Nationalizing Religion:
The Violent Path of Religious Nationalism

Johan Strijdom

Abstract
The article not only accepts the distinction between indigeneity and hybridity as two extreme positions in postcolonial studies, but argues that the former paradigm's rigid and essentialist definition of identity may contribute to intolerance and violence. Examples of religious nationalism within Buddhist, Hindu and Christian traditions are juxtaposed to illustrate the point, and their relevance for a critique of monolithic Afrocentric views is postulated. In conclusion, the struggle to defend constitutional promises that respect cultural diversity and the promotion of a cosmopolitan education are presented as necessary antidotes to the problem of homogenizing tendencies.

In his essay 'Colonialism' David Chidester (2000:432-436) not only elaborates on the postcolonial location from which one may critically analyze religion and the study of religion as modern European constructs that have been useful instruments for economic, political and military imperialism during the 19th and 20th century, but also towards the end of that article identifies 'two extreme positions in postcolonial studies—*indigeneity* and *hybridity*—that are relevant to the future of the academic study of religion'. The emphasis in postcolonial theory, he says, 'has shifted away from the

critique of European representations of 'others' to a recovery of the subjectivity and agency of the colonized'.

Thus those who work within an *indigenous* paradigm privilege 'the self-representation of indigenous people who have passed through the experience of colonization', draw their inspiration from liberation movements against colonial oppression and aim at the recovery of a supposedly pure or authentic pre-colonial tradition, unstained from the distortions that the imperial encounter imposed on it—a strategy that Chidester aptly calls 'a romantic politics of nostalgia'. Amongst such traditionalists he then includes not only Hindutva which 'has actively engaged in electoral politics', but also those who promote visions of an African renaissance[1]. He rightly points out that such an essentialist approach, which assumes the existence of 'timeless traditions', has to contend with historical research that questions the assumed continuity and uniformity of tradition and instead emphasizes the contingent invention of it.

The second analytical strategy has therefore been to focus not on the nostalgic wish for the recovery of some pre-colonial pure root, but instead on the *hybridity*[2] that has resulted from the cultural negotiation between

---

[1] Chidester (2000:433f) considers Fanon's position as 'a type of 'nativism'', qualifying it as 'an indigeneity that sought to forge a new humanity in the modern world by means of a militant anti-colonialism'. He also points out that Spivak, who is known for being a critic of essentialism, can support 'in some occasions a 'strategic essentialism''[that] might be necessary to intervene on behalf of the marginal, oppressed or 'subaltern' in struggles over representation in colonial relations'.

[2] The main theorists that Chidester (2000:434-435) refers to here are Homi Bhabha and Stuart Hall. The former does not wish to foreground in his analysis the *diversity* of cultures in colonial situations, but rather the aspect of negotiated *hybridity*. The latter, however, seems to focus on both heterogeneity and hybridity in his analysis of the Afro-Caribbean diaspora. Doniger (2009:46-49) is helpful in clarifying by means of concrete examples the distinction between 'hybridity' and 'multiplicity'; she simultaneously emphasizes quite correctly that 'it doesn't really matter whether you call it multiple or hybrid (or even syncretic)', but that 'what does matter is how you evaluate the fused mix'.

colonizer and colonized, now emphatically including diaspora communities as well. Instead of seeking the return to a supposedly pure, indigenous essence that would be nothing but a repetition of 'the old, the imperializing, the hegemonizing form of "ethnicity"', an approach that focuses on hybridity recognizes and analyzes heterogeneity and diversity in intercultural exchanges, particularly amongst diaspora communities. We will, however, do well to underline Chidester's concluding point that 'not all negotiating positions are equal'.

