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THE INDIAN IN *DRUM* *in the 1950s*



MASTERS IN FINE ARTS (By Coursework)

RESEARCH REPORT

THE INDIAN IN DRUM IN THE 1950S

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Front cover *Rank for 5 Taxis*, cnr Grey & Victoria Street, Durban, 1958
Photo by Ranjith Kally © BAHA

ABSTRACT

This investigation aims to provide evidence of alternate South African Indian identities that have been suppressed in representations of the 'Indian' in the country.

In order to do this the study first establishes some of the dominant notions of the 'Indian' that include portrayals in state publications such as Meet the Indian in South Africa. The investigation then makes use of the *DRUM* magazine archive of articles and images relating to 'Indians' in the 1950s to deconstruct many of the popular 'Indian' stereotypes.

The findings recover an unofficial 'Indian' history by recalling personalities and 'Indian' sub-cultures that emphatically demonstrate alternate 'Indian' identities. Via the findings the study thus also hopes to contribute to the restoration a communal 'Indian' memory. The inquiry also finds that this 'Indian' representation in *DRUM* magazine has been overlooked in the general retelling of the *DRUM* magazine story. The study therefore also acknowledges some of the 'Indian' writers and photographers who were responsible for documenting these stories in the magazine. This argument for a broader and more complex view of the 'Indian' is reinforced via the production of an exhibition of photographic images drawn from the *DRUM* magazine archive that relate directly to the discussion, which forms part of the practical visual art requirement of the degree, the production of which is discussed under a separate chapter.

Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted towards the degree of Masters of Fine Arts by Coursework in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before any other degree or examination.

……..

RIASON NAIDOO

15 February 2007

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Lastly I would also like to acknowledge my parents and my extended family whose lives were the inspiration behind this research.

INTRODUCTION

After school I would while away the time at my father's small stall in the Victoria Street Indian Market, playing draughts on the checker boards of stiffened paper bags until the shutters to the main entrances were rolled down. The market was notorious for its street fighters, its links to the underworld gangs and some of the biggest football clubs in Durban. It was also a spot where runners of the big gangs could illicitly dispense of imported goods – Hardy Amies silk ties from London, gold watches, leather jackets, designer cigarette cases from the top houses in the States – for a fraction of the store price. It was in this environment that I encountered many stories of 'Indian'[1] gangsters, football players and dance halls. Even within my family there were ballroom dancers, professional football players and tough street fighters. Names such as the Dutchenes, the Crimson League and the Salots constantly recurred when speaking of gangs in Durban. And Dharam Mohan and Links Padayachee are still remembered as two of the most gifted 'Indian' footballers the country has produced, at the time when Aces United and Avalon Athletic football clubs once filled Curries Fountain to the brim.

1 This refers to the South African of Indian origin.

But this is not the image of the 'Indian' that has generally been presented in popular culture in South Africa. Instead, the more popular idea of 'the Indian' – constructed over a period of time, first under colonialism and later under apartheid – is dominated by an image of a wealthy 'Indian', often in the form of the cunning shopkeeper looking to extort the customer and exploit the worker; or the traditional and often backward 'Indian', one who follows in the old cultural traditions of arranged marriage, caste, and other static religious practices.

In the course of the discussion it will be made more evident too how these stereotypes, created under colonial and apartheid South Africa, perpetuate to the present day. Many of these predominantly negative notions have deep roots that can be linked to certain anti-'Indian' sentiments that evolved out of an Indian economic threat posed to whites in nineteenth century Natal, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1.

What this says is that stereotypes are extremely powerful and the perpetuation of them can continue for centuries. The recent decades of separate development under apartheid along racial lines has further contributed to colonial and imperial ideas of the Indian subject and the entrenchment of such thinking that has resulted in these lingering to the present.

These notions of the 'Indian' were also at odds with much of my own experience and the stories told by my family. They raised doubts of the validity of these stories in my own mind and had me wondering if they were not a romanticized version created and given an exaggerated importance to compensate for the dehumanizing effects of apartheid.

Motivated by the passion with which these narratives were related, I began to investigate the existence of other 'Indian' identities than the limited ones portrayed.

It was in seeking evidence of these alternative 'Indian' identities that I started to search for traces of this in my family's archives. A trip to Durban led down a dead-end road when I discovered that all the old family photographs had been lost in the various moves after my grandparents died. This effectively effaced for me any visual reference of an early family history: the early football teams, the Junction house where my great-grandfather brought up his family on the small farm plot; the Sea View house where the family later moved to in the 1950s. This sense of loss is described by bell hooks (1994:389):

> I remember giving her the snapshot for safekeeping; only, when it was time for me to return home it could not be found. This was for me a terrible loss, an irreconcilable grief. Gone was the image of myself I could love. Losing that snapshot, I lost the proof of my worthiness …

What it did reveal though was the evidential power of a photograph. Where were the vestiges of the often talked about social clubs, extraordinary gangsters, journalists, boxers, golfers, football players and dancers that related to the 'Indian' experience? Did this only exist in my own imagination? The search was becoming frustrating and the intention of paying tribute to this era was beginning to seem like a far-fetched fantasy.

Then some weeks later, quite by accident, I came across copies of *DRUM* magazine from 1955 as I was browsing through old journals in the basement of the Africana Library at Wits University. As I paged through the yellowed pages of the magazine – usually

associated with South African black 'African' history, and the freehold township of Sophiatown – my heart skipped a beat...edition after edition, month after month, unfolded personal stories on the 'Indian' illustrated with exquisite photographs unlike anything I had encountered before. Here was a legendary archive of images and text that spoke of other 'Indian' identities that, to my great surprise, no one had cared to mention before. The stories I came across in the edition evoked legendary names that I had heard of in my youth. There was all this and more.

Using the *DRUM* archive, I will explore the representation of the 'Indian' histories and identities that may challenge the long held and dominating notions of the 'Indian' thus far portrayed in private and official accounts. I have chosen to focus on the 1950s because it is the era intrinsically linked to the legend of Sophiatown, *DRUM* magazine and the epitome of black 'African' life in the country. It is also the decade when there was some degree of comparative tolerance before apartheid's pernicious tentacles gripped society with the violent killings in the Sharpville Massacre of March 1960. By focusing on the 'Indian' in the fifties I will draw upon articles and photography in *DRUM* magazine to reveal an alternative view of 'Indian' life that may well be in stark contrast to the limited state portrayals of the 'Indian' widely propagated, especially under apartheid. The insight offered to 'Indian' life, often captured by 'Indian' journalists and photographers from the same communities in *DRUM*, is an existence that was contemporary with Sophiatown. With such an extensive archive of the 'Indian' to draw on from *DRUM* it is also surprising that this has been overlooked in the re-interpretations of *DRUM* in the last decade.[2]

2 Here I refer to accounts such as those by Michael Chapman (2001) and Mike Nicol (1995) that make no mention to any 'Indian' presence in relation to *DRUM* magazine, ignoring both the significant content of the coverage of the 'Indian' experience as well the contributions by the various 'Indian' journalists and photographers.

What the exploration will not do is look at all material in *DRUM* equally. While most portrayals of *DRUM* thus far have mainly focused on Sophiatown and black 'African' life and contributions, this investigation will focus on the specific portrayal of another black identity in the famous magazine, namely the 'Indian' for 'new' evidence of other more complex 'Indian' identities and experiences.

Before exploring the 'Indian' identity in *DRUM* it will be helpful to explore historically perceived notions of who, or what, the 'Indian' is. Chapter 1 deals with this and also looks at the role of photography in constructing and perpetuating colonial power relations. Clare Bell (1996:11) argues that the photograph has also long been an imperative tool in ethnographic depictions of the African continent propagating myths of the Other as documents of real life to the West. These 'scientific' representations conformed to specific cultural expectations where the photographic image – seen as mechanically created with minimal or no human agency – was relied upon as an unquestioned exact science. This chapter also reveals the play on 'Indian' stereotypes by the state towards its objectives of projecting a better self-image abroad. Photography remains integral to this discussion of stereotypes and proves invaluable in contesting them later in the discussion on the 'Indian' identity in *DRUM* in the 1950s in Chapter 2 and through the images in the public exhibition.

hooks (1994:394) says that photography may help us to reconstitute images of ourselves so that we may imagine ourselves in new and liberating ways that may "transcend the limits of the colonizing eye." The photos, carefully selected from hundreds of thousands of negatives from the *DRUM* archives of the 1950s in the corresponding exhibition *The Indian*

in DRUM in the 1950s, reflect on these 'Indian' identities hidden from official and colonial representations of the 'Indian'.

The use of photography in self-representation, where in this case, 'Indian' photographers from within 'Indian' communities have privileged access to and enjoy the trust of that community, may reveal more insightful instances of the 'Indian', outside of the experience or knowledge of the 'official' gaze and other 'racial' gazes – and insiders view if you like. This has often been a threat to the official and often constructed representations of oppressed people presented by colonial regimes to reinforce the power relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. Supporting this view, Olu Oguibe (1996:233) quotes Nicolas Monti on nineteenth century photography who asserts that the authorities of European colonies in Africa were well aware of the danger of the 'natives' "getting possession of this means of expression and using it as an instrument of subversion by showing the true conditions of their people."

