"ORCHESTRAL MUSIC WAS THE

MUSIC OF THE WORKING CLASS":

INDIAN POPULAR MUSIC, PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

AND IDENTITY AMONG INDIAN SOUTH AFRICANS

IN DURBAN, 1930 - 1970

by

Naresh Denny Veeran

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ABSTRACT

During the mid-1930s, a tradition of music-making
which drew its repertoire almost exclusively from
the music of Indian films began among Indian South
African ensembles in and around the city of Durban.
This dissertation examines the ways in which the
re-created music of Indian films served as a popular
expressive medium for the majority of Indian South
Africans in and around the city of Durban between
1930 and 1970. Unlike ethnomusicological and popular
music studies that focus on musics which are gener-
ally both composed and performed by the same group
of people, this study deals with a repertoire that
was by and large imported directly from another geo-
graphic, political, and social context: India. The
study is based on the premise that the performance
of music can serve as a valuable historical text,
and it posits that the musical structures and per-
formance practices of the ensembles under study en-
code vital information about shared socio-political
experiences and the Indian South African identities
that emerged during the period under discussion.

The whole thesis, unless otherwise indicated, is my
own original work.

A NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY AND TRANSLATION

Although all Indian South Africans are conversant in English, many use a number of idiomatic colloquialisms in daily conversation. Unless otherwise indicated, translations or explanations of these terms are my own. Where Tamil and Hindi expressions are part of quotations, explanations are either placed within parenthesis or explained more fully in the explanatory notes. In all instances, these translations were elicited from the informants themselves. This method, as opposed to providing a dictionary definition of the term used, was adopted to provide insight into how Indian South Africans themselves understand the Tamil and Hindi words and expressions they use. In cases where Tamil words and phrases occur in unquoted text, the translations given are my own.

Following the popularly accepted trend in South Africa to exclude diacritical markings for South Asian terms, these have been left out in the text. As Melveen Jackson points out, diacritical markings in South African sources are frequently inaccurate and vary widely (1988: 28). As a result, their inclusion is sometimes more confusing than helpful.

Finally, transliterated Tamil and Indian South African colloquial terms in this study are based on A. C. Chettiar's *English-Tamil Dictionary* (1992) and Rajend Mesthrie's *A Lexicon of South African Indian English* (1992) respectively.

PREFACE

Choosing a title for an academic text can be a particularly sensitive matter because, in its entirety, the ideal title should simultaneously indicate the discipline in which the study is located, capture the spirit of the narrative, focus on the scope of the study, and, to an extent, summarise the major concern or concerns of the paper. Further, both forceful communication and practical considerations, such as bibliographic concerns, demand that the title be composed as economically as possible.

The title of this paper is a quotation from a participant in the study. Apart from capturing the essence of the project, the quotation, I felt, also reflected the spirit of my study, i.e. a representation of information and data rather than solely an analysis of generally available information. In using the quotation, I attempt to reflect the source of my data, since most of it was gathered through interviews and conversations with people. The study thus results from interactions between my informants and myself; it encompasses the

intersection of many experiences and viewpoints.
There is a dire need in ethnographic writing to con-
sider audiences and participants as partners in an
emerging dialogue. Research, Veit Erlmann states,
can no longer be one-sided (1996: 11).

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All the participants of this project, but most especially Harry Arunachalam of the Bala Vinotha Orchestra, Gopalan Govender of the Ranjeni Orchestra, Peter Jack of the Karshi Orchestra, Rajive Mohan of the Dilkaash Show Band, Shama Naidoo of the Silver Star Orchestra, Tulsidas "TP" Naidoo of the Indian Academy of South Africa, Devan Nair of Lotus FM, Madhavan Nair of the Ranjeni Orchestra, Bandy Pillay of the Denny Veeran's Music Academy and Jugatheesan Devar -- former presenter of the South African Broadcasting Corporation's Indian music programme,

In Memoriam

Bashan Jimmy Veeran

8 April 1981 - 10 March 1994

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In a small village in India, there once lived a
musician and his wife who had everything they
wanted except a child. For many years they were
unable to have children. Then, one day, they
sought the advice of a priest who offered his
blessings, and in time a son was born to them.
The child was named Tansen. As a young boy he
was extremely mischievous, but was also very
talented. Recognising Tansen's ability to accu-
rately mimic various animal sounds, and keep
people entranced by his vocal gymnastics, Tan-
sen's father decided to send him to live with a
music teacher. By the age of sixteen, Tansen
had memorised hundreds of songs, and could sing
all the ragas. One day, Akbar, the emperor of
India, went on a journey to a town nearby. On
the way, he discovered Tansen singing in a gar-
den. He was moved to tears because of the
beauty of Tansen's voice, and immediately of-
fered Tansen the position of court musician --
an honour that Tansen's entire village later

celebrated. In the years that followed, the emperor showered Tansen with lavish gifts at the end of each of his performances. During this period, Tansen entertained thousands of the emperor's guests and also composed hundreds of songs. It is believed that Tansen's music was so powerful that it could invoke sympathy, joy, sorrow, or anger in the listener. People from far and wide came to listen to Tansen and to witness the power of his music. His fame grew to such a degree that when a neighbouring king offered a priceless diamond in exchange for the services of Tansen, it is believed that Akbar refused, saying "No amount of money could make me part with Tansen."

Tansen eventually married one of the queen's maiden attendants and in time, two daughters were born to the couple. As both his daughters grew older, they also proved to be musically talented. Although Tansen was admired by thousands of people, his fame and position in Akbar's court made a number of people envious. These people included the emperor's *Wazir* or Chief Minister. The *Wazir* and his friends tried many ways to discredit Tansen, but each time Emperor Akbar dismissed the charges.

One day however, one of Tansen's enemies suggested to the *Wazir* that he ask Tansen to sing Raga Deepak. Realising the power of that particular raga, the *Wazir* agreed at once. He had heard that if the raga was sung in its proper context, fire would be created and the singer would die.

In court the next day, the *Wazir* asked the emperor if he would request Tansen to sing Raga Deepak. The emperor, knowing about the power of the raga, immediately realised that this request was part of a plot to kill Tansen. However, he would have lost face if he had deferred the request, because, as an emperor, he could ask anything of his subjects. Refusing the request might suggest that he lacked the power which was appropriate to his position; he could not simply say no. Therefore he asked Tansen to sing Raga Deepak. Tansen was shocked knowing that singing the raga would kill him. However, to please the emperor, he agreed but asked for a three week period of grace in which to prepare for the performance. At home, Tansen spent hours thinking of a way to counteract the power of Raga Deepak and finally realised that

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only a steady, cooling rain would help. He decided to teach his daughters Raga Malhar which, if sung properly, could invoke rain. Over the next three weeks, he patiently prepared his daughters for their performance.

On the appointed evening, Tansen appeared in court and began singing. Thousands of people were present to witness the performance. Within a few hours, the temperature in the hall rose making it unbearable for the audience. Gradually the heat that was created by the raga warmed the rivers around the palace making it impossible for the birds to drink water. Tansen's body became hot and his eyes were blood-shot. In the meantime, his daughters sang at their home with every bit of passion that they could muster. The sky grew overcast, but no rain appeared. Tansen persevered leaving his destiny in the hands of his daughters. He sang until the next morning when suddenly, the skies opened and let forth a thunderous downpour. By this time however, the lamps in the court were lit by the heat of the music, and Tansen's body was feverish. By the evening, it was impossible for him to continue even though the rain had helped considerably. Tansen could take no more and ran out into the rain like a madman.

In the weeks that followed, Tansen lay in bed delirious and ill. The emperor however, sat by his side and nursed him. After a month, Tansen recovered and went back to sing for his emperor and friend. The city rejoiced, and never again was Tansen's ability questioned.

What happens when a person such as Tansen makes music? Why do particular individuals or social groups perform or listen to the sounds in the place, time and context that they do? What are the principles that organise the combinations of sounds and their arrangement in time? What effects do musical performances have on the musicians, the audience and other groups involved? What is the relation of music to other processes in society? What is the role of the individual in shaping a tradition, and of tradition in forming the individual?

Answering the above questions is perhaps as problematic as defining the nature of ethnographic knowledge itself. The story about Tansen, which is a combination of historical fact and myth, was related to me a few years ago by Deepak Ram, my *bansuri* (Indian flute) teacher. Although it does not directly provide solutions to the above questions, it highlights a number of themes that may possibly be the beginnings of answers -- one of them being the ability of music to influence and reflect people's attitudes and actions. The story is about power relations, about good triumphing over evil, and about the power of music. In Hindu thought, fire is associated with evil and destruction, whilst water is associated with life and beauty. In the story,

the *Wazir* is plagued by evil thoughts, and he plots
to kill Tansen through performance. Tansen, unlike
the *Wazir*, is the epitome of all things creative and
beautiful. The story thus treats the ragas and the
power relations in Akbar's court as metaphors that
represent the ability of life and beauty to overcome
evil. For me, the story is important in that it ex-
emplifies the manner in which much of the data for
this study was accrued, i.e. through stories and
conversations about experiences. Many of the people
who conversed with me lived through the experiences
they recounted or else remember them as being expe-
rienced by people who they themselves knew.

THE MUSIC AND THE PEOPLE BEING STUDIED

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the
ways in which the re-created music of Indian films
served as a popular expressive medium for the major-
ity of Indian South Africans within a particular
temporal and spatial framework. Indians in South Af-
rica subscribe to at least three major religions,
viz. Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Of the early
Indian settlers in South Africa for example, 80 per-
cent were Hindus, whilst between 10 and 15 percent
were Muslims. Christians made up the smallest group
of about 1.4 percent (Hall 1985: 347). Although In-
dian film music was, and for many still is, an inte-

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gral part of Indian life in South Africa, it did
not, nor does it continue to play a prominent role
in the everyday lives and celebrations of Muslims.
In fact, amongst orthodox Muslims, music is consid-
ered *haraam* (not permissible) and thus is not in-
cluded in their celebrations and rituals. However,
many of the early Indian record shops, record compa-
nies and cinemas were Muslim-owned and run. Further,
a number of Indian South African personalities ac-
tive in the period under focus of this study were
Muslim radio presenters, record producers, sound en-
gineers, and, as Appendix One reveals, musicians.
Thus, although Muslim support of and influence on
the development of the Indian film music tradition
in South Africa is small in comparison to the sup-
port and influence of other religious groups, the
roles played by Muslims in providing support, per-
sonnel and an infrastructure for Indian film music
in South Africa cannot go unmentioned.

I called the South African development of film music
an "expressive medium" earlier to illustrate the va-
riety of ways in which Indian South Africans have
used this music to perceive, invent, and reveal
meaning within their environment. In the course of
the study, I focus on various performance practices,
and show how these practices became metaphors for

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aspects of Indian South African identity. This iden-
tity, among other themes such as community and
power, is central to the study.

Unlike western popular music, which draws material
and inspiration from a large variety of sources and
media, Indian popular music in South Africa and, to
a large extent, in India is dependant on Indian
films for its repertoire. The Indian popular music
industry therefore exists within the confines of a
parasitic relationship with its host, the Indian
film industry. Indian South African musicians do not
use the term "Indian popular music" in conversation,
but, instead, use the terms "film music" (owing to
the source of the music's repertory) or "orchestral
music" (due to the fact that large ensembles were
used to perform this music). I use the term "Indian
popular music" to refer to popular music that in-
cludes the film music played by Indian South African
orchestras as well as such other music that was
played in South Africa and that combines Indian and
western attributes. Indian popular music is thus
distinct from Indian folk music, devotional music
and classical, or art, music.

Indian popular music is not unique in its reliance
on the cinema for inspiration and materials: in many

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other cultures, as Peter Manuel points out, popular

music matured in the context of cinematic musicals.

These popular musics include the Indonesian *dangdut*,

the Argentine tango and modern Egyptian urban music

(1988: 172).

Using a set of criteria proposed by John Bailey in

his attempt at justifying the use of the label

"popular music" for the *kilwali* genre of Afghani-

stan, I argue that Indian film music can be classi-

fied as Indian popular music for the following

reasons:

1. The people who perform this type of music distin-

guish the genre as a distinct category, and contrast

it with other kinds of music;

2. The repertory has a rapid turnover, and its con-

tinual change is recognised by the populace as im-

portant to their perception and appreciation of the

music;

3. The music is closely associated with the sound

recording and broadcasting media which form indis-

pensable elements in the network of communication

between performers and audiences;

4. The above media are especially important in the

process of creating new music, but the music is

later recreated at the local level, where it becomes

a medium of social interaction -- part of a dynamic social process; and

5. The music is associated with a "cult of person-alities", with leading exponents elevated to a special status in the community that appreciate the music (1981: 120).

While Indian popular music shares the above points with western popular music, it differs from western popular music in several ways. Firstly, the western popular music industry encompasses a number of genres and repertories which have their origins in various parts of the world. The Indian popular music industry on the other hand, until recently, consisted only of songs composed in India. Secondly, as has been mentioned, Indian popular music is almost completely reliant on Indian films for its inspiration and survival as a renewable tradition, whilst the western popular music industry exists independently of the western film industry. Thirdly, the major target market for the promoters of western popular music is the youth. However, due to its reliance on Indian films which are watched by people of all ages, the Indian popular music industry enjoys a wider reception. And finally, although there has been some experimentation with Indian music by western popular ensembles such as Traffic, the Beat-

les, the Rolling Stones, and the Incredible String Band, Indian music has never been the primary foundation on which western popular music was built (Farrell 1988: 189). In the case of Indian popular music on the other hand, a number of western techniques, genres and stylistic features such as orchestration, harmony, form, counterpoint, rhythm and metre are combined with Indian melodic and rhythmic characteristics to form the basis of the entire popular music repertoire.

Indian film music is not the only popular music performed by Indian South Africans. Such western genres as jazz, rock and ballroom-dance music have featured just as prominently as Indian film music in the lives of Indian South Africans. (See Appendix Two, a list of dance bands comprising Indian South African musicians active in the sixties and seventies.)

Prior to the 1930s, the music that was performed at Hindu social occasions such as weddings and concerts in South Africa was based mainly on Indian folk music and religious music. Thus, it drew primarily on Indic traditions that Indian immigrants brought with them to South Africa. Between 1860 and 1911, 152 184 of these immigrants arrived in South Africa under the system of indenture -- a five year contract --

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to work on the sugar cane plantations in the coastal belt of Natal, in the homes of white colonists, in hotels, on the railways, or in the coal mines of Northern Natal where mining began in 1889 [refer to map, Figure 1.1] (Hall 1985: 346). Accounts from the grandchildren of settlers -- most of whom are now grandparents themselves -- reveal that the kinds of music that were performed by the early settlers were generally designed for performance by small ensembles. The size of these ensembles seems to be in line with the size of other types of ensembles in India at the time. Typical examples of these other types of ensembles include *periya melam* ensembles, and the groups that featured in *katcheri* performances.

Periya melam is a Tamil term which when literally translated means 'a big drum'. However, in conversation, it refers to a particular type of small ensemble that is found in both North and South Indian weddings. The South Indian *periya melam* comprises, principally, a *nagasvaram* (a type of double-reed oboe) and a *tavil* (a large, barrel shaped drum). A second *nagasvaram* may also be included in the ensemble, whilst the *ottu* -- a closed-hole *nagasvaram* -- provides the drone. *Thalam* (cymbals) are also common
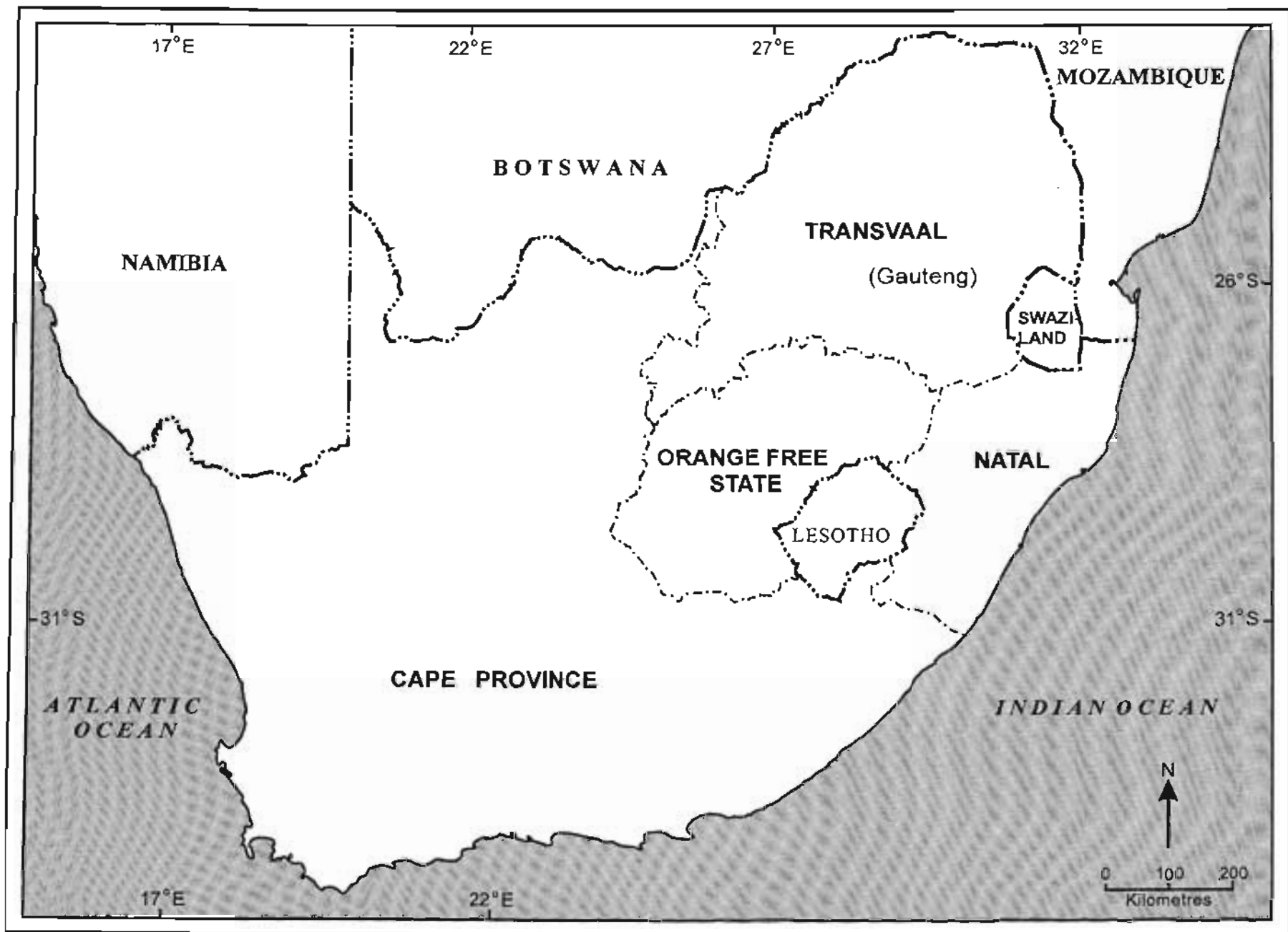
Figure 1.1 Map of South Africa prior to the advent of democracy in 1994 (Cartographic Studio, University of Natal 1999)

in *periya melam* ensembles. In North Indian weddings, the *nagasvarams* are replaced by *shenai* (another type of double-reed oboe).

Katcheri refers to the medium for the performance of South Indian classical music, ensembles which may differ according to the soloists being featured. In all cases the ensembles are small, and consist of a soloist -- either a vocalist or instrumentalist -- accompanied by a melody instrument such as the violin, a drone provided by a *tanpura* and a rhythmic instrument such as the *mrdangam*. In India, the law courts and other public offices are referred to as *katcheris*. Michael Nixon argues that it was perhaps the formal appearance of musicians in a public recital that led to the adoption of the term (1988: 31).

During the thirties, the sound cinema was introduced to Indian South Africans. As film moved out of the "silent" era, it became one of the most sought-after forms of entertainment for Indian South Africans. Indian "talkies", as they are fondly remembered, were musicals, and they provided an inspiration as well as material for the many ensembles that performed at weddings and concerts. Tulsidas Naidoo, the son of Perumal Ramaswamy Naidoo who is reported

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to be the last Indian to have served under the system of indenture (*The Sunday Tribune Herald*: 5 April 1998), states that these ensembles had been in existence in South Africa since the 1890s. Film music, much like other aspects of Indian life in South Africa such as dress, style and language, blended western and Indian elements. This mix included the use of both western and Indian instruments, western harmonic and contrapuntal principles, western rhythms and metre, and Indian melodic organisation and ornamentation. Although, and perhaps even because, the films were imported from India, they appealed to the aspirations of Indian South Africans at the time. As a result, both the film medium and the music associated with it gained popularity with local Indians rapidly, and within a short space of time it began to form the core of most forms of popular entertainment.

As the popular music played by Indian South Africans gradually incorporated the newly imported repertoire, the ensembles grew to accommodate the demands this repertoire made upon them. Referred to by the performers of popular music as orchestras, the ensembles formed the bedrock of a tradition of music-making that dominated the popular cultural life of

most Indian South Africans from its advent until the present day.

This study concerns itself with the role played by the music of the Indian orchestral tradition in the lives of Indian South Africans in the city of Durban. Oral evidence suggests that orchestras were formed soon after the appearance of Indian films in Durban during the thirties. By about 1970, when technological developments such as amplification made smaller ensembles possible, large orchestras were gradually replaced with smaller ones. Therefore, I have confined this study to the period between 1930 and 1970.

Unlike ethnomusicological and popular music studies that focus on musics which are generally both composed and performed by the same group of people, this study deals with a tradition of music making which was based on a repertoire that was by and large a direct import from another geographic, political, and social context: India. Since the composition of the music took place in another location and context, I privilege the performance practices. These practices enable one to gain insight into the re-creation and appreciation of the music, and the experiences of the people who perform it. This argu-

ment resonates with Sara Cohen's ideas that focusing
upon people and their musical practices and proc-
esses, rather than structures, texts or products,
illuminates the ways in which music is appreciated
and the important role that it plays in everyday
life and in society generally (1993: 127). The well-
known ethnomusicologists Anthony Seeger and Regula
Qureshi also agree that analysis of the musical
practices and processes of a group yield insight
into how sounds are conceived, created, appreciated
and used to influence other individuals, groups and
social and musical processes (Seeger 1992: 89 and
Qureshi 1987: 65).

MOTIVATION FOR THE PROJECT

My great-grandfather, Murugasen Pillay, owned a
large home that was situated on an acre of land in
Cato Manor -- a suburb which is located approxi-
mately 3 kilometres from central Durban. In keeping
with the lifestyle of his neighbours and of much of
Indian society at the time, his family was an ex-
tended one, and his house therefore, was home not
only to all of his children, but also to their re-
spective husbands, wives and children. By 1960,
about 40 people lived with my great-grandfather in
his home.

Although for most of his life Murugasen Pillay worked as a chef in the home of a prominent white businessman, Harvey Greenacre, he was also a musician who, according to his sons, was a "fine sitar player". Like other Indian South African musicians during this period of South African history, he was unable to support his family through performing alone. As Harichand Somaroo points out:

> Essential to the progress of a community's arts, in the absence of a kindly disposition by the Establishment towards its culture, is the affluence of that community and the advantages that attend such affluence. Of these, patronage of the arts is invaluable. Unfortunately the local Indian community had not for the most part of its history in this country enjoyed such benefit. A community consisting largely of indentured labourers living in penury has had little time for the pursuit of higher ideals, expending its energies instead in coming to terms with the more practical issues of living. Despite these adverse circumstances, the very nature of the Indian has dictated the perpetuation of music as an inseparable aspect of his life in South Africa from the outset. However, there were no professional musicians amongst the early Indians and it is regrettable that those who initiated the local musical tradition fell far below the standards of professionalism found in India. (1989: 241)

Although circumstances such as "coming to terms with the more practical issues of living" made it impossible for my great-grandfather to work as a professional musician, he nevertheless made music an integral part of life in his home by playing music

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on his days off as well as inviting other musicians in the area to perform with him. Although he was not personally involved in his children's music education, his children eventually became musicians. In 1940 three of his sons formed a family band which they named the Golden Lily Orchestra. Playing only music composed in India, the band performed at weddings, in variety concerts and on radio broadcasts. By 1960, the ensemble consisted of three of his sons, two daughters-in-law, three grandchildren and two nephews. By that stage of its growth, the ensemble was led by his eldest grandson -- my father -- Denny Veeran.

During the late sixties, the effects of apartheid legislation -- especially the Group Areas Act of 1950 -- were being felt by most communities throughout South Africa. The situation was no different for my family. For most of their lives, they had lived in what they considered to be one of the most densely populated "Indian areas" in South Africa. For them, living there made a variety of social, cultural and political activities possible. However, Cato Manor was declared white-only in 1958, and every single inhabitant of the suburb was forced by law to relocate (Patel 1995: 92).

By 1970, my father's uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters, as well as their respective families began moving out of Cato Manor into various sections of what was then the newly created Indian township of Chatsworth [refer to map, Figure 1.2]. Their extended family was now forced to separate, and each of the family members moved into their own homes. With distances now separating the members of the band, and with its members having to contend with such domestic issues as furnishing new homes, and creating a reasonable environment for their families, the Golden Lily Orchestra ceased its activities after almost thirty years of existence.

I was born in Cato Manor and my earliest recollections are of life in the wood and iron shack which was leased to my maternal grandfather. Throughout the period of my residence there, water was obtained from a communal tap located approximately 500 meters away from the house, and there was no electricity. Like the rest of my father's family and thousands of residents from the various predominantly Indian suburbs that dotted the landscape of Durban, my parents and I moved into Chatsworth in the early seventies where my father set up a private music school which he continues to run until the present day.
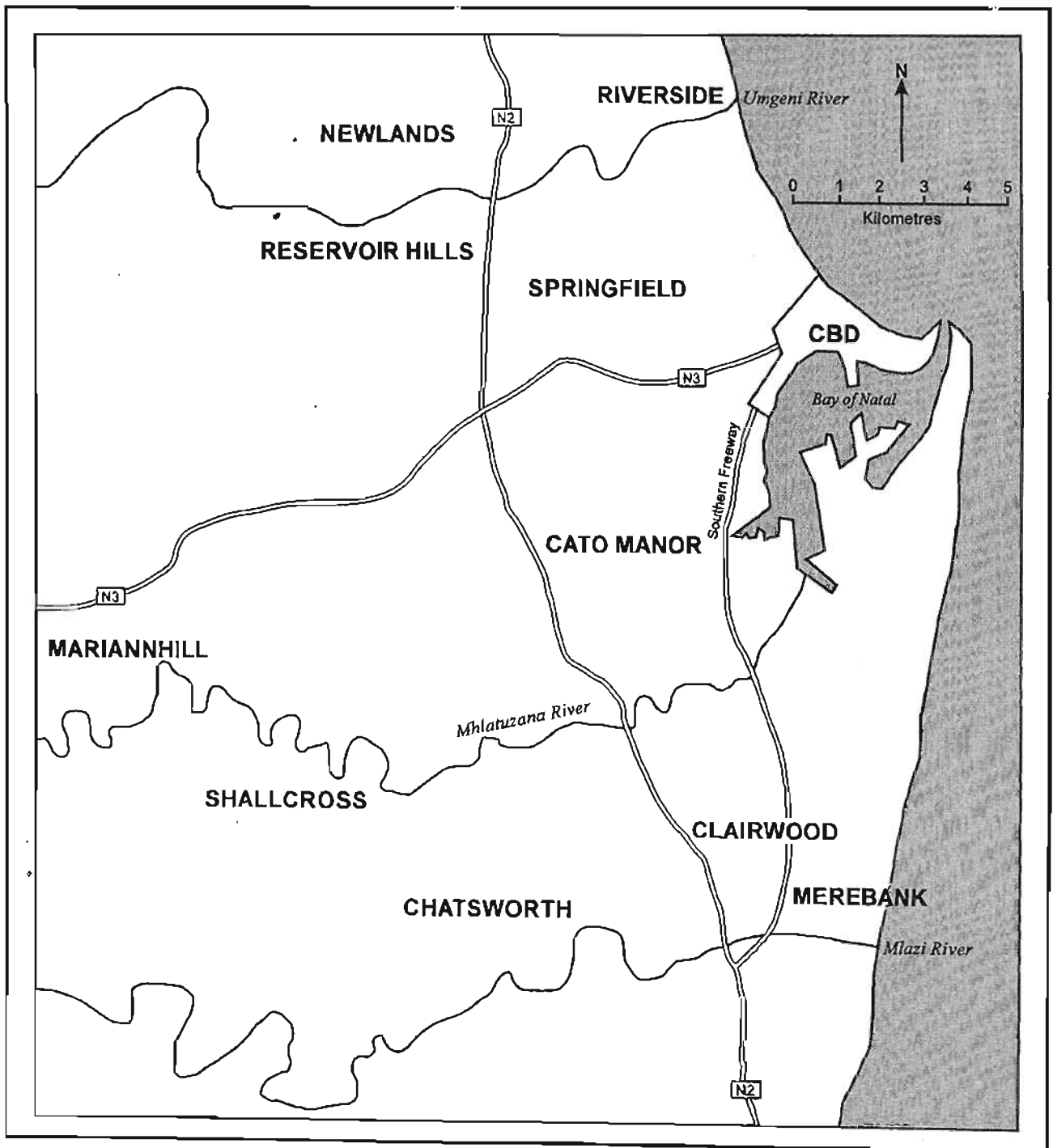
Figure 1.2 Map of Durban showing the Central Business District (CBD), Cato Manor, Chatsworth and other predominantly Indian areas (Cartographic Studio, University of Natal 1999)

Whilst growing up, I remember listening to lengthy family discussions about life in "those days". I recall hearing stories about the "family band", its music, the occasions and venues at which it performed, the incidents that shaped its development, and amusing anecdotes about its members. In 1994, a collection of documents, photographs, posters, recordings and programmes belonging to the Golden Lily Orchestra came into my possession after the death of my uncle, James Murugasen, who had been the secretary of the orchestra throughout its life. Intrigued by this documentary evidence, and armed with a wealth of oral information which I had accumulated over the years, I was inspired to lend my voice to the ongoing discussion of orchestral music, which I now felt was an integral part of my personal identity.

I cite my family history, because I am an insider to the culture under focus. Although my informants and I are separated by at least a generation, we share similar historical, cultural and social backgrounds. My relationship to my informants problematised my original notion of the subjects of my study as an "other" towards which I would be able to take an objective, "scientific" stance. When my informants questioned me about my opinions of a song or of a

particular piece of legislation that affected us both in the past, for example, I often felt like the "other", the subject of the study, rather than its object. It was a situation where I felt that I was not the only one learning something new. The interaction between my informants and myself during my research transformed both my perceptions of them and their perceptions of me. Jayendran Pillay, another Indian South African ethnomusicologist researching his own community, observed that his presence in the field effected a transformation of the identities of others, and influenced his own identity in powerful ways. In other words, his constant engagement with those whom he classified as the "other" -- the informants and the participants of his study -- transformed both himself and the "other". After much deliberation, he realised that the "other" was actually a part of himself, and he saw himself in the "other" (1994: 12).

Martha Minow states that when researchers consciously categorise themselves and their informants as 'us' and 'them', they immediately place themselves in a quagmire. She argues that:

> When we identify one thing as like the others, we are not merely classifying the world; we are investing particular classifications with consequences and positioning ourselves in relation

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to those meanings. When we identify one thing
as unlike the others, we are dividing the
world; we use our language to exclude, to dis-
tinguish -- to discriminate. (1990: 3)

As is evident in her statement, Minow believes that
in any given research situation we must be wary of
the processes that Naomi Schor calls "saming" and
"othering" (1989: 38), or, what Ogborn, in a differ-
ent context, termed, "centreing" and "othering"
(1992: 287). Schor believes that when we "same", we
categorise others as like ourselves when there may
actually exist differences, whilst when we "other",
we see others as different when they may share some
similarities with ourselves. Similarly, Arjun Ap-
padurai's notes that "every similarity hides more
than one difference, and that similarities and dif-
ferences conceal one another indefinitely (1997:
11). In other words, when we invoke the notion of
difference by engaging in the processes of "saming"
or "othering", we immediately place ourselves upon
the horns of a dilemma. In my own research, I found
that the "centre", a position which I adopted owing
to my role as a researcher, was constantly shifting.
One instance where this occurred involved a situa-
tion where Peter Jack, one of my informants, was
about to celebrate 50 years of performance. (He can
be heard playing the clarinet on Tracks 11, 12 and
13 on the accompanying compact disc.) During our

second interview he was busily engaged in compiling
a brochure detailing his musical achievements. Ig-
noring most of my questions, he wanted to know how I
felt about particular songs that he performed,
whether or not they appealed to me, and how I would
go about "improving" them so that they would appeal
to the "youngsters". He sought my ideas about the
construction of his brochure and requested that I
write a Foreword. Further, he wanted my opinions
about the orchestration and presentation of his mu-
sic, and also requested that I perform with him at
the celebration which was going to be held a month
later. Needless to say, my research was put on hold
for a few weeks. It was such shifts -- shifts which
took me away from my self-defined "centre" -- that
created a dissolution of boundaries, a dissolution
that inspired a partnership in discussions about
ideas for the construction of my own text.

Veit Erlmann's suggestion that historical conscious-
ness can no longer be the property of "the detached,
supposedly scientific gaze alone" was particularly
instructive here. He states that:

> Appraisal, questioning, and critique, just as
> they cease to be the exclusive privilege of one
> side only, are now being recognized as the es-
> sential constituents of a dialogical mode of
> discourse: the production of texts, videos,
> sound recordings, and so forth has become a re-

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lational process involving dissent, critique, and even rejection. (1996: 11)

Similarly, Sara Cohen believes that the researcher's presence "in the field" affects informants' views and reactions. Consequently, the ethnographic text becomes a version of reality that is created by the researcher in collaboration with informants. She concludes that:

> Culture has come to be seen less as something 'out there' to be studied, and more as something 'invented' (Wagner 1975) or 'manufactured both by informants and anthropologists, and in the process, as contested' (Caplan 1992: 69). (Cohen 1993: 124)

In sum, this study has provided me with a number of ideal opportunities in which to closely link my own interests and experiences with those of the people with whom I work and live.

LITERATURE REVIEW

My investigations began in 1995 with a search for scholarly literature pertaining to Indian popular music and to Indian orchestras. Whilst I found a dearth of literature directly concerned with these subjects, I did find relevant material in several other studies. These include the research of Fatima Meer (1969), Melveen Jackson (1988), Harichand Soma-roo (1989), Sallyann Goodall (1991), Jayendran Pil-

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lay (1994), Dianne Scott (1994) and Bill Freund
(1995). However, while some of these scholars dis-
cuss Indian music and Indian lifestyles in South Af-
rica, their studies refer to Indian popular music
only in broad terms. For example, in the studies
carried out by Meer, Jackson, Somaroo and Pillay,
the reader is made aware of the existence of Indian
popular ensembles and of Indian film music in South
Africa but only as part of a larger body of musical
experience rather than as unique experiences in
themselves. Due to the pioneering nature of each of
these studies, they were, of necessity, exploratory
in orientation. However, each study carried with it
particular strengths which have impacted positively
on this project.

Fatima Meer's *Portrait of Indian South Africans* for
example, is a general description of Indian life in
South Africa at the time of its publication in 1969.
Resulting from a number of personal observations and
experiences, her text is rich in contextual descrip-
tions. Thus her book is a particularly important
source of information about the socio-political and
cultural scenario at the end of my period of focus.
Many of the issues that she raises, arguments in
which she engages, and descriptions that she pro-

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vides helped me to place my informants' views and discussions into perspective.

Melveēn Jackson's historical overview of Indian music in South Africa until 1948, is undoubtedly the most comprehensive treatment of this topic to date. Beginning with an examination of some of the key issues that faced Indian settlers in South Africa around the 1860s, her dissertation proceeds to a chronological description of Indian music genres and an analysis of those aspects of Indian life that have influenced the development of Indian music in this country. The topics she examines include Indian popular music, popular music ensembles, broadcasting, advertising, music education and gender. Owing to the exploratory nature of her work, a constraint which she acknowledges early in the study, most of these topics are cursorily treated. My paper attempts to address these areas in greater depth, and thus builds on her insights and descriptions.

Bill Freund's *Insiders and Outsiders* is an engaging analysis of the economic development of Indians in Durban between 1910 and 1990. Through the use of oral evidence and documentary sources, Freund's presentation concentrates on the interplay between economic and social history. The result is a per-

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spective which complements the findings of Meer and
Jackson by providing a fresh and insightful view of
an extended period of Indian life in South Africa.

In her Doctoral dissertation entitled "Communal
Space Construction: The Rise and Fall of Clairwood
and District", Dianne Scott focuses on changes
within Clairwood, an Indian South African cultural
enclave located on the periphery of Durban (1994).
She examines the establishment of the area, its sub-
sequent rise to a flourishing space for Indian com-
munal activity in the fifties, and the eventual
decline of the area in the late sixties.

In her analysis, Scott examines the influences of
language, religion and family on the development of
a network of kinship and communal relationships
which, she argues, formed the moral and social
framework for the process of communal space con-
struction. Located within the broad ambit of his-
torical geography, Scott's study is ultimately an
examination of the transformation of the identity of
Clairwood and its residents after the implementation
of apartheid legislation. Scott concludes that when
social groups and communities engage with specific
localities, they create symbolic meanings which be-
come invested in these spaces. In Clairwood, she be-

lieves, cultural meanings created by different social groups became encoded in the landscape.

Much of the data for the present study was drawn from interviews with ex-residents of four specific areas in and around Durban. These areas were Cato Manor, Clairwood, Riverside and central Durban. In the initial stages of my research, I concentrated on the personal experiences of these individuals. It was Scott's arguments and insightful descriptions that influenced the broadening of my focus to incorporate the communal experiences of my informants and the ways in which such experiences influenced their sense of identity. Her study was also influential in shaping my understanding of the various links between cultural meaning and communal space construction.

Jayendran Pillay's examination of music, identity, and ritual among Hindu South Africans, especially those residing in Chatsworth near Durban, is approached from an insider perspective (1994). The result is a study that reflects Pillay's experiences both within and outside his own community. Thus the work adds a new dimension to the discussion of identity among Indian South Africans. Pillay draws on oral, visual and documentary sources, and produces a

text rich in description and analysis. Although his work does not directly concern Indian popular music or popular music ensembles, his informants and mine come from similar backgrounds, and the questions he raises concerning his insider status are ones I share. Indeed some of the persons he contacted have also served as informants for the present work. It was useful to examine the ways in which another insider grappled with some of the questions that were raised in the course of my own research.

Harichand Somaroo's essay simply entitled "Music" is part of a composite treatment of contemporary Indian life-style in South Africa (1989). As an Indian South African, a researcher and a former lecturer of Indian music at the University of Durban-Westville, Somaroo presents scholarly and insightful descriptions of film music, classical music, folk music, devotional music and western music as they are performed and appreciated by Indian South Africans. Injected with both fact and opinion, the article discusses the roles played by various social, cultural and political forces in the development of Indian music in South Africa. The strength of the article lies in the fact that it was written by an informed insider. However, the essay addresses too many areas within a restricted space resulting in a

presentation of the barest of outlines. The article thus serves more to raise the awareness of readers rather than engage them in the issues that surround Indian music in this country. In the case of this project, the article, written at a time when academic focus on Indian South African music was just beginning, paved the way for further research by identifying those areas that require more attention. This project thus complements many of Somaroo's descriptions, findings and arguments.

Sallyann Goodall's doctoral thesis entitled "Hindu Devotional Music in Durban: An Ethnomusicological Profile as Expressed through the Bhajan", is a comprehensive description and analysis of religio-cultural development in Durban between 1860 and 1991. Although the study does not concern itself with popular music, it was useful to this project in that it is rich in analysis and description of the ways in which Indian South Africans have used music in their everyday lives. As such, many of Goodall's arguments resonate strongly with those posed in this paper.

Apart from the texts discussed above, I found that there was a lack of secondary texts of a scholarly quality concerning Indian music and Indian life in

South Africa. This inspired me to turn to the musicians themselves for more information. Thus, in 1995, as part of my Master's degree, I enlisted the help of my father in an attempt to contact musicians who played Indian popular music in "those days". Through his help I secured a number of interviews and contacts. Many of my informants were members of my family, distant relatives or family friends. In situations where I did not know an interviewee personally, no problems were encountered because upon discovering my family name, the interviewee would almost instantly recall sharing the stage with a member of my family in a concert or other performance. For many, an interview was a kind of reunion, whilst for others, it was the start of a new, meaningful relationship.

Unfortunately the prescribed scope for the Master's dissertation meant that the final work could not accommodate the large body of data gleaned through my interviews and documentary searching (Veeran 1996). Certain aspects of the topic had to be omitted or treated cursorily. Therefore, the current study utilises my previous paper as a pilot study, and goes on to discuss issues more thoroughly, explore voices more deeply, and analyse its topic in more depth.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Many years ago, four blind brothers owned a
cinema in a little Indian village. One of them
worked in the projection room, whilst the oth-
ers worked in the auditorium. After a few years
they were bored and decided to go on a holiday
to the city. There they experienced many new
sounds and sensations. On their return, the
villagers gathered around them one evening to
enquire about their experiences. The brothers
talked about all the sounds that they heard and
people they had talked to. The magistrate of
the village had heard about an object called a
car and wanted to know if they knew anything
about it. The brothers who had indeed "seen" a
car proceeded to describe what they saw. The
first blind brother had been standing behind
the car at the time and had managed to open the
boot lid and feel the inside. He described a
car as a large suitcase that was carpeted on
the inside. Having worked all his life in a
cinema, he felt that this "suitcase" was de-
signed and built to hold large delicate objects
like film reels. The second brother on the
other hand, was standing in front of the car.
He opened the bonnet lid. Feeling his way
through the wires and the mechanical parts, his
view of a car was that it was indeed a case,
however, it was a case that held lots of wires
and objects which were very much like a modern
projector. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to get
the "projector" to work. The third brother had
managed to sit inside the car. In the absence
of anything familiar, he felt that the car was
actually a padded chair in a small room much
like the projector room in which he worked. The
fourth brother had managed to open the back
door and sit on the back seat. Feeling the seat
in front of him, he thought that a car was like
a small cinema with two rows of seats. However,
he was in a rush to catch a train and could not
stay to watch the movie[1].

The anthropologist, historian or ethnomusicologist

faced with a large body of data amassed through a

variety of methods, is often in a precarious position when attempting to analyse and interpret such data. As the story cited above illustrates, even the sum of a number of versions of the same reality may not necessarily constitute truth. How then, does one go about eliciting and presenting data in such a way as not to obscure the truth?