Now in his article 'Diversität und Homogenisierung: Postkoloniale Anmerkungen aus Indien' (2005) Anil Bhatti, from Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), identifies the very same two contradictory tendencies in postcolonial theory, but shows with reference to India's history in no uncertain terms the destructive consequences of a closed, nativist paradigm that searches for some original, pure roots. In contrast to this attitude which is actively propagated by Hindutva and its political arm the Indian People's Party (BJP) and the supportive international World Hindu Council (VHP), he presents us with the alternative vision of a postcolonial India as an open, multi-layered palimpsest that has been formed by diverse religions, languages and ethnicities which must be respected in order to avoid intolerance and violent conflict—a vision embodied in India's anti-colonial struggle, by Gandhi's respect for Islam and Christianity, and by Nehru's vision of a secular state that would deal equally with all religions.

What interests me is the juxtaposition of Hindutva and African indigenism by Chidester, and the lesson we may learn from Bhatti's analysis of postcolonial India for our own postcolonial and post-apartheid context. But before I raise that point for further discussion, I would like to sketch the broader global context of the problem. The role of religion in violent conflicts has gained renewed global urgency in our day, with most of the world's attention focusing on Islamism. It may, therefore, be a good strategy to decenter this one-sided emphasis by first looking at Hindu and Buddhist nationalism, since these two religions have traditionally been regarded as exemplary of tolerance. We may then return to Islamic and Christian nationalism, and eventually ask about its relation to African indigenism.

'Hinduism' and 'religion' are categories invented by the modern West. European explorers and colonialists first employed the concept of 'religion' to mark the difference between themselves having 'religion'

(meaning Christianity) and the indigenous people they encountered being without religion (meaning without anything comparable to Christianity), a view which was adapted in the 19ᵗʰ century by emerging scholars of comparative religion who came to recognize the existence of myths and rituals amongst the colonized, but accorded the so-called 'primitives' places within a hierarchy of religious evolution with Christianity being given a place right at the top-end of the scale. Religious Studies thus became quite useful and complicit in managing the 'natives' and keeping them in their inferior place (cf. Braun 2000:7-8; Chidester 2000; Mack 2008:16-25; Smith 2004).

The term 'Hinduism' was first coined in the 19ᵗʰ century by British colonial scholars in an attempt to create a common identity out of what they perceived to be a despairing chaos. Although some Indian intellectuals at first questioned the move, they eventually came to find it quite appealing in the context of nationalism—another idea that was entering from the West (cf. Madan 2006:16). The concept of 'nationalism' was a product of the European romantics, who insisted, against the cosmopolitan thinkers of the Enlightenment, on the naturalness of a *Volksgeist* based on a common ethnicity and history, language and literature, art and religion, within a specific territory—an idea that came to be realized in the formation of 19ᵗʰ century European nation-states and that spread to the colonies, where it came to be appropriated by national liberation movements in the 20ᵗʰ century (cf. Bhatti 2005:1; Anderson 2006).

The rise of 'religious nationalism', by which we understand the use of 'religion' as a category to rigidly define the boundaries of the nation-state, can therefore not be understood apart from this history of Western colonial expansion and the struggle for liberation from it. But, as Peter van der Veer (1996:250) aptly remarks, behind the official story of Indian national liberation from British oppression, lurks 'a subtext that tells the story of partition, of hatred and violence between Hindus and Muslims'. How do we explain this violence in postcolonial India? Bhatti (2005:10) ascribes it to a clash between homogenizing and secular mentalities, between Hindu nationalists and Muslim nationalists[3], which reveals the fragility of a secular

---

[3] For Savarkar as founding ideologue of the former and Muhammad Iqbal as illustrative of the latter, see Bhatti (2005:7-10).

nation-state with a constitution in which cultural plurality is enshrined (the kind of alternative that Nehru, with his socialist leanings, had in mind for postcolonial India)[4]. Thus not only was the partition in 1947 of a Muslim nation-state in Pakistan and a secular nation-state in India based on an assumed essential difference between Muslims and Hindus, but in the case of secular India there was also a clear split between exclusivist Hindu nationalists and inclusivist secularists, as became all too clear in the assassination of Gandhi by a Hindu nationalist.

The picture may be further refined by adding economic and educational reasons for the communal violence to political and religious causes. The question then 'seems to be how ... Hindu-Muslim riots are related to structured economic inequality of class', how religion is related to 'economic causes, such as large-scale unemployment due to the crisis in the textile mills', to quote Peter van der Veer (1996:252)—an aspect that is well recognized by the media.