Chapter 2 explores and interprets the representation of the 'Indian' found in DRUM in the fifties according to various themes such as the 'Indian' underworld, love affairs across racial lines, modernity and the 'Indian' woman, poverty, politics, sport, entertainment and also explores the personalities of individual characters who epitomised these worlds.

The text in *DRUM* and the accompanying photos provides a primary source for insight to 'Indian' experience captured by 'Indians' via the 1950s. With eloquent accounts by the writer G.R. Naidoo and others, this archive reveals 'Indian' identities that openly defy the stereotypical notions placed on 'Indians'. These were embodied in personalities who were known not only within their communities but throughout the length and breadth of the

country and the continent, wherever a copy of *DRUM* was distributed. Through this process of exploration and recovery, this study will offer a glimpse of alternate 'Indian' identities that may contribute to redefining perceptions of the 'Indian' reinforced under the separate development policies of apartheid.

G.R. Naidoo and Ranjith Kally, two figures emanating from within the 'Indian' community, whose invaluable contributions in photography will also become evident in this volume, offer important and refreshing lenses on the 'Indian', which have for one reason or another been overlooked in the retelling of South African black stories after 1994. Their own marginalisation in the retelling of *DRUM*'s remarkable legend is closely related to the dismissal to the margins of the realities that they were so instrumental in recording. Their inclusion in this discussion is imperative as recorders of life in the 1950s in images for *DRUM* in Durban, and no discussion on this topic would be complete without it.

Moreover, in my investigation for material to speak about an 'Indian' history it was photography that kept recurring for me as a tangible reference. It was photographs that I instinctively grasped for to validate this existence when initially searching through my family archives. "Look here it is!" I could imagine myself saying, recalling Roland Barthes' (1981:5) assertion of the photograph possessing an evidential force, and suggesting "the gesture of the child pointing his finger at something and saying: that, there it is, lo!"

Okwui Enwezor (1996:22) makes a compelling argument that photography should be used by Africans to "re-appropriate images of objectification and transform them as images of our own creation". While Enwezor refers to the African continent we can apply this

concept more broadly to include other continents where subjected peoples have suffered the similar fates of being objectified in visual representations of them. With this in mind the images selected from the *DRUM* archives for the corresponding exhibition *The Indian in DRUM in the 1950s* will reveal insights that contest limited official notions of another one of Africa's many identities: the South African Indian. Edward Said (1983:1088) too articulates the use of photography among other popular visual mass media as having the potential to meaningfully contribute to the restoration of lost memory and history:

> Two concrete tasks…strike me as particularly useful. One is to use the visual faculty (which also happens to be dominated by visual media such as television, news photography, and commercial film, all of them fundamentally immediate, 'objective', and ahistorical) to restore the nonsequential energy of lived historical memory and subjectivity as fundamental components of meaning in representation. Berger calls this an alternative use of photography: using photomontage to tell other stories than the official sequential or ideological ones produced by institutions of power…Second is opening the culture to experiences of the Other which have remained 'outside' (and have been repressed or framed in a context of confrontational hostility) the norms manufactured by 'insiders'.

The challenge of articulating a more multifaceted 'Indian' self through the prism of the 1950s in *DRUM* is an ambitious task, especially since the terrain necessarily includes discussion around broad issues on race, identity politics, class, gender, representation, history, memory and politics. My intention is that through this inquiry more complex notions of the 'Indian' will emerge that can be elaborated upon; the restoration of

memories can begin, and those legendary individuals long cast in the shadows – whether they be colourful jazz personalities, tough-as-nails gangsters, woman stunt riders or those who took their pictures and wrote their stories – can finally be acknowledged. The argument for a broader, more representative and complex 'Indian' experience is accompanied by *DRUM* photographs that challenge official versions that portray the 'Indian' as traditional, passive, conservative, rich et al. The process of mounting such an exhibition from hundreds of thousands of negatives presented its own challenges, and my selections and methods are discussed in the section titled *Curatorial Notes*. Together, the discussion and the exhibition operate to dispute some of the long held clichés of the Indian in South Africa.

1

"MEET THE INDIAN IN SOUTH AFRICA"[3]

> To the majority of non-'Indians' in South Africa the 'Indian' is a shopkeeper, likes gold, eats or sells samoosas, kerriebols, or curry and rice. They eat spicy and hot foods. They have a distinct ethnic dress and their religions are also different. These basic identity parameters have helped South Africans to create an image of the 'Indian' that allows them to articulate their otherness vis-à-vis the Indian (Rehana Ebrahim Vally 2001:28).

When the National Party came into power in South Africa in 1948 it instituted a new set of laws to reflect its philosophy of separate development. The Group Areas Act of 1950 affected many mixed areas or 'blackspots', as the authorities referred to them, by

3 The title is the same as that of the publication produced by the state in 1975, which presented its portrayal of the 'Indian' as part of a mass propaganda campaign to counter the negative image of the country abroad.

demolishing the buildings and moving people away to racially segregated areas. Areas like Sophiatown, Vrededorp, Newclare, Marabastad, Cato Manor and District Six are the best known examples of such areas affected, where people of different ethnicities that had been residing together were forced to move. Published accounts of people who lived in these mixed areas, such as Sophiatown in the 1950s before the forced removals, tell of a vibrant and diverse mixture of people of different origins. Classified 'Coloured' under this dispensation, Don Mattera (1987:19), of an Italian grandfather and Khoisan grandmother, recounts his early childhood in Sophiatown before the act disrupted the easy-going relations among the culturally diverse people living there:

> Africans, Indians and coloured people who for many, many years had lived together harmoniously alongside Chinese and a sprinkling of white immigrant families, were being willfully driven apart. The weak fell prey to propaganda, and racial hostility won the day.

The Population Registration Act of 1950 racially classified people, and subjected 'Africans'[4] to the carrying of passbooks, or a 'dompass', in cities around the country. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and The Immorality Act (1950) made marriage and sex illegal between 'White' and 'Non-White'[5], and subject to punishment by imprisonment for up to five years. In addition, the Separate Amenities Act (1953) determined every aspect of public and private life by providing separate facilities for 'Whites' and 'non-Whites', and further differentiated between the three 'non-White' sub-groups, identifying separate public and recreational facilities for each of these racial

4 A racial classification term used during apartheid to denote indigenous black people of South Africa.

5 Non-White referred to 'Indian', 'African' and 'Coloured' racial categories under apartheid. The term black is also used to denote these three 'racial' categories in this discussion.

categories. This separate development along racial lines gave rise to increased alienation of each group from the other.

Under the official guise of better sanitation and living conditions, families were relocated to racially exclusive townships, which denied the majority contact across racial lines, so that education, sport, recreation, living, and almost every aspect of life became racially exclusive. Deborah Posel (2001:63) states that this daily reality "amplified modes of racial reasoning that were widely normalised and naturalised in the experiences of the apartheid subjects". This created the conditions for a deep internalisation of racial stereotypes, often oversimplified and exaggerated negative ideas, which were necessary, Vally (2001:28) argues, for it allowed "the non-'Indian' as well as the 'Indian' to display their likes or dislikes of the other."

South African 'Indians' were treated as homogenous under apartheid. Recent research from scholars has argued against the idea of the homogenous 'Indian' as simplified and bundled under apartheid. Fatima Meer (1969:28) has explored the different roles fulfilled by 'Indians' – who originated from different regions in India – in South Africa: the Christian English speaking 'Indian', the Hindu and Muslim merchant class 'Indian' originating from Gujarat in the west of India, and the indentured and ex-indentured labourers who originated from the north-east and south of India. C. G. Henning (1993:31) notes that even the first accounts of Indian arrivals recorded "Pariahs, Christians (Roman Catholics), Malabars and Mahomedans" who were skilled in various professions. Ashwin Desai (1996:104) suggests that Indians have been a "community centred around the village, dynastic realm, religion or caste before there ever existed an Indian nation or coherent Indian tradition". And most

recently Vally's (2001) detailed account in Kala Pani further reveals how the complex caste system further differentiated 'Indians'.

These differentiations were largely ignored by the state and by white historians[6], who especially tended to simplify the notion of the 'Indian' under the racial classifications of apartheid. This meant that despite religious disparities among Christians, Hindus and Muslims; class differences between the 'passenger' who paid their own way on board the ships and labourers who were contracted under terms of indenture; the array of geographical and linguistic origins; and caste distinctions, the 'Indian' was considered a homogenous entity. Acknowledging that these differentiations existed, my focus in this chapter is to explore some of the notions of the homogenous portrayal of the 'Indian' that have prevailed, for in order to contest the dominant portrayal of the 'Indian' it is helpful to establish what these perceptions of the 'Indian' are.

The affluent 'Indian'

The 'Indian' passenger and merchant classes followed soon after the first indentured Indians arrived in 1860. It was during a brief window period that some of the indentured labourers, freed of their contracts and given grants of land in lieu of a return passage to India, became farmers and traders themselves.[7] Henning (1993:75) notes that The Wragg

6 Henning (1993:38) states that White historians tended to project the notion that all indentured labourers came from the lowest classes of Indian society.

