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About the Author

David Chidester is a Visiting Fellow at the Social Cohesion and Integration Research Programme of the HSRC. He is Professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Cape Town, Director of the Institute for Comparative Religion in Southern Africa (ICRSA), and Co-Director of the International Human Rights Exchange. He is author or editor of fifteen books in the study of religion, including *Religions of South Africa* (1992), *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (1992), *Savage Systems: Colonialism and Comparative Religion in Southern Africa* (1996), and *Christianity: A Global History* (2000).

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David Chidester

Why study religion and religions? Why should we be involved as educators, students, parents or administrators in the process of teaching and learning about religious diversity? In this essay, I want to test one possible answer: citizenship. As I hope to show, the validity of this answer depends less upon what we mean by religion than it does upon what we mean by citizenship, although both terms will have to be brought into focus. Without exhausting all possible avenues of exploration, at the very least I hope to suggest that the study of religion, religions and religious diversity can usefully be brought into conversation with recent research on new formations of citizenship.

Conventionally, the modern notion of citizenship has combined political-legal rights and responsibilities with symbolic-affective loyalties and values into a public status of full inclusion and participation within a society. Located within the constitutional frameworks of modern states, social citizenship has generally been defined as national citizenship. Although the second half of the twentieth century certainly produced declarations of transnational rights and social movements with transnational loyalties, social citizenship formally remained national citizenship. According to many analysts, however, the increasing scope and pace of globalisation since the 1990s has generated new forms of 'post-national citizenship', which

have appeared in both local assertions of different kinds of 'cultural citizenship' and transnational assertions of a planetary 'global citizenship'. In order to test my answer, therefore, I shall need to consider how these changing forms of citizenship affect the terms of inclusion and the conditions of participation in public educational programmes in the study of religion, religions and religious diversity. In spite of its conceptual and practical problems, I will propose, citizenship provides a useful rationale for the study of religion and religions.

IMPERIALISTS AND IDIOTS

Why should we study religion and religions? In a recent essay published in the *Guide to the Study of Religion*, I criticised imperial answers, from nineteenth-century British imperialism to twentieth-century American neo-imperialism, which have been based on the assumption that the study of religion and religions is good for maintaining a certain kind of transnational order (Chidester, 2000a). For example, in a series of lectures, *The Religions of the World*, published in 1847, the British theologian F. D. Maurice proposed that the study of religions provided knowledge that was useful for a nation that was currently 'engaged in trading with other countries, or in conquering them, or in keeping possession of them' (Maurice, 1847: 255; see Chidester, 1996: 131–32). Over a century later, in the first edition of his popular survey of world religions published in 1958, *The Religions of Man*, American scholar of religion Huston Smith reported that his series of lectures to officers of the U.S. Air Force provided useful knowledge because 'someday they were likely to be dealing with the peoples they were studying as allies, antagonists, or subjects of military occupation' (Smith, 1958: 7–8; see McCutcheon, 1997: 180–81). Certainly, these recommendations for the study of religion suggest a remarkable continuity from British imperialism to American neo-imperialism in justifying the field of study as an intellectual instrument of international trade, military conquest and political administration of alien subjects.

In case we think that such strategic justifications for the study of

religion and religions have disappeared, we can refer to the introductory course offered by Chaplain Ken Stice at the United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. In the syllabus for this course, 'Religious Factors in Special Operations', Chaplain Stice identified the 'terminal learning objective' as enabling a Special Operations soldier to brief his or her commander on the impact of religion and religions on a mission and its forces. 'Why do Special Operations soldiers need to study religion at all?' Chaplain Stice asked. 'Primarily, because of the truth of Special Operations Imperative Number 1: Understand the Operational Environment!' As an adjunct to military strategy and tactics, the study of religion and religions can be useful in gaining the cooperation or submission of adherents of foreign, unfamiliar religions that Chaplain Stice could characterise as 'different from our own' (Stice, 1997).