Ethnomusicology is not about a single truth or a single set of facts but rather concerns itself with the meanings that people attach to the conception, creation and appreciation of music. As Erlmann suggests, the ethnographic representation,

> is not about the representation of some authentic 'other', but, at best, a record of what performers say about what they think they are doing and what ethnographers believe they saw and heard. (1996: 29)

The truth then, is essentially a matter of conjecture and negotiation. "The unruly, multiple meanings that emerge from this negotiation", Erlmann explains, "cannot be subjected to a unified portrait, a tableau vivant to be contemplated from a single vantage point" (1996: 14).

This paper is based on the premise that performance is a valuable historical text, and it posits that

the musical structures and performance practices of
the orchestras under study encode vital information
about shared socio-political experiences and the In-
dian South African identities that emerged during
the period under discussion. A number of theories
and texts are integrated into the analytical frame-
work of this work. Themes that recur throughout the
thesis are: performance, community, identity and
gender. In the following discussion of these themes,
I refer to those texts that have helped shape my
thinking.

PERFORMANCE

> Performance is an exercise of power, a very
> anxious one. Curious because it is at first so
> furiously self-consultive, so even
> narcissistic, and later so eager for publicity,
> love and historical dimensions. Out of an
> accumulation of secretive acts emerges at last
> a form that presumes to compete with reality
> itself for control of the mind exposed to it.
> (Poirier 1971: 87)

Of all the texts that have informed my treatment of
performance -- texts such as James Kippen's *The
Tabla of Lucknow* (1988), David Coplan's *In Township
Tonight* (1985), and Christopher Ballantine's *Marabi
Nights: Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville*
(1993) --, Veit Erlmann's *Nightsong: Performance,
Power and Practice in South Africa* was the most in-
fluential (1996). *Nightsong* is fundamentally an

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analysis of the relationship between everyday expe-
rience and the performance of *isicathamiya*. By trac-
ing the emerging expressive form of a fractured,
urbanising, disempowered group of people, Zulu male
migrants, Erlmann successfully shows how various
symbolic expressions, ranging from texts, melodies,
choreography, and clothing, reflect two important
issues for *isicathamiya* choirs and their audiences.
Firstly, they reflect the relation of performance to
broader social and political experiences such as
apartheid, and emerging urban Zulu identity. Sec-
ondly, they reflect the way in which performance be-
comes a potentially empowering act of transformation
and restoration. Erlmann applies Eric Hobsbawm's no-
tion of an invented tradition -- a notion that re-
fers to a conscious appropriation of symbols to
serve social and political ends (Hobsbawm 1988) --
by examining the various layers of images and refer-
ences embodied in performance and by considering
their connection with everyday events. Erlmann un-
derstands performance as being a field of dynamic
social relations. Meaning, he suggests, does not re-
side in the music, but is the result of the inter-
play between the performers and their audiences.

After Erlmann treats some of the key theoretical is-
sues in performance studies today, issues such as

ethnographic authority, representation, power and gender, he provides a contextual description of *isicathamiya* performance. Since, as is the case with *isicathamiya*, it is the political economy of apartheid which lies at the basis of Indian popular music performance style in South Africa, many of Erlmann's ideas resonate loudly with those posed in this paper. Erlmann continues his study with an analysis which is constructed around the concept of performance and cultural space. This approach was important to the present study in that Indian popular music, much like *isicathamiya*, provided an expressive platform for the performance of glamour, otherness, and an idealised life-style in South Africa.

In a study that primarily concerns itself with a performance tradition, it is essential to turn to the performers themselves as sources of information. In this regard, Erlmann points out that:

> Performers, like diviners and healers, by virtue of their ability to direct the flow of power through special channels of words, music, and bodily movement, are privileged in handling power. This is why performance, unlike ethnographic description, potentially transforms individuals into persons in control of their own destiny. (1996: xix)

The need for being "in control" of one's "own des-
tiny" is reflected strongly in an observation made
by an informant. He states that:

> I remember watching the Ranjeni [orchestra] at
> a wedding in 1960. When the band boys walked
> in, all dressed to kill, everyone just looked.
> If Madhavan Nair sneezed with his mouth closed,
> every musician in Durban would sneeze with his
> mouth closed after that. People didn't go there
> to witness the wedding, they went there to see
> the band. Madhavan would start, could hear a
> pin drop. If his eyes moved onto the stage, the
> entire audience would look at the stage. He had
> the power. In the audience, every musician
> would be watching, waiting, copying. He had
> style.

As the report of my informant suggests, performance
provided performers and audiences alike temporary
respite from the reality of the congestion and pov-
erty of their everyday lives. Madhavan Nair, the mu-
sician whom my informant speaks about, was employed
in a shoe factory for six days each week. In an in-
terview, Nair remembered times when "things were so
bad" he could not make ends meet. However, at least
once a week for almost thirty years, he experienced
the transformative power of performing on stage.

Being "in control", however temporarily also ac-
counts for the large number of ensembles and musi-
cians in Durban during the period under focus. In
fact, my informants' estimates taken in conjunction

with my own findings contained in Appendix One and Two, puts the number of active musicians in Durban at almost 600.

COMMUNITY

Although all members of the Indian South African populace were forced through apartheid legislation and external attitudes to live in the same areas, visit the same parks and beaches, shop at prescribed establishments, and eat at specific restaurants, the use of the term community in describing them as a group may be expeditious but not necessarily accurate. The term "community", which conjures an image of a collective identity, is an extremely delicate construct. It maybe prudent, therefore, to deconstruct the assumption that the Indian 'community' can be defined in ethnically homogenous terms by first pointing to a few variations and exceptions.

Nikhil Bramdaw suggests that Indian South Africans are an extremely fractured political and cultural group especially when one views them within the confines of an homogenous identity (1995: 26). Firstly, as has been mentioned, Indian South Africans subscribed to at least three major religions. Secondly, until the 1930s when English, which was the language of the market place and of the hybrid colonial cul-

tural world outside the home, was adopted by Indian South Africans as the *lingua franca,* there was never a common linguistic base for Indians. Further, the majority of Indian settlers were Hindu, and within this group, three languages -- Hindi, Telegu and Tamil -- created communication barriers between them (Hall 1985: 347). Thirdly, economic differences divided the group as a whole. Indentured Indians, ex-indentured Indians, passenger Indians who came to South Africa for the explicit purposes of trade, and Indians that survived on market gardening in the early years of this century each formed a socio-economic sub-division which had its own intragroup conflicts and concerns.

Differences in priorities also mediated Indian experience. For example, Indians who were employed by the state were provided food-rations and housing in compounds such as the Durban Corporation barracks. For Indians who were employed in the private sector on the other hand, food and housing were fundamental concerns. In Clairwood -- a suburb which was considered a relatively settled area by its residents -- the major concern was the threat from the increasing industrialisation of the area more than the lack of housing.

In sum, the number and variety of religions, languages, classes and priorities of Indian South Africans problematises the notion of a coherent Indian subjectivity.

South African ethnomusicologists who have grappled with the term community as it has been applied in the Indian South African context include Jayendran Pillay (1994) and Melveen Jackson (1988). Pillay believes that it was the government's interchangeable use of the terms "race" and "culture" that influenced the widespread use of the term "community" even among Indian South Africans themselves. Pillay states that:

> Through a clever manipulation of terminology, the government had conjoined the meanings of race and culture over the years. It used them interchangeably over the government-controlled media, and through powers of censorship in the marketplace. Blacks, whites, coloreds [sic], and Indians were deemed to be not only different races, but distinct cultures as well, which were racially produced. The fact that whites comprised Afrikaners, English, Jews, Greeks, and Portuguese, each with its own number of complex cultural subgroupings, was not an issue. Neither was the fact that Hindus, Moslems, and Christians comprise the so-called "Indian" racial group, which sports its own intracultural complexities. (1994: 22)

Melveen Jackson cites the history of the Lawrence family in Durban which further illustrates the complexities of the use of the term community in de-

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scribing Indian South Africans. Vincent and Josephine Lawrence and their children May, Sylvia, Francesca, Christina, George, Rosalind, Ralph and Therèse, were Christians (1988: 104). The children spoke only English, participated extensively in church activities, and spent a considerable amount of time studying western music under white music educators. Viewed by Jackson as an example of assimilation, her account of the Lawrence family's history, if isolated and read separately, could be a description of any European family of church-going musicians in South Africa. Jackson shows that, apart from their racial characteristics and their ancestral home, little about the Lawrence family was Indian. In the eyes of the state however, they belonged to the Indian 'community' by virtue of their ancestry. Although they were subjected to the same laws and restrictions as other Indian South Africans, many of my informants refer to the Lawrences and others like them as being "white".

For most of the century, Indian South Africans were prescribed an identity which was based on the government's perception of their ethnicity. Freund states that,

> the intense sense of racial nationalism developed by the whites of Natal powerfully reinforced the sense that 'Indians' were a common

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category of people with whom it was only natu-
ral for law and custom to deal as a race apart.
(1995: 38)

While Indian responses to this prescription, which
ranged from resistance to compliance, have been many
and varied, Indians did form intergroup networks
that lent value to the concept of community. Freund
suggests that,

the Indian 'community' in reality consisted of
networks of community linked together through
dense human contacts that tied into family re-
lationships and a myriad of economic connec-
tions. There is frequently a sentimental
association of the idea of community with homo-
geneity and total, organic harmony. This is not
the way the word is used here. Community rela-
tions invariably embrace (but perhaps to the
outsider, mask) conflict and inequality. It is
the sense of network and the mediation of rela-
tions through networking that gives the concept
of community some value. (1995: 75)

Extending Benedict Anderson's concept of the "imag-
ined community" to a group that is far smaller than
a nation (1991), I see the Indian community in South
Africa as one that is to a large degree imagined in-
sofar as it is assumed to imply homogeneity or or-
ganic harmony. Both the government and the members
of the Indian South African populace did, and to a
large extent probably still do, imagine it as ho-
mogenous both as a social community and as a politi-
cal community.

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The majority of Indian South Africans have never
known the bulk of the South African diaspora, met
them, or even heard them speak; yet in the mind of
each lived the image of their communion. Regardless
of intragroup inequalities and exploitation, they
conceived of themselves as realising a deep and
horizontal comradeship. It was this affective expe-
rience of fraternity that made it possible for many
thousands of Indian South Africans to willingly en-
dure imprisonment and hard labour during their vari-
ous political resistance campaigns. (See Appendix
Three which is a partial list of passive resisters
that participated in the *Satyagraha* or passive re-
sistance movement.)

IDENTITY

In 1996, I taught a primary school cultural studies
class which consisted of a group of eleven-year-old
children who came from a variety of cultures and
backgrounds. During one of our lessons where relig-
ion was being discussed, an African child who was
also Christian wanted to know why it was that Hindus
have so many Gods? Answering her, I said that Hindus
have only one God but have many names for their God.
I explained further that at special times of the
year and during different occasions, Hindus would
use these different names during prayer. She ap-

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peared confused, so, using an analogy, I explained,
"Take me for example, to you I am your teacher, yet
when I am at university in the afternoons, I am a
student. At home I am my father's son, yet to my
son, I am his father. To my sister, I am her
brother, but to her daughter, I am her uncle." I
then asked my pupil, "How is it that one person can
be a father and a son, a teacher and a student, a
brother and an uncle all at the same time?" Realis-
ing that it was a rhetorical question, she smiled.
Taking the discussion a little further, and away
from religion later on in the lesson, I explained
that in my lifetime, there are things about me that
may change, while there are things that may not.
"For example," I explained, "I may be a father right
now, but in the future, I may be a grandfather. If
or when the time arrives, I may be a good grandfa-
ther or a not-so-good grandfather. I might be a
teacher now, but one day that could also change.
But, I will always have the same parents, the same
birth-place, and the same group of friends with whom
I grew up. In other words, who I was will not
change, but, depending on circumstances, who I am,
can and will."

As is evident in the above example, my understanding
of individual identity formation is that it is a dy-

namic process involving the constant negotiation of factors including, but not limited to, those of a cultural, political, social, religious or educational nature. These factors influence individuals' definition of themselves and their actions in powerful ways. As Bernauer and Rasmussen argue,

> identity is what is naturally given and is therefore considered as a possession, yet it is also that which possesses the individual. If, on the one hand, identity is constituted by a personal experience and an individual history, it is also and inevitably a product of the otherness of cultural, social and linguistic determinants. (1994: 21)

Although a knowledge of individual identity formation contributes significantly to our understanding of an individual's actions, outlook, tastes and aspirations, there appears to be a need for a theory which links the individual to society and which is able to explain changes in the outlook both of the individual and of the society. This concern has been expressed in other studies, including examinations of the changing status of women in society (Williams and Giles 1978; Skevington and Baker 1989). Theorising about individual identity, therefore, does not necessarily contribute significantly to our understanding when we deal with individuals at the collective level.

Indians in South African use the term "community" when referring to themselves collectively. It was my contention earlier that given the diversity of their religious, social, educational, linguistic and religious backgrounds, they do not necessarily constitute a "group" in the sense of an homogenous identity. However, in light of my previous discussion, they can be considered a "community" insofar as the term takes into consideration the networks that were formed between their respective sub-groups. For purposes of this discussion therefore, it may be prudent to define the term "group". Henri Tajfel, whose ideas have helped shape many of the arguments presented in this paper, offers the following definition. He states that if large numbers of people define themselves and are defined by others as a "group" who solve collectively a problem that they feel they have in common, they must be considered a "group" (1978a: 46). In other words, he sees the resolution of conflict at the collective level as being the basis of group identity. This is a useful definition in view of the various resistance and survival strategies used by Indians in South Africa during both the pre-apartheid and apartheid eras in resistance campaigns such as Mahatma Gandhi's *Satyagraha* movement. Further, in South Africa, both individual and group identities

have been informed by a variety of influences which include socio-political circumstances; attitudes of the apartheid government; and the absence of structures that promote intercultural awareness and tolerance.

The need to explore theories explaining group behaviour necessitated an examination of a number of sources including texts dealing exclusively with minority groups and their behaviour. Studies which included the examination of women (Williams and Giles 1978; Skevington and Baker 1989), Henri Tajfel's study of intergroup relations (1978a) and his study of minority groups (1978b) helped streamline my current thinking on this topic.

Tajfel, who was one of the most prolific writers on the behavioural consequences of belonging to a minority group, states that,

> ... we distinguish between three general sets of conditions which lead to the appearance or strengthening of 'ingroup' affiliations in members of minorities. In the first of these, a common identity is thrust upon a category of people because they are at the receiving end of certain attitudes and treatment from the 'outside'. In the second case, a group already exists in the sense of wishing to preserve its separate identity, and is further reinforced by an interaction between the 'inside' and the 'outside' attitudes and patterns of social behaviour. In the third case, an existing group might wish to dilute in a number of ways its

differences and separateness from others; when
this is resisted, new and intense forms of a
common group identity may be expected to ap-
pear. (1978b: 6)

Although Tajfel's findings above contributed to my
understanding of the strengthening of minority group
affiliations, it did not fully explain the formation
of group identities among minorities. I then began
examining his other works including a study of the
social psychology of intergroup relations (1978a).
This study was particularly instructive as it ex-
plained Tajfel's theory of social identity.

The theory assumes a merger of three separate but
interrelated processes. These are social categorisa-
tion, the formation of social identity and social
comparison. Their convergence, Tajfel believes, re-
sults in attempts by groups to create a psychologi-
cally unique profile of themselves. The basis of his
argument is that groups of people are continuously
active in their efforts to define themselves in re-
lation to their environment. Social categorisation
which he states is "the ordering of social environ-
ment in terms of groupings of persons in a manner
that makes sense to the individual", is one of the
cognitive devices used for this purpose (1978a: 61).
We tend to categorise ourselves along with other
people according to gender, race, appearance or lan-

guage. Jennifer Williams and Howard Giles state
that:

> While some of the strategies for achieving this
> are personal and idiosyncratic, many are trans-
> mitted via socialisation and are powerfully
> constrained by our time and place in history.
> (1978: 433)

As individuals in a society, we belong to social
groups which stand in power and status relations to
other groups. The knowledge of an individual's mem-
bership in such groups, and the regard in which this
membership is held, is defined as "social identity"
and is an integral part of one's personal identity.
Social identity, however, only acquires value and
meaning when one group compares itself with another.
Tajfel argues that we interpret the social environ-
ment and act in a manner that enables us to make our
own group favourably unique from other groups with
which we may compare it. Such positively regarded
distinctiveness from relevant "outgroups" generally
affords a satisfactory social identity to members of
a group (Williams and Giles 1978: 434).

The bulk of Tajfel's attention is devoted to groups
which possess what he calls a less positive social
identity -- an identity, Tajfel suggests, which may
be attributed to consensus about the group's nega-

tive characteristics or its low status. When members
of a group find themselves in such a situation, they
will attempt to change the situation in order to se-
cure a more satisfactory social identity. Initially,
positive change is attempted at the individual
level. One of two strategies, he proposes, may be
adopted.in this instance. The first is an inter-
individual intra-group comparison, which, as the
name implies, involves a process whereby individuals
attempt to compare themselves favourably with others
in their own group, whilst the second is an attempt
to leave a group in order to "pass" into one of
higher status. This latter strategy is related to
the concept of "social mobility". Tajfel defines
this as the movement of individuals or their fami-
lies from one social position to another in an at-
tempt to move upward from one social group to
another (1978a: 46).

In cases where individual attempts.at social mobil-
ity are impossible owing to an impenetrable boundary
between social groups -- a boundary based on skin-
colour for example --, and, further, when there ex-
ists an awareness in the 'group that their low status
is unjust or unfair, group members will attempt to
achieve a positive social identity by collective
means. Tajfel proposes three types of action that a

low status group will adopt in order to achieve a positive social identity. Firstly, an attempt will be made to assimilate those elements which are perceived to be positive from the superior group. These may be social, psychological or cultural elements such as dress, language and religion (1978a: 94). However, if this strategy fails at securing a positive social identity, previous negatively valued characteristics such as a group's language or dress may be reinterpreted in a positive, favourably perceived direction. The term "social creativity" is used to describe this strategy. For example, some of my informants who worked as waiters in "white" hotels during the forties and fifties remember encountering difficulties when they attempted to learn to speak Afrikaans -- the language of the apartheid government. Many believe that learning to speak Afrikaans was an attempt by waiters to either impress their white employers and guests, to "get ahead at work", or to "prepare for the times ahead". However, it soon became apparent to the waiters that learning Afrikaans was not going to alter their social positions at work, at home or on the street. One informant concluded that,

> When our lahnees used to hear us chooning Tamil, they used to say we choon chara mara, chara mara. We reckon, okay, we'll learn the boere lingo. In the end, we reckon bugger the

choon, we got our own choon and started choon-
ing Tamil with the boys.

(interpretation/translation:
When our white employers and supervisors used
to listen to us speaking Tamil, they used to
say that we spoke gibberish. We said, okay,
we'll learn to speak Afrikaans. In the end, we
realised that there was nothing wrong with
speaking Tamil. It was our own language. We
then continued speaking Tamil to each other at
work.)

Finally, it may be possible to create new character-

istics, not previously used in the process of inter-

group comparison, according to which the group may

try to assume positive distinctiveness from a domi-

nant group. This may include the challenging of the

status quo through active or passive resistance.

John Turner used the term "social competition" to

describe this strategy (1975). Williams and Giles

believe that the importance of this aspect of Ta-

jfel's theory is its dynamic character. They state

that,

inescapably, social action on the part of the
inferior group to assert itself will be met
with strong social action from the dominant
group, in an attempt to maintain its positive
distinctiveness from the others and to preserve
or restore its superiority. (1978: 435)

Indians in South Africa are a minority group who,

throughout the pre-apartheid and apartheid eras,

were subjected to various prejudicial attitudes on

the street, at the work-place and at the legislative
level. One of the primary aims of this thesis is to
evaluate how far social identity theory can assist
us in our understanding of how Indian South Africans
created, appreciated and developed Indian popular
music in South Africa in order to enhance their so-
cial identity.

GENDER

> Gender combines a principle of social organiza-
> tion and a set of ideas which, while appearing
> to be natural, based on common sense and bio-
> logical difference, is in fact culturally con-
> structed and variable. (Sarkissian 1992: 337)

In music research the examinations of gender rela-
tions and gendered identities in performance have
surfaced as major issues in recent years. Gender as
a culturally variable construct worthy of scholarly
attention in its own right has been the primary fo-
cus of many ethnomusicological research endeavours.
These include Seeger's examination of the gendered
identities in Suya music (1979); Sugarman's study of
gender and singing among Prespa Albanians (1989);
Vander's investigation of the musical experiences of
Shoshone women (1988); Auerbach's observations of
the parallels in musical behaviour and domestic fe-
male experience of Greek women (1987); and the
prominence given to women's voices in studies of

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performance such as Melveen Jackson's historical account of Indian music in South Africa (1988).

As I examined old photographs and posters related to Indian popular music in South Africa, I made several observations concerning gender -- observations that inspired new lines of questions in subsequent interviews. For example, although the groups of musicians in the photographs were composed of both men and women, none of them depicted women playing instruments. When I enquired about this phenomenon, the consensus among male musicians was that women only sang, whilst men both sang and played instruments. Intrigued, I attempted to find out more about the reasons behind this, this time however, from the women themselves. In attempting to contact these women -- the names of whom were given to me by their male counterparts -- I discovered that the ratio of men to women performers was almost 25 to 1. Another observation was that the women who were depicted in adverts, photographs, programmes and posters always wore identifiably Indian clothing, whereas the men wore tuxedos, suits or other types of western dress.

As a result of my observations, I began to ask: "Who are/were these women?" "What did they feel about their professional lives with the ensembles?" "What

did audiences -- men and women -- think of them?"
"Did their images change over time?" These questions
were framed using theoretical input from a variety
of sources including Linda Whitesitt's examination
of the support structures that women have provided
for music and musicians (1991); Renee Cox's intro-
duction to feminist musical aesthetics (1991); Carol
Muller's exploration of the concept of space and
time and its relationship with the female body in
Nazarite worship (1994); Jennifer Post's analysis of
women's performance traditions (1994); and Margaret
Sarkissian's overview of the research, methodologies
and theories explored thus far in gender studies
(1992). Another important source of information, ma-
terial and insights was an anthology of papers enti-
tled *From the Pen of South African Indian Women*
(Sarasvati 1988).

From the Pen of South African Indian Women does not
deal with music or gender *per se*, but with the per-
sonal experiences of Indian South African women.
With contributions from a number of leading Indian
South African scholars such as Fatima Meer, Devi
Bughwan and Uma Mesthrie, the work addresses issues
such as language, indenture, culture and religion.
Although most of the material was not directly re-
lated to music, the work contributed to an Indian-

oriented, gender-sensitive approach to the overall
framework of this dissertation. Further, the experi-
ences contained in the anthology support the view
that gender can no longer be considered a given bio-
logical condition that "is simply reflected in per-
formance roles and music symbolism" (Erlmann 1996:
27).

RADICAL EMPIRICISM AND REFLEXIVITY

Traditional empiricism, Michael Jackson suggests,
assumes that the anthropological researcher and the
informant inhabit disconnected worlds. It regards
experience as something "passively received rather
than actively made" (1989: 5). Jackson believes that
an alternate, reflexive view -- one that stresses
the interplay between researchers and those with
whom they live and study -- will urge us to clarify
the ways in which our knowledge is grounded in our
practical, personal, and participatory experiences
in the field as much as our "detached observations"
(1989: 3). Jackson calls this alternative "radical
empiricism" and believes that it includes the expe-
rience of both the informant and the observer and in
fact "defines the experimental field as one of in-
teractions and intersubjectivity." He states that,

> experience, in this sense, becomes a mode of
> experimentation, of testing and exploring the
> ways in which our experiences conjoin or con-

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nect us with others, rather than the ways they set us apart. (1989: 4)

Jackson's ideas were particularly significant to me, because conducting research in my own community was essential to my project. While most anthropological and ethnomusicological texts deal with the concept of the "field" as the site of ethnographic enquiry, only a few adequately address the concerns of native researchers who live and work in the "field" that they are researching. Stanley Diamond, for example, conceives of the researcher as being an outsider to the culture being studied, an orientation that is evident in his statement that:

> Unless the anthropologist confronts his own alienation, which is only a special instance of a general condition, and seeks to understand its roots and consequently matures as a relentless critic of his own civilization, the very civilization which objectifies man, he cannot understand or even recognize himself or the other in himself. (1969: 402)

James Clifford on the other hand, does discuss the issue of the insider. He states that:

> A new figure has entered the scene, the 'indigenous ethnographer' ... Insiders studying their own cultures offer new angles of vision and depths of understanding. Their accounts are empowered and restricted in unique ways. The diverse post- and neo-colonial rules for ethnographic practice do not necessarily encourage 'better' cultural accounts. The criteria for judging a good account have never been settled and are changing. But what has emerged from all

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these ideological shifts, rule changes, and new
compromises is the fact that a series of his-
torical pressures have begun to reposition an-
thropology with respect to its 'objects' of
study. Anthropology no longer speaks with auto-
matic authority for others defined as unable to
speak for themselves ... Other groups can less
easily be distanced in special, almost always
past or passing, time--represented as if they
were not involved in the present world systems
that implicate ethnographers along with the
peoples they study. 'Cultures' do not hold
still for their portraits. Attempts to make
them do so always involve simplification and
exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the
construction of a particular self-other rela-
tionship, and the imposition or negotiation of
a power relationship. (1986: 9)

Conducting research among people that were known to

me or my family was a given for the topic I had cho-

sen. Whilst researching, I realised that my focus

should not be on a comparison of myself with a re-

searcher who was an outsider, but on the ways in

which I could maximise the benefits potential in the

situation in which I found myself. One of the advan-

tages of my status was that it made me both accessi-

ble to and accepted by interviewees. My informants,

most of whom were alive throughout the apartheid

era, are wary of "outsiders", being suspicious of

their motives. As a result, I gained access to in-

formation that is generally not shared with outsid-

ers. I often encountered the phrase, "You know what

it feels like." This sentiment is one that would

never be expressed to a white researcher. A second

advantage was that interviews quickly became two-way processes not only where information and data were exchanged, but also where opinions were shared freely. Thirdly, language and communication did not present any problems. Although all of my informants speak English, some of them use what can best be described as Indian South African colloquialisms -- a combination of Indian vernacular phrases, pidgin English, and Afrikaans slang. I could immediately understand such colloquialisms, ones such as are present in the following excerpt of a conversation about an incident that occurred in the sixties. The incident concerns the time when my informant re-signed from work because he could not get the day off to perform with his ensemble.

> We were hitting a putu jorl by one connection
> -- span of roti ous were coming. The lahnee
> didn't want to give me off from graph. I had a
> coupla sparks. Next day, I was barbied and
> tuned the lahnee I'm chucking. He tuned me if I
> vy, he'll find a ravan to do the graph.

> (interpretation/translation:
> We were hired to play at a coming-of-age prayer
> conducted by mainly Tamil-speaking Hindus. Our
> contract was with one of my relatives. Lots of
> Hindi-speaking people were going to be there as
> well. My boss did not want to give me time off
> from work. I had a few drinks and the next day
> I had a hangover. I told my boss that I was re-
> signing. He told me that if I left, he would
> find an African person to do my job.)

Another advantage of my position in the research arena was my understanding of Indian customs, rituals and celebrations. For example, in the above excerpt, my informant states that his ensemble was hired to play at a "putu jorl". Firstly, the use of this phrase means that it could only be a coming-of-age celebration in a Tamil-speaking household. Secondly, in South Africa, most of the rituals involved in such an event are not accompanied by music. Therefore, the only time the ensemble could have played was after the prayer when the guests were dining. This means that the ensemble's repertoire must have been based on film music and not on devotional music since devotional music is generally not played when people are eating. Further, since many of the guests were Hindi-speaking, a number of Hindi film songs must have been performed.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Due to the pioneering nature of this project, it was necessary to use varied methods of collecting data. My research began at my parent's home -- literally in a shed in their backyard. Here I started by examining boxes of old letters, brochures, programmes and photographs which, for want of space, had been stored for a number of years. This was followed by lengthy discussions with my parents who complemented

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my findings with names, dates, anecdotes and other information. Upon the death of my uncle, more documentary evidence became available -- all of it related directly to Indian popular music.

After thoroughly familiarising myself with the material contained in my family's collection, I initiated an archival investigation in a quest for new material and fresh insights. At the University of Durban-Westville's Documentation Centre, which houses a number of private collections, photographs and historical documents pertaining to Indian experience in South Africa, I was able to begin to contextualise my study within both historical and spatial parameters. The exercise at the Documentation Centre also proved fruitful in that I discovered the existence of the Muthu Pillay Family Collection. In an attempt to complement the Documentation Centre's collection, I deposited copies of my own family's material with the curator, Mr Chetty. During this period I also examined the old documents and studies housed at the Killie Campbell Library in Durban. These sources also provided valuable insights into the socio-historical and political context of the popular music tradition I was studying.

Complementing my search for primary source material, was the search for ethnographies dealing with Indian popular music and with other popular musics in South Africa, for other relevant ethnomusicological works and works in the fields of anthropology, oral history, and political and social history -- in particular for studies dealing with performance, gender, economy, politics, entertainment, apartheid, social identity, law, political resistance and religion.

Naturally, I also turned to the musicians themselves for further information. In the initial stages of this investigation, I did not feel sufficiently empowered to make decisions concerning the quality of the evidence I accumulated through interviews. However, Paul Thompson suggests that:

> The historical value of the remembered past rests on three strengths. First ... it can and does provide significant and sometimes unique information from the past. Secondly, it can equally convey the individual and collective consciousness which is part and parcel of that very past ... More than that, the living humanity of oral sources gives them a third strength which is unique. For the reflective insights of retrospection are by no means always a disadvantage ... If the study of memory "teaches us that all historical sources are suffused by subjectivity right from the start", the living presence of those subjective voices from the past also constrains us in our interpretations ... (1988: 148)

He concludes with a statement that affirms the dia-

logic process already discussed above:

> We are dealing, in short, with living sources
> who, just because they are alive have, unlike
> inscribed stones or sheaves of paper, the abil-
> ity to work with us in a two-way process.
> (1988: 149)

The resonance of Thompson's ideas can also be heard

in Regula Qureshi's "Music Anthropologies and Music

Histories" (1995). Qureshi believes that there is a

need to explode the concept of anthropology by the

historical experience of culture so as to find the

conceptual place of the past in the present (1995:

331). Following Marshall Sahlins (1985: 72), she as-

serts that culture is precisely the organisation of

the current situation in terms of the past. In other

words, there is a dire need for music histories to

be "anthropologized". She concludes that:

> Anthropologizing music history must ... begin
> with a recasting of the musical product into
> the realm of experience: a process of cultural
> production, of performance, of utterance and
> reception, all generated by human agents. At a
> profound level this may amount to the 'undisci-
> plining' of music, releasing it from the
> boundaries of an essentialism closely linked to
> textualist form, so that it may be restored to
> the human relationships that produce it. (1995:
> 335)

Gathering data by speaking to people was perhaps the

most rewarding aspect of this project. In the ini-

tial stages, I used a schedule to help guide and direct the conversations, however, I soon realised that this method was restrictive in that it stunted the flow of conversation. I then attempted another method. Here I began the interviews by telling my informants in advance the areas that I would like to concentrate on, and I would then set a closing time for the interview. Another reason for the change of strategy was that for many of my informants, time was not a constraint. Practically all of the musicians that played in Indian popular orchestras have now retired either from their ordinary, non-music-related employment, from performing, or from both. For many, my conversations and questions were a journey into a period that only the adjectives "glamour" and "prestige" could come close to describing. Therefore, informants, in an effort to relive their pasts through conversation, would continue speaking unless otherwise directed.

Interviews were generally followed by my informant and I listening to old recordings, or sometimes even by the performance of an old film tune in which I would be requested to participate. Whilst listening to old recordings, informants almost always provided me with synopses of the films from which these songs originated. Often I was told about the cinema where

these films were viewed, the amount of hours spent rehearsing the songs, the venues at which informants subsequently performed these songs, and the reasons why a particular song was chosen for performance rather than others in the film. Most songs became active testimonies to living moments through the mediation of people who did not listen and analyse, but who lived the music. For me, it scarcely mattered how many times the songs were performed. Whatever was happening in our encounters, two things were clearly not happening. Informants were not attempting to objectively place the songs in the contexts in which they were performed -- their 'authentic', cultural contexts -- as those have long since passed. Informant's encounters with the songs were part of modern recollections. And secondly, the songs were not being appreciated solely as aesthetic objects as the encounters were too specific, enmeshed in personal history and memory. In the context of these encounters, the songs acquired new meanings.

A meal always followed my interviews with informants, and refusal was sometimes met with phrases such as "a growing boy must eat", or "You can't keep studying; you must take a break." By this stage of the visit, the wives of my informants would contrib-

ute memories of their experiences of Indian popular music and life during the days of the orchestral tradition. I was always treated with respect and, in many instances, with reverence because I was attempting such a project.

While I take full responsibility for the construction of the text, my fieldwork and the different types of data gathered have been influenced by my conversations with the various participants in this project. Since the subject of which I write lends itself to rich contextual descriptions, I have, where possible, interwoven the voices of my informants into the text thus enabling the subjects of my study to speak for themselves.

One of the most interesting and unique situations in which I found myself during the course of research for this paper was the one that involved an interview with my paternal grandfather's sister. Prior to the interview, I had no idea who she was or what her existence would mean to me. In fact, I "discovered" her existence in Pretoria on my visit there to collect some documents. I use the word "discovered" because neither my family nor I had met her or were aware that she was alive. In fact, for many years my family had no contact with any of my paternal grand-

father's family. My grandfather, it was assumed, was born in the Transvaal. As a child, I recall being told of the existence of his relatives "somewhere in Jo'burg", but attempts to contact them over the years had proved fruitless. It must be borne in mind that after the implementation of such pieces of apartheid legislation as the group areas act, families were forced to split and move to different locations. As a result, it was virtually impossible for a family in Durban, for example, to trace their relatives in the Transvaal.

I visited Gauteng (formerly the Witwatersrand) in January 1998 to examine a part of the estate of the late George Veerasamy who was a well-known Indian South African musician in the area. As there exists little data about Indian music in the other provinces of South Africa, I called the Veerasamy family in Pretoria after hearing about George Veerasamy's collection from one of my informants. In his lifetime, I later found out, he had amassed boxes of photographs, newspaper cuttings, recordings and other memorabilia. I called his family and appealed to them to grant me an interview and access to his collection. They agreed and while perusing some of his documents at his late residence a few weeks later, I came across a newspaper cutting which was

dated 1955. It showed a photograph of young man playing the trumpet. Examining it closer, I realised that it was a photograph of my father. None of the members of the Veerasamy family could explain the importance of the photograph, or could furnish reasons why the newspaper cutting was kept. However, Vilaliṇ Veerasamy, George's son, vaguely recalled his paternal grandmother, who is now eighty six years old, mentioning the newspaper cutting some years ago. We called his grandmother at her daughter's home in Benoni and made an appointment to see her the next day. Mrs Veerasamy, who insisted I call her *arya* (grandmother) at the outset, stated, using a mixture of Tamil, English and Afrikaans, that she had two brothers, one of whom had left the Transvaal as a young man to seek employment in Durban. However, no one in her family had heard from him since. Further, she could only recall two substantive pieces of information about her brother. The first was that he was known simply as Jimmy, and the second was that he was an excellent singer and actor. Her story continued for about an hour at which time she got around to the newspaper cutting. She stated, in Tamil, that the reason behind her keeping the article was that the young man in the photograph, Denny Veeran, was the son of her brother, Jimmy

Veeran. "Look at the picture," she concluded, "they even look the same."

Suffice it to say at this juncture that after explaining to Mrs Veerasamy that Denny Veeran is my father, the meeting became extremely emotional. In the days that followed, she introduced me to other members of her family, many of whom were also musicians. When I left Benoni a few weeks later, I had not only begun a new, meaningful relationship, but also amassed a substantial amount of oral data.

Among the areas that have received little scholarly attention in studies of the popular musics of South Africa, the most neglected are probably the areas of advertising and publicity. Advertising, Raymond Williams suggests, was developed to sell goods or services in a particular kind of socio-political economy, whilst publicity was developed to promote "persons in a particular kind of culture" (1993: 333). Williams states that:

> It is impossible to look at modern advertising
> without realizing that the material object [or
> service] being sold is never enough: this in-
> deed is the crucial cultural quality of its
> modern forms. If we were sensibly materialist,
> in that part of our living in which we use
> things, we should find most advertising to be
> of an insane irrelevance. Beer would be enough
> for us, without the additional promise that in
> drinking it we show ourselves to be manly,

> young in heart, or neighbourly. A washing-
> machine would be a useful machine to wash
> clothes, rather than an indication that we are
> forward-looking or an object of envy to our
> neighbours. But if these associations sell beer
> and washing-machines, as some of the evidence
> suggests, it is clear that we have a cultural
> pattern in which the objects are not enough but
> must be validated, if only in fantasy, by asso-
> ciation with social and personal meanings which
> in a different cultural pattern might be more
> directly available. (1993: 335)

The associative component in advertising of which Williams speaks is important in that it contributes to our understanding of why particular strategies were adopted in campaigns that focused on Indian popular music. It explains the use of certain types of slogans, phrases, photographs and illustrations in posters and pamphlets that depict glamour, other-ness and fantasy.

My pilot study indicates that both advertising and publicity played crucial roles in the development of Indian popular music. Further, the symbols, slogans, and illustrations used provide important clues to the identity of the participants.

Although researchers of South African musics such as David Coplan (1985), Melveen Jackson (1988), Chris-topher Ballantine (1993), Carol Muller (1994), Jay-endran Pillay (1994), and Veit Erlmann (1996) refer to advertising and publicity at different points in

their texts, none analyse these areas as forms of social communication between people. Whether it is through the use of symbols, slogans, or pictures, advertising is a unique way in which to understand how people attract or "speak" to like-minded people in order to get them to share in a particular experience. In terms of this study, an analysis of the types and techniques of advertising and publicity used by Indian South African musicians provided another vantage point from which to understand these people and their experiences.

Research into the areas of advertising and publicity began with collecting old posters, pamphlets, newspaper cuttings and recordings of radio broadcasts. Most of these were found in private collections belonging not only to musicians but also to other people in the community. Participants were generous in both allowing me to make copies of their memorabilia, and in some instances, providing me with the original documents for addition to my personal collection. Copies of these have also been made available to the University of Durban-Westville's Documentation Centre, as well as to the Department of Education and Culture's Documentation Centre in Derby Street, Durban.

Another area that I focused on was the collection, copying and analysing of old recordings. Most recordings pertaining to this study are now between 30 and 50 years old and exist only in 78 rpm discs, in four track reel-to-reel tapes, or, in rare instances, in cassette-tape formats. Some of these recordings are in a delicate state, whilst many are damaged through age, use or storage. Obtaining copies of these recordings however, did not prove as easy as I thought it would. Inasmuch as people were generous with their photographs and posters, this was not the case with their audio collections. Even though in most instances I was treated as a member of an informant's family, it was only after months into the relationship when a sense of trust was earned that I was allowed to make copies of these recordings. A selection of these recordings have been re-recorded on compact disc -- a copy of which accompanies this dissertation.

Of the Indian South African musicians that were active between 1930 and 1970, the majority played by ear. None of them had any formal schooling in instrumental performance or in music literacy. Many were able to play songs only after listening to them repeatedly and then committing them to memory. In cases where musicians were able to read or write

western notation, they would write down only their own parts and would use notation as a memory aid rather than a score. Consequently, these scores were not accurate representations of the music as it sounded in performance.

Although the major thrust of this dissertation was not the writing down of sounds but the discovery of how these sounds were conceived, made, appreciated, and used to influence other individuals, groups, and social and musical processes, I nevertheless needed to familiarise myself with all aspects of the music. In the absence of written scores, I initially intended to transcribe in western notation as many songs as possible. However, I discovered early in this process through listening, performing and discussing, that the meticulous transcription of a number of songs would not add much to my understanding because the musical characteristics that were important to my study were elements that were common to the entire repertoire. These elements include orchestration, ornamentation, timbre, metre, rhythm, tempo, harmony, counterpoint and form.

After spending a considerable amount of time listening to recordings together with my father and other ensemble leaders, I isolated a single song that all

agreed was the most popular during the fifties among audiences and musicians. The song was an instrumental piece from the Tamil film *Chineh Doreh* (literally the small boss).

I thereafter invited Madhavan Nair, who was the leader of the Ranjeni Orchestra for more than thirty years, to my home where I had installed a sequencing programme onto my computer, and set up a 16 part multi-timbral synthesiser. Nair, a keyboard player and a vocalist himself, also arranged the music for his ensemble. During his tenure as leader of his orchestra, he arranged music by listening to an original (imported) recording repeatedly after which he would isolate the various instruments' parts. He then reproduced and memorised each of these parts and played them on his harmonium. Each of the musicians would then be expected to learn or more accurately, copy their respective parts from him. He once remarked that given the opportunity, he could still achieve this.

I explained to him how a MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) studio works, and then requested that he reproduce the instrumental song from the film *Chineh Doreh*. Nair attempted this from memory and completed recording his version of the song

later that evening opting to skip lunch and dinner. He was impressed with the result and felt that it was exactly the way in which his orchestra would have performed it. The next day, Rajive Mohan -- a fellow musician and the leader of the Dilkaash Showband -- edited the arrangement. I then brought in my father and later on, a few other musicians to listen to the recording. I knew I had obtained a positive result when a few of them asked to purchase a copy of the recording. A computer generated transcription of that particular song is included in Appendix Five of this presentation, whilst the synthesized version can be heard on Track 15 of the accompanying compact disc[2].

One of the biggest hurdles facing my research was encountered when I began collecting recordings. Most recordings were poorly stored, many were not in covers or sleeves, and only a handful were accompanied by any written details. In the absence of such details, many hours were spent with informants listening to the recordings, classifying them, and then labelling them accordingly. My intention initially was to divide the recordings into two sections: imported recordings and local versions of the same recordings, and then to store them accordingly. However, this was difficult because in some in-

stances a single reel or cassette would contain both imported and local recordings. In the first few months of my research, the bulk of my work consisted of sorting out, and listening to these recordings.

Another hurdle was encountered when I began collecting memorabilia and old recordings. Although people were generous in granting me permission to use their material, most of them were unable to give me physical access to their collections for extended periods of time. Typical responses were that the material was in someone else's home, "in the garage somewhere", "with my son", or "possibly at my daughter's house". Often I was told, "I'll find it and let you know". In some cases, months would elapse before I would suddenly receive an invitation to lunch where I would be told, "we have something for you." In one instance, I travelled a distance of almost 200 km with an informant who was under the impression that a particular document was in one of three places: in a home in Tongaat, in a house in Phoenix, or at his brother's home in Chatsworth. He insisted that we visit all three locations in an attempt to find the document. We did not locate the document that day, although, it was eventually found a few weeks later at his sister's home in Chatsworth.

It was frustrating to make repeated trips only to find that a particular document or recording could not be located, but when it was eventually found, my frustration was replaced with excitement and antici-pation.