7 Henning (1993:40) records that the 1872 Commission recommended strongly that the freed labourers be given land to farm, adding that their industrious nature would contribute to the overall prosperity of the Colony.

Commission[8] also reported positively on these Indian entrepreneurs who turned waste and unproductive land into prosperous tracts of vegetables, tobacco, maize and fruit trees. Accustomed to difficult working conditions on the fields as labourers for a low wage, and with many coming from agricultural backgrounds in India, the ex-indentured-turned-landowners prospered in working towards their own profits. Many of these Indians became wealthier in Natal, and the Wragg Commission (1885-1887) reported, "Free Indians thrive in Natal. Their wants are, comparatively few, and their industrious habits cause them to prosper in nearly every occupation in which they engage" (Henning 1993:73).

While the majority of 'Indians' made up the indentured – the greater part of which lived in appalling conditions – the passenger 'Indian' constituted the elite "and was generally as well equipped as the average White settler to compete in the urban economy of the colony" (Meer 1969:28). The 'Indian' merchant class proved wealthier than the passenger class and was made up of mainly Muslim merchants from Gujarat. From within the first decade of 'Indian' arrival, many labourers turned farmers and with the passenger class and merchant class, posed an economic threat that lead to rivalry with the English colonialists who had previously monopolised the resources in Durban. This economic rivalry was exacerbated by incidents such as 'Indian' traders selling produce at a price that the 'White' traders found hard to match. Meer (1969:20) cites the Wragg Commission report to show evidence of this:

> Rice is the chief food of the 30,000 immigrants now in the colony, and these astute traders have so successfully devoted their tact and energy to the

8 The Wragg Commission of 1885-87 followed the one of 1872 to enquire after complaints by white farmers of competition by the 'Indian' market gardeners (Meer 1969:26). It also found that 'Indians' lived in poor and unsanitary conditions and that the colonialists treatment of the 'Indian' workers did not respected the labour laws.

> supplying of that article that the price to all consumers fell, from twenty-one shillings per bag in former years, to fourteen shillings in 1884.

Even if the indentured labourer-turned-farmers' profits were very slim they made inroads into the market previously monopolised by 'White' farmers. The financial threat posed to 'Whites' led to antagonistic views of 'Indians' by 'Whites' in the late 19th century. Meer (1969:24) notes the irritation felt by 'White' farmers towards the new competition: "You will see the Indian weeding his field, himself and his wife, even by moonlight."

When their contracts expired many indentured labourers farmed small patches of land from white farmers and a few indentured labourers turned to business competing directly with 'White' store owners. The story of Teluksing, as illustrated by Henning (1993:15), a former indentured labourer who was able to employ another former indentured labourer in his grocery business of perishable goods that he opened in West Street in around 1870 is one of the first cases of indentured labourers turning to business in the centre of the city.

While it was mainly the 'Indian' merchant class that posed a threat to the wealthier 'White' business class, the ex-indentured labourers who were starting to work as clerks and to fill the other important service related jobs in Durban's emerging industrialisation competed with the 'White' working class (Henning 1993:15) and noted the rise of the 'Indian' middle class. This drastic change in status, where former indentured labourers, previously considered as mere labourers, now competed with 'Whites' for jobs as equal subjects in the colony, led to widespread resentment of the 'Indian' presence by 'Whites' in the city.

Meer (1969:24) reports on some of the growing anti-'Indian' sentiment that was expressed in newspaper reports by the early 1890s:

> They (coolies) are a restless people and are a thieving set of vagabonds … The Asiatic is as great a danger to the Coloured and native community as he is to the White…The only cure for the Asiatic problem is the surgeon's knife and a silver bullet…I feel that nothing but black listing by the White traders will ever bring home to these people the wrong they are doing the country…I do not go as far as to say that you must take the Asiatic by the throat and throw him out of the country, because that will lead to international complications. They are here, but we can put them in their own areas.

This economic competition posed by 'Indians', and the anti-'Indian' feelings of the time, resulted in harsh new legislation to curtail their economic aspirations. Perhaps one of the most discriminatory and unjust laws that reacted to the 'Indian' threat was the annual £3 tax introduced in 1895 on indentured labourers, at a time when the average annual income for indentured labourers was around £10. The tax was instituted to appease 'Whites' who felt that 'Indians' were brought to the country as labourers, and not as settlers in competition to them.[9] It was aimed at discouraging indentured labourers from staying on in South Africa unless they were locked into contracts as indentured labourers on the sugar farms. Thousands were repatriated to India after the tax was introduced, many of whom were second generation South Africans born "with no knowledge about India apart from the vague fairy-like stories that had been passed on to them" (Meer 1969:26).

9 B. Freund (1995:15) reports that the rate of re-indenture was as low as 20 percent in 1902 and 13 percent in 1903 and 1904.

Those that chose to remain in the country faced a daunting task of surviving against scores of discriminatory laws aimed specifically at 'Indians'. The laws were designed to prevent 'Indians' from owning property, and to restrict their movement. A law in 1897 restricted the entry of free Indians into the country, and in the Transvaal, marriages between 'Indian' men and 'White' women were forbidden by law (Meer 1969:26). Between 1860 and 1937, Vally (2001:86) notes that the 'Indian' historian Joshi (The Tyranny of Colour) reviewed more than sixty discriminatory laws against Asians. These were aimed at curtailing the economic prospects of the 'Indian' in an attempt to eliminate or reduce the competition posed to 'Whites'.

The resentment of 'Indians' is evoked by Cannon Smith, a missionary tasked with converting 'Indians' to Christianity in Durban: "We seldom hear a good word spoken for the Indian…Their children grow up without control or restraint…he may contract as many marriages as he pleases…he carries on immoral practices…he deteriorates surroundings in which he is placed" (Henning 1993:156). Smith's impressions implicitly underpin the root cause of these negative impressions of 'Indians' by referring to "the money-making instinct, which seems to be so inherent in the Indian nature".

In the apartheid era

It is interesting to observe that this sense of an 'Indian' economic threat, so closely linked to anti-'Indian' sentiment, was not limited to the first few decades of indentured labour, nor confined to competition with the English settlers, nor restricted to Durban.

The 1949 riots that started in Victoria Street and spread to Cato Manor were seen by many to have been the effect of rising tensions and competition for land between 'Indians' and

'Africans' in the colourful settlement. With many 'Africans' moving from the rural areas to the city in the 1920s and 1930s, places like Cato Manor were a strategic foothold to earning a living in Durban. Ashwin Desai (1996:12) describes the 1949 riots as an anti-'Indian' massacre fuelled by "race-based" hierarchies of groups in the city that:

> …laid the basis for competitive and antagonistic relationships between Africans and Indians at the level of employment, housing and trade. Indians came to be seen as a barrier to a broad spectrum of the African community, ranging from workers to the aspirant middle class.

'Indians' and 'Indian' businesses were targeted in the riots, and many 'Indians' and 'Africans' lost their lives in the process, with many businesses and homes having been destroyed.[10] The riots were fuelled by beliefs of an 'Indian' economic threat and of exploitative 'Indians'. It demonstrated the power of the stereotype to incite violence and cause death on a massive scale.

The sense of an 'Indian' economic threat and its resulting resentment was not limited to the 'White' English or the 'African' Zulu living in Durban. Even in Johannesburg in the 1950s, Don Mattera (1987:64) observes the ambiguous relationship Afrikaners had with 'Indians':

> They [the Afrikaners] occupied cheap, run-down single and semi-detached houses and because of their poverty, the Boers had developed a love-hate relationship with the more affluent Indians. Love for the goods they received on credit, and hate to have Indians as neighbours.

10 DRUM (December, 1960:54) reported that "1087 were injured of whom 58 subsequently died; 1 factory, 58 stores and 247 dwellings were destroyed."

The 1985 Inanda Riots outside Durban again threatened to follow the same pattern between the 'Africans' and 'Indians' living in close proximity to each other, but these were curbed early enough, and endured fewer casualties. In the process however valuable and historic sites, like the Phoenix settlement set up by Mohandas Gandhi, were destroyed. This belief in an 'Indian' economic threat posed to 'Whites' under colonial rule emerged again during the apartheid era, but this time as a threat to working class 'Africans'.

