2019

The Virtues of Comparative Theology

Daniel J. Soars
Eton College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.butler.edu/jhcs>

Recommended Citation

Soars, Daniel J. (2019) "The Virtues of Comparative Theology," *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*: Vol. 32, Article 8.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7825/2164-6279.1734>

The *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies* is a publication of the [Society for Hindu-Christian Studies](#). The digital version is made available by Digital Commons @ Butler University. For questions about the Journal or the Society, please contact cbauman@butler.edu. For more information about Digital Commons @ Butler University, please contact digitalscholarship@butler.edu.

The Virtues of Comparative Theology

Daniel J. Soars

Abstract: In this article, I focus on a small section in the epilogue of Francis X. Clooney's *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies* in which he outlines some of the personal characteristics needed to do comparative theology well. He takes five of these from Catherine Cornille's *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue* and adds several of his own. By exploring notions like doctrinal humility and rootedness in a particular tradition, we are forced to reflect upon the 'virtues' of the discipline in both senses of the word – not only those attributes required to engage in it, but the merits of doing it at all.

IN a recent article, S. Mark Heim suggests that we have reached 'the end of the beginning' of Comparative Theology.¹ Yet, twenty-five years after Francis Clooney set the template for this 'experiment' in his *Theology after Vedānta*,² ongoing scholarly conversations around the nature, methods, and aims of the discipline indicate that Comparative Theology is still in the process of finding its feet.³ I want to propose that this critical and continuous self-interrogation points not so much to a quarter-life crisis, as to the very nature of what Clooney calls "...a deep learning grounded in both heart and mind."⁴

It is for this reason that I have chosen to focus on a small section in the epilogue of

Clooney's *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies* where he outlines the virtues of interreligious learning.⁵ As if acquiring the requisite scholarly expertise (e.g. linguistic skills, historical awareness, etc.) needed to be a comparative theologian were not daunting enough, Clooney also wants us to be people who can take risks, who are patient with ambiguity, and who can live creatively on the margins of our own communities.⁶ Alongside these requirements, Clooney borrows the five virtues proposed by Catherine Cornille in her 2008 volume, *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*.⁷ These virtues, considered separately and together, provide a conceptual lens through which we can examine many of the 'meta' issues facing Comparative Theology (and the possible virtue of practising it at all), as well as a mirror in which we can see the sorts of theologians we might become as we engage in this comparative 'experiment'. In what follows, I will offer a brief commentary on these characteristics, and raise some questions along the way.

The central argument of my paper is that we will never reach 'the end of the beginning' of cultivating these virtues as theologians (comparative or otherwise), but that the ongoing questioning of the discipline can itself form us as the kind of humble, faithful, and

Daniel Soars completed his PhD in Comparative Theology at the University of Cambridge in 2019. His thesis, entitled "Beyond the Dualism of Creature and Creator," is a Hindu-Christian comparative enquiry into the distinctive relation between the world and God, with a particular focus on the work of Sara Grant and the earlier Calcutta School, and their attempts to bring Thomism into conversation with Advaita Vedānta. He currently teaches in the Divinity Department at Eton College.

empathic practitioners who are likely to do the job well.⁸ After all, Clooney himself never really wanted Comparative Theology to be seen as yet another narrow specialization for those in a charmed circle, but really just as an ongoing ‘experiment in theology’⁹ – and the experimental method, like cultivating virtuous habits, is not the sort of thing we master definitively (even after 25 years), but that we keep working at and (we hope) improving over time.

Commitment to a particular religious tradition and openness to learning from others

Cornille’s work is framed by her belief that genuine dialogue cannot be reduced to a mere exchange of information but must be seen as part of a continuous existential search for truth in which one is committed to a particular tradition and, at the same time, open to learning from others.¹⁰ The fact that Cornille’s conception of dialogue is consistent with Clooney’s vision of Comparative Theology as a practice which involves “...rootedness in one tradition while cultivating deeper openness to another”¹¹ can help us to circumvent some false dichotomies. In particular, this ‘committed hospitality’ seeks to hold ‘mission’ and ‘openness’ together in such a way that interreligious dialogue and comparative theology (not least, Christian-Hindu studies) might avoid (re)turning to imperialistic appropriations of the other with no desire for reciprocal learning, and, at the same time, takes a Gadamerian-inspired pride in its prejudices so that dialogue and comparison are not simply reduced to the kind of disinterested exchange “that is necessary for civility and life together.”¹² The basic claim here is that a deepening rootedness in one’s own religious tradition does not exclude, but in fact enables, a dialectical openness to the

religious other. Only with the seemingly opposed virtues of commitment and hospitality, Cornille argues, can there be a genuine dialogue between interlocutors seriously trying to grow in understanding of their own traditions while, at the same time, remaining open to the witness of the other.