By contrast to this imperial strategy, a different rationale for studying religion and religions has emerged under conditions of increased religious, cultural and linguistic diversity within urban centres of the West. Increasingly, people encounter adherents of other religions not only in international business, military operations or foreign missions, but also at home. To illustrate this local rationale for studying religious diversity, I refer to a popular text, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World's Religions*. Addressing the reader, the authors reformulate my initial question as 'Why Bother to Learn?' As the authors explain,

> At one point or another, just about everyone has felt some form of anxiety about encountering an unfamiliar religious tradition. This book will not only help you reduce the likelihood of embarrassing missteps, it will also clue you in about the guiding ideas behind just about every religious tradition you're likely to encounter in today's world. (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: frontis)

Notice the personal reasons for studying religion and religions: we need to deal with personal feelings of anxiety about the unfamiliar; to avoid personal embarrassment in dealing with others; and to live knowledgably, comfortably and confidently in a multicultural, multireligious world. Ultimately, the study of religion and religions is recommended as an antidote to fear of the unknown. 'Perhaps the most important reason to study faiths beyond one's own', the

authors advise, 'is that it is a marvelous way to replace fear with experience and insight. It's hard to be frightened of something you really understand' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 8). The study of religion and religions, therefore, emerges as a kind of therapy for fear. 'The more you know about other faiths', the authors promise, 'the less fear will be a factor in your dealings with people who practice those faiths' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 10).

Although the *Idiot's Guide* observes in passing that these personal accomplishments are always useful for tourists visiting strange and distant places, the authors repeatedly stress that the problems of anxiety, embarrassment and ignorance urgently need to be resolved at home. In the workplace, the neighbourhood, the school, and even the family, religious diversity is a local fact of life. Accordingly, the study of religion and religions is not a strategy for dealing with foreign subjects but a therapy for dealing with fears that arise in ongoing and regular relations with fellow citizens who live and work in the same operational environment.

As any idiot knows, structural and historical causes can be identified for local religious diversity. Addressing an American audience, the authors of the *Idiot's Guide* point to the framework of the U.S. Constitution as a legal structure that ensures religious diversity. By ensuring freedom from any religious establishment and guaranteeing freedom for all religious exercise, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution created 'a pluralistic religious environment'. Recent history of population movements, immigration and diaspora, however, has expanded the scope of diversity. As a result, the authors observe, 'We live in a society in which true religious diversity, guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, is finally becoming a reality' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: *frontis*). In structural terms, the reality of religious diversity can be understood as working out the terms and conditions of the U.S. constitutional framework, 'Catching Up with the Constitution', as the authors put it. However, the historical dynamics in and through which people, money, technology, images and ideas move around the world have clearly accelerated the pace of this race to catch up with the U.S. Constitution. 'In an earlier era, unfamiliar religious systems could be dismissed as "foreign" and left for the scholars to

explore', the authors note. 'In this era, that is usually not a realistic option' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 5). Learning about religion and religions has become a necessity for everyone, 'even if you don't have an advanced degree in comparative religion', they urge, adding the tantalising question: 'Why leave all the excitement to academics?' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 7).

By treating adherents of different religions as local citizens rather than as foreign subjects, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World's Religions* represents a significant alternative to the imperial study of religion. Although the guide does not directly address citizenship, the basic ingredients are there in politico-legal rights and responsibilities and the symbolic-affective terms for group identification and shared values. Recognising a citizen's right to religious worship, the guide spends less time on rights than on responsibilities – the responsibility to exercise religious tolerance, the duty to respect religious diversity, and the civic obligation to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged on the basis of religious difference – that implicitly recognise the reality of an interreligious citizenry. In an aside, the *Idiot's Guide* urges employers to avoid discriminating against employees on the basis of religion. Not merely a matter of etiquette, this freedom from religious discrimination in public is a legal right held by all citizens. As the authors warn,

> Watch It!: Just a reminder: It is completely inappropriate (and usually illegal) to question someone who reports to you about the whys and wherefores of his or her religion as it relates to workplace performance. Stay on the right side of the law; do not give even the barest impression that you are judging someone's performance, or potential for a job opening, on his or her religious beliefs. (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 23)

While asserting the legal rights and responsibilities of an interreligious citizenry, the guide also promotes an interreligious basis for group identification and shared values in which no-one is defined as 'the "Other" on the basis of religion' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 9) and all religions are found to hold in common the same elemental truths of humanity's relation with the eternal, the interconnectedness of all creation, and the limits of the logical mind (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 11–19). Although this common ground of shared religious values must seem very thin, the *Idiot's Guide*

nevertheless develops a rationale for the study of religions that is based on the mutual recognition of citizens, for all their religious diversity, in a common interreligious society.

