Contents

List	of Figures and Tables	X
Pre	face: Ghosts, Post-truth Despair, and Brandolini's Law	xi
Ack	nowledgements	xix
Not	Note on Text	
1	An Incoherent Contradiction	1
	A geological divide	1
	Mapping the problematique	2
	Maps, compasses and bricks	5
	Sui generis crisis	8
	The arms race of natural theology	9
2	The Deep History of Communicati	13
2	The Deep History of Comparison	13
	A rusty toolbox	17
	Birth certificate(s): Ultimate origins	21
	A preliminary note on imperialism, postmodernism and science	21
	Rationality as cumulative by-product of comparison: From Jean Bodin	23
	to Edward Burnett Tylor Enter comparative mythology: Friedrich Max Müller	26
	Enter comparative mythology: Friedrich Max Müller Triumph and dissolution of comparison: James George Frazer	28
	Whodunnit?	31
		33
	Shape of things to come	00
3	The Darwinian Road Not Taken	37
	'The greatest historian of all time'	37
	The threat of a scientific and comparative study of religion	39
	What makes us human	41
	The Origin of Species, 1859: Breaking the chain of being	42
	The Descent of Man, 1871: Degrees, not kinds	44
	The Rubicon: Max Müller versus Darwin	46
	Ladders, progress and pithecophobia	48
	Original sin	51

viii

Contents

4	Goodbye Science	==
	The theory of everything	55
	A scientific theology? William Robertson Smith's 'dual life'	55
	Smith's heretical accommodationism, 1880s	57
	The end of the Victorian science of religion	59
	Birth certificate(s): HoR's proximate origins	62
	Netherlands, 1860s: Tiele's (tentative) science of religion	64
	Netherlands, 1870s: Chantepie's theological reaction	66
	Netherlands, 1930s: van der Leeuw's re-confessionalization	68
	Germany, 1890s: 'Cultural circles', geography and reactionary politics	71
	Austria and Switzerland, 1900s–1950s: Schmidt's apologetic history of religion	73
	Schmidt's legacy: The strategic rescue of Andrew Lang's High Gods	75
	as an early home run for post-truth	=0
	Italy, 1910s–1950s: Pettazzoni's revolutionary rebuttal	79
	Italy, 1920s–1930s: Pettazzoni's two-fold gamble	82
	1950: The foundation of the IAHR and the defeat of science	04
9		88
5	Eliadology	93
	Neither with you nor without you: Mircea Eliade	93
	Eliade, 1920s-1980s: From Romanian post-truth to American New Age	96
	The sacred from the Stone Age to the present and back again	100
	Schmidt's 'stupendous learning and industry'	103
	An epistemic twilight: Pseudoscience and esotericism	105
	Shamanism, 1200s–1800s: Heretics, noble savages, (super)heroes	109
	Shamanism, 1937–1946: Eliadean superpowers	110
	Shamanism, 1951–1970s: The Eliadean synthesis	112
	Resolving 'The problem of shamanism': An unwarranted answer to a	
	non-existent question	115
6	The Demolition of the Status Quo	117
	Point of (k)no(w) return: The politics of the Eliadean HoR	117
	Sexist biases and gender issues: Eliade's tunnel vision	120
	Dismantling homo religiosus: Rita M. Gross	122
	Dismantling the Eliadean research programme: Henry Pernet	124
	Dismantling the primacy of shamanism: Mac Linscott Ricketts	126
	Dismantling phenomenological morphology: Ioan P. Culianu	128
	Dismantling classification: Jonathan Z. Smith	130
	Dismantling right-wing ideology: Bruce Lincoln	133
	New generations, poststructuralism and Religious Studies	135
	Be careful what you wish for: Postmodernism	138
	From Deconstruction to New Realism	141

Contents ix

7	The Cognitive (R)evolution: The End?	145
	Post-truth rules	145
	What is science, anyway?	148
	Forgotten forerunners: Baldwin's evolutionary epistemology	151
	Forgotten forerunners: Harrison's evolutionary psychology	153
	Forgotten forerunners: Macalister's invention of tradition	154
	Disappearing without a trace	155
	The Dark Ages: Psychoanalysis, behaviourism and cultural anthropology	156
	Modern trail-blazers, 1950s-1990s: The slow Renaissance of science	160
	Cognition, 2000s: Back to a natural history of religion	163
	Cognition, 2010s: More than meets the eye	166
	Learning from your mistakes: The usefulness of scientific 'false views'	168
	A short-lived success? The inevitable rise of 'false facts'	170
Epil	ogue: The Night of Pseudoscience	175
Note	es es	179
Bibliography		191
Index		233