

**THE ROLE OF MUSIC
IN THE HINDI SHIKSHA SANGH (SOUTH AFRICA)**

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of the requirement for the degree of**

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by

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

ABSTRACT

The promotion of the Hindi language by the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) has dominated the cultural life of the majority of Hindi-speaking Hindus in South Africa for over fifty years. This study concerns itself with the role of music in the construction of a local Hindi identity in the *Sangh*. It examines the factors that created and sustained the Hindi identity. Areas that come under focus in the research include : the history of the Hindi-speaking Hindu and their language in South Africa ; the promotion of the Hindi language ; the role assumed by the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) ; the function and significance of music and the socio-historical context of music that informs the cultural identity of the Hindi-speaking Hindu. The theoretical basis for this research has been drawn from principles in musical ethnography. The study locates the cultural identity of a linguistic group within the premise of socially meaningful music.

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In dedication to

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CHAPTER ONE

SUBJECT OF STUDY

Introduction

It is my intention in this study to explore the interpretation of certain events in the history of the Hindi-speaking Hindu in Durban, South Africa. The aim is to evaluate the formation of the local Hindi identity through the means of musical activities within the Hindi Shiksha Sangh¹ (South Africa) (hereafter called "the *Sangh*"²). It investigates the relationship of the *Sangh* to the Hindi-speaking community and reports on the music performances and activities organised by the *Sangh*. On the basis of the observation of these activities, the examination of historical records, and by means of interviews with members of the *Sangh* and the Hindi-speaking community at large, it attempts to indicate possible ways in which music may be related to the construction of a local Hindi identity.

Three historical paradigms have been distinguished within the field of music : reflexive, interpretive and immanent (Neuman 1991:269). This study incorporates elements of all three paradigms. The main body of the study (chapters 2 and 3) is interpretive, or "what is conventionally thought of as music history in which music culture itself is the subject of history and the history is externally constructed and conducted" (Neuman 1991:269). The introduction (chapter 1) relates to the reflexive mode, or the author's personal standpoint and how it may affect the interpretation of the study. The remaining chapters

(chapters 4 and 5) incorporate the immanent mode : "music constructing history : the ethnic group is the 'other,' and the authors are the co-authors" (Neuman 1991:270).

One of the assumptions that form the foundation of this research is that music performance, along with religion, language, and traditions of dress and cuisine is strongly related to people's sense of ethnic identity or 'belonging' to a particular culture.

In speaking about the Hindus in South Africa, on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the arrival of Indians in South Africa, Ranji S. Nowbath succinctly stated that :

The linguistic groups are distinctly defined in matters of detail in worship, religious rites, social customs, food and dress although there is considerable overlapping.

(1960:17)

Evidence of both group differentiation and 'overlapping' will be discussed in the course of this thesis.

In other words, music as a group of characteristic social practices can aid in the structure of a cultural identity within a linguistic group. Martin Stokes confirms this when he writes that

music is socially meaningful ... largely because it provides means by which people recognise identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them.

(1994:5)

Also, Peter Manuel substantiates the claim that "musical tastes, practices, and ideas can serve as particularly salient indices of the complex multiple identities of migrant communities" (1997/1998:17).

In the case of the *Sangh*, musical activities consist of (i) categories of items presented at the annual eisteddfod, (ii) musical shows and (iii) musical tuition.

The *Sangh*, which teaches spoken and written aspects of Hindi concurrently, also uses music to promote the Hindi language. Participants in the musical activities are thus all speakers of the Hindi language. Hence their linguistic identity - Hindi identity - is deepened by music, be it consciously or unconsciously. At the same time, a distinct social process of group self-identification is produced.

The Hindi Diaspora in the South African Context

With the implementation of apartheid policies by the South African government in the 1950s, the various race groups were forced to live separately. New areas were established, such as Soweto for Blacks outside Johannesburg, and Chatsworth and Phoenix near Durban for Indians. People were displaced and relocated into such areas as these, where transport and domestic supplies became problematic. For many, dependence on relatives was the only means of survival : extended family structures enabled 'the many' to live off the skills and income of 'the few'.

Judging from the social engineering of the state, the assumption of the legislation seems to have been the essential homogeneity of the Asian 'group'. Hence, they were

concentrated under the Act without any regard for religious or other differences³. In fact, contrary to the 'group' classification, the "separate consciousness of each [linguistic] group [Gujerati, Hindi, Tamil and Telegu]" strengthened. Nowbath confirms this when he states that

[w]here fifty years [1910], even thirty years[1930], ago the common adjective in the cultural social religious activity was *Hindu*, or even Indian it is now Tamil, Telegu or Andhra, Hindi, Surtee Hindu and Kathiawadi Hindu [the later two are Gujarati].

(1960:22)

Further, Nowbath concurs that, with the implementation of the English education system, a "greater fragmentation and isolation [occurred] and yet there is the remarkable recognition of the fact that all are Hindus" (1960:22).

Forty years later, at the dawn of a new millennium (2000), the specificity of each linguistic group remains a reality. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) is a reflection of this fact among the Hindi community. This study concentrates solely on the changes in the local Hindi identity.

Precedents in Parallel Studies

The province of KwaZulu-Natal, in South Africa, boasts the largest Hindu (and Indian) community within South Africa⁴. Yet studies of this group have mainly been concerned with economic, historical, political and religious issues rather than with musical scholarship.

This study lies within the field of musical ethnography, as it is a written representation and description of a specific "music-culture". The term "music-culture", as defined by Titon and Slobin, implies

a group of people's total involvement with music : ideas, actions, institutions, artifacts - everything that has to do with music.

(1996:1-2)

In the case of the *Sangh*, musical activities of various forms - annual eisteddfod, musical tuition and musical shows - are documented in relation to its historical role as a social organisation.

Similar noteworthy studies conducted on local Indian music have been undertaken from the 1980s (Jackson, 1988; Goodall, 1991; Mahabeer, 1992; Pillay, 1994 and Veeran, 1996). Melveen Jackson's Masters thesis, "An Introduction to the History of Music Amongst South Africans in Natal 1860 - 1948 : Towards a Politico - Cultural Understanding", addresses the historical perspective of Indian music from 1860 to 1948. In this study the way of life of the musician is intimately connected with the style of music practised and performed. Her focus lies in south Indian music. In Sallyann Goodall's PhD thesis, "Hindu Devotional Music in Durban : An Ethnomusicological Profile as Expressed through the Bhajan", Hindu identities are shown to be related to the languages in which the *bhajans* are sung. The present author's B.Music (Hons) thesis, "South African Hindi Wedding Songs : *mehendi*, *bedi*, *mangalam* and *garigawai*", provides a bird's-eye view of the Hindi-speaking Hindu weddings in South Africa. Naresh Denny Veeran's Masters thesis, "The Orchestral Tradition Amongst Indian South Africans in Durban Between 1935 and 1970" surveys Indian popular music-making.

The question of identity arises most strongly in Jayendran Pillay's PhD thesis, "Music, Ritual, and Identity among Hindu South Africans". His thesis focuses on the Hindu temple and on the rituals, songs and performance of *kavady*, *terukkutu* and firewalking as practised most specifically by the Tamil-speaking Hindu.

The present study reflects on group identification through the means of language and related cultural practices. It aims to extend Pillay's study by examining the Hindi identity specifically as it relates to the musical activities of a single cultural organisation patronised by the community in question. The *Sangh*, which sees language as an extremely important agent in strengthening a Hindi identity in South Africa, promotes a wide variety of musical activities. The intention is to consider these activities as reflections of a socially constructed identity.

Methods of Research

Three main methods were used to gather and consolidate data and to draw final conclusions : participant observation ; bibliographic survey ; and interviews.

It is imperative to understand my relation to this study so as to weigh the effects of my taking on the participant / observer role.

As a child I grew up in an atmosphere of 'safety and security' amongst Indian South Africans in apartheid South Africa. After their arrival in 1860, many Indians assimilated a western life-style and converted to other religions, while others, as in the case of my family, practised Hindu customs and kept very strictly to religious beliefs and way of life, including preferences for Indian food and clothing.

I come from a Hindi-speaking family. My paternal grandfather, Rajkumar Mahabeer, held the position of vice-president of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (South Africa) when he died in 1965. Within South Africa this organisation promotes a reformist religious movement, known as the Arya Samaj movement. Its headquarters is in New Delhi, India. Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati (1825-1883) founded the Arya Samaj on 6 April 1875. The Arya Samaj began as a "revolutionary movement of all-round reformation and reawakening" during the British rule in India (Vable 1983:9). Arya Samaj missionaries travelled to many lands where the indentured Indian settled in order to spread the message of the Holy Scriptures, the *Vedas*. Its followers, both in India and abroad, are predominantly Hindi-speaking Hindus.

My parents, Premchand and Hamwathi Mahabeer, practised this religion according to the principles of the Arya Samaj movement⁵. Sanskrit and Hindi classes were held regionally, and thus my mother was able to study these languages. Following in her footsteps, I studied Hindi 1 and 2 during my first two years (1987-1988) as a Bachelor of Music student at the University of Durban-Westville. My sister, Aarthi, my brother, Shuven, and I were active members of the youth wing of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (South Africa), which is the Arya Youth League (South Africa), since its inception in 1985. Within KwaZulu-Natal, we read papers on Hinduism at conventions and youth camps, conducted workshops, propagated Hinduism during fieldwork trips, and organised musical recitals. These activities were organised by the Arya Youth League (South Africa).

The year 1987 marked a historical change at the University of Durban-Westville because it was then opened to all races after having been an all-Indian university. That

being my first year at the university, I became aware of the political turmoil and rapid changes South Africa was experiencing. Moving from a sheltered life into the so-called 'real world' forced me to make many social adjustments. I was introduced both to such concepts as integration, tolerance, and ethnicity, and to the existence of minority groups, of intercultural endeavours and of syncretic art forms.

On completion of my Honour's degree, I began to ask myself : "Who am I really?" "In what category should I place myself?" "Should I categorise myself at all?" ... My work on the *Sangh* has enabled me to gain a better perspective on my position as an Indian South African.

Since I am Hindi-speaking by birth and since I grew up participating in the annual youth eisteddfod held by the *Sangh*, and since I have been living amongst the Hindi-speaking community as well as in Indian society all my life, I find myself in an awkward position when I contemplate taking on the role of an observer, even in a participant-observer role. On the other hand, the advantages of such a role (ease of communication, familiarity with materials) have helped me to reassess what I already know and the way I have lived. In addition, academic study has already given me the opportunity to impart something of Indian culture to other communities in the world.