WORLD RELIGIONS

Although I have been busy so far appreciating and applauding *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World's Religions* for advancing the study of religion and religions within an inclusive framework of interreligious citizenship, the text certainly must also come in for some criticism. In many respects, the *Idiot's Guide* is more symptom than solution of the problem of teaching and learning about religious diversity in a common society. Researchers and educators in the study of religion will certainly object to many of its guiding premises, especially its overheated diagnosis of anxiety, its reduction of the field of study to personal therapy, and its superficial assimilation of religious diversity into a common core of beliefs supposedly shared by all religions of the world.

Certainly, as the *Idiot's Guide* suggests, we cannot leave all the excitement of studying religion and religions to academics, but we also cannot simply ignore academic theory and method in the field. In this regard, the most serious problem with *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World's Religions* is its adherence to the very notion of 'world religions'. The book's substantive chapters consist of simple reviews of the history, beliefs, and practices of 'world religions' as if they were separate systems, continuous with the past and uniform in the present. Among academics, considerable excitement in the study of religion and religions in recent years has been generated by rejecting, for many good reasons, the organising framework of 'world religions'.

First, the framework is arbitrary. How many 'world religions' are there in the world? In the 1590s, when the word 'religions' first appeared in English, there were two: Protestant and Catholic (Harrison, 1990: 39). During the eighteenth century, there were four: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Paganism (Pailin, 1984). In 1870, the putative founder of the scientific study of religion, F. Max Müller, identified eight: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Confucianism and Taoism (Müller,

1873). As the study of religion developed in the twentieth century, Max Müller's list of major 'world religions' was altered on account of contingent historical factors to remove Zoroastrianism and add Shintoism. Although a recent survey has identified 33 principal 'world religions' (Eliade, et al., 2000), common usage of the framework has generally settled on a kind of G8 of major religions in the world.

Second, the framework is exclusionary. By privileging the religions that emerged from urban, agricultural civilisations of the Middle East, India and the Far East, the model of 'world religions' implicitly excludes all forms of indigenous religious life. When not ignored entirely (Burke, 1995; Sharma, 1993), indigenous religions are incorporated in the model as 'nature and tribal' (Küng and Kuschel, 1995), 'basic' (Hopfe, 1994), 'primal' (Smith, 1994; Richards, 1997), or 'non-literate' (Coogan, 1998). Consistent with this general practice, the *Idiot's Guide* includes a brief chapter on 'Nonscriptural Nature Religions' of Africa and Native America (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 193–99). Although it might be assumed that the term 'world religions' stands in contrast to either non-religion or religions from other planets, it actually operates in opposition to the indigenous religions of colonised people all over the world. In general surveys of 'world religions', indigenous religions are rarely referred to as 'indigenous', as William Pietz has observed, because that term would imply 'the right to land, territories, and place' associated with the kind of indigenous national autonomy asserted by the International Covenant on the Rights of Indigenous Nations (Pietz, 1999: 7–8; Martin and Stahnke, 1998: 133–37). By rendering indigenous religions as a residual category, the framework of 'world religions' excludes them from such claims to identity and place in the world.

Third, the framework is readily available for the ideological work of asserting conceptual control over the entire world. In the case of Max Müller, who adopted the aphorism 'Classify and Conquer', the division of the world into 'world religions' promised conceptual control over religious diversity in the service of the British imperial project. Arguably, recent systems of classification, such as Samuel Huntington's eight 'world civilizations', which can easily be mapped as 'world religions', continue this ideological work of asserting global

conceptual control (Huntington, 1993; 1998). Organised within the framework of 'world religions', clashing civilisations can not only be understood but can also be managed from the imperial centre.

Although more could be said against the notion of 'world religions', let this suffice for the moment. Whether arbitrarily or strategically constructed, the power of the category 'world religions' is derived from the implicit assertion of control over the complex, changing world of religious diversity. During the 1990s, despite criticisms within the academic study of religion, the notion of 'world religions' underwent a revival on two fronts – global and local – especially as evidenced by the changing role of religion in public education.