Equally critical are the selective uses of history, as Bhatti (2006b:3) indeed observes, and the literal interpretation of myth by the Hindu Right. 'When college and university teachers educate their students in a history of oppression by Muslims of Hindus', Van der Veer (1996:251) says, 'the discursive premises of violent acts have been laid'—a concern shared by Martha Nussbaum (2007a) and Amartya Sen (2005), who have spent considerable energy to contest the Hindu Right's attempt to have their monolithic version of history prescribed for schools. Commenting on her new book *The Hindus: An Alternative History* Wendy Doniger (2009b), the well-known Indologist at the University of Chicago and object of the ire of the Hindu Right in the USA (cf. Nussbaum 2007a:246-250), foregrounds the danger of misreading myths for history. 'Myth', she says, 'has been called "the smoke of history'', and therefore, she insists, '[the] desperate need for a history of the Hindus that distinguishes between the fire, the documented evidence, and the smoke; for mythic narratives become fires when they drive historical events rather than respond to them'. What she then attempts to do, in contrast to standard colonialist and Hindu nationalist histories, is 'to set the narrative of religion within the narrative of history, ... to show how Hindu

---

[4] Bhatti (2005:5-7) traces this inclusive vision back to the thinking of Ranindranath Tagore. Cf. also Sen (2005).

images, stories, and philosophies were inspired or configured by the events of the times, and how they changed as the times changed. There is no one Hindu view of karma, or of women, or of Muslims; there are so many different opinions'. The challenge is to include these alternative and diverse views of untouchables, women and non-Hindus.

The same would apply to the political use of sacred space. On the one hand we witnessed in 1991 the Hindu nationalists' demolition of Babur's 16th century mosque at Ayodhya in order to reclaim the space for the cult of Rama, which left a bloody trail that eventually culminated in the Gujarat pogrom of 2002 with approximately 2000 Muslims being killed (cf. Nussbaum 2007a:17-22). On the other hand Bhatti (1996a:6; 1996b:5-6) upholds the secular alternative, which would instead turn the site into a memorial place where both Muslims and Hindus may worship.

The tension between heterogeneity and homogeneity, between religious nationalism and secular / syncretic alternatives, is clearly not limited to the Indian sub-continent, as Bhatti (2005:1) would surely agree. Any religion may be essentialized and used to rigidly define political identities. Since Islam presents an enormously complex case, demanding nuanced distinctions between a spectrum of positions (from Islamic States like Saudi Arabia and Somalia to more secular variants like Malaysia, Indonesia and Turkey)[5], I will limit myself here to a few observations on Buddhist and Christian nationalism, before I bring the question home to African nativist paradigms in our midst.

Buddhism has stereotypically been portrayed as a tolerant, peaceful and inclusivist religion (McCargo 2009:11), a picture to which Western scholars of religion have decisively contributed by classifying it first within the category of 'idolatry' and then upgrading it, in the second half of the 19th century, to a universal, ethical and spiritual religion, almost on a par with Christianity (Smith 2004:187-191). The continuing violence in Sri Lanka and Thailand forces us, however, to take a much more critical view of the role of

---

[5] I intend to map and assess in a further article forms of Islamic nationalism and European secular nationalism which are unable to deal with cultural diversity. The latter is most pertinently illustrated by France's legal ban of the Islamic veil in public schools and by Switzerland's ban of minarets (cf. Scott [2005] for an excellent analysis of the French situation).

religion in these nation-states. In Sri Lanka we witness the ethno-religious clash between Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists and the Tamil minority (cf. Tambiah 1992), and in Thailand between conservative Buddhist nationalists and Muslims in its southern provinces.

The latter presents a particularly interesting case, since it has never been formally colonized by a European power. This does, however, not mean that it has not been profoundly affected by Western modernity, the influence of which is evident in the formation of a territorially demarcated Thai nation-state which came to be predicated on the institutions of the monarchy and the Buddhist monastic order, which were in their turn legitimized by the creation of a master historical narrative to be taught in schools as well as the concomitant restoration of memorial sites and establishment of festivals in the national calendar (cf. Peleggi 2007:7-9, 171-192).