The primary bibliographical sources for the study include the constitution of the organisation, its periodical publications *Sangh Samachar* and *Shiksha*, its annual conference report, and its souvenir and commemorative brochures.

From the titles listed in the secondary sources, some were especially helpful : Freund, 1995 ; Ganesh, 1998 ; Henning, 1993 ; Nowbath, 1960 ; and Rambiritch, 1960.

Both formal and informal interviews were conducted. My main informants were long-term office bearers of the *Sangh* whose positions made them party to much detailed information. My first informant was Dr. Rampersad Hemraj, a former lecturer at the Human Movement Department at the University of Durban-Westville who has retired. He was interviewed in 1996 when he held the post of president of the *Sangh*. He provided valuable information on the structure and activities of the *Sangh* and its role in South Africa at large as he held the president's position since 1985. Informal interviews with him occurred at the eisteddfod and musical shows, as well as on other occasions.

My main informant was the highly esteemed Bal Ganesh. Recently, he published a book entitled *The Hindi Language in South Africa*. Ganesh held the secretarial post for twenty-three years and then was treasurer for one year before he become president of the *Sangh*. He remained as president for six years. He initiated the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod in the *Sangh* during his term of office. He was also instrumental in promoting folk musical items at the *Sangh's* eisteddfod during his period. He directed me to the deposit of the *Sangh's* records at the Documentation Centre at the University of Durban-Westville. No fewer than twenty boxes of recorded history of the first forty years of the *Sangh* were given to the Documentation Centre for research purposes. I found a wealth of information such as handwritten minutes of meetings, annual reports, posters of shows, photographs of events held, circulars for meetings, programmes of activities, as well as many documents written in the Hindi language.

Other interviewees included Brijdeo Behadar who has been an executive member of the *Sangh* for eighteen years. Other interviews with spectators (at the *Nritya 'n Geet*, held on 4 May 1996 and the Forty-Seventh Annual Hindi Eisteddfod (Finals) on 11 and 12 May 1996 held at the Pattundeen Hindi Centre, Kharwastan, Chatsworth, and the Fiftieth Anniversary Musical Show on 24 April 1999 held at the Luxmi Narayan Temple in Mobeni Heights, Chatsworth) and performers (such as Geetha Maharaj, the ladies of the Dayanand Stree Samaj and Dosti Nagaara Sounds) were informal and conversational in nature. Especially useful were the discussions with Saraswati Ganesh, who was instrumental in arranging the musicians for the video recording submitted with the thesis, and with Harry Sewlall Rampersad who shared his personal experiences.

I have attempted to collect or solicit as many responses as was possible in order to build an objective perspective.

NOTES

1. Hindi Shiksha Sangh stands for Hindi Education Federation.
2. As is customary all words foreign to English are italicised with the exception of 'naturalised' terms such as 'Hindu', 'Hindi' and other languages (and dialects). Diacritical marks have not been included. A glossary of Hindi words may be found on pp. 62-63.
3. The case of the Zanzibar Muslims - African by descent - is anomalous : their location in Unit 2, Chatsworth was a religious exception to the rule.
4. Based on the statistics in *Census in Brief* by F. M. Orkin, KwaZulu-Natal is said to have 790 813 Indians out of 1 045 596 in South Africa (1998:2.5).
5. See *Aryan Prayer*, page 120.

CHAPTER TWO

THE HISTORY OF THE HINDI-SPEAKING HINDU

The year 2000 marks 140 years since the arrival of Indians as indentured labourers to South Africa, with the sole function of working on the sugar plantations. The fostering and nurturing of Indian culture, language and religion through various hardships, like political marginalisation and exploitation, created an identity specific to the social environment. This chapter presents significant aspects, from the history of Indians in South Africa, highlighting pertinent markers in the establishment of the Hindi language.

The Arrival of the "Oriental-like" People into South Africa

A system of indenture had proven successful in colonial America in the early seventeenth century where "poor Englishmen were made tempting offers of employment, which included a free passage and, at the end of a seven-year contract, grants of land" (Henning 1993:1). A similar economic instance occurred throughout the British Empire : an urgent call for labour in the various plantations. The native Zulus were considered "unreliable workers" as they "enjoyed their local sense of time and found no necessity to learn clock-time" (Pillay 1994:37). Since the Zulus were 'unavailable', British India with its "unemployed and impoverished peasants" who were eager for any form of employment was the answer to the problem the British government faced (Henning 1993:1). This gave rise to the "Emigrant Coolie", says Henning, who explains the attraction of the indenture scheme to Indians as follows :

Emigration offered some hope to them of building the foundations of a better life for themselves and their offspring. It is doubtful whether the majority who embarked on the indenture scheme were aware of the contract or what lay ahead in "darkest" Africa, the distant West Indies or in other remote corners of the British Empire. Life, certainly, could not get worse and with the prospects of a fixed wage they faced the uncertain future with fortitude and optimism.

(1993:8)

Through the indenture system, Indians migrated to British colonies throughout the world in the nineteenth century. Settlements with Indians were established in Australia, Fiji, Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Sarawak, Sri Lanka, Borneo, Mauritius, Reunion, Madagascar, East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika), Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, British Honduras and the West Indies (Granada, Martinique, St. Vincent and St. Lucia), Brazil, and other territories outside the British Empire. (Vedalankar and Somera 1975:57, and Henning 1993:2).

An excerpt from *The Mercury*, 22 November 1860, describes the scene of the arrival of Indians at Durban harbour :

A very remarkable scene was the landing, and one well worth remembrance and record. Most of the many spectators who were present had been led to expect a lot of dried up, vapid, and sleepy looking anatomies. They were agreeably disappointed. As the swarthy hordes came pouring out of the boat's hold, laughing, jabbering, and staring about them with a very well satisfied expression of self-complacency on their faces, they hardly realised the idea one had formed regarding them and their faculties. They were a queer, comical, foreign-looking, very Oriental-like crowd. The men with their huge muslin turbans, bare scraggy shin bones, and colored (sic) garments; the women with their flashing eyes, long dishevelled pitchy hair, with their half-covered, well formed figures, and their keen inquisitive glances; the children with their meagre, intelligent, cute and humorous countenance mounted on bodies of unconscionable fragility, were all evidently being [sic] of a different race and kind to any we have yet seen either in Africa or England.

(Quoted by Henning 1993:31)

"Natalie Hindi"¹

The arrival of indentured Indians in the British Colony of Natal between the years 1860 and 1911 began a significant chapter in the history of Indians living outside India. The indentured Indians for Natal were collected from two ports, Calcutta and Madras. The immigrants from the areas around Calcutta spoke a variety of languages but were identified by the British as Hindi-speaking. Similarly, those from the areas around Madras were said to be Tamil- and Telegu-speaking. Passenger Indians - those who were not indentured but paid their fare - came via Bombay to the Colony from 1875 onwards. They spoke Gujarati and Urdu. They came in the capacity of traders and merchants to fulfil the material needs of the indentured Indians.

Morrell, Wright and Meintjes regard the 'question of identity' amongst the indentured Indians from their arrival up to the turn of the twentieth century as complex. They state that

[l]anguage carried powerful cultural meaning and frequently related the speaker to his or her place of origin. Apart from the many different dialects spoken, there were languages from three distinct groups with little in common with one another. This meant that northerners [Hindi-speaking] could not effectively communicate with southerners [Tamil-speaking], who could not communicate with Urdu-speaking Muslims.

(Morrell, Wright and Meintjes 1996:53-54)

Looking specifically at the Hindi-speaking Hindu, one finds that no fewer than eleven dialects of Hindi were spoken when the indentured Indians left Calcutta for Natal. They were

Bhojpuri, Maghayee, Kadee Bolee, Punjabi, Bondeli, Urdu, Chatisgari, Bengali, Maithili, Awadhi and Braj They created a communication problem which the labourers solved by developing a form of speech from their mother tongues. The labourers called it, Natalie Hindi.

(Ganesh 1998:2)²

Similarly, Mesthrie reports on a variety of Indo-European languages from the north of India including Kananji and Rajasthani (1995:116). He deems "South African Bhojpuri" to be "a 'common denominator' speech" amongst the north Indian immigrants, as "koineisation - the development of a new dialect from existing dialects of a language and/or other closely related languages" (1995:121).

The Need to Learn One's Mother-Tongue

The lack of established Hindu religious institutions in the early years of indenture led to the practice of Indian customs and traditions based on memory alone, and their descendants in turn practised rituals without understanding their purposes. The learning of the Hindi language was done in the home where parents taught their children by communicating with them in Hindi. Such oral transfer did not favour the application and comprehension of the written form of the language. With labourers working long hours for extremely low wages, financial hardships resulted in a decline in the ability of people to read and write the Hindi language. Thillayvel Naidoo writes :

From 1860 to the turn of the century, Hindus in South Africa were kept in a state of limbo. Although many Hindu temples were constructed during this period, their main purpose was the observance of rituals such as they had been familiar with all their lives. There were no religious institutions that disseminated any religious literature and none of the temples was known to discourse a specific doctrine except those preached through ritual and sacrificial worship. Hence no theological foundations were laid and all religious education was conducted through a kinship structure peculiar to the joint family system which obtained in the community at the time.

(1992:55-56)

B Rambiritch offers a more positive picture of the early promotion of mother-tongue :

During the early years the peculiar social conditions of the immigrants, governed by factors of indenture, were largely responsible for the extent and content of mother-tongue education. Among the literate, particularly in the case of the Brahmins, education was mainly a family affair where the sons were initiated into Vedic lore and the rituals and mantras necessary to the functions of a priest. In cases where the parents were illiterate, the children on the sugar estates and

the collieries gathered at the home of a priest or a learned one and acquired the rudiments of reading and writing.

(1960:67)

The need to learn one's mother-tongue is strongly evident. The "will and desire to study" is noted but there was a lack of qualified teachers who may have had to travel to the areas where indentured, 'free'³ and passenger Indians lived (Rambiritch 1960:68).

Fifty years after the arrival of the "Oriental-like" people to South Africa "many had already lost spiritual contact with India, and ... the standard of the Indian languages spoken, was already declining" (Henning 1993:151).