On the global front, a range of interreligious initiatives – the Global Ethic, the Parliament for the World's Religions, the World Conference on Religion and Peace, and so on – promoted the major 'world religions' as if they were a kind of security council in a religious United Nations (Chidester, 2000b: 598–600). Although they might not agree on matters of religious doctrines, myths and rituals, the 'world religions' could be invoked to underwrite a global religious consensus on questions of ethics, social justice and shared values. However, as Eleanor Nesbitt has argued, these projects in distilling 'shared values' from all the religions of the world are 'always initiated from a Western/"host" cultural position'. In the very process of identifying key moral issues, such as sexual relationships, abortion, euthanasia, social justice or environmentalism, 'dominant Western concerns and conceptualisation shape the agenda for examining ... all the faiths' (Nesbitt, 1999: 125). Similarly, Wolfram Weisse, Ursula Neumann and Thorstein Knauth have expressed serious reservations about any 'global ethic' based on the assertion of shared religious values that might be 'imposed from above' (Neumann and Weisse, 1999: 138; see Weisse and Knauth, 1997: 36–38). Clearly, when representatives of the 'world religions' are brought around the same table, it makes a difference who owns the table.

Locally, in many countries, the category of 'world religions' was revived in response to new demographic situations. In the context of increasing religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity of British society,

as Eleanor Nesbitt has observed, educational policy was marked by the 'shift in the content of religious education towards "world religions" and also towards an internally differentiated Christian tradition' (Nesbitt, 1999: 116). In particular, the growing presence of South Asians of Hindu, Sikh or Muslim religious backgrounds has led to the development of new curricula in religious education based not on Christianity alone but also on 'world religions' (Nesbitt, 1999: 118). Of course, not all British educators see this as a progressive development, not because they do not want to be inclusive, but because they want to avoid the arbitrary, exclusionary and ideological limits of this model. In the ongoing research of the Warwick project, the model of 'world religions' has consistently been rejected as an illegitimate point of departure for research, teaching and learning about religious diversity. As a global framework, it falsely reifies religions; as a local framework, it inevitably alienates adherents of the religions it reifies. Based on intensive ethnographic fieldwork among British Hindus, Robert Jackson and Eleanor Nesbitt have found that the 'juxtaposition of children with perceptions of their cultural background based on home and community experience and teachers having a "world religion" conception of Hinduism can lead to misunderstandings' (Jackson and Nesbitt, 1997: 94). Accordingly, researchers of the Warwick project have developed methods of local ethnography that depart from the static framework of 'world religions'.

In Germany, as Ursula Neumann and Wolfram Weisse have noted, attention to religious diversity has also been motivated by demographic changes resulting from 'the growing number of migrants entering Germany from South Europe, Turkey, Asia, South America and Africa; and in more recent years, from the eastern European countries' (Neumann and Weisse, 1999: 136). The challenge of religious diversity, however, seems to have been raised primarily by the increasing presence of Muslim immigrants. Arguably, the challenge of working out new Christian-Muslim relations has made the model of 'world religions' less attractive for educators in Germany. Similarly, in the Netherlands and Norway, religious diversity seems to have registered locally in relations between Christians and Muslims (Østberg, 1997; Van de Wetering,

1997). Under these changing conditions of religious demography, the global framework of 'world religions' has had less salience. As Neumann and Weisse have argued, the educational task is 'not to define "world religions" as abstract systems, but rather to define them through personal experiences evolving out of dialogue with people who perceive themselves as members of a particular religion' (Neumann and Weisse, 1999: 136). Accordingly, educators in the Hamburg project have developed methods of interreligious dialogue that do not depend upon the model of 'world religions'.

In Namibia and South Africa, however, the framework of 'world religions' has assumed an entirely different significance, not as an instrument for controlling foreign subjects or assimilating alien immigrants, but as a new model of inclusion for nation-building. In post-independence Namibia, educators in the field of religious education sought new terms for overcoming the political, social and economic divisions of the past by searching for a common moral ground on which to build a new nation. As Christo Lombard has observed, educational programmes in the study of religion, religions and religious diversity were linked directly with moral education. Accordingly, approaches to the study of religion that distilled a 'common morality' (Outka and Reeder, 1993) or a 'global ethic' (Küng and Kuschel, 1995) were attractive for educators struggling to overcome differences and facilitate reconciliation in an independent Namibia. 'In the Namibian RME programmes,' as Lombard has reported, 'we have taken this emphasis seriously by linking religious and moral education, and by allowing learners to discover common values through their own discussions and explorations' (Lombard, 1997: 120). Although more sophisticated than the prescriptions of the *Idiot's Guide*, this educational undertaking to explore and discover 'common values' has reinforced the framework of 'world religions' in teaching and learning about religious diversity.