Comparative Theology, at least as envisioned by Clooney, is, likewise, a skilful practice of holding together tradition and diversity, and truth and openness, in creative tension from within a particular faith community.¹³ Indeed, we can see this ‘committed openness’ in practice in the lives and works of some of the early Jesuit missionaries to India surveyed by Clooney in the first section of his *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*.¹⁴ Without any particular faith commitments, pioneering figures like De Nobili might have been less Christocentric in their approaches to the Hindu other, but, in the absence of these moorings, there might have been no real motivation for engagement in the first place.¹⁵ This is the reason why Clooney wants Hindu-Christian studies to be distinctively *theological*, indeed, a kind of ‘faith seeking understanding’, for openness without commitment runs the risk that whatever we might learn through our comparative engagements with another tradition has no transformative impact on us, let alone on wider religious communities.

These virtues of commitment and hospitality raise a number of issues which have been picked up in recent scholarship. Glenn Willis presses the point that as theology, comparative theology must serve the constructive needs of an identifiable religious community,¹⁶ while Stephanie Corigliano directly questions the supposed need for CT practitioners to have an explicit faith commitment and allegiance to a tradition.¹⁷ These questions, in turn, provoke others –

such as whether the virtue of ‘commitment’ places unreasonable responsibility on the individual to represent their tradition – which thereby becomes essentialised as one monolithic structure – and therefore whether it is helpful to speak about (in our case), Christian and Hindu ‘traditions’ at all.¹⁸ Clooney’s emphasis on specific ‘experiments’, rather than grand narratives, goes a long way to dissolving these issues,¹⁹ but the question of whether ‘commitment’ is a necessary or desirable virtue remains an important one. Corigliano proposes that a possible way to expand the scope and impact of CT is to see it as “a way of exploring and even forming faith identity” for those whose faith commitments are unclear or not “rooted” in a specific faith.²⁰ “In such a case,” Heim suggests, “...CT would be not so much the outreach, and (likely) unsettling of, an existing “faith seeking understanding,” as a constitutive theological activity that elicits a practitioner’s emerging religious identity.”²¹ Perhaps, then, what is important is not so much an explicit identification with one of the traditions compared, so much as a fully-engaged theological and spiritual search for truth which is ever-open to new sources of learning. This would meet Clooney’s requirement for the possibility of genuine transformation, but open CT to a broader range of practitioners. That said, without commitment to a particular tradition, it is not immediately clear how truth would be identified and sought for in the first place.

Empathy

Clooney insists, of course, that Comparative Theology is not about making uninformed pronouncements from the perspective of one’s own religious tradition on the meaning and value of others, conceived in general terms, but about paying meticulous

attention to particular details of other traditions without any *a priori* judgements made on the basis of one’s own.²² This sort of comparative engagement is ‘participatory’ and practical, which is why we need the virtue of ‘empathy’.²³ Cornille, similarly, argues that anyone seriously committed to interreligious dialogue must attempt to enter into the religious life of the other and identify with their beliefs and worldview.²⁴ This participation may well be practical (actually going to a Hindu temple or a Catholic mass, for example) but at the very least must be theologically ‘imaginative’. By focusing on the religious world of another, Cornille contends, one’s own religious imagination will be extended, even if this means projecting meanings onto other religious symbols which do not necessarily match that tradition’s self-understanding.²⁵