NOTES

1. This story is based on an Indian folk tale that was related to me by my mother many years ago. I have not been able to determine its source.

2. The MIDI set-up involved in generating both Track Fifteen and Appendix Five included a Roland JV-30 synthesizer, a Roland SC-88 sound module and Twelve Tone System's sequencing programme "Cakewalk Professional 4.01" for Windows.

PART ONE

INDIAN

POPULAR MUSIC

IN DURBAN

Performance practices such as music making are so-
cially and historically located, meaningful con-
figurations of symbols and practices and, hence,
any adequate analysis of such practices 'must be
informed by an equally detailed understanding of
the historically situated human subjects' that per-
ceive, learn, interpret, evaluate, produce, and re-
spond to these symbols and practices. (Erlmann
1996: 101 including citation of Waterman 1990: 6)

Part One of this paper is an historical overview of Indian popular music in Durban. Drawing heavily on the voices of informants, the discussion is divided into two chapters. Chapter Two functions primarily as a background which describes those aspects of pre-1935 Indian popular music in South Africa that were most overtly altered by the advent of the sound cinema. The discussion, whilst sensitive to the social, cultural, religious and political events that framed the development of Indian popular music during this period of South African history, privileges an examination of the repertory, performance practices, nature and make-up of the ensembles. Chapter Three takes up the discussion with a focus on the period after 1935. Whilst the data presented in Chapter Two is chronologically arranged, Chapter Three is arranged thematically exploring some of the issues raised in Chapter One in greater depth. The experiences of musicians from the various predominantly Indian South African communities in and around the city of Durban are privileged in this section.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND: INDIAN

POPULAR MUSIC

BEFORE 1935

The terms "migration" and "diaspora" have surfaced
in a number of recent ethnographies to describe the
movements, or, sometimes, the displacement of large
numbers of people. More often than not the people
involved share a common cultural heritage, religious
background or ethnic origin. Although both terms are
related to the movement of people, it is the term

"migration", that is closely associated with the movement of people from one location to another in order to fulfil a labour need in the new location. David Coplan's *In Township Tonight* (1985), Christopher Ballantine's *Marabi Nights* (1993) and Veit Erlmann's *African Stars* (1991), amongst others, show that this was especially true of the movement of certain groups of Africans from one location to another within South Africa. In the case of Indian immigration to South Africa around the middle of the nineteenth century, "migration" may be a particularly apt term to describe this movement as it was for the supplying of labour, and that reason alone, that Indians first arrived in South Africa. The majority of Indians however, did not leave after the completion of their contracts, but, instead, integrated themselves into South African society and made South Africa their home. Thus while we can perhaps refer to them as "immigrants", the term "migrants" does not seem to apply.

Gerard Chaliand and Jean-Pierre Rageau argue that the term "diaspora" -- the Greek word used to describe a "dispersion" or a "scattering" -- is a more relevant term to describe Indian South Africans as it encompasses more than just the criterion of movement. They believe that if an ethnic or religious

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group is *forced* to disperse owing to political reasons, if that group retains its identity in a new location or "host" country, and, further, if the group's cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation via collective memory, then that group must necessarily constitute a diaspora (1995: XIV).

In this chapter, which is essentially an examination of Indian experience in South Africa between 1860 and 1935, we will examine some of the ways in which Indians came to constitute a diaspora and how this impacted on their identities.

By the late 1850s, sugar -- of which at least 500 tons was being produced annually -- was fast gaining primary-export status in the British colony of Natal (Pachai 1971: 1). With financial resources and land not being major problems to the colonists, the only, albeit serious, hurdle faced by white farmers in multiplying that figure was the shortage of willing labour. Although one might think that the Zulu men of Natal could have supplied the necessary labour, Zulu men were not agricultural workers, but rather hunters and pastoralists. They felt no compulsion to work on the sugar plantations and were not motivated to work for a wage on a regular basis (Hall 1985:

345). The farmers felt an urgency to secure Natal as the economic base of the east coast of South Africa, and this concern spurred their discussions of the labóur problem on to a fervent pitch.

Various editorials in the *Natal Mercury* from the year 1855 suggest that several possible labour alternatives were under consideration. For example, it was reported that when the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, Sir George Grey, visited Natal, he was requested by the public to "promote"

> Free Immigration, by opening up the Crown Lands to occupation on easy terms, so as to introduce 1000 families annually ... [and to seriously consider] the introduction of a limited number of Coolies, in aid of the present needs of the planters. (*The Natal Mercury*: 9 November 1855)

Grey gave the latter request serious consideration, and, in 1858, an experiment was attempted with a group of Chinese labourers who were brought to Natal under the system of indenture by the Umzinto Sugar Company (Pachai 1971: 3). However, it soon became apparent that the labourers were not satisfied with their working conditions and their pay. The workers were dismissed and, after much deliberation, the colonists focused their attention on a sister British colony -- India -- as a potential source of

cheap labour. Indian labour had been successfully used in other parts of the world such as Mauritius in 1834 (Hazareesingh 1975: 12), British Guiana in 1838, Trinidad in 1844, and Jamaica in 1845 (Chaliand 1995: 147). Discussions were initiated between the governments of India and Natal, and, in 1860, laws were passed by the respective governments which made indenture a reality. These laws were Act 33 which was passed by the government of India, and Laws 13, 14 and 15 which were passed by the Natal Legislative Council. In November 1860, 203 men, 87 women, 21 boys and 19 girls arrived in Natal from India after a month-long sea voyage on board the *Truro*. When the indenture system was finally abolished in 1911, a total of 152 184 Indians had been brought to Natal under its auspices (Hall 1985: 346).

> It was a striking feature that most workers
> came from one of two regions: the borderlands
> of the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) and Bi-
> har; that is to say, the middle of the Hindi-
> speaking Gangetic plains of north India, and
> the districts bordering the south-eastern In-
> dian coast where Tamil and (further north)
> Telegu were spoken. In Natal over the course of
> time, it was the south Indian emigration that
> became predominant while the tendency was for
> north Indians to come from districts further to
> the west. (Freund 1995: 3)

Other Indians, who realised the economic and trade potential of South Africa, came over as 'passenger'

or 'free' Indians, having paid their own passage.
This group constituted the trading class or as Peter
Jack calls them, "the merchant classes" (1996). The
majority of this group comprised Muslims and
Gujerati-speaking Hindus.

Jayendran Pillay, who researched religion among the
early Hindu settlers in South Africa, theorises that
the Hindu religion, through its rituals and prac-
tices, powerfully influenced the formation of early
Indian identity. This theory is supported by Ber-
nauer and Rasmussen in *The Final Foucault* who found
that although identity may be an individual posses-
sion, it is also a product "of the otherness of cul-
tural, social and linguistic determinants" (1994:
21).

The influence of religion on the everyday lives of
the indentured labourers, it seems, was especially
strong in the areas of music and dance. As Amra-
vathie Veerasamy recalls:

> I was born in 1912 ... In my father's time
> [c.1870 - 1920], all they had was temple. They
> used to have temple dances, singing bhajans,
> that was the only entertainment. Only thing be-
> sides work. Everything around temple. Even we
> used to meet most people at temple when we used
> to sing on Friday evenings. (1998)

Although the above account illustrates the importance of the role played by religion in creating a space that provided refuge from the realities of indentured life, it also demonstrates the extent to which music inscribed this space with meaning. The term "space" above, therefore, does not refer solely to a specific location -- a location that can only be occupied by one object at any given moment --, but, as Michel de Certeau points out, to a place that is "actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it" (1984: 117).

Martin Stokes tells us that music, with its ability to invoke a sense of space, is often used as a source of refuge and identity among diaspora throughout the world. For example, he states:

> The insistent evocation of place in Irish balladry or the 'country and Irish' heard on jukeboxes in bars in Ireland and amongst migrant communities in England and the United States is a striking example, defining a moral and political community in relation to the world in which they found themselves. (1994: 3)

Indian South Africans, by inscribing the temple with music, I argue, were able to reconfigure their identities in a new location.

Speaking of the religious practices among the settlers, Her Holiness Vidya Saraswati Svamini, an In-

dian religious leader who is now a South African
resident, speculates that:

> During this early period in history [mid-
> 1800s], India was steeped in ignorance, and
> mainly illiterate Indians left India in large
> numbers to earn their livelihood in foreign
> countries. The religious beliefs were a bundle
> of superstitions and comprised meaningless
> rituals. The caste system persisted among them.
> They clung strongly to a sort of religion and
> cultural pattern of life to which they had be-
> come accustomed in India and they did so with a
> degree of pride. During their first fifty years
> of settlement abroad, no new religion or ra-
> tional way of life reached them from India.
> (Saraswati 1988: 9)

Although, in the absence of any verifiable evidence,

Saraswati's statements have to be considered pure

speculation which may be based in part on her obser-

vation of current religious practices among Hindu

South Africans and in part on anecdote, her last

statement brings to surface an important issue --

that of the absence of any direct contact with India

and her nationals over an extended period of time.

This is an important factor when considering the

ways in which Indian traditions developed or were

reinvented in South Africa. It also assists in help-

ing us understand the milieu in which various modes

of creative expression evolved among the early set-

tlers.

Life under indenture in South Africa has been dis-
cussed in some detail by Meer (1969), Freund (1995),
Jackson (1988), Tinker (1974) and Arkin et al.
(1989), and practically all their accounts relate
the manner in which indebtedness, the abuses of cor-
poral punishment, and the prevalence of brutality
affected individuals caught up in the system of in-
denture. As Rangasammy, a hotel-keeper, relayed to
the Coolie Commission of 1872[1]:

> I heard from the Coolies that some masters
> treat them badly. I hear that Mr Anderson some-
> times beats them: not only does he beat the
> Coolies himself, but he gets the magistrate to
> beat them. There are four Coolies: they are on
> estate now. If [a] Coolie demands pass to go,
> he refuses to give the pass, and gives them
> [sic] a kick. The complaint about Jackson is
> not so bad, but he beats Coolies. I never saw
> marks on a Coolie beaten. I don't know what An-
> derson beats them with; he uses whatever comes
> next to hand: stones, sticks, shambock. He
> treats a Coolie like a bull buffalo. (Ran-
> gasammy 1872)

Even access to education was practically impossible:

> There are many children in the colony, and they
> are spoiled for want of teachers; schools
> should be built, because the white teachers
> will not take Coolie children in their schools.
> (Rangasammy 1872)

For the early groups of indentured Indians, the pic-
ture was also complicated by the fact that most were
functionally illiterate, and many were not conver-

sant in English -- the language of the market place
and judicial recourse. As Rangasammy pointed out to
the commission:

> In the magistrates' Courts there are no proper
> interpreters: they won't take our positions
> properly before the magistrate. In this way:-
> if we say, 'My wife was ill-treated,' he ren-
> ders it, 'My wife was kicked.' In consequence
> of this interpretation, the magistrate gets an-
> gry, and says we are liars. I would ask that
> Colonel Lloyd would speak our language to the
> magistrate, and then let the interpreter render
> it in English and he could then judge. (Ran-
> gasammy 1872)

Of the literature that addresses the early period of
Indian history in South Africa, very little focuses
on the social and cultural aspects of Indian life.
During the course of my investigations, I found that
the bulk of the extant data pertaining to these ar-
eas was to be found in commemorative brochures and
old programmes. However, most of the accounts from
these sources are of an unscholarly character, and
many include a fair amount of speculation. In the
absence of reliable, written sources, it was neces-
sary to depend heavily on informants, many of whom
recalled stories told to them by their parents and
grandparents. An analysis of their responses shows,
firstly, that work seems to have been an all-
pervasive factor which structured indentured life.
Secondly, religion, the accounts also seem to sug-

gest, was not only a part of spiritual life, but was also used as means of creative expression, and a source of relief from everyday hardships. Thirdly, the time and effort required to deal with such fundamental domestic concerns as feeding one's family and coming to terms with the harsh realities of indentured life made it virtually impossible for any sort of musical culture to flourish in the early days. And finally, legislation, it is strongly suggested, governed every aspect of indentured life. The following quotation, although not intended as a *précis* at the time of the interview, aptly summarises my findings listed above. The account is from my late grandfather's sister who spent the better part of her youth in a number of townships including Sophiatown -- the township made famous by a number of writers, artists and musicians including Spokes Mashiyane, the pennywhistler. She states that:

> My father, your *appa's thatha* [father's grandfather] ... his name was Perumal Veeran. He came to South Africa to cut bricks, you know, like a builder, from Veloor in India. He had a lot of music and drama in him, that's where you get it from ... Ya, he worked everyday of the week. He had to feed his family and that. His boss moved to Jo'burg so he came along too ... somewhere in the [eighteen] eighties, nineties I think. Here he met amma [my mother] and here I was born. Music, drama those days, they never had the time. You can't buy soap, what you gonna worry about buying harmonium, *tabla*. These whites never gave him off even when I was born. Amma told me when I was born, next day she had to go back to work. From sunrise to

> sunset, work, work, work, so we could have
> something to eat. Everyone was like that. Suf-
> fering and staying. What else could they do?
> Okay, he used to sing by the temple, sometimes
> he was too tired. That's how it was those days,
> little chance to play music, not like today.
> And what about the tax, 3 pounds they said. Mu-
> sic, what music? (Veerasamy 1998)

During the 1890s, a small number of immigrants re-
turned to India after completing their five-year pe-
riod of indenture. However the majority, faced with
the possibility of returning to the bleak situation
that inspired them to leave India in the first in-
stance, either re-indentured themselves or explored
other economic possibilities locally. It was at this
stage that a number of small communities consisting
primarily of ex-indentured Indian immigrants began
mushrooming throughout Natal. One such community,
located approximately 20 kilometres north of Durban,
was the Desharma Sugar Estate in La Mercy [refer to
map, Figure 2.1]. Tulsidas Naidoo, the President of
the Indian Academy of South Africa, states that:

> The Desharma Sugar Estate contained a rela-
> tively small community consisting of mostly
> Tamil and some Hindi speaking people. The peo-
> ple, using what little money they could
> afford, managed to acquire some semblance of a
> living environment. They built their own tem-
> ples, and so on. (1997)
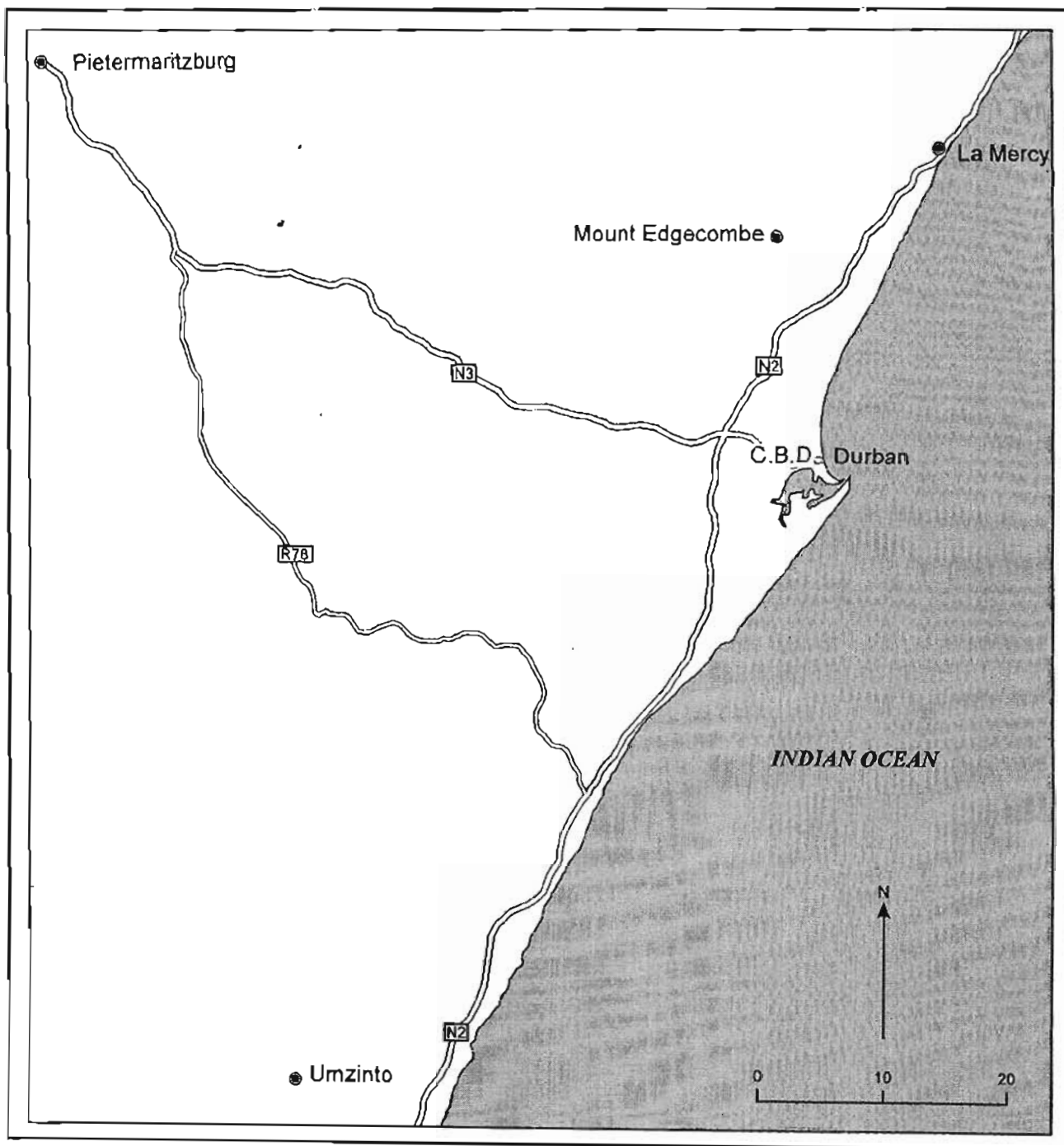
Figure 2.1 Map of Natal showing La Mercy, Umzinto, Pietermaritzburg and the Durban CBD
(Cartographic Studio, University of Natal 1999)

Gary Moonsamy, a great-grandson of one of the resi-
dents of this community, remembers his grandfather's
recollections of life there. He states that:

> My grandfather told me about how his father
> took part in some of the temple processions.
> The *ther* [chariot] used to go through the vil-
> lage, people used to go to it for blessings and
> ashes. There was also lots of six-foot dances,
> grand weddings and celebrations. (1997)

The "six-foot dances" (Tamil: *terukuttu*) of which
Moonsamy speaks were sung and spoken recitals of
episodes taken from such Hindu epics as the Mahab-
harata and the Ramayana. The term "six-foot dance",
informants argue, was coined in South Africa and its
usage grew out of the fact that an area of six feet
by six feet was required for a performance of this
folk theatre form. In the early years of this cen-
tury, six-foot dances were usually part of temple
festivals, and also constituted important sources of
entertainment for most Indian South African communi-
ties. "In South Africa," Naidoo adds,

> the six-foot dance was generally held over
> three consecutive days. However, when this was
> not possible, it was held overnight. The ac-
> tors, all men, were not professional artists,
> but they sang, acted and danced. There was also
> some short pieces of comedy in-between to keep
> the audiences awake. The bulk of the play was
> sung although you used to get a bit of dia-
> logue, or commentary. All of this happening in
> Tamil. A number of groups of performers used to
> do this on a regular basis, i.e. whenever there
> was a temple celebration or a call for it. The

instrumentalists were sometimes involved in the singing but they were a separate group from the actors. The main instruments used were harmonium, *mattalam*, *mrdangam*. In India, you will find a *mukha vina* [a high-pitched double reed oboe with a limited range] sometimes added. (1997)

In the late 1890s, another form of folk theatre, the dance-drama, also gained popularity among Indian South Africans. The dance-drama was similar to the six-foot dance but was performed outside the context of temple celebrations. Whether or not such dramas were an important medium of creative expression prior to this period is not known. However, it is clear from the reports of informants that the dance-dramas were performed and appreciated by both Hindi- and Tamil-speaking Indians. The "dramas", as they are collectively referred to, and fondly remembered by informants, were also based on epics, especially the *Puranas*, which are essentially a class of sacred works comprising the bulk of Hindu mythology, and writings about love and philosophy (Nixon 1988: 44). Hindi-speaking groups who performed these dramas were known as *Sarangi-Thaal* groups. Jagunandhan Mohan, a grandson of a popular *Sarangi-Thaal* musician of the 1930s, speculates that these groups were named *Sarangi-Thaal* because the *Sarangi* was the main instrument used to accompany the singers (Mohan 1997).

Jimmy Veeran, my grandfather, was considered by many of his peers to be the "greatest drama actor this country ever saw" (Naidoo S. 1997). Shama Naidoo recalls that:

> When Jimmy Veeran came on stage, the whole stage shook. No microphone those days. His voice was like thunder. Also, those days women were not allowed to act -- women's roles were played by men. Very nice costumes. The dramas with music -- harmonium, *mrdangam*, *thalam* -- went on all night. The actors used to have one, two sparks [alcoholic drinks] and they used to go on all night. In fact, they used to get paid by the *budhi* [bottle]. Some of the best dramas were *Harichandra*, *Kavalan*, *Galaver*, *Kovilan and Kanaygie*, *Nullathungal* and *Sathiavan-Savithree*. Acting, dancing, singing, music, all in one place. We never had any T.V., that time only silent pictures. So, what else we could look for. When your grandfather walked in Mayville, people used to say, 'God coming'. (1997)

In July 1892, M. Rangiah of the Desharma Sugar Estate together with a group of four instrumentalists and two vocalists performed at a Tamil wedding held in La Mercy. The musicians -- all men -- were either ex-indentured labourers or children of indentured labourers who held various jobs not related to music. The group called itself the Sarasvathie Group. Previously musicians who performed together in groups generally did so on an ad hoc basis and thus tended not to refer to themselves collectively. The use of a label by the Sarasvathie group would suggest that it was the first, or one of the first, to

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entertain thoughts of performing on a somewhat regular basis. In the absence of other theories to explain this shift in thinking, I would suggest that the change occurred because the Sarasvathie group was "invented", to use Eric Hobsbawm's term (1988: 2), by a community that was working and living under conditions that they themselves negotiated and created. For the first time individuals were empowered to re-indenture, to work for themselves, or to choose their employers. Thus, individuals who were able to sing or play an instrument made both time and space available to channel their efforts into a culture of semi-professional performance -- something that did not and could not exist under indenture. The act of naming the ensemble thus reflects the positive change in the conditions under which people lived, worked and performed.

The bulk of the repertoire performed by the Sarasvathie Group consisted of items which, reports suggest, were consciously appropriated from the six-foot dance and the dance-drama repertories. When traditions are invented, Hobsbawm tells us, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past (1988: 1). In terms of the Sarasvathie Group, this "continuity" was evident in their choice of repertoire and, to an extent, their

choice of instruments which included *mrdangam*, Jew's harp, harmonium, violin, tenor banjo and *thalam* (Naidoo T.P. 1996). Certain practices of the Sarasvathie Group were followed by other ensembles which were formed subsequently, and, in line with Hobsbam's understanding of an "invented tradition", such practices continued to characterise most ensembles until the late 1920s. These practices were the use of western instruments such as the violin and tenor banjo which were not traditionally associated with Indian classical or devotional music at the time; the naming of the ensemble; the fact that all the musicians were men; and the performance of a repertory that drew heavily on folk theatre forms.

Whilst the term "invented tradition" accounts for the formation of the Sarasvathie Group, the standardisation of its performance practices can best be described as a sort of musical "koineization". "Koineization" is a term formulated by Rajend Mesthrie in his study of language and indenture that refers to a process in which the various Indian dialects spoken by indentured workers of North Indian descent came together to form a new, relatively standard speech in South Africa (1991: 56). I argue that the term "musical koineization" is particularly useful here as it suggests the amalgamation of vari-

ous Indian and western musical practices into a new,
standardised set of performance practices.

In the absence of written sources, it is difficult
to speculate whether a similar "musical koineiza-
tion" also took place in India around the same pe-
riod. It may have been that Indian South African
musicians were engaged in the process of "musical
saming", to extend Naomi Schor's term (1989: 38), by
creating musical practices that they imagined were
taking place in India during the same period. In the
absence of any direct contact with India, I suggest
that musicians and audiences engaged in the process
of "musical saming" to create an imaginary link with
their ancestral home -- a link which influenced
their identities in powerful ways.

By the 1890s a large number of indentured labourers
who had completed their period of indenture opted to
explore economic possibilities outside the sugar es-
tates. Although the option to explore commercially
viable avenues at the end of indenture was part of
Natal's original agreement with the Indian govern-
ment, the white colonists of Natal -- especially
those involved with trade at the domestic level --
were not prepared for the realisation of this aspect
of the arrangement. What had seemed a solution in

the 1850s became a problem in the 1890s. For many, the 'free' Indian was fast becoming a competitive variable in the local economic landscape. As the General Manager of the Standard Bank was pleased to report in 1897:

> The trade carried on in the interior, by Banyan and Arab traders [who were considered Indian by virtue of their skin colour], is almost at a standstill, and we are restricting our dealings with this class of customer. (Mabin 1987: 427)

Later that same year, white fears of commercial competition began to feature in the legislative process through the passing of the Dealer's Licence Act. The Act stated that the sole discretion to issue a trading licence to a non-white individual lay in the hands of licensing officers, and that this issue was not open to judicial recourse. With the excision of the courts from the process, obtaining a dealer's licence was virtually impossible for Indian South Africans.

For the few Indians who were employed in the other provinces of South Africa and who later settled in these regions, the situation was no different. As the minutes of a meeting held in 1890 by the Volksraad of the Orange Free State indicate:

> The session of the Volksraad just closed was
> one of the longest on record, and much work of
> a progressive character was accomplished ... A
> stringent measure was passed by the Raad
> whereby no coloured Asiatics in future will be
> allowed to reside longer than two months in the
> State without permission of the President, and
> such permission will not be granted in the
> event of objections being lodged showing that
> the individual is competing in business with
> traders or farmers. An Asiatic is further de-
> barred from owning fixed property, as is at
> present the case with the native races, and 12
> mos. grace is given to persons of the class
> mentioned already settled in the State. (Mabin
> 1987: 273)

Although many believe that racism was practised ex-

tensively before the 1890s, it was only in the 1890s

that it began to be embodied in legislation. (Appen-

dix Four is a comprehensive list of laws that af-

fected Indian South Africans in Natal between 1860

and 1960.) At this juncture however, two points need

to be stressed. Firstly, Indians were in fact Brit-

ish subjects, and, secondly, a contributory factor

that made possible the passing of Act 33 of 1860 by

the government of India, was the understanding that

her nationals could choose to return to India at the

end of their indenture, to re-indenture, or to take

up residence as free persons in South Africa.

The passing of Acts 8 and 17 in South Africa in the

mid-1890s and of the Dealer's Licence Act of 1897

clearly contradicted the earlier agreements with In-

dia as well as indicating the extent to which white

South Africans felt threatened by what they perceived to be an over-extended presence of non-indentured Indians in their country (see Appendix Four for details). Act 17 of 1895 passed by the South African authorities stipulated that those Indians over the age of 16 who either failed to re-indenture or return to India would have imposed on them a compulsory annual tax of three pounds. A year later, Act 8, the Franchise Act, was passed which removed the parliamentary franchise from non-Europeans and thus effectively excluded them from the legislative process. As early as 1932, this discrimination was noted by Harold Adamson who pointed out in his Master's thesis that this piece of legislation contained a "racial taint" (1932: 10).

Although anti-Indian hostility was evident at the legislative level as early as the 1890s, Indian South Africans were by no means complacent in their resistance to such hostility. In 1894, Mahatma Gandhi formed the Natal Indian Congress which was the first organised attempt at Indian resistance in South Africa (Meer 1969: 43). In the following decade, Gandhi organised various campaigns to unite Indians throughout South Africa against the tyranny of the various provincial and national authorities. These endeavours met with varying degrees of suc-

cess. In 1906, Gandhi and his followers began a passive resistance campaign that became known as the *satyagraha* (truth-force) campaign. Such non-violent resistance was initiated in protest against racial prejudice, unjust laws and human rights violations against all Indians in South Africa. During the eight years that Gandhi led this campaign, he was successful in mobilising a large sector of the Indian South African populace, and Establishment reaction to the campaign was swift and harsh. Thousands of active campaigners and sympathisers, both Indian and white, were arrested and subjected to periods of imprisonment for their parts in such protest actions. (For a list of names of these resisters, see Appendix Three.) When Gandhi's *satyagraha* campaign finally ended in 1914 however, it was successful in inspiring the creation of the Indian Relief Bill which effectively abolished Law 17 of the Colony of Natal -- the basis on which the annual three pound tax was imposed on ex-indentured Indians. Although Gandhi left South Africa to return to India the same year, the cudgel for Indian resistance in South Africa was taken up in the other provinces of South Africa by the Cape British Indian Council and the Transvaal Indian British Association.

The decade that saw the formation of the Natal Indian Congress by Gandhi, was also witness to the migration of ex-indentured labourers from the rural and peri-urban environments towards the culturally, economically and socially diverse landscape of the city. Erlmann states that:

> The city of Durban, for instance, had been founded in 1824 and with its rapidly growing European population and expanding port facilities, soon came to constitute one of the most important regional urban labour markets on the south-east African coast. (Erlmann 1996: 113)

By 1904, 10 192 Indians were living in the Cape, 253 in the Orange Free State, 10 948 in the Transvaal and 100 918 in Natal constituting, in total, approximately two percent of the South African population (Mesthrie 1988: 92). Owing primarily to such discriminatory pieces of legislation as the Immigrants' Regulations Act which prevented the dispersion of Indian South Africans from Natal to other parts of South Africa, the greatest concentration of Indian South Africans was in the city of Durban (Bagwandeen 1991: 9). Within the confines of Durban, a large number of ex-indentured Indians farmed as market gardeners.

The community of Riverside along the Umgeni River, approximately 2 kilometers north of Durban's central

business district, was a market gardening community [see Figure 1.2]. Like many other predominantly Indian South African communities, Riverside was created as a result of ex-indentured labour migrating away from the sugar estates on Durban's north coast south towards the city centre. Informants estimate that of the community, 80% consisted of market gardeners, whilst about 20% were employed in nearby factories such as Natal Canvas and the Lion Match Company.

During its approximately 70-year existence, Riverside was the site of much religious, social and cultural activity (Padayachee 1998). The members of the community, it seems, pooled their resources and within a few years of their settling, managed to create a comfortable environment. For example, the Tanjore School Hall, which informants state was the central social and cultural space during the existence of Riverside, was built by funds that were raised solely by members of the community (Padayachee 1998). Many leading Indian South African personalities such as R. K. Ghuru, A. M. Khan, R. K. Naidoo, M. K. Govender, N. Padayachee and Gopal Naidoo were all, at one stage, residents of Riverside. In the 1930s and 1940s, Riverside witnessed the formation of the Thilai Nadaraja and the Prospect Or-

chestras as well as the Riverside Sanathan Dancing Troupe. In fact, at a fire-walking ceremony which was held in March 1997 at the Umbilo *Shree Ambalavar Alàyam* (commonly referred to as the Second River Temple of Cato Manor), I had the opportunity of video taping a performance by one of the last surviving six-foot dance groups in South Africa. This group calls itself the Riverside Dance Company even though members of the Riverside community were forced through apartheid legislation to move from the area more than thirty years ago.

Many ex-indentured Indians who left the sugar estates entered the hotel and catering industries in Durban. These industries were flourishing owing to Durban's geographic location on the coast and to the prosperity that resulted from its exporting of sugar and its railway link to the Transvaal gold fields. Since there was a growing shortage of semi-skilled white labour, the Durban City Council also began employing a large number of ex-indentured Indians as railway workers and essential-service workers. Adequate, or rather sufficient, housing however, became a major concern.

In an attempt to expedite a solution, construction of a housing scheme on the marshy, inland side of

the upper Marine Parade near Durban's beach front
was undertaken by the City Council in 1880 (Mikula
1982: 59). Two platoon-like sets of buildings con-
structed within walking distance of each other ini-
tially comprised the scheme. Military in appearance,
these cantonments were named the Railway Barracks
(housing railway workers) and the Durban Corporation
or Magazine Barracks (housing workers of the Corpo-
ration's essential services) -- the term Magazine,
an informant suggests, was derived from the name of
the road that led to the site (Pillay, B. 1996).

Judging from the emotionally charged reports of some
of the former residents whom I interviewed, to refer
to living conditions within the confines of the
scheme as being difficult and miserable for the more
than "6000 residents" (Mikula 1982: 59), would be an
understatement. Curfews constantly governed the
movement of residents, and sanitary conditions dete-
riorated with each passing month. By 1914, "the bar-
racks" -- as informants refer to the settlement
collectively -- were condemned because they were
"notoriously insanitary and overcrowded" (Omar 1989:
8).

Despite this bleak scenario, the residents of the
barracks created living spaces for their religious

practices, their musical occasions and the exercise of their cultural traditions. For example, the ritual of fire-walking associated with the Hindu Goddess, Draupati, was an annual event at the barracks. In terms of creative and religio-cultural spaces, two temples and one hall -- the Old Drama Hall -- were built in the barracks by means of funds raised by the community. The first temple was built in 1924 by K. R. Pillay and the second, in 1937 by Alagan Pillay (Mikula 1982: 15). A variety of socio-cultural activities such as Hindu ritual performances, Tamil dramas, and temple dances are reported to have taken place in these three venues regularly (*The Leader:* 14 October 1960).

The proximity within which families lived in the barracks, and the communal nature of their existence seem to have been factors that stimulated socio-cultural development. In fact, informants suggest that in other compounds in Durban such as the "Tram Barracks" in Cross Street and the "Point Barracks" at the end of Point Road, "musical and cultural items" were "part of the life" (Pillay, B. 1996).

Dianne Scott, in her examination of communal space construction in Clairwood near Durban, states that the communal nature of life in relatively close-knit

communities provide ideal building blocks for the process of communal space construction. Cultural meanings, she argues, become encoded in such spaces whith, in turn, contribute significantly to the identity of the people who occupy these spaces (1994: 1).

When one bears in mind that the inhabitants of the barracks comprised varied groups of individuals and that each group had customs and traditions which they perceived to be unique to their own group, a complex painting of different religions, languages, and political affiliations emerges with the focal point being the communality of people's experiences. Peter Jack, who was born in the barracks, recalls that a sense of community was manifest in all activities including those of an expressive and creative nature. In fact, his recollections also suggest that musical activities such as variety concerts provided one of the most important platforms for uniting the different linguistic groups within the barracks community. He states that:

> Tamil and Hindi dancers and bands existed side-by-side. They played on the same shows, to the same people, the same audiences. Sometimes, a *roti fuller* [a Hindi male] would play with the Tamil boys and the other way around. (Jack 1996)

In the physical space of the barracks, as I have suggested in an earlier work:

> Networks developed amongst performers who shared similar interests ... and with the development of these networks came musical progress in terms of technical proficiency and quality of reproduction. In fact associations based on common regional and religious origin and on kinship ties have been the most enduring. Possibly they were the earliest organizational patterns devised by the residents of the barracks. (Veeran 1996: 28)

Erlmann points out that in other spaces in South Africa such as the mining compounds of the Transvaal, networks such as those described above were created by Zulu migrants around the turn of the century. These organisations were called "homeboy networks" and were based on common regional and religious origins. Such networks were attempts at minimising the effects of proletarianisation. It is Erlmann's contention that such networks helped provide migrants with a degree of stability in an uncertain environment (Erlmann 1990: 211).

Although by 1921, approximately 127 000 Indians were South African by birth, the South African historian Uma Mesthrie believes that it was during this period that Indians began to be regarded as "undesirable aliens": white South Africans began to fear the growing economic competition; they held a low opin-

ion of the sanitary standards of Indians; they feared, particularly in Natal, being swamped by Indian cultural and social differences; and they believed in their own racial superiority. Mesthrie states that various repatriation schemes were devised, and various strategies were adopted to deal with the "Indian question". The first strategy of the government, she states, was to close the door to further immigration. Secondly, additional discriminatory legislation was put in place to restrict the rights of Indian South Africans to trade, purchase property or participate in the political structure of the country. And finally, various inducements were offered by the South African government to encourage Indians to return to India. For example, in 1921 a cash bonus of five pounds per adult with a maximum of twenty five pounds per family was offered for those surrendering their domicile rights in South Africa. In 1924, she adds, these bonuses were doubled as a further inducement (Mesthrie 1988: 92).

In the mid-1920s a new legislative threat was levelled against Indian South Africans. Termed the Asiatic Bill, its principle tenet was the compulsory economic and residential segregation of Indians in cities such as Durban. In response to this threat, the Transvaal Indian Congress (formerly known as the

Transvaal Indian British Association), the Cape Indian British Council, and the Natal Indian Congress formed an alliance under the auspices of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC). The primary aim of the SAIC was to address anti-Indian hostility and segregational legislation through negotiation with the South African Union government. One of their principle demands was that a round table conference be called between themselves, the Indian and the South African governments in order to discuss, among other issues, the Asiatic Bill.

After much pressure, the conference was arranged by the Union government and held in Cape Town in 1926 (Meer 1969: 33). The Union government's position however, was that the Asiatic Bill would be withdrawn only if a repatriation scheme was accepted by Indian South Africans, one that they felt would reduce this group of the population to a manageable compass. Negotiations between the stake holders began and the result was a scheme known as Assisted Emigration which made provisions for transport costs, cash bonuses and other inducements such as the covering of medical expenses and relocation costs to those Indians who opted to "emigrate" back to India. The Union government was of the opinion that large numbers of Indians would subscribe to the

scheme. In the thirteen year period between 1927 and 1940 however, only 16 303 individuals -- a relatively small figure in comparison to the total Indian South Africa population of almost 300 000 at the time -- emigrated under its auspices (Mesthrie 1988: 97).

The government of India agreed in principle with Assisted Emigration but offered to co-operate only as long as the Union government sufficiently empowered those Indians who remained in South Africa to uplift themselves both in the education and housing spheres. After much deliberation, an agreement which became known as the Cape Town Agreement of 1927 was signed by the various stake holders. As per the demands of the government of India, it made provision for the process of upliftment. In practice however, Indian South Africans felt that the government of India had abandoned them because the agreement's "uplift clause", as Devi Bughwan terms it, was an attempt by the South African authorities to force those Indians who did not subscribe to Assisted Emigration to conform to then western notions of living. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha uses the term "mimicry" to describe the desire of dominant groups "for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same,*

but not quite [emphasis in original]" (1994: 86). In South Africa, the authorities, to rephrase Bhabha, desired of Indians a "reformed, recognizable Other," i.e., as different in colour but almost the same in language, clothing, ethics and habits. The uplift clause, Bughwan adds,

> curiously enough [also] included the matter of dress ... without this [and other aspects such as the acceptance and use of the English language as a means of communication] they would ... have no means to articulate their aspirations for full citizenship. (1988: 113)

As has been mentioned, despite the increasing hostility they had to face, only a handful of Indians left South Africa. Some of the reasons are evident in the following statement made by Gopalan Govender:

> I was born in 1924 in South Africa. My father was born in South Africa, my family was born in Durban, everyone I knew was South African. We never knew what India looked like let alone where it was on the map. Okay, we knew how to speak Tamil, Hindi but we spoke English. We were proud to live in this country. We struggled, we fought, some people died fighting. Where we gonna leave this place that time? (1998)

Govender's statement, while implying how different the inhabitants of India were from himself, illustrates Bernauer and Rasmussen's contention that although identity is constituted by a personal experience and an individual history, "it is also

and inevitably a product of the otherness of cultural, social and linguistic determinants" (1994: 21). Their findings help place Govender's statements in context in that although he begins by talking about himself, he continues his statement in relation to others around him. This is evident in his use of the phrases, "My father..., my family..., we..." in his statement. Further, he identifies himself, his father and everyone known to him as South Africans. He never refers to himself as an Indian or an Indian South African. Secondly, his use of the phrase, "but we spoke English" tends to reinforce his view about being a South African.

It is ironic that the Establishment felt it necessary to force Indians to conform to western standards under the guise of implementing provisions of the Cape Town agreement, while Govender's statement illustrates the needlessness of such enforcement as the process of westernisation, his attitude and statements suggest, began with his birth. Although knowing this contributes to our understanding of Indian identity in South Africa, it also helps us place in context the attitude of the Establishment. In other words, the international negotiations of the South African government concerning the Cape Town Agreement were based on their own mis-

perceptions of Indians in South Africa and not on Indian perceptions of themselves.

Despite the rigours and challenges of urban life as well as the political pressures that both musicians and their audiences were forced to endure, Indian South African ensembles persevered throughout the twenties. Most of these groups continued the "koineized" trends established by the Sarasvathie Group from La Mercy almost three decades earlier. The most prominent and sought-after among these, Tulsidas Naidoo believes, was the Sarasvathie Sangeeth Mandil which was led by D. Roopanand of Durban (1997). The ensemble comprised musicians who were mainly children or grand-children of Indian settlers. Like the previous Sarasvathie Group, they performed primarily at weddings and variety con-certs. Their repertory, however, was expanded to in-clude "devotional songs" and "a selection of semi-classical pieces" (Naidoo, T.P. 1997).

In India in the late 1920s, a new genre of music emerged which ironically enjoyed a greater reception among Indian South African audiences than Indic ones. Referred to as *Vadya Vrind* or "orchestral light music", it is an example of an invented tradi-tion which resulted from musical innovations and ex-

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periments carried out by musicians at the studios of

All India Radio -- the first national broadcaster of

India (Manuel 1993: 39). *Vadya Vrind,* Jugatheesan

Devár explains, refers to "a feast of music" (1998),

and its "invention" it seems was inspired by the

opinion that it was not possible for a national

broadcaster in India to adequately cater for her

vast regional and linguistic diversity (Manuel 1993:

39). A common-denominator, standardised, national

folk music, Peter Manuel tells us, was one of the

few ways in which India's diversity could be ad-

dressed on radio. Owing to the linguistic diversity

of the Indic populace, this new national folk music

had to be devoid of lyrics if its creators were to

avoid the pitfalls of being seen to concentrate on

any single particular linguistic group. Secondly,

the music had to incorporate elements from Indian

folk music, Indian classical music and western popu-

lar music in order to be truly reflective of Indian

diversity and taste. A number of experiments were

attempted within the controlled setting of the stu-

dio, and in the late 1920s, *Vadya Vrind* resulted.

Three Vadya Vrind songs, the second and third of

which were recorded possibly during the 1930s in In-

dia, can be heard on Tracks One, Two and Three on

the accompanying compact disc. By 1930, *Vadya Vrind*

became standardised and comprised instrumental

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pieces that were between three and seven minutes in length with melodies being orchestrated for large ensembles of both Indian and western instruments. During that year, hundreds of *Vadya Vrind* compositions were released under such recording labels as His Master's Voice, Columbia, Hindusthan, New Theatres,. Kohinoor and Jenophone. Composers and musicians who excelled during this period and whose names are most often recalled by Indian South African musicians were Naushad Ali, G. N. Balasubramaniam, Timir Baran, V. Balsara, Anil Biswas, R. C. Boral, the Sarma Brothers, P. U. Chinnapen, T. K. Jayaraman, T. R. Mahalingam, D. K. Pattamal and P. G. Venketasen (Govender, G 1996; Arunachalam 1996).