The Contribution of Hindu Theologians in South Africa

About a half a century after the arrival of the Indians in South Africa, prominent theologians visited this country and were able to provide spiritual guidance and devote time to the promotion of the Hindu culture. The conscious propagation of the Indian languages, including the Hindi language, and the promotion of Hindu culture began to develop.

Two theologians who dedicated their time primarily to the promotion of the Hindi language will be given special mention as they laid the foundations for the formation of the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa).

Swami Shankaranand visited Durban in 1908. Apart from delivering discourses in Hindi and English on "Hindu Culture, Religion, Indian Civilisation, Faith in God, Ceremonies, [and] the importance of mother tongue education", he stressed the significance of festivals, particularly Diwali, festival of lights (Rambharos and Behadar 1995:25). Until

then, Hindus in South Africa had not observed this festival. He saw a need for all South African Hindus to meet at a conference. In 1912, a year after government stopped the immigration of Indians into South Africa, the heads of the various religious bodies then existing met at a conference. Here, Swami Shankaranand "motivated the formation of the Hindu Maha Sabha" (Rambharos and Behadar 1995:25). On 31st May 1912 the Hindu Maha Sabha was established, its president being Pandit Bhawani Dayal.

Pandit Nardev Vedalankar and Manohar Somera state that "Pandit Bhawani Dayal was the first South African Indian to become a religious leader of such influence in this country" (1975:70). He obtained his early education and his strong belief in the teachings of Swami Dayanand in India. He encouraged the formation of organisations like the Hindi Pracharini Sabhas for the teaching of the Hindi language wherever Indians were settled. He trained people in these areas to teach the language in their community. In 1916 he organised a Hindi Literary Conference in Ladysmith where people from the Hindi Pracharini Sabhas delivered talks in Hindi.

The weekly newspaper *Hindi*, written in English and Hindi, was his other significant contribution. It became the "mouth-piece of the Indian people" wherever Indians lived outside India (Bista 1992:16). This newspaper provided extensive coverage of the birth centenary celebrations of Swami Dayanand in 1925. The celebration was held in Durban from 16th to 22nd February and at this occasion the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha⁴ (Natal, later South Africa) was formed. Pandit Bhawani Dayal was its first President. His immediate task was to link the smaller Hindi-speaking bodies throughout Natal and promote the teachings of Swami Dayanand.

In 1927 while in India, Pandit Bhawani Dayal entered the holy order of *Sannyasa* where he was ordained as a Swami. When one enters into *Sannyasa*, one must give up all one's material belongings and dedicate one's life to the propagation of the Vedic philosophy. This tradition of *Sannyasa* has been in existence since the Vedic period (c. 800 - 600 B.C.). As a Swami, the only garment one wears is a saffron robe. Thereafter, Swami Bhawani Dayal served the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha as a Vedic missionary, returning to South Africa to preach the Vedic religion.

Swami Shankaranand and Swami Bhawani Dayal stirred immense interest in Hindu philosophy and culture among Indians. This included the urge to read and write the Hindi language, but systematically structured programmes were not available to cater for this interest.

Pandit Nardev Vedalankar

In 1947 an advertisement placed in an Indian newspaper seeking for a qualified Gujarati teacher to work in South Africa interested Pandit Nardev Vedalankar (hereafter called Panditji), who was also a Vedic scholar. Born in India, Panditji studied at Gurukul Supa⁵ in Gujerat for ten years. He learnt Gujarati, Hindi, Sanskrit, mathematics, history, geography and science. Thereafter, for four years he studied Vedic science, comparative religion, philosophy and history at Gurukul Kangadi⁶ in Haridwar, graduating with the degree of Vedalankar. Since the *gurukul* rejected the practice of caste, the graduates discarded their surnames, as it was indicative of a caste, and affixed 'Vedalankar' as the surname. Since then he was titled Pandit Nardev Vedalankar. 'Vedalankar' appears as a surname on all Panditji's official documents, and his children have taken on this surname "without having had to study" for the degree (*Veda Jyothi*

1988:32). (Pandit Nardev Vedalankar's original surname is unknown) After obtaining the degree of Vedalankar, Panditji undertook a special training programme at the Hindi Prachar Samiti that Mahatma Gandhi established for the promotion of the Hindi language. At the time when the advertisement was placed, Panditji was holding the position of *archarya* of the Hindi Pracharak Mandal⁷ in Surat, India, supervising at least eighty teachers in Vedic religious studies.

Even though the advertised position meant leaving India and venturing into unknown territory, this did not deter Panditji as he thought this would be an opportunity to earn extra income. As he explained in an interview at the time of his seventy-fifth birthday celebrations in Durban in 1988, "[t]he British regarded Gurukuls as anti-British and refused to recognise their degrees, so there were no jobs for Gurukul graduates in government" (*Veda Jyothi* 1988:31).

The Surat Hindu Education Society, an organisation formed for the upliftment of the Gujarati-speaking community, sponsored Panditji and his family in their move to South Africa to teach the Gujarati language. However, his love for the Hindi language inspired him to teach and propagate it as a medium of communication as well. He firmly believed in the need to study Indian languages as being integral to the protection of culture and religion - hence in the preservation of identity. Panditji states that

[i]n order to understand our religion and culture in their true perspective the study of Indian language in South Africa is a necessity. English or any other foreign language cannot manifest our religion and philosophy in the same manner as they are expounded in Indian languages. Each language moves within its own conductive [sic] surroundings which exert a profound influence on a person's intellect and mind. This results in the development of his / her character. Therefore the study of Hindi and other languages will assist us in preserving our Indian identity.

(Vedalankar 1983:2)

Taking his advice, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (South Africa) convened a meeting of Hindi institutions, which on the 25th of April 1948 established the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa). Its purpose was to "set about reorganising the system of Hindi education in the country" (Rambiritch 1960:70). The *Sangh* was declared to be a non-religious organisation.

Its aims are :

- 3.1 To promote the Hindi language in Southern Africa.
 - 3.2 To propagate Indian Culture with special reference to North Indian music, dance and drama.
 - 3.3 To promote the academic study of the Hindu religious scriptures.
- (Constitution nd : 1)

Its first president was Panditji. He held this position until 1975.

Meanwhile, India was celebrating their independence from British rule. Jawaharlal Nehru, the leader of the Congress Party, became India's first prime minister. Under the direction of one of his fellow political associates, Purushotam Das Tando, the dialect Kadee Bolee was declared the official language of India. Also, Tando was instrumental in establishing the Rashtra Basha Parishad Samiti in Wardha, India which promoted the teaching of Kadee Bolee. The *Sangh* affiliated to this institution and prepared students for its examinations (Ganesh interview, April 1998).

Panditji was "a man of vision and tremendous foresight" (part of a congratulatory message, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday celebration of Panditji, from D. D. Bhikha, President of Surat Hindu Association, *Veda Jyothi* 1988:6). His "pioneering efforts" in the promotion and propagation of the Hindi language in South Africa

produced a systematisation of the language, "in drawing up suitable syllabuses and in preparing teachers to promote the language" (part of a congratulatory message, on the occasion of the seventy-fifth birthday celebration for Panditji, from Rampersad Hemraj, Chairman of the Hindi Shiksha Sangh, South Africa, *Veda Jyothi* 1988:5).

By the mid-twentieth century great strides within the Hindi-speaking community in the propagation of their mother-tongue are evident. Emerging from these historical data is also the clear want to invoke an identity specific to the Hindi speaker.

NOTES

1. Rajend Mestrie refers to Natalie Hindi as South African Bhojpuri.
2. It is interesting to note that Urdu was one of the dialects. According to Ganesh, Urdu was spoken in the Muslim military camps during the time of the Mogul rule (c.1300-1700) in the Kanpur, Muradabad, Meerut, Saharapur, Dehradun and Patiala areas. Kadee Bolee was the mother-tongue of the people that lived here. The Urdu dialect arose to bridge the gap in resolving a communication problem over time, due to the "number of languages spoken in the camps" (Ganesh 1998:3). Thus arising out of Kadee Bolee, Urdu was formed. Today, Urdu has its own cultural language for the Muslims in South Africa. It is written in Persian (Arabic) script as against Kadee Bolee, which is written in Devanagari. For further reading on these dialects see Ganesh 1998:2-3.
3. "At the end of the first five years, the Indian (including the minors in his family) received a Certificate of Industrial Service (or a Certificate of Discharge), which meant that he was now free to work in the free labour market at the highest wage possible. Many Indians soon settled down during their second five years to become either small farmers or enter various occupations, such as servants, traders, gardeners and fishermen. In typical pioneering fashion, they started to clear the land and grow crops" (Henning 1993:39).
4. Today, the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha (South Africa) is a religious body with over 200 affiliated organisations throughout South Africa. (It is affiliated to the Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, with its headquarters situated in New Delhi, India.) The aims of the *Sabha* are :
 1. To encourage the establishment, organisation and consolidation of the Arya Samajs and Vedic Institutions in South Africa.
 2. To elucidate the tenets of Arya Samaj and to foster these principles in South Africa.
 3. To disseminate Vedic Religion and Philosophy.
 4. To promote the art, culture and civilisation of India.
 5. To encourage and advocate the study of Hindi and other Indian languages.
 6. To protect and defend the rights of Hindus and to concern itself with their spiritual, moral and social upliftment and
 7. To co-operate with other Hindu organisations on matters affecting the Hindu Community.

(Rambharos and Behadar 1995:28)
5. Name of a residential teaching institution.
6. Name of a residential teaching institution.
7. Hindi Pracharak Mandal stands for College for Hindi Studies.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE ASSUMED BY THE HINDI SHIKSHA SANGH

Language may act as a catalyst in the formation of styles in art, music, poetry and drama. In turn it may lend itself both to 'identity maintenance' in so far as it sustains and preserves styles, and to 'identity negotiation' when a revisiting of established styles occurs to suit the changing cultural, economic, political and social environment. The Hindi language in South Africa has been instrumental in these processes. This chapter discusses the installation of a structured Hindi examination and provides a historical account of the activities conducted by the Sangh. Thereafter, an analysis of the musical categories in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod is made. A video recording illustrating some of these categories accompanies this thesis.

