

# Contents

<i>Preface to the English Edition (2019)</i>	xvii
<i>Preface to the German Edition (2015)</i>	xix
<b>1 A Theology of Religions or a Theology of Interreligious Relations?</b>	<b>1</b>
Impressions Gained from Dialogues: London, Kandy, Lahore	2
A Theology of Religions: A Historical Overview and Some Literature References	6
Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism: An Obituary of a Model	14
Absolute Truth Claims: Fomenting Conflict or Promoting Peace? The Problem	15
What Exactly Is the Subject of a Theology of Religions? Heuristics	19
Theory and Theology of Interreligious Relations: The Hypothesis and Layout of the Book	21
<b>2 Developments to Date: Christian <i>Classifications</i> of Other Religions</b>	<b>26</b>
Regulating Forces or <i>Natural Theology</i> ? The Doctrine of Creation	27
Primeval Revelation or the History of Revelation? The Doctrine of Revelation	30
A Universal Christ and Non-Christian Religions? Christology	36
Religions as Latent Church? Ecclesiology	42
The Religions Are Paths of Error, but There Is Universal Redemption in the Hereafter? Eschatology	46
A Comparative Analysis: Six Heuristic Questions	52
<b>PART I NEWER CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY-OF-RELIGION MODELS</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3 Revisionist Approaches: John Hick and Paul Knitter</b>	<b>57</b>
A Theocentric Theology of Religion: John Hick	57
Relativizing Christology on the Basis of Religion History	59

Relativizing Christology on the Basis of Epistemology	61
Relativizing Christology on the Basis of Linguistic Theory: Paul Knitter	63
Toward a Hermeneutics of Interreligious Dialogue	66
Soteriocentrism and Liberation as Truth Criteria	67
<b>4 Interpretive Approaches: Michael von Brück and S. Mark Heim</b>	<b>69</b>
An Experience-Based Theo-“logy” of Religion: Michael von Brück	69
An Advaitic Interpretation of the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity	70
Dimensions of Interreligious Dialogue and Communality	73
The Trinitarian Theological Matrix of the Religions: S. Mark Heim	75
Three Kinds of Human Relations as Analogies to Trinitarian Forms of Interaction	77
Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam from a Trinitarian Perspective	78
<b>5 Revisionist and Interpretive Approaches: A Critical Response</b>	<b>81</b>
Can We Speak About God Literally or (Only) Metaphorically? Linguistic Theory	81
Is It Legitimate to Demand a Uniform Religious Approach? Intentionality	85
Is It Possible to Distinguish Between Faith and Belief? Religious Experience	88
Trinitarian Structures as Keys to the Religions? The Doctrine of the Trinity	91
What Is the Relationship Between the Logos Doctrine and Christology? Christology	93
Excursus: On the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451)	95
A Christology of Representation Without Substitution? Soteriology	97
<b>6 Selective Approaches: Francis Clooney</b>	<b>103</b>
Comparative Theology: A Viable Alternative to the Theology of Religions?	103
Religious Reading as Opposed to Historical-Critical Reading	104
Interreligious Reading as an Experience of Spiritual Power	105

Comparative Theology—or Comparative Religious Studies Plus Interpretation?	107
Regarding the Interpretive Horizon	108
Comparing <i>Comparative Theology</i> to <i>Traditional Theologies of Religion</i>	109
<b>7 Interactionist Approaches: Amos Yong</b>	<b>111</b>
<i>A Theology of Hospitality</i> Instead of Older Approaches	111
Jesus Christ: A Paradigm of God's <i>Redemptive Hospitality</i>	112
Dynamic Hospitality: A Locus for Hospitality	114
The Boundaries of Hospitality: <i>A Theology of Exile</i>	115
The Holy Spirit and the Multitude of Spirits: Discerning the Spirits	116
Welcoming the Spirit: <i>A Theology of Interreligious Practices</i>	119
<b>8 Selective and Interactionist Approaches: A Critical Response</b>	<b>120</b>
Interreligious Reading: Knowledge Gain or Hermeneutical Dead End?	120
Interreligious Comparisons: To What End, and on What Basis?	121
Comparative Religious Studies: The Argument for a <i>Methodological Presumption of Innocence</i>	125
Pneumatological Hermeneutics: The Dynamic and the Fragmentary Aspects	127
Christomorphic Communality: On the Significance of a Hermeneutical Locus	128
Discerning the Spirits: Associations and Dissociations	128
<b>9 Comparative Remarks: Six Heuristic Questions</b>	<b>130</b>
The Epistemological Question: The Search for a Transreligious Basis	130
The Hermeneutical Question: Coming Up with the Most Neutral Categories	131
The Soteriological Question: Do Others Offer Truth, Revelation, Salvation?	132
The Theological Question: What Does the Christian God Reveal About His Nature?	133
The Ethical-Social Question: The Operative Motifs of Interreligious Appreciation	134
The Sociopolitical Question: How Much Freedom Is There for Religious Dissidents?	135