While claims implicating the state in inciting the Durban riots of 1949 (B. Freund 1995:70) to illustrate intolerable racial and cultural differences to justify the implementation of the Group Areas Act have not been proven, they do raise the issue as to what degree the apartheid state was implicit in entrenching stereotypes towards its own political ends. Meet the Indian in South Africa, a publication produced by the apartheid state, may help to shed more light on the subject for its complex and ambiguous portrayal of 'Indian' stereotypes. In depicting the 'Indian' as an example of one of the categories of the oppressed races, it made use of many loaded stereotypes, reinforcing ideas of caste, and of a perceived affluent community, to reveal how 'Indians' had materially benefited from South Africa:

> They had the right, on expiry of their contracts, to return to India at no cost to themselves, but most of them preferred to remain in a land where there was no caste distinction, where there was no lack of opportunity and where their own enterprise and initiative could assure their welfare, prosperity and happiness.[11]

11 Meet the Indian in South Africa (1975) has no page numbers.

The pictorial essay in the publication emphasises the poor state of indentured labourers on arrival in the Colony of Natal, juxtaposed with images showing the nurturing role of the state in providing health, education, housing and welfare. The publication stressed the idea that South Africa had afforded 'Indians' the opportunity to progress under conditions provided by the state to a wealthy and affluent 'middle-class' community. Through a secretly funded propaganda campaign, the state aimed to demonstrate that apartheid was a successful model for all concerned, including blacks. The campaign surreptitiously channelled funds to the State Information Office from 1 April 1973 to 31 March 1978 (Rees & Day 1980:73) to restore its poor image abroad. This included using state funds to buy key media houses in the United States and Europe to control and promote a better image of apartheid South Africa internationally. In the five years from 1974, the chief officials working for the Department of Information estimated that the Department spent R85-million on its secret propaganda war (Rees & Day 1980:186). Said (1983:1088) remarks on the role of the state in manipulating the representation of colonised peoples:

> …Stereotypes of the Other have always been connected to political actualities of one sort or another, just as the truth of lived communal (or personal) experience has often been totally sublimated in official narratives, institutions, and ideologies.

In the State's portrayal of the 'Indian', photography is an essential tool in creating and disseminating ideas to a local audience as well as to the outside world as will be shown in more detail later in the discussion of the State publication, Meet the Indian in South Africa. I would like to take a more critical and detailed look at this state publication as it reveals the use of 'Indian' stereotypes in interesting and ambiguous ways.

The first and most powerful image with which one is confronted with in the opening pages of the publication is key to supporting the book's claims. The publication provides a collage of identity photo portraits of indentured labourers from the nineteenth century, against which images of middle-class 'Indians' are later compared in the rest of the publication. In so doing, it intends to illustrate how 'Indians' have overcome dire poverty under colonialism and how apartheid has benefited them by transforming the image of the poor indentured labourer into the image of the affluent 'Indian', shown elsewhere in the publication.



Photo records of indentured labourers reproduced in Meet the Indian in South Africa

The image of the indentured labourers comprises twelve naked torso length portraits of Indian males, some not yet adults, who face the reader, each holding up his own

identification number. Most of the men in the photograph appear malnourished, with rib cages protruding from beneath their skins and sunken eyes that tell of weary voyages, emphasising their disempowered and hopeless situation. The figures are replicated like patterned wallpaper, with numbers coming before and after them, indicating a continuity of a potentially infinite number of others beyond the borders of the image, which further emphasises their presence in the colony as mere commodities, or numbers, in the sugar industry.

The ethnographic portrayal of the 'Indian' labourer further emphasises the unbalanced power relationship between coloniser and colonised, capitalist and worker. The head-on portraits evoke comparisons with prisoner classifications, connoting a 'cultural subordination' where the subjects depicted can only offer a docile glance to the more powerful gaze of the camera and the paternal state. The use of photography in the fields of anthropology, criminology and psychiatry, to mention a few, rendered passive the "working classes, colonised peoples, the criminal, poor, ill-housed, sick or insane" (John Tagg 1988:11). This depiction served to further internalise the subjection of those photographed and recalls Michel Foucault's (1999:66) reading of the theory of Panopticism[12] where forms of surveillance gradually become internalised by those under surveillance impacting on behaviour that responds to being constantly watched.

This image renders the subjects as impoverished and passive, and their capture by the photographic lens in this manner, links them to other subjects, like criminals and the sick.

12 Foucault's reading of the theory of Panopticism describes prison cells designed in a circular fashion around a watchtower. The guard or warden in the tower has an advantageous view in that he can observe any one of the prisoners in their cells. Each prisoner's field of vision is directed to the watchtower. The prisoners cannot view other inmates cells and cannot tell whether there is anyone inside the watchtower so that even if there is no one in the watchtower the prisoners are unable to know that, but the constant feeling of being monitored leads to an internalisation of behaviour as if under constant observation.

The apartheid state used the full power of the photograph, showing the passive 'Indian' under colonialism to further its image of the affluent 'Indian' under apartheid thereby promoting its own political agendas under the pretence of improving conditions for blacks. Tagg (1988:64) notes that:

> Like the state, the camera is never neutral. The representations it produces are highly coded, and the power it wields is never its own…This is not the power of the camera but the power of the apparatuses of the local state which deploy it and guarantee the authority of the images it constructs to stand as evidence or register a truth.

Exploiting the contrast to the days of their arrival, the accompanying caption to the photograph reads: "…some of the 152,641 men, women and children who between 1860 and 1911 left conditions of semi-starvation for a better life."[13]

Hence the state's portrayal of a mute, naked and impoverished 'Indian' under colonialism is replaced later in the publication by an evolved, affluent middle class 'Indian' under apartheid. The marked contrast from naked ethnographic subject to civilised citizen is claimed by the apartheid state as part of its nurturing role, for public relations abroad. In so doing it reinforces the image of the rich 'Indian' with the images of contented middle class 'Indians' outside plush homes. The publication demonstrates the important role of photography in framing strong perceptions that, in this case, were part of a political agenda. The contradictions contained within this depiction of projecting an affluent civilised 'Other' to audiences abroad also contributed to entrenching 'Indian' stereotypes at home.

13 Meet the Indian in South Africa (1975) has no page numbers



Illustration from Meet the Indian in South Africa

While projecting an 'Indian' middle class as an example of blacks living well under apartheid, it also implicitly evoked racial difference by playing on stereotypes of religion and caste, in contrast to western religions and customs, thereby also reinforcing the need for separation of the races under the guise of difference and under the policies of separate development of apartheid.

Locally this entrenched many of the 'Indian' stereotypes and reinforced the idea that 'Indians' were a prosperous group in the country, one that had benefited economically under the apartheid state. And it is through photographic images that we will explore how these ideas were perpetuated and propagated.

In the democracy

The initial years of South Africa's democracy brought an optimistic and fresh change from the oppressive years of colonialism and apartheid. This new phase celebrated racial equality for the

first time and embraced cultural diversity and the rights of minorities that became enshrined in a newly formulated constitution.

But in 2002, Mbongeni Ngema, the acclaimed South African songwriter-playwright, famous for his musical Sarafina, released his controversial tune, AmaNdiya. The song rekindled anti-'Indian' sentiments and reinforced negative perceptions of 'Indians' in the country. It supported the notion of the 'Indian' as the oppressor who exploited the 'African' worker, and who was concerned only with profit. The song explains that "Indians have conquered Durban — we are poor because all things have been taken by Indians."[14] It once more imagined the 'Indian' as an economic threat to the 'Africans' in Natal, and reinforced the image of the affluent 'Indian'. In addition, Ngema called on strong black men to take on and retaliate against the 'Indians', threatening another riot, such as those of 1949 and 1985. Once again, old stereotypes such as the rich and exploitative 'Indian' this time seen as a threat to limited economic opportunities appeared to have come back to haunt the 'Indian' even in the newly formed democratic state.

This depiction of the shrewd, scheming 'Indian' who always has ulterior motives, and exploits the 'African', emerged again in an article in the Sunday Times[15] − the Sunday paper with the largest national circulation − this time in relation to the ulterior motive of 'Indians' in the political struggle. The article implied that 'Indians' who were involved in the liberation movements in the country during apartheid did so for economic and political favours in the new South Africa. The article revealed the entrenched discrimination of the journalist and the easy and dangerous exploitation of stereotypes, in this case the 'Indian' for sensational reporting to a mass readership. Fortunately the article also resulted in a

14 Quoted from an article by Edwin Naidu entitled *The Song of Discord* published in The Hindu (online edition), Sunday, June 23, 2002.

15 *Getting back our morality*, Sunday Times, July 9 2006

damning criticism from Arts & Culture Minister Pallo Jordan, who was himself involved with many of these 'Indian' political activists in *Letters to the Editor*[16] the following week.

The article by the journalist once more called on the strong conviction that 'Indian' life centred on profits and wealth. Vally (2001:89) makes reference to previous historical accounts on the 'Indian' where the sole motivation behind the political resistance of 'Indians' is depicted on the right to do business anywhere. This has been the one-dimensional perception of the 'Indian' that is dominated by the idea that the 'Indian' is economically minded above all else. According to Vally (2001:92) previous historical accounts too have shown a perception of 'Indians' where the idea of the rich 'Indian' shopkeeper dominated:

> All these authors tended to present the picture of a homogenous Indian community. Thus they argued that business was at the centre of the 'Indian' question…they still only referred to the rich 'Indian' shopkeeper…

What becomes apparent from the 'Indian' presence in Natal under British colonialism is that the 'Indian' is soon viewed as an economic threat to 'Whites'. This association of the 'Indian' linked to business and wealth starts under colonialism and gave rise to an anti-'Indian' feeling among the Whites in the province. Under apartheid this anti-'Indian' sentiment based on an economic threat continued and was also expressed by 'Africans' in the province. 'Indians' and 'Africans' competed for jobs and living space near Durban, and the riots of 1949 were an expression of this sentiment that was building up. The timing of the riots also fell conveniently in the argument for separate development under the newly

16 Sunday Times, July 16 2006

elected National Party. Even more recently, in the 'rainbow nation' democracy marked by progressive constitutional reforms and equality since 1994 instances of anti-'Indian' stereotypes that pre-date apartheid are retrieved and find expression in contemporary popular culture, illustrating that many racial stereotypes that flourished under colonialism and apartheid have a bearing on the way people view each other across racial lines in the present.