The Promotion of the Hindi Language

From the turn of the twentieth century, "single-teacher institutions and ... centres of instruction [in Hindi] became permanent features of mother-tongue education" (Rambiritch 1960:67). According to Rambiritch,

[p]upils joined the school at any time of the year, at any age and left school when it pleased their whims or those of their parents. Education was, in most instances, imparted free ... Promotion from one grade to another depended on the successful completion of prescribed readers, mastery of some number-work, especially tables, and the ability to recite selected prose and verse from memory.
(1960:67)

These institutions and centres were plagued by haphazard methods : each adopted its own system of teaching the Hindi language.

By the year 1950, the various Hindi schools, all operating independently, were encouraged to affiliate to the *Sangh*. A common Hindi syllabus was structured and examinations conducted. A brief introduction to the history and geography of India was also taught, and the first Hindi eisteddfod was introduced. At that time "thirty-five *patshalas* joined the *Sangh* at that function" (Ganesh 1987:3). In time that number increased¹.

The primary task of the Hindi Shiksha Sangh is to implement the following aims :

- * promote the Hindi language using the *Devanagari* script ;
- * propagate the Indian culture, viz. north Indian music, dance and drama through the medium of Hindi ;
- * promote the academic study of Hindu religious scriptures.

Drawing on his extensive experience in the teaching of Hindi - standardised Hindi or Kadee Bolee - in India, Panditji structured

a common syllabus, with graded exercises for the various classes, and proper supervised examinations to ensure a smooth progression from one class to the next.

(*Veda Jyothi* 1988:23)

Panditji wrote "six textbooks suitable for South Africa" (*Veda Jyothi* 1988:23). Within ten years of the inception of the *Sangh*, the Hindi language had made phenomenal progress. In 1958, at the *Sangh's* tenth anniversary celebrations, on garlanding Panditji, Mahabeer Ramawtar stated that

[t]he creation of a unified system in the schools has bonded Hindi education into a firm structure with a bright future. Among Indian languages in this country, Hindi is the best organised in its propagation, thanks to the determination, dynamism, insight and untiring effort of Pandit Nardevji.

(*Veda Jyothi* 1988:23)

At the same time, the political arena within South Africa was dominated by the legislation that set the wheels of 'grand apartheid' in motion. With the implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950), the gradual uprooting, forced removal and displacement (between mid-1950s to 1970s) of the 'once established' Indian community fragmented its culture and religion. The *Sangh* was one of the many once well-established organisations that were either left in disarray or forced to reorganise.

In a congratulatory message on the occasion of the official opening of the *Sangh's* headquarters in Chatsworth in 1995, Sishupal Rambharos added to this by stating that

[t]he impact of the many adverse factors arising from the effect of the Group Areas Act had completely shattered the structures devised by the Indian community in the teaching of the Indian languages. After much effort there has been a resurgence by bodies like the Hindi Shiksha Sangh.

(*Commemorative Brochure* 1995:3)

Thus, by the 1970s the majority of the Hindi speakers in South Africa were 'cut off' from living speakers of the language with the exception of those with a few surviving ties in India. One of the direct effects of apartheid relocation was the favouring of nuclear family units. This interrupted the joint-family system in which language was most easily transmitted from older to younger generations.

Preservation of spoken Hindi had proved difficult; promoting literary Hindi was even more problematic. In the mid-1980s the *Sangh* decided to reintroduce Hindi debates to encourage the use of spoken Hindi; they had been initiated in 1951 but eliminated in 1973 in favour of the spoken categories in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod. The implementation of debates created a platform for people to develop their speaking skills of the Hindi language. Over the past fifteen years the debates seem to have

remedied the problem of the lack of formal spoken Hindi, as is noted every year by the increasing level of difficulty of the topics.

From its inception till 1984, the *Sangh* prepared its students for two examinations - the Wardha examinations² and the examinations based on the syllabus prepared by Panditji. In 1987 a "new administrative structure" was set, with Rampersad Hemraj taking over the presidency of the *Sangh* (Hemraj 1987:6). Prior to this, the *Sangh* had seen two presidents - Kedoo Lallo (1976) and Bal Ganesh (1977-1982) - after Panditji handed over his post in 1975. The purpose of a new structure was "to utilise the available human resources in such a way that optimum results will be ensured" (Hemraj 1987:6). A "revisiting" of the *Sangh* took place whereby a restructuring and a closer co-operation between the *Sangh* and the Hindi schools was developed (Hemraj interview, October 1996). With the termination of the Wardha examinations in 1984, the *Sangh's* Examinations Board arranged and conducted its own Hindi examinations based on the Wardha examination syllabus.

Today, Hindi examinations are offered in four primary grades - *Prathamik* (equivalent to Grade 5), *Prarambhik* (Grade 6), *Prakash* (Grade 7), and *Pravesh* (Grade 8) - and in four secondary grades - *Praveen* (Grade 9), *Parichey* (Grade 10), *Visharad* (Grade 11), and *Kovid* (Grade 12). Since 1991 the *Sangh* has offered a two-year post-Kovid (post-grade 12) teacher-training diploma known as *Shikshan Paddhati* 1 and 2.

Part of the restructuring was to create regions to help centralise the extended activities. Presently there are six regions. Each region comprises a number of Hindi schools for children and adults, which are called Hindi *patshalas*, under a regional director. These

schools are held in the afternoon after government school hours for children and at night for adults. Each region has meetings, organises a regional eisteddfod and raises funds to maintain the Hindi *patshalas* within the constitution of the *Sangh*. At each Hindi *patshala* qualified Hindi teachers who have already obtained their teacher training diploma from the *Sangh* are employed to teach the various grades offered and to prepare their students for activities organised by the *Sangh*.

The greatest landmark for the *Sangh* has been the development of the Hindi Centre to serve as a headquarters. It was first proposed in the 1980s. The major donor, Kasiepersad Pattundeen, after whom the Hindi Centre is named, was instrumental in bringing the building project to its completion. The Kasiepersad Pattundeen Hindi Centre, situated at 30 Oak Avenue, Kharwasthan, Chatsworth, was officially opened on the 29th of October 1995. The Hindi Centre has now become the geographical centre in the promotion of Hindi language and culture. Prior to this, meetings of the *Sangh* had taken place at the homes of members and the other activities of the *Sangh* were held at hired halls.

The Activities of the *Sangh*

The application of a language within a specific language-speaking community does not occur in a vacuum. Insight into the culture and life-style of its speakers will enable an observer to have a better understanding of the language. Panditji, therefore, saw it as essential to organise a Hindi eisteddfod, to highlight other non-linguistic cultural activities.

In 1951 the first Hindi eisteddfod for children was held in this country, made up of various categories including : dance to audio-tape / long-play record, *Ramayan* ³ recital, *Gita* ⁴ recital, *Veda* ⁵ mantra recital and prose reading. Also, Panditji wrote speeches, poems, plays and short stories that were performed for the eisteddfod. The eisteddfod was a resounding success as it not only entertained the audience but provided a platform to teach the Hindi language, at the same time ensuring the correct usage of its grammar and pronunciation. This, thought Panditji, should be an annual event (*Veda Jyothi* 1988:25). Since that year the Hindi eisteddfod for children has been held annually. Two more items have also been included : choral verse and a dialogue.

The immense success of the eisteddfod led to other Indian vernacular communities - Gujarati, Tamil and Telegu - applying this concept to their language group.

One of the first signs of adults participating is evident in a poster. In 1958, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the *Sangh*, a Singing and Dancing Competition was held - a singing of Hindi songs and Indian dancing. This competition was

open to any person over the age of 16 years, belonging to any racial, religious or linguistic group Males and females will be judged separately.

(DC/HSS, Poster, 6 July 1958)

Ten years later there is evidence of further attempts made in establishing a competition-type environment for adults - in the format of an eisteddfod. But it was not until four years later that this eventually materialised in the form of an adult section to the Hindi eisteddfod.

The adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod was held over one day in 1972. Solo categories presented were classical songs, *bhajans*⁶, film songs, Indian dancing, instrumental music and recital of the *Ramayan*. Group categories were folk songs, Indian dancing and Hindi plays. A duet category⁷ presented was Indian dance. Specific rules applied : men and women - individual and group categories - were separately adjudicated; singing sections were to be accompanied by no more than two musical instruments; the dance categories were permitted to be accompanied by recorded or live music; the passage from the *Ramayan*, selected by the *Sangh*, should be recited in the traditional tune (DC/HSS, Circular, 20 May 1972).

By 1974, the inclusions of specific folk songs such as biraha and santo bhajans are noted (DC/HSS, Poster, 14/15 September 1974). The length of the adult section increased to two days.

In a circular regarding general information and programme for the adult section in 1975, it is noted that a choice of four ragas - *Bhairavi*, *Yaman*, *Yaman Kalyan* and *Kammaj* - are stipulated for the classical singing category. Also, a new category - the *sarangi* song - is included. The participants were required to sing with the accompaniment of the *sarangi* instrument (DC/HSS, Circular, 20/21 September 1975).

More categories were added in 1978 - *chautal*, *aalha* and folk songs (such as wedding songs and *sohar*) (DC/HSS, 39th General Report, 4 March 1979). By this time the categories in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod were set with no further inclusions reported. The requirements stipulated were : *santo bhajan*, *chautal* and *aalha* categories were to be sung to traditional tunes with the accompaniment of two

instruments : *dholak*, *sarangi*, *kangari*, *majira* or harmonium ; all other song categories were to be accompanied by no more than three instruments ; in dance categories the requirement remained the same ; there was a choice of three *ragas* in the classical singing category - *Maalkosh*, *Aiman Kalyan* and *Bheema Palaasi* ; and the singing of the *biraha* was to be accompanied by the *nagaara* instrument (DC/HSS, Circular on the Eighth Annual Adult Section Hindi Eisteddfod).

This format for the adult section in the Hindi Eisteddfod continued until 1985.

In 1986 the first music/dance/drama festival was held in place of the adult section. Participation in this festival was open to children and youth as well as adults, and it had to be through an affiliated institution. The music categories comprised : singing - solo, duet and group ; *bhajan* ; film song ; wedding songs ; instrumental ; and *biraha*. The exclusion of *santo bhajan*, *sarangi* song, *chautal* and *aalha* is evident. The other categories found in the adult section for the Hindi Eisteddfod were incorporated into the festival. This time youth were given the opportunity to participate in *bhajan*, film songs and wedding songs.

From 1988 the format of the eisteddfod changed again. The adult and children's eisteddfodau were combined. The recitation of verses from the religious scriptures of the *Ramayan* and the *Gita* as well as sketches, poetry reciting and dance were presented. Only choral singing represented music.