In its history as a modern nation-state the persistent tension between a syncretic attitude and a nativist emphasis on Thainess is quite evident. On the one hand kings were educated since the latter half of the 19th century in the West, taking it as a model for the active modernization of the Thai nation. On the other hand there was the opposite tendency too, particularly associated with King Rama VI who, deeply influenced by European ideas on nationalism at the beginning of the 20th century, propagated a solipsistic view of Thai identity based on a singular language and assumed pure ethnicity and cultivated a hostile attitude towards foreigners, particularly the Burmese as external and the Chinese as internal enemies (Peleggi 2007:193-214).

These contradictory positions are not only still clear amongst contemporary politicians and scholars (viz. those who perpetuate the official historical narrative versus those who deconstruct it by focusing on its multi-layered hybridity), but also amongst leading monks. Whereas the renowned philosopher-monk Buddhadasa saw Buddhism as an inclusive, universal religion, his successor has taken an increasingly conservative stance arguing that Thai nationality should be based on orthodox Buddhism alone, thus creating a climate of increasing intolerance and hostility towards the Muslim minority in the country, which was corroborated by a call from the Queen that 'all three hundred thousand Thais' in the [southern] region [should] learn how to shoot' (McCargo 2009:4, 8). 'Buddhist temples in the southern border provinces', says Duncan McCargo (2009:21) in the most recent 2009 edition of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*,

represent enclaves of Thailand's majority religion, outposts of 'nation, religion and king' that need to be defended from physical, religious, ethnic, cultural and political incursions by the Malay Muslims who comprise most of the area's population. Each functioning temple is a visible assertion of the Thai Buddhist state's continuing suzerainty over this rebellious region. For this reason, the Thai state has invested considerable moral and military capital in securing Buddhist temples for symbolic reasons.

When the Taksin government took a more pragmatic approach and established a National Reconciliation Commission in 2005, tasked to propose policy solutions to address the southern violence, the initiative was highly unpopular among Buddhist monks, with only two joining the commission—the one being a prominent peace activist and the other an advocate of interfaith dialogue in the south (McCargo 2009:17, 28-29). McCargo (2009:32) concludes:

> While Buddhist individuals and communities in the south began arming and militarising themselves under royal patronage, elements of the *sangha* [ie, the community of monks—JS] joined a nationwide campaign to enshrine the place of Buddhism in Thailand's next constitution. Thai Buddhism was becoming increasingly particularistic, more and more national and very markedly less civil.

I take the nationalist use of Christianity in the USA as another illustration of our problem. In his recent *Myth and the Christian nation* Burton Mack (2008), a well-known critical scholar of early Christianity and its reception, analyzes the formation of Christian nationalism in the USA from a social-critical perspective on the history of religions.

Whereas the founding fathers were in the first place inspired by 18th century Enlightenment ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity, which resulted amongst other things in the constitutional separation of church and state, the notion of a 'Christian nation' amongst fundamentalist Christians has become particularly prominent during the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century. Here are a few moments in the growing influence of Christianity in the public sphere:

- Under Eisenhower (1953-61) Congress added 'under God' to the pledge of allegiance (1954) and 'In God we trust' to the dollar bills (1956). Eisenhower himself presided over the first National Prayer Breakfast and started to invite Protestant preachers like Billy Graham to lead those prayers.

- John F Kennedy (1961-63) was more cautious and tried to maintain the distinction between church and state, and to limit religion to the private experience of the individual. He nevertheless understood that the Christian religion indeed formed a crucial part of the way Americans conceived of their nation.

- After Kennedy Christian fundamentalists increasingly entered the public domain, involving themselves in school boards, city and state bureaucracies, and in national party politics, as a reaction against what they considered threatening changes in liberal civil rights of African Americans and women, and against unpatriotic, 'decadent' students who protested the Vietnam war.