Sociologist Fatima Meer has argued against this idea of the rich 'Indian' showing evidence that the majority of 'Indians' lived in relative poverty.[17] But the stereotype of the rich 'Indian' remains a strong one for most South Africans. Chapter 2 will explore this idea of the poor 'Indian' through photography and text from the articles in DRUM in the 1950s.

Religion and Culture

'Indians' inherited several perceptions from the sub-continent that were transported with them. A master narrative of the colonised, already articulated by the colonisers on themes such as religion and caste, contributed to the discourse of a 'backward' and 'provincial' society (Veena Das 1995:107). These dominant ideas, already part of an undisputed colonial discourse, were created under the veneer of 'objective' and 'scientific' social studies of an unchanging religious culture. Those deeply engrained perceptions of the Indian, located in the encounters with the West, still find traces that can be seen in the representation of the 'Indian' in South Africa.

17 Meer (1969: 85) "…Indian poverty predominates. Sixty-four percent of the community is estimated to be living below the poverty datum line and over twenty-eight percent just above it."

'Indian' religion features prominently in the depiction of the 'Indian'. The stark contrast, of Hinduism in particular, to western religions and modern secularism, has facilitated the depiction of the 'Indian' as unsophisticated and archaic. This is consistent with the representation of the 'Other', Elizabeth Edwards (1992:6) observes, as representing the "'childhood of mankind', a phase through which European man had passed in his prehistoric and proto-historic periods in a linear progression towards 'civilization'."

Vally (2001:89) argues that it was the cultural oddness of the 'Indians' that was seen as an obstacle to their integration, and Violet Wetherell's observation in The Indian Question in South Africa with respect to "polygamy, lack of hygiene, dress sense, and cow worshipping" as typical of the many repulsive descriptions of the 'Indian' in the 1930s and 1940s. Fire walking, the piercing of the body with sharp needles, and seemingly strange customs have all contributed considerably to the 'Indian' being seen as different. Religious difference has marked the otherness of the 'Indian' most dramatically. It is this effective display of separation and difference, which in denying the colonised "western modes of civility" lends "authority to the official version and mission of colonial power" (Homi K. Bhabha 1999:378).

Frantz Fanon (in Renate 1974:22-23) explains that during colonialism Christian missions condemned the customs and religions of the natives as heathen and inhuman to uphold the values of colonial racism. In Meet the Indian in South Africa the contrast between the tribal 'Indian' under colonialism is highlighted in contrast to the modern, western 'Indian' shown under apartheid. A description such as the caption "With silver skewer through his tongue and hooks in the flesh of his back and chest, this Hindu devotee has worked himself

into a stage of religious ecstasy" from Meet the Indian in South Africa is typical of highlighting the cultural and religious otherness of the 'Indian'.



Illustration from Meet the Indian in South Africa

While implicitly promoting stereotypical depictions of the 'Indian', the apartheid state simultaneously embraced the distinctive silhouettes that temples and mosques added to the skylines. The inclusion of the Grey Street mosque, with its landmark golden minaret, in Meet the Indian in South Africa, was used in the publication to represent an exotic culture – photographs of Indian bazaars, with exotic eastern goods, emphasising difference. Photographs of 'Indian' women performing ancient dance forms in striking traditional dress and exotic jewellery were part of the duality in the state depiction of how the 'Indian' had maintained his ancient religious and traditional customs that differentiate him from 'Whites', while at the same time embracing the influences of modern western ways. For the state this served to emphasise racial difference and to justify separation under apartheid.



Illustration of Grey Street Mosque from Meet the Indian in South Africa

But this was not only a state portrayal. Many 'Indians' too aspired to the assimilation of a 'European' way of life, which they saw as a means of being accepted as respectable and 'civilised'. Aiyar's statements in The Indian Problem in South Africa (1925) in Vally (2001:87) gives one example of this: The Indian community is not in any way retarding the development of this country along the lines of western civilisation and as proof of our assertion we might say that the rising generation of Indians are practically assimilating European ideals and European culture…Give us a fair chance as the white man has, and then judge whether we adopt the white standard or not. Fanon (in Renate 1974:22-23) reads this as a natural consequence of the condemnation of the customs of the colonised as 'uncivilised' by the colonisers, leading to self-hatred on the part of the colonised.

Caste has been a signifier in South Africa in the dichotomy between the 'modern' and the 'backward'. Meet the Indian in South Africa promoted the idea that South Africa had modernised 'Indians' in that it gave them the opportunity to break away from outdated and

uncivilised notions of caste that would have shackled them to their place in society in their country of origin. Through this portrayal the state intended to demonstrate that South Africa, contrary to negative perceptions about apartheid, had in fact helped 'Indians' to free themselves from their primitive religious heritage. The state claimed to have dispelled the notion of caste among 'Indians' on the basis that South Africa was a land where there was no caste distinction, no lack of opportunity, and where one could, through one's own entrepreneurial spirit and hard work, determine the conditions of one's lives. It claimed that most 'Indians' were of a lower caste that benefited from the opportunities afforded them in their new adopted country, "where there was no caste distinction".[18]

While the issue of whether 'Indians' came from the lowest or highest caste is not the theme of this discussion, it is, however, interesting to see how the apartheid state manipulated this impression of the low caste indentured labourer to redeem the image of the state.[19]

Other accounts of 'Indians' show caste as having been relevant in affecting matters such as marriage, as is depicted in the portrait of the Juggernaths (Meer 2003:211):

> In 1910, 19-year-old Juggernath married Surjee, the daughter of Saran and Soobhagia. Unlike the marriages of their parents, contracted between indentured individuals in the absence of elders and considerations of caste, this marriage was arranged between families of the same caste and…was celebrated with festivities that spanned over many days.

18 Meet the Indian in South Africa (1975)

19 A Pachai & Bhana study notes that a number of indentured workers belonged to the "Brahman [priests], Kshatriya [warriors], and Vaishyia [merchants] varnas" indicating a variety of castes.

Being chosen as the one representative 'Indian' family – one of nine other South African families of differing cultural backgrounds – in a presentation of South Africa's diversity in the travelling exhibition and book Group Portrait South Africa – Nine Family Histories (produced by the Tropen Museum in Amsterdam in 2003), the Juggernaths are meant to symbolise the 'Indian' family, which contains the clichéd depiction of caste as well as arranged marriages.[20]

Arranged marriages remain a distinct indicator of difference in the portrayal of the 'Indian' as the Other with young children arranged in marriage by their parents' mutual consent and young girls arranged to marry men many years older. Meer (1969:116) illustrates the case of "Rabia, a young Muslim girl from Tin Town who was only 13 when her mother arranged for her marriage to a widower 20 years her senior."

Rabia felt she was just a child and still too young but her mother said it was her duty and it would help the family (Meer 1969:116). In this portrayal of the 'Indian' there seems to be no place for self-expression or choice on the subject of 'love'. Love is depicted as a totally abstract concept and contrary to the intrinsic beliefs of the 'Indian'. Mary Phillips (1975:19) reinforces this point with the words of an 'Indian' father with two daughters to marry, "Hindu parents have little patience with love in a tumbledown cottage as such and falling in love with love is, to put it literally and metaphorically, for the birds…"

The stereotypes created of caste, and arranged marriages and the portrayal of 'Indian' religions as backward with particular emphasis on its otherness have been widespread,

20 Shamim Meer (2003:14): "In 1935, at age 22, Balbhadur married 16-year-old Harbasi. This marriage, like that of his parents, had been arranged in true Indian tradition. The families of bride and groom had sealed the match two years previously but the couple did not see each other until after the wedding ceremony.

from state depictions – however implicit or contradictory to its objectives – to authors' accounts by both non-'Indians' and 'Indians' alike. Thus the overall portrayal is one of an unchanging and static culture, where marriages between Indians of different language groups and/or from different geographical regions were a rare phenomenon. Most portrayals of the 'Indian', including those by the state, mark the otherness of the 'Indian' by focusing on religion, caste and arranged marriages.

The Passive Indian

In one of the early mass demonstrations of passive resistance in South Africa, the 'Great March' of 1913 saw many hundreds of 'Indians' march from Newcastle in Natal to Johannesburg in the Transvaal, defying the laws that restricted their entry into the Boer state. A correspondent from the *Times of Natal* remarked that the resistance was carried out without any form of violence – even in self-defence – by the passive resisters (Henning 1993:177). This 'passive' and non-retaliatory approach seems to have stuck with the image of the 'Indian', so linked to Mohandas Gandhi's presence in South Africa and his involvement in the *Satyagraha* movement, and has given rise to the notion of 'Indians' as being weak and fragile people.