All those who participate are to be affiliated to a Hindi school. Each region organises its own eisteddfod in its area at least a month or two prior to the final eisteddfod. The

winning group/s or individual/s then represent their region at the final eisteddfod. Both the regional and final eisteddfodau attract an audience made up of pupils, parents of participants, well-wishers and the general public.

With the 'demise' of the adult section in the Hindi eisteddfod in 1985 and the introduction of the music, dance and drama festival in 1986, a further development occurred - the conducting of music classes in singing and *tabla* by local musicians such as Geeta Maharaj, Maharati Singh, and Sarojini Ranchod. Insufficient interest led to its discontinuation in 1988.

The following year, the Sangh invited three music teachers from Mauritius to teach vocal, *sitar* and *tabla* for a two year period. They were Ramesh Santhokee, Jayaraz Santhokee and Abeydhanand Beejan. This proved extremely successful as no fewer than five hundred children and adults received music training. At the end of their two years a concert was held at the City Hall. For the very first time in South Africa, to the author's knowledge, people got to see no fewer than fifty *sitar* players performing together in one of the items in this concert. Maintaining these musicians financially did not prove to be feasible; as a result the Santhokee brothers returned to Mauritius. Beejan settled in Durban teaching north Indian music privately.

Thereafter, another Mauritian musician - Ashok Coomar Jorai - an exponent of classical singing, conducted workshops for three weeks for the Sangh.

Between 1958 and 1961 the *Sangh* produced several plays. The most popular one was *Raj Tyag*. This play initiated the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the Hindi

Shiksha Sangh (South Africa). The play toured wherever Indians lived in Natal and the then Transvaal (now Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and Northern Province). The entire play was enacted in Hindi with musical items such as songs and dances. The songs were written and the music composed by a renowned local musician, Narain Rao, who also played the lead role in this play. Narain Rao was also instrumental in composing music for other plays thereafter.

The promotion of the Hindi language through competitions like the eisteddfodau and debates, and in drama reflects the diversity of an organisation in propagating its language. It reflects also an urgent need to instil the language in its learners by offering interesting items and dramatic roles in which to participate.

The Musical Genres

The introduction of the adult eisteddfod helped to establish an identity that showed characteristics peculiar to its environment. For example, the main purpose of creating a platform for the adult musician was to promote, sustain, and maintain the musical styles of older generations. The type of Hindi language used was most definitely not standardised Hindi - Kadee Bolee - but Natalie Hindi, this being the language spoken in Hindi homes (Ganesh interview, April 1998).

At least seven sorts of traditional musical categories were promoted : *biraha* ; *sarangi* songs ; *santo bhajans* ; *chautal* ; wedding song ; *sohar* and *aalha*. Film songs comprised of popular compositions taken from the Hindi films. *Shastri sangeet* was the promotion of north Indian classical music.

The traditional songs consisted of musical styles in vogue amongst Hindi-speaking Hindus. Adults performed them, especially the older generation, at special joyous occasions such as weddings, prayers and birthdays. By the 1980s a decline in these styles had become evident, calling for a change in musical categories in the eisteddfod format. Unfortunately, the removal of these categories may have contributed to the gradual demise of these styles within the Hindi community altogether.

According to Ganesh, *biraha* were popular as they drew "both male and female competitors" (1998:27). The instrument used to accompany them was the *nagaara* played in the villages of north India, and *majira*. Traditionally, the *nagaara* was played to attract people in the village to hear an announcement, usually of a birth, marriage, death or other significant happenings occurring in a family. At Hindi weddings the *nagaara* provided accompaniment to the *biraha* singers and a *jhangia* dancer. Ganesh explains that a *jhangia* was a man who wore a "carnival-type" costume with tiny bells sewn on it. The bells produced a "sweet, rhythmic sound" as the dancer performed. As the popularity of the *jhangia* dancer declined, the male dancer took to wearing female clothing and jewellery - thus becoming a *nachanya*⁸ - but the song remained the same (Ganesh 1998:27).

Ganesh writes about a man called Moonesar who was an outstanding *nachanya* who performed at Hindi weddings in the mid-1970s. He comments on *biraha* singing in the adult eisteddfod :

Birha singing was a popular item in the adult eisteddfod held by the Hindi Shiksha Sangh. It drew both male and female competitors. So enthusiastic did the competitors become that they danced on the stage before concluding their items.

(1998:7).

The *sarangi* songs were also performed by a *nachanya* who also sang at Hindi weddings. The instruments used as accompaniment were two *sarangis*, *tabla* and *majira*.

By the mid-1940s in Natal some musical groups had formed theatrical companies and prepared themselves to perform anywhere in Natal at short notice. One such group was the Riverside Dancing Club. Jadunandan, the director of this group, wrote the plays, and composed the music and songs. Their performances comprised dance, drama and songs, which kept the guests entertained for hours. An interesting feature was that both standard Hindi and Natalie Hindi were used in the scripts. Ganesh lists some of the well-known *nachanya* dancers such as Alijan, Mewalal, Shaik Ally and Ramjan (1998:27-28). According to Harry Sewlall Rampersad, who is both the present director of Royal Star Dancing Company that was established in the 1930s and a *nachanya* dancer by profession, there are very few *nachanya* dancers nowadays (informal communication, November 1999).

In the 1300s in India a group of reformers called *sants* formed religious institutions known as *pants*. At this time the Moguls ruled India. The priests preserved the Sanskrit language, which was promulgated by the Aryan descendants. The *sants* wrote verses that were sung at their gatherings. These verses came to be known as *santo bhajans*. The *sants* were said to be ordinary and illiterate people. One of the most famous of the *sants* composers and singers was Kabir. Among the many indentured labourers who came to Natal were followers of the *pants*. Over time the number of followers dwindled. It was noted that by mid-1940s Kabir and Shivnarayan *pants* were singing *santo bhajans*. Nowadays, musicians and singers sing *santo bhajan* compositions even though

they do not belong to a *pant*. *Santo bhajans* are sung at festivals and at religious functions. They are usually accompanied by *kartal* and *dholak*. Ever since the children's and adults' eisteddfodau were combined, the *santo bhajans* were discontinued (Ganesh 1998:25). The local verses of the *santo bhajans* make use of Natalie Hindi, as it is easier to understand and appreciate. Bal Ganesh mentions two persons - Paheli Chotoo and Jay Narain - who are well known for their renditions of this genre in the adult eisteddfod (1998:50). According to Gyan Parsoo, the newly instated president of the *Sangh*, the Shivnarayan *pants* are presently residing in Shallcross (informal communication, November 1999).

Chautal are songs that are traditionally sung during the *Holi*⁹ celebration. The songs sung are based on the legend of Krishna and Radha. Ganesh writes that the indentured labourers continued this tradition, but after about two generations a decline was noted. Nowadays, this celebration continues at temples only on a small scale and some of these songs are still sung (1998:26).

Wedding songs are traditionally sung at all stages of Hindi nuptials. It "injects a wide range of meanings into the wedding ceremony" (Mahabeer¹⁰1992:1). Traditionally, they are performed by a group of women.

Sohar songs are sung at the ritual known as *chatee*. On the sixth day after the birth of a child *chatee* is held. Songs are sung while the womenfolk "create a din by banging on brass trays with spoons and ladles" (Ganesh 1998:23).

The song texts of the solo *aalha* relate to the heroic deeds performed by people through the ages in India.

Other musical categories were promoted in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod : *bhajan* ; film song ; and *shastri sangeet*.

Bhajans are devotional songs addressed to specific religious deities, such as Ram, Hanuman, and Krishna. They are accompanied by *tabla*, harmonium and *majira*. They are sung either solo or in a group.

Film songs, based on those heard in the Hindi films and on records produced in India, were also performed. The instrumental accompaniment would differ according to the availability of instruments. Usually the harmonium and *tabla* provided the basic accompaniment (Ganesh interview, April 1998).

Shastri sangeet or north Indian classical music was also a category in the adult eisteddfod. Ganesh recalls a man by the name of Sultan Khan who came to Natal as a passenger Indian. Apparently he was an exponent of north Indian music who lectured at Baroda University. One of his students who is highly respected for his musical accomplishments is Master Harisingh who is still teaching music. His daughter - Geeta Maharaj - teaches music as well.

Dhorai Roopanand, a child of an indentured family, was sent to India by his parents to study north Indian music. He returned to South Africa to teach music. His students are P. H. Narsi, Narain Rao, and Polly Bharat Singh, all of who are deceased.

The students of these classical musicians like Geeta Maharaj, also teach music and have performed in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod. The musical instruments that were used in the eisteddfod were *tabla*, *bansuri*, harmonium, violin, *sitar*, *nagaara*, and *sarangi*.

The performance practice of these and other items for the purposes of assessment was highly prescriptive. The *Sangh* established parameters and rules for each and every category. All categories had a set time frame and a specified number of performers for group items. Categories such as *santo bhajans* and *aalha* were to be sung in traditional tunes and accompanied by at least two musical instruments chosen from *dholak*, *sarangi*, *majira* or harmonium. All other song categories were to be accompanied by at least two musical instruments. In the dance category recorded or live musical accompaniment was compulsory but singing was optional. Classical singing was to be performed in one of the three stipulated *ragas*. Prescribed texts from the religious scriptures were provided for recitation. In the case of the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod, it was a rule that only participants over the age of 17 were eligible. (See Appendix A for a breakdown of the adjudication of categories for the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod.)

Video Recording

On the 18th of November 1999 a video recording of some of these musical categories was made and is submitted with thesis. (See Appendix B for commentary on the video sequences.)

The vibrancy of these musical styles, which immensely satisfied the older generations, may be perceived as a 'window' specific to an era that is fading away along with its musicians. The 'identity maintenance' adopted in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod, based on lived Hindi culture, is now giving way to the negotiated identity, based on the streamlined construction of 'Hindi-ness', as viewed in the combined children's and adults' eisteddfod.