- In the 1980s Reagan had the vigorous support of the conservative Protestant preacher Jerry Falwell who coined the term 'Moral Majority' and contributed greatly to Reagan's election as president.

- In the 1990s the televangelist Pat Robertson founded the 'Christian Coalition', and networks of Christian churches started to form Political Action Committees that could ensure Christian representation on school boards, in city councils, and in state and governments in order to censure immoral practices that in their view violated Biblical law.

- But it was after the September 11th attacks in 2001 that Christian language became most apparent in public discourse. In the subsequent 'war on terror' Christianity became a reason for going to war under the bravado that 'God was on our side'. Mack (2008:3-4) gives a few examples:

> As President Bush said, we were 'the greatest force for good in history'. A lieutenant general gave speeches on the Christian nation going to war against infidels and winning because our 'God was bigger than their gods'. Attorney General Ashcroft said, in effect, not to worry because Jesus is our king and we have no king but Jesus'. And our radio preachers and television evangelists said that God had allowed the terrorists to attack us because, as a nation, we had sinned and deserved the punishment.

How do we explain this nationalistic mentality of the Christian Right in the USA that has been actively involved not only at all levels of society pleading for the upholding of moral values, but also in politics using most recently 'Christian language to justify a military mission' (2008:ix)[6]? Mack argues that, although the formation of the American nation is different from the birth of European nation-states (the latter developed out of kingdoms that had their own state churches, whereas the USA has never had an official church but only diverse denominations that had to establish spaces for themselves), the USA nevertheless inherited a grammar from medieval Christendom according to which only the Christian religion is true and all other religions are regarded as false and inferior. It is the persistence of this logic in the mentality of the Christian Right that explains the violent consequences which we have witnessed. It is a monolithic grammar that supports a binary hierarchy between a superior 'us' versus inferior 'them' that is at the basis of the Christian myth-ritual system—a social logic that is, in Mack's view, simply not tenable in today's multicultural world. Instead of thinking of Western culture as superior to other cultures, and of Christianity as superior to other religions, Mack (2008:7) insists, we need 'to learn how to engage [each other] constructively' by educating citizens in religion from a humanistic perspective 'from grammar school through college', which would prepare them to 'think critically about religion in public forum', as would befit a multicultural democracy.

---

[6] Mack (2008:3) notes the similarity in rhetoric between Islamists and the US administration, who were using the same labels for each other after 9/11 but without noticing it.

This is not the place to give a detailed outline of or to debate Mack's intricate social-historical analysis of the Christian myth and ritual system:

- on how apocalyptic fantasies imagine a divine holocaust in which the in-group would be saved ('God is on our side') and the outsiders be slaughtered by God's vengeance (Mack 2008:3); or

- on the formation of one Bible and one creed under Constantine in the 4th century to serve one empire by which alternative, called 'heretical', voices were silenced; or

- on ritual appropriation of space in pilgrimages and cathedrals.

I would only like to highlight Mack's basic point: of a tension between those Christian nationalists who have internalized a mentality that considers itself the only pure truth superior to any other on the one hand (also shamefully present in the history of the Western academic study of religion), and on the other the multicultural society that America in fact has become.

This brings me to our own situation. Given these examples, taken from Hindu, Buddhist and Christian nationalisms, would it be surprising to find the same contradictory positions in a post-colonial and post-apartheid South Africa? We should, I maintain, not be surprised, and we should, I insist, be cautious of its destructive potential. We know the theory and practice of Afrikaner Christian nationalism firsthand, whose legacy is still with us. But we have in the meantime also been confronted with a comparable view of Africanization that essentializes African culture, and wishes to uncover a pure pre-colonial root unstained by European influences. Ulrike Kistner (2009) articulates the point aptly in a recent article in the *Mail & Guardian*, entitled 'Recolonising the mind: The rise of African National Education'. Says Kistner (2009:6):

> That 'Africanisation' of higher education has been or should be the hallmark of post-apartheid higher education reform has a thin common sense basics ....
> 'Africanisation in Tuition' at Unisa, for instance, comes with a list of mandatory 'reorientations' closely in line with Thabo Mbeki's

version of the African Renaissance[7] ... Afrocentrism, the valorisation of things African, Afro-dynamism and Afro-optimism are central to this mission. A new division is being created between 'the Africanised' and the 'un'- or 'anti-Africanised', implying a call for a policing of this division ....