Tracks Four, Five and Six on the accompanying compact disc are South African versions of three *Vadya Vrind* compositions. Although all three pieces, local musicians suggest, were composed during the forties in India, they continued to be performed by ensembles in South Africa until the late sixties. In fact, Track Six was performed at Indian South African weddings as recently as 1990. Tracks Four and Five were recorded in 1955 at a rehearsal of the Golden Lily Orchestra in Cato Manor, and Track Six was recorded in 1990 by the Neelavanie Entertainers using a combination of electronic and acoustic

instruments but maintaining the melody, harmony, form and overall arrangement of the piece as it had been for decades.

The melodies were influenced by Hindustani and Carnatic folk and classical traditions, as well as by European and American "Big Band" music, and by other popular music traditions. The pieces, performed in single keys as is generally the case with Indian classical music, are set within strict linear frameworks rather than the cyclical ones of Indian classical music (known as *tala*). They are characterised by an Indian-derived, ornamented melody orchestrated for large ensembles. I use the term "Indian-derived" to illustrate the proliferation of the various melodic devices such as *meend* (glides), *gamaka* (*acciacatura*), mordents and trills employed by Indian classical musicians on the melodies. The *jugalbandhi* (call and response) technique commonly used in Indian classical music between a soloist and an accompanist -- a technique like that often employed by jazz soloists and accompanists during improvisation as well -- is especially evident in these recordings. The music manifests both a suggestion of raga in the melody and a sense of western harmony in the chord progressions, whilst the outstanding features of the pieces are the presentation of a massed uni-

son sound at certain points and the doubling of parts at others.

Although from the outset *Vadya Vrind* found a ready market in South Africa, it was largely ignored by the population of India. Complementing Peter Manuel's discussion of *Vadya Vrind* (1993), I argue that there are four factors that explain why *Vadya Vrind* was unable to establish a firm footing in the Indic market and that none of these had to do with its sound. Firstly, the introduction of *Vadya Vrind* to India was made at a time when radio broadcasting in India was still in its infancy. Peter Manuel points out that although radio is presently the most widespread mass medium in India, it was, in the early years and for many years thereafter, expensive and beyond the reach of the indigent masses (1993: 41). Thus *Vadya Vrind* was relatively inaccessible in India. Secondly, in the 1930s, the sound cinema was introduced to India. Although the poor masses could not afford to purchase radios -- and were thus de- prived of access to *Vadya Vrind* --, they could, nev- ertheless, afford occasional cinema tickets. The Indian public thus gained easier access to film mu- sic than *Vadya Vrind*. Thirdly, owing to the exis- tence of a number and variety of folk and regional

musics in India, each having a strong support base
established over decades if not centuries, it was
virtually impossible for a single genre to gain a
significant following in a matter of a few years.
And finally, although commercial records were avail-
able in India from 1902, and further, whilst a num-
ber of recordings of *Vadya Vrind* were released in
India throughout the late twenties and early thir-
ties, the record-buying public was largely confined
to the urban upper class who were a minority in com-
parison to the 80 percent of people who lived in the
peri-urban and rural areas (Manuel 1993: 38). The
target market of the three major record companies --
the Gramophone Company of India, Viel-o-phone and
Ramagraph -- was, therefore, not large enough to
sustain the growth of a new genre.

In South Africa, I argue, *Vadya Vrind* was appreci-
ated, re-created, performed and supported for the
following reasons. Firstly, in the absence of any
direct contact with India over an extended period of
time, and further, having to rely only a few select
musical recollections of their ancestral home to
draw on, Indian South Africans did not have access
to the numbers and varieties of genres that their
Indian counterparts enjoyed. *Vadya Vrind* which was
readily available at local record and music stores

thus filled a important niche in the market. Secondly, *Vadya Vrind* was a blend of Indian and western musical elements that mirrored the Indian South African reality which was a mixture of Indian and western elements in dress, language and lifestyle. Thus *Vadya Vrind* was readily accepted in South Africa. Thirdly, Durban possessed the commercial infrastructure that is necessary for the successful dissemination of a new music genre. Stores such as The Radio and Record Trading Company in Victoria Street, Goshalias in Grey Street and The Orient Music Saloon in Field Street, among many others, had been Indian music and record specialists for many years (*The Leader*: 11 December 1940). Finally, the Indian South African population had ready access to these establishments. In 1936, there were 220 000 Indian South Africans, of which 183 700 were living in Natal, whilst just over 65% of those in Natal resided in urban centres such as Durban (Arkin 1981: 121, 134). Through such events as weddings, variety concerts and other celebrations where local ensembles performed *Vadya Vrind*, access to, and dissemination of, this genre was not restricted.

As has been suggested, such residential spaces in Durban as the barracks provided fertile grounds for many types of cultural activities. In 1929, the Pa-

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piah brothers, among them Nagiah, Vartha and Ramadu, formed a *Vadya Vrind* ensemble in the bedroom of their flat in the barracks. They called the ensemble The Papiah Brothers, and, musically, modelled themselves on the Sarma Brothers of India. The group went on to perform for almost five years at a variety of Indian celebrations in and around Durban playing a number of *Vadya Vrind* pieces which they copied from imported records.

Although all accounts suggest that The Papiah Brothers performed music that was drawn exclusively from the *Vadya Vrind* repertory, they did not abandon all ties with such folk theatre forms as the six-foot dance and the dance-drama. Much like other ensembles of the thirties, the Papiah Brothers performed under the auspices of a performing arts organisation which, in the case of the Papiah Brothers, was known as The Papiah Brothers Orchestral Club. As an umbrella body, the club arranged a number of activities including variety concerts, fund raisers, six-foot dances and dance-dramas. The club's activities were recorded with meetings being held timeously. Further, the club, like the many others that were subsequently formed in other areas, had a number of officials including a president, a secretary, a treasurer, vice-presidents and patrons. The Papiah

Brothers as an ensemble was thus one wing of the club's overall structure. This trend -- i.e. the symbiotic existence between an ensemble and its host, a performing arts organisation -- was established in the barracks and was followed by a number of ensembles until the early forties. Although none of my informants cite reasons for this phenomenon, I argue that in the absence of a significant patronage base, it made economic sense for most ensembles to exist in this fashion. Being a part of a larger performing body relieved musicians of the stresses of having to regularly secure performances, advertise, sell tickets, purchase instruments, organise venues, and meet other financial commitments.

Gopalan Govender, a musician who performed in a number of events that were held in the barracks in the thirties and forties, and who is currently still musically active, states:

> The Papiah Brothers, I was a little boy at the time, was truly the first big band in those days. New music that time. Many followed, and many imitated. As a 11 year old boy, I was the first to play on the airwaves. Same time, Papiah Brother's were famous. Weddings, christenings, parties. People liked them because the music was good and also they were part of the people, from the barracks. Papiah Brothers set the standard, everyone followed. (1998)

In 1930, a year after the Papiah Brothers was formed, a few performers, among them P. M. Govender, V. M. Reddy and M. K. Govender, started the first *Vadya Vrind* ensemble in Cato Manor. The ensemble which operated under the auspices of the Cato Manor Bala Baktha Orchestral Club, performed for more than a decade after its formation. Like the Papiah Brothers in the barracks, the "Bala Baktha", as my informants refer to the ensemble, was the first to exclusively focus on *Vadya Vrind* pieces in Cato Manor (See Figure 2.2 which is a photograph of the Bala Baktha Orchestral Club).

Unlike the members of the Papiah Brothers ensemble who were employed by the state, the members of the "Bala Baktha" were employed in the private sector. As has been mentioned, on arriving in Durban, a number of ex-indentured labourers looked towards the private sector for employment. Many found work as waiters, clerks, barmen and factory workers. Of the section of the Indian South African populace that took on such employment, most settled on the edge of Durban's central business district in areas such as Clairwood near the South Coast Junction and Mayville in Cato Manor. The suburb of Mayville, although relatively small in terms of geographic space, was home to almost 40 000 Indian South Africans by the

Figure 2.2 The Bala Baktha Orchestral Club (Durban, 1940, from the Durban Documentation and Cultural Centre)
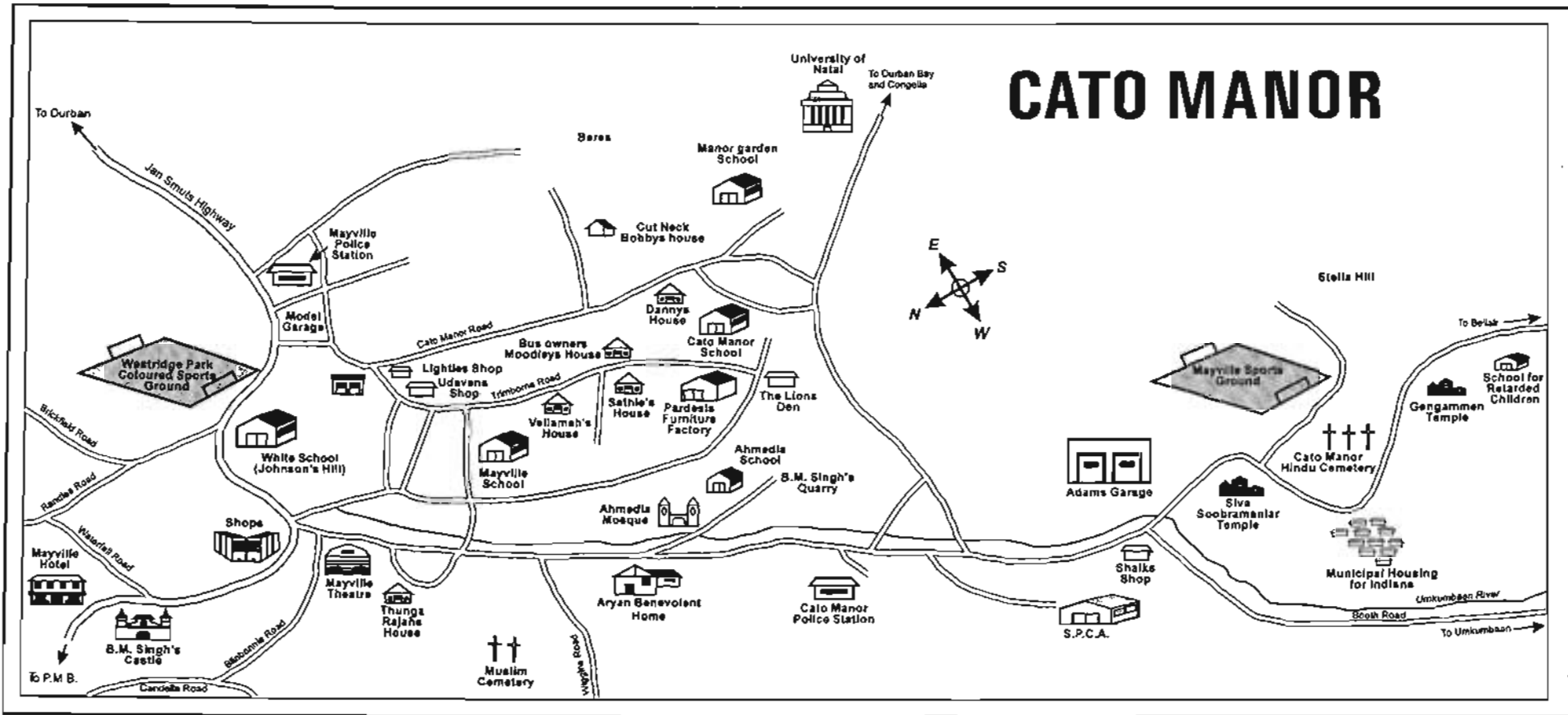
Figure 2.3 Cato Manor as remembered by its residents (Govender, R 1996)

late fifties [refer to map, Figure 2.3] (*The Leader*: 14 October 1960). Some of the dwellings in Cato Manor were brick-constructed houses whilst many were little more than shacks. Most homes lacked running water, ablution facilities, and electricity. The luxury of owning a telephone, was just that, a practically unheard-of luxury.

Although the private sector provided employment opportunities, it was never a lucrative option. As my father recalls:

> My father was the head waiter at the Edward hotel in those days. Where we lived in Mayville, it was one of the most prestigious jobs any Indian could hope to have. People used to address him with respect. Yet, at home, we had great difficulties making ends meet. Most times we couldn't afford clothes. Sometimes food was a problem. Although my father had one of the most sought-after jobs, it was still not enough. Can you imagine then, what it was like for thousands of people who were just waiters and barmen? (Veeran 1997)

Conditions such as the above contributed to the maintenance and growth of the extended family phenomenon. Bill Freund explains that:

> The most crucial element in the construction of this peri-urban society was the extended family. To a white observer, the vast majority of poor Indians lived in squalid shacks whose disorder defied any sense of structured purpose. However, those wood-and-iron shacks in fact were ideally suited to the needs of their inhabitants in some respects. They could be

> built, repaired and extended cheaply with lit-
> tle reference to the construction industry.
> (Freund 1995: 35)

The extended family, which was both a choice and an
economic necessity, represented an efficient avenue
through which a pooling of resources was made possi-
ble.

Despite the squalid conditions under which the ma-
jority of the residents of Cato Manor lived, the
networks that formed as a result of the close-knit
nature of their existence made all sorts of activi-
ties -- cultural, social and political -- possible.
Mayville in Cato Manor was home to hundreds if not
thousands of amateur performers who participated
regularly in concerts, plays and other community
celebrations. (See Appendix One which is a table of
musicians and ensembles from Mayville and surround-
ing areas.)

The role played by music in the everyday lives of
the residents of Mayville is especially evident in
the following account which I was given at the home
of one of my informants where I was conducting an
interview. A friend of my host who was fascinated to
learn that Mayville was part of an academic study
stopped by for a visit. As an ex-resident who was

forcibly removed in the late sixties through the Group Areas Act, he felt duty-bound to lend his voice to this study. Over an extended lunch, he emotionally recollected that:

> In Mayville, everybody knew everybody. We lived like one big happy family. Five minutes to town by bus, the cinema was round the corner, and when there was a wedding, everyone was there. The Golden Lily [Orchestra] used to play, sometimes Ranjeni [Orchestra] -- the boys dressed to kill. We had some of the best footballers you know, the best musicians. You know Ronnie Govender, the theatre man, he was from Mayville. You too, I know your whole family. Your father is the music man. I'm right eh. I miss those days, I miss the music because me, I'm a Mayville boy. (Moodley 1997)

Evidence suggests that although "being a Mayville boy" meant growing up in a suburb that lacked basic amenities, a suburb that was wanting in essential services and that had almost no public social and cultural spaces such as community halls and sports fields, Jay Moodley states that:

> Ya, things were bad. But now when I think of Mayville, I don't remember those things. I only think of the life we had. Those were the days. (1997)

Moodley, much like most of my informants, presents a picture lacking the harsh, everyday realities of life on the margins of society. Taking into consideration that the passage of time may have suppressed

the unpleasant aspects of his experiences in May-
ville, it is clear that part of who Moodley is, part
of that which defines him, can be traced back to who
he was in relation to the community in which he
lived.

Clairwood, another predominantly Indian South Afri-
can residential area where a number of the first
group of ex-indentured labourers settled, is located
approximately five kilometres south of Durban's cen-
tral business district and was incorporated into
Durban in 1932 (Scott 1994: 1). Much like Mayville
in Cato Manor and the barracks near central Durban,
Clairwood, all accounts suggest, was a hive of liv-
ing activity for Indians even before the turn of the
century. Unlike the barracks and Mayville, Clairwood
was not directly affected later on in the 1950s by
such pieces of apartheid legislation as the Group
Areas Act, although it was never actually declared
an Indian group area. In the late sixties, most of
its residents began migrating to newer townships
such as Chatsworth and Merebank when the Durban City
Council, noticing its industrial potential with mul-
tinationals such as Coca-Cola and Unilever buying
into the area, made it less and less attractive as a
residential area. Residents' building plans were re-
fused approval, and municipal services were gradu-

ally diminished. One of my informants states that
although the area was proclaimed for industrial ex-
pansion in the mid-sixties, some residents remained
and fought a long and, to this day, successful bat-
tle to avoid expulsion.

Clairwood's northern border, as ex-residents remem-
ber it, was the Umbilo River/Edwin Swales Drive
area, whilst Collingwood Road, now known as Bluff
Road, bordered it to the south. To its north-west
and south-east, areas such as Bayhead and Fynnlands
were located [refer to map, Figure 2.4]. Of the
thousands of Indians that resided there, a large
percentage survived on the fishing industry. Esti-
mated to have a population of almost 80 000 in the
sixties, Clairwood was affectionately referred to as
"Little India" by its residents (Naidoo T. P. 1997).

Located presently in the heart of an industrial maze
made up especially of clothing factories, Clairwood
was also home to a number of small businesses which
dotted its landscape. It was unlike the neighbouring
predominantly Indian-settled suburbs in that, by the
thirties, much of the land was privately owned
whereas in the other areas, most of the land was
leased to tenants.
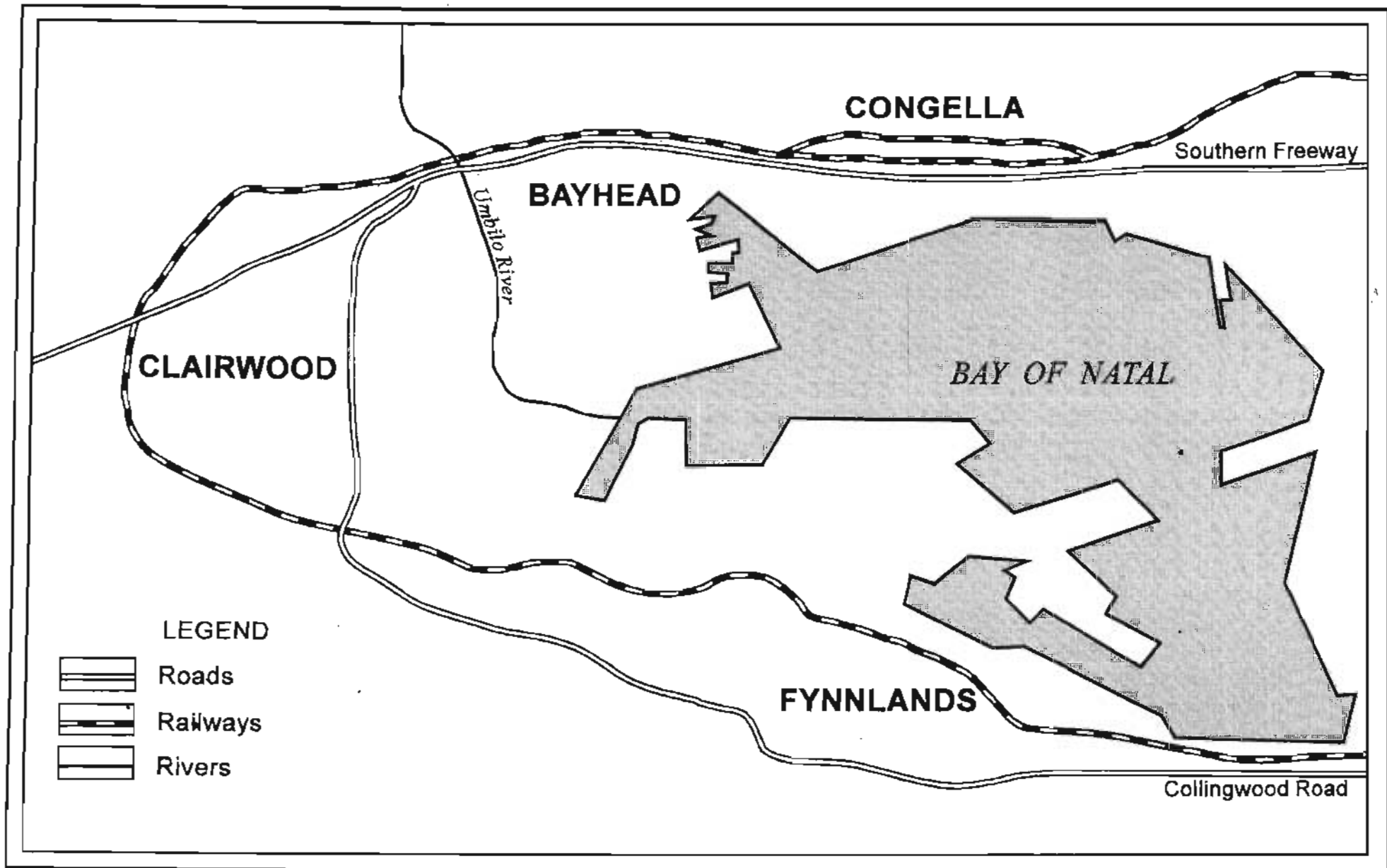
Figure 2.4 Clairwood as remembered by its residents

Julian Lutchmana, whom most ex-residents remember as the son of 'Taxi' Billy, lived in Houghton Road opposite Corky's tea-room. He recalls that:

> We had the largest Indian population in the Southern Hemisphere. Football, mm, we'll never get those days back. Bridgeview Football Club, Boys Town Football Club, Pirates, oh yes, what about Bluff Rangers. I remember Joey Chetty. Now there was a soccerite. Clairwood was the place, Jacobs Road temple, Shree Subramoney temple. And the musicians, when Muthu Pillay acted and sang, tears came to your eyes. It was music or soccer. (1997)

When I requested information about some of the hardships his family faced, he stated that:

> It wasn't like other places. Lot of brick houses, lot of wood-and-iron buildings. Ya, drainage was a problem, we had to make soak pits when the womens [sic] was washing outside. Bucket system toilets too. Try using a bucket system toilet in winter, the toilet is a good few meters from the house, and just when you getting down to business, the bucket man comes to change the bucket. (1997)

Clairwood was also home to the Star and the Young India Orchestras in the 1940s and 1950s, as well as home to such personalities as Tulsidas "TP" Naidoo, J. R. Devar, Muthu Pillay and Madhavan Nair. Informants' reports of Muthu Pillay's musical and theatrical exploits, Tulsidas Naidoo's dynamic stage presence, J. R. Devar's radio personality, and Mad-

havan Nair's showmanship portray a rich, living per-
formance culture in Clairwood.

Jayendran Pillay extends the use of the term "music"
to refer to "that soundscape which is precomposed,
improvised," or "unplanned" (1994: 8). Following his
usage, one could say that the "music" of Clairwood
consisted of a multitude of aural impressions and
expressions. Martin Francis, an ex-resident, states
that:

> At midnight, a woman would hear the train
> blasting past. This would tell her that in a
> short while her husband would return from work
> in town where he was a waiter. When she heard
> the bucket-carriers clanging in the morning,
> she knew she had to get her kids ready for
> school. The horn from the factories nearby sig-
> nalled lunch, whereas the school bell ringing
> would demand her return home from shopping down
> the road. There was a mosque right next to my
> window, the *azhaan* [Muslim call to prayer] was
> better than owning a watch. I knew the words by
> heart. The temple bell signalled the evening,
> and the church bell on Sunday mornings sig-
> nalled the beginning of the week. Hearing foot-
> steps at midnight during the week-day nights,
> one knew that waiters were coming home from
> work. Screams and shouts on a Saturday night,
> here were the revellers. The temple sounds dur-
> ing *kavati* [a Hindu ritual], the *moharrum* pro-
> cession, the drumming, the trance, everything
> was a part of who you were. (Francis 1997)

Clairwood, much like the temples discussed at the
beginning of this chapter, was thus an important
communally constructed space that reinscribed a par-

ticular landscape and timescape with meaning (Pillay 1994: 8).

Clairwood, unlike the other suburbs in and around central Durban, was almost exclusively Indian since its inception around the 1880s (Francis 1997). Life there, informants suggest, was a kaleidoscope of musical, religious, social and cultural activity. As Francis recalls:

> I am a Catholic as was my family. As a young boy growing up in Clairwood, I remember my family cheering street processions on, witnessing temple functions, [and] eating at Tamil and Hindi weddings. I remember watching the Indian bands, clapping and singing along. The six-foot dances, fire walking, the whole nine yards. It was the norm where we lived. Your religion didn't matter. At the *kavati*, I was with the boy scouts. We knew everything, where to stand, don't wear leather shoes otherwise you'll get whipped. We knew where the milk stands went, we helped people who fainted. We even played games like that. Putting up flags, building drums. Although I was a Christian, I knew exactly what the different rituals meant. My father, for example, was a Catholic, but I remember him telling me about his Tamil school experiences as a boy. What about a wedding in the district. Everybody pitched in, in kind and cash. Even the western front, we used to have the debating society which debated at the Jacobs Road School. The Royeppens and the Sigamoneys and the Moodleys were involved here. The jazz band, the Jazz Pirates with Dickey Jeevanantham started in Clairwood. I remember one Christmas, we had invited a whole section of people, Hindus, Muslims, the whole nine. Everyone participated. That sense of sharing and community. Everybody experienced everything. (Francis 1997)

In 1930, Muthu Pillay, an accomplished actor, writer and director of Tamil dramas formed an ensemble in Clairwood which he later named the Star Orchestra. Pillay's intention initially, reports suggest, was to form an ensemble to provide musical accompaniment to his dance-dramas, and to perform pieces that he had composed for these productions. Pillay, it seems, was the only Indian South African to successfully attempt original composition during that period. In fact, he is reported to have composed and arranged the complete scores for two extremely popular plays of the period, viz. *Kovilan and Kanaygie*, and *Harichandra*. However, in line with what was then a fashionable trend, the ensemble also included *Vadya Vrind* items in its repertory. By the midthirties, Pillay's ensemble was performing a mixture of *Vadya Vrind* and dance-drama compositions with a stronger emphasis on the latter. At a time when most ensembles were abandoning music from the folk theatre idiom in favour of *Vadya Vrind*, the Star Orchestra, with its focus on an amalgamation of both, was enjoying wide-spread support in Clairwood. The reasons for this reception, I argue, lies not so much in the quality of the Star Orchestra's performance, but more in the nature and make-up of Clairwood itself. Clairwood comprised families that had been resident there, in most instances, for at least

three generations. The community was thus more set-
tled than the other predominantly Indian South Afri-
can communities in Durban. Drastic changes either in
their lifestyles, environment or musical occasions,
it is my contention, were not as easily accepted or
accommodated as they would have been in other, less
settled areas.

Due to its relatively settled community, a social
and cultural infrastructure by way of shops, schools
and temples punctuated its landscape. In fact,
Clairwood was home to a larger number of temples
than any other so called Indian area in Durban. In
terms of amenities, halls such as the Clairwood
Tamil Institute Hall and the Sirdar Road Temple Hall
were all important spaces of social, religious and
cultural expression for the community. Further, the
majority of Clairwood's residents were mostly Tamil-
and Telegu-speaking Hindus who shared not only a
common linguistic base, but also a similar religious
outlook.

And finally, although some residents lived in Clair-
wood out of necessity or simply because it was the
area they were born in, most of the inhabitants, in-
formants suggest, resided there out of choice.

Emerging from interviews with a number of ex-
residents of the area, is a tapestry depicting a
group of people from a limited range of religious
and cultural backgrounds who shared a common canvas.
Interwoven was a sense of community and belonging,
as well as an identity defined not only by one's re-
ligious or cultural background, but also by one con-
tributing to, and living in, a relatively stable
environment. Although I have stated in Chapter One
that in the early years of this century performance
provided performers and audiences alike temporary
respite from the congestion and poverty of their
everyday lives, popular music in Clairwood by gradu-
ally assimilating new elements but resisting total
change, it seems, reflected the relatively settled
nature of the community's existence. It is for these
reasons, I argue, that the Star Orchestra enjoyed
significant patronage in Clairwood.

Apart from the 1930s being witness to innovations in
terms of the Indian popular music repertory, it also
marked the end of the silent film era and the begin-
ning of the sound cinema in Durban. "Indian" silent
movies -- one of the first of which premiered in Ma-
dras in the south of India in 1897 -- were imported
by Indian South African entrepreneurs throughout the
twenties (Nixon 1988: 57). From all accounts, it

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seems that screenings of silent films were well pa-
tronised by the Indian South African populace. In
India, Michael Nixon tells us, silent films were
presented as part of a variety entertainment which
included a number of stage acts such as dancing and
singing (1988: 57). In Durban, the evening's enter-
tainment followed a similar format with the various
cinema owners also hiring a number of musicians on
an ad hoc basis to sing or perform background music
for the films. In fact, this was one of the more lu-
crative areas for local musicians during the twen-
ties.

With the introduction of the sound cinema to South
Africans in the thirties, came Indian films together
with a sound track which not only accompanied these
films, but which were an integral part of these
films. It is my contention that between 1935 and
1970, the performance of Indian film music came to
constitute the primary source of empowerment and en-
tertainment for both musicians and audiences at In-
dian South African weddings, variety concerts and
radio broadcasts. I use the term "empowerment" to
illustrate the degree to which the performance and
appreciation of Indian film music was able to,
firstly, transform the ways in which both audiences
and musicians viewed each other, and, secondly, to

describe the way in which performance placed a degree of control in the hands of musicians, a degree of control that was not possible in other areas of their lives. This period, i.e. the era that followed the inauguration of the sound cinema, was a volatile period characterised by a dynamic political situation and shifting identities. It is on this period that we now turn our focus.

NOTES

1. The word "coolie" which later became a derisive racist term for Indian South Africans in general, was originally a caste term for "porter". It was given to all non-Muslims by the early planters in Natal (Jackson 1988: 38).

CHAPTER THREE

INDIAN IDENTITY,

THE CINEMA

AND ORCHESTRAS

IN DURBAN AFTER 1930

In the opening chapter of Edward Said's *Musical
Elaborations*, the relationship between listeners and
performers in modern, western musical performances
comes under close examination (1991). Based on his
own observations, as well as on the arguments of

other writers including Theodor Adorno (1978) and Richard Poirier (1971), Said concludes that modern performances of western art music -- especially those given by virtuoso performers -- effectively distance listeners from performers. He believes that:

> Whether we focus on the repeatable mechanically reproduced performance available on disc, tape, or video-record, or on the alienating social ritual of the concert itself, with the scarcity of tickets and the staggeringly brilliant technique of the performer achieving roughly the same distancing effect, the listener is in a relatively weak and not entirely admirable position. (1991: 3)

In contrast, Veit Erlmann shows how *isicathamiya* choral performances among Zulu male migrants in South Africa bring people together rather than distance or separate them. He emphasises that while performances reflect the broader social and political experiences of the performers and of the audiences, they also place a degree of control in the hands of the various stakeholders -- a degree of control which may not be possible in other spheres of their lives (1996: 14).

I contend that the performance of film music during the thirties and thereafter was more like *isicathamiya* performance as analysed by Erlmann than

like the western performance analysed by Said. To perform film music was an empowering act of personal restoration and group transformation which contributed to the development of a positive social identity for all Indian South Africans.

Before presenting arguments in support of this claim, it may be prudent to present examples of the music to which I am referring. The film songs *Malare malare* and *Thithikum thena mudeh* on the accompanying compact disk have been selected by my informants as favourites with audiences (Tracks Seven and Eight). Recorded by the Ranjeni Orchestra in 1981, both film songs, which are in fact instrumental arrangements of pieces that originally contained lyrics, were first performed by the ensemble in the late fifties and were a part of their repertoire until the early 1990s. Both these songs, like the majority of Indian film songs, differ from the examples of *Vadya Vrind* discussed in Chapter Two in that these songs were designed first and foremost with the cinema in mind. In other words, film music in addition to providing relief from the action, serve as musical commentaries on the themes and episodes in the plots. *Vadya Vrind* compositions on the other hand were all instrumental pieces and were aimed primarily at the record buying public. In terms of

the sound of the respective styles, both focused on the interplay between western and Indian elements in terms of instrumentation orchestration, harmony, rhythm and melody. As is evident in the recordings presented on the accompaying compact disc, there was thus very little discernible difference in the sound of *Vadya Vrind* and instrumental renditions of film songs in South Africa.

Speaking of the performance of film music, Shama Naidoo states that:

> From Monday to Friday, we were treated like dogs. Yes sir, no sir, yes madam, no madam. On Sunday morning, when we playing at a wedding, we were the *dorehs* [bosses]. Young, young boys wanted to play like us. We looking smart, the audience will 'look' [stare with admiration]. We too, we used to 'give it' [perform well]. If your grandfather was alive, he'll tell you. He was like God when he sang. One fuller [man], Zimbert, tattooed your grandfather's name on his hand. (1997)

An important point that emerges from Naidoo's recollections is that although the sound and the lyrics of the music which he performed was meaningful and familiar to both himself and his audiences, meaning did not reside solely in these areas. Instead, it seems that actual performances were used by musicians to symbolically achieve the unattainable. In other words, performance firstly allowed people temporary respite from the congestion of their everyday

lives, and secondly, placed a degree of control in their hands, something, I once again argue, that was not possible in most other spheres of their lives. Through performance, musicians' perceptions of themselves underwent positive change. Veit Erlmann suggests that meaning is essentially produced in the "ever-shifting interaction" between musicians and audiences (1996: 102). This is especially evident in Naidoo's phrases, "On Sunday morning, when we were playing at a wedding, we were the *dorehs* [the bosses]", and "He was like God when he sang". For Indians in Durban, performance effected a degree of transformation in the ways Indian South Africans viewed each other in terms of status, potential and power. For audiences, musicians became symbols of empowerment. Through the restorative power of weekly performance in "communally constructed spaces" such as the stage and the rehearsal venue (Scott 1994), individuals were able to transcend the barriers erected by life at the work-place and on the street.

Earlier, I explained that one of the ways in which a positive social identity can be achieved is through what Henri Tajfel terms social creativity. In this case, a low status group create characteristics which effectively make the group so different from a higher status one that the group drastically reduces

its need to find characteristics in common with the higher status one (1978a: 63). In effect, the low status group, realising that intergroup comparison is not a powerful strategy, attempts to create a positive social identity that does not depend on comparison.

During the period to which Naidoo refers in his statement above, he was a waiter in a hotel on Durban's beach front. Although he begins his statement by talking about his white employers and customers -- "Yes sir, no sir, yes madam, no madam" --, he does not compare his group's status nor his social identity with theirs. Instead, he focuses on the ways in which he achieved a positive social identity through interaction with his audiences. He states that the audiences "looked" [stared in admiration], respected and imitated musicians like him, and held people like him in esteem. In other words, musicians like Naidoo were able to use performance to transform their individual identity and that of the group to whom they belonged by acting as role models embodying positive characteristics that were expressed through music and which were unique to Indian South Africans. In an environment filled with prejudicial attitudes and uncertainty, performance became an empowering act.

THE SOUND CINEMA

In the mid-thirties, the first "talkie", *Alam Ara*
made its debut at such cinemas as the Mayville Thea-
tre, the Krishna Theatre and the Avalon in Durban
(*The Leader*: 17 December 1940). The film, much like
others made in the same decade and ever since, was a
musical which in this case included almost ninety
songs[1]. The lyrics and dialogue were in Urdu which,
in conversation, is similar to the Hindi dialect
spoken by Indian South Africans. *Alam Ara* and the
"talkies" that followed it were resounding successes
with local audiences and paved the way for the cin-
ema to become one of the most sought-after mediums
of entertainment for Indian South Africans.

The Indian films that followed *Alam Ara* in the thir-
ties were generally screen-adapted plays that de-
picted episodes of Indian mythology, tragedy and
history. Biographies of Indian heroes were also
popular. Indian South African audiences readily
identified with these films, since they had been ex-
posed to the stage versions of the same stories
since the 1890s. In fact, by the late twenties, In-
dian South African stage artists such as Jimmy
Veeran and Muthu Pillay enjoyed a considerable fol-
lowing among the audiences of Durban. Films based on

dramas such as *Kavalan, Galaver, Kovilan and Kanay-gie, Nullathungal, Harichandra,* and *Sathiavan - Savithree* were extremely popular among Indian South Africans (Naidoo 1993: 3). Devan Nair, a South African radio presenter and Indian film critic, tells us that:

> In 1931, the first Tamil talkie was made. It consisted of 56 songs and ran for over a year. There was very little dialogue. In 1932, only 4 Indian movies were made and in 1933, 8 were made. All of them were adaptations of folk theatre, adaptations of stage dramas. Initially, the music was semi-classically, devotionally and folk oriented. The mid-thirties was the period of the actor-singer -- he or she had to do both. This was the period of M. K. Thyagaraja Bhagvathar or MKT as he was known. The themes began to change, more social issues. As a result, the music began to change. A mixing of western and Indian elements. (1998)

By 1935, the blend of Indian and western elements of which Nair speaks became a distinctive feature of Indian film music. For urban Indian South Africans, Harichand Somaroo argues, this new music represented the bridging of two cultures which satisfied their Indian proclivities as well as their western aspirations. Indian South Africans by subscribing to film music, he adds, were seen to be in tune with the changing times whilst at the same time, they could not be accused of spurning Indian traditions (Somaroo 1989: 243).

Since the inauguration of the first "talkie" in the thirties, the film industry of India has enjoyed a phenomenal growth. In 1988, it was noted that an average of 15 000 000 Indians attended cinemas everyday of that year. The industry's success, Peter Manuel states, maybe attributed to the following factors: India has a literacy rate of lower than 35% resulting in the print medium being naturally weak (Manuel 1993: 41; Ranade 1984: 64). Since the broadcast media are state-run, cinemas are the only non-print mass medium open to indigenous capital. Televisions and radios have always been expensive in India, whilst occasional cinema tickets are affordable. And finally, since the thirties, there has existed an extensive network of travelling screen shows, cinemas and theatres. These then, are some of the reasons for the success of the film industry in India (Manuel 1993: 41).

The views of my informants as well as the information in various printed sources, suggests strong reasons for the success of Indian film in Durban. Firstly, cinemas which were owned, operated and patronised by Indian South 'Africans had been in existence prior to the debut of the first "talkie" in the mid-thirties. The Rawat Cinema, for example, opened its doors soon after the end of the First

World War. Durban thus had the necessary infrastructure to support the dissemination of Indian film. Secondly, the focus of film music on the interplay between Indian and western elements strongly reflected the reality of urban life in South Africa during that period. As Somaroo states:

> The local emergence of the Indian film coincided roughly with the urbanisation of the Indian community. The emerging social order ... found it increasingly difficult to relate to what it believed to be the expressions of an agrarian mentality and found in the Indian film and in the nature of film music a projection of their newly acquired and sought-after image. (1989: 243)

Thirdly, I argue that in the absence of any direct contact with India since the arrival of their forefathers, with the state regarding them as second class citizens, and with nothing tangible connecting them with India, Indian South Africans used Indian film to strengthen an imaginary link between themselves and their ancestral home. The cultural theorist Arjun Appadurai tells us that deterritorialisation creates new markets for film companies which thrive on the need of migrant populations and diasporas for contact with their homeland. Although, in many instances, the homeland may be partly invented and thus may exist only in the imagination of the deterritorialised group, its existence sufficiently

motivates that group to establish any sort of con-
tact, imaginary or otherwise, with itself (Appadurai
1997: 49). This need inspired by deterritorialisa-
tion, I contend, may have been responsible for the
initial euphoria surrounding the advent of the sound
cinema in Durban. And finally, I argue that having
to come to terms with employment in an urban envi-
ronment, with the South African socio-political
landscape lacking structures that promoted intercul-
tural awareness and tolerance, as well as feeling
the absence of adequate recreational facilities, and
being forced to live on the margins of society, In-
dian South Africans used Indian film as a means of
both physical and psychological escape from the
harsh realities of everyday life.

Some of these realities included the Depression, as
well as the South African government's view that In-
dians were a "redundant population" who could be
"induced to emigrate to India" (Freund 1995: 49).
Against this backdrop of an almost pathologically
mordant anti-Indian hostility, it is not surprising
that an additional reality was the identity crisis
that Indians were forced to confront. As I have
stated in another work:

> On the one hand there existed the desire [among
> Indian South Africans] to identify with the

culture that was dominant locally, i.e. western culture, whilst on the other, there was a need for an individual cultural identity within a larger social matrix. (Veeran 1996: 24)

As indicated earlier, at the turn of the century Indian identity in South Africa had been informed by a self-determined work ethic, as well as religious, linguistic and political factors. By the 1930s however, Indian identity had expanded to include both resistance to, and in some quarters, assimilation of the English language and western notions of dress and lifestyle.

The Cape Town Agreement's court injunction mentioned in Chapter Two effectively told the Indian to "go western or go home" (Jackson 1988: 102). Similarly, the prejudicial attitudes that Indians experienced at work and faced on the street had left a group of fractured, disempowered and disenfranchised individuals.

Let me tell you how it was. You see, our people too let us down. Some of our fullers [men] were so busy kissing up to the whites, their lips blinded them. Their accents changed. At work they called themselves by names like Sam, at home it was Ramsamy. We were never sure where we stood. The whites didn't want us, the Africans had no voice, we had to make the best. In our own community we had divisions, now imagine experiencing further divisions outside as well. Hell, we couldn't vote, we were shunned by the whites on the street, second class citizens, that's the way we were treated. Ask any Indian in this country, they'll tell you. You worked

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your job for years. The management brings in
this white kid, straight from the army. They
ask you to train him, you do it, he becomes
your boss. Hell, it happened to all of us. Ask
any member of your family. (Naidoo, T. P. 1998)

In the words of Gopalan Govender, people of Indian

descent,

were like people who felt like they were [be-
ing] kicked out of their own homes. If we
didn't like the situation, where could we go?
If they [the South African government] didn't
want us, who'd take us?" (Govender, G. 1998)

Until the late-1980s, the government considered

racially-mixed entertainment venues to be illegal,

and thus access to theatres, cinemas, restaurants,

bars, community halls, night-clubs and other venues

for recreation and entertainment in South Africa was

governed by segregational legislation. Especially in

the early thirties, and to a large extent later as

well, Indian cinemas showing Indian films provided

one of the few avenues of entertainment available to

Indian South Africans. Christina Veeran states that:

Saturday afternoon, 5.15, that was the time.
The men worked all week, we went to market on
Saturday morning, no T.V., radio -- all we had
was Ruthnam Pillay for half an hour on Sunday
morning --, one wedding to go to, but the
bioscope [cinema] was it. Also, most of the
people couldn't read. Cinema was the only en-
tertainment. We'd have a late lunch about 4 'o
clock and then we'd dress. From Trimborne Road,
we walk down Molver Road then across the bridge
in one big group. No cars at that time. At Bel-
lair Road, we see other families. The girls
used to dress, Sunday best. Marina curls and

gold slides in their hair. Beautiful clutch
purses, and tickey heels -- you know patent
leather stilettos --, stockings with seams. We
all use to meet at Mayville theatre. The film
starts at 5.15, we used to get there by half
past four. Meet other families, talk, stand in
line for our tickets. One and three [thirteen
cents] for a ticket. Sometimes the show would
be sold out. We had to buy black market. Out-
side the bioscope, boys used to see for girls
[look for prospective wives], that was the
meeting place. Sometimes, girls used to check
the boy [appraise the physical attributes of
the male who made enquiries about her]. We used
to meet people from Standard Road, Blinkbonnie
Road, Bonella Road. The films, first we saw the
trailers, we knew we had to go see that film.
Then, the film started. *Yana Soundree* -- she
lost her hand --, *Haridas* -- he lost his leg in
the film --, *Bhakta Pregalathan*, *Vaner Morgini*,
those were some of the best films. The biggest
crowds. We didn't have anything else. We got
home by 8.30 in the evening. No lights, we used
to burn coal, sometimes we ate. Slept early.
The next morning, we talked about the film.
Tell those that didn't come to see it, and each
time the story was told, it was distorted to
the nth degree. (1998)

Christina Veeran's statement provides important

clues to the ways in which the cinema was perceived,

the roles it played in the lives of Indian South Af-

ricans, and the reasons for the patronage it en-

joyed. As is evident in her report and as has been

mentioned, the cinema did not only serve as a means

of physical and psychological escape from the harsh

realities of life in urban South Africa and the

slum-like conditions of life in Cato Manor. It pro-

vided a space and an occasion for social activity as

well as for the viewing of culturally affirming

films.