NOTES

1. Current affiliation is 51 schools (Gyan Parsoo, informal communication, December 1999).
2. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) was affiliated from 1948 to 1984 to the Rashtrabasha Prachar Samiti, Wardha, India to enable the Sangh to conduct Hindi examinations in South Africa. The examination papers were set, marked and moderated in India while the examinations were conducted in South Africa. This was a tedious and time-consuming process with delays in the postal service.
3. The *Ramayan* is one of the two great epics of Hinduism, the other being the *Bhagavata Gita*. The Sanskrit epic of the *Ramayan* was written by Valmiki, which is said to have reached its final form around 400 BC. The Hindi epic of *Ramayan* written by Tulsidas in the sixteenth century is the *Ramayan* recited at the Sangh's eisteddfod. This is written in the Awadhi dialect so that the common person could read it since Sanskrit was preserved amongst the Hindu priests (Nowbath 1960:34).
4. The *Bhagavata Gita* is a "sermon which Lord Krishna preached to Arjuna, the Pandava Chief, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra Its composition possibly began in the fourteenth or thirteenth century before the birth of Christ, finding inspiration in a great historical battle [known as the Mahabharata] fought between the warlike races [the Pandavas and the Kauravas] of North India" (Nowbath 1960:35).
5. The literal meaning of the word *Veda* is both "knowledge" and "supreme knowledge". This term applies to a set of four books - *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Atharva Veda* and *Sama Veda* - "belonging to the ancient Indo-Aryans who crossed the Indus [River] and settled on the Indo-Gangetic Plain, probably at some period between 2000 and 1500 BC. These books, written in Sanskrit, are considered to be direct revelations from God, and are said to embody the Supreme Truth that could not be gained by any effort of the human mind. They were communicated from time to time to the *Rishis* in their supra-normal consciousness" (Nowbath 1960:25).
6. For further reading on *bhajans* see Sallyann Goodall's thesis.
7. Duet category implies two female dancers performing together.
8. The *nachanya* is said to represent the Goddess Saraswati - the Goddess of Knowledge (Harry Sewlall Rampersad, informal communication, November 1999).
9. *Holi* is a harvesting celebration. The peasants of India traditionally celebrate it in the month of April. Once harvesting is over *Holi* is celebrated. During the day the people throw coloured powder and spray coloured water in the air and on each other. At night they offer handfuls of grain into the sacred fire to signify their gratitude to God for granting them an abundant harvest.

10. For further reading on Hindi wedding songs see author's B. Music (Honours) thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

Historically the *Sangh* has aspired to promote the Hindi language through various mediums, viz. eisteddfodau, plays, debates, musical shows, musical tuition and most recently a radio station - Hindvani¹. The dissemination of the Hindi language, spoken or sung, fulfils the aim of the *Sangh*. Through the years music has helped not only in the transmission of the Hindi language among the Hindi community but also in creating Hindi identity. This identity has proved to be fluid, and not fixed. The construction of Hindi identity within the space of the *Sangh* is negotiable. This chapter discusses the significance and function of the music in the *Sangh* specifically, and reflects historically on the socio-cultural context of the Hindi community.

SIGNIFICANCE AND FUNCTION OF MUSIC IN THE SANGH

Fiftieth Anniversary Musical Show : An 'Ethnographic Moment'

It was Saturday, 24th April 1999. Here we were - my mother, brother and I - standing outside the auditorium of the Luxmi Narayan Temple in Mobeni Heights, south of Durban. The time was about 19h25 and we were late in arriving. The show was already twenty-five minutes underway. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) celebrated their fiftieth anniversary. Part of the celebration was made up of shows. This show brought the anniversary celebrations to a close. We could hear the band playing one of the latest Hindi songs from a recent Bollywood film².

The audience roared loudly with joy clapping their hands, probably acknowledging to the band that they recognised the musical composition played.

Meanwhile, I tried to purchase the tickets but the ticket sellers were notified to stop the ticket sales as the hall was packed to capacity. Immediately I felt utterly disheartened. At the same time my mind raced with the various probabilities of what-ifs and what-to-do-next. Luckily, one of the members of the Sangh we knew was standing at the door. He said that he could 'organise' seats for us. He conferred with the usher while I paid for our tickets. Within a few minutes the usher returned to lead us to our seats.

As I entered the hall I was amazed to see a mass of Indian people - some were seated on the regular seats, some were on the additional seating while others were standing at the sides and back of the hall. We were escorted to the front of the hall to the row of seats placed there only moments ago (I'm sure) - weren't we really lucky?

The womenfolk were adorned in their traditional Indian garments like the *sari*, *punjabi*, *salwar kameez*, *gagra choli*, *sharara*, *sari* suits and *chaniya choli*. Some of the male stalwarts of the Hindi community wore their Nehru suits with the Nehru hats, *kurtas* or Indian-styled suits. It was a rainbow of colours shimmering in the dimmed light of the auditorium that added to the pleasing of the senses.

The invitation to this show was announced only over the *Sangh's* radio station - Hindvani - for a period of two days. Tickets were sold at the door. Therefore the overwhelming turnout of people clearly reflected the station's listenership.

The show featured a popular band, the Tansen Nepaul Band, which comprised of instrumentalists and presumably the best local Hindi singers. The musicians played instruments such as electronic keyboards, bongo drums, a drum set, *tabla* and guitar³. The musical compositions performed were cover versions of the songs sung in the Hindi films from Bollywood. These musicians and singers have acquired a basic knowledge of music, which was taught to them at the government schools they attended. There were very few dance items, which were performed when the band took a break. Some dance items were folk-based while others were in the traditional north Indian art dance form known as *kathak*. The dancers are professionals, trained by the local dance schools in Durban. Teachers who are either trained locally or abroad in India run these schools.

At a function of this nature supper is usually provided. The meal was vegetarian in nature and consisted of *biryani*, *dhall* and salad⁴. The meal was taken during the interval.

At that time I got a chance to chat to one of the members of the audience who was seated next to me. She was overwhelmed by the turnout of people when she said : "I cannot believe that so many Hindi people are under one roof" (informal communication, April 1999). This auditorium generally seats a thousand people. On that night at least 1300 were squeezed in.

The atmosphere in the hall was one of excitement. The audience participated by clapping their hands, tapping their feet and shaking their heads to the beat of the music. Some were even moving their bodies and shoulders in their seats. Some were singing

along with the singer. I caught my mother doing just this many times. There were plenty of children who braved the late hours singing along with the singers, chatting excitedly and even moving their bodies to the rhythm of the song.

The show ended a little after 23h00. The audience had been saturated with Hindi music, song and dance. They most probably left the hall satiated as their faces, I observed, were pleasant, resigned and content.

This is a bird's-eye view based on my observation of the socio-cultural experience of a musical event of the *Sangh* that has taken place in 1999.

When considering the context of music, i.e. the musical event, Line Grenier recommends that it should be "experienced in realtime" (1990:33). Similarly, Quereshi terms this "ethnographic moments" (1995:335). At the same time, the construction of 'authenticity' occurs. It is a "way of saying to outsiders and insiders alike 'this is what is really significant about this music', 'this is the music that makes us different from other people'" (Stokes 1994:7). Authenticity draws on 'moments' in which self-identity is focussed in a particularly clear way, so that the event becomes a 'marker' in cultural identity.

From this two tendencies arise : one, the construction of social order through the means of music; the other, formation of an individual 'sense of belonging'.

Perceptions of Cultural Status

Amongst the Indian community, people who are associated with an institution like the *Sangh* are perceived to be 'cultured'. The construction of a social order through the practice of religion has helped me in finding my place in society. Through my personal experience in associating with the Arya Youth League, I have acquired respect from the community I worked together with; owing to the fact I could speak and write the Hindi language, conduct *havan* and debate on Hindu philosophies. Wherever we travelled in KwaZulu-Natal my colleagues and myself were complimented for propagating Hinduism among the Hindi youth.

Being learned and knowledgeable in the practice, promotion and propagation of the religion and culture requires that individuals be 'cultured'. As Dr. Rambhajan Sitaram, the Head of the former Indian Languages Department at University of Durban-Westville, stated in a paper which was presented at the thirty-eighth annual conference of the *Sangh* that

[c]ulture is the aggregate of a people's achievements in the amenities of life, such as music, art, literature, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics and religion.

(1987:4)

So, too, social order may be construct by people through the means of music in finding their place in society. The listenership of the various genres of music tends to determine the social levels of the serious listener, rather like the 'highbrow' music of the Western tradition. Similarly, *chutney*⁵ music may be likened to traditional music and Indian film music to popular music.

Class distinctions within the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) are non-existent as the *Sangh* purposely cuts across the class barriers. This is attributed to the focus of the aim of the *Sangh* - the promotion of the Hindi language. Consequently, whether a learner comes from either a wealthy or a deprived family, the purpose of the 'coming together' is to learn the Hindi language.

The promotion of caste as practised in India is not adhered to strictly in South Africa, or, if done so, "is used incorrectly. Instead, the ideology of Indian culture survived [here] in religion and in language practice" (Freund 1995:9).

A musical event like the fiftieth anniversary show concurrently promotes the formation of a 'sense of belonging'. The feeling of 'oneness' on that evening, especially the knowledge that a part of a specific human group that shares many fundamental preferences in daily life, also enjoys its cultural music - is indeed extraordinary.

By the same token, while establishing a social order and a sense of belonging through what may be constructed as 'ours' by the Hindi community, the concept of difference to the larger Indian community and South African society as a whole is established. This "differential approach" - as Grenier terms it - to musical events addresses music as a means by which groups, in this instance, the Hindi-speaking Hindu, "actualize and manifest their respective cultural and social traits, and their mutual differences" [among Hindus in general] (1990:33).

While one is experiencing music and musical events in "realtime", one is concurrently "anthropologising music history"⁶. When recasting musical products by incorporating

felt experiences, the observer explains this new amalgam as made up of "cultural production, of performance, of utterance and reception, all generated by human agents", so that the sociality of music is accounted for (Quereshi 1995:335). The underlying process is to accept and engage with 'difference'.

The question to ask here is : How is social meaning conveyed in music generated by the *Sangh* ? The musical traditions, realised at the musical events, are encompassed in the "soundscape" of the event when considering it holistically. Jayendran Pillay regards the term "soundscape" to be the "precomposed, improvised, and unplanned": it is "crucial in inscribing a particularized landscape and timescape with meaning" (1994:8). For example, the unsolicited participation of the audience by clapping their hands, singing along, tapping their feet, expressing their emotions on their faces creates confidence in the musicians to perform, knowing that their music is being enjoyed and appreciated.

An instance of a "soundscape" experience at an adult eisteddfod retold by Ganesh :

[T]he people used to get excited and enthusiastic, I tell you, that when you had the nachanya item we used to get people on the floor dancing.