While the spirit of the distinction Clooney and Cornille want to make here between an engaged, empathic comparative study and a dispassionate or even pre-decided ‘theology of religions’ is clear, there surely is a question about the precise relationship between empathy and truth. This virtue forces us to confront the theological tension already alluded to between rooted commitment to one’s own tradition and existential openness to another – especially if empathising with and even participating in another religious tradition could feel like a betrayal of one’s own deeply-held convictions.²⁶ Much will depend on the degree to which a particular tradition can find resources within its own doctrines to be hospitable not only toward perceived similarities in other religions, but toward the possibility of truth in difference.²⁷ For a Christian, who believes that the Spirit blows where it wills, this might amount to how far we are willing to be ‘surprised by grace’ and, indeed, how far we are prepared to ‘take risks’

and be ‘patient with ambiguity’.²⁸ In fact, the tension between commitment and openness, between truth and empathy might well put us on our guard against proudly thinking that we need to decide in advance the boundaries of God’s presence and remind us that as (comparative) theologians, we also need to allow God to be God in the divine freedom which cannot be domesticated by doctrine. As Clooney says:

“How we meet God depends in part on how generously open – imaginative, vacant – we stand in expectation of this God who promises to adjust to us, accommodating us as we are.”²⁹

Humility and interconnection

The openness integral to the kind of dialogue Cornille has in mind and the kind of Comparative Theology practised and endorsed by Clooney distinguishes these practices from proselytising monologues or comparative studies merely designed to confirm the superiority of one’s own tradition.³⁰ After all, “...though begun modestly and with small examples,” Clooney’s ambitious vision in *Theology after Vedānta* “...intends a rethinking of every theological issue and a rereading of every theological text.”³¹ Even with such hospitality, however, the problem remains that religious traditions themselves will tend towards preserving already established claims to truth and may, as a result, be dismissive or suspicious of insights gained through dialogue or comparison which conflict with their own teachings. Indeed, Cornille shows how Roman Catholic Christianity has often fostered the virtue of humility in its laity (as submission to Tradition and the mind of the universal Church) as a way of *reinforcing* the authoritative status of official teachings.³² This kind of humility *toward* the teachings of one’s own tradition

surely stands in some tension with the ‘doctrinal’ or ‘epistemic’ humility *about* one’s own tradition that Cornille and Clooney want to see in practitioners of dialogue and comparative theology. While this virtue does not call for a kind of uncommitted pluralism, it does involve:

“Humble recognition of the ... partial and finite nature of the ways in which ultimate truth has been grasped and expressed in the teachings and practices of one’s own tradition.”³³

Even if one is open to learning through dialogue or comparative study (i.e. one has the virtue of ‘hospitality’), rootedness in a particular faith community and its claims to truth is likely to take priority over any merely secular reasons³⁴ to soften doctrinal commitments for the sake of dialogue as such. This is why Cornille and Clooney turn to Christian thinkers like John Henry Newman and George Lindbeck in search of resources *within* Christian self-understanding that, for a Christian, might justify ‘doctrinal humility’.³⁵ Much depends, of course, on believing from the outset that there is some degree of ‘interconnection’ between (in our particular case) Christian and Hindu understandings of the truth – in other words, believing that “...the teachings and practices of the other religion are in some way related to or relevant for one’s own...”³⁶

This raises the vexed question of the relation between Comparative Theology and Theology of Religions.³⁷ Clooney insists throughout his work that comparative engagement comes first, and that “...the theology of religions comes only later, out of the experience of reading others’ texts,”³⁸ but he does admit that his vision is basically an ‘inclusivist’ one. In other words, while he sees no merit in establishing an explicit evaluation of the meaning and value of another tradition

before immersing himself in it,³⁹ he does want to maintain that Jesus Christ is the definitive and authoritative revelation of God, while affirming the salvific presence of God in non-Christian religions.⁴⁰ Indeed, it is hard to imagine the sort of theologically committed comparative study endorsed by Clooney without presupposing that God can speak to us in and through traditions other than our own.