As Vinay Lal (2006) explains in his paper on Gandhi, the reading of the Mahatma in terms of masculinity is ambiguous. Gandhi's inclinations towards vegetarianism and strict observance of celibacy in his marriage, together with the depiction of him in association with passive resistance portrays him as more effeminate than masculine in the conventional roles between men and women in South Africa at the time.

Even the very first records of Indian arrivals in 1860, as reported in Phillips (1975:22), reveal descriptions of men with "bare scraggy shin bones" and children of "tiny and fragile" bodies as they step off the boats and onto shore which emphasise the delicate and fragile nature of the 'Indian' from the outset. Indentured labour meant the inhumane treatment of the 'Indian', who working under slave-like conditions, was often treated like an animal and beaten with stones, sticks and *shamboks* (Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie 2001:11). One account describes a severely beaten labourer entering Gandhi's office for assistance:

> Balasundarum was a Tamil indentured labourer. One day he entered Gandhi's office in tattered clothes and with two front teeth broken. His mouth was bleeding … Balasundarum was serving his indenture under a well-known Durban European, who had trashed him so severely for some trivial offence that two teeth had broken (*DRUM*, August 1959:79).

Some of the conditions were so bad, and the avenues for justice so limited, that the Colony of Natal held the notorious reputation for its high rate of suicide among indentured labourers.[21] For those who were brave enough to report cases of maltreatment, there was always the fear of retribution by the white farmers. This portrayal of the indentured labourer represents the 'Indian' as passive, helpless and weak in a context that was generally violent and competitive.

It was not only the indentured that were portrayed as weak in the last century. In the classic South African novel, Down Second Avenue, Es'kia Mphahlele (1986:110) describes an

21 Henning (1991:121) records that "Although the rate of suicide in Madras and the United provinces was quoted as being 46 and 54 per million respectively, in Natal it was estimated at 640 …"

incident, set in 1950s Marabastad, where his aunt Dora bashes up the 'Coolie' shopkeeper for not signing the book of stamps for the full ten shillings that added towards a 'Christmas Box':

> …Aunt Dora banged her head a few times on Abdool's face as was, and still is, the common technique among fighting women. She drew blood from his mouth. Soon she was on top of Abdool on the concrete floor. They rolled down from the verandah and a few times in the dust, and my aunt, still on top, shouted, 'Are you going to stamp the book, Abdool?' He spluttered a few words and Aunt Dora got up.

In this illustration the 'African' woman is portrayed as showing superior strength to the 'Indian' man, suggesting the pervasive idea of the effeminate and harmless 'Indian' man. The incident, set almost a century after the first Indians arrived in the country, reveals how, over several generations, the perception of the pitiful 'Indian' male has been entrenched and imbedded in the South African psyche. It further alludes to another stereotype of the shrewd, scheming 'Indian' touched on earlier.

This perception of the submissive 'Indian' has not only been limited to one of physical capability. Desai sees this yielding to authority and non-confrontational approach as a psychological trait in the 'Indian' that is prevalent in the private life of 'Indians'. According to Desai (1996:98) the 'Indian' family unit is one of oppression, where children hand over the pay-packets to the father, where women are banished to the kitchen and where the father figure is the disciplinarian. He argues that the 'Indian' family unit

produces submissive subjects and a compliant attitude towards authority, despite humiliation.

This example could also be discussed in terms of the emasculation of the 'Indian' patriarch by the state and others of different 'race' and gender, who then exercises his power most forcefully within the family and at home. The submissive 'Indian' woman complies with the husband or the father and is also exposed for her inherent lack of resistance. This psychological reading of the 'Indian', according to Desai, where the idea of meekness is interpreted as something of a characteristic, adds significantly to the portrayal of the 'Indian' as weak, both mentally and physically.

Hence a picture of a physically frail and psychologically weak individual emerges in the portrayal of the 'Indian', someone that is easily overpowered by both the state and by other individuals, by both women and men of other ethnic groups.

Conclusion

In the portrayal of the homogenous notion of the 'Indian', a dominant image of the wealthy businessman emerges. Anti-'Indian' laws and violent actions linked to other negative ideas about 'Indians' have resurfaced time and again. And most discussions about the 'Indian' emphasise the religious otherness that includes arranged marriages and caste.

The State's portrayal of the 'Indian' in Meet the Indian in South Africa makes use of photographs to subtly evoke stereotypes to promote state agendas, which aim to

demonstrate the emergence of a ‘non-White’ middle class community. It reproduces the tribal-modern dichotomy: where the indentured labourer, caste and religion are symbols of ‘backwardness’ under colonialism, and which are opposed to the representations of ‘Indians’ materially progressing under apartheid as emancipated figures in a modern context, with their big homes and cars parked in the driveway.

The portrayal of ‘Indians’ as submissive is apparent in the colony and under apartheid. While these concepts have demonstrated only a few of the themes in the representation of the ‘Indian’, it offers a broad impression of the ideas around which the ‘Indian’ has been associated.

2

THE INDIAN IN *DRUM* *in the 1950s*

DRUM magazine was the South African success story of the 1950s: created in 1951 by Bob Crisp, under the dynamic proprietorship of Jim Bailey, it thrived under the leadership of its editor Anthony Sampson who set the trend of *DRUM's* early years in the fifties against which later editions would always be compared. Together with handpicked journalists and photographers – and a few who just seemed to float in as switchboard operators and messengers, only to end up as some of the biggest names in photography – *DRUM* gained an international reputation by innovatively revealing black urban life as told by mainly black newsmen. Okwui Enwezor (1996:182) states that:

> Bailey expanded the parameters of *DRUM* so that it became a quasi-continental organ. Added in succession were editions in Nigeria (1953), Ghana (1954), East Africa (1957), and Central Africa (1966) … At the height of its popularity, *DRUM* enjoyed enormous readership. Even a North American and West Indian edition was distributed. The magazine's circulation per issue stood at 450,000 copies, reaching far into many literate, cosmopolitan areas of Africa.

DRUM thrived under Bailey's hands-on approach until 1984 when he sold the magazine. The *DRUM* archive documents the hardships, joys, aspirations and attitudes of black life of a time marked by harsh laws that discriminated against blacks, and the strong opposition to these laws by way of protest campaigns led by black political leaders. It reveals a life of shebeens, jazz, gangsters, flashy American cars and clothes, and an active sporting culture, inspired by black American role models. Oswald Mtshali (1987:11) reveals that boxers such as Joe Louis, and jazz musicians such as Louis Armstrong, Billy Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald had hundreds of local imitators aspiring to their emancipated image, and local gangs chose their Cadillacs, Buicks, Lincolns, Chryslers, Dodges, Fords and Chevrolets to emulate the choices of leading gangsters on the silver screen.

These records of local black life were reflected through photography as well as through the articulate and innovative use of the English language by *DRUM*'s emerging black writers. The magazine was immensely popular during its time as its circulation figures reveal, and later, in the eighties, when it became clear that political change in South Africa was on the horizon, *DRUM* of the 1950s became a source of inspiration for numerous productions. Mike Nicol (1995:xi) observes this phenomenon:

> Certainly no other magazine in the world has generated as much publicity so long after its heyday as has *DRUM*. In recent years its stories, both fact and fiction, have been anthologized in at least six books; and following the publication of Schadeberg's photographic selections, its pictures continue to be used again and again throughout the world. And still more books are planned, as are a television series and a Hollywood movie. But then *DRUM* has already given rise to a play, Sophiatown!, which attracted good houses in South Africa and Britain; a photographic exhibition which toured Europe, Britain and the United States; and two popular documentaries. All this without counting the journalists' or the editors' own books inspired by working on *DRUM*, or the newspaper articles, academic studies, even a university course at one of South Africa's oldest institutions, which have followed in its wake.

DRUM has been a key source in providing examples that defy the myths of Africans and the continent. Enwezor and Zaya (1996:20) remark that "…no medium has been more instrumental in creating a great deal of the visual fictions of the African continent than photography…we must rely on photography for refutation" so that just as photography and literature were used in ethnographic portrayals of Africa conforming to the myth of the Dark Continent, so photographs and written accounts as articulated by Africans can be used to dispel those myths.

The fact that these depictions in *DRUM* were most often provided by black writers and photographers broke a long tradition of whites articulating black lives. Bell (1996:13)

argues that by refuting the rhetorical forms of colonialist sensibilities through photography, this simultaneously nourishes fresh perspectives on subjectivity. *DRUM*'s black photojournalists offered its readership new insights into private and public black lives. But in the enthusiasm of disputing these myths of the continent as a homogenous space, other myths have become ingrained in the representation of the journal in South Africa: that *DRUM* was exclusively focused on 'African' life and Sophiatown.

Since the eighties, with the revival of *DRUM* through a variety of forms, the legendary publication has become synonymous with Sophiatown, and the two are used interchangeably to refer to each other and the 1950s. More recently, the film *DRUM* (2004) directed by Zola Maseko, further inscribed the relationship between what Can Themba (1978:107) referred to as the "the little Paris of the Transvaal" and the renowned magazine. In 2005 the play, *Sophiatown!* – that includes *DRUM* journalists like Can Themba as essential characters in its script – returned to the stage to great acclaim at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg, celebrating twenty years of the play's existence.