Similarly, in South Africa, the model of 'world religions' has increasingly appeared as an inclusive construction. As a world in one country, according to the tourist propaganda, the new, democratic South Africa has been struggling to define new terms of inclusion in a common society. Ongoing debates over the role of religion in South African public education have helped to clarify the ways in

which religious diversity, even if that diversity is framed in terms of 'world religions', can be translated into national unity. In a draft submission to the Minister of Education that grew out of a Consulting Workshop on Religion in Education in May 2000, a proposed policy sought to recognise religious diversity but also to affirm the rights and responsibilities of a common citizenship. 'With a deep and enduring African religious heritage, South Africa is a country that embraces all the major "world religions"' (Consulting Workshop, 2000: 4). Given this diversity of religion, a national policy must be consistent with the constitutional framework that defines the rights and responsibilities of citizens. As the draft submission recommended, 'Policy for the role of religion in public schools in South Africa must flow directly from core constitutional values of citizenship, human rights, equality, freedom from discrimination, and freedom for conscience, religion, thought, belief, and opinion' (Consulting Workshop, 2000: 2). In a society in which citizenship was systematically denied to the majority of the population, the promise of national citizenship has represented not only new terms of inclusion but also new possibilities of empowerment. Although the vocabulary of 'world religions' has often been used, the ongoing negotiations over the future of religion in South African public schools have been driven by new requirements of citizenship.

As suggested by research in these different countries, 'world religions' can signify different things – an alienating framework to be rejected, an inclusive framework to be embraced – depending upon the aims and objectives of specific national projects. Nationalism, of course, is not what it used to be. In the South African case, a new, democratic nation was born in 1994 just when nations seemed to be going out of style. In a globalising world, citizenship is no longer necessarily contained within the political-legal framework of states or the symbolic-affective loyalties to nations. Recent research has identified new developments in global and cultural citizenship that must be taken seriously in thinking through relations between citizenship and religion education.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP, CULTURAL CITIZENSHIP

There has always been a tension between the political-legal and symbolic-affective sides of any definition of citizenship, perhaps even a basic contradiction between generalised rights and distinctive social, cultural and religious identities (Soysal, 1994). Nationalism, it might be argued, has been an experiment in resolving that tension by fusing the community of rights and responsibilities with the community of affective loyalty. In the classic formulation by T. H. Marshall, 'social citizenship' signifies the 'full membership' of an individual in 'the community' (Marshall, 1950; Marshall and Bottomore, 1992). Articulating personal subjectivity and social collectivity, social citizenship, in Marshall's terms, presumes the harmonious integration of the individual within the overlapping social structures of civil society, the nation and the state. While it is unlikely that these structures have ever actually overlapped in any society, their disjuncture in the present is particularly evident (Hall and Held, 1989). Since 1989, as many analysts have observed, new forms of 'post-national citizenship' have dissolved any necessary link between the rights of citizenship and loyalty to the nation-state. Post-national citizenship has been developing on two mutually constituitive planes, global and local, which I shall characterise here for purposes of discussion as global citizenship and cultural citizenship.

Global citizenship, which is formed on the basis of universal rights and transnational loyalties, has been promoted by an array of social movements, non-governmental organisations and international initiatives. In the field of education, global citizenship is receiving increasing attention as an essential component of citizenship education to prepare students for a globalising world. Although the clearest assertion of global citizenship has emerged in the human-rights movement, with its claims to basic rights that transcend the sovereignty of individual states, global citizenship has also appeared in recent formations of transnational identities with their own rights, responsibilities, loyalties and values that cut across the territorial boundaries of states (Bauböck, 1994). In feminist analysis, for example, new forms of women's citizenship have assumed global scope, asserting transnational rights and loyalties on

the basis of gender (Berkovitch, 1999; Lister, 1997). Likewise, ecological citizenship has asserted the global rights of nature and the responsibilities of human beings towards the environment (Batty and Gray, 1996; Hansen, 1993; van Steenbergen, 1994; Szerszynski and Toogood, 2000). Other constellations of transnational rights and identities, such as consumer citizenship (Murdock, 1992; Stevenson, 1997), media citizenship (Ohmae, 1990), sexual citizenship (Evans, 1993), moblility citizenship (Urry, 1990), flexible citizenship (Ong, 1999), and cosmopolitan citizenship (Held, 1995; Hutchings and Dannreuther, 1999), have been identified as new forms of global citizenship. In all of these cases, the very notion of citizenship has been transformed by the increased scope and pace of the global flows of people, capital, technology, images of human possibility, and ideals of human solidarity that Arjun Appadurai identified as the defining features of globalisation (Appadurai, 1996).