Conclusion

It is clear by now that Cornille's set of virtues (viz., commitment, hospitality, empathy, humility, and interconnection) cannot be entirely disentangled from one another. Interconnection implies that God being present, even fully, in one tradition does not preclude God's presence elsewhere, which is why we must remain open even in our commitment; while humility and empathy require us to make the effort to enter into another tradition without trying to predict on the basis of our own how or what we can learn there.⁴¹

Just as Aristotle said that we only develop virtues through practice, and one of Clooney's

Jesuit forebears, G.M. Hopkins, memorably talked of the 'just man who justifies', so the virtues needed for comparative theology can be cultivated by actually doing it.⁴² This is surely why Clooney adds the virtues of 'new dwelling' and 'marginality' to Cornille's list, since comparative theology changes us and we return to our home tradition different from who we were when we set out.⁴³ To reiterate the central thesis, then, in closing: ongoing reflection on the nature of Comparative Theology is a good thing because it raises important questions about why and how we are engaging in it. At the same time, we must not let this meta-enquiry stop us from actually getting on with our experiments because it is in doing them that we will slowly cultivate the virtues needed to do them better. 'What I do is me,' cries each mortal thing in Hopkins' poem; as comparative theologians, our calling is to do theology comparatively – and if this helps us to become more committed, hospitable, empathic, and humble, then that is surely a significant virtue of our discipline.⁴⁴

Notes

¹ S. Mark Heim, 'Comparative Theology at Twenty-Five: The End of the Beginning', *Modern Theology*, 18 October 2018 (online version before inclusion in an issue). Heim offers a 'stock-check' on the state of the discipline via four recent works: Francis X. Clooney and Klaus Von Stosch, eds., *How to Do Comparative Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018); Michelle Voss Roberts, *Comparing Faithfully: Insights for Systematic Theological Reflection* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016); Mara Brecht and Reid B. Locklin, eds., *Comparative Theology in the Millennial Classroom: Hybrid Identities, Negotiated Boundaries* (New York: Routledge,

Taylor and Francis Group, 2016); Francis X. Clooney and John Berthrong, eds., *European Perspectives on the New Comparative Theology* (Basel: MDPI, 2014). In the same vein, we might also think of two works that both came out in 2010 – one written by Clooney – *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning across Religious Borders* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), and the other a collection of essays (many by Clooney's former students) edited by him: *The New Comparative Theology: Interreligious Insights from the next Generation* (London: T & T Clark, 2010).

² Francis X. Clooney, *Theology after Vedānta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology*, (Albany: State University of New

York Press, 1993). Heim also recognises, however, that a form of 'comparative theology' was already being practised by figures like Robert Neville, Keith Ward, Raimon Panikkar and David Burrell, before the discipline acquired the label.

³ After all, David Tracy predicted as long ago as the late 1980s that Christian systematic theology would one day unavoidably have to be comparative, but I think most of us would agree that we are still waiting! See David Tracy, "Comparative Theology," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan 1987), 446-55. In her edited volume, *Comparing Faithfully*, Voss Roberts sees it as comparative theology's constructive goal to make interreligious learning a constituent part of Christian self-understanding.

⁴ Francis X. Clooney, *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies: A Theological Inquiry* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 4.

⁵ Clooney, *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 113-115. The very fact that he introduces virtues tells us much about how Clooney conceives of comparative theology and Hindu-Christian studies as "practical as well as a matter of ideas" (ibid., 113).

⁶ Clooney, *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 114.

⁷ Cornille's '5 conditions' for interreligious dialogue are: (i) doctrinal or epistemic humility, (ii) commitment to a particular religious tradition, (iii) interconnection, or the belief that the teachings or practices of another religion are relevant to one's own, (iv) empathy, and (v) hospitality or openness to the possibility of truth in other religious traditions. See Catherine Cornille, *The Impossibility of Interreligious Dialogue* (New York: Herder, 2008). Clooney adds: risk-taking, patience with ambiguity, new dwelling, and marginality – cf. *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 114.

⁸ Clooney talks about the slow, prayerful reading (*lectio divina*) of texts from another tradition as a form of spiritual practice in which the reader herself is formed and reconstituted in relation to the texts (cf. *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 64).

⁹ Cf. *Theology After Vedānta*, 6 and *passim*.

¹⁰ Catherine Cornille, 'The Role of Witness in Interreligious Dialogue', *Concilium* 1 (2011): 61-70, here, 61. See also Cornille, 'The Confessional Nature of Comparative Theology', *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 24, no. 1 (2014): 9-17.

¹¹ *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 113.

¹² Ibid., 7.

¹³ *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 8.

¹⁴ *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 23-46.

¹⁵ *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 30-36.