Without reflecting on particular orders and histories of disciplines 'Western knowledge' is pitched against 'African indigenous knowledge'[8].

Speaking about the function of tradition in black political discourse in the diaspora, Paul Gilroy (1993:187-188) observes a similar tension between Afrocentric traditionalists who obsessively search for an idealized pure, authentic origin before modern colonialism and slavery on the one hand versus African modernists who emphasize 'the irrepressible diversity of black experience' and 'intercultural cross-fertilizations' on the other. 'The invocation of tradition', says Gilroy (1993:194,199), 'becomes both more desperate and more politically charged as the sheer irrepressible heterology of black cultures become harder to avoid. ... [the] story of hybridisation and intermixture ... inevitably disappoints the desire for cultural and therefore racial purity'—a process that applies in his view equally to the African diaspora and Africa itself.

---

[7] Chidester (2008:278-282) seems to consider Mbeki's explanation of the Coat of Arms as expressive of the Khoisan motto of ' unity in diversity' to be consonant with Mandela's and Tutu's rainbow vision, but others (e.g. Kistner) would contest this and instead observe a shift from the inclusionary rainbow metaphor to a more exclusionary African Renaissance rhetoric and practice. It is against such observable reductions that this article wishes to issue a warning. Butler (2009:36) aptly remarks that 'South Africa remains a long way from Archbishop Tutu's vision of a rainbow nation comfortable with and strengthened by its own diversity' and then proceeds to illustrate South Africa's 'uncomfortable' heterogeneity with reference to ethnicity, language and religion.

[8] Cf. also Kistner's (2008:1) critique of pleas at the 2007 CODESRIA conference for exclusionary Africanisation-as-indigenisation curricula in the social sciences.

What are we then to do, if rigid identities—amongst them those based on religion—seem to leave a trail of intolerance and violence? Politically, I think, we should continue the struggle against all forms of discrimination based on religion and work towards the equal respect for all religions by the state and their equal treatment before the law (cf. Nussbaum 2007b). In this way the democratic state would be held responsible by its citizens to create the systemic conditions which would make it possible for all its citizens to enjoy a fulfilled life, which would include the human right to practice the religion of one's choice[9].

But this struggle, we know, can only be fought by citizens who are properly educated in respect for diversity. Our energy, I would therefore urge, should most crucially be invested in the promotion of a cosmopolitan education of the type that Rabindranath Tagore taught in his Santiniketan School in Bengal, which Amartya Sen (2005:45, 115) had the privilege to attend—one that realizes that creativity and renewal come from being exposed to a diversity of cultures rather than a xenophobic focusing on one's own that will leave a society so much poorer and worse. As the Italian writer Antonio Tabucchi answered when asked about his roots: 'Only trees have roots', he quipped, 'human beings have legs, they can cross boundaries'. But, he added more seriously, 'if we do indeed have roots, they should be in our hearts'.

What would this mean in the South African context? Chidester (2008) seems to register the problem only reluctantly. On the one hand he fully supports South Africa's current National Policy on Religion and Education, according to which learners in public schools must be educated about different religions in such a way that it would cultivate respect in them for cultural diversity. This would be in line with the values enshrined in the South African Constitution and in line with universal human rights. On the other hand he argues for the greatest part of his essay that post-apartheid heritage initiatives are to be seen as an extension of the classroom to re-educate citizens (particularly emphasizing that many of these attempt to transform sites of pain into sites of reconciliation), but eventually admits that

---

[9] Nussbaum (1999) does, however, argue elsewhere that freedom of religion may not be used to condone cases where religious traditions violate basic human rights.

there are critics who legitimately object that post-apartheid national monuments may 'reinforce an imaginary uniformity' (Chidester 2008:291). In my view this is the crucial point that needs critical elaboration, towards which the analytical juxtaposition of religious nationalisms above may contribute.