(Interview, April 1998)

In my conversation with Brijdeo Behadar and Bal Ganesh after the fiftieth anniversary show, Behadar quite aptly stated that "music is an expression of our culture" (informal communication, April 1999). Pillay clarifies the term "expressive culture" as denoting "particularized modes of artistic performance [musical specificities] that articulate a storehouse of ways of perceiving, finding, and revealing meaning of / to the world" (1994:8).

Ganesh confirms that "success of the adult eisteddfods and shows like this evening's [fiftieth anniversary show] shows us that we have a tradition, a culture, and that we should be proud of it" (informal communication, April 1999).

MUSIC IN RELATION TO THE HISTORIC SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE HINDI COMMUNITY

Amongst the Indians in South Africa the discontinuation in trade and cultural links between India and South Africa brought about a progressive isolation in the early to middle twentieth century. The resultant deprivation included the musical arts. Thus, they relied on the traditional practices that were passed on from one generation to another by memory alone.

Ganesh comments on the admission of music with language in the eisteddfod :

We realised very early in the years that if we wanted to teach Hindi, we had to include music as a means of promoting our language A lot of our items were musical. After all, in music you had to use Indian language [Hindi] Also dancing, we encouraged our children to dance the kathak style. In kathak you have Indian music [specifically north Indian music], you see, as a medium, whereas in bharata natyam you have Tamil music [south Indian music]. So we encouraged the very popular items, singing and dancing, in the promotion of our language.

(Interview, September 1997)

The Dynamics of Change in Local Hindi Identities

A culture devoid of any expression of the senses and of emotion is equivalent to a vacuum. Music is undoubtedly one of the fundamental, indeed, universal elements in stirring the senses and emotions of people. The differences that separate our culture from another lie in the types, styles, performance practices and instruments used within each culture.

Just as the Hindi eisteddfod was implemented as a platform for the promotion of the language, so too was music considered to foster Hindi. But this process was not as straightforward as its initiators imagined. Over the past fifty years, the musical activities of the *Sangh* have changed with assimilation to the environment, creating as a result an ethnic identity that is demonstrably a product of the second half of the century.

The many musicians who performed in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod, even though it was competition-based, viewed this as a platform for promoting the culture of the Hindi-speaking Hindu. However, one must understand that the songs sung bore no relevance whatsoever to the academic promotion of the standardised Hindi - Kadee Bolee - but rather to the "koinisation" of song texts.

How did this non-literary form come to be promoted ? Based on Pillay's theory of "expressive culture", perhaps the unstated function of these musical performances was to find a way of expressing the un-idealised cultural identity of the Hindi-speaking Hindu. The older generations were greatly attracted to these items, as they easily identified themselves with them. For them, it injected a sense of "belonging" (Saraswati Ganesh, informal communication, September 1997).

Ganesh discusses the place of folk music in the social lives of the Hindi-speaking Hindu:

When we introduced it [folk music in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod] it was not rare like now. Now if you ask a person to sing biraha he wouldn't know what you are talking about. But those days '53, '55 and even 1960, you see, almost every Hindi wedding had the nachanya, had the biraha singers. They had different sections [in the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod]. Nagaara was playing there, you had the nachanya, had the santo bhajan. They worked in groups - one finished and the other group took over. Of course you don't see this now. We have changed - it's different - we have changed a great deal.

(Interview, September 1997)

Thus, these forms were at the time strongly rooted in the everyday social practices of Hindi-speakers. Their gradual incorporation in the eisteddfod represented an articulation of lived Hindi culture that was not necessarily at one with the stated aims of the *Sangh*.

Peter Weinreich defines ethnic identity, when considering the development of identity amongst migrant offspring, as forming a

[p]art of the totality of one's self construal made up of those dimensions that express the continuity between one's construal of past ancestry and future aspirations in relation to ethnicity.

(1986:232)

In light of Weinreich's definition, the folk items (*biraha*, *sarangi* song, wedding song, *sohar*, *chautal*, and *aalha*) appear to have signified to the Hindi-speaking Hindu both the evidence of their origins (the reminder of one's regional roots as "construal of past ancestry"), and the defining marks that needed to be handed on to generations to come (the simple and communal songs, associated with the life-cycle activities, and free of erudition, as "future aspirations in relation to ethnicity").

In terms of origins, there exists clear evidence of the connection between musical genres and regions of origin in India⁷. Says Ganesh of the folk material, it "originates from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar" (Interview, October 1999). These are unique styles specific to that region.

Harry Sewlall Rampersad recalls that when one of his relatives visited the village where his forefathers had lived in north India, "he saw musicians playing birahas close by " (informal communication, November 1999). Despite a difference in dialect, the songs were still musically recognisable.

Ganesh touches on the specificity of 'Hindi-ness' when discussing folk music in the adult eisteddfod :

We were trying to make people aware that this is our foundation. Our music that we are singing now have these as our foundation because our music is different from the Tamil music [south Indian music], the Tamil music is different from the Qawwali style. That was our purpose. Our purpose also was to try to get our people not to forget our culture because these were the basics of our culture. The purpose was to preserve Hindi culture.

(Interview, April 1998)

In terms of the continued expression of ethnic identity, the recent disappearance of these song types represents, at least for the older generations, a weakening of Hindi identity.

Ganesh mention some of the causes :

Change must have taken place about twenty years ago, '70s ... inclination towards the western culture, western education ... the economic position changed ... then you had the TV, the radio ... another thing I feel that has brought about a great change was our life-style, you see, we lived jointly - there was the joint family system - those early days, I am talking about when the parents lived with the children, their grandchildren. Then when the economics of the country changed, when we became more economically sound - we separated. The influence of the older people who were more inclined to our culture evaporated.

(Interview, September 1997)

The social engineering of apartheid led to the physical dislocation of the Indians in Durban. According to Freund the idea of the Group Areas was one of progression, hygiene and modernity (1995:64). This is a fundamental factor contributing directly to the fragmenting of the once well-established social ties. The construction of new links in areas like Chatsworth (opened for settlement in 1964) and Phoenix (opened for settlement in 1976) impacted on the joint family system. The emergence of the nuclear family led to a growing economic independence.

Arising out of this like a phoenix - defined as "rising from its ashes young again to live for another cycle" (*Oxford Paperback Dictionary* 1990:607) - is the emerging modernised Hindi youth. Parents tend to place greater emphasis on a sound schooling and tertiary education rather than the need to learn to read, write and speak Hindi.

The paradigm shift from folk and north Indian music to Bollywood music has recently accelerated. This is a distinctive feature that has occurred not only in India but even more so in countries where Indians have migrated, whether by indenture, as passenger Indian or by voluntary immigration⁸. The consciousness of younger Indians, many now without an Indian language, has replaced these 'strong' markers with hybrid forms of music like *chutney* (among younger Indian South Africans) and *bhangra* (among Indians throughout the world).

The stopping of the adult section in the Hindi eisteddfod was most likely the result of diverging 'agendas'. Although it may never have been made explicit, the underlying issue appears to have been that of the un-idealised culture versus the 'literary'. Two possible assumptions come to mind : the unsuspected force of "koinisation"

superseding the academic promotion of Kadee Bolee in the eisteddfod ; more generally, the lived Hindi culture conflicting with the views of the purist. It seems that neither side has won as the Indian youth ultimately accept hybridised musical forms. This 'identity conflict' in the *Sangh* is important when considering the maturing of the Hindi youth in their identity formation, since it indicates the presence of differing senses of Hindi identity. This is discussed further in the following chapter.

NOTES

1. Hindvani is the radio station run by the *Sangh* on a twenty-four hour basis. All shows on this station are communicated chiefly through the medium of Hindi - Kadee Bolee - and the English language is used less. See chapter five for further discussion.
2. The centre of India's film industry is the city of Bombay. It is usually referred to as 'Bollywood' - Bombay joined with Hollywood (the American commercial film industry).
3. The use of western instruments like guitar or bongo drums is for the purpose of creating a specific sound in the musical composition. The use of a keyboard synthesizer in bands is the 'replacement' for instruments such as violin, *sitar*, or vocal chorus.
4. This meal represents an example of Nowbath's category of "overlapping" cultural practices. This type of cuisine is common among all Hindus in South Africa.
5. *Chutney* are "sung in the style brought to the country by the indentured labourers. Their lyrics are composed locally. They are related to contemporary life. Many contain words, phrases and sometimes sentences from other languages. The songs can be serious, humorous, romantic and religious" (Bal Ganesh 1998:24).
6. Quereshi discusses this in her article "Music Anthropologies and Music Histories : A Preface and an Agenda" in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48/3, Fall, 1995, 331-342.
7. See L.G. Tewari's PhD. thesis entitled "Folk Music of India : Uttar Pradesh", 1974.
8. Apart from the migration of Indians during the British rule in India, Indians, more so in the second half of this century, are immigrating to various parts of the world. Some of the reasons for doing so are either for better jobs or for ensuring a better future for their children.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF IDENTITY

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa), Katze Prinsloo, Director of Indian Education (Department of Indian Affairs) sent this message:

Hindi, the official language of India, is also the mother tongue of a large number of Indian South Africans. Every community tries to preserve and propagate its language, for language is the gateway to appreciating one's literature and traditions.

(DC/HSS, Official letter, 30/4/1974)

Twenty-five years later, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the *Sangh*, M. K. Lokesh, Consul-General of India in Durban, sent this message :

Language is the primary expression of any culture and it is indicative of the richness and depth of the cultural heritage of the community to which that language belongs.

(*Souvenir Brochure* 1998:4)

Clearly, these two congratulatory messages emanating from ideologically distinct sources, reflect the value placed on the continued propagation of the Hindi language.

Likewise, music has been a driving force in the construction of the local Hindi identity. Musical activities, especially the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod, reflect this. A message from Rampersad Hemraj, then the president of the *Sangh*, on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, stated that

[t]he eisteddfod programme has attracted enthusiastic support from young and old participants alike. This is one area of the Sangh's activities which has the potential to help sustain the Hindi language and to increase the number of its adherents. ... A dynamic entertainment programme incorporating established artistes and up-and -coming performers, presented imaginatively on a regular basis, can do much to rejuvenate dwindling interests in each of these areas. The consequent impact on the Hindi language will be positive.