¹⁶ G. Willis, 'On Some Suspicions Regarding Comparative Theology' in Clooney and Von Stosch, *How to Do Comparative Theology*, 122-36.

¹⁷ S. Corigliano, 'Theologizing for the Yoga Community? Commitment and Hybridity in Comparative Theology', in Clooney and Von Stosch, ibid., 324-50. See also Heim, 'Comparative Theology at Twenty-Five', 17-18.

¹⁸ Clooney notes in the prologue to his *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies* (5-6) that many of these issues were raised by F. Clothey in 'Hindu-Christian Studies: Some Confessions from the Boundaries', *Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin* 9 (1996), 42-45.

¹⁹ Cf. *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 15.

²⁰ One thinks, in particular, of those increasing numbers of people who identify as 'spiritual but not religious'.

²¹ Heim, 'Comparative Theology', 18. This whole q of fluid/hybrid identities comes to the

fore in the essays in Brecht and Locklin, *Comparative Theology in the Millennial Classroom* (because it seems especially true of teenagers).

²² *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 11-15. This itself raises the question of whether it is really possible to study another religious tradition without any *a priori* judgements at all (e.g. about the possibility of God being revealed in that other tradition).

²³ *Ibid.*, 15. Clooney sees the work and life of Raimon Panikkar as a particularly good example of this 'mutual inhabiting' of two traditions – i.e. a Christian who practised his theology in engagement with the texts and teachings of Hinduism (cf., *ibid.*, 48). By emphasising the participatory nature of empathy, this virtue can also help to address Voss Roberts' concern that CT should be a fully 'embodied' practice which takes seriously issues like gender and sexuality – see, for example, her contribution, 'Gendering Comparative Theology' to *The New Comparative Theology* (2010).

²⁴ Cornille, 'Empathy and Inter-Religious Imagination,' *Religion and the Arts*, 12, 1-3 (2008) pp. 102-118.

²⁵ This 'projection' could amount to '*a priori* judgements made on the basis of one's own' tradition, but, in a positive way, this itself can be seen as part of a continuously enriching and fruitful hermeneutical process. If, for a Christian, the Bible defines the world in which other texts are written and received, these texts will themselves be read in the context of the Bible. At the same time, however, the Bible will, in turn, be reread with other religions and their texts as part of its context. For more on this, see Clooney, 'Reading the World in Christ: From Comparison to Inclusivism', in Gavin D'Costa (ed.), *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic*

Theology of Religions. (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990), 67 and *passim*.

²⁶ *Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*, 197-211.

²⁷ Of course, 'truth in difference' is somewhat ambiguous in this context and might have different connotations for different traditions – not least, for a Hindu and a Christian. For the former, one could invoke *bheda-abheda* Vedantic systems to suggest that somehow the truth does not negate difference but ineffably includes and sublates difference. For the latter, one could rework Trinitarian doctrine to claim that the eschatological truth will not simply nihilate other strands of religious truth but will carry them to a supreme fulfilment.

²⁸ *Future of Hindu-Christian Studies*, 114.

²⁹ Clooney, 'God for us – multiple religious identities' (2002). Interestingly, Clooney discusses a very similar tension between 'commitment' and 'openness' in respect to directing the Spiritual Exercises: "There is a delicate and important balance between the insistence that preestablished or traditional, even scriptural images, decisively limit and focus meditation, and the insistence that we can imagine God...and know, in humble awareness, that God will find us there." Perhaps, as a Jesuit formed by this imaginative openness to finding God in all things, Clooney is more disposed to an empathic engagement with other religions than Christians immersed in other Christian spiritual traditions might be.

³⁰ For a survey of different ways in which Comparative Theology has been conceived by figures ranging from J.F. Clarke (1810-1888) and F. Max Müller (1823-1900) to R. Panikkar (1918-2010) and S. Grant (1922-2002), see *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 31-39. For a critique of attempts to distinguish 'new' from 'old' Comparative Theology, see Paul

Hedges, 'The Old and New Comparative Theologies: Discourses on Religion, the Theology of Religions, Orientalism and the Boundaries of Traditions', *Religions* 3 (2012): 1120–37.

³¹ *Theology after Vedanta*, 6.

³² Cornille, *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*, 28.