References

Anderson, Benedict 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London and New York: Verso.

Bhatti, Anil 2006a. Kulturelle Vielfalt und Homogenisierung. *Kakanien Revisited* 31. Accessed on 29/03/09 from http://www.kakanien.ac.at/ beitr/theorie.

Bhatti, Anil 2006b. Der koloniale Diskurs und Orte des Gedächtnisses. *Kakanien Revisited* 31. Accessed on 29/03/09 from http://www. kakanien.ac.at/beitr/theorie.

Bhatti, Anil 2005. *Diversität und Homogenisierung: Postkoloniale Anmerkungen aus Indien.* Accessed on 29/03/09 from http://www. goethezeitportal.de/index.php?id=1431.

Braun, Willi & Russell McCutcheon (eds) 2000. *Guide to the Study of Religion.* London and New York: Cassell.

Butler, Anthony 2009. *Contemporary South Africa.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Chidester, David 2000. Colonialism. In Braun, Willi & Russell McCutcheon (eds): *Guide to the Study of Religion.* London and New York: Cassell.

Chidester, David 2008. Unity in Diversity: Religion Education and Public Pedagogy in South Africa. *Numen* 55: 272-299.

Doniger, Wendy 2009a. *The Hindus: An Alternative History.* New York: Penguin.

Doniger, Wendy 2009b. The Battle over Hindu History. *The Washing Post's On Faith Panel.* Accessed on 30/03/09 at http://newsweek. washingtonpost.com/onfaith/panelists/wendy_doniger/2009/03/the_battle _over_hindu_history.html

Gilroy, Paul 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. London: Verso.

Kistner, Ulrike 2008. 'Africanization in Tuition': African National Education? *Mediations: Journal of the Marxist Literary Group* 24/1. At www.mediationsjournal.org

Kistner, Ulrike 2009. Recolonising the Mind: The Rise of African National Education. *Mail & Guardian* February 6-12, 6-7.

Mack, Burton 2008. *Myth and the Christian Nation: A Social Theory of Religion.* London: Equinox.

Mack, Burton 2003. *The Christian Myth: Origins, Logic, and Legacy.* New York: Continuum.

Madan, TN 2006. Thinking Globally about Hinduism. In Juergensmeyer, Mark (ed): *The Oxford Handbook of Global Religions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McCargo, Duncan 2009. Thai Buddhism, Thai Buddhists and the Southern conflict. *Journal of South Asian Studies* 40,1: 1-10.

McCargo, Duncan 2009. The Politics of Buddhist Identity in Thailand's Deep South: The Demise of Civil Religion? *Journal of South Asian Studies* 40,1: 11-32.

Nussbaum, Martha 1999. Religion and Women's Human Rights. In Nussbaum, Martha (ed): *Sex and Social Justice.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, Martha 2007a. *The Clash Within: Democracy, Religious Violence, and India's Future.* Cambridge, Ma: Harvard University Press.

Nussbaum, Martha 2007b. Liberty of Conscience: The Attack on Equal Respect. *Journal of Human Ddevelopment* 8,3: 337-357.

Peleggi, Maurizio 2007. *Thailand: The Worldly Kingdom.* London: Reaktion Books.

Scott, Joan 2007. *Politics of the Veil.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Sen, Amartya 2005. *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian history, Culture and Identity.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Sen, Amartya 2006. *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny.* London: Penguin.

Smith Jonathan Z 2004. Religion, Religions, Religious. In Smith, Jonathan Z. *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tambiah, Stanley 1992. *Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lanka.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Van der Veer, Peter 1994. *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Van der Veer, Peter 1996. Writing Violence. In Ludden, David (ed): *Contesting the Nation.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Van der Veer, Peter 1997. The Victim's Tale. In De Vries, Hent & Samuel Weber (eds): V*iolence, Identity, and Self-determination.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Religious Studies
Unisa
strijjm@unisa.ac.za