Whereas white South Africans had the opportunity to visit a park, a restaurant or a theatre to meet friends and family, and catch up on the local gossip, for Indian South Africans the cinema served in the same way as the *isicathamiya* venues for Zulu migrants during that period in that it was one of only a few venues for such social activity. Secondly, the weekly visit to the cinema provided people with an opportunity to wear their "Sunday best", to rise above the conditions under which they were forced to live. It was thus a social occasion that provided an avenue for the practises of otherness, glamour and fashion. Thirdly, arranged marriages among Indian South Africans, my informants tell me, was the order of the day. In most instances, young men and women never met each other until the appointed Sunday afternoon when wedding discussions began at the prospective bride's home. Young women thus used the cinema to "check *the* boy" whose family had made enquiries about her availability. Young men, on the other hand, sometimes scanned the crowds for prospective brides. As Christina Veeran remarks, "boys used to see for girls." Further, in cases where a marriage was not arranged, meetings between the couple usually took place at the prospective bride's home. Such meetings however, were usually con-

strained by the presence of the large extended family that almost always shared the home. Couples used the cinema as a "meeting place" for privacy away from the prying eyes of the prospective bride's parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and their respective children and families; my informants tell me that the couple would visit the cinema on a day when the bride's family had other commitments.

In most public notices and pamphlets produced and aimed at the Indian populace between 1900 and 1930, Tamil and Telegu were the languages used (Freund 1995: 48). Further evidence which includes Christina Veeran's statement that "most people couldn't read", suggests that the majority of Indians were functionally illiterate in the English language. In view of the above, I argue that the Indian film medium with its emphasis on Hindi, Tamil and Urdu, was, therefore, a naturally strong one.

Appadurai states that one of the principle shifts in the global cultural order created by the cinema has to do with the role of the imagination in social life. The imagination, which may be expressed in dreams, songs and stories, he adds, "has always been part of the every society in some culturally organ-

ized way" (1997: 53). Indian films, apart from providing a means of escape, I argue, presented a rich, dynamic store of possible lives and life-styles, some of which entered the imaginations of Indian South Africans.

Thus, whether it was for social or cultural reasons, all accounts suggest that the cinema became one of the most sought-after mediums of entertainment for Indian South Africans after the mid-thirties. As mentioned earlier, practically all of the Indian films that were screened in South Africa in the early days of the sound cinema were based on Hindu mythology. By the late-thirties, this trend changed. Devan Nair states that,

> the revolutionary director, S. S. Vasan, single-handedly changed the face of Indian films. Gone were the days of only mythological themes. He began to look at secular themes, love stories amongst people that audiences could identify with, not Gods and Goddesses. This is the stuff that we began to see and enjoy down here. Films with a sprinkling of western outfits, vernacular languages and maybe an English word here and there, fancy hairstyles, dances that incorporated a little or some little type of ballroom, pure escapism. The people lapped it up down here. The music changed accordingly. *Vadya Vrind*, which you spoke about earlier, began incorporating lyrics in Tamil, Hindi and Urdu. It began to diversify. You'd get some semi-classical film songs, devotional films songs and just plain old popular *Vadya Vrind* type film songs. This set the stage for the music to come out as a single unified structure which we begin to see in the forties. One prime example is M. K. Thygaraja

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Bhagvathar's 'Krishna Mughanda'. That song un-
til the 1980s had a cult following. It is re-
ligious because of the reference to Lord
Krishna, but it is set in a somewhat secular
musical style. That combo [combination] set the
style for devotional music after the forties.
This was the time of [the Indian film person-
alities] S. M. Subbiah Naidu, K. V. Madhavan
and T. K. Ramamurthie . Enter the specialist
musician, the playback muso [musician], gone is
the actor singer. (1988)

MUSIC-MAKING IN THE COMMUNITY: THE FORMATION OF THE

RAILWAY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

One of the ways in which Indian South Africans de-

scribe themselves collectively is through the use of

the term "community". Although the number and vari-

ety of religions, classes and priorities of Indian

South Africans problematises the notion of a coher-

ent Indian subjectivity, a number of intergroup net-

works were forged among sub-groups of Indian South

Africans. The formation of these networks advance

value to the term "community" as it is used by In-

dian South Africans. In this regard, interviews with

informants suggest that the formation and subsequent

survival of the Railway Youth Orchestra in the Rail-

way Barracks near central Durban exemplifies the

manner in which such an intergroup network was

formed.

The Railway Youth Orchestra, or the RYO as infor-

mants fondly remember it, was an ensemble that was

formed in 1935 through the efforts of such person-
alities as S. N. Chetty, M. G. Reddy, M. N. Goven-
der, S. R. Devar, and A. S. Lott among others (see
Figure 3.1). Initially performing only *Vadya Vrind*
(orchestral light music) at birthday parties, chris-
tenings and other celebrations, it started including
film music in its repertoire a few months after its
formation. Most of the members of the ensemble were
employed by the state, lived at the Railway Barracks
and rehearsed in a flat belonging to one of the mu-
sicians. However, at the height of its success in
1938, the RYO consisted of twenty musicians from
various backgrounds and areas (Jack 1996). Tulsidas
Naidoo recalls that:

> One of the most remarkable things about the
> Railway Youth [orchestra] is the way in which
> they came to represent our people. You had men
> and later women in the group. Guys who were
> waiters, clerks, factory workers, street sweep-
> ers, people with a little bit of money, people
> without money and the like. People from town,
> from the barracks, from Mayville, a couple of
> Andhra [Telegu-speaking] guys, a couple of
> Tamil [speaking] guys, a sprinkling of Chris-
> tians, all playing together. A truly represen-
> tative community organisation. (1998)

Naidoo's statements that the RYO consisted of people
from different areas, classes and religions illus-
trates the degree to which a performance-based net-
work brought individuals from a variety of
backgrounds together. The development of such a

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Figure 3.1 The Railway Youth Orchestral Club (Durban, 1938, from the private collection of Peter Jack)

network (along with other, differently based net-
works) lends value to the way in which the term
"community" was, and to an extent still is, used to
descfibe Indian South Africans.

Like the many ensembles of that period, the RYO per-
formed under the auspices of a performing arts body
which in its case was known as the Railway Youth Or-
chestral Club. The organising of variety concerts,
temple celebrations, dances and fund-raising events
were among the activities of the club. As the per-
forming wing of the club, the RYO played at most of
these events.

From an ethnomusicological perspective, one of the
most interesting aspects of the RYO, and the many
ensembles that were formed in the period between the
mid-thirties and late sixties, was the fact that the
term "orchestra" was included in its name. "Orches-
tra" is a western rather than an Indian term and is
used both for western classical ensembles and large
jazz ensembles such as the Paul Whiteman Orchestra.
Judging from the appearance of the RYO, the instru-
ments that were used, and the events that the ensem-
ble performed at, it was the latter usage of the
term "orchestra" that applied. Tulsidas Naidoo, how-

ever, considered the use of the term "orchestra" to have a more local origin. He states that:

> The [local] groups at the time were playing
> film music although they had no idea of what
> the original [Indian] groups looked like. The
> films didn't show you the musicians, you simply
> heard the music. One had no idea as to the size
> of the groups or exactly what instruments were
> being used. As a result, the local musicians
> identified with the only comparable ensemble in
> Durban -- the Durban City Orchestra [est.1881].
> This is how the word 'orchestra' came to be
> used. (1996)

Henri Tajfel tells us that amongst the ways in which a low status minority group may collectively attempt to enhance its status, the first attempt is usually the assimilation of what are seen as positive features from a higher status group (1978a: 94). Bill Freund observes that Indian South Africans were quite successful at assimilating elements such as sport, language, dress and religion from western lifestyle in the thirties and forties. He states that:

> Indians ... were able through work, through
> leisure and through observation, increasingly
> to assimilate aspects of a racially diverse,
> colonially created, urban South African world
> ... (Freund 1995: 40)

Clearly, the RYO, and the ensembles that were later formed in its mould, also did this. The use of the term "orchestra" suggests that they assimilated ideas from the white, local and global landscape. In

terms of their appearance, their sources were American films and record media. In Figure 3.2 which is a photograph taken from a pamphlet advertising the appearance of the RYO at a concert in 1946, and Figure 3.3 which is a photograph of the Golden Lily Orchestra, we notice the leaders, clarinettists K. S. Naicker and Sonny Murugasen, in the famous Benny Goodman stance, i.e. with Goodman conducting at the side of his band with the tip of his clarinet reed on his lower lip.

Madhavan Nair who led the RYO a decade later when it played under the name of the Ranjeni Orchestra states that:

> In those days, we used to see the American musicals [in local Indian cinemas] and some people used to buy the big-band swing and jazz records. We heard musicians like Fletcher Henderson, Glenn Miller, Hugh Basie, clarinet players like Tommy Dorsey, Arti Shaw, Jimmy Dorsey and Benny Goodman. That's where our boys learned their style, from looking and listening. Look at K. S. Naicker, white tux, the works. We used to see pictures of these bands on record covers, sometimes in the bioscope [cinema]. Where you think K. S. got his style from? (1996)

Indians, of course, were not the only South Africans who were influenced by American popular culture. In his book, *Marabi Nights*, Christopher Ballantine points out how influential American culture was on the development of African popular music in South
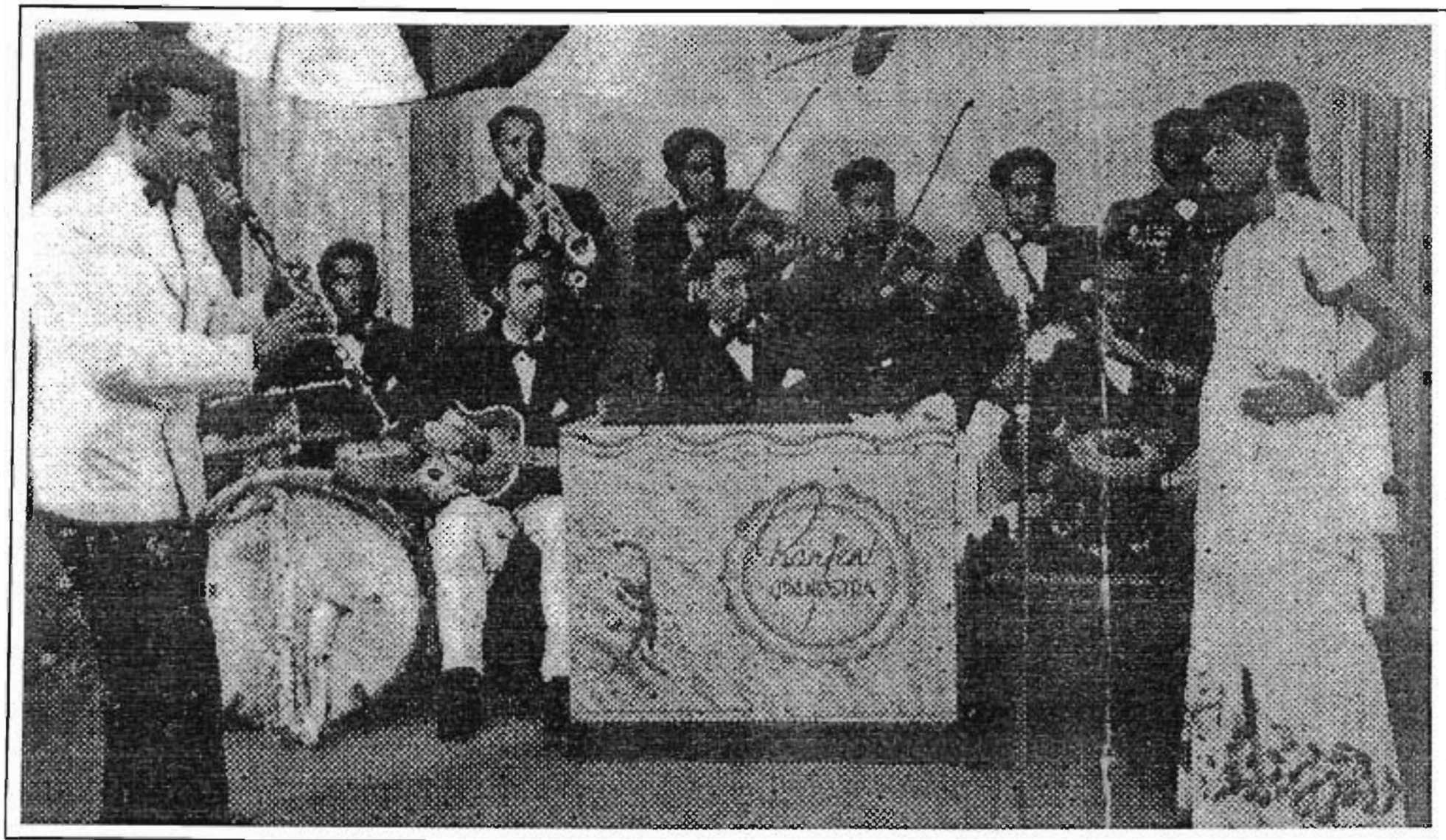
Figure 3.2 The Railway Youth Orchestra featuring K. S. Naicker (Durban, 1946, from the private collection of Madhavan Nair)

Figure 3.3 The Golden Lily Orchestra (Durban, c. 1950, from the private collection of Denny Veeran)

Africa in the first half of this century (1993: 13).

He states that African musicians in South Africa

were infatuated with American culture and that they

looked towards America as a source of both inspira-

tion and material. Ballantine concludes that:

> If infatuation with the United States provided
> the inspiration and the examples, it also set
> standards and furnished the means by which lo-
> cal artists could be deemed to have succeeded.
> Favourable comparison with an individual, group
> or style in the United States was the ultimate
> stamp of approval. For the top performers, such
> accolades were common. (1993: 15)

With the assimilation of such elements as the use of

the term "orchestra" and the appearance of ensembles

from the local and international landscape being one

of the few options available to Indian South Afri-

cans in the thirties and forties, and musical per-

formance providing one of a handful of opportunities

available to secure a positive social identity, it

is no wonder that assimilation was especially evi-

dent in the area of performance.

Another interesting aspect of the RYO as well as

other ensembles that were formed in the period lead-

ing up to the early fifties, was that they were all

led by clarinettists (see Appendix One for personnel

details). Informants were unable to explain this

phenomenon and in the absence of a plausible expla-

nation, I argue that the reason for this lies in the backgrounds of the musicians themselves. Most orchestras comprised primarily Tamil- and Telegu-speaking musicians. In other words, they comprised South African musicians of South Indian descent. In South Indian Hindu weddings, the performance of the *periya melam* ensemble, which was discussed in the introduction of this paper, is an indispensable and auspicious part of the wedding ceremony. *Periya melam* ensembles are led by a double-reed oboe known as the *nagasvaram*. In North Indian Hindu weddings, the *shenai*, also a double-reed oboe, plays a similar role to the *nagasvaram*. There was thus, arguably, a cultural need for instrumental ensembles, and specifically reed-instrument-led ensembles, at Hindu weddings. Since the primary platform for Indian South African orchestras was the Hindu wedding, this could explain the leading role of the clarinet in all orchestras. It may have been that the clarinet was the only available instrument that could be invested with long established cultural significance and also with contemporary, upwardly mobile connotations because of its use by Benny Goodman.

In 1938, the Railway Youth Orchestral Club ceased its activities and the RYO, under the leadership of K. S. Naicker, moved out of the Railway Barracks and

into the private home of Mr Moonsamy Bell who lived
in Umgeni Road, Durban. Under Bell's management, the
ensemble was renamed the Ranjeni Orchestra (see Fig-
ure 3.4). Until 1992, 57 years after its formation,
the Ranjeni Orchestra could still be heard at Hindu
weddings.

THE GOLDEN LILY ORCHESTRA: FAMILY IDENTITY AND INDIAN POPULAR MUSIC

Along with inter-group networks which helped define
a sense of community amongst Indian South Africans,
intra-group structures also helped to forge group
identity. One such structure was the extended family
which had been in existence since the turn of the
century. Prior to this period, most Indians were in-
dentured labourers who were forced to live in
dwellings allocated to them by their employers. Re-
ports indicate that most of these dwellings were
little more than huts. At the end of indenture, when
Indians moved out into the urban and peri-urban cen-
tres, it made economic sense for family members to
live together in order to pool their resources (Fre-
und 1995: 35; Meer 1969:65). Such a living arrange-
ment made all sorts of activities possible including
music-making. An example of such a music-making fam-
ily was the Murugasen family of Trimborne Road in
Mayville.

Figure 3.4 The Ranjeni Orchestra (Durban, c. 1955, from the private collection of Madhavan Nair)

In 1938, Bhokraj, Harry and James Murugasen, my
grandmother's brothers, began the Golden Lily Or-
chestral Club. Like other performance-based organi-
sations, the activities of the club were generally
linked to community efforts such as fund-raising and
the organising of variety concerts and plays. Within
a short period of time, the Golden Lily Orchestra
(GLO) was formed and began performing at all of the
club's events.

Unlike the RYO, the GLO included only members of the
Murugasen family. In fact, this seems to have been
common in Cato Manor and the other suburbs of peri-
urban Durban. The Bala Vinotha, the Silver Star and
the Gangha Devi Orchestras were also family-based
ensembles. Shama Naidoo recalls that:

> I was a lighty, I vied for a graph in Gangha
> Devi. The Rungan boys had it taped. I went so
> many times, come tomorrow, come tomorrow. Eve-
> rything was connection call. (1996)

> (interpretation/translation:
> When I was a boy, I went looking for a job with
> the Gangha Devi Orchestra. However, the Rungan
> family made it impossible for an outsider to
> perform with them. Each day they would request
> that I come the next day. Every aspect of life
> was governed by family relations.)

Musical identity based on kinship was not exclu-
sively an Indian South African phenomenon, since

this practice is in line with the *gharana* tradition

of India. A *gharana* or school of music refers essen-

tially to a professional class of musicians --

mostly members of the same family -- who share a

repertory and a particular style of performance.

Most performers of Indian classical music can trace

their lineage to one of the many *gharanas* still in

existence today. Entry into a *gharana* is generally

based on kinship; however in special circumstances,

it is possible for an outsider to gain entry. (For a

further discussion of the *gharana* tradition, see

Daniel Neuman's doctoral thesis [1974] and Harichand

Somaroo's article entitled "Music" [1989] which dis-

cusses the admission of outsiders on page 270.)

Intragroup, family-oriented networks such as those

evident in the orchestras of Cato Manor, also ex-

isted at the work-place. Sonny Govender remembers

that:

> Those days, the only people you could count on
> was your family. Who else gonna look out for
> you. I was 16 year old boy. I wanted a graph
> [job]. One connection [family relative] was
> graphing [working] at the Edward [Hotel]. He
> tuned [spoke] to his lahnee [boss]. I got the
> graph [job]. In the end, half of Edward was my
> connections [relatives]. If one connection
> [relative] had to fret [die], no one will come
> to graph [work] next day. Everyone gone fu-
> neral. The lahnee [boss] used to get mooren
> [angry]. (1997)

Apart from collective efforts at creating a positive social identity, individual efforts to attain this were also attempted. This, it seems, was the case with my father, Denny Veeran, who as a young man took over the leadership of the Golden Lily Orchestra from his uncle, Sonny Murugasen.

My father began his musical career as a percussionist in his family band at the age of about eight, and by his eleventh birthday had toured a number of towns throughout Natal under the auspices of various road-shows (see Figure 3.3 which shows my father at the back of the ensemble holding a pair of maracas). By the age of sixteen, he displayed a keen interest in the trumpet and spent extended periods of time with various Indian South African trumpeters in an attempt to further his music education. In the absence of formal structures that promoted music education during the thirties and forties, most of his colleagues were either self-taught or performed by ear. Thus, they were unable to contribute significantly to his musical development. In the years that followed, he joined the Bantu, Indian and Coloured Arts Association (BICA) which was an ad hoc body created for the development of non-white arts education; he worked over week-ends and evenings to pay for private music lessons under white music educa-

tors; and he joined a western-dance band, the Ace

Swingsters, in order to explore other musical possi-

bilities. He has said:

> I went to quite a few white teachers. I sweated
> like a dog learning from them. I used to work
> seven days a week doing all sorts of jobs, for
> just one lesson. I remember once, I couldn't
> make the full amount. This white lady had me
> clean her floors. It was also difficult at home
> because none of the band boys could read, they
> all played by ear. I couldn't discuss anything
> that I learned. One teacher chased me out be-
> cause I couldn't grasp the basics of harmony
> and counterpoint. When I argued, she threatened
> to call the police. (1996)

In the fourteen-year period that led up to his thir-

tieth birthday, my father earned, against almost in-

surmountable odds, licentiates from Trinity College

and the Royal Schools of Music.

My father, as well as other individuals in other

spheres of life, attempted what Henri Tajfel terms

"individual, upward social mobility" (1978a: 46). As

Tajfel explains, members of low status groups at-

tempt to enhance their social identity through indi-

vidual effort.

"A career in music", as my father recalls his father

telling him, "is a pipe dream". For non-white musi-

cians, earning a living through full-time perform-

ance in South Africa in the first half of this

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century was virtually impossible no matter how tal-
ented the musician. My father thus held a job as a
paymaster during the week whilst he continued to
perform with his family band during week-ends. He
states that:

> By the time I was finishing my studies, I real-
> ised that there were almost no opportunities
> for Indian musicians in this country. I had to
> make the best of a bad situation. I continued
> to lead the Golden Lily, and started a private
> music school to teach other Indians. (1996)

There were also a number of other Indian South Afri-
cans who were educated in western music and were un-
able to find full-time work as musicians in South
Africa. Some of these musicians left the country to
seek employment in other countries. One such musi-
cian was Gamby George who performed with the Star-
dust dance band. Having left South Africa in the
early sixties, he now lives and performs in Sweden.
(Further details concerning George are contained in
Appendix Two.)

According to Tajfel, when individuals fail in ef-
forts to enhance the social identity of the group,
they will abandon these indivdual efforts and at-
tempt to join others in their group by assimilating
elements from a high status group, or attempting so-
cial creativity. In my father's case, his statement

that he continued performing with his family ensemble even after having completed his studies in western music illustrates that his individual effort was futile. Realising that this attempt at upward social mobility was impossible, my father's continued performance with his ensemble, I argue, was his contribution to a group effort at creating a positive social identity.

During the late sixties, the joint-family or extended family system under which the majority of Indians lived in South Africa began to disintegrate. There were a number of reasons for this, but foremost among these was the fact that the Group Areas Act and other apartheid legislation forced Indian South Africans out of areas like Cato Manor into racially defined townships. Sallyann Goodall tells us that the housing facilities in these townships did not permit the establishment of joint families (1991: 1). In 1970, my family moved into different parts of what was then the newly created Indian township of Chatsworth. However, by this date the GLO included members of several families, and the forced moves meant that the members of the orchestra were now scattered over an area of almost 100 square kilometres. With reliable public transport being al-

most non-existent, the GLO ceased its activities af-

ter more than thirty years of performance.

WOMEÑ IN INDIAN POPULAR MUSIC

By the early-1940s, Indian women began to play an

active role in the political arena as the moderate

politics of the Gandhian era militantly shifted to-

wards radicalisation. This shift away from a politi-

cal stance of negotiation was stimulated by a

reaction to further legislation, this time in the

form of the "Pegging" Act. This Act -- Act 35 of

1943 -- expressed unequivocally that Indians were

no longer welcome in the city of Durban. The effect

of the Act was to curtail the occupation of land or

premises by Indians in the Durban municipality.

Whites, in effect, were not allowed to sell or even

lease land to Indians.

> The 'Pegging Act' was the first major inroad
> into the fundamental rights of ownership and
> occupation of property by Indians in Natal. It
> froze the existing Indian residential areas and
> business holdings in Durban, and was as such
> the forerunner of legislative segregation in
> the urban areas of South Africa. The 1913 Land
> Act set aside land for Africans and the Native
> Urban areas Act of 1936, controlled the resi-
> dence of Africans in the towns. Neither of the
> Acts however legislated for residential segre-
> gation as such. The 'Pegging Act' was a viola-
> tion of the original understanding with the
> Indian Government that Indian immigrants having
> completed their indentureship would enjoy simi-
> lar vested rights as their European counter-
> parts. (Bagwandeen 1991: 102)

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The forties was also the period when one of the
first concerted efforts at mobilising every sector
of the Indian South African populace was made. On 21
October 1945, at a mass meeting organised by the Na-
tal Indian Congress and held at the Curries Fountain
Sports Stadium in Durban, an election was held where
the Anti-Segregation Council was voted in as the
collective voice of Indians who felt that any hopes
for negotiation politics had been greatly dimin-
ished. The active presence of more than 500 women
was obvious for the first time at that mass meeting.
Women did in fact participate in the political life
of South Africa through marches and speeches prior
to this period (see Appendix Three for a partial
list of their names). However, their contributions
were usually made independently in the area of mus-
tering support for the cause -- as part of a broad
based political strategy as it were -- rather than
through the sharing of a common voice with their
male counterparts. A year later, during a passive
resistance campaign, women and men marched side-by-
side down the streets of Durban protesting against
discriminatory legislation and racial segregation
(Bagwandeen 1991: 146).

Margaret Sarkissian points out that in communities
where there is a growing consciousness of ethnic
identity, gender distinctions are not as apparent
since group solidarity is generally valued above in-
ternal divisions (1992: 345). This may explain the
entry of Indian women into the mainstream of politi-
cal life only in the forties.

By 1946, 8.7% of Indian women in South Africa were
economically active in the public arena. This figure
increased to 13.3% by 1951, thus indicating the
changing position of Indian women in society (Arkin
1981: 133 and 279). Indian South African women were
no longer considered solely in domestic terms as was
traditionally the case; they were now being viewed
as a viable economic force within the Indian popu-
lace.

In an attempt to find reasons for the increase in
the employment of Indian South African women during
that period, I once again turned to my informants,
this time in order to gain women's perspectives on
the issue. Sarojini Soni who is now a retired school
principal made the following statement which encom-
passes many of my findings:

> Since the end of indenture, people had choices,
> limited, but choices nonetheless. It was an un-

written law that women kept house, tended to
the children, while the men went out and
worked. Ask your granny or anyone else in that
age-bracket, a woman working was unheard of. In
the 40s, the emancipation began. You saw women
like Dr Gonam who qualified overseas coming
back home. Women like her became role models.
Families had to supplement their income. The
war was over, factories needed semi-skilled la-
bour. For political reasons, African women were
only allowed to work as domestics, white women
would never have lowered themselves to take on
factory jobs, and even if they wanted to work
there, there was not enough of them. So, that
left us. First, it was working on the machines,
then slowly as clerks, and so on and so on. We
were efficient, ready to learn. Everything was
new to us. (1998)

Whilst perusing some old family photographs re-

cently, I observed that the women in these photo-

graphs always wore saris. Similarly in some

photographs of various orchestras, I discovered that

although women featured prominently, they were al-

ways attired in Indian traditional dress whilst

their male counterparts wore suits or tuxedos. In

one particular photograph taken of my father's sis-

ters during the late forties however, I noticed that

one of my aunts was wearing a pair of trousers.

Since this was unusual, I telephoned her in Cape

Town where she now lives and enquired about her

dress during that period. She said that:

I am now an old lady, but those days in May-
ville, I was one of the first girls to start
working. At work, on the bus, in town we had to
dress, look smart. I am a dressmaker, so I cop-
ied the fashions I saw. I was the first girl in
Mayville to wear pants to work. The people used
to 'look' [stare in amazement/admiration].

Slowly, the other girls started copying me.
(Pillay, G. 1998)

Reflecting on both Soni's and Pillay's statements, as well as my own observations, it seems clear that men, through performance and social interaction on the street and at the work-place, were able to seek westernising alternatives more quickly and easily than women, especially those who were not employed. In the forties, when a second income was crucial to the survival of the family, women, by taking on employment and thus participating in the economic life of the family, were empowered to make choices and take decisions which were previously only available to men. However, not all of these choices and decisions were made by women themselves. Bill Freund states that in practice, the entry of women into the formal work-force, although reflecting the exposure of women to formal education, also reflected a "family strategy" governed by fathers and husbands rather than by women themselves (1995: 80).

The "family strategy" of which Freund speaks, seems to refer to the fact that women were only allowed to take on employment when the deteriorating financial situation in the home necessitated such a move. However, the decision for women to work was made by male householders and not by women themselves. As

Jugatheesan Devar stated, "a woman at home was generally the rule, whilst a woman at work was the exception" (1998).

In the stage dramas and six-foot dances from the turn of the century until the thirties, women participated only as audiences. Women's roles in such plays were always performed by men. One possible reason for women not appearing on stage, Margaret Sarkissian states, is that:

> In cultures with strongly marked female and male realms, such women [women who perform in the male-dominated public arena] transgress acceptable norms of behaviour, and there is frequently a real or implied association with prostitution. (1992: 341)

In the late thirties, orchestras in South Africa more often became family-based, and Indian women gradually made inroads towards semi-professional performance. The reason for this, I argue, was that performance within the family unit empowered women to use the protection and legitimacy afforded by the family to overcome some of the commonly-held, negative perceptions mentioned by Sarkissian above. All reports, however, suggest that women were always considered junior partners in performance rather than as performers in their own right.

In 1946, the Anti-Segregational Council and the Na-
tal Indian Congress held a variety concert at the
Durban City Hall in order to raise funds for their
protest activities. The concert was called the "Song
of India" and featured, among others, the Ranjeni
Orchestra. Samadhanam, a women vocalist who joined
the Ranjeni Orchestra as a teenager in 1940, re-
ceived rave reviews and was named the "Nightingale
of South Africa" by the people who attended that
performance (Nair 1996). Angela Nair, the wife of
the leader of the Ranjeni Orchestra, Madhavan Nair,
states that:

> Samadhanam was a singer. What a singer. She
> could bring tears to your eyes. Such a sweet
> voice. She was young, people loved her. She
> knew all the best songs, everything we wanted
> to hear. In the street, she was like a film
> star. People used to stare when she walked
> past. One time, I remember, when they made one
> recording, ask uncle Madhavan he'll tell you,
> when she walked past the shops, the shops will
> play the song, the one she sang. She'll smile.
> (1996)

Until recently, women never played instruments in
orchestras. Prominent women musicians like Samadha-
nam and Sucksha Singh (nèe Sushiela Soodyall) of the
Ranjeni Orchestra, Mognambal Chitray who performed
with the New India and Columbian Orchestras, Yanum
of the Kalaivani Orchestra, Iris Pillay of the
Golden Lily Orchestra, as well as other musicians

like Maya Devi and Subuluxmi Naidoo were all well
received by the public, but they only sang. I asked
both men and women why women did not play instru-
ments on stage and was given a number of plausible
reasons.

Firstly, from the forties until the seventies, women
never enjoyed an income that allowed them to pur-
chase instruments. In the few cases where they held
jobs, such employment was taken on to supplement the
family income, not for the satisfaction of personal
desires. Men, on the other hand, were free to spend
a part of their income in whatever way they wished.

Secondly, until the seventies, there were almost no
facilities available for music education for Indian
South Africans. In instances where a facility did in
fact exist, economic, and sometimes, physical access
to the institution was restricted. The majority of
Indian South African male performers themselves were
either self-taught, or played by ear. Indian women,
it may be argued, could have pursued this avenue
themselves. Reports, however, indicate that the do-
mestic roles prescribed for them by their families
left them with little time to practise.

Thirdly, the records and films that were imported from India and which supplied inspiration and material to Indian South African musicians were crucial in the structure of local orchestras. I argue that although both men and women vocalists featured on these records and films, Indian South Africans had no idea whether any of the backing musicians were women, and, in line with current practices in South Africa, correctly assumed that they were all men. In other words, apart from vocalists, there were no visible women role models in performance.

Fourthly, since rehearsals were conducted occasionally on Saturday afternoons but mostly during weekday evenings, women were denied access to such rehearsals as they were forced to tend to household chores and the needs of the rest of their families. And finally, except for Samadhanam who came from a family of musicians, almost every Indian women musician during the forties and fifties was married or engaged to be married, with the majority being married to men who were involved to some degree with popular music performance. Thus, they were introduced to the world of performance by their husbands. In contrast to these women, other Indian South African women had no such access or approval and were

thus unable to actively pursue musical interests or engage in musical careers.

In 1947, a variety concert entitled "Sing Baby Sing" was held at the Durban City Hall. Sucksha Singh, the star of that show, recalls that:

> I was a relatively unknown singer at the time. I took a chance and went on stage. After the people heard me, hey, I was like a sensation. After that night, I carried on singing with Ranjeni, and other bands as well. Mostly on a freelance basis. My family gave me hells. My mother use to complain all the time, 'Where you going this part of the time, people will talk'. But I wanted to sing. I enjoyed it. I was good at it. By the early fifties, I made a name for myself. I met up with Yuseph Kat, and the Shalimar Records, here in Durban. They wanted me to start recording. I made some good records. Madhavan, Gopalan, I think played on some of them. Good musicians those fullers. Sometime later, Shalimar wanted to make adverts for the bioscope. You know, before the film starts, interval time also, they show adverts. Shalimar wanted me to appear in the adverts. Record sales for Shalimar you know. (1996)

Performing in the mid-fifties as well, Singh is almost always referred to in relation to the concerts she performed at, the songs she sang, or the cinema adverts she appeared in. For example, Madhavan Nair calls her Sucksha "Shake in the Grass" Singh, Peter Jack refers to her as "Sing Baby" Singh, and Gopalan Govender remembers her as "The Diamond Queen".

In spite, and perhaps even because, of the roles prescribed for them, a few Indian South African women carved a niche for themselves through the empowering act of performance. The fact that they featured prominently in posters, pamphlets and other advertising media, suggest that they performed crucial roles in the development of the Indian popular music tradition of South Africa. Many were able through performance to also overcome to some degree stereotypes associated with Indian women, i.e. being considered solely as the custodians of tradition. In sum, I theorise that performance provided an expressive medium in which women like men, but to a lesser degree, explored the practises of glamour, fantasy and otherness.

IDENTITY THROUGH RESISTANCE

As has been mentioned, Henri Tajfel's theory of social identity encompasses the notion that in order to gain a positive social identity, people employ a variety of group strategies. The first two of these, viz. assimilation and social creativity, have been discussed at length. The third strategy is what Tajfel terms "social competition" (1978a). He states that when both assimilation and social creativity fail to create a positive social identity for a low-status group, the group will actively or passively

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challenge the status quo through resistance. For example, the Gandhi-inspired passive resistance campaign of 1914, was able to ensure a number of minor victories for Indian South Africans during the period before the twenties. By the forties however, social and political circumstances had created a situation that required of Indian South Africans a renewed vigour in their fight against oppression and discrimination.

From all accounts discussed thus far, it is clear that Indian South African attempts at social creativity and assimilation were successful in that such attempts were able to empower individuals to act collectively against the roles prescribed for them by the dominant, white high status group. However, such strategies were not able to effect the type of social change that could have ensured and sustained equity at the legislative level, in the work place, and on the street. At the legislative level, for example, intolerance was expressed in 1934 when the "Slums" Act was devised. The Act, according to the authorities, was designed to ensure industrial expansion of the city, and 'to remove menaces to public health. However, many of my older informants believe that the "Slums" Act was simply an attempt to remove those Indians who lived and traded in the city.

In 1940, the growing presence of Indians in white neighbourhoods was noted by the Provincial Council. In response to this phenomenon which they termed "penetration", a commission was set up to investigate the degree of Indian penetration. However, only a small percentage of white South Africans felt that penetration was becoming a problem. As Professor Raymond Burrows pointed out that same year:

> Penetration is a small problem which does not concern ninety-nine and three quarters [percent] of the European population ... But the fact [is] that the remaining quarter percent have enough influence to make it appear a problem. (*The Indian Opinion* 1940: 157)

Some of the concerns articulated by some white South Africans during this period, seem to have little to do with penetration but more with cultural intolerance:

> H. H. Alder who lived in Poplar Road expressed consternation at having Indian neighbours because 'the smells from the cooking stuff are very offensive sometimes.' He informed the Commission [the Indian Penetration Commission] that he once called the police because his neighbours 'were playing a gramophone with Indian music, which is very distasteful to Europeans. (Indian Penetration Commission 1940: 939)

Although it is Freund's considered opinion that Indians "were able through work, through leisure and

through observation, increasingly to assimilate aspects of a racially diverse, colonially created, urban South African world", this opinion was not held by all South Africans during the forties (1995: 40). For example, Heaton-Nicholls, a Natal Provincial councillor, stated at a council meeting in June 1944 that,

> the cultural differences between the Europeans and Indians were such that they 'remain ... unassimilated and unassimilable with Europeans'. (Bagwandeen 1991: 121)

With sentiments such as those expressed by Heaton-Nicholls and Alder impregnating the socio-political landscape, and further, discriminatory attitudes spawning legislation such as the "Slums" Act in the mid-thirties, it is no wonder that the moderate politics of the Gandhian era turned radical in the forties.

In Durban, protest-politics by way of political meetings were being practised in a number of locations. However, none of these locations equal the status attached to an area that my informants remember as "Red Square". Given its name possibly through its association with a number of Communist Party rallies in the forties, "Red Square" was a parking lot bordering the Indian commercial area between

Pine Street and Commercial Road in central Durban.
At present, the lot is occupied by the Nichol Square
Parking Garage. Here, hundreds of mass meetings were
held until the late-fifties (Jack 1996).

On 13 June 1946, active resistance began in Durban.
The day was declared "Hartal Day" -- Hartal refer-
ring to the cessation of work in favour of strike
action (Gandhi 1972: viii). Culminating in an his-
torical mass meeting of over 15 000 people at "Red
Square" at five-thirty that afternoon, the day was
characterised by the closing of doors of thousands
of Indian-owned businesses, children being absent
from school, factories devoid of Indian labour, and
marches and speeches being held throughout Durban.

"Hartal Day", for Indian South Africans, was an out-
ward expression of years of frustration at the pass-
ing of anti-Indian laws, segregational legislation
such as the "Ghetto" Act and the "Pegging" Act, and
at generally being treated as second class citizens.
The Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation
Act, commonly referred to as the "Ghetto" Act, be-
came law in March 1946. It was designed by the gov-
ernment to effectively control the movement of
Indians into white neighbourhoods by providing "con-
trolled" and "uncontrolled" areas for Indians. Fur-

ther, the Act also made provision for what was called the *communal* representation of Indians in parliament. In effect, two whites would represent Indians at Senate level, and three other whites would represent them in the House of Assembly (Hall 1985: 363).

"Hartal Day" was a success in that, at the domestic level, it united a broad spectrum of the Indian population through resistance, and, on the international front, created political awareness through the focus of world-wide attention on the Indian struggle in South Africa. Within weeks of "Hartal Day", economic sanctions were instituted against South Africa by India -- an act that foreshadowed South Africa's isolation from the international community until the early 1990s.

Later that same year, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, who had been closely monitoring the political situation in South Africa for some time, stated at the annual meeting of the United Nations that, "The issue of Indians in South Africa has become a world issue" (Bagwandeen 1991: 180). Although he did not cite the events of "Hartal Day" in his speech, his statement resonated strongly with the sentiments of Indian South Africans.

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Although the resistance movement was able to secure
world-wide attention through its protests and
marches, the government's response was the assump-
tion of an observer role in the proceedings. This
stance, they felt, would not attract any more atten-
tion to the issue than was already being received.
On 27 June 1946 however, two passive resistance
leaders -- Dr G. M. Naicker and Dr Y. M. Dadoo --
were arrested by the South African Police. They were
arrested in terms of the Riotous Assemblies Act and
not for defying any particular piece of legislation.
Both were subsequently sentenced to imprisonment
with hard labour. This was followed by the arrest
and imprisonment of a woman medical doctor, Dr K.
Goonam, for her part in the resistance campaign. She
was also arrested under the Riotous Assemblies Act
(Bagwandeen 1991: 169).

The defiance of Indians was able to cause massive
work stoppages to the extent that certain essential
services had to be curtailed. However, white indus-
trialists were quick in recruiting scab labour from
the readily available work-force formed by the mi-
grant Zulu component of the Durban landscape. Indian
South African resistance, it seems, guaranteed only
a modicum of success. Undoubtedly, a new strategy

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was required -- one that encompassed all oppressed South Africans.

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In March 1947, Dr G. M. 'Monty' Naicker of the Natal Indian Congress, Dr Y. M. Dadoo of the Transvaal Indian Congress, and Dr A. B. Xuma of the African National Congress, signed what many of my informants remember as the "Doctor's Pact." In effect, the pact consolidated the efforts of Indian, African and sympathetic white South Africans for the first time in the history of South Africa

Up until the mid-forties, the need to be recognised and treated as South Africans was the stimulus that inspired and defined the actions of Indians. The events that transpired in 1948 however, made acquiring this goal virtually impossible. This was the dawn of a new age of oppression -- the era of apartheid. The Nationalist Party contested and won the national elections, and within a short space of time, was able to successfully dampen the embers that ignited the spirit of all oppressed South Africans.

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In 1949, hopes for reconciliation were further dashed when the Durban race riots erupted on 13 January. Put down by the white government to the

"racial characteristics of Blacks and Indians and the long term tensions between them" (Arkin 1981: 232), the riots which began as an incident in central Durban between an Indian trader and an African customer, moved to the suburb of Cato Manor at the edge of town. The riots left 87 Africans, 50 Indians, 1 white, and 4 'unidentified' people dead. One factory, 58 stores and 247 homes were destroyed, whilst 2 factories, 652 stores and 1285 homes were damaged (Freund 1995: 57).

