, it argues for the continuing hybrid character of the historically shaped semantics of zongjiao and its lasting semantic ambiguities, which allow one to understand *zongjiao* as a signifier that interconnects uses in local, traditional, as well as modern academic and international discourses."

19. Rosker, Jana S. 2017. "Is Confucianism a religion? Modern Confucian theories on the ethical nature of classical discourses." *Asian Philosophy* no. 27:279–291.
Abstract: "When dealing with the study of diverse Confucian traditions in eastern Asia, we are often confronted by the issue of the religious dimension of Confucianism and how can it be compared to the Western (or 'general') connotations of the term. Proceeding from the basic question as to how Confucianism sees itself, the paper focuses on the approaches of two representatives of the Modern Confucian intellectual movement, namely Mou Zongsan and Xu Fuguan. In addition, we shall also take into consideration the various contemporary Confucian interpretations of the previously delineated problems, for instance Liu Shuhsien's or Chen Lai's. Based on these discourses, the paper clarifies the reasons for Modern Confucian interpretations, according to which Confucianism is not a religion in the Western sense but a discourse that represents both a practical moral teaching and an abstract philosophy of immanent transcendence."

20. Spickard, James V. 2003. "Cultural context and the definition of religion: seeing with confucian eyes." In *Defining Religion: Investigating the Boundaries Between the Sacred and the Secular*, edited by Greil, Arthur and Bromley, David G., 189–199. Oxford: Elsevier Science.
"There has been considerable scholarly work done on the intellectual construction of this concept [of religion], most famously by W. C. Smith (1964) but also by his successors (see McCutcheon, 1997). There has been less work done on its *social* construction, by which I mean the ways in which Western social patterns have constructed (and constricted) religion as an intellectual artifact. The present essay seeks to explore this social construction by contrasting Western and Confucian religious practices, showing (in brief outline) how these practices have shaped definitions. By putting practices before definition, we open the social study of religion to a broader group of phenomena than would otherwise be the case. We also — ideally — learn something about our own cultural blinders and how they have shaped what we think it appropriate to investigate. Put otherwise: each set of practices shapes a sociology of religion that places different phenomena at its core." (pp. 189-190)
References
McCutcheon, R. T. (1997). *Manufacturing religion: The discourse on sui generis religion and the politics of nostalgia.* New York: Oxford University Press.
Smith, W. C. (1964). *The meaning and end of religion: A new approach to the religious traditions of mankind*. New York: Mentor.

21. Standaert, Nicolas. 2017. "Early Sino-European Contacts and the Birth of the Modern Concept of "Religion"." In *Rooted in Hope: China – Religion – Christianity / In der Hoffnung verwurzelt: China – Religion – Christentum. Festschrift in Honor of / Festschrift für Roman Malek S.V.D. on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday / zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Hoster, Barbara , Kuhlmann, Dirk and Wesolowski, Zbigniew, 3–27. Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica.
"The concept of religion, as is well known. underwent significant changes in meaning in the course of the last four hundred years. The aim of this contribution is to trace some aspects or the *Begriffgeschichte* of "religion," especially from the point of view of intercultural contacts. Indeed, the concept was reformulated and recreated in the *inter*stices - the spaces *between* cultures.(1) I will not reiterate,

however, the various studies that have shown how Europe or the West have imposed their concepts, including "religion", on other cultures and in doing so have forced these cultures into frames that were not necessarily their own. I would rather like to reinstate the role of the "other" in the creation of concepts. More specifically I want to show how China. as well as the 17th century European reports about China, contributed to the birth of the modern notion of "religion." In doing so, I will also show how our modern concept on the one hand made the study of "religion" possible, but on the other hand may complicate our understanding not only of "religion" in other cultures but also in other epochs within one's own culture. I should underscore, however, that just like in any research on the history of concepts, the concept "religion" includes a large degree of fluidity and it is only at the end of the story that certain evolutions or distinctions become clearer."
(1) For a similar approach, see Jason Ananda Josephson. *The Invention of Religion in Japan*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012). p. 5.

22. Sun, Anna. 2013. *Confucianism as a World Religion: Contested Histories and Contemporary Realities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
"The problem I set out to solve in this book is the confusions and controversies over the religious nature of Confucianism. Although Confucianism has long been commonly accepted as one of the major world religions in our popular imagination, and portrayed as the most important religion of China in introductory textbooks on world religions, it might come as a surprise to many that it is neither considered a religion by most people in China nor counted as a religion by the Chinese government.
In fact, Confucianism is not included in the Chinese official classification of the Five Major Religions, which includes Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism." (p. 1)
(...)
"In this book I set out to untangle the many tousled threads that have made the discussion of the religious nature of Confucianism particularly difficult, both in the past and in the present. In order to make sense of the many seeming contradictions in our understanding of Confucianism, we need to be aware of the epistemological, political, and social assumptions that are embedded in the discussions of its religious nature. All concepts and classifications have histories, and I contend that in the case of the controversies over Confucianism as a religion, they are never purely intellectual scholarly disagreements; there are always complex political and social dimensions to the struggles over the classification of Confucianism." (p. 2)

23. Tarocco, Francesca. 2008. "The Making of ‘Religion’ in Modern China." In *Religion, Language, and Power*, edited by Green, Nile and Mary, Searle-Chatterjee;, 42–56. New York: Routledge.
"Research on religion in modern China has been constantly growing during the last decade. Scholars have been particularly concerned with assessing the impact of legislation upon religious practice and, to a lesser extent, with looking at how practitioners have accommodated themselves to the changing cultural and political environment. While such studies have done much to illuminate several aspects of the Chinese religious world in the twentieth century, this essay takes one step back and begins to look at the emergence of a novel conception of ‘religion’ between the last decades of the nineteenth century and the fi rst decades of the twentieth, a notion that was at considerable variance with the ideas and practices of earlier periods.
In particular, I look at how notions surrounding *zongjiao*—the term used to translate the English term ‘religion’ in modern Chinese—emerged out of several processes of cross-cultural translation and linguistic accommodation that involved primarily, but not exclusively, China and Europe, the beginnings of which can be dated back to the seventeenth century. In fact, premodern China lacked both a lexical equivalent of the English term religion and the current notion of ‘religion’ as a discrete feature of culture and matter of individual belief.(3) The following comments will hopefully reveal something of the processes that took place both with respect to some of the

attempts at representing the Chinese indigenous worldview along lines similar to those of Christianity and to the slow but progressive assimilation of a modern version of Chinese Buddhism into the new religious order." (pp. 42-43, two notes omitted)
(3) Cf. U. Bianchi (ed.), *The Notion of 'Religion' in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVIth Congress of the International Association of the History of Religions* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1994); J. Paper, *The Spirits Are Drunk: Comparative Approaches to Chinese Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

Hinduism

1. Yu, Anthony C. 2005. *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives*. Chicago: Open Court.
"The aim of this brief study, however, is not so much an attempt to justify the Chinese leader or his followers in defense of their policies as it is to assist an academic and lay readership in grasping the historical lineage of certain governmental policies toward religion. The thesis I hope to argue is simple: that there has never been a period in China's historical past in which the government of the state, in imperial and postimperial form, has pursued a neutral policy toward religion, let alone encouraged, in terms dear to American idealism, its "free exercise." The impetus to engage religion, on the part of the central government, stems first of all from its own subscription to a specific form of religiosity that, most appropriately, should be named a state religion. For more than two millennia, the core ideological convictions shaping and buttressing imperial governance also direct correlatively the purpose and process to regulate, control, and exploit all rivalling religious traditions whenever it is deemed feasible and beneficial to the state.
(...)
"The argument I want to add is that these forms of interaction with state power need not be confined to recent history, nor should it be averred that the policy of stringent and systematic state intervention in religious life has been implementated only recently by the Chinese Communists. The motivation to promote, regulate, coopt, and control religion, as a recent work of Chinese scholarship has also sought to demonstrate,' had already taken shape in China's high antiquity. The substantiation of my thesis thus focuses on the earlier periods of Chinese history down to the Tang." (pp- 3-4)

2. Balagangadhara, S. N. 2010. "Orientalism, postcolonialism and the 'construction' of religion." In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 135–163. New York: Routledge.
"In this chapter, I do two things: while showing both the strengths and weaknesses of the postcolonial story about the creation of religions in India, I also spell out a clear hypothesis on what religion is. There is much discussion in contemporary religious studies about the status of the concept 'religion'.
Some argue that the word is a creation of the scholar or that it has no reference to anything in the world or that it is not possible to talk about 'religion' intelligibly. I argue that we need to have a theory of religion, if we have to take an informed standpoint on any of the above issues. As a first step in the process, I formulate a hypothesis about the nature of the phenomenon.
I do this, however, while critically engaging with the arguments of some of the contemporary scholars." (p. 135)
(...)
"Conclusion

Let me bring this rather long chapter to its conclusion. In contradistinction to many writers on the subject, I do argue that religion can be studied.
However, I add that it could be studied at multiple levels: studying religion as religion is to accept its self-description and, in that case, being forced to do theology. The peculiar self-reflexivity of religion explains to us how to understand authors like Schleiermacher, Otto and Söderblom without accusing them of apologetic motivations. In a very specific sense, they were entirely right when they suggested that one could study religion only by being a believer oneself. At this level of description, that is, at the level of self-description of religion, it is simply impossible for us human beings to have access to an 'outsider perspective'. Our 'data' are the experiences of the believers and the properties of religion ('faith', 'worship' and such like).
Jonathan Smith (1982) is totally wrong when he says there is 'no data' for religion. As he knows, the word was historically not coined by 'the scholar' during the enlightenment period: it was used in polemics and apologetics in Ancient Greece and Rome. The believers took over the word 'religio' and gave it a different meaning than the one it had in Classical Rome. However, this does not mean that one cannot study religion scientifically: one can and should do this, but at a different level of description. It is only at this level that we could hope to develop a scientific theory about religion and the role it plays in human societies and cultures.
'Religions' were constructed in India as experiential entities by people who had a religion. There is no 'religion' in India, nor has there been one, provided one does not take the presence of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in India into account. In any case, entities like 'Hinduism', 'Buddhism', 'Jainism' are fictional entities the way the 'satyr' and the 'unicorn' are." (pp. 160-161)
References
Smith, J.Z. (1982) *Imagining Religion: from Babylon to Jonestown*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

3. Balcerowicz, Piotr. 1997. "Jaina concept of religion." *Dialogue and Universalism* no. 11-12:199–217.
"Can religion get along without a god? This question might seem absurd to many inhabitants of the Judeo–Christian and Islamic belts, but there is nothing, however, inherently absurd nor logically inconsistent in the concept of a religion bereft of the notion of a god, a supreme being or some kind of the absolute that would transcend human condition and lie at the other extreme, qualitatively disparate in relation to the mundane world. And precisely this question—rather than its converse counterpart (with the transposition of the subject and the predicate), which in itself would present perhaps an even more intellectually challenging and stimulating issue, a *soupçon* of iconoclasm and discordance hidden in it in the eyes of fervid believer notwithstanding—will occupy the bulk of the present paper, set in the Indian circumjacence of *śramaṇa* culprits scarcely amenable to traditional monotheistic concepts of religion." (p. 199)

4. Coward, Harold. 1994. "The Role of Scripture in the Self-Definition of Hinduism and Buddhism in India." In *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVI Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (I.A.H.R.), Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990*, edited by Bianchi, Ugo, 19–32. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
"Modern Western Biblical scholars have led the way in bringing the resources of Postmodern literary and language theory to bear on the interaction between the community of readers or hearers and its scripture.(6) To my knowledge little bas been done in this direction by scholars of Eastern Religions. Wendy Doniger has speculated on impact of scholars· revisions of scriptures upon the devotees who believe in the texts and suggested that the activity of scholars affect the normative understanding of a scripture by the believing conmunity. She finds that the scholar's activity does not remain disconnected from his or her subject matter but in many situations acts directly upon the data so as to create a significant change in the devotee's experience of their scripture.(7) Thus there is a change in the scholar's

object of study, induced by the scholar, and simultaneously a change in the devotional conmunity's experience of their scripture - the focal point of their religious self-definition. The aim of this paper is to open the study of this question with regard to Hinduism and Buddhism in India." (p. 20)
(6) See, for example, Edgar V. McKnight's excellent review of these developments (especially in relation! to the reader in his Postmodern Use of the Bible: *The Emergence of Reader-Oriented Criticism*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988) and from a more sociological or reader or community perspective, EP. Saunders (ed.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, two volumes 1980 & 1981.
(7) See Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (ed.), *The Critical Study of Sacred Texts,* Berkeley: Berkeley Religious Studies Series, 1979, p. xiii.

5. De Roover, Jakob, and Claerhout, Sarah. 2010. "The colonial construction of what?" In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 164–183. New York: Routledge.
"Statements concerning ‘the construction of religion’ have become commonplace in postmodern scholarship in religious studies and other domains."
(...)
"By raising three central questions, this chapter aims to clear some of the conceptual ground required for such theory formation. The first section deals with the question ‘Is religion a construct?’ The thesis that religion is only a construction or creation of scholarly study is surrounded by confusion about its precise meaning and implications. We argue that this thesis and the concomitant claim that ‘there is no data for religion’ fail to make sense in the absence of any theory of religion. In the second section, we answer the question ‘Is Hinduism a construct?’ in the positive. We explain a specific hypothesis on the empirical process through which Hinduism was created as a conceptual unit in European descriptions of India. In this limited sense, Hinduism could indeed be called a ‘construct’.
This specific hypothesis needs to be situated in the more general debate on the colonial construction of Hinduism and contrasted to some current views on the nature of ‘modern Hinduism’. Therefore, the third section raises the question as to *what* is constructed in the process of construction. On one hand, one could argue, as we do, that Hinduism has been created as a concept in certain dominant descriptions of India. Naturally, these descriptions have had some effect on Indian society, but this does not imply that Hindu religion exists in India today. On the other hand, one could suggest that Hinduism has come into being as an *object* also, a new religion that materialized on the subcontinent.
In the concluding section, we briefly indicate how the current discourse on the construction of Hinduism prevents alternative theory formation, rather than encouraging it. This is the case, because one does not realize at which level the contemporary descriptions of, and common sense on, religion have been produced by a particular theoretical framework, namely, generic Christian theology. The very ‘facts’ accepted by most authors are already descriptions that have been structured by this framework." (pp. 164-165)

6. Fitzgerald, Timothy. 1990. "Hinduism and the 'World Religion' Fallacy." *Religion* no. 20:101–118.
Abstract: "The present argument is (1) that a broadly sociological approach to Indian religion is more fruitful analytically than the ‘World Religion’ approach; (2) that the conception of Hinduism as a World Religion is highly artificial, and has been created by some theological needs; (3) that the case of Hinduism highlights more general problems with the notion of the World Religions. The implication of this argument is that the World Religion approach, which dominates the study of religion in schools and colleges, creates more confusion than clarity. A sketch of an alternative approach is offered."

7. ———. 2010. "Who invented Hinduism? Rethinking religion in India." In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 114–134. New York: Routledge.
"I have argued that the question ‘Are there religions in India?’ or ‘Were there religions in India before colonial intervention?’ is in the first place a question about meaning and translatability. No one has ever seen ‘a religion’, just as no one has ever seen a society or a state or a nation. These are all abstract categories, not empirically observable phenomena. But ‘abstract’ here does not mean devoid of power or without consequences for the ordering of human life! These meanings are conveyed in discourses that express the interests of powerful elites (including modern academics) at different historical moments. They constitute attempts to classify the world in accordance with imagined orders of power. I have argued that the English language term ‘religion’ and associated terms such as ‘religions’ and the adjective ‘religious’ need careful historical contextualization in order to understand their complexity and to see that such terms do not have any easy and self-evident meanings, and are not mere harmless labels."
(...)
"To translate a term such as ‘religion’ into Sanskrit, Hindi, Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese or any other language is also to ask what it is being distinguished from; if we say that religions have always existed in India, does this imply that non-religious institutions also always existed? Did they also have written constitutions, secular law courts, and capitalist economic concepts at the time of Buddha, or the Guptas? Did they have these things in Europe at the time of the Medicis or the Tudors? My proposal is that we go much more deeply into the historical and contextual analysis of related terminology, and become more self-critical about our own motivations, conscious or unconscious, for assuming that the world can fit into our own categories in order to satisfy our own unanalysed classificatory urges." (pp. 131-132)

8. Frykenberg, Robert Eric. 1989. "The emergence of modern ‘Hinduism’ as a concept and as an institution: A reappraisal with special reference to South India." In *Hinduism Reconsidered*, edited by Sontheimer, Günther and Kulke, Hermann, 29–49. New Delhi: Manohar Publications.
"Frykenberg, too, points out that "there has never been [in pre-colonial times] any such thing as a single ‘Hinduism’ for all of India.” But in contrast to von Stietencron [*] he accepts the existence of a contemporary system of one corporate Hinduism. Therefore, however, he emphasizes that the origins of the term ‘Hinduism’ and its application as metaphysical instrument for socio-religious realities in India need to be better understood. According to Frykenberg “modern Hinduism is the product of a socio-political process - a process of reification which has evolved during the past two centuries and which lead to a syndicated (R. Thapar) or organized religion.” Of crucial importance were missionaries and their institutions, state sponsored Hinduism during colonial period and revivalist and fundamentalist movements. Frykenberg illustrates his thesis with detailed references to the development of modern Hinduism in South India." (*Introduction*, p. 2)
[*] *Hinduism: on the proper use of a deceptive term*, same volume,

9. ———. 1993. "Constructions of Hinduism at the Nexus of History and Religion." *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* no. 23:523–550.
"The term "religion," with all its variety of meanings, has no exact equivalent in India (South Asia).
Moreover, the roles of religion and history in India are almost impossible to disaggregate. Nevertheless, at the heart of virtually all interactions between history and religion during the past century has been one overarching conceptualization. However casually and carelessly used, it has come to dominate discourse, contributing more than any other term to misunderstandings about the nature of important events. As a consequence, claims in its name can also be credited with having added, in some measure, to human misery. This soft concept, this jumble of

inner contradictions which has existed at the nexus of history and religion for hardly 200 years, is "Hinduism."
(...)
Nor did Hinduism simply spring, full-blown, into being. Rather, it was *constructed*, piece by piece. At times and, in part, this was done inadvertently; and, at times or, in part, deliberately; out of materials and precedents which had already existed for a long time. As a concept, it is India's twin." (p. 523)
(...)
"Like Hinduism, India and Indian are modern terms. Coined by the East India Company, they are the direct products of the process being described. John Stratton Hawley, "Naming Hinduism," *The Wilson Quarterly*, XV (1991), 244, 30-34, traces Orientalism from ancient Persians and Greeks, through Marco Polo and Roberto di Nobili, to John Zephhaniah Holwell, Nathaniel Braested Halhed, Horace Hayman Wilson, Rammohan Roy, Henry David Thoreau, Monier Monier-Williams, Max Muller, and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.
See Frykenberg, review of Gauri Viswanath, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York, 1988), in *American Historical Review*, XCVII (1991), 272-273." (p. 533, note 10)
(...)
"The "official" (or establishment) structure, in summary, consisted of at least five elements: (I) Hinduism as a nativistic synonym for all things Indian (or pertaining to India); (2) Hinduism as an ancient civilization, something clearly identifiable before 1800 and going back 5,000 years; (3) Hinduism, as a loosely defined label describing all socioreligious phenomena found or originating in India (comparable to, but less pejorative than, paganism as a label for nonmonotheistic religions in the ancient Graeco-Roman world); (4) Hinduism as an institutional/ideological instrument for the sociocultural and sociopolitical integration of an All-India (imperial or national) sway; and (5) Hinduism as a single religion which, with the coming of Swami Narendrath Datta Vivekananda to the First World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893, was gradually recognized and then elevated by liberally minded and eclectic Western clerics into the rank of a world religion. A pragmatic, and sometimes, romantic blending of these five representations, as Hawley has argued, helped to reify Hinduism in popular imaginations. With Western impetus, this blending was then projected onto the world." (p. 537, a note omitted)

10. Hussig, Hans-Michael. 1994. "Some Observations on the Idea "Religion" in Varıous "Religions"." In *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVI Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (I.A.H.R.), Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990*, edited by Bianchi, Ugo, 797–802. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
"Islam seems to be the only religion which from its very beginning had a self-definition which can be seen as comparable to other religious traditions. The term 'islām already occurs in the Qur'an. It is derived from the verb 'aslama, which means "to submit" or "to surrender" (to God). A muslim is someone who surrends to God. Islam is understood as *din*, which is the common term for "religion" in Arabic, as Wilfred Cantwell Smith had already shown.(15) The classical dictionaries give the term *wara*' "piety" as an equivalent. According to Smith the word *wara*' never has a systematic or a community meaning and it cannot have a plural. However *din* also carries the sense of a particular religious system, one "religion" as distinct from another and in this meaning it also has the already mentioned plural '*adyiān*.
According to the Qur'an (5,3)
God has chosen '*islām* as the religion for his followers. However '*isliim* did not start with Muhammad but was preached already by earlier prophets. Abraham for example is said to have admonished his sons to die as *muslimŭn* (2,132). Sometimes the term *muslim* even refers to contemporary Jews or Christians (29,46), who in general are called '*ahl al-kitāb* - 'people of the book'.
(...)

What I want to prove here is that the various religious traditions have different comprehensions of themselves as well as in comparison to other "religious" traditions.
Further research into other religious traditions, for example, the Chinese or tribal religions, may be much more colourful than the traditions described by myself. The language of our scientific research does not always fit these various definitions. Our science, the history of religions, should at least take this into consideration. Perhaps the consciousness about the differences of the language of our research and the comprehension of the various traditions may lead to a better definition of the object of our study." (p. 802)
(15) Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, New York 1%3, p. 81.

11. Keppens, Marianne, and Bloch, Esther. 2010. "Introduction: Rethinking religion in India." In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 1–21. New York: Routledge.
"The concept of religion
In the field of religious studies there is a longstanding problem of how to recognize Hinduism as a religion. The tremendous diversity of doctrines, texts, gods and practices in India has puzzled scholars, missionaries and others who tried to get a grip on the Indian religion (Brockington 1981: 1; Flood 2003: 16; Klostermaier 1989: 15). As an answer to this problem many scholars have stated, from an early period onwards, that Hinduism is not one religion, but should be seen as a collection of many separate religions or faiths.(1)
Against this background, Wilfred Cantwell Smith's influential work *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1962 [1991]) argues that the concept of Hinduism is a construction of the West. 'Hinduism', he says, 'refers not to an entity, it is a name that the West has given to a prodigiously variegated series of facts. It is a notion in men's minds – and a notion that cannot but be inadequate' (1962 [1991]: 144). The name 'Hinduism', he argues, was wrongly given to the varied series of Indian religious facts as if these formed one system of doctrines. According to Smith, this misconception was the result of the use of a Christian, and more specifically, a Protestant conception of religions as systems of doctrines.
Smith's main thesis is that the concept of religion is itself Christian and therefore inadequate to study religious phenomena in general. To Smith, the term 'Christianity' does not capture the religious phenomena of Christians any more than 'Hinduism' does for those of Hindus. The alternative he suggests is to study religious phenomena not as systems of doctrines but rather as faiths and cumulative traditions." (p. 3)
(1) Even though this answer regained prominence in the twentieth-century academic study of religion, this claim was already widespread in the nineteenth century and before European colonialism.(...)
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Brockington, J. (1981) *The Sacred Thread: Hinduism in its Continuity and Diversity*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Flood, G.D. (2003) 'Introduction: establishing the boundaries', *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, Blackwell Companions to Religion, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
Klostermaier, K.K. (1989) *A Survey of Hinduism*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
Smith, W.C. (1962; reprinted edn 1991) *The Meaning and End of Religion*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

12. Khalsa, Simranjit, Kalinowski, Brenton D., and Ecklund, laine Howard. 2020. "Indian Scientists' Definitions of Religion and Spirituality." *Religions* no. 11:1–18.
Abstract: "Scientists are often assumed to be irreligious and little research has examined the role of religion and spirituality in their lives. Recent research shows that many scientists do articulate a commitment to the sacred and see religion and

spirituality as influencing their work. However, we lack a basic understanding of how scientists define religion and spirituality, particularly outside of the Western world. We examine Indian Scientists' definitions of religion and spirituality and their tie to scientists' views on the relationship between religion and science. Drawing on 80 in-depth interviews with Indian scientists, we find that although science often operates as a global institution, national context influences definitions of religion and spirituality. Further, the views a scientist has about the relationship between religion and science are linked to their definition of religion. To understand and navigate the relationship between religion and science, we must study definitions of religion and spirituality, as well as the way they are shaped by national context."

13. King, Richard. 1999. *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial theory, India and 'the mystic East'*. New York: Routledge.
"The approach of this study, then, is to look at the categories of mysticism and religion, some of the presuppositions involved in the disciplines of religious studies and Indology, and the ways in which Indian religion became located within contemporary notions of 'the mystical'. My aim, therefore, is to change the subject (that is, mysticism and the comparative study of Indian religion), not by changing what we talk about (that is, by looking at something else) but rather by suggesting ways in which one might redirect the intellectual trajectory of comparative study in the light of postcolonial and post-structuralist theories. This requires an examination of the ways in which mysticism as a category has been constructed in the West, and the ways in which this notion has been projected onto Indian religious culture as a way of controlling, manipulating and managing the Orient. However, in order to carry out this project, one first needs to know something about the way in which the category of 'the mystical' has been defined in Western culture, and this will be the topic of Chapter 1 [*The power of definitions: a genealogy of the idea of 'the mystical'*]." (p. 6)
(...)
"I would like to begin this chapter [2: *Disciplining religion*] by making a few remarks about the category of 'religion'.
The term clearly has a history that is bound up with the cultural and intellectual history of the West and deserves some attention in any discussion on the nature of 'religious studies' as a discipline. I will draw attention, in a fairly rudimentary manner, to some trends in the use of this term and will eventually develop some conclusions of my own about the way the study of 'religion' might most fruitfully approach its own subject matter. In so doing I will also spend some time reviewing some recent attempts to discuss the relationship between religious studies and secularism (including the relationship between religious studies and the secular social sciences) on the one hand and various approaches to the question of the relationship between religious studies and theology on the other." (p. 35)

14. ———. 2010. "Colonialism, Hinduism and the discourse of religion." In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 95–113. New York: Routledge.
"With regard to the specific term 'Hinduism' I would suggest that it is best avoided in such historical contexts because of the dangers of anachronism such use poses. Nevertheless, in the late colonial/modern context, the term 'Hinduism' certainly does take on increasing significance and social power as an indicator of Hindu national identity and has become a powerful cultural vector through which Indian civilizational history has been and is being interpreted.
The problem that remains however is how to take seriously the complexity of Indian history – to learn from the examples and indigenous models emerging from Indic civilizational discourse, when the paradigms and terms of contemporary debates remain so strongly skewed, as a consequence of European colonialism, by a Eurocentric template for narrating world history.
The rendering (almost) invisible of the work of translation involved in the representation of Indian civilization in the language of 'religion' and 'the world

religions' persists. It is a conceptual legacy of five hundred odd years of European colonial rule and, in my view, remains an obstacle not only to understanding the diversity of the histories and philosophies that constitute our global cultural heritage, but also to the possibility of imagining alternative post-imperial and, dare I say it, post-western futures." (p. 113)

15. ———. 2011. "Imagining Religions in India: Colonialism and the Mapping of South Asian History and Culture." In *Secularism and Religion-Making*, edited by Dressler, Markus and Mandair, Arvind-Pal S., 37–61. New York: Oxford University Press.
"As Daniel Dubuisson has argued, it is through the language of religion that the West has spoken—and continues to speak, both about itself and about "the other."(1) In contrast to such strategies, a comparativist approach that seeks to suspend Eurocentered accounts of the world through an engagement with non-European worldviews is one that is better equipped to displace the prevailing discourse of religion, grounded as it is in the experiences and worldviews of the West. In this essay I wish to explore both approaches, with an emphasis on the importance of comparison in the development of a form of cultural critique that would denaturalize conventional (Occidentalist) accounts of human history and the discourse of religion that has served as the conceptual platform upon which such mythic narratives have been built." (p. 37)
(...)
"In *Orientalism and Religion* (1999), I argue that the category of religion is the product of a culturally specific discursive history characterized by the imprints that Christian theology, the Enlightenment, and secular modernity have left upon it. As such its continued unreflective use cross-culturally, while opening up interesting debates and interactions over the past few centuries (and creating things called "interfaith dialogue" and "the world religions"), has also closed down avenues of exploration and other potential cultural and intellectual interactions.
Perhaps the first Western academic to draw attention to problems with the category in a systematic fashion was Wilfred Cantwell Smith in his 1962 book, *The Meaning and End of Religion*." (p. 39)
(...)
"In continuing the intellectual legacy within the study of religions of interrogating and challenging dominant models of modernity and Western identity there is an important and ongoing role for the comparative study of "religion" in a postcolonial context—acting as a kind of "foreign body" or "point of infiltration" within the university: a space for both the specialized and comparative study of cultures; a place for the articulation of cultural difference and the exercise of sensitive comparisons; and a site where the Eurocentric, theological, and secularist presuppositions of the academy can be thoroughly interrogated, explored, and debated alongside the study of non-Western wisdom traditions that have been subalternized and framed as "religious" by colonial epistemologies.57 What better place to start than with the category of "religion" itself?" (p. 54)
(1) Daniel Dubuisson, *L'Occident et la Religion: Mythes, Science, et Idéologie* (Brussels: Complexe, 1998); English translation, *The Western Construction of Religion* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).
(57) This can be done by drawing attention to the parochial or provincial nature of European and/or Western paradigms of knowledge, as well as to the ethnocentricity of some of its practices and theories. Such a project can be approached of course from a number of different disciplinary angles. My own particular interest tends to be what might be called in the West "philosophy" or the history of ideas, but this can be (and is being) done by anthropologists, sociologists, historians, geographers, cultural studies specialists, and so on.

16. Klimkeit, Hans-Joachim. 1994. "Religion in a Pluralistic Society: The Case of Central Asia." In *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVI Congress of the International Association for the History of*

Religions (I.A.H.R.), Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990, edited by Bianchi, Ugo, 89–96. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
"It is clear that, within one language area like the Turkish one, different religions with different origins have to drawn the same concepts, or terms, to express their respective ideas. Each one interprets these according to its own framework, yet not fully able to eliminate dimensions of meaning they have when used by other religions of the area. This is especially true of those Central Asian tongues that were originally spoken by nomadic peoples like the Turks of the Steppes, which initially had no means to express relatively abstract or highly differentiated trains of thought. (...)
"In so far as the general concept of "religion" was concerned, there was no word to express it that could be expanded by combining it with a loan word. However, a basic concept from the sphere of religion was *qut*, the spirit, which conveyed the sense of a minor deity, but also of something spiritual, or of blessing, charisma etc. This word was taken as a base for various conpounds. The development of the term and its compounds has been sketched by the Italian Turkologist Alessio Bombaci.(2) Yet none of these compounds with *qut* really had the broad and general meaning of "religion". For this, amazingly enough, the Greek term νόμος, in the sense of "the religious law", was adopted, abbreviated as *nom*. The term was taken over from the Sogdians, who employed it in this sense, since they did have an Iranian word for "religion", viz. δyn(h) (Middle Persian/Parthian *den*). But beside it, *nom*, was later passed on from the Uighur Turks to the Mongols, who then also used it and still use it to denote "religion". In all these languages it also denoted the Buddhist *dharma*. This connection with *dharma* also reverberated even when the Christians and Manichaeans employed the term. *Nom* thus became a common denominator, the meaning of which was codetermined by all three religions, and this is especially true of compounds with and derivatives from *nom* (e.g. *nomly saw*, "the *dharma* word")." (pp. 90-91
(2) A. Bombaci, *Qutluy Bolzun!* [*A Contribution to the History of the Concept of Fortune among the Turks*] I Il, in UAJB [Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher] 36, 1965, 284-291 and 38, 1966, 14-43.

17. Lorenzen, David N. 1999. "Who Invented Hinduism?" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* no. 41:630–659.
"This essay argues that the claim that Hinduism was invented or constructed by European colonizers, mostly British, sometime after 1800 is false. The evidence instead suggests that a Hindu religion theologically and devotionally grounded in texts such as the Bhagavad-gita, the Puranas, and philosophical commentaries on the six darsanas gradually acquired a much sharper self-conscious identity through the rivalry between Muslims and Hindus in the period between 1200 and 1500, and was firmly established long before 1800. The obvious danger of this thesis is that it can be modified to provide support to a Hindu communalist argument that a self-conscious Hindu identity arose out of the violent persecution of Hindus by Muslims. In fact state-sponsored persecution was only sporadic and directed mostly at temple buildings, not people.
Nonetheless, religious literature by Hindu poets such as Kabir, Ekanath, and Vidyapati (some of this quoted below) suggests that socioreligious conflict occasionally violent conflict - did occur among people on a local level. In any case, only a recognition of the fact that much of modern Hindu identity is rooted in the history of the rivalry between Hinduism and Islam will enable us to correctly gauge the strength of communalist forces and wage war against them.
Inventing Hinduism
If what one means by Hinduism is simply the English word itself, then the claim that it did not exist before the nineteenth century is correct. Several scholars cite the date 1829 for the first known occurrence in English, in the form "Hindooism"." (p. 631)

18. Mandair, Arvin-Pal S. 2003. "What If 'Religio' Remained Untranslatable." In *Difference in Philosophy of Religion*, edited by Goodchild, Philip, 87–100.

Aldershot: Ashgate.
"A major conclusion of these micro studies [on colonial and pre-colonial India], a conclusion that has been endorsed elsewhere (Balagangadhara, 1994; Derrida, 1998; King; 1999) is that Indian languages do not possess a word for 'religion' as signifying something like a uniform and centralized faith community. Further, that prior to colonialism what came to be classified as 'proper' Indie religions and languages possessed fluid boundaries, with the result that most Indians participated in multiple religious and linguistic identities. In other words, the distinct entities known as Hindu-ism or Sikh-ism which philosophers and phenomenologists have long posited as the natural other of Western religions and Western thinking, are in fact recent constructions.
Although it is not immediately obvious, developments such as these are dependent on a reorientation of thinking about the translatability of the term 'religion', indeed the history of the translation of this term, or, stated differently, the intrinsic link between religion and translatability as interchangeable concepts. If translatability here implies much more than semantic exchange, referring also to the creation of an economy of colonial desire and the consequent transactions between colonizer and colonized, the question arises as to whether the work of translation as the site of this encounter is as innocent or transparent as continues to be presumed.
How did the representation of Indie cultures in terms of religion come to be regarded as natural?" (pp. 89-90)
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Balagangadara, S.N. (1994), *The Heathen in His Blindness: Asia, the West and the Dynamic of Religion,* Leiden: Brill.
Derrida, Jacques (1998), 'Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of "Religion" at the Limits of Reason Alone', in J. Derrida and G. Vattimo, (eds), Religion, Cambridge: Polity Press.
King, Richard (1999), *Orientalism and Religion: Post Colonial Theory, India and the Mystic East*, London and New York: Routledge.

19. Mandair, Arvind-Pal S. 2009. *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality, and the Politics of Translation*. New York: Columbia University Press.
"Each chapter in this book has, in different ways, engaged with and provided an extended critique of the concept of religion as a cultural universal. Through a case study of Sikhism, I have tried to demonstrate how certain aspects of Sikh and Hindu traditions were reinvented in terms of the category of “religion” during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As scholars working in different disciplines have increasingly recognized, the context of India’s colonial encounter with the West provides fertile ground for the emergence and crystallization of concepts and categories that inform—but at the same time test the limitations of—the contemporary intellectual and political environment. Rather than looking at the process of intellectual encounter between India and the West in isolation from Europe, I have sought to shift the focus of this encounter closer to the political history of ideas that mutually shaped European and Indian modernities. This shift in focus has been achieved by grounding the critique of religion in a series of empirical and theoretical studies of translation. The aim of this approach was twofold: on the one hand, to highlight the operations of translation that were pivotal to the reformulation of Sikh and Hindu traditions in terms of religious identity, and on the other hand, and in the very same process, to recover part of Europe’s repressed colonial memory, a memory that is organized around a certain translatability between religion and secularism." (pp. 433-434)

20. Morris, Paul Martin. 2021. "The Study of ‘Hinduism’ and the Study of ‘Judaism’: A Personal Journey." *Contemporary Jewry* no. 41:639–660.
Abstract: "Two religious traditions have informed my personal and academic life – Judaism and Hinduism. This is a reflection on their intersection over a period of more than 40 years. This article chronicles an academic journey from a reified religious universalism towards identifying a deep structural affinity between

Judaism and Hinduism defined in contrast to other major differentially constructed religious traditions, then to a position of radical alterity that is potentially just as productive of a very different discussion among those interested in cross-traditional and interreligious deliberations.
The wider context is that of the relationships, conceptual and analytical, between discernible religious traditions, or dimensions thereof."

21. Oddie, Geoffrey A. 2010. "Hindu religious identity with special reference to the origin and significance of the term 'Hinduism', c. 1787–1947." In *Rethinking Religion in India: the Colonial Construction of Hinduism*, edited by Bloch, Esther, Keppens, Marianne and Hegde, Rajaram, 41–55. New York: Routledge.
"The purpose of this chapter is (a) to discuss the gradual emergence and spread of a Hindu sense of an all-India religious identity and (b) to explore the origin and significance of the term 'Hinduism', including the part it played in further developing this type of awareness. While the term was important for Europeans (who appear to have coined the word in the first place) it was readily adopted, especially by western-educated Hindus. It not only became a reference point and focus of feeling and debate, but was used as a method of mobilization and self-defence in the struggle against missionaries and colonizers especially during the later stages of British rule. Inconclusion, the chapter discusses how these findings relate to ongoing debates centred on ideas and definitions of 'Hinduism'." (p. 41)

22. Stietencron, Heinrich von. 1989. "Hinduism: on the proper use of a deceptive term." In *Hinduism Reconsidered*, edited by Sontheimer, Günther and Kulke, Hermann, 11–27. New Delhi: Manohar Publications.
"Von Stietencron's paper is certainly the most radical reconsideration of Hindusim presented at the panel. Denying that even the most important "essentials" of Hinduism, that is recognition of the Vedas, belief in reincarnation and the doctrine of *karman*, and the hierarchical caste structure apply to all sections of Hinduism he argues that "Hinduism in toto, with various contradicting systems and all the resulting inconsistencies, certainly does not meet the fundamental requirements for a historical religion of being a coherent system; but its distinct entities [the so-called 'sects'] do. They are indeed religions, while Hinduism is not." And he concludes that "what we call 'Hinduism' is a geographically defined group of distinct but related religions."
Lumping together these different religions in one religion, as we do, according to von Stietencron, in our preconceived Western/Christian notion would be comparable with a combination of Judaism, Christianity and Islam which too are "cognate but distinct religions united by origin in the same region"." (*Introduction*, p. 2)

23. Sweetman, Brendan. 2003. ""Hinduism" and the History of "Religion". Protestant Presuppositions in the Critique of the Concept of Hinduism." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* no. 15:329–353.
Abstract: "The claim that Hinduism is not a religion, or not a single religion, is so often repeated that it might be considered an axiom of research into the religious beliefs and practices of the Hindus, were it not typically ignored immediately after having been stated. The arguments for this claim in the work of several representative scholars are examined in order to show that they depend, implicitly or explicitly, upon a notion of religion which is too much influenced by Christian conceptions of what a religion is, a conception which, ft it has not already been discarded by scholars of religion, certainly ought to be. Even where such Christian models are explicitly disavowed, the claim that Hinduism is not a religion can be shown to depend upon a particular religious conception of the nature of the world and our possible knowledge of it, which scholars of religion cannot share."

24. Wiebe, Donald. 1994. "From Religious to Social Reality: The Transformation of "Religion" in the Academy." In *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research: Selected Proceedings of the XVI Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (I.A.H.R.), Rome, 3rd–8th September, 1990*, edited by Bianchi, Ugo, 837–846. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.

"I must now bring these comments on' religion' to a close. I have argued here that with the development of the academic/scientific study of religion there was indeed a radical transformation of the notion of religion. In this I am in agreement with W.C. Smith that 'religion', though at one time involving reference to a (transcendent) religious reality now refers only to a socio-historical reality (although a socio-historical reality with a peculiar ideological content). Unlike W. C. Smith, however, I do not see that transformation as problematic for the student of religion.(26) Indeed, I have given grounds rather to show that such a change was necessary if the study of religion was ever to transcend its original theological and apologetic intentions and to become genuinely scientific. Its transformation, that is, is the concomitant result of the emergence of the academic/scientific study of religion. The similarity this transformation of· religion' has to other conceptual developments in the physics of motion should be obvious.

A denial that the same physical laws can account for both mundane terrestrial motion and divine celestial motion would today be recognized as quite absurd. To argue that radically different laws and explanatory frameworks are required to account for profane social phenomena and religio-social phenomena, I would argue, should be seen as no less so.

As for the criticisms of J. Z. Smith, [Timothy] Fitzgerald and [Philip C.] Almond little more needs to be said. Though some of their criticism are on target their generalizations about the use of the terms· religion' and 'world religion' are not. That some scholars are guilty of reification does not mean that all are, nor that that tendency to reify cannot be transcended.

I think I have given indication that it can.

I conclude this discussion, therefore, by insisting, like Eric Pyle, that students of religion have no need to abandon their use of the term 'religion'. Indeed, I have no doubt but that more confusion within this field of study would result from that course of action than presently exists." (pp. 844-845)

(26) That this modern concept of 'religion' is not indigenous to the religious community itself - because, that is, it differs radically from 'religion' as it is used by the religious - does not present the kind of problem for the scholar that [W.C.] Smith thinks it does. The modern concept, that is, is simply a different concept of which the community being studied is unaware. And as W. G. Runciman, *A Treatise of Social Theory, 1, The Methodology of Social Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 13 points out in regard to the study of ancient cultures and their economies, the historian is not deterred by the fact that those ancient cultures lacked the modem concept of culture. As he puts it, such historians will not, on the basis of their lack of that concept, conciude "that theirs was not an economy any more than that because they lacked the concept of 'malaria' they never died from it".