Cultural citizenship, which is formed on the basis of distinctive, often local, loyalties, has been asserting claims on group, collective or cultural rights. Like the new transnational variants of global citizenship, cultural citizenship cannot easily be assimilated into conventional models of national, political or social citizenship. The conventional Western liberal definition of citizenship, as S. James Anaya has observed, 'acknowledges the rights of the individual on the one hand, and the sovereignty of the total social collective on the other, but it is not alive to the rich variety of intermediate or alternative associational groupings actually found in human cultures, nor is it prepared to ascribe to such groups any rights not reducible either to the liberties of the citizen or to the prerogative of the state' (Anaya, 1995: 326). Instead of assuming universal rights and responsibilities, cultural citizenship affirms the distinctive cultural identity of citizens and asserts claims for the recognition and protection of that identity. As Renato Rosaldo has proposed, cultural citizenship is premised on the 'right to be different and to belong in a participatory democratic sense' (Rosaldo, 1994: 402; see Rosaldo, 1997).

Not only a matter of belonging to a particular cultural group, cultural citizenship raises questions of rights. In the subtitle to a recent collection of essays on Latino cultural citizenship in the

United States, the authors identify the task of cultural citizenship as 'reclaiming identity, space, and rights' (Flores and Benmayor, 1997). Such claims for rights, even universal human rights, for cultural difference suggest that cultural citizenship has emerged not in opposition but in counterpoint to the transnational identities of global citizenship. Frequently, claims for 'full membership' within the national community have been asserted on the basis of both global and cultural citizenship. For example, as Pnina Werbner has observed, British Muslims have been making claims for inclusion as citizens simultaneously on the basis of cultural difference and on that of universal human rights (Werbner, 2000: 319–20). Likewise, in researching Turkish immigrants in France, Yasemin Soysal found that Muslim organisations 'do not justify their demands by simply reaching back to religious treachings or traditions but through a language of rights, thus, citizenship' (Soysal, 2000: 9). In this merger of cultural resources and global rights, the constitution of national citizenship is being transformed by post-national citizenship, resulting in what Nira Yuval-Davis has called the 'multi-layered citizen' (Yuval-Davis, 1999).

What does any of this have to do with the study of religion, religions and religious diversity? Religious resonances of the very notion of citizenship could certainly be pursued. On the political-legal side, the idea of human rights is directly related to religion, whether we want to argue that inherent, inalienable and essentially 'sacred' human rights require some kind of religious grounding (Perry, 1998: 11–41), represent competing, conflicting claims in relation to religious obligations (Gustafson and Juviler, 1999), or stand in necessary counterpoint to religious loyalties (An'naim, 1992). In all of these ways, the rights of citizenship are entangled with religion. On the symbolic-affective side, the sense of belonging, loyalty to the collective, and shared values of citizenship represent a kind of religious work, even if we do not want to use the term 'civil religion' to represent the religious character of the imagined communities (Anderson, 1991), invented traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1985), political mythologies (Thompson, 1985), and political rituals of citizenship (Kertzer, 1988).

Although these hints of a religious genealogy of citizenship could

be elaborated, I am not interested in attempting that task here. Instead, I want to suggest that recent formations of global and cultural citizenship, with their multiple identities, shifting locations and new media, can chart the terrain for resituating the study of religion. As I have suggested elsewhere, the study of religion might be reconceived as a disciplined inquiry into the dynamics of human identity, spatial and temporal location and the media through which identity and location are negotiated (Chidester, 2000c). To put it differently, we might understand the study of religion as the creative and critical investigation of the multiple, situated and contested mediations of what it is to be a human person in a human place. Citizenship, particularly 'multi-layered' citizenship, brings those issues into a particularly intense focus. At the intersection of global and local identities, this multiple citizenship, as James Clifford has observed, results in 'forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside of the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference' (Clifford, 1994 308). In that politics of difference, as Nira Yuval-Davis has argued, citizenship is a 'constant process of struggle and negotiation' (Yuval-Davis, 1997: 193–94). Like religion, citizenship is a process of negotiating human identity in time and space.