The recognition of black life through *DRUM* has included acknowledging the black writers and photographers without whom this form a self-expression would have been much the poorer. Michael Chapman (2001:188-191) gives a detailed description of the journalists that made *DRUM* what it was in the fifties, following the careers and functions of each of the black journalists who worked for *DRUM*: Todd Matshikiza, credited for reviewing records and writing jazz features; Arthur Maimane for his boxing and crime stories; Can Themba's arrival in 1957 after winning *DRUM's* first short-story competition; Casey Motsisi for his column "On the Beat"; and Stanley Motjuwadi, Bloke Modisane, Lewis Nkosi, Nat Nakasa, James Matthews (Cape Town office), Ezekiel Mphahlele, and the

heroic Henry Xhumalo are all accounted for along with the literary roles they fulfilled. Chapman acknowledges the photographers too, "Reinforcing the features with photographs were Jürgen Schadeberg, Bob Gosani and, subsequently, Ian Berry (as a freelancer) and Peter Magubane."

Chapman's acknowledgement of the *DRUM* journalists and photographers has typified the recollection of *DRUM* contributors that focused solely on the 'African' journalists and photographers in the Johannesburg office. The iconic photograph of the *DRUM* office by Jürgen Schadeberg illustrates this misrepresentation of *DRUM* most lucidly. It reveals several *DRUM* journalists, the very picture of concentration and discussion typical of a busy newsroom. Jürgen Schadeberg's (2001:53) caption reads:

> The *DRUM* office in Johannesburg with Henry Nxumalo, Ezekiel Mpahlele, Casy Motsitsi, Can Themba, Arthur Maimane (wearing hat, drooping cigarette), Victor Xashimba, Dan Chocho and Bob Gosani (right with camera).

This image has come to represent *DRUM* as an 'African' magazine: nowhere is there reference made to proprietor Jim Bailey, or to editor Anthony Sampson – both synonymous with 1950s *DRUM*. The white photographer (Schadeberg) is indirectly implicated in the picture, through the photo credits, but at the same time is outside of it. All three seem to be hidden in the projected image of the magazine. But then one also needs to ask who else cannot be seen beyond the borders of the photograph?



Photo of the DRUM office by Jürgen Schadeberg in The Black and White Fifties

Other histories in *DRUM*?

Schadeberg (1987:8) hints at another name that seldom appears in relation to *DRUM*, when he credits G.R. Naidoo along with Magubane and Alfred Kumalo as having taken most of the pictures from 1956. This is one of the very few references to Naidoo, who worked for *DRUM* in Durban from the fifties. Schadeberg does mention the Johannesburg based photographers Kumalo, Ernest Cole, Victor Xashimba and Gopal Naransamy who all joined the *DRUM* office in the fifties. If this seems to indicate that other writers and photographers have gone unacknowledged in favour of those who worked in the Johannesburg office, then is it possible that other histories contained in *DRUM* have also been glossed over in favour of Sophiatown? Are there other histories in *DRUM* that are still to be revealed? John Matshikiza (2001:ix) offers a clue:

> I knew the dark side of the life of South Africa through the pages of *DRUM* by the time I was six years old: the highlife and the bitter end of the gangster; the blunt, zol-fired world of the tsotsi … the six Indian sisters, none of them more than teenagers, who hanged themselves in a death pact in the back yard of their family home in Durban, rather than submit to arranged marriages. The hazy photograph of the six bodies in their pristine saris hanging by their broken necks from a tree we had in our own back yard is seared forever in my memory of my retina.

From Matshikiza's brief reference to the Toplan suicide we get an idea that *DRUM* also recorded aspects of 'Indian' life, which would leave a major impression on him. A closer investigation into *DRUM* reveals that the *DRUM* editorial was concerned with being

inclusive of other black stories. Anthony Sampson (2005:170) relates the concerns of not wanting *DRUM* to appear as a racist magazine in the early 1950s by only covering 'African' interests, where the question of including other races without losing the confidence of 'Africans' was a complex one:

> An interracial *DRUM*, if it could be achieved, would increase both our circulation and our stature: a magazine read by all races could have a great power for good. But in an apartheid country, the task was difficult.

Of course it wasn't all about political correctness on the side of the editorial staff. For one thing, it made commercial sense to expand the readership by including the 'Indian' and the 'Coloured' with the depiction of 'African' life, which simultaneously broadened the readership and promoted sales. By focusing on exposés of mistreated workers in 'African', 'Indian' and 'Coloured' regions like Bethal, the sugar farms of Natal, and the tot vineyards of the Cape, Sampson (2005:36) reveals that *DRUM* established itself as a friend of all the 'non-whites', which dramatically increased the circulation of the magazine. This inclusion of 'Indian' and 'Coloured' content resulted in offices being set up in Durban and Cape Town, centres of 'Indian' and 'Coloured' communities respectively. *DRUM* reflected the resistance movement's non-racial philosophy of the time in its coverage that encapsulated the interests of 'African', 'Indian' and 'Coloured' readers nationally.

So the re-reading of *DRUM* with a bias towards Sophiatown and 'African' life is clearly in opposition to the original intentions of *DRUM* to broadly represent all black communities around the country. It further gives a very limited perspective on *DRUM* and its coverage.

The recalling of fifties life by *DRUM* writers, in published books under their own names, identifies 'Indians' as having formed an integral ingredient to the inclusive black cultures in Marabastad, Sophiatown and Durban. In Down Second Avenue for example, Mphahlele (1986:110-111) speaks of atchar sandwiches and Abdool the shopkeeper in Marabastad; Nat Nakasa refers to the Goodwill Lounge in The World of Nat Nakasa (2005:10), and Themba (1978:107) recalls the cosmopolitanism of Sophiatown:

> You have the right to listen to the latest jazz records at Ah Sing's over the road. You can walk a Coloured girl of an evening down to the Odin Cinema, and no questions asked. You can try out Rhugubar's curry with your bare fingers without embarrassment.

And when one reads original copies of *DRUM* from the 1950s, this sense of racial inclusiveness is overwhelmingly displayed in its coverage.

The publications that came out of Bailey's Archives during the 1980s give a more accurate reflection of *DRUM's* coverage, and are an exception. The Fifties People of South Africa (1987) by Jim Bailey is the exceptional 'non-racial' portrayal of the decade, acknowledging the major public personalities from around the country that figured in *DRUM*, although the photographs are not credited to specific photographers. The Finest Photos from the Old DRUM (1987), also published by Bailey, contains some of the best photographs from *DRUM*, and credits many photographers from outside Johannesburg. Schadeberg's Sof'town Blues (1994) too, re-publishes many of the photographs already seen in The Finest Photos from the Old DRUM, but equally gives credit to the photographers whose photographs are published. The fact that these books are exceptions may be due to the fact

that both Bailey and Schadeberg recognised the value of the people they worked with on a daily or weekly basis. This included the newsroom journalists – also those from outside the country – as well as personalities of all colours that were depicted in *DRUM*'s pages.

Within this coverage, a cosmopolitan society emerges that is strikingly revealed in almost every area of life – from politics to romance, from gangs to football teams, and from boxing gymnasiums to jazz clubs. Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006:xx) speaks of a fluid coexistence among people of different cultures living in one place as a natural process rather than a contrived one, "Cosmopolitanism isn't hard work; repudiating it is."

It is exactly this inclusiveness of different cultures that is reflected in *DRUM*, showing the experiences of black people getting on with their lives in a multicultural society.

But the fact that *DRUM* gave immense coverage to the 'Indian' experience is not acknowledged in the numerous subsequent re-readings of the journal. For instance, there is no sign in Chapman's account of an 'Indian' existence, either in South Africa or in *DRUM*. The 'Indian' presence in *DRUM*, the immense content of 'Indian' life, and the contributions to the magazine by 'Indian' writers and photographers is completely effaced in the rewriting of the *DRUM* experience.[22] For example, of thirty one *DRUM* articles reprinted in Chapman's The DRUM Decade, none refer to 'Indian' life or are written by 'Indian' writers, and yet we know that there was a *DRUM* office with talented writers in Durban. This seems to characterise the re-presentation of *DRUM* over the last decade, especially by people who were not part of that lived experience. Accounts such as these

22 This is also true of Mike Nicol's (1995) a good-looking corpse that reprints 26 DRUM articles by various authors that make up the bulk of his account, yet, none of these include 'Indian' writers or document any of the numerous accounts of 'Indian' life as were recorded in *DRUM*, as will be revealed later in the discussion.

since 1990, often by white writers, have tended to focus only on 'African' life at the expense of other *DRUM* accounts.

My aim, then, in this chapter is to bring to light another side of *DRUM* that has rarely been looked at, namely the 'Indian' experience as portrayed in *DRUM* in the 1950s. By focusing on this 'Indian' experience – which was largely concentrated in Durban where there was a *DRUM* office staffed mainly by 'Indian' writers and photographers – this immediately extends the representation of *DRUM* beyond Sophiatown. Focusing on the 1950s is important because it is seen as the most significant decade of black life recorded in *DRUM*. My investigation will explore the 'Indian' experience in spaces such as Victoria Street, Cato Manor and Fietas that were contemporary with the predominantly 'African' experience in Sophiatown, and the predominantly 'Coloured' experience in District Six. The effect of which, one anticipates, will reveal new perspectives on the 'Indian'.