³³ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁴ Such as the need for civic tolerance in pluralistic societies or Rawlsian notions of 'public reason'.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Clooney draws on Lindbeck in 'Reading the World in Christ' (1990), 67. Given the huge amount of time and effort needed to become a proficient comparative theologian, finding these motivations within one's tradition to engage in learning outside of it is perhaps even more pressing than in the case of interreligious dialogue. After all, one might be convinced, up to a point, of the need for dialogue to foster cohesive community life, but this is unlikely to be enough motivation to go to the lengths of learning ancient languages or immersing oneself in the texts of another tradition.

³⁶ *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*, 5.

³⁷ The relation between these two areas is addressed in detail by K.B. Kiblinger in her contribution to *The New Comparative Theology* (2010) and by R. Drew in 'Challenging Truths: Reflections on the Theological Dimension of Comparative Theology,' *Religions* 2012, 3(4), 1041–1053.

³⁸ 'Reading the World in Christ', 66.

³⁹ *The New Comparative Theology*, 196.

⁴⁰ 'Reading the World in Christ', 72, and *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 16.

⁴¹ Clooney discusses these presuppositions in more detail in *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 115. He is surely right to conclude that these conditions make it harder "to move

swiftly from *our* faith positions to judgements on *their* religions, because our own traditions teach us to know God as one who can well be at work in other traditions, even in their theological doctrines." (*Ibid.*, 116).

⁴² The phrase comes from Gerard Manley Hopkins S.J., 'As Kingfishers catch Fire'.

⁴³ See *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, ch.9 for more on this.

⁴⁴ Clooney discusses specific contributions that CT can make to theology more broadly in *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning*, 113 – e.g. it can play a corrective role in theological conversations with other traditions (by unburdening us of misconceptions); it undermines the excessive self-confidence that can arise if all we ever engage in is *intra*-religious dialogue; it can purify doctrinal claims by uncovering cultural and philosophical accretions that surround theological truths over time; it shows that many theological expressions of truth have appeared in other forms elsewhere; and it deepens our repertoire of ways of understanding and speaking about God.

References

- Brecht, Mara, and Reid B. Locklin, eds. *Comparative Theology in the Millennial Classroom: Hybrid Identities, Negotiated Boundaries*. New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2016. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315718279>
- Clooney, Francis X. 'Reading the World in Christ: From Comparison to Inclusivism', in D'Costa, Gavin (ed.). *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990.
- . 'God for us - multiple religious identities as a human and divine prospect', in Cornille, Catherine. *Many Mansions? Multiple Religious Belonging and*

- Christian Identity*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis, 2002.
- . *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies: A Theological Inquiry*. London and New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Clooney, Francis X., and John Berthrong, eds. *European Perspectives on the New Comparative Theology*. Basel: MDPI, 2014.
- Clooney, Francis X. *Theology after Vedānta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993.
- Clooney, Francis X., and Klaus Von Stosch, eds. *How to Do Comparative Theology*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1xhr5zg>
- Clothey, Fred. 'Hindu-Christian Studies: Some Confessions from the Boundaries, *Hindu-Christian Studies Bulletin* 9 (1996), 42-45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7825/2164-6279.1134>
- Cornille, Catherine. 'The Confessional Nature of Comparative Theology'. *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue* 24, no. 1 (2014): 9–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1xhr5zg.4>
- . *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*. New York: Herder, 2008.
- . 'The Role of Witness in Interreligious Dialogue'. *Concilium* 1 (2011): 61–70.
- Drew, Rose. 'Challenging Truths: Reflections on the Theological Dimension of Comparative Theology,' *Religions* 2012, 3(4), 1041-1053. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel3041041>
- Hedges, Paul. 'The Old and New Comparative Theologies: Discourses on Religion, the Theology of Religions, Orientalism and the Boundaries of Traditions'. *Religions* 3 (2012): 1120–37. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel3041120>
- Heim, S. Mark. 'Comparative Theology at Twenty-Five: The End of the Beginning'. *Modern Theology*, October 2018 (online version before inclusion in an issue).
- Tracy, David, "Comparative Theology," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan 1987), 446-55.
- Voss Roberts, Michelle. *Comparing Faithfully: Insights for Systematic Theological Reflection*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016.