At the point when it seemed that the situation could not deteriorate any further, discriminatory legislation began once again to rear its ugly head, this time in the form of the Group Areas Act of 1950. Through the entrenchment of this Act, racial segregation became law, and by the mid-fifties, wholesale removals of communities began. "In Durban," Bagwandeen points out,

> the prototype of the Group Areas Act, one of the most abhorrent and despicable pieces of apartheid legislation, was developed. (1991: 6)

By the late sixties, areas in Durban such as Cato Manor, Clairwood, and Central Durban -- where the Durban Municipal Barracks was situated -- were declared white group areas. As has been discussed,

these had been important spaces for Indian communal
activity since the turn of the century. Planning and
structuring of these areas however, were almost de-
void of any reference to the civil engineering in-
dustry. Rather, they were racially influenced. Cato
Manor, for example,

> was 'proclaimed' for, but never really settled
> by whites; it became a huge empty green-and-
> brown hole in the centre of Durban. The City
> Council [by 1980] had in fact lost interest in
> its prospects as white suburbia. It seems
> likely that its proclamation as white stemmed
> from Pretoria [the capital of South Africa] no-
> tions of creating a secure white block extend-
> ing down the hills of Natal to the centre of
> the city, in defiance of any other planning ra-
> tionality. (Freund 1995: 75)

While inhabitants of Cato Manor and other areas were
bitter at the loss of their homes through the Group
Areas Act, many were also frightened by the events
of 1949 and were thus,

> not entirely hostile to removal to a safer
> place. The riots, of course, represented a pow-
> erful argument in favour of the white Estab-
> lishment view that segregation was the key to
> 'peaceful race relations'. (Freund 1995: 70)

Further, the government legitimised its actions by
instilling the belief in Indian South Africans that
through the building of group areas, lower-middle
class people could become homeowners in defined,
class-bound suburbs (Freund 1995: 70).

By 1960, the centenary of the arrival of the first
Indians to South Africa, Nationalist Party doctrine
continued to retain the pre-World-War-One ambition
of white Natal residents to ship what they felt were
the unassimilable Indian population back to India.

> By this time, though, hopes that any signifi-
> cant proportion of the Indian population would
> emigrate to India had vanished. The Verwoerd
> government accepted that the Indians were in
> South Africa to stay, perhaps as junior part-
> ners of the whites in the deteriorating secu-
> rity situation, and proceeded to fit them into
> the framework of apartheid. (Freund 1995: 26)

Inasmuch as the discussion thus far has tended to
describe life for Indian South Africans between 1935
and 1970 as being bleak and hopeless, it may seem
somewhat strange that oral evidence suggests the
contrary in relation to Indian popular musical ac-
tivity in South Africa. Jugatheesan Devar, for exam-
ple, states that:

> If ever there was a stage when our people
> really found a place in the sun, it would be in
> the forties, fifties and sixties. For most,
> life was a hopeless mixture of indifference,
> pity, hatred, prejudice and plain old discrimi-
> nation. Musicians and indeed most Indians, how-
> ever, went on unabated by the circumstances
> they found themselves in. Weddings, broadcasts,
> shows, you name it, this was the golden age of
> film music, of orchestras, of people coming to-
> gether in the face of adversity. (1998)

In the light of reports which suggest that there were no marked improvements in the housing, health, education and job sectors, why then was the twenty-year period after 1940 so fertile for Indian popular music in South Africa?

Firstly, following the various resistance campaigns in the forties, India severed all official ties with South Africa. As one of my informants stated, "Nothing came in, nothing went out, officially of course!" (Jack 1997). Indian films and records however, continued to be imported via England and Singapore. In this regard, Devan Nair states that:

> As you know, where there is a char ou [Indian], there is a way. Okay, with the trade embargo, we couldn't get films, records, tapes etc. down here. What our local guys did was to set up dummies in England and Singapore. Singapore, you must realise, is a free port. Everything comes, everything goes. People like Phiroz S. Randeria who used to be in Short Street next to the Ganesan Printing Press, and Silver Screen films -- later Venus films -- brought stuff down through the back-door. Records and films left India for Malaysia. From Malaysia, they went to Singapore or England. From there, they were repacked, sometimes repackaged, and then sent to South Africa. Quite a few middle-men were involved, but the whole process took less than a month or two. We sometimes got stuff down here before they even hit audiences in India. From Randeria or Venus, records and films either went to the bioscopes or the stores, stores such as the All India Record Centre in Victoria Street and Record King in Ajmeri Arcade. Roopanands in Grey Street created their own label "Kohinoor" and sometimes re-pressed records for local consumption. Where there's a char ou, there's a way. (1998)

Inasmuch as Nair states that films and records found their way to South Africa through the efforts of local entrepreneurs, most Indian South Africans had little or no direct contact with India -- a country that many still referred to as their "motherland". Indian South African musicians and audiences, therefore, were forced to respectively develop and subscribe to the existing local performance culture, the culture of film music.

Another factor that must be borne in mind when considering the period after the forties is that the contravention of an apartheid law was a punishable offence. In other words, apartheid was a legislated reality which governed the speech, the movement and the residence of Indians and other groups in South Africa. Indian popular music in South Africa, therefore, was not heavily influenced by other South African musics, and was thus able to develop in a relatively closed environment.

A number of my informants suggest other reasons for the rapid development and appreciation of Indian popular music between 1940 and 1960. One theory suggests that the roles prescribed for Indian South Africans by the Establishment were finally accepted as

a reality in the forties and fifties. Another theory
is that the 1949 riots, which many believe were part
of the subversive activities of the state, had in-
stilled a degree of fear in Indian South Africans of
"what the whites would do" to them. Another report
suggests that the South African authorities sup-
ported any structure that emphasised differences
among the various race groups in South Africa, and
thus allowed Indian South Africans to conduct their
weddings and variety concerts freely and without
fear of intimidation. Such performance platforms, it
is suggested, emphasised the Indianess of Indian
South Africans.

Although any one of the above theories can be taken
to explain the survival of Indian popular music in
the twenty-year period after 1940, it is my conten-
tion that it was the symbiotic relationship between
popular music and existing creative platforms such
as Hindu weddings, variety concerts and radio broad-
casts that made rapid growth during this era possi-
ble. Ruth Finnegan, in her study of the popular
music practices in Milton Keynes, England, concluded
that popular music is a "pathway" that people choose
(1989: 306). She believes that certain "pathways" --
especially musical ones -- are regular routes that
people choose because they provide a context for re-

lationships and activities, and a means of generating both personal and group identity. Borrowing Finnegan's metaphor, I argue that the creative platforms for popular music listed above were familiar, well trodden "pathways" which allowed musicians and audiences to meaningfully structure their actions in both space and time. It is to an examination of these creative platforms that we now turn our attention.

NOTES

1. Between 1931 and 1954, only 2 Indian films were made that were not musicals (Manuel 1988: 160).

PART TWO

MUSICIANS

AND SPACES

Performers, like diviners and healers, by vir-
tue of their ability to direct the flow of
power through special channels of words, music,
and bodily movement, are privileged in handling
power. This is why performance, unlike ethno-
graphic description, potentially transforms in-
dividuals into persons in control of their own
destiny. (Erlmann 1996: xix)

Whilst the discussion in Part One of this paper tends to focus on Indian film, the development of film music and the ways in which these media enhanced and reflected Indian South African identity, this section concerns itself with the manner in which performances of Indian film music became metaphors for and constructive forces in shaping this identity. Into these performances were woven the outlooks, aspirations and value systems of both performers and audiences during the relevant period of South African history. My treatment of musicians and spaces is indebted in part to Melveen Jackson's seminal "An Introduction to the History of Music Amongst Indian South Africans in Natal 1860-1948", a work in which the descriptions and discussions of Indian music in South Africa reveal as much about the lives and experiences of the people who performed and appreciated it as it does about the music (1988).

This section comprises two chapters. Chapter Four serves as a foundation for the above argument by exploring, firstly, the lives and choices of Indian South African musicians, 'and, secondly, the ways in which they learned to play music and their reasons for joining orchestras. Chapter Five focuses on the four primary performance spaces that were available

to Indian South African musicians, viz. the rehearsal, the Hindu wedding, the variety concert and the radio broadcast. Chapter Five also considers the ways in which information and news about Indian popular music were disseminated locally, and analyses two posters to show how the various symbols, slogans, icons, terms and phrases used in advertisements became metaphors for Indian identity. Important to the material in this chapter are Indian South African perceptions of "home" and the "world", and the impact of these perceptions on thoughts, actions and music-making.

CHAPTER FOUR

"I WANTED TO BE LIKE 'KS':

PERFORMER'S BACKGROUNDS,

MUSIC EDUCATION

AND MUSICAL CHOICES

...through music (including its related sounds,
role models, anthems, stereotypes and so on)
households, kinship groups and wider sets of
relationships act as transmitters of collective
representations of nation, city, district, com-
munity and family, and of collective conceptu-
alisations of place, home and belonging.
Concepts of territoriality, boundaries and re-
latedness are constructed through interaction

> with people. The focus should thus be upon in-
> dividuals and their social relationships and
> networks, networks that intersect with differ-
> ent 'groups' or 'subcultures' ... and revolve
> around collective identities and assertions of
> difference. (Cohen 1993: 131)

My treatment of Indian popular music in South Africa
thus far has shown that one of its most distinguish-
ing elements for Indian South African musicians was
that its meaning did not reside solely in its lyrics
or melodies but in its performances -- performances
which were used by these musicians to symbolically
achieve what was ordinarily unattainable. In other
words, performance not only allowed people temporary
respite from the reality of the poverty in their
everyday lives but also placed a degree of control
in their hands, something that was not possible in
most other spheres of their lives. In this chapter I
pursue this argument by exploring musician's back-
grounds, including their music education and their
reasons for joining orchestras. This discussion is
carried further in Chapter Five where it is argued
that musicians created a variety of performance
spaces and negotiated within these spaces by devis-
ing a wide range of real and imagined links which
connected them in various ways with the multiple
worlds they were forced to inhabit.

"YOUR THATHA WAS A WAITER, YOUR BALLY ONE TIME

GRAPHED AS A DOORMAN, I WORKED IN THE FOOTWEAR":

PERFORMER'S BACKGROUNDS

Often Indians were conceived of as a single community in South Africa both by themselves and by others. The inter-group networks that they formed among their various sub-groups facilitated this concept. These networks were active in various areas of Indian life. In the predominantly Indian neighbourhoods of Clairwood, Cato Manor, Riverside and the "Barracks", for example, they were responsible for helping create communal spaces, reasonable living environments and a shared sense of identity for the residents. In this section we explore this argument further by examining the religious, linguistic, work-related, educational and family backgrounds of musicians in order to determine their contributions to the formation of networks of music making -- networks which, it seems, ultimately incorporated other members of the community as well.

Of the musicians whom I interviewed, with whom I came into contact with at concerts or with whom I performed, at least ninety percent never completed primary school. Those who did, did so only because of familial and personal sacrifice. As reported in the Indian-oriented, state-sponsored periodical,

Fiat Lux (1973), education for Indian South Africans was not either free or compulsory until 1973; for a young person to attend school prior to this year meant that parents and other family members had to make provision within the household budget for school fees, text books, writing materials and school uniforms. Thus, it is not surprising that of the 477 047 Indians who lived in South Africa in 1958, only 6679 -- 1.4 percent -- had a high school education (Arkin 1981: 250, 257). Most musicians came from extended working-class families and left school at early ages in order to support their families. In a country where the higher paying jobs were reserved for white South Africans, positions as waiters, barmen, doormen, messengers, machinists and clerks became the usual if not the only choices for Indian South Africans. Sonny Govender explains:

> When we were playing in those days, what graphs [jobs] we had? I never met a lahnee [rich] musician. We all worked like dogs. Your thatha [grandfather] was a waiter, your bally [father] one time graphed [worked] as a doorman, I worked in the footwear [shoe factory]. (1997)

Employment was almost always secured by a family friend, an uncle or another male relative who already held a position in an organisation. The general trend was that the employed man "organised a graph for the lighty [used his position in his or-

ganisation to secure employment for the boy]" (Gov-
ender, S. 1996). Networks which operated at various
levels and in various spheres of Indian life con-
tribúted to the survival of both the individual and
the community. The reliance of individuals and
groups on the network system, it seems, was not ex-
clusively an Indian South African strategy. Veit
Erlmann in his analysis of the social relationships
at work inside the *isicathamiya* choirs of South Af-
rica tells us that many aspects of migrant life in
southern Africa were structured by networks, espe-
cially networks involving "home people". These were
networks that were generally based on the common re-
gional origin of Zulu migrants (1996: 261).

All musicians whom I interviewed were conversant in
at least two languages -- English and an Indian lan-
guage such as Hindi, Telegu or Tamil. The Indian
languages were generally spoken at home, and some-
times at the workplace when employees "didn't want
the lahnee [boss] to know what they were talking
about." There were, however, musicians who spoke Af-
rican languages fluently as well. For example, the
late A. Gwainsamy, a well-known *tabla* player who was
commonly known as "Tabla" Gwain, "spoke Zulu like a
Zulu." This earned him the Zulu nickname "Kumfaan"

[boy], a nickname by which musicians still remember
him today (Nair 1996).

Apart from references to "Kumfaan's" fluency in Zulu
and to the Durban race riots of 1949, I was sur-
prised during my research to note the almost com-
plete absence of Africans in the memories of Indian
South Africans. Further, there were no African in-
fluences on the dress, food, language, religion,
dance or music of Indian South Africans. In the ab-
sence of any other plausible explanation, I suggest
that Indian South Africans developed an inward look-
ing ethnic identity as a result of their concentra-
tion on the rascist attitudes of the government and
challenging the status quo through various passive
resistance campaigns. Thus Indian South Africans at
any given opportunity looked towards what they per-
ceived to be "home" -- India and Indian culture and
traditions -- for inspiration and as a source of
refuge from the harsh realities of everyday life in
South Africa. This orientation, it is my contention,
manifested itself in a number of areas including mu-
sic, dance, food, and, to an extent, dress and lan-
guage. Looking to India as "home" accounts for
informants referring to India as their "motherland"
when in fact most of them have never visited the
country and, indeed, for the popularity of Indian

films and Indian film music amongst Indian South Africans.

Although the notion of "home" was an idealised one, it influenced, it seems, many aspects of Indian life in South Africa. One such aspect was the importance of the extended family unit, since one of the most important ways in which an Indian South African musician was identified was by the family from which he came. If his uncles, brothers or parents were well-known musicians, this meant an automatic entry for him into any one of the orchestras in his neighbourhood. Shama Naidoo remembers that he initially experienced resistance from a number of ensembles when he tried to join them as he was relatively unknown. I.e., he did not come from a family of musicians. Even when it came to recordings and radio broadcasts, he recalls, "everything was connection call [based on family]" (1996). Musical identity based on kinship was in line with the institution of *gharanas* (schools of music) in India, a phenomenon which was discussed earlier. This tradition was based on a similar set of unwritten rules.

Whilst a fair number of orchestral musicians were Muslims, Christians, Buddhists and Hindus of North Indian descent, the majority were Hindus of South

Indian descent or "Tamils" and "Telegus" as they refer to themselves. This was due to the fact that in the latter half of the nineteenth century larger numbers of South Indians emigrated to South Africa than any other group (Freund 1995: 3). By the early 1960s, this resulted in the proliferation of "Tamil bands" on the South African entertainment scene. Although "Tamil bands" were orchestras which drew the bulk of their repertoire from Tamil films rather than Hindi ones, they comprised musicians from Hindi, Telegu, Christian, Tamil and, in some cases, Muslim backgrounds. (Appendix One contains information about some of these musicians.) Further, it was not uncommon to find "Hindi bands" playing at predominantly Tamil functions and *vice versa*.

Orchestras, then, apart from their obvious musical function, also operated as networks that brought people of Indian descent together. As argued earlier, it was networks such as these that lent value to the way in which the term "community" was used by Indian South Africans to describe themselves collectively.

"I'M A SELF-TAUGHT MUSICIAN": MUSIC EDUCATION AND INDIAN POPULAR MUSIC

Becoming a performer of Indian popular music was an arduous journey which began by learning to play an instrument under extremely difficult circumstances. Finding an instrument on which to learn was the initial step and in the majority of cases the most problematic. My father, for example, began his music career as a percussionist in the family orchestra, but at the age of sixteen decided that he wanted to play the trumpet. A few months after making his decision, he spotted a second-hand trumpet which was selling for 5 pounds. During that period, his father and most of his uncles who were waiters earned approximately 3 pounds a month and were not able to contribute significantly towards the purchase of the trumpet. A month after initially finding the instrument, he convinced one of his uncles, George Murugasen, to make an "investment" in his future. Murugasen agreed to pay 2 pounds, more than half of his monthly salary, towards the purchase of the trumpet. Later that month, the family ensemble was hired to play at a wedding in Zululand for which the ensemble charged 3 pounds. The members of the band, seeing the enthusiasm in their nephew, took a decision in Zululand to contribute their total earnings

from that contract to the "lighty" (boy). He bought the trumpet three days later.

Other musicians such as Gopalan Govender, Peter Jack and Madhavan Nair also experienced problems with obtaining instruments at the start of their careers. Govender remembers using his brother's *tabla* for many years, whilst Nair and Jack used instruments which belonged to their families and friends of their families.

Learning to play an instrument was a hurdle for all musicians. Since western classical music is by and large a written tradition, learning to play an instrument such as the flute or piano is synonymous with learning to read and write staff notation. Although the developments in popular music and jazz in the twentieth century has made musicians less and less reliant on written scores, western music education remains primarily a written tradition. Indian classical music, on the other hand, developed within an oral tradition in which music education until fairly recently was the domain of a *guru* (master, teacher or guide) with whom a *shishya* (pupil or disciple) spent an extended period of time observing and imitating. (For further discussion, see Daniel Neuman [1974].) As our discussion thus far has indi-

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cated, Indian popular music, unlike its western
counterpart, resulted from an amalgamation of ele-
ments from a number of musical traditions including
jazz, western popular music and Indian classical mu-
sic. Although the instrumentation, harmony and
rhythm of Indian film songs are largely western,
scores for these songs have never been written or
published both in South Africa or in India and,
thus, when the songs were performed by Indian South
Africans, they were initially learned by ear and
then performed from memory. The ability to play by
ear and remember songs are complex activities which
cannot be verbalised fully, and, by extension,
taught fully. As Lars Lilliestam tells us, these
skills are acquired through long hours of practise
and involves one's auditive, visual, tactile-motoric
and verbal memories (1996: 201). Learning to play
Indian popular music then, was, and still is,
largely a case of learning the technique required to
play either an Indian or a western instrument and
then at the same time learning an orchestra's reper-
toire which meant developing skills needed to learn
this repertoire.

Most of the instruments used by Indian South African
orchestras were western instruments. However, quali-
fied teachers of these instruments were mostly

white, and the racial segregation of the thirties and the entrenchment of apartheid laws in and following 1948, made it difficult for Indians to study with white teachers. Added to this impediment was the cost of lessons which made them luxuries that most Indians could not afford. Even learning to play an Indian instrument such as the *tabla* was not without its problems. Indian South Africans by the 1930s consisted largely of grand-children of indentured labourers, and as Harichand Somaroo points out,

> they had little time for the pursuit of higher ideals, expending ... [their] energies in coming to terms with the more practical issues of living. (1989: 241)

He adds that,

> there were no professional musicians amongst the early Indians and it is regrettable that those who initiated the local musical tradition fell far below the standards of professionalism found in India. (1989: 241)

As a result, Somaroo concludes that there was a "lack of teachers of worth" (1989: 241).

Orchestras, it seems, did little to promote music education. "Orchestras didn't produce musicians; musicians produced orchestras", responded Peter Jack when I brought up the topic of music education

(1996). His opinion seems generally to be in line with other evidence which suggests that, apart from the Kalaivani and Linghum orchestras which offered music lessons for a short period in the fifties and seventies respectively, none of the orchestras that existed had any specific didactic objectives. According to Madhavan Nair, "orchestras were too busy practising and performing to worry about teaching" (1996). It could be argued that Indian South African musicians, with the exception of a handful, never received any formal music lessons in either western or Indian music, and, as a result, did not consider themselves adequately equipped to teach.

For Peter Jack, music lessons meant closely observing and listening to other musicians. He recalls that:

> When we were growing up, we never had so many music schools like nowadays. I liked the clarinet and I used to watch K. S. Naicker and I copied his style. Those days if you wanted to learn, you watched carefully and listened as well. (1996)

Similarly, Harry Arunachalam who is considered a "fine" clarinettist by his peers states that:

> I'm a self-taught musician. I never went to anybody for lessons. I used to listen to a lot of musicians and to lots of records. I picked it up quickly. (1996)

Learning by observing and listening, my informants suggest, was the order of the day. Although these two components were also integral parts of the traditional music education system of India -- the *guru-shishya parampara* (the master-disciple relationship) -- this was not the institution within which Indian music in South Africa flourished. In most cases, an individual would join an ensemble through the performance of a percussion instrument such as the tambourine or maracas. If he wanted to learn another instrument, he would observe a musician in the group, listen to his performance, and imitate him. This was a laborious process and one for which, it seems, some individuals paid (Veeran 1996). My father, for example, stated in his conversations with me that on purchasing his trumpet, he went to a quite a few Indian South African trumpeters for lessons. He remembers washing their cars, doing odd jobs around their homes and running errands for them in the hope of receiving lessons. However, he soon realised that most of them avoided teaching and one of the reasons for this, he states, was that they knew that they were ill equipped to teach. One of my informants after spending a short period of time studying under a musician, for example, found out that:

> He [the teacher] knew things, but really didn't
> know how he knew it or how to teach it. He
> picked them up while listening to records, so
> he really didn't know the value of scales and
> · exercises. He couldn't read or write music and
> this made things even more difficult. In the
> end, I realised that he couldn't really teach
> me much more.

Some musicians, however, in what seems to be an attempt to add credence to their performance, state that they were once pupils of one or another famous musician. For example, I came into contact with a clarinettist a few years ago who stated that he was once a pupil of the late "great" K. S. Naicker who it seems was the first Indian musician to introduce the clarinet into Indian South African popular music. When I enquired about the nature of his lessons -- i.e. how often were they held, how much did they cost, what was learned, and what method of instruction was used --, the picture that emerged was that he befriended Naicker and spent a lot of time watching and listening to him play, rather than receiving any formal tuition. In other words, he considered himself a pupil not because of receiving tuition, but by virtue of being associated with an acknowledged expert.

Those musicians who could read or write music, generally applied those skills to the performance of

film music as well. Figure 4.1, for example, is a copy of a score for a film song that was popular in the early sixties. The musician who transcribed it did not notate the entire piece, but only the trumpet interludes. Further, the rhythmic notation is not exact. Other pieces that I have examined, are similar. It seems that written scores were generally memory-aids rather than fully transcribed, accurate scores.

"I WANTED TO BE LIKE 'KS'": REASONS FOR JOINING ORCHESTRAS

Earlier I argued that for the major part of this century, India had largely evolved into an imaginary "home" in the minds of Indian South Africans with the term "home" suggesting a place of refuge, an imagined space, rather than a domestic space. In an attempt to create and in some instances reinforce links with "home" -- India and Indian customs and traditions --, Indian South Africans used various vehicles, one of which was Indian film music. Drawing a line of thought followed by Veit Erlmann in *Nightsong* (1996), I suggest that performances of this music were tantamount to modes of homing where performers were both figuratively and in real terms homebound. Erlmann's research indicates that every performance of *isicathamiya* was a journey home or

ekhaya. The basis of *isicathamiya's* performance style, he argues, was the political economy of apartheid which, I contend, was also the basis of the performance style of Indian film music in South Africa. For both Zulu migrants and Indian South African musicians then, "home" was a condition rather than a space. For Indian South Africans, India and Indian traditions became shields from the destructive impact of South Africa and South African circumstances. Orchestras, being modes of creative expression, links with "home" and networks that ensured the survival of the diaspora, therefore, were crucial sources of identity during a period that was riddled with uncertainty.

Another unique appeal of orchestras was that they offered musicians opportunities which were unavailable in other areas of their lives. One of these was the opportunity for them to accumulate "symbolic capital" (Erlmann 1996: 226). In other words, since the majority of performers worked full-time in jobs where prospects for advancement were extremely limited, performing with orchestras at weddings, concerts and on radio broadcasts became compensatory strategies which enabled them to experience power and which provided them with possibilities for making "progress" in what was perceived to be a crucial area of their lives.

Figure 4.1 Trumpet score of a film tune used in the sixties by the Golden Lily Orchestra (from the private collection of Denny Veeran)

Given that Indian film music was an amalgamation of both Indian and western musical principles, orchestras also functioned as "bridges". Dealing with musical problems during rehearsals and performances enabled orchestral musicians to symbolically create bridges across social and cultural divides as well. The orchestra satisfied the Indian South African's "Indian proclivities as well as his Western aspirations" in a way few other activities could do (Somaroo 1989: 243). A number of Indian musicians who were active in the western dance band tradition of the sixties began their musical careers by performing Indian popular music, and it seems that those who did not were generally members of families who did play in Indian orchestras (Sharma 1996).

Melveen Jackson speaks of the music of Indian South African orchestras as being musically neutral in a sense that it was neither Indian nor western, but both. She states that,

> it was Indian enough to conjure up an evocative Indian nationalistic sentiment which had become largely nostalgia for most South African Indians but ... it was also Western enough to cater for the new Indian South African nationalism. (1988: 226)

However, based on our discussion thus far, I conclude that performances of film music were not musi-

cally neutral but value-laden in the sense that they used music to create and affirm a transformative social identity.

From the foregoing, it is clear that orchestras attracted musicians for a variety of reasons. Becoming a member of an orchestra, it seems, was: part of the natural development of Indian musicians; a developmental and social goal that was attractive to young people; an avenue by means of which individuals could participate actively in the life of their community; a means by which individuals could establish, reflect and enhance their self image; an opportunity for musicians to experience the transformative power of performance; an opportunity to acquire status and prestige; and, lastly, a way to forge links with an imagined space which many of them perceived to be their "motherland".

To examine exactly how musicians realised these goals in performance, we now turn our attention to the ways in which various performance spaces facilitated the process.

CHAPTER FIVE

PERFORMANCE SPACES

IN RELATION TO

INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN

IDENTITY

In the last fifty, fifty-five years, I played
at two, three thousand weddings, too many
shows, recordings too and radio, don't talk to
me about 'Music in the Morning'. Too many. In
my time, band practise with the best of the

boys 'til late in the night. Thousands of
songs, thousands of people. You name the film,
I sang the song. I could have been a rich man
today. Ask aunty, they used to call me all the
time. 'Come play here, come play there'. East
London, Port Elizabeth, Jo'burg, you name the
places, I played there. We were treated like
kings. Rich men would pay money to listen to
us. I sang at some of the top weddings, VIPs,
the lot. Today, when you asking me these ques-
tions, it all happened yesterday. I could tell
you stories, whole night. (Nair, M. 1997)

Madhavan Nair's statement portrays his role in the

rich performance culture that flourished between the

1940s and 1990s, a period which was one of the most

volatile in South African history. Echoing the words

of the majority of my informants, he speaks of the

various performance spaces such as the Hindu wed-

ding, the rehearsal ("band practice"), the variety

concert ("show"), and the radio broadcast ("Music in

the Morning"). His references to the way in which he

was perceived by audiences, his perceptions of the

way in which he was seen by fellow musicians, and

the way in which he perceived others suggest that

the spaces he identifies were crucial for the crea-

tion and negotiation of power. This power, it seems,

influenced the shaping of the identities of the

various stakeholders including Nair in powerful

ways. To examine the ways and the degrees to which

various performance practices became metaphors for

and transformers of their identities, we now turn,

firstly, to the rehearsal, or, as informants term

it, "band practice", the initial step of the Indian

popular music performance hierarchy in South Africa.

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"COME TO THE LOUNGE, BOYS. ORGANISE THE TEA, ANIE"

The fact that music performance was not economically

viable as a full-time profession for non-white South

Africans meant that rehearsals had to take place

during week-day evenings or on Saturday afternoons.

Sundays were the days on which Hindu weddings were

held and, as a result, were generally reserved for

performances, or as musicians term them, "contracts"

(see Figure 5.1, the "Contract Form" of the Golden

Lily Orchestra). Even though the week-day evening

and Saturday afternoon practice schedule made atten-

dance easier, many musicians were engaged in shift-

work as waiters in hotels and thus missed rehearsals

periodically. Despite this hurdle, reports indicate

that rehearsals continued unabated.

Most rehearsals or "band practices" were held in the

lounge of the home belonging to the ensemble leader

or "band leader". The lounge became the "band room",

and the home thus became the first primary perform-

ance space in what would eventually become a chain

of performance spaces. Rehearsals began around 6 PM

and, in most cases, continued until 11 PM with the

occasional tea break in-between. Although one may

"G O L D E N   L I L Y   O R C H E S T R A."
        for EASTERN and WESTERN MUSIC.
_____

                C O N T R A C T   F O R M.   No.
                        * * * *   ? 2

        Phone: 886545   126 TRIMBORNE ROAD,
              or   MAYVILLE,
        Phone: 886775   DURBAN.

                             Date:...............

NAME OF APPLICANT: ....

ADDRESS ....

DATE ....

.. TIME OF COMMENCING ....

AMOUNT AS DEPOSIT ....

BALANCE PAYABLE ....

TRANSPORT PROVIDED   * YES / NO ....

MICROPHONE PROVIDED * YES / NO ....

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: ....

                FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.
                _____

CONTRACTS TAKEN BY...

REMARKS ....

WITNESSES BY...

STYLE OF NAME TO BE INSERTED ON CARDS ....

....

DATE OF CONFIRMATION ....

SIGNATURE...
                For and on behalf of
                    "GOLDEN LILY ORCHESTRA".
                led by Sonny Murugasen.

* *

NB. All Contracts subject to confirmation.   In the event of
any Contracts being cancelled without sufficient cause shown
and 7 days Notice, all monies deposited will be forfeited to
the Funds of the Orchestra.   The Balance of all Contracts to
be paid on or before the day of Contract.

                    Sgd,.............................
              GOLDEN LILY ORCHESTRA

Figure 5.1 "Contract Form" of the Golden Lily Ochestra (Durban, c. 1960, from the private
collection of James Murugasen)

argue that the repeated presence of a large group of people, some of whom may have been strangers to the rest of the household, would have created an unpleasant situation for the band leader's family, Angela Nair, the wife of Madhavan Nair stated that:

> Band practice every week, I never thought about it until now when you asked me. It was a natural thing. You married a musician, you knew what to expect. It didn't bother me. The harmoniums, drums everything was in the sitting-room whole week, who do you think used to clean it? I use to even cook for the boys [band members], even the new boys. I didn't mind. Plus, during the week musicians used to come visit uncle [the band leader], people used to come for contracts [to hire the orchestra], everyday there was something. (1997)

Judging from Angela Nair's response, if an orchestra were to be thought of as a network that brought friendship and common purpose to people from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds, it would seem that the homes of band leaders widened their function from domestic spaces to bases for these community operated networks.

The transformation of the home from a primarily domestic space to a site of communal artistic expression illustrates the dynamic nature of communally constructed spaces. Weekly rehearsals transformed homes into performance spaces, whilst homes in turn supported the function of rehearsals as social occa-

sions -- occasions which in addition to their obvious musical function, afforded musicians temporary respite from the hardships that impinged on their everyday lives. As Roy Murugasen states:

> I was a porter in a hotel. Couldn't even walk up the front stairs -- whites only. One day I was tired and I couldn't walk all the way around the hotel to go upstairs so I used the front stairs. One white woman started screaming and shouting, 'Get out from here, get out from here'. That day I cried. Anyway, one thing I looked forward to was meeting the boys [musicians], working out some new songs, listen to some records, play some music. (1998)

In an article entitled "The World and the Home" and a later work entitled *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha uses the term "unhomely" to describe the disintegration of boundaries between domestic space -- the "home" -- and public space -- the "world" (1992: 141; 1994: 10). Citing Nadine Gordimer's *My Son's Story* (1990), among other works, he explains that to be "unhomely" does not simply mean to be without a home. He states that "unhomeliness" is a state in which the boundaries between home and the world, the private and the public become enmeshed (Bhabha 1994: 10).

The transformation of the home and the resultant disintegration of the borders between the private and the public, then, can best be described as the

"world-in-the-home" (Bhabha 1992: 141). A more recent example of blurring of boundaries between the "world" and the "home", the private and the public is evident in the recent conversion of a number of Indian South African musician's homes into commercial recording studios.

Indian South African musicians, including the majority of those who continue to perform Indian film music, generally learn songs by listening and memorising lyrics and patterns. However, since the repertoire is taken from Indian films, the primary sources of inspiration and material are not live performances but imported films, and recordings in the form of 78 rpm and 33 rpm record, cassette and, more recently, compact disc formats.

Peter Jack, the leader of the Karshi Orchestra, states that:

> In the old days, what used to happen was we would listen and listen and listen until we knew the chords by heart. I would play the melody on my clarinet and each person would do the same thing on their instruments. Some of these boys were damn slow, so sometimes we went on all night doing only one song. That's why when I was the leader of the junior Ranjenis, long before Karshi, we sounded just like the [imported] record. Other bands I heard never worried. Send it, wrong chords and all. I made sure the boys knew their parts. You have to have a good ear, see. (1997)

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Madhavan Nair, the leader of the Ranjeni Orchestra
-- "the best band around" -- used a variation of
Jack's technique during practice sessions to achieve
roughly the same results. He recalls that:

> When I was young, I used to go to the bioscope
> as soon as the film came out. I listened while
> watching and tried to memorise the tunes. I'll
> go home and practise. Next day, go see the same
> film. Sometimes, do the same thing next day
> [the day after]. I come home and play the song
> on my harmonium. When the boys come for re-
> hearsals, first thing, come to the lounge boys.
> Organise the tea, Anie. I show each one of them
> their parts. Some of the guys were sharp, they
> picked it up quickly. Within one week some-
> times, we playing the song on stage. Sunday
> morning wedding. People used to get shocked.
> Most of them never even saw the film yet.
> Later, when records used to come, Goshalias and
> all, same story only this time, I use to listen
> to the record. You know the 78s. Once every one
> knew the parts, we made sure we got it right. I
> used to work in the footwear, not so much
> shifts [shift-work]. I had a little bit of
> time. But the band boys were very good. You
> know, uncle Gopalan, Billy Kisten, Srinivasan
> Sonny, Nadarajan Naidoo. (1997)

It is clear from both reports that fidelity to the
original version of a song determined not only the
success of a rehearsal but also the success of an
orchestra. The way in which an imported song was ap-
propriated, imitated and appreciated by musicians
and audiences, it seems, was an attempt by both
groups to strengthen links between the "home" -- In-
dia -- and what was perceived to be the "world" --

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South Africa. Accurately imitating the singers of India then, blurred the boundaries for Indian South Africans between "home" and the "world" and created for them a "home-in-the-world".

References to specific trends in Indian popular music in South Africa paralleling those of its African counterpart was made earlier. Among those parallels, one of the most striking was the almost total reliance of both musics on non-South African sources. In the case of African music popular in the first part of this century, it was the popular music of the United States, more especially those songs that were composed and performed by African Americans, which provided inspiration and materials. In fact, Christopher Ballantine in his research of the Marabi performance culture of South Africa stated that during an interview with Peter Resant, the leader of the Merry Blackbirds, Resant said that his ensemble "felt immense pride when audiences confirmed that they could detect 'no difference' between his band's performance of a number and the way that number sounded on an imported record" (1993: 15). These were almost the same words used by Peter Jack in his interview with me.

In Chapter Two, I explained that people who belong
to a diaspora more often than not engage in actions
in which they believe that other members of the di-
aspora are also engaged. To describe how this hap-
pens in music, I used the term "musical saming"
which in the present argument explains why both
American and Indian popular musics were appropriated
and imitated by African and Indian South African mu-
sicians respectively. Imitation, it seems, was not
exclusively a musical phenomenon. Homi Bhabha in the
Location of Culture tells us that the bulk of post-
colonial literature, including works such as Joseph
Conrad's *Nostromo* and V. S. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men*,
contain references to the ways in which Africans,
Indians and members of other diasporas appropriated
and imitated aspects of other cultures and of peo-
ples in other parts of the world (Bhabha 1994: 88;
Conrad 1979; Naipaul 1967). During a period which
was witness to the emergence of multiple and frac-
tured identities in South Africa (Erlmann 1996:
102), it seems that the appropriation of musics by
both diasporas and migrants who felt an ancestral
and, in some instances, a largely imaginary link to
these musics and the people who created these mu-
sics, helped to a large extent to reconfigure the
fractured and multiple identities of the respective
groups. Their appropriation of musics which it seems

subsequently contributed to the reconfiguration of their respective identities may have also been an attempt to abrogate the effects of alienation and disempowerment which were experienced by so many oppressed South Africans at the time.

While Nair says that his rehearsals generally proceeded without any difficulties, this was not true of all orchestras. As Denny Veeran, the leader of the Golden Lily Orchestra in the sixties, points out:

> Lots of bands carried passengers. You know, people who couldn't really play. In most cases, they were willing, and because most bands couldn't find suitable musicians, they had to make do. This really slowed a lot of bands down. Other problems. Liquor was a major problem. Some fellows used to come drunk to the band room. What can you do? (Veeran 1998)

Apart from Veeran's account above, other reports also suggest that alcohol was a major problem which affected both rehearsals and stage performances. In fact, cases have been reported which indicate that some musicians missed performances periodically because of alcohol. Tulsidas Naidoo states that:

> When I was involved in some of the shows in the early days, it was sometimes very bad. Guys used to drink back-stage, perform, and then drink some more. (1997)

Faulty instruments, it seems, were also problematic.

As Veeran recalls:

> Sometimes they [instruments] were being re-
> paired. Some of them were broken. Some of them
> were still being paid for by band money, you
> know the money we earned from contracts. Some-
> times, guys used to tell their wives they going
> to band practise, but had women on the side.
> Problems. You name it. (1998)

Although Veeran's account paints a bleak picture of
music and of the lives of musicians, he was speaking
generally and not of his own orchestra, which en-
joyed a fair amount of success. This success can be
attributed at least in part to its members mostly
belonging to the same family, and to their all being
teetotallers. As Veeran recalls:

> We never had big problems because we all lived
> under one roof. The band room was there, and
> practise sessions were regular. Liquor wasn't a
> problem and because the uncles [senior members
> of the family] were there, none of the boys got
> up to mischief. Looking back now, I think one
> of the biggest problems with the Golden Lily is
> we never really had the best of the musicians.
> Yes, all of us were good, but sometimes we
> brought in outsiders [to the family]. A lot of
> passengers. (1998)

Another problem that hindered rehearsals, and conse-
quently stage performances, was the rapid turnover
of musicians. A possible reason for this phenomenon,
one report suggests, was that,

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> most musicians were never paid -- the money
> earned being used for uniforms, instruments,
> transport and the like. This meant that those
> that did not have any family ties to an orches-
> tra generally moved their allegiances without
> any notice. (Naidoo, T.P. 1997)

The Colombian Orchestra, for example, was dealt a

heavy blow in the early fifties when most of its

members left to join the Travancore and the National

orchestras. The New India Orchestra suffered a simi-

lar fate when two of its leading musicians, Madhavan

Nair and Gopalan Govender, left to join the Ranjeni

Orchestra which remained one of the most popular or-

chestras from the 1940s until the 1970s.

One is tempted to speculate that it was for artistic

reasons that musicians constantly shifted alle-

giances. However, interviews indicate that most mu-

sicians left one ensemble to join another not at all

for this reason but rather because some ensembles

enjoyed a larger following than others. The more

popular the ensemble, the more performances it was

thus able to secure. This meant an increase in reve-

nue for the ensemble, but none of the musicians that

I interviewed reaped any financial rewards by join-

ing a more well-known ensemble. The money that was

earned was almost always used for purchasing instru-

ments, uniforms and records and for hiring a micro-

phone and transport. As Harry Arunachalam states,

"It was for love that we played, not for money"
(1996). If, as Arunachalam states, it was the love
of performance that motivated musicians, why then
was there a high turnover of musicians? Could they
not have experienced this love by performing with
just one ensemble?

Although there are no easy answers to these ques-
tions, the beginnings of answers seem to be con-
tained in Erlmann's discussion of the link between
music performance and power. Erlmann describes musi-
cians as being able "to direct the flow of power
through special channels of words and music", and
thus as being "privileged in handling power." It is
for this reason, he states, that "performance ...
potentially transforms individuals into persons in
control of their own destiny" (1996: xix). As I have
stated earlier, due to the prejudices that black
South Africans experienced in their everyday lives,
they had little control over how and where they
lived their lives. Performance however, provided
them temporary respite from this congestion. Ensem-
bles that enjoyed a greater patronage thus provided
musicians with more opportunities to perform, and,
consequently, more opportunities to handle power and
to feel the transformation described by Erlmann. In
this context, I argue, power may be likened to a

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narcotic which is addictive and demands of its users every spare minute of their lives.

"COME ON BOYS, IT'S SUNDAY MORNING"

Sunday morning between ten and eleven o'clock was probably the most important hour of the week for Indian South African musicians as that was the hour when the majority of Hindu weddings were held. Of the musical pathways that were available to Indian South African musicians, the Hindu wedding was by far the most well-trodden. As stated earlier, ensembles have always been an auspicious and indispensable part of Hindu weddings both in South Africa and in India. In the Hindu weddings of South India, for example, the *periya melam* ensemble is still an integral part of the wedding ceremony in that it facilitates a number of the wedding rituals (Nixon 1997). In South Africa however, the scarcity of *periya melam* instruments such as the *nagasvaram*, *ottu* and *tavil*, and the lack of adequately trained *periya melam* musicians created a gap in Hindu weddings. Orchestras playing film music, although not taking on the role of the *periya melam* ensemble, nevertheless provided a type of ensemble at weddings thereby continuing a tradition albeit in a modified form.

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In the first half of this century, the majority of
Hindu weddings were held in the home of either the
bride or groom. Preparations began months in advance
and included the re-painting of the house, the
cleaning of the yard, the buying of clothes and the
chopping down of bushes around the house so that a
tent could be erected about a week before the wed-
ding. Under the tent, the entire nuptial ceremony
took place. Sonny Govender recalls that:

> Those days things were different. When I got
> married in Cato Manor, I was graphing [working]
> in Peach and Hatton [a furniture factory].
> Where I had bucks [money]. My neighbour gave me
> one pocket potato, Moodley brought one bag
> rice, one connection down the road gave two
> gallon oil. Somehow or another things got done.
> My broer-in-law [brother-in-law] Paul gave me
> 10 pounds, Krish paid for the band, Golden Lily
> played, my connection lighty [young male
> cousin], Sagie, paid for the marquee. One
> graphing chomee [a co-worker], Mohammed, down
> by the scheme [government housing] had a cab
> [car], we used that cab to pick up my vrou
> [wife]. What was short those days? You tell me.
> (1997)

Judging from Govender's report of his wedding in
Cato Manor and other reports which I received from
informants who lived in Riverside, Clairwood and the
Magazine Barracks, it is clear that weddings were
community-based events. The way in which relatives,
neighbours and friends contributed their time, ef-
fort and money to make weddings successes illus-
trates the communal nature of life in "those days."