(*Souvenir Brochure* 1998:2)

Hindvani

An important outcome of the fiftieth anniversary was the launch of the Hindi radio station, Hindvani, on 30 September 1998. Unfortunately, due to the lack of funds for the licence from the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), Hindvani has been off-air twice and is so presently. However, in the short spells of airtime (totalling approximately six months) the response from listeners has been significant. *Post*, 14-17 October 1998 published an advertisement feature on the Hindvani radio station. The unnamed reporter mentioned that "Hindvani is making a remarkable change to the community" (1998:25).

A suggestion of a shift in mental thought is expressed : "Many scholars and students who normally spend their time in front of television are switching on to 103 FM Stereo" (1998:25).

Overseas and local Hindi musical recordings were played, including studio-produced hybrid, popular, devotional, religious and traditional forms, along with local recordings made live at social events that included devotional and traditional musical forms. It is interesting to note that a broader spectrum of Hindi music is heard - the overseas musical recordings. When comparing the offerings of the radio station to the musical

activities held by the *Sangh*, there is no doubt that there is a wider appeal. The variety of recordings is limitless as against the restricted musical compositions from the local musicians; and the space in which the music is appreciated can be within a personal environment and at any time of the day, rather than, as previously, being confined to a specific time and place.

The act of broadcasting has many potential results. It creates an alternative forum to the regionalised Hindi schools by presenting the Hindi language in the home of every Hindi person. It is feasible that this exposure might lead eventually to increased attendance at a local Hindi school. However, there can be little doubt that continued broadcasting would play a vital role in the question of 'Hindi-ness'.

Resynthesized Identity

The socio-historical events in the construction of 'Hindi-ness' within the *Sangh* in the later twentieth century may arguably have occurred in two distinct phases : first, the urge to inject the linguistic heritage into the 'lived Hindi culture', through the means of the adult section of the Hindi eisteddfod; second, the changes in the priorities of the *Sangh* which brought about the academic promotion of the Hindi language as against the 'lived Hindi culture' and which may be seen in the termination of the adult eisteddfod.

A result of these socio-historical events is what Weinreich calls "resynthesize[d] identity". The outcomes of such an identity construction rely on

[t]he particular mix of identifications that they [the subjects] make not only during the various phases of their early childhood and adolescence, but also during subsequent periods when they take on adult responsibilities.

(1986:231)

Some of the causes which might lead to a "resynthesize[d] identity" are increasingly present in local conditions. Children were exposed to an informal multicultural educational environment from the mid-1980s on, and the cultural identity of the child thus contrasted with that of schoolmates. The repealing of the Group Areas Act enabled greater demographic mingling and the inclusive constitution of South Africa since 1994 resulted in greater, positive media representations of cultural and religious diversity.

The effects of such changes are already noticeable amongst the Hindi community. English is superseding vernacular languages including Hindi as a binding force within South Africa. Also, greater tolerance and respect of cultures other than one's own is growing, as is the awareness that the coexistence of various identities is the only reasonable path into the future.

This re-synthesized identity may be interpreted as a product of the present time :

[It] is the way that individuals have become increasingly free ... to self-consciously choose their sense of identity, rather than unquestioningly inheriting it as a pre-ordained given. The obligation to choose becomes particularly acute in a diasporic situation marked by a declining traditional cultural core and the presence of new cultural options and alternatives.

(Manuel 1997/1998:27)

In the Hindi Shiksha Sangh, musical items in the eisteddfod once served as clear indices of the various forms of 'lived Hindi culture'. With the introduction of local Indian radio stations (Radio Lotus – started in 1983; Radio Phoenix – started in 1997 ; and Hindvani – first broadcasted in 1998), a new means is now available for the acceptance and

appreciation of a wider choice of musical genres (traditional, popular or hybrid styles) among a much broader mass of Indian youth.

From this wide choice, people still construct a 'Hindi identity' and this may constitute what Stuart Hall regards as "minimal self":

It insists on difference - on the fact that every identity is placed, positioned, in a culture, a language, a history. Every statement comes from somewhere, from somebody in particular. It insists on specificity, on conjuncture.

(1993:138)

When considering the "minimal self" in the context of the Indian South African, it is impossible simply to regard Indians as a single group, since they are differently rooted in their specificities of language, religion, geography, practices and customs. The identities of groups, subgroups and their individual members are historically conditioned. Parts of those identities are therefore inescapable. But so too are influences from outside the individual's 'home' culture. Identity is now synthesized from at least three sources : the linguistic / regional culture ; the pan-Indian culture ; and a powerful westernising influence. The challenge of the "minimal self" in the present situation is, therefore, two-fold : on the one hand, to deal with the strong appeals to the value of one's own cultural heritage : and on the other hand, to deal with awareness of the diverse identities present in one's communal experience.

The challenge of the "minimal self" requires a moment of crystallisation in the perpetual negotiation of identity. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh (South Africa) is a living example of the attempt to instil and strengthen a sense of what it means to be Hindi.

APPENDIX A

BREAKDOWN OF ADJUDICATION FOR THE CATEGORIES IN THE ADULT SECTION OF THE HINDI EISTEDDFOD

INSTRUMENTAL		Total marks 50
1)	<i>taal</i>	10 marks
2)	<i>anthra / sthayi</i>	10 marks
3)	choice of melody	10 marks
4)	attack and release	10 marks
5)	artistry and finish	10 marks
BIRAHA / CLASSICAL SINGING / FILM SONG (MALE/FEMALE) / BHAJAN (MALE/FEMALE)		Total marks 50
1)	<i>anthra / sthayi</i>	10 marks
2)	<i>taal</i>	10 marks
3)	voice and interpretation	10 marks
4)	diction	10 marks
5)	artistry and finish	10 marks
DANCE (SOLO / GROUP / DUET)		Total marks 100
1)	costume and make up	20 marks
2)	co-ordination with music	20 marks
3)	rhythm	20 marks
4)	movement, costume and deportment	20 marks
5)	style, artistry and finish	20 marks
GROUP SONG (POPULAR) / SANTO BHAJAN		Total marks 100
1)	<i>anthra / sthayi</i>	20 marks
2)	<i>taal</i>	20 marks
3)	voice and interpretation	20 marks
4)	diction	20 marks
5)	artistry and finish	20 marks

APPENDIX B

VIDEO SEQUENCE : RUNNING TIME 110 MINUTES

1. Musical genre : *Ramayan*
Artist : Nirmala Pursad
Accompanying instruments : none
Language of song text : Awadhi Hindi
2. Musical genre : *Gita*
Artist : Nirmala Pursad
Accompanying instruments : none
Language of song text : Sanskrit
3. Musical genre : *Veda*
Artist : Brijdeo Behadar
Accompanying instruments : none
Language of song text : Sanskrit
4. Musical genre : *Bhajan*
Artist : Dosti Nagaara Sounds
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Kadee Bolee
5. Musical genre : Instrumental
Artist : Dosti Nagaara sounds
Accompanying instruments : harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
6. Musical genre : Film Song
Artist : Dosti Nagaara Sounds
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Kadee Bolee
7. Musical genre : *Biraha*
Artist : Dosti Nagaara Sounds and Harry Sewlall Rampersad
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi

8. Musical genre : *Santo Bhajan*
Artist : Dosti Nagaara Sounds
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi
Comment : Traditionally instruments used were *sarangi*, *kangari* and *kartal*

9. Musical genre : *Sarangi* song
Artist : Harry Sewlall Rampersad and Dosti Nagaara Sounds
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi
Comment : Traditionally instruments used were two *sarangis* (they were called 'left' and 'right'), *tabla*, and *majira*.

10. Musical genre : *Chautal*
Artist : Harry Sewlall Rampersad
Accompanying instruments : vocals, harmonium, *nagaara*, *ghand* and lead guitar
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi

11. Musical genre : Wedding Song
Artist : Dayanand Stree Samaj
Accompanying instruments : *nagaara* and *majira*
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi
Comment : This song is usually sung when the bridegroom arrives at the venue of the wedding proper.

12. Musical genre : *Sohar*
Artist : Dayanand Stree Samaj
Accompanying instruments : *dholak* and *majira*
Language of song text : Natalie Hindi

GLOSSARY

<i>aalha</i>	songs based on heroic deeds of people
<i>acharya</i>	professor
<i>anthra</i>	the first refrain in a north Indian music composition
<i>bansuri</i>	a transverse bamboo flute
<i>bhajan</i>	a devotional song
<i>biraha</i>	an announcement of a significant happening that is sung
<i>biryani</i>	rice with vegetables, meat or poultry cooked with spices
<i>chaniya choli</i>	medium length skirt with a blouse accompanied with a shawl
<i>chautal</i>	a song relating to the <i>Holi</i> festival
<i>dhall</i>	pea soup cooked with spices
<i>dholak</i>	a single double-headed drum
<i>gagra choli</i>	long skirt with a blouse accompanied with a shawl
<i>ghand</i>	small cymbals
<i>Gita</i>	a Hindu epic
<i>gurukul</i>	a residential teaching institution which is kept up by a tutor
<i>havan</i>	a sacrificial fire
<i>Holi</i>	a harvest celebration held in the Spring season
<i>kangari</i>	like a tambourine but smaller
<i>kartal</i>	a block of wood with tiny cymbals attached, with an oblong opening in which to hold - when played, two <i>kartals</i> are held in one hand and are struck together.
<i>kurta</i>	long pants with a full-length shirt
<i>majira</i>	two tiny cymbals joined together with a string
<i>nachanya</i>	a male dancer dressed so as to represent the Goddess Saraswati

<i>nagaara</i>	a set of drums played with wooden mallets
<i>pandit</i>	priest
<i>patshala</i>	vernacular school
<i>punjabi</i>	long pants with a dress accompanied with a shawl
<i>raga</i>	a musical scale
<i>Ramayan</i>	a Hindu epic
<i>salwar kameez</i>	long pants with a long dress accompanied with a shawl
<i>Samnyasa</i>	a person who gives up material belongings to propagate a religious philosophy
<i>santo bhajan</i>	a religious song
<i>sarangi</i>	a north Indian bowed fiddle played vertically
<i>sari</i>	a length of cloth draped round the body, worn by Indian women
<i>sharara</i>	long skirt with a dress top accompanied with a shawl
<i>sitar</i>	a north Indian plucked lute
<i>sohar</i>	birth songs
<i>sthayi</i>	the second refrain in a north Indian music composition
<i>swami</i>	a title given to a Hindu monk or nun
<i>tabla</i>	a set of drums played with the palm and fingers of the hand
<i>vakya pratiyogika</i>	oral language competition

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