If we take seriously these new formations of global and cultural citizenship, then we can no longer think of relations between religious meaning and political power in terms of conventional models, which are basically managerial models, for dealing with religious diversity. Within modern states, models for managing religious diversity have been based upon either the distinction between the public and the private or that between the one and the many. For example, while the U.S. Constitution has managed diversity by reinforcing the principled separation of private religion from the public apparatuses of the state, the new South Africa has sought to mobilise all of the many religious constituencies within its borders into the service of the one national interest. Given the changing formations and fluctuations of national, global and cultural citizenship, however, we can no longer be confident that religious diversity can be absorbed into either of these formulae. Beyond the managerial model for dealing with religious diversity, we are faced

with new challenges of understanding religious identity, location and media as negotiated.

By locating the study of religion within the 'constant process of struggle and negotiation' over citizenship, we might find new ways to revitalise our ongoing attention to the religious meanings of being human, in all its diversity, within specific times, places, global exchanges, local situations and power relations. At the very least, citizenship, however it might be negotiated, inevitably raises the stakes in questions of human meaning by translating the meaning of being human into the political dynamics of the inclusion, enfranchisement and empowerment of human beings. In other words, citizenship conventionally, but also practically, stands for the power of meaning, the power of rights and responsibilities merging with the meaning of affective loyalties and shared values, articulating the powerful, meaningful intersection of personal subjectivity and social collectivity. In these terms, the problems and prospects of citizenship, for all their conceptual ambiguity, global extensions and local differentiations, might very well be a good place to think about religion, especially within the sphere of public education. In conclusion, I want to reflect briefly on some of the implications of this positioning of the study of religion for teaching and learning about religion, religions and religious diversity in public schools.

RELIGION EDUCATION

In state schools, the process of teaching and learning about religion has often, if not inevitably, been invested with a public purpose that can be formulated in the service of citizenship. Sometimes, advocates of religious education have enunciated their public intent as facilitating global citizenship. For example, invoking the utopian ideal of a global village, Trees Andree proposed that interreligious and intercultural education was essential because 'the citizens of that global village, who are all neighbours, have to learn to live together' (Andree, 1997: 18). In this formulation, religious education, designed for diversity, promises to make learners turn into good global citizens of the world. By contrast, many national systems of religious

education have been fashioned around more provincial goals of cultivating a certain kind of homogeneous national citizenship. 'In the Norwegian curriculum,' as Breidlid and Nicolaisen have observed, 'construction of cultural identity is regarded as a main task, and the R.E. subject (among others) is seen as a suitable tool for fulfilling this purpose' (Breidlid and Nicolaisen, 1999: 143). From this perspective, public education in religion can serve the goal of initiating pupils into a citizenship that is both national and cultural. However, Muslim immigrants in Norway, accounting for roughly 25 per cent of the pupils in Norwegian public schools in Oslo, have introduced a new challenge to this assumed equivalence between cultural citizenship and national citizenship in Norway. As we have seen, however, the disjunctures among national, cultural and global formations of citizenship are everywhere a feature of public life. If education in religion, religions, and religious diversity in public schools is public, we need to think through what we mean by 'religion' and by 'public'.

Once again, attention to citizenship brings the notion of 'public' into a particular kind of focus. Established by rights and responsibilities, enabled by collective loyalties and shared values, citizenship is actualised in and through public participation. How do we participate as citizens in public? Following Jurgen Habermas, we might imagine a 'public sphere' that is constituted by a certain kind of consensual communication (Habermas, 1989). However, as the advocates of both global and cultural citizenship demonstrate, public spheres are multiple. In the Northern Province of South Africa, for example, a citizen might participate in the different public spheres of the national government of the African National Congress (ANC), the regional branch of comrades of the ruling party, a local civic association, a traditional religio-political authority, and a local traditional administrative authority. Documenting these multiple spheres of citizen participation, Isak Niehaus has observed that a 'woman can, for instance, appeal to ANC leaders for information about national politics, ask comrades to apprehend stock thieves, inform the Civic that a tap is without water, divorce her husband at the chief's *kgoro* and ask the local headman to allocate her a new residential site.' Manoeuvring within and among

these different public spheres, any citizen can actualise his or her citizenship by asserting rights, obeying responsibilities, serving obligations, and affirming shared values within multiple contexts. As Niehaus concludes, a citizen operating in these diverse public spheres 'would not perceive these actions as contradictory' (Niehaus, 2001: 156).