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Further, at a time when owning a car was seen as a luxury, and reliable public transport was virtually non-existent on a Sunday, the home-based wedding, or more appropriately the community-based wedding, was extremely convenient for guests.

In Chapter One, I extended one of Bill Freund's arguments to argue that one of the ways in which Indian South Africans conceived of themselves as being part of a community was through the networks that they formed among their respective sub-groups (Freund 1995: 75). In Govender's report we notice that Moodley (a shop-owner), Krish (a Hindi-speaking neighbour), Mohammed (a Muslim co-worker), Paul (the Christian brother-in-law) and Sagie (a cousin) represent a network of friends, neighbours, relatives and business-people who otherwise would have had little in common. It is the network that they found themselves in, I contend, the lent value to the way in which they and others like them conceived of themselves as a "community".

In the late fifties, weddings gradually moved away from the home and into the wider community. This was the period that was witness to the completion of a number of community-supported building projects such as temples, halls and schools. Prospective bride-

grooms began hiring halls and some of the favoured
venues were the Bolton Hall in Albert Street, the
Gandhi Hall in Lorne Street, the Pathmajurrani Andhra Maha Sabha Hall in Clairwood and the Vedic Hall
in Carlisle Street. Reports indicate that a sense of
community was still manifest in the way in which the
wedding was arranged, and that it was only the nup-
tial space that changed. Much like our earlier exam-
ple of how rehearsals in the home transformed the
home from a domestic space to a site of communal ar-
tistic expression, the movement of weddings from the
home into the hall, I argue, transformed the hall
into a "home" away from their literal home .

Orchestras that were hired to play at weddings in
both halls and homes were hired solely on the basis
of their reputations which were determined by their
performances at other weddings. A good orchestra,
then, consisted of a large ensemble of immaculately
dressed individuals who performed music that sounded
almost identical to imported records. Another factor
that secured good reputations was repertoire. Those
orchestras which performed songs from the most re-
cent films were held in the highest esteem.

Hindu weddings are generally an hour in length, and,
in South Africa, ensembles were hired to play

throughout the wedding taking a break only at the point where the priest sought the blessings of the guests. Although recorded music has now largely replaced live music at weddings, in the Hindu weddings of the past guests not only witnessed the ceremony, but served as audiences who applauded if a song was sung well. As a twelve year old drummer, my father, for instance, remembers audiences "throwing money on stage" during his drum solos at weddings. The orchestra thus became one of the central features of weddings, and a wedding would be deemed "memorable" if the ensemble that was engaged to perform there was particularly outstanding.

Wedding programmes consisted of about twenty songs. Of these, the first to be performed was a "signature tune" which might be a *Vadya Vrind* song. In most instances however, particularly favoured film songs were considered signature tunes. Such songs were generally chosen for their popularity with audiences, and most often were orchestrated for the entire ensemble. For the audience, the performance of a particular song meant that the orchestra identified itself not only with that particular piece, but also with a particular style, a genre of film, a period or a repertoire. For orchestras, the performance of signature tunes became conscious statements

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of their musical identities. "The Ranjeni Rhapsody"
is an example of a signature tune and can be heard
on Track Nine of the accompanying compact disc. This
track, a *Vadya Vrind* song, was recorded in India
around the fifties and was "appropriated" by the
Ranjeni Orchestra who subsequently re-named the song
"The Ranjeni Rhapsody". None of the surviving mem-
bers of the Ranjeni Orchestra recall the original
title of the song.

The balance of wedding programmes consisted of songs
from films that were currently on circuit, or songs
from older films that were favourites with audi-
ences. In fact, as late as the 1980s, a selection of
songs from films that were released in the 1950s was
still being performed at Hindu weddings. Two of
these were *Maanile Neethu* and *Nee yenga* which were
performed by the Ranjeni Orchestra (Tracks Ten and
Eleven on the accompanying compact disc).

When trying to imagine the sound of orchestras at
weddings, it is important to remember that at this
time amplifiers and amplified equipment were a rar-
ity. The overall volume was thus created by the
sheer number of instruments, whilst instrumental in-
terludes were made prominent by two to three instru-
ments playing a part simultaneously. Examples of

such interludes are especially evident in the *Vadya Vrind* songs performed by the Golden Lily Orchestra on Tracks Four and Five of the accompanying compact disc.

Continuity for the wedding programme was provided by a compère who welcomed guests, introduced speakers and briefly introduced each song. Sometimes the compère was a member of the orchestra, but most often, dynamic personalities within the intelligentsia were approached to add "some splendour to the occasion" (Naidoo, S. 1996). Between 1940 and 1970, compères who were favoured choices included the educators P. R. Singh and P. K. Naidoo, and the radio presenters Abel 'Thunderbolt' Peters, Ruthnam Pillay, Jugatheesan Devar and Tulsidas Naidoo.

Until the late 1950s, most compères and guest speakers spoke only in Indian languages at weddings. Songs were also introduced in these languages. However, this trend changed when weddings moved into halls. Gradually speeches began to be made in English with only occasional remarks made in Indian languages. Wedding invitations also underwent a change during this period. Prior to the 1960s, most of them were written exclusively in Tamil or Hindi,

but by the late sixties English translations began
to accompany these invitations.

The use of the Hindi or Tamil languages at weddings
and on wedding invitations almost one hundred years
after the arrival of the first group of Indian set-
tlers illustrates the degree to which change was re-
sisted in certain Indian institutions. Although
English was the lingua franca, it seems that the use
of Indian languages at weddings until the 1960s was
an attempt by Indian South Africans to retard what
they may have perceived to be the gradual transfor-
mation of their cultural identities. I use the term
"retard" and not "stop" as it is evident in the wed-
dings of the seventies that people did in fact real-
ise that change was inevitable. Thus, at the point
when the "home" -- the community, the home-based
wedding, Indian languages -- moved into the "world"
-- the hall, the wider community, the English lan-
guage --, the boundaries between the "world" and the
"home" also blurred.

The disintegration of boundaries between the private
and the public domains also manifested itself in
other spheres of Indian South African life, and one
of the areas in which this was most prevalent was in
the area of religion. In the early 1920s the

Bethesda Pentecostal Church was formed in Pieter-
maritzburg, and a satellite was introduced in the
Magazine barracks of Durban a decade later. The ear-
liest Indian converts were service workers such as
waiters and barmen (Buijs 1985: 127). By 1983, the
Bethesda Pentecostal membership numbered 40 000 and
the success of the church was due primarily to the
fact that it incorporated Indian South Africans into
what many of them perceived to be a universal or-
ganisation that encouraged thrift, education, social
mobility and, most importantly, the use of English
as a language of communication (Freund 1995: 87).
One of the early converts was Peter Jack who per-
formed with the Ranjeni Orchestra of the Magazine
Barracks. In 1946, Jack, together with Pastor J. F.
Rowlands -- one of the founders of the Bethesda Pen-
tecostal Church in South Africa -- started the Kar-
shi Orchestra which was the first all-Indian gospel
group in South Africa. Comprising members of the
Bethesda congregation at the Magazine barracks, the
Karshi Orchestra was careful to steer away from the
film music repertoire as its members were told that
the cinema, like smoking, drinking and gambling, was
considered "worldly" and any connection with it had
to be avoided (Freund 1995: 87). However, as most of
the musicians had performed at one stage or another
with Indian orchestras, the Karshi's performance of

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hymns and other gospel songs sounded very much like the film music and the *Vadya Vrind* songs of the time.

Within a short space of time, the Karshi Orchestra established itself as the only choice at Indian South African Christian weddings and Indian Christian church service rallies. Three of their most popular songs were *Yedanadi Devanay*, *Siloovay Somendoo* and *Narsoogar Premadinchi*. (Tracks Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen on the accompanying compact disc). Judging from these recordings which were made at the Virginia Lee Recording Studios in Durban during 1965, it is clear that despite the role prescribed for them by the church, they were very much a part of "home" -- the Indian popular music tradition of the time. The melodies, much like film music and *Vadya Vrind* tunes (Tracks One to Eleven), were clearly influenced by the Indian popular music tradition as well as by the European and American popular music traditions. The pieces, performed in single keys as is generally the case with Indian classical and Indian popular music, are set within linear frameworks rather than the cyclical ones of Indian classical music. The lyrics are sung in Indian languages and the melodies are characterised by Indian-derived ornamentation. The *jugalbandhi* (call

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and response) technique commonly used in Indian classical music, Indian popular music and western jazz is also evident in these recordings. Manifest in the music are both a suggestion of raga (evident in the melodies and ornamentation) and a sense of western harmony (evident in the chord progressions), whilst one of the most noticeable features of the pieces is the presentation of a massed unison sound at certain points. Instrumental interludes seem to have followed the *Vadya Vrind* style of performance in that they were made prominent by the doubling of parts.

The Bethesda church by employing English as a language of communication and the Karshi Orchestra as one of its voices in the community was thus able to cross a number of boundaries, one of these being the boundary between that which was conceived of as the "world" (the wider South African community, the English language, fundamentalist Christianity and state education) and that which was conceived of as "home" (the orchestral tradition and the Karshi Orchestra). During a period that was riddled with uncertainty, the Bethesda Church by blurring the boundaries between the "home" and the "world" created a crucial source of identity for certain sections of the Indian South African populace.

"I'M BUSY ON SATURDAY NIGHT, I'M PLAYING AT A SHOW"

In the early years of this century, one of the few
regular sources of entertainment for Indian South
Africans in Durban was the weekly visit to the "pic-
tures" at either the Royal Picture Palace or the
Victoria Picture Palace which were located on the
opposite sides of Victoria Street. Both "palaces"
showed imported "Indian" silent films which were be-
tween 10 and 15 minutes in length. Much like the si-
lent films in the "picture palaces" of India, silent
films in Durban were presented as part of a variety
entertainment which included a number of stage acts
such as dancing and singing. The evening's programme
"sometimes took the better part of three hours"
(Naidoo, T. P. 1997). Both the Royal Picture Palace
and the Victoria Picture Palace thus hired a number
of entertainers on an ad hoc basis to sing and dance
and to perform background music for the films. One
such entertainer was my paternal grandfather, Jimmy
Veeran, for whom the Royal Picture Palace was one of
the more regular and prestigious performance spaces
between the First World War and 1930. Like most of
the entertainers of his time, however, he was never
paid for his services.

Reports indicate that around 1935 both "palaces" were converted to accommodate sound cinemas. Since the majority of the sound films were between two and three hours in length, variety entertainment -- the format in which silent films were presented -- was no longer required in the cinema. However, Indian variety entertainment was too important to the community for it to be allowed to die: by drawing on the dance and music traditions of India, it seems to have articulated the hopes and aspirations of the Indian working class, much as jazz, vaudeville and *isicathamiya* did for the African working class (see Ballantine 1993: 11 and Erlmann 1996). Thus, while it did not continue within the space of the cinema, another space was quickly created for it. The first "revival" of the original format, *sans* pictures, was a variety concert entitled "The Big Broadcast" which took place in June 1935 at the Durban City Hall. For audiences, it was a new entertainment concept and as a result they "packed the place like sardines" (Govender, G. 1996). The concert was organised by Dr G. M. 'Monty' Naicker, the Natal Indian Congress stalwart and violinist, and featured The Hindu Youth Orchestra; Dada Kadhani, a magician; the Gopalan Govender Trio; a gymnastics display; and a sketch entitled *"Vinodha Vivagam"* (A Strange Wedding). Although in a slightly modified form, the variety con-

cert format of 1935 continued until the seventies (Veeran 1996: 50).

Variety concerts or "shows", as they are still referred to by Indian South Africans, however, were not exclusively Indian South African phenomena. They seem to have differed little in principle with the variety concerts of other cultures. Indian South African shows were much like wedding programmes in that they were held together by a compère. Whereas the compère functioned as a master of ceremonies at weddings, his position in the variety show seems generally to be in line with the one of the stock characters in South Asian folk theatre. This figure, the narrator, introduces characters, explains the action and symbolism, tells jokes to reduce the boredom of all-night performances, prompts actors, and directs the entire performance (Jackson 1991: 181). P. R. Singh, who was an educator during this period, was well able to perform these functions in a way that generally fulfilled audience expectations and as a result, was a popular choice of compère.

Another popular choice of compère, especially during the fifties and sixties, was "Roy the Black Boy", the stage persona of Harry Naidoo. During the early fifties Naidoo played the role of "Roy the Black

Boy" in a minstrel show. At the end of the tour, he
decided to move onto the variety concert circuit but
soon realised that he was relatively unknown as
Harry Naidoo. This led him to adopt the name "Roy
the Black Boy". Reports indicate that although he
did not continue to perform in the minstrel tradi-
tion, i..e. he did not sing, dance or paint his face,
he was always smartly dressed, told the funniest
jokes and "kept audiences on their toes" (Naidoo, T.
P. 1997).

Variety concerts were held on Saturday evenings be-
tween 7 PM and 8 PM and lasted for three hours with
a fifteen minute interval about half-way through.
This trend seems to be in line with Indian films of
that period which ran for a similar duration. A
typical variety concert consisted of between ten and
fifteen songs. Of these, at least four were entirely
instrumental -- those at the beginnings and ends of
each half of the programme. Most often, these pieces
were instrumental arrangements of Indian film songs.
The balance of the programme was a kaleidoscope of
sketches, dances, songs, magic shows and gymnastics
displays. In between, the compère established the
pace by telling jokes and by providing exciting in-
troductions to the forthcoming items. This also al-

lowed the entertainers time to rearrange the stage to suit their respective acts.

All Shows were held in halls or cinemas. However, racial segregation prevented these shows from being held at just any suitable venue in Durban. Specially designated venues such as the Durban City Hall, the Red Cross Hall and Bolton Hall in central Durban as well as the various "Indian" cinemas and temple halls such as the Pathmajurani Andhra Sabha Institute in Clairwood, became the most popular, if not the only, choices.

Tulsidas Naidoo, who was a popular choice of compère himself, states:

> Shows raised the status of Indian music and really gave it a place in the sun. It had to be glamorous to attract audiences, so the orchestras were forced to improve their quality of music, their dress and their overall image. Uniforms became the fashion, and glamour was the order of the day. (1996)

One of the most striking elements that distinguished wedding programmes from variety concerts is the fact that no vernacular titles were used in posters and programme notes for shows. In fact, rather than naming songs, sketches, or styles of dance according to their vernacular designations, broad generalisations such as "Tamil Song", "Laugh-A-Minute", and "Dance

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of the Moghul Court" were used in concert pro-
grammes. One of the musicians who performed in "The
Voice of India" stated that what was indicated
merely as a "Tamil Song" was actually entitled
Thilai Ambala Nadaraja, that "Laugh-a- Minute" was a
Tamil sketch entitled *Vinodha Vivagam,* and that
"Dance of the Moghul Court" was a dance based on the
principles of classical Indian dance, viz. Bharata
Natyam. In part, the use of English in an otherwise
Indian programme may be attributed to the process of
"Anglicisation" described by Melveen Jackson who
discusses how, after the twenties, assimilation and
syncretism became evident in the music, the outward
appearance, and the *modus operandi* of Indian South
African ensembles (Jackson 1988: 94).

As for their performances at weddings, musicians al-
most never received any remuneration for their per-
formances at variety concerts. As the secretary's
report at the 18th Annual General Meeting of the
Golden Lily Orchestra indicates:

> So far, we have catered for a number of wed-
> dings in the last year ... I have great pleas-
> ure in mentioning to you that we have taken
> part in a number of shows where we rendered mu-
> sic free to quite a number of charitable insti-
> tutions (private collection of James
> Murugasen).

Some of the most successful variety shows also toured. For example, "Songtime", which featured the Ranjeni Orchestra, toured the major cities of South Africa in the fifties whilst "The Voice of India" toured the Transvaal and Natal extensively during the same period. Evidence suggests that one of the first shows that went on tour was "Music Fanfare" which featured the Golden Lily Orchestra. It toured the Transvaal and Northern Natal between 1951 and 1952 (private collection of James Murugasen). The income generated from ticket sales were generally used for financing the tours themselves. Concerning the organisation of these tours, Madhavan Nair states that:

> We sometimes toured for a few weeks at a time. Those musicians that could get off from work used to come but most times, we used to get musicians from the areas that we played in, to play with us. In fact, Mehmoona, the singer - you must have heard of her -- we met her in East London. She joined us there and came back to Durban with us. (1996)

Apart from providing another musical pathway for musicians, variety shows also created a number of local "stars". Angela Nair, for example, remembers:

> When my husband [Madhavan Nair] walked down Grey Street, I hated to walk with him. Everybody stopped to say hello. When he used to pass the record shops, the owners used to make the music louder because they know he sang that song on stage. People use to ask him for his

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autograph, and the girls, don't ask me about
the girls. (1997)

In the absence of any direct contact with India for
an extended period of time and with imported Indian
films providing little more than an imaginary link
with their ancestral home, audiences, by creating a
need for and subscribing to a local performance cul-
ture and elevating its practitioners to the posi-
tions of "stars", I argue, attempted to bridge the
gap between what they viewed as the "world" (South
Africa and South African circumstances) and "home"
(India and Indian film music). Whilst variety shows
provided opportunities for musicians to handle power
and, even for a few hours during each performance,
control their destinies within this space, both
audiences and musicians collaborated to blur the
boundaries created by both time and space between
themselves and their ancestral home. This, I con-
tend, contributed to the strengthening of their cul-
tural identities -- something that could not be
achieved as successfully in other spheres of their
lives.

To explore the dialectic between the "home" and the
"world" more fully, and to examine how this inter-
play manifested itself in other areas related to
performance, we now turn our attention to the way in

which news and information about popular music was disseminated.

"WE HAD FULL COLOUR POSTERS JUST LIKE THE FILMS"

Of the texts that were consulted during research for this paper, some of the most insightful were posters and programmes. In dealing with the posters, it is helpful to keep in mind the distinction Raymond Williams makes between publicity and advertising. Publicity, he says, was developed to promote "persons in a particular kind of culture", whilst advertising, he suggests, was developed to sell goods or services in a particular kind of socio-political economy (1993: 333). Whether it is through the use of symbols, slogans, or pictures, advertising is a unique form of social communication that enables us to understand how people attract or "speak" to like-minded people in order to get them to share in a particular experience. Williams states that:

> It is impossible to look at modern advertising without realizing that the material object [or service] being sold is never enough: this indeed is the crucial cultural quality of its modern forms. If we were sensibly materialist, in that part of our living in which we use things, we should find most advertising to be of an insane irrelevance. Beer would be enough for us, without the additional promise that in drinking it we show ourselves to be manly, young in heart, or neighbourly. A washing-machine would be a useful machine to wash clothes, rather than an indication that we are forward-looking or an object of envy to our

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neighbours. But if these associations sell beer and washing-machines, as some of the evidence suggests, it is clear that we have a cultural pattern in which the objects are not enough but must be validated, if only in fantasy, by association with social and personal meanings which in a different cultural pattern might be more directly available. (1993: 335)

The associative component in advertising of which Williams speaks is evident in the many posters that I collected during my fieldwork. For example, in Figure 5.2, which is a poster advertising the variety show "Oriental Express: East to West", the generous use of the five-pointed star icon which creates imaginary links with both Hollywood and Bollywood, the mention of the famous compère, "Roy the Black Boy", and the use of phrases such as "The Surprise Item of the Year", "South Africa's Greatest Dancing Sensation" and "Durban's Most Famous Stars" clearly indicates that the advertisers were pitching for otherness, glamour and fantasy. If it were possible for us, for example, to watch the show, we would encounter "Africa's Greatest Master of Magic", "Faeeza the Wonder Girl", "Madhavan, the Golden Voiced Singer", "Muthoo Pillay who needs no Introduction", "Samadanam, The Voice that Thrills Thousands", "Mr South Africa", and "Marie Govender, Durban's P. G. Vengatesan".

Figure 5.2 Poster advertising the variety show "Oriental Express: East to West" (Durban, 5 June 1954, from the private collection of Madhavan Nair)

On the music side of the "Oriental Express", we would get a chance to listen to the Ranjeni Orchestra -- "The most famous Indian Orchestra in the country" --, The Top Spots -- "Durban's Melody Kings" --, and the Sarojini Orchestra -- "The Rising Musical Maestros of the year". On the other hand, if we chose to patronise the "Voice of India" (Figure 5.3), we would encounter "Miss Asia, The Glamorous Dancer", who was in fact an Indian South African dancer, and get a chance to experience "something new" and "something grand". Whilst listening to the "Golden Lily Orchestra, The All Star Band", we would experience "The Years Greatest and Gayest Musical Sensation". Emerging from these texts is clear insight into Indian South African perceptions of a Utopian Indian South African identity as well as unique ways in which the "home" and the "world" were perceived. The personalities and acts mentioned, it seems, were not enough but had to be validated, if only in fantasy, by association with social, cultural, personal and even imaginary links to another place separated by both space and time. Marie Govender and K. Parthab, for example, are depicted not just as good singers, but Durban's equivalent of India's playback singers P. G. Vengatesan and Mukesh respectively.

Figure 5.3 Poster advertising the variety show "The Voice of India" (Pietermaritzburg, 27 February 1954, from the private collection of Denny Veeran)

Further, at a time when the majority of Indian South Africans were functionally illiterate in the English language, and the languages spoken at Indian South African homes were predominantly Tamil, Telegu, Gujerati, Hindi or Urdu, the use of the English language and the type of phrases mentioned in the texts indicate that conscious efforts at blurring the boundaries between the "world" and the "home" were made at a time when the apartheid government was successfully creating boundaries between the various cultural groups. The image of the speeding train moving from "East to West" depicted on the top of Figure 5.2 and, indeed, indicating the journey that the early Indian immigrants made to South Africa from the "east" to the "west", is a further example of the conscious crossing of boundaries between "home" (the east) and the "world" (the west). Both the name of the show, "Oriental Express", and its representation as a speeding train indicates the speed at which boundaries were being crossed.

The photographs in the posters also provide important clues to the identities of the participants. "Ace band leader of the Ranjeni Orchestra" Billy Gengan with his bow-tie and his hand under his chin seems more like a western philosopher than an Indian musician and is thus depicted as a man of the

"world" (the west). The magician Yusultini, on the other hand, is dressed like an Indian prince and is thus depicted as being a part of "home" (the east). The dialectic relationship between "home" and the "world" is also evident in his appearance in that although he exudes an air of eastern mysticism, he is in fact considered "*Africa's* Greatest Master of Magic". Women singers, dressed in saris and other Indian apparel, it seems, were seen to be the custodians of Indian tradition who belonged within the realm of the "home" (domestic space), whilst male singers dressed in suits, tuxedos and other western apparel were seen to be part of the "world" (western alternatives). Further, all the photographs, it seems, were posed for in photographic studios since none feature singing or playing although "Mr South Africa" does reveal his strength in the picture. Photographs depicting on-stage action, I argue, might have been more effective in the marketplace as it would have created a sort of series of "silent" pictures which undoubtedly would have been more appealing, informative and entertaining. In other words, the photographs in the posters clearly resemble, or were made to resemble, the kinds of photographs that one would find on a book-shelf, mantelpiece or in a family album. Once again, the dialectic relationship between the "home" (the pho-

tographs) and the "world" (the phrases and slogans)
become evident in these media.

The titles of shows and the prominence given to them
in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 also provide important clues
to Indian South African perceptions of "home" and
the "world". In the case of Figure 5.2, one would
think that given the scope of the show, a title such
as "Entertainment Express: Music to Magic" would
have been more accurate in its description than
"Oriental Express: East to West", whilst in the case
of Figure 5.3, one would think that given the fact
that it was a show held in Pietermaritzburg featur-
ing musicians from Durban, a title such as "The
Voice of Durban" would have been a more apt title
than "The Voice of India". In both cases, it seems
that the names of shows were not based on the con-
tent of the shows but rather on the perceptions and
fantasies of the people who performed in and who pa-
tronised the shows. I argue that although the major-
ity of Indian South Africans had no physical contact
with India, the titles and the content of their
shows as well as the way in which these shows were
advertised indicate that conscious efforts were made
to forge links between "home" (India) and the
"world" (South Africa) creating, if only in fantasy,
a "home-in-the-world".

"MUSIC IN THE MORNING"

If Indian popular music performance were to be
thought of as a triangular hierarchical structure
housing four levels with the space within each level
representing the number of opportunities to perform,
rehearsals then would undoubtedly be placed at the
base of the structure, since they belonged to the
least glamorous of all the musical pathways but pro-
vided musicians with the most opportunities to per-
form. In the level directly above rehearsals, we
would find Hindu weddings, and above this, variety
shows. The uppermost space near the apex of the tri-
angle would be occupied by radio performance owing
to its highly prestigious nature and also the least
number of opportunities it provided for Indian South
African musicians to perform.

Indian music was first heard on South African radio
in 1935 when Abel 'Thunderbolt' Peters presented the
first 15 minute "Indian" slot live in what was to
become a series of 15 minute-slots on Wednesday eve-
nings. The programme fell under the auspices of the
African Broadcasting Corporation's (ABC) English re-
gional service and consisted of a violin solo by De-
var, a *tabla* solo by 'Tabla' Gwainsamy and a
devotional song by a local *bhajan* or prayer group.

Jugatheesan Devar, himself a prominent radio person-
ality in the seventies, recalls that:

> I clearly remember the day when we went on air
> for just 15 minutes. I was a little boy, and my
> brother, a violinist, was going on air. I ran
> all the way from Standard Road to C. N. Rana's
> shop just to listen. Abel Peters came on doing
> his entire presentation in English on the In-
> dian segment. It was amazing. He had a crystal
> clear, highly resonant voice which earned him
> the name 'Thunderbolt'. (1998)

At the end of the Second World War, this "Indian
segment" moved into a half-hour Friday night slot.
By 1972, it had evolved into an hour-long Sunday
morning programme called "Music in the Morning" and
was presented, compiled and produced by Jugatheesan
Devar. For the first time in 1972, the programme was
aired nationally. Between 1935 and 1972, a number of
presenters were hired on either a part-time or a
freelance basis. Such personalities included S. R.
Naidoo, P. R. Singh, Devi Bughwan and Ruthnam Pil-
lay. Ruthnam Pillay who had worked in various ca-
pacities at the now South African Broadcasting
Corporation (SABC) for five decades began presenting
"Music in the Morning" in 1966 and continued until
Jugatheesan Devar replaced him six years later.

Tulsidas Naidoo who also worked on radio on a free-
lance basis in the 1970s recalls that:

> If you went to any Indian home in Natal on a
> Sunday morning, you were bound to hear the
> broadcast. It was one of the few constants we
> had. Laws changed, employment opportunities
> came and went with each passing year, but the
> radio was the only source of regular entertain-
> ment for our people. The latest music, the
> older music, classical music, you heard them
> all on radio. And if a band was going on air on
> Sunday, there would certainly be a mention of
> it in the local newspaper during the week.
> (1997)

One of the reasons that broadcasting took on the

kind of importance that it did for Indian musicians

was that it enjoyed a large audience. Denny Veeran

recalls that:

> In those days, radio had cornered the market
> because everyone had access to it. If you
> played on the air everyone in Natal heard you.
> Obviously, we could have made records and tried
> to sell these in the shops. But, you must re-
> member that we were playing mostly film music,
> and this music was already available on record.
> We ourselves bought these records and learned
> the songs. Now, if we were going to cut re-
> cords, who was going to buy it? Therefore, ra-
> dio became the ultimate way of being heard. It
> was very prestigious. And if you played on ra-
> dio, you automatically became 'radio stars'.
> People used to put this on posters, 'Golden
> Lily Orchestra, Stars of Radio and Stage'. At
> weddings and shows, the master of ceremonies
> would say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, please wel-
> come on stage, radio stars GLO'. (1998)

Before 1972, the procedure for orchestras wanting to

perform on air involved an audition where an advi-

sory panel made up of community and cultural leaders

serving in honorary capacities listened to the en-

sembles. This took place on Sunday mornings at the SABC's studios in Tribune House on Aliwal Street and later in Radio House on Gardiner Street. The requirements, it seems, were fairly straightforward: "The band had to be broadcastable". When I enquired what this meant, Devar said that:

> The performance had to be flawless. I'm not talking about how well they copied a film song, I'm talking about the overall sound. Singers had to sing in pitch, instruments in tune, that sort of thing. (1998)

If this criterion was not met, the ensemble was requested to,

> go back and adjust matters. When they were ready, they were given another chance. Also, all bands were paid for their services. (Devar 1998)

Musicians, it seems, could do little to influence the opinions of the advisory panel, and as such, many were unhappy.

> The audition people, who were they? What community leaders? They were put there, connection call [all were related]. What they knew about music? None of them were musicians. Now, how they gonna know whether you playing right chord or wrong chord? We had to shut our mouths and just play.

One of my informants who wished to remain anonymous stated that:

Those days, things were different. If those
guys [members of the advisory panel] had a con-
nection [family member whose ensemble was audi-
tioning], no problem. The rest of us
[ensembles] had to shut up. We knew what was
going on, but we didn't have a choice.

Another report indicates that:

Sunday morning was wedding time. These fullers
[members of the advisory panel] had the whole
week to call us, but they'll call us on a Sun-
day morning. We had to hire transport, organise
all the boys, rehearse like mad. Then they'll
tell us, we must come back in two weeks time.

One of my informants who wanted to "tell it like it

was" stated that:

Those bloody bastards had us exactly where they
wanted us. If they wanted us to jump, we
jumped. Organise some chow [food], put some dop
[alcohol] on the table, broadcast guaranteed.
You can put it down [quote me].

Payment for services, it seems, was also a problem.

Okay fair enough, we got paid. But it was a
pittance. It wasn't even enough to pay for
transport. Also, how we know how much was get-
ting pocketed in the station and whose pocket
it was going to?

Despite what they felt, musicians never turned down

an offer to perform on air. As I have stated ear-

lier, performances afforded musicians opportunities

to handle power and thus gave them control of their

destinies. Radio, the ultimate performance space, was thus a highly sought after performance opportunity. Reports indicate that between 1945 and 1972 hundreds of ensembles auditioned for spots on the Sunday morning programme, and many were successful. These ensembles included the Kalayvaner, Ranjeni, Linghum, Karshi, Sarasvathie and the Golden Lily Orchestras. Their details can be found in Appendix One.

Jugatheesan Devar who served as one of my principle informants stated that:

> I only became fully involved in radio after 1972, but the reason that many musicians were unhappy was because they felt they worked hard and deserved a chance. I heard some of them and most were very good. However, a lot of them needed much more work and didn't take too well to constructive criticism. Instead on harping on negative things, they should have spent more time on themselves. Many of them, the sound wasn't right. For many, pitching was a problem. Concerning the money, we had a budget for the year. We tried to get as many musicians in as possible. Sometimes the money wasn't enough. (1998)

Although the "Indian segment" was considered a highly sought-after performance space, there also existed the opinion that it was actually an integral part of the whole apartheid machinery. Supporters of this notion state that Indian music, like the musics of many other cultures, is an integral part of the

lifestyle of the people it represents. In South Africa, they believe, this notion was used by the apartheid government in its quest to emphasise separate development. Air-time, they state, was granted to the performance of Indian music as it was viewed by the Establishment as "belonging" to Indian people and as such, maintaining, if not reinforcing their Indianess. In other words, it was used as an effective political tool by the apartheid regime to further "Indianize" and thus de-westernize the image of Indian people. This, supporters believe, was the primary motivation behind Indian music on the regional airwaves before the seventies, and then on the national airwaves thereafter.

One could argue that if the above was indeed true, a daily, national dosage of Indian music would have been a more effective tool than the regional, weekly hour-long broadcast. This, it seems, did eventually occur to the government whose position on the matter resulted in a nationally-aired, full-time "Indian" radio station -- Radio Lotus --, and the inclusion of "Indian" programmes on national television in the 1980s.

If we agree with the position that the Indian music programme on radio was an integral part of the

apartheid ideology, then we must also agree that In-
dian subscription to this medium was actually part
of a process of appropriation: if musical perform-
ances provide opportunities for the handling of
power, then Indians, by performing on air, appropri-
ated this medium for their own purposes. This appro-
priation, it could be argued, partly abrogated the
power of the apartheid government. This would ex-
plain why "Indian" radio was well patronised even
though its very existence actually segregated South
African society.

Bill Freund in his discussion of Indian working
class of Durban states that:

> Their own vigour, the plasticity and ingenuity
> of their cultural and material responses to
> circumstance, has been applied to the peculiar
> institutions of South Africa to shape the rooms
> in which they dwell and the windows through
> which they look out on the broader world.
> (1995: 91)

The rooms and windows metaphor which Freund employs
to describe Indian perspectives is a particularly
useful one for the present discussion as well. One
could argue that if the Indian music programme was
one of the "peculiar institutions of South Africa",
as the theory proposed has indicated, then it shaped
Indian perspectives of India -- "the rooms in which

they dwell" --, and South Africa -- "the windows through which they look out". In other words, "Music in the Morning" was extremely influential in creating both an inward looking ethnic identity, and a resistance identity based on the appropriation of a performance space for the abrogation of the Establishment's power.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The study of Indian orchestral music in and around
the city of Durban between 1930 and 1970 illuminates
the larger picture of a group of individuals coming
to terms with the realities of life in an urban en-
vironment, individuals who were members of a minor-
ity group in an alien environment, and it focuses on
the strategies that they devised in order to mini-

mise the effects of racism and alienation. Prior to the thirties, i.e. the period which was character- ised by the migration of ex-indentured Indians from the sugar cane plantations of Natal, Indians were a fractured, disempowered and disenfranchised group comprising a number of sub-groups each with their own intragroup conflicts and concerns. This study has shown that one of the mediums through which In- dians sought to overcome the internal divisions be- tween their respective sub-groups as well as reconfigure their identities in the space of the city was through the development of networks, many of which were initially small and operated within the confines of the family, the temple or the neigh- bourhood. Later, other types of networks developed and these were based either on friendship or on trust. In other words, if the system of networks was to be thought of as three concentric circles, the smallest circle comprising the core would be the network based on kinship while the next would be the one based on friendship. The outer core would be the largest circle incorporating family, friends, friends of friends, people who visited the same tem- ple or mosque, or any other person who an individual may or may not know personally but who would be willing to help or provide financial or other sup- port should an occasion arise. The evidence suggests

that the system of networks existed at workplaces, in neighbourhoods, in business, in education and generally in any area where Indians were marginalised. The residents of Riverside, for instance, created a system of networks comprising Indian South African Christians, Muslims and Tamil-, Telegu- and Gujerati-speaking Hindus. Through these networks, the residents were able to create communal spaces and to unite people in these spaces. It was argued that cultural meanings became encoded in these communally constructed spaces which in turn contributed significantly to the identity of the people who occupied those spaces. Networks were thus survival mechanisms which were able through their very nature to breach internal barriers and consolidate relationships across class, religious and linguistic lines.

The present study of Indian popular music indicates that networks were important to the construction of cultural spaces. In the case of the Railway and Magazine Barracks, networks comprising musicians, family members and audiences were responsible for creating a reasonable living environment and providing a degree of stability in an area that was plagued by violence, insecurity, overcrowding, curfews and insanitary conditions. Dance dramas and

six-foot dances that took place in the Barracks, for instance, were extremely popular and well patronised forms of entertainment. As the evidence has suggested, dances and dramas were able to successfully unite people and consolidate relationships. Further, apart from them being primary sources of entertainment, they pointed the direction towards a sense of Indianess where Indians who found themselves in a hostile environment could feel "Indian" and celebrate together their Indianess.

The need for Indian South Africans to celebrate their ethnicity and to identify with India and not South Africa as "home" was partly inspired during the first half of this century by the racist attitudes and segregational legislation of the South African government. Laws such as the dreaded "3 pound tax law" of 1895, the Dealer's Licence Act of 1897, the Immigrant's Regulation Act of 1913 and the Durban Land Alienation Ordinance of 1924 were successful in marginalising Indians and reinforcing in them a sense of disempowerment and alienation. Other pieces of racially inspired legislation also contributed to a feeling of homelessness and foremost among these were the various injunctions that arose out of the Cape Town Agreement of 1927. In effect, the Establishment sought through a repatriation

scheme to coerce Indians to "emigrate" back to India. Those who did not subscribe to the scheme were forced to conform to western notions of living making assimilation and Anglicisation the only options available to them during the thirties.

It was during this period of uncertainty that Indian "talkies" appeared in Durban. As a new entertainment medium, the sound film was able to unite people and consolidate relationships in a new way in that it was both inclusive and exclusive. In other words, since Indian "talkies" were made only in Indian languages, they excluded all other South African patronage, whilst on the other hand, since they were shown only in Indian cinemas, they were supported by *all* the Indian South African linguistic groups albeit at different times.

The Indian-western interplay that characterised Indian film and its music reflected the reality of Indian South African urban experience during the thirties. As one argument suggested, for Indian South Africans, the new music represented the bridging of two cultures which satisfied their Indian proclivities as well as their western aspirations. Indian South Africans by subscribing to film music were seen to be in tune with their environment

whilst at the same time, were able to embrace Indian
traditions.

In the absence of any direct contact with India
since the arrival of their forefathers, with the
state regarding them as second class citizens, and
with very few tangible connections with India, In-
dian South Africans used Indian film to create and
in some instances strengthen an imaginary link be-
tween their "world" -- South Africa -- and what they
now perceived to be their "home" -- India. Further,
having to come to terms with employment in an urban
environment, with the South African socio-political
landscape lacking structures that promoted intercul-
tural awareness and tolerance, as well as feeling
the absence of adequate recreational facilities, and
being forced to live on the margins of society, In-
dian film was also used as a means of both physical
and psychological escape from the harsh realities of
urban life, and indeed, life in South Africa. As one
informant indicated, the weekly visit to the cinema
provided people with an opportunity to use their
"Sunday best" and to rise above the conditions under
which they were forced to live. It was thus a social
occasion that provided an avenue for the practises
of otherness, glamour and fashion.

The music of Indian films while acting as an important source of creative expression also helped Indian South Africans internalise the idea of community formation. One of the primary ways in which it did this was through inspiring the formation of a large number of popular music ensembles comprising individuals and groups who otherwise would have had little in common. This was especially true of the formation of ensembles in areas such as Cato Manor, Clairwood and the Railway Barracks where relationships were forged across various barriers.

These ensembles -- which became known as orchestras -- attracted musicians for a variety of reasons. One of the most powerful of these was that it provided individuals with opportunities to acquire status and prestige. Thus, its appeal lay more in its ability to establish, reflect and enhance the images of individuals, than as an expressive platform. Becoming a member of an orchestra, it seems, was also an important way for individuals to forge links with an imagined space which many perceived to be their "home".

Performing film music in the forties and thereafter became empowering acts of personal restoration and group transformation. It allowed people temporary

respite from the poverty and harsh realities of their everyday life and, as our description has shown, provided them opportunities to handle power thus placing a degree of control in their hands, something that was not possible in other spheres of their lives. In an environment filled with prejudicial attitudes and uncertainty, performance became an empowering act which contributed significantly to the formation of a positive social identity for both musicians and audiences.

Performing film music also offered musicians opportunities which were unavailable in other areas of their lives. One of these was the opportunity for them to accumulate "symbolic capital" (Erlmann 1996: 226). In other words, as prospects for advancement were extremely limited for Indian South Africans in their full-time jobs, performances became compensatory strategies which enabled them to experience a degree of power and which provided them with possibilities for making "progress" in what was perceived to be a crucial area of their lives.

Performance also provided Indian South Africans opportunities for creating and reinforcing links with India. As the discussion has indicated, for many Indian South Africans, India had evolved into a "home"

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in the sense of it being an imagined place of refuge. Performances of Indian film music thus became imaginary journeys "home" making "home" a condition rather than a space. For Indian South Africans, India and Indian traditions became shields from the destructive impact of South Africa and South African circumstances. Film music by providing links with "home" and material for creative expression, also inspired the creation of music-based networks that contributed positively to the survival of the diaspora. Film music and the ensembles that performed it, therefore, were crucial sources of identity during a period that was riddled with uncertainty. It was not surprising, then, that between the early 1940s and the late 1960s, Indian South African weddings, concerts and other social occasions were characterised by the performance of Indian film music.

This paper was based on the premise that performance is a valuable historical text, and it posited that the musical structures and performance practices of the ensembles under study encoded vital information about shared socio-political experiences and the Indian South African identities that emerged in the period roughly between 1930 and 1970. Whilst this hypothesis was indebted in part to studies of other

musics in South Africa, the data presented in this paper has in fact supported it. For example, the majority of Indian South African women were considered custodians of tradition and, as a result, were not able to pursue westernising or any other alternatives. In the case of women performers, the majority performed only as vocalists and not as instrumentalists. Most women were denied access to any sort of music education owing to the domestic roles prescribed for them by their families, and most women never enjoyed an income which allowed them to purchase instruments. Further, apart from women vocalists who featured on imported Indian records, there were no other visible women role models in performance. Since rehearsals were conducted occasionally on Saturday afternoons but mostly during week-day evenings, women were denied access to such rehearsals as they were forced to tend to household chores and the needs of the rest of their families. Finally, almost every Indian women musician during the forties and fifties was married or engaged to be married, with the majority being married to men who were involved to some degree with popular music performance. Thus, they were introduced to the world of performance by their husbands. In contrast to these women, other Indian South African women had no such access or approval and were thus unable to actively

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pursue musical interests or engage in musical careers.

Other areas of performance in which shared socio-political experiences and Indian South African identities were particularly evident include the Hindu wedding, the variety concert and the radio broadcast, and performances in these spaces were facilitators of Indian identity. It was clear that into performances were interwoven the aspirations, value systems and outlooks of both performers and audiences. Our discussion thus revealed as much about the lives and experiences of people as it did about their music.

In the case of Hindu weddings, it was apparent in the dress, repertoire, names and *modus operandi* of ensembles that conscious efforts were made at bridging the gap between "home" -- India, Indian music, Indian film, Indian culture, Indian traditions and Indian instruments -- and the "world" -- life in South Africa, western instruments, western aspirations and western dress.

In our treatment of the radio broadcast as a performance space, one argument presented was that radio was a state-controlled medium and air-time was

granted to Indians in order to emphasise separate development by "Indianizing" and thus de-westernizing the images of Indian South Africans. It was also argued that if this was indeed the case, then Indian subscription to radio as a performance space actually included appropriation in the sense that broadcast performances provided yet another opportunity for the handling of power by the musicians involved. Thus in these broadcasts, Indian South Africans partly abrogated the intention and the power of the apartheid government.