<b>PART II HOW ISLAM AND BUDDHISM VIEW OTHER RELIGIONS</b>	<b>137</b>
10 The Ultimate Validity of the Qur'an and Religious Plurality: Islamic Perspectives	139
Islam, Tolerance, Human Rights, and Democracy: Current Issues	140
Streams Within Islamic Reformism: An Overview	143
On the Significance of Traditional Institutions of Religious Learning	145
Methodological Approaches and the Islamic Theology of Religions	146
What Is Islam(ic)? What Is Permitted and What Is Forbidden as a Metaperspective	148
An Islamic Lifestyle, an Islamic Society, an Islamic State	150
11 A Liberation-Theological Hermeneutics of the Qur'an: Farid Esack	152
The Qur'an: Context Contingent, but Not to Be Understood in a Neutral Sense	152
Theological, Hermeneutical, and Social Principles	153
Basic Theology-of-Religion Concepts in the Qur'an: <i>'Īmān, Islām, Kufr</i>	156
Qur'anic Pluralism Versus Socioreligious Collective Terms	157
Islam's Reputation in the Context of a Pluralistic Competition in Doing Good Deeds	159
A Critical Appraisal	160
12 An Islamist Hermeneutics of the Qur'an, and Tolerance: Muhammad Shahrūr	161
Fundamental Distinctions: <i>Qur'ān</i> and <i>Dhikr</i> , <i>Nubūwwah</i> and <i>Risālah</i>	162
Five Areas of the Eternal and Universal Shari'a	163
The <i>Ḥudūd</i> Punishments and the <i>Theory of Boundaries</i>	166
Three Types of Piety, Theonomic Freedom, and the Limits of the Discourse	168
<i>Islām</i> and <i>'Īmān</i> : The Universal Religion of Humanity and a Particular Religion of Rituals	169
An Islamic Theology of Religion: A Critical Appraisal	170
13 Nonadherence and Religious Plurality: Buddhist Perspectives	173
The Four Noble Truths: Fundamental Tenets of Buddhist Teaching	174
The Preliminarity of Doctrinal Traditions: The Parable of the Raft	175
From Early Buddhism to Mahāyāna Buddhism: Shifts in Emphasis	177

Two Truths: The Significance of the Subject Matter of Consciousness	178
Skillful Means: <i>Upāyakauśalya</i>	179
The Three-Bodies Doctrine: Non-Buddhist Teachers of Religion	183
<b>14 Models of Buddhist Thought</b>	<b>184</b>
Anagārika Dharmapāla (1864–1933): An Apologetic Hermeneutics	184
Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu (1906–1993): A Hermeneutics of the Two Languages	189
Masao Abé (1915–2006): An Interreligious Hermeneutics?	192
Thich Nhat Hanh (b. 1926): An Assimilative Hermeneutics	195
John Makransky (b. 1950): A Contrastive Hermeneutics	199
Buddhist Hermeneutics of the Other: An Overview	203
<b>15 A Concluding Comparison: Six Heuristic Questions</b>	<b>204</b>
The Epistemological Question: A Transreligious Basis?	204
The Hermeneutical Question: Are the Categories as Neutral as Possible?	205
The Soteriological Question: Do Others Offer Truth, Revelation, Salvation?	206
The Axiological Question: What Is the Nature of Ultimate Reality?	207
The Ethical-Social Question: The Operative Motifs of Interreligious Appreciation	208
The Sociopolitical Question: How Much Freedom Do Religious Dissidents Have?	208
 <b>PART III BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A THEORY OF INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS</b>	 <b>211</b>
<b>16 Is There a Need for a <i>Theory of Interreligious Relations</i>?</b>	<b>213</b>
Theologies of Religion Under Fire: Six Fallacies	213
Toward the Concept of a Theory of <i>Interreligious Relations</i> : Thesis 1	216
A Theory of Interreligious Relations as a Theory of Perception: Thesis 2	221
A Theory of Interreligious Relations as an Interdisciplinary Project: Thesis 3	223
A Theory of Interreligious Relations as Food for Thought and a Source of Inspiration: Thesis 4	223
A Theory of Interreligious Relations as a Corrective: Thesis 5	225