At the same time, again following Habermas, we might assume that the public sphere demands a certain kind of 'public reason', based not on violence, force or coercion, but on rational persuasion. In the context of global and cultural citizenship, however, public reason requires new mediations of persuasion that are based not only on assertions about national interest, but also on a kind of public participation that moves in, through and across differences in order 'to see how issues look from the point of view of those with differing religious commitments and cultural backgrounds' (Kymlicka, 1998: 188). Public reason, however, is only a small part of public participation opened up by the new forms of global and cultural citizenship. As Paul Gilroy has observed, alternative public spheres are constantly being opened not through the rational deliberations of 'public reason' but also through the performances of 'story-telling and music-making' (Gilroy, 1993: 200). In a world of global mass media, with its proliferating images, stories and music, the 'public' character of the public sphere has mutated in ways that validate both global and cultural constructions of human identity.

Situated in these multiple, shifting and changing landscapes, the study of religion in public institutions, especially in public schools, has to come to terms with citizenship. Whether constructed nationally or transnationally, citizenship is inevitably a matter of identity. Identity, as we have seen, is urgently at stake. If the academic study of religion is concerned with human identity, it will have to attend to all the permutations of invented, emergent, contested and negotiated identities that have claimed citizenship, whether that citizenship is asserted in national, cultural or global terms. In public schools, space needs to be created for teaching and learning about religion in ways that recognise, affirm and explore, creatively and critically, this multiplicity of identity. Fortunately, the educational work is already happening. In Norway, for example, despite the national mandate to

cultivate a particular kind of cultural citizenry, educators in the field of religion education have been able to explore the ways in which their pupils identify with multiple cultures, both global and local, and form multiple identities. As Breidlid and Nicolaisen have found, religion education reveals not only religious diversity in the social collectivity but also 'plural identity in the same individual' (Breidlid and Nicolaisen, 1999: 148–149). While each pupil might have multiple religious loyalties, the classroom is inevitably a site of religious diversity. In the ongoing research of Wolfram Weisse and his colleagues in Hamburg, the classroom has been opened up as a space for the articulation of diversity through the dialogue of pupils from the 'multi-perspective view of the participants' (Weisse, 1999: 155). In the study of religion, identity is crucial. As historian of religions Bruce Lincoln has argued, the study of religion is constantly confronted with the challenge of making sense of the discourses and forces through which any first-person plural – any 'us' – is constructed (Lincoln, 1987: 74). Religion education in public institutions of learning is also confronted with this problem. Given the multiplying demands of multiple citizenships, however, teaching and learning about religion must respond to the multiplicity of personal and collective identity.

In pedagogical practice, international projects in religion education have developed methods that are responsive to these challenges. Methods have been tested in the classroom – the ethnographic method of Warwick (Jackson, 1997b), the dialogical method of Hamburg (Weisse and Knauth, 1997), the structured exchange of Utrecht (Bakker, 1997: 145), the multiple narratives of Norway (Breidlid and Nicolaisen, 1999), the moral inquiry of Namibia (Lombard, 1997), the participatory pedagogy of Cape Town (Chidester, 1997; Stonier, 1997), and so on. For all of their differences, these international projects have agreed on a student-centred, participatory, engaging, multiple, relational, dynamic and open approach to teaching and learning about religion, religions and religious diversity. At the same time, each of these projects has struggled to mediate between the national agendas in their working environments and all of the different kinds of cultural and global citizenship that we have considered. As I have tried to suggest, this

mediation between the academic study of religion and the multiple political demands of citizenship can be a creative, productive tension for teaching and learning about religion. Although we might not be able to achieve such unity in any other public sphere, the religion education classroom can be a public place in its own right, in which we can work towards creating an 'us' with no 'them'. Global citizenship, as John Urry has observed, might represent a radical departure from conventional constructions of national citizenship that have inevitably marked out a terrain of insiders and outsiders, 'identifying the non-citizens, the other, the enemy' (Urry, 1999: 322). Following *The Complete Idiot's Guide to the World's Religions*, the religion education classroom can be a space for such an inclusive citizenship in which no one is defined as 'the "Other" on the basis of religion' (Toropov and Buckles, 1997: 9). If education is about making citizens, then at the very least we want to develop programmes in religion education that prepare pupils for the national, cultural and global terrains in which they will negotiate their citizenship in a rapidly changing world.

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