In the case of variety concerts, and the posters that advertised them, it was clear that both quite accurately reflected the reality of Indian life in South Africa. Posters, for example, were filled with symbols, slogans, icons, terms, phrases and photographs that represented Hollywood and Bollywood, multiple worlds and multiple identities, and the dialectic relationship between Indian men vs Indian women, western dress vs Indian saris, English titles vs Indian lyrics, original composition vs reproduced music and photographs as representations vs photographs as icons. Emerging from reflections on both concerts and posters was clear insight into Indian South African perceptions of a Utopian Indian South

African identity as well as unique ways in which Indians viewed the "home" and the "world".

It is thus clear that the wide range of spaces devised by both audiences and musicians during the period under discussion connected them in multiple ways with both South Africa and India. The creation of and negotiation within these spaces it seems afforded them opportunities to disengage themselves from the oppressive effects of the apartheid Establishment. From their dress and repertoire to their appropriation of air-time, the evidence presented has suggested that both performers and audiences invested these spaces with positive meaning and agency as well as attempted to establish links with "home" (India, Indian film and Indian music) in order to create a shelter against the invading forces of the "world" (South Africa, racial segregation and alienation).

Given that the period between 1930 and 1970 was a volatile period characterised by a dynamic political situation and shifting identities, it was also an important period of communal space construction and community formation among Indian South Africans. Music was an important medium of expression during this period which also provided Indian South Afri-

cans with opportunities to forge identities and create a degree of stability in an environment filled with uncertainty, prejudicial attitudes and racial segregation. Perhaps one of the most important lessons to be learned from this study in the context of present day South Africa is that sources of identity and stability do already exist in communities throughout South Africa. The challenge however lies not only in identifying them, but devising ways in which they can serve as resources that can be harnessed in the process of post-apartheid reconstruction.

APPENDIX ONE

ORCHESTRAS FORMED IN NATAL

(1930-1970)

The following table contains details of Indian popular ensembles active in the period between 1930 and 1970. Expanding considerably on an earlier work (Veeran 1996: 108), it details information concerning both North and South Indian ensembles. In cases where the information received about a particular ensemble could not be confirmed, the ensemble is included in a list at the end of the table.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Bala Vinodha Orchestra (BVO)	Cato Manor: Mayville Hill	Harry Arunachalam (clarinet), A. Perumal [aka Willy Thomas] (tenor banjo), Kistraj Raghavan (violin), 'Tabla' Gwainsamy (tabla) [performed with group for a short while], Kenny Kersaval (harmonium/ vocal)	1. Active from 1942 to the late 1960s 2. Rehearsed at Arunachalam's home in an area known as Mayville Hill (opposite Mayville Hotel) 3. Arunachalam began recording with the Shalimar lable in 1949 together with other members. 4. Kenny Kersaval, before his tragic death in 1955, recorded 2 pieces with Shalimar in 1952. 5. The Group Areas Act of 1950, which dispersed members, made it impossible for the group to continue after the late 1960s.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Bharathi	Railway Barracks	Sonny Gengan, Billy Gengan, B.K.Reddy (tabla), Sonny Lott (violin)	Sonny Lott (who worked in the 'prestigous' position as the foreman at Joko Tea) provided rehearsal space at his home. He was also one of the group known as the Lott Bros. (Soobrey and Rathnam being his brothers) who enjoyed a measure of success in the Durban entertainment scene during the 30s.
Buxons	Central Durban: Bond St.	Cassim, Dawood Suleiman (violin), Ronnie Singh, Vishnu, Rabin Heera (clarinet) [pupil of K.S.Naicker], Sonny Govender (violin)	1. Active in the 40s. 2. Band performed both North and South Indian film music.
City Nights	Clairwood	Reggie [leader]	This ensemble only performed North Indian popular music. One of the participants of this study stated that one of this group's unique characteristics was their introduction. He states that the leader of the ensemble always opened by saying, "Hello, my name is Reggie and these are my boys, let's go boys." Thereafter, the band began their unusual signature tune, a Kwela song.
City Youth	Central Durban: Victoria St.	M.Ganas Pather (clarinet/ saxophone) [pupil of K.S.Naicker], Narain (harmonium)	1. Rehearsed behind Simon's Cafè in Victoria St. 2. Many members from Puntans Hill (Telegu-speaking community).
Columbian	Railway and Corporation Barracks	George Stevens (accordion), Harry Reddy (trumpet), Balu (saxophone), C. Mognambal (vocal), C. Ganas (violin), Mickey Chitray (tabla), Harry Chetty (clarinet), Sam Abrahams (saxophone)	1. Described as having created a new sound at the time, i.e. they introduced intricate harmonic patterns and interesting arrangements into their repertory. 2. When group disbanded, musicians that left joined either the National or the Travancore Orchestras.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Eastern Serenaders	Clairwood	A. Khan (accordion)	1. Active in the fifties and sixties. 2. Repertoire drew mainly from North Indian film music.
Ghanga Devi	Mayville: Standard Rd.	Billy Naidoo (clarinet), Cyril Muthusamy (secretary), Shama Naidoo (violin), Frank Muthusamy (violin), Gansen Tommy (harmonium) [Kistraj Raghavan's brother-in-law], Nad Govender (saxophone), Billy Rungan (tabla/double bass), Ganas Naicker (harmonium), 'Tabla' Gwainsamy (tabla), Dick Rungan (manager)	1. Repertoire of G. N. Balasubramanium.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Golden Lily (GLO)	Mayville: 126 Trimborne Rd.	Harry Murugasen (violin), Sonny Murugasen (clarinet) [style of clarinet playing modelled on the style of K.S.Naicker], James Murugasen (tabla), Roy Murugasen (accordion), Denny Veeran (trumpet), Jonny Veeran (guitar), Percy Veeran (clarinet), Radha Peters (vocal), Iris Pillay (vocal), George Chokalingum (saxophone), Srinivasan Sonny Pillay (violin), Ganas Roy [aka 'India' Ganas] (vocal), R. Manilal (harmonium), Sonny Naidoo (trumpet) [c.1950]	1. Family band based in their home in Mayville. 2. 1940-1970 3. Disbanded -- Group Areas Act 4. Group toured Natal extensively in the 50s and 60s to perform at weddings and shows.
Hari Narayana	Railway Barracks	S. Nandha (veena), Tony Moon (vocal), Bell Moonsamy, Thatoomarie (flute), Moses (violin), Ratty (tabla)	An orchestra active in the 40s but comprising musicians from the 'older' generation, i.e. musicians that were popular in the early 30s. The group lasted less than 5 years. The musicians thereafter performed on a freelance basis.
Indian Highlights	Overport: Brickfield Rd.	Danpal Naidoo (clarinet), Gansen (tenor banjo), Sonny Govender (violin)	Active in the 50s

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Indian National (INO)	Central Durban	Vadi Naicker (trumpet) [leader], A. Khan (accordion), Devar (clarinet) [pupil of K. S. Naicker]	1. Active in the 50s. 2. Band performed in a concert in honor of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II at Curries Fountain on the 2 June 1953.
Kalaivani	Pieter-maritzburg	Nadaraj Moodaliar (accordion), Soobiah (clarinet), Yanum (vocal), 'Kalaimani' A. Govindsamy Pillay (founder)	Moodaliar converted to Christianity and left for India to preach in 1950. Group later disbanded.
Kalaivani	Mt Edgecombe	Ganas Pillay (leader) [Grandson of M. Rungiah -- the leader of one of the first Indian popular music ensembles]	1. Group made up of sugar mill workers living in the barracks 2. The group continues today under the leadership of one of Pillay's grandsons.
Karshi	Railway Barracks	Peter Jack (clarinet) [Leader], Andrew Chengan (accordion), Simon Peter (accordion), George Chokalingum (saxophone), James Isaac (guitar), Willy (accordion), Billy Kisten (tenor banjo)	1. Band formed to serve the needs of Christian Indians (1946). Still in existence under same leader. 2. In 1946, Peter Jack composed 2 pieces which were sung by George Chokalingum and Patricia Henry. Renditions of these pieces were sent to India with Nadarajan Moodaliar where they were entered in the Gospel Hit Parade (Madras). Performing on these recordings were: 'Tabla' Gwainsamy, Kistraj Raghavan, Billy Kisten (tenor banjo) and others. 3. The recordings were made at the Virginia Lee recording studios in Broad Street, Durban. 4. The band performed and still performs in the Ranjeni Orchestra/Sarma Brothers tradition.
Linghum	Clairwood		1. One of the bands still in existence. 2. Many of the members left Star Orchestra to join this group.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Manoghari	Central Durban: Lorne St.	Kanabadhi Moodliyar (clarinet), Dixon (tenor banjo), Sonny Naidoo (Manager), Nad Govender (trumpet), 'Pipes' (saxophone)	Kanabadhi is purported to be the first Indian musician to use the Boehm system clarinet (unlike others who were using the simple system clarinet at the time)
Mayfair	Clairwood: Dhayal Rd:	M.G.Paul (saxophone), Sonny Govender (violin), Sam (harmonium), Daddy Govender (violin), Thangavel Govender (drums)	Active in the 50s
Merry Melodies	Central Durban	A. Khan (accordion), Vadi Naicker (trumpet)	Many of the members also played in the western dance band, the Master Keys.
Metro	Mayville	Ranjith (saxophone / clarinet) [leader], Balraj (accordion), Dhalip (clarinet), Ishwar (mandolin)	This ensemble performed only North Indian popular music.
Nadhan	Pieter-maritzburg	Bill (keyboard), Len (clarinet / guitar / dholak) [Len, nephew of the Durban clarinettist Rabin Heera, was the leader], Sudheer (vocals)	This group performed only North Indian popular music.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
National	Clairwood	Harry Reddy, Balu (saxophone), Gopaul, R. Balakrishna (vocal), Percy Veeran (clarinet) [c. 1970], Johnny Veeran (guitar)[c. 1970]	1. This ensemble performed popular music but concentrated on semi-classical Indian music and devotional songs in the 50s and 60s. 2. The group is still in existence and now performs only film songs at weddings and concerts.
New India (NIO)	Central Durban	V.G.Pillay (clarinet) [leader], V.G. 'Bones' Naidoo (violin) [associated with ballroom dancing], Mognambal (vocals), G.G. Reddy (tabla), Vadi Naicker (trumpet) [started in 1943], A.Khan (accordion), Madhavan Nair (vocal/ harmonium) [1946], Gopalan Govender (mrdangam) [1940].	
Olympic	Puntan's Hill	Vadi Pillay (violin)	1. Active in the 40s 2. Most of the members were Telegu - speaking Indians.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
The Railway Youth Orchestral Club [RYOC]	Railway Barracks	Founding members were: M. P. Naidoo, S. G. Naicker [Assistant Secretary], A. S. Chetty, K. Govindraj, S. N. Chetty [Honorary Treasurer], P. K. Dass, R. Ganas, M. G. Reddy (Honorary Secretary], M. M. Muthoo, M. M. Moodley [Assistant Treasurer], Miss R. Samathanam, M. S. Naidoo, M. N. Govender [Manager], M. Gopaul, M. M. Moodley, C. N. Abbai, P. Chinniah, M. M. George, Narsingh Naidoo [President], K. S. Naicker [leader], S. R. Devar [Honorary Life President], A. S. Lott, V. Kisten Pillay, Gengappa Naicker, K. M. Pillay	1. One of the first groups to emerge after the Papiah Bros. (1935) 2. Name changed to the Rangeni Orchestra in 1938 after the group decided on the need for a shorter name [see below].
Rajendra Sounds	Pieter-maritzburg	Morris (saxophone/clarinet) [leader]	This band played only North Indian popular music.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Ranjeni	Magazine Barracks	K. S. Naicker (clarinet) [leader in 1938, pupil of trumpeter Dickey Jeevanantham], Gopalan Govender (mrdangam)[joined in 1943], Peter Jack [clarinet 1940 - 1946], Billy Gengan (harmonium) [joined the band in 1947 and later led in 1952-1958], Madhavan Nair (accordion / harmonium) [started in 1952, led group in 1958], Billy Kisten (tenor banjo), Srinivasan Sonny Pillay (violin) [Arumugam Pillay's brother (violin teacher)], Loganathan Pillay (saxophone), Kisten Naidoo (clarinet), Nadarajan Naidoo (clarinet), Pat Krishnan (trumpet) [pupil of Dickey Jeevanantham], Samadhanam (vocalist) [aka the "Nightingale of SA". She joined the group in 1940]	1. Musicians suggest that this was the first orchestra to play popular music after the Papiah Brothers. 2. Seems to have modelled itself on the the Glenn Miller/Benny Goodman big band tradition and the Papiah Bros. 3. Formerly known as the Railway Youth Orchestra. 4. Contributed to the Bengal Famine fund (India) by performing at a concert held at the Orient Hall in Durban during the fifties. Also raised funds for the Friends of the Sick Association (FOSA). 6. In 1946 the Anti-Segregational Council and the Natal Indian Congress held a show at the City Hall called "Song of India" featuring the Ranjeni. "Song of India" thereafter toured. Later, with impressario Yuseph 'Kat' Kathrada and members of the BVO, the following shows were held at the Durban City Hall around 1950: "Songtime" and "Sing Baby Sing". 7. Band rehearsed in Mr Bell's (first manager) home in Umgeni Rd. and later at Billy Gengan's home in Prince Edward Street. When he passed away, the group was given space free of charge by the Natal Tamil Vedic Society at the Vedic Hall's Council Room in Carlisle St. (1960 - 1992). Presently Gopalan Govender still uses this venue for his mrdangam classes. 8. K. S. Naicker is purported to be the first musician to introduce the clarinet into the popular music ensembles of South Africa. 9. Around 1950, the band charged 5 pounds for an engagement. 10. Group disbanded in 1992 after 57 years.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Rathnas	Central Durban		This group played only North Indian popular music. One of their highlights was performing for the South African radio personality, Sonnybhai Boodhram, on his return from his studies from India where it is reported that he studied under the Indian playback singer, Mohammed Rafi.
Regal	Mayville: Candella Road	G. Surajpaul (accordion / saxophone) [aka Bhai; leader 1953 - 1975], J.Mohan (bongo drums, double bass and later as leader, played the guitar) [leader 1976 - 1994], Baljith (drums), M. Dhilraj (saxophone), Umra Sew (guitar), Inderjeeth (violin), Sewnarain (violin), Dhowlath (mandolin), P. Manilal (clarinet), D.Shankar (vocal)	The Regal Orchestra which changed its name in the mid-seventies to the Regal Entertainers, was started in June 1953. The last leader, J. Mohan, started with the group by playing the bongo drums at the age of ten. He then went onto the double bass (playing it while standing on a chair) and finally led the group in 1976. The band went on to win numerous awards for Best Band, Best Vocalist and Best Instrumentalist between 1976 and 1994.
Saraswathie	Central Durban: Brook Street	Rabin Heera (clarinet) [leader], Kishore Premjee [aka 'Bunny'] (accordion), J.Mohan (guitar), Singh (mandolin), Rusty Mohammed (vocal), H. M. Roy (vocal), Sam (saxophone) [Rabin Heera's brother]	This ensemble performed only North Indian popular music. The group began performing from the early fifties until the late sixties and toured the Natal midlands towards the latter part of the sixties. Rabin Heera, their leader, was a very popular clarinettist, and many of the participants of this study state that audiences who would normally not attend a function would do so due to his performing there. Participants also state that Rusty Mohammed was a popular vocalist whose imitation of the Indian playback singer, Mohammed Rafi, was remarkable.

Name of Orchestra and Common Abbreviation if any	Area of Origin	Personnel *	Other Info.**
Sarojini	Central Durban: Leopold · St.	Reggie Naidoo (accordion), Ramadu (clarinet) [pupil of K. S. Naicker], Sonny (double bass), Pakiri (drums), Sonny 'Taxi Driver' Naidoo (trumpet)	Rehearsed behind Simon's Cafe in Victoria Street.
Silver Star	Cato Manor: Bristow Road	Shama Naidoo (violin), Jimmy Naidoo, Barney Nagan (clarinet), S. P. Chetty (tabla/vocal), Kisten Chetty (drums), Peter Naidoo (manager), Ganas Naicker (harmonium), Gwain Naicker (trumpet), Lighty Naidoo (guitar), Johnny Pillay (guitar)	1. 1948 - c.1970 2. Many of the members also played with the Ghanga Devi Orchestra.
Soorsurthie Nightingales	Northdene	Danny (accordion), Johnny (guitar), Raj (dholak)	This ensemble performed only North Indian film songs.
Star	Clairwood	R. Muthu Pillay (leader), Madhavan Nair (harmonium) [1940]	One of the first orchestras to perform original music for 2 plays, viz. Kovilan and Kanagie, and Harichandra, both starring Muthu Pillay.
Young India	Clairwood South: Collingwood Rd.	Harry Chetty (clarinet), Sonny (violin), Andrew Chengan (accordion), Benny Gengan (clarinet) [leader], Morgan Gengan (vocal)	Described as a group of youngsters. Group disbanded when one of the key members died tragically.

* This column reflects both the names of the founding members of the ensemble and also the musicians who featured prominently during the life of the ensemble. Since this list is based entirely on the recollections of surviving members of the ensembles, it cannot be considered complete. Certain names may not have been recalled. If surnames or in some instances, first names of musicians are missing, it is because the people I interviewed did not remember them.

** This column reflects details that distinguishes one ensemble from another. Elements include items such as the dates the ensembles were active, the venues they played, the concerts they gave, and other information.

NAMES OF OTHER INDIAN POPULAR MUSIC ENSEMBLES ACTIVE IN THE PERIOD BEFORE 1970

Asian Orchestra

Clairwood Orchestra: Muthu Pillay (harmonium), Morna Naidoo (vocals). Active in the early 40s.

Goodwill Orchestra

Highlight Entertainers: Hindi ensemble from Clairwood, Houghton Road.

Kalayvaner Orchestra: Ensemble who named themselves after N.S. "Kalayvaner" Krishnan (an Indian actor and musician). Band was based in Mt. Edgecombe.

Merry Melodies (Mt. Edgecombe)

Merry Melodies (Pietermaritzburg)

Mohani Orchestra

New Theatre Orchestra

Odeon Orchestra (Pietermaritzburg)

Parasathie Orchestra (Central Durban)

Prospect Orchestra (Riverside)

Puntan's Hill Orchestra: Comprised members of the Telegu-speaking community. Group led by Ramadu on clarinet.

Rossburgh Sarasvathie Orchestra

Sharda Orchestra: Hindi ensemble from Victoria Street.

Thilai Nadaraja Orchestra (Riverside)

Travancore Orchestra

Vijay Orchestra

Young Men's Vedic Orchestra: Group led by a Mr Reddy (father of one of the first female singers of Indian popular music, viz. Mognambal Reddy).

SOURCES: Veeran. D, Jack, Arunachalam, Naidoo S, Naidoo T, Govender G, Govender S, Nair, Mohan (1996-1998).

APPENDIX TWO

A PARTIALLY ANNOTATED LIST OF WESTERN DANCE BANDS

THAT WERE FORMED BY, AND FEATURED,

INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN MUSICIANS

(1945 - 1970)

The following table consists of Indian South African ensembles that performed western dance music. The list is based on the recollections of musicians that performed in these ensembles, and on sources such as brochures and magazines. Where a column is left blank, the information received could not be confirmed.

Name of Dance Band	Popular Perfor-mance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Ace Swingsters	Private functions in and around Durban and Pieter-maritz-burg	Denny Veeran (drums), John 'Bull' (accordion), Roy Naidoo (saxophone), Aden (rhythm guitar), Thomas (double bass)	The Ace Swingsters were especially active during the mid-fifties in Pietermaritzburg. Avoiding the night-club route, the band performed mostly at wedding receptions, birthday parties and private dances.
Ambassa-dors Sextet		Sonny Pretorius (leader / saxophone), Raymond Kress (bass guitar)	
Astrolites		Authur Isaacs (drums), Kenneth 'Porky' Kress (piano)	
Blue Champagne		Morris Joseph (drums)	

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Blue Ricks	Resident band at the Himalaya Hotel in central Durban during the early sixties. The band was also enjoyed a considerable following in Port Elizabeth and East London.	Tony Harris (saxophone), Morris Joseph (drums), Brian Pillay (rhythm guitar), Dennis Green (piano), Henry Paul (bass guitar), Lawrence Andrews (percussion), M. H. Seedat (manager), M. N. Pather (tour manager)	Ensemble formed in 1942 by Tony Harris and Lawrence Andrews. The group won the M.N. Pather trophy at the 1959 Natal Dance Band Championships held at the Durban City Hall -- the event was judged by the American jazz musician, John Mehegan. Apart from night-clubs, the ensemble also performed at the 1957 and 1959 Natal Ballroom Championships. The Blue Ricks performed for a number of ballroom champions including Alf Davies, John Wells, and Jock McGregor.
Blue Jewels		Micky Beaunoir (piano), Danny Pillay (saxophone), Victor Nundoo (bass guitar), Arnold Richards (manager), Ernest Kress (rhythm guitar), Authur Isaacs (drums), Cyril Sigamoney (rhythm guitar)	In the mid-seventies, the ensemble was commissioned by the South African Broadcasting Corporation to compose and perform music for a local film entitled "Chicken Run" which was shot in Mauritius. The musicians who performed in this production included: Cyril Padayachee, Loxy Padayachee, Dean Padayachee, Vickey Padayachee, Barney Benjamin, Joe Peters, David Williams, and Ravi Govender on percussion.
Bob Ellis Sextet		Bob Ellis (drums), Kenneth 'Porky' Kress (piano), Raymond Kress (bass guitar), Arnold Richards (manager), Sonny Pretorius (saxophone)	

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Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Calypsos	.	Kadras John (saxophone), Bobby Sigamoney (bass guitar), Kitty Nagan (drums), Mack Naidoo (rhythm guitar and percussion), Leslie Peter (rhythm guitar), Edward Louis Saunders (piano), Cyril Sigamoney (banjo)	Ensemble formed in April 1957 by Kadras John, Bobby Sigamoney and Mack Naidoo. The band was a runner-up at the 1959 Natal Dance Band Championships, and took fourth place at the 1960 Natal Dance Band Contest. In the late sixties the band began recording their first album entitled *Calypso A Go-Go*.
Casaloma Swingsters		Richard Stephen (drums)	
Cracker Jacks		Richard Stephen (saxophone)	In 1945, this band was led by Stephen.
Crescendos	Began performing at the Bon Chance night-club and later at the Paradise night-club.	Krish Pillay (saxophone), Eric Harris (piano), Benny Ragubeer (bass guitar), Seelan Naidoo (lead guitar), Krish Govender (percussion), Michael John (vocals)	The Crescendos began performing in 1960 and can still be heard at the Island Hotel in Isipingo – Durban (March 1998).
Dixieland Rocksters		Bruce Frank (drums)	

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Dukes Combo	Swaziland (3 months during the sixties); Johannesburg (6 months during the sixties); resident band at the Himalaya, the Butterworth, the Belgica and the Athlone hotels in Durban. Also spent a considerable time at the Green Cat nightclub in Verulam, and the Dallas Disco in Durban. Presently resident at the Pelican Hotel in Chatsworth, Durban (May 1998)	Dee Sharma Roopanand (saxophone), Teddy Peters (drums), Sydney Caine (vocal / flute), Sagie Naidoo (bass guitar), Eugene Mkhize (rhythm and lead guitar), Vasie Naidoo (piano), Brian Thusi (trumpet), Philip Thusi (trombone), George Mari (trumpet), Errol Arunachallam (guitar), Neville Ganes (guitar), Gabriel Joseph (trumpet), Ronnie Dallas (vocals), John David, Gordon Padayachee, Robin Caine, Dicky Frank	The Dukes Combo which began performing in the early sixties under the leadership of Dee Roopanand, toured extensively during that same period. In the late sixties, they released 14 records including *Dukes by Request*, *Latin and Beat*, *Shabaash* and *East Tango*. Teddy Peters still performs dance music with his band, Tropical Heat . His band are resident at the popular Trawler's Wharf night-club on the Durban waterfront. Sydney Cane continued to perform but switched from western dance music to Indian classical music. He passed away early in 1998. Vasie Naidoo started Creme in the early eighties and continues to perform with this group. The Dukes Combo which is still under the leadership of Roopanand, continues to be a popular choice of ensemble in Durban. Later this year (1998), they will release their first compact disc.

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
El Remos	Railway Hotel and the Bon Chance. night-club	Sagren Pillay (bass guitar), Harry Jacobs (Rhythm guitar / leader), Elaine Fredericks (organ), Tucker Parson (saxophone), Danny Martin (vocals), Kallel George (drums)	The El Remos was formed in 1965 by Harry Jacobs.
Five Pennies	Resident band at the 'Rainbow Room' of the Moon Hotel in Clair-wood, Durban during the sixties	Danny Pillay (saxophone), Barron Herbst (piano), Bob Ellis (drums), Victor Nundoo (bass guitar), Errol Johnson (rhythm guitar), Arnold Richards (manager)	The group was formed by Arnold Richards when the Moon Hotel required a resident band.
Gamblers		Errol Johnson (vocals)	
Gold Medallions	Resident band at the Cinder-ella Ballroom in the Railway Hotel, Isipingo	Krish Pillay (tenor saxophone), Theo Chetty (lead guitar), Robbie Naidu (manager), Munna George (drums), Harry Chetty, Dino Chetty (bass guitar), Steve Frank	
Happy Hearts		Bob Ellis (drums)	

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Inter-mezzos	Resident band at the Club Lotus in the 1960s.	Lionel Pillay (piano), Jonathan Harris (saxophone), Claude George (rhythm guitarist), Eddie Samuels (drums / manager), Gerald George (bass guitar), Len Moodley (drums)	In the 1961 Natal Open Dance Band Contest brochure, the Intermezzos claimed that they were one of the first Indian bands to play in a "European" night-club on the Durban beach front. The band was founded by Eddie Samuels. Lionel Pillay (piano) performed with a number of international artists including Tony Scott, Herby Mann and Oscar Peterson.
J. Martins' Bluebirds		Richard Stephen (saxophone)	In 1943, this band was led by Stephen.
Jazz Minstrels		Henry Paul (double bass), Bob Ellis (drums), Munna George (drums)	The Jazz Minstrels were also known as the Swing Cadets.
Jazz Serenaders		Richard Stephen (saxophone)	Stephen led the Jazz Serenaders in 1949.
Key Toppers		Errol Johnson (vocals)	
Les Vinden's Dance Band		Eddie Samuels (drums)	
Maracaibos		G. Morgan (bass guitar)	
Master Keys	Cape Town, Lourenco Marques (now known as Maputo)	Edgar J. Royeppen (alto saxophone / leader), Rodney Somasundram (tenor saxophone), Daniel Marrian (rhythm guitar), John Harris (piano), Percy Naidoo (vocals / percussion), David Royeppen (bass guitar), Bobby Naidoo (drums)	The Master Keys recorded and broadcasted over Lourenco Marques during the late fifties. In 1955, they won the coveted Mills Floating Trophy, and in 1958, they were placed first at the Natal Dance band championships.

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Melodians		Morris Joseph (drums), Micky Beaunoir (piano)	
Metronomes		Victor Nundoo (double bass)	
Modern-aires		Raymond Kress (bass guitar), Ernest Kress (rhythm guitar)	
New Yorkers		G. Morgan (double bass), Cyril Sigamoney (banjo)	
Ray Kress Quintet		Sonny Pretorius (saxophone), Raymond Kress (bass guitar), Ernest Kress (rhythm guitar), Authur Isaacs (drums), Kenneth 'Porky' Kress (piano)	Most of the members of this ensemble performed with the Bob Ellis Sextet breaking ties with Ellis around 1960. The band began playing in and around Natal thereafter. They entered the annual Natal Open Dance Band contest in 1961.
Rhythm Blue Birds		Richard Stephen (saxophone), G. Morgan (bass guitar), Micky Beaunoir (piano), Jona Pather (drums), Cyril Sigamoney (rhythm guitar)	Like the Ray Kress Quintet, most of the members of the Rhythm Blue Birds came from other bands. As a group, they substituted for resident bands at Durban hotels, and entered the annual Natal Open Dance Band contest in 1961.
Rhythm Play Boys		Gerald George (bass guitar), Authur Isaacs (drums)	
Rhythm Rascals		Victor Nundoo (double bass)	

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Rhythm Swingsters	Resident band at the Hotel Sonna .	Manivel Pillay (saxophone / clarinet / flute), Ronald John (piano), Bertie Vinden (bass guitar), Bruce Frank (drums), Lorrie Andrews (rhythm guitar)	Manivel Pillay who was also the leader of this group, was the son of Mathiemugan Pillay, a famous Indian playwright and actor. Pillay studied western classical music under the trumpeter, Dicky Jeevanantham, and played a number of instruments including piano and drums.
Sam's Latin Kings	Resident Band at the Admiral Hotel in Durban during the sixties, and were later the resident band at the Moon Hotel in Clairwood - Durban	Samuel Abrahams (saxophone), Oswald Peter (rhythm guitar), Edgar Peter (bass guitar), Munna George (drums), Allan Abrahams (piano), Brian Pillay (guitar), Gordon Godfrey (piano), David Jack (manager)	Samuel Abrahams who began playing clarinet for the Rhythm Quavers Quintet at the Golden Stairs Club, was influenced by the music of the late Freddy Gardiner. He later began playing the saxophone and started his own band, Sam's Latin Kings. In 1956, Sam's Latin Kings won the Himalaya Floating Trophy for their best musical arrangement of a cover song, and the Mills Floating Trophy for the best band. In 1959, they were placed first at the Natal Non-European Jazz Contest held in Pietermaritzburg. A year later, they won the Natal Open Dance Band Contest.
San Remos		Petros Msomi (saxophone), Tony Andrews (rhythm guitar), Frank Pillay (percussion), George Pillay (bass guitar), Lenny Somasundram (piano), Gona George (drums), Vasie Naidoo (manager)	The San Remos was founded by Petros Msomi and Vasie Naidoo in 1958. Gona George, the drummer, was the youngest brother of Gamby and Munna George who performed with Stardust and Sam's Latin Kings respectively. Gamby George emigrated to Sweden in the early sixties owing to the pressures of apartheid on musicians in South Africa.

Name of Dance Band	Popular Performance Venues	Personnel *	Other Information**
Santiagos		Lionel Peters (piano), C. P. Peter (saxophone), Bridglall (accordion), Allen Thomas (rhythm guitar), Krish Naidoo (bass guitar), Shan Govender (drums), Leslie David (percussion / manager)	Group began performing around 1960. Most of the members were students of Winifred Nundoo.
Stardust		Bob Ellis (drums), Kadras John (saxophone), Gamby George (drums), David Jack (manager), Edgar Peter (double bass), Willy Thomas	Gamby George who emigrated to Sweden in the sixties, has been teaching music there since.
Sundowners			Group formed in 1960 and performed in a number of broadcasts over Lourenco Marques. One of their first big performances was on the show, Margate Variety.
Swing Cadets		Munna George (drums)	The Swing Cadets later became known as the Jazz Minstrels.
Swing Maestros		Micky Beaunoir (piano)	
Twilight Serenaders		Richard Stephen (banjo)	

* This column reflects both the names of the founding members of the ensemble and also the musicians who featured prominently during the life of the ensemble. Since this list is based entirely on the recollections of surviving members of the ensembles, it cannot be considered complete. Certain names may not have been recalled. If surnames or in some instances, first names of musicians are missing, it is either because the people I interviewed did not remember them, or the written sources I consulted did not refer to them.

** This column reflects details that distinguished one ensemble from another. Elements include items such as dance band competitions that ensembles participated in, details of key members, the concerts they gave and other performance-related activities.

SOURCES: Veeran D,. Sharma, Abrahams (1997); Natal Open Dance Band Contest (1961); Blue Ricks (1959).

APPENDIX THREE

A PARTIAL LIST

OF PASSIVE RESISTERS AND

THOSE WHO SYMPATHISED WITH

THE SATHYAGRAHA MOVEMENT

(1906 - 1914)

Aizar, Subramania (Sir)

Alexander, Morris

Aswat, Ebrahim Ismail

Badat, A. M.

Bawazeer, Imam Abdool Cadir: Chairman of the

Hamidia Islamic Society.

Besant, Annie (Mrs)

Bhikji

Bhyat, Amod Moosa

Bibi, Hanifa

Budree, Sivpujan

Cachalia, Ahmed Mohamed: Chairman of the Transvaal

British Indian Association who spent a number

of periods in prison for his part in the

passive resistance movement.

Chandavarkar (Lady): Member of the Bombay Indian Women's Organisation.

Chettiar, V. A.: Chairman of the Johannesburg Tamil Benefit Society.

Christopher, Albert

Cupoosamy, Moonlight

Dayal, Bhawani (Mrs)

Desai, Pragji K.

Doctor, M. (Mrs)

Doke, J. J. (Rev): Gandhi's biographer.

Essackji, Moosa

Garach, Gokuldas

Gandhi, C. K.

Gandhi, C. K. (Mrs)

Gandhi, Gokaldas P.

Gandhi, Harilal M.

Gandhi, Maganlal K.

Gandhi, Maganlal (Mrs)

Gandhi, Mohandas, K.: Founder and leader of the passive resistance movement.

Gandhi, Ramdas

Gokhale, G. K.

Govindoo, R.

Govindrajiloo, V.

Haddon, T. R.: Member of the European committee of sympathisers in Johannesburg.

Harbatsingh: Died in prison during the passive resistance campaign.

Hosken, W. M.

Howard, John (Rev): Member of the Johannesburg European Committee.

Howard (Miss)

Isaac, Gabriel

Jhaveri, Omar Hajee Amod: Secretary of the Natal Indian Association.

Kallenbach, H.: Owner of Tolstoy Farm where resistance was organised. Also imprisoned in November 1913 as a passive resister.

Kunke, Mahomed Ebrahim

Lazarus, D. M. (Mrs)

Mahabeer (Mrs)

Mahomed, Hajee Dawad: President of the Natal Indian Association who spent a year in prison as a passive resister.

Mahomed, Jeewa

Medh, S. B.: Imprisoned eleven times during the passive resistance campaign.

Mehtab, Sheik (Mrs)

Merriman, John X.

Minnatjee (Miss)

Moodaliar, K. Packri

Moodley, Moonsamy (Mrs)

Moodley, Valliama (Miss): Purported to be the youngest and first women to die after serving a term of imprisonment as a passive resister.

Moonsamy (Mrs)

Nagappen, S.: Died soon after release from prison during the passive resistance campaign.

Naidoo, C. K. Thambi: Chairman of the Tamil Benefit Society.

Naidoo, P. K.: Member of the Transvaal Tamil Benefit Society.

Naidoo, P. (Mrs)

Naidoo, Perumal (Mrs)

Naidoo, Thumbi (Mrs)

Naidoo, V. S. (Mrs)

Naoroji, Dadabhai

Naryasamy: A passive resister who died at Delgoa Bay after being hunted from port to port in South Africa by the Union Government.

Natarajan, K.: Editor of the *Indian Social Reform* and joint secretary of the Bombay-South Africa Committee.

Natasen, G. A.: Secretary of the Indian-South Africa League in Madras.

Nelson, C. E.: Member of the European Committee.

Pachiappan

Padaiachy, P. Ramasamy

Patel, Maganbhai

Patel, Ravjibhai M.

Peerbhai, Vali

Petit, J. B.: Joint secretary of the Bombay South African Committee.

Petit, J. B. (Mrs)

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Phillips, C. (Rev): Chairman of the European

Committee.

Phillips (Mrs): In July 1913, she unveiled the

memorials to Valiamma and Nagappen -- two passive

resisters who died during the struggle.

Pillay, B. M. (Miss)

Pillay, Chinsamy (Mrs)

Pillay, K. M. (Mrs)

Pillay, N. (Mrs)

Pillay, N. S. (Mrs)

Polak, H. S. L.: Editor of the *Indian Opinion*

newspaper ("the organ of passive resistance"). Also

served a term of imprisonment in 1913 as a passive

resister.

Polak (Mrs): Founder of the Transvaal Indian Women's

Association.

Ritch, L. W.: First secretary of the South Africa

British Indian Committee.

Rustomjee, Parsee (aka. Kakaji)

Royeppen, Solomon

Sakkai, Jamnabai N. (Mrs): President of the Gujarati

Hindu Stri Mandal.

Schlesin, Sonja: Private secretary of Gandhi who

helped organise the Transvaal Indian Women's

Association.

Schreiner, Olive

Schreiner, W. P.

Shapurji, Sorabji

Singh, Lalbahadur: Chairman of the Germiston Indian
Community.

Sivprasad (Mrs)

Sodha, Revashanker

Somar (Mrs)

Soorzai

Stent, Vere: Past editor of the *Pretoria News*
newspaper.

Tagore, Rabindranath (Dr)

Tata, Ratan J.: Contributed financially to the
passive resistance fund.

Thomas (Miss): Rendered assistance in Newscastle.

Tolstoy L. N. (Count)

Tommy, M. (Mrs)

Vartak, V. R.

Veerasamy (Mrs)

Vogl, W. M. (Mrs)

West, A. H.: Manager of the Phoenix settlement where
Gandhi lived. He was arrested and subsequently
released for his part in the passive resistance
movement.

West, Ada (Miss) (aka. Devi Behn)

SOURCE: Gandhi (1972: viii)

APPENDIX FOUR

A LIST OF LEGISLATION AFFECTING

INDIANS IN NATAL

(1860-1960)

The following Acts which were passed by the various
provincial and national authorities in the hundred-
year period between 1860 and 1960 are listed
according to the year in which they became law. As
this study is based mainly on the experiences of
Indian South Africans in Natal, provincial laws that
affected Indians in the other areas of South Africa
are not listed here.

1859: Law 14 of the Colony of Natal
This law resulted from Natal's agreement with India.
It allowed for the introduction of indentured labour
to South Africa and made provisions for Indians to
return to India after their indentureship, to
re-indenture or to settle in South Africa as South
African citizens.

1895: Law 17 of the Colony of Natal (The 3 pound tax law)
This statute was aimed at those Indians who had
completed their period of indenture and who planned

to take up South African residence. It stipulated
that those Indians over the age of 16 who either
failed to re-indenture or return to India would have
imposed on them, a compulsory annual tax of three
pounds. The passing of the Indian Relief Bill almost
twenty years later, in 1914, effectively abolished
the three pound tax on ex-indentured Indians.
However, this Bill was not passed in the spirit of
negotiation or reconciliation, but was made possible
only through the pressure brought on by political
resistance especially through Mahatma Gandhi's
Satyagraha campaign. In his Master's dissertation
written in 1932, Harold Adamson states that the
reason for the three pound tax could not have been
an economic one, but must have been based on "a
general colour prejudice" on the part of white South
Africans (1932: 6).

1896: The Franchise Act
This Act deprived Indian South Africans of the right
to vote. The Natal Indian Congress which was founded
in 1894 by Mahatma Gandhi strongly reacted to Indian
disenfranchisement.

1897: The Dealer's License Act (Act No. 18)
This legislation empowered municipalities to control
the issue of dealer's licenses. Full discretion was
given to licensing officers to renew and grant
licenses. Courts were excluded from the process. In
1906, the Act was repealed when India threatened to
discontinue indenturing labourers to Natal.

1897: The Immigration Restriction Act
The Act stated that any passenger Indian seeking
admission to South Africa had to undergo
educational, age, health and means tests.

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1904: Notice 164

Special permits were now required by those Indians entering the Transkei, Griqualand East, Tembuland, Pondoland and Port St. Johns.

1913: The Immigrants Regulation Act of the Union of South Africa

The Act stated that any individual wanting to enter South Africa and who was considered economically unsuitable or whose standard or "habits of life" were found to be unsuitable (Meer 1969: 44), could not gain permission to enter the country. The Act was amended twice and by 1937 it effectively prohibited entry to all Indians wanting to enter South Africa except those individuals whose wives or minor children were applying for such entry into the country.

1914: The Indian Relief Act

The Act effectively abolished the three pound tax on ex-indentured Indians, recognised Indian traditional marriages, and facilitated the entry of wives of Indian men into the country.

1924: The Borough Ordinance

Indians were deprived of the municipal franchise in Natal.

1924: The Durban Land Alienation Ordinance

This statute empowered the Durban municipality to exclude Indians from the sales of corporation land.

1927: The Immigration and Indian Relief Act

This Act resulted from negotiations between the governments of India and South Africa at a round table conference. It stated that:

1. Indian children born outside South Africa but whose parents were Indian South African, must enter the country within three months of birth in order to gain South African citizenship.

2. Any Indian South African who spent more than three continuous years outside the country forfeited their domicile rights.

3. The illegal entry of all Indians into South Africa were condoned, but families of affected individuals were not allowed to join them.

4. Any Indian adult wishing to return to India would receive a bonus of 20 pounds and free passage. The bonus was doubled in 1931, and finally abolished in 1955.

1927: The Asiatics in the Northern Districts of Natal Act

This statute effectively excluded Indians from trading in the town of Vryheid.

1934: The Slums Act

In theory, the Act empowered municipalities to remove slums in the interest of sanitation to ensure industrial expansion. In practise however, the authorities demolished and expropriated only non-white properties. This, oral evidence suggests, was done in order to ensure racial segregation.

1943: The Pegging Act

Also known as the Trading and Occupation of Land Restriction Act, this statute prohibited the transfer of any property from whites to Indians in

Durban for a period of three years during which time the government would be able to fully examine the issue of Indian penetration of white suburbs. Dowlat Bagwandeen states that:

> The Pegging Act was the first major inroad into the fundamental rights of ownership and occupation of property by Indians in Natal. It froze the existing Indian areas and business holdings in Durban, and was as such the forerunner of legislative segregation in the urban areas of South Africa. The 1913 Land Act set aside land for Africans and the Native Urban Areas Act of 1936 controlled the residence of Africans in the towns. Neither of the Acts however legislated for residential segregation as such. The Pegging Act was a violation of the original understanding with the Indian government that Indian immigrants having completed their indentureship would enjoy similar vested rights as their European counterparts. (1991: 102)

1946: The Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act

Also referred to as the "Ghetto" Act, the Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act encompassed two basic tenets. Firstly, it prevented Indians from purchasing property in areas that became known as controlled areas. And secondly, it offered Indians communal representation. In effect, only white South Africans could represent them in parliament.

1949: The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, No. 15

All marriages between whites and non-whites were now prohibited.

1950: The Group Areas Act, No. 41

The Act divided the South African population into racial groups for the purposes of segregation.

1951: The Immorality Act, No. 21

All sexual association between whites and non-whites were now declared illegal and offenders were subject to imprisonment.

SOURCE: Meer (1969)

APPENDIX FIVE

A COMPUTER GENERATED SCORE FOR THE FILM SONG "CHINEH DOREH"

Edited by Rajive Mohan
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Note that the drum track has not been notated

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2:
low
strin

4:
mute
trum

5:
accor

6:
high
strin

7:
keyb
1

8:
doub
bass

9:
coun
strin

10.
keyb
2

11.
clan

12:
flute

13.
keyb
3

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Private Collection of Madhavan Nair, Durban. A collection of photographs and posters concerning the development of the Ranjeni Orchestra. Copies have been donated to the Documentation Centre, University of Durban-Westville.

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