17	What Does <i>Identity</i> Mean? Interaction in Social Networks	227
	An Overview of Identity Theories: Introduction	227
	Identity and the Concept of Coherence	230
	Locating the Self: In the Network of Social Interaction	231
	Identity and Fictive Identities: Multiple Positions	234
	Knowing and Not Knowing: Indeterminacy as an Added Value	237
	Identity as Coherence and Interreligious Relations: An Outlook	242
18	Inclusions and Exclusions: Ambivalences	245
	Exclusions as a Symbolic Struggle for Status: Pierre Bourdieu	245
	Interreligious-Symbolic Rivalries: The Example of Architecture	248
	On Symbolic Exclusions with an Inclusive Effect	251
	On Legal Inclusions with an Exclusive Effect	253
	Inclusions, Exclusions, and Religious Claims to Ultimate Justification	255
	On the Interdependence of Inclusions and Exclusions: A Conclusion	256
19	What Does <i>Recognition</i> Mean? Levels of Acknowledgment	258
	Recognition in the Sense of a Right: Society	259
	Recognition in the Sense of Love: Intimate Relationships	261
	Recognition in the Sense of Solidarity: In-Groups	262
	Recognition in the Sense of a Gift: Lifeworld	266
	Recognition in the Sense of Esteem: Everyday Life	269
	Multiple Forms of Recognition: A Summary	270
20	Which Factors Are at Play in the <i>Public Sphere</i> ?	
	Spatial Relationships and Relationship Spaces	272
	Theoretical Reflections on the Term <i>Public Sphere</i>	272
	The Public Sphere and Tactfulness in Everyday Life: The Micro Level	274
	The Local Public Sphere and Spaces Defined by Religion: The Meso Level	277
	The Dialogical in Spatial Language and in Language Spaces	281
	The Public Sphere and Validity Claims in Society: The Macro Level	281
	Spaces as Effective Forces: A Conclusion	282

21	Pluralism, Multiculturalism, and the Theory of Society: Background Assumptions	284
	Theories About Multiculturalism and Pluralism	285
	Pluralism in the Sense of a Consensus-Oriented Theory of Democracy: Jürgen Habermas	286
	Pluralism in the Sense of Multicultural Citizenship: Will Kymlicka	288
	Pluralism in the Sense of Agonistic Pluralism: Chantal Mouffe	289
	The Definition of Pluralism and the Theology of Religion: Elective Affinities	292
	Strong Pluralism as the Basis for a Theory of Interreligious Relations	294
22	The Basic Principles of a Theory of Interreligious Relations: An Outlook	296
	Multiperspectivity	297
	Media	297
	Performances	298
	Spaces	300
	Boundaries	301
	Actors	302
	<b>PART IV THE DIALOGICAL IN INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS</b>	<b>303</b>
23	Dialogues and Intentions: Encounters	305
	On the Topic of “Dialogue”: Theories and Contexts	305
	Contact Dialogues: Options for the Future	308
	Information Dialogues: Overcoming Prejudices	309
	Consensus Dialogues: The Search for Transreligious Truth	310
	Persuasion Dialogues: The Power of a Religious Interpretation of the World	311
	On Dialogues and the Dialogical: Going Beyond the Verbal	312
24	Dialogues and the Dialogical: Signs	313
	A Conceptual Option or a Power Play? Improving One’s Quality of Life	313
	Religious or Secular? Ascriptions of Meaning	316
	Global or Local? The Weight Statements Carry	317
	To Speak or to Remain Silent? Ignorance as an Added Value	318

Conversations or Dialogues? The Danger of Making Comparisons	319
Words or Gestures? Nonverbal Messages	321
25 Dialogue: Yes, but with Whom? Discourses	323
Aspects of Discourse Theory: Michel Foucault	323
The Concepts of <i>Religion</i> and <i>Buddhism</i> : Ceylon as a Case Study	326
Which <i>Contemporary Concepts</i> Are Being Used?	
Theorems of Science	327
Which <i>Positions Support Authority</i> ?	
Spokespersons and Support Bases	331
How Can a Broad Appeal Be Achieved?	
Organizational Forms and Media	333
Dialogue: Yes, but with Whom? A Critical Response	334
26 The Goal of Dialogue: The Proper Balance Between Intimacy and Dissociation	340
A Quest for Intimacy—or a Friendly Takeover?	340
Dialogical Alternatives—or a Private Religion?	342
Identities—or Positions in a Field of Discourse?	343
Should Boundaries Be Maintained or Dissolved?	343
Openness and Reciprocity in All Dialogue Types?	344
Some Hypotheses on the Subject of Interreligious Dialogue	345
<b>PART V TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS</b>	<b>347</b>
27 A Theology of Interreligious Relations as a New Approach: Theses	349
A True Hermeneutics of Differences: As Opposed to Theology of Religion-Type Models of Appropriation	349
Life Power and Rivalries: As Opposed to a Theology of Religion-Type Quietism	351
Awkward Motifs and Texts: As Opposed to a Theology of Religion-Type Selectionism	353
Discourses and Complex Identities: As Opposed to Theology of Religion-Type Essentialisms	354
Motifs, Actors, and Spaces: As Opposed to a Theology of Religion-Type Disregard of Context	355
Varying Degrees of Loyalty: As Opposed to Theology of Religion-Type Central Perspectives	356