My discussion will examine the overall representation of the 'Indian' in the magazine, focusing on certain characters and stories that formed a dominant part of a collective memory in the 1950s to reveal a more complex experience that may counter the more conventional portrayal of the 'Indian' as discussed in the previous chapter. My investigation would not do justice to the 'Indian' portrayal in *DRUM* without acknowledging major contributions of certain 'Indian' photographers and writers/editors who have, up till now, remained marginal in the *DRUM* legacy.

The use of photography, which was crucial to *DRUM* magazine, will prove an essential component in my argument in offering alternatives to the staid notions of how the 'Indian' has been represented thus far. Photography also plays an essential role in making this

experience more public, as intended through the touring photographic exhibition, *The Indian in DRUM in the 1950s*, which is expanded upon in the chapter titled Curatorial Notes.

an/Other 'Indian' identity in *DRUM*

Politics

What one first notices going through the primary material in *DRUM* is the significant presence of 'Indian' leaders in the anti-apartheid campaigns of the 1950s. *DRUM* gave immense coverage to the Defiance Campaign – when 10, 000 volunteers defied apartheid laws and regulations – throughout 1952, where Yusuf Cachalia, Nana Sita, C.T.N. Naidoo, Maulvi Cachalia and Walter Sisulu are pictured (*DRUM* August 1952:35).

The Defiance Campaign, led by Nelson Mandela and Moulvi Cachalia, saw the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) join forces to lead mass public campaigns around the country, where volunteers from these political parties[23] openly defied the racial laws and courted arrest in disciplined and non-violent conduct. The campaign that went on for over four months and saw 8000 arrested was intended to highlight the degradation and subjugation of non-whites under the National Party's discriminatory laws. It was sparked by a political rally held at the Red Square in Fordsburg on April 6th, 1952 – exactly 300 years after Jan Van Riebeck's arrival – which

23 Up to this stage in South African resistance politics the African National Congress was largely composed of 'African' members and the South African Indian Congress made up of 'Indian' members. It was the Defiance Campaign that united many across the colour line (which counted 'White' members among its allegiance) in defying apartheid laws that saw trade unions, women's federations and 'Coloured', 'Indian' and 'African' political parties show resistance as a united front.

was addressed by Dr Moroka (ANC) and Dr Dadoo (SAIC), among other 'African', 'Indian', and 'Coloured' leaders. Desai (1996:16) confirms this close relationship between the leadership of the South African Indian Congress and the African National Congress at the time:

> Indian Congress leaders were intimately involved in the planning of the Defiance Campaign. Yusuf Dadoo and Yusuf Cachalia from the TIC served on the initial five-person planning committee. When a National Action Committee was set up to direct the campaign, three leaders from the South African Indian Congress joined four leaders from the ANC on the council.

Henry Nxumalo writing in *DRUM* (October:1952) observed that the Defiance Campaign involved non-white volunteers entering white suburbs, such as Boksburg, without necessary permits and 'Africans' defying pass laws in the city of Johannesburg. The volunteers offered no resistance to arrest and the groups were taken to jail without violent incident.

A photograph by Bob Gosani in *DRUM* (October 1952:17) captures 'Indian' and 'African' women, mainly from the two organisations, defying permit regulations at Germiston on August 26, 1952 during the Defiance Campaign. The active participation of women in this campaign was the forerunner to the formation of the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) in 1954, and of the Women's March to Pretoria in 1956, which protested against 'African' women having to carry passes. The courageous women endured imprisonment for weeks at a time during the Defiance Campaign, recalling the likes of teenage martyr Valliamma Munusamy, who protested during the passive resistance

campaign of 1913-14.[24] These women were important political voices in the community, one of which was Dr. K. Goonam, who was regularly quoted in *DRUM* on a wide range of topics, from the cinema ban (March 1959:48) which was to institute racially segregated cinemas, to the emancipation of women (July 1960:53).

It was during the Defiance Campaign, on the same day that thirty women defied the law in Germiston, that a crowd of thousands, including 800 'Indian' school children, assembled outside the courts in support of twenty leaders that were appearing at the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court on a charge of contravening the Suppression of Communism Act. *DRUM* (September 1952:9) carried the picture of defiant schoolchildren outside the courts, revealing the active participation of children in politics and their vehement support for their political leaders imprisoned by the state. In the photograph, the children carry placards declaring: "We Want Freedom", "Leave Moroka" and "Show Your Protest – Attend Courts", and they hold up their thumbs in the Africa salute characteristic of defiance against the state. The accompanying article reported that the people sang and chanted outside and were only quietened when Moroka, at the request of the court, came out and asked them to be silent and disperse, which they did immediately.

The Defiance Campaign saw 'Indians' and 'Africans' in all parts of the country openly defy the laws in places like Johannesburg, Vereeniging, Port Elizabeth and East London. In Durban, Chief Albert Luthuli (ANC) and Monty Naicker (NIC) addressed the crowds at Durban's 'Red Square' where 3000 people attended and marched in the streets. The

24 Eric Itzkin (2000:36) states that Munusamy campaigned against the refusal by the Searle Judgement to recognise Hindu and Muslim marriages, which effectively reduced 'Indian' women "to the status of concubines", classifying their children as illegitimate and denying them rights to inheritance. At age sixteen, Munusamy also travelled with other women to Newcastle in Natal urging indentured workers to strike. She was arrested and imprisoned with hard labour. When she was released from Pietermaritzburg Prison in 1914 she was suffering from a severe fever. She died shortly afterwards.

Defiance Campaign was dominated by this Indo-Afro political alliance, and documented in *DRUM* in 1952. The campaign showed the potential of a united non-white people fighting against the state and formed the basis for the broader Congress Alliance in 1955 that pulled together the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress and the South African Coloured People's Organisation under one non-racial body, including the workers' unions and women's federation. It represented, for the first time, the interests of 'Africans', 'Coloureds', 'Indians', 'Whites', women and workers.

Monty Naicker and Yusuf Dadoo were two 'Indian' leaders who featured regularly in *DRUM*, if not for leading and addressing mass meetings, then for profiles on them as leaders of the black people. 'Masterpiece in Bronze', a regular feature that focused on outstanding leaders, paid significant tribute to Naicker, as this description in *DRUM* (September 1957: 29) reveals:

> He belongs to what you may call 'the doctor tradition' of political leadership in the S.A. Indian Congress…medical practice among utterly poor and diseased Indians, Coloureds and Africans…Twice banned, Monty went to jail for six months with Dadoo for passive resistance in 1946; served six months in Maritzburg for crossing the Transvaal border in defiance of Indian immigration laws in 1948, served one month during the Defiance Campaign.

Naicker and Dadoo embodied the new phase of 'Indian' leadership that embraced diversity locally and had extensive links with the world outside of South Africa. The article also

reported that the two were invited guests of Mahatma Gandhi to the Asian conference in 1947 in Delhi where they engaged with many leaders from Asia and Egypt.

Both medical doctors studied at Edinburgh and were college mates in the 1930s. Their early international exposure may have led the way to a broader vision for the SAIC in a shared future with political groups of other ethnicities, a change from the Kajee-Pather[25] group that they successfully ousted that "believed in cap-in-hand negotiations with the authorities"[26].

The description by Ezekiel Mphahlele of Dadoo in 'Doctor Dadoo's Dilemma' in *DRUM* (October 1956:25), "One might even say Yusuf Dadoo has a Marxist head, a Hindu heart, Mohammedan nails, and an African blood system…" reveals the diverse make-up within Dadoo himself: communist, passive resister, Muslim and African. Peter Magubane's lens complements Mphahlele's description with images revealing the different facets of the activist's life: morning stretches; at work as a physician; juggling a football in the air. Another image by Magubane reveals Dadoo in the kitchen wearing an apron and preparing a meal on the stove, which resists the conventional image of the patriarchal 'Indian' male. Mphahlele builds on the doctor's cosmopolitan image, elaborating on his marriage to his first wife from Germany (from whom he separated), and to his second wife from the Reunion Islands.

The image of Dadoo playing football was first used in *DRUM* in 'Political Football', published in November 1953. It revealed older activists from the liberation struggle, such

25 Kajee and Pather were the previous leaders of the South African Indian Congress whose leadership was characterized by a conservative ethnic view in contrast to the Naicker and Dadoo leadership that ousted them.

26 DRUM, September (1957:29)

as Goolam Pahad, Moses Kotane, and Dadoo playing against the Young Turks, that included Oliver Tambo, on a farm outside Johannesburg. In the background of the image one can see a very young Aziz Pahad, current deputy minister of Foreign Affairs, watching from the sidelines. The image also hints at the close connection between politics and football, and reveals the personal side of Dadoo the politician – which would have further endeared him to the *DRUM* readers who were great lovers of football. The depiction of Dadoo, by Mphaphele in words and