28	The Power and Love of the One God:	
	On the Biblical Concept of God	358
	Monotheism, Polytheism, and the Issue of Violence	359
	How Do Yahweh's Jealousy and Revenge Relate to Love and the Renunciation of Violence?	363
	The One God and the Plurality of Gods: A Case of Competition?	367
	Jesus Christ and the <i>Basileia</i> : The Orbit of God's Love?	369
	The Concept of God in the Gospels, and the Issue of Divine Potency	371
	Consequences for a Christian Theology of Interreligious Relations	375
29	The Interreligious Communication of Jesus Christ:	
	Searching for Traces	377
	The Emotionality Surrounding the Son of God	377
	Jesus' Offensive Behavior: The Son of God and the Children of God	380
	Loving Your Enemies as a Way of Overcoming Interreligious Aggression: Displacement Patterns	381
	The Beam in One's Own Eye, and Sinners: A Paradigm of Reversal	383
	Can Jesus (Also) Be <i>Brutal</i> ? "Violence" as <i>Body Language</i>	384
	Performative Actions and Interreligious Relations	386
30	The Fellowship of the Spirit as a Contrast Model:	
	The Example of 1 Peter	388
	Elect Exiles and Foreigners: The Basis for a Theology of Recognition	390
	The Cornerstone and Living Stones: The Fellowship of Witnesses	393
	An Attractive Lifestyle: The Basis for an Ethics of Interreligious Recognition	395
	Conflicts, Insults, and Suffering: Recognition and the Question of the Name	398
	Life as a Differentiated Community: Balancing Contrast with Recognition	399
	Multiple References to Recognition, Competition, and Rejection	401
31	Endorsing Both a Dualistic Worldview and Pacifism?	
	Taking Revelation as an Example	403
	Fleeing or Engaging the World? Revelation as a <i>Political Theology</i>	404
	The Dragon, the Beasts, and the Whore of Babylon: Christ Versus the Imperial Cult (Macro Level)	406

The Synagogue of Satan: Demonizing the Others (Meso Level)	410
The Sexually Immoral, the Liars, the Dogs: Dualistic Paraenesis and Everyday Life (Micro Level)	411
Making Allowances for Emotion? The Language of the Oppressed Versus the Language of the Powerful	415
Consequences for a Contemporary Theology of Interreligious Relations	419
<b>32 Ultimate-Justification Models as the Basis for Interreligious Relations: Looking Forward</b>	<b>421</b>
Trinitarian-Doxological Self-Suspendedness	422
Inversions Related to the Theology of the Cross	427
Disempowerments Related to the Theology of Justification	428
Pneumatological Contingencies	429
Ecclesiological and Eschatological Decentrations	430
Ultimate Justifications and Ultimate Certainties	430
 <b>PART VI INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY/MISSION STUDIES AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES</b>	 <b>433</b>
<b>33 Intercultural Theology: Implications of the Term</b>	<b>435</b>
Intercultural Theology: Descriptive and Prescriptive Approaches	436
Intercultural Theology: Implicit and Explicit Subject Materials	437
Intercultural Theology as a Subject Heading	439
Intercultural Theology as Relational Theology: The Prefix <i>Inter-</i>	440
Intercultural Theology: Definition and Subject Area	441
Intercultural Theology as Orientational Knowledge	446
<b>34 Intercultural Theology/Mission Studies: Dimensions</b>	<b>448</b>
The Semiotic Dimension: Signs	448
The Discourse-Theoretical Dimension: Validity Claims	449
The Connective Dimension: Traditions	451
The Communicative Dimension: Interpretive Possibilities	453
The Transformative/Missionary Dimension: New Formations	453
Intercultural Theology in the Theological Curriculum	454
<b>35 Intercultural Theology and Religious Studies: Looking Forward</b>	<b>456</b>
Intercultural Theology and Religious Studies	456

Religious Studies Within the Faculty of Theology	458
Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology: Emphases	459
Intercultural Theology/Mission Studies: The Common Thread	460
The Old and the New: Three Ways to Understand the Word <i>Subsumed</i>	461
Intercultural Theology in the Twenty-First Century: Looking Forward	463
<i>Bibliography</i>	465
<i>Name Index</i>	495
<i>Subject Index</i>	499
<i>Scripture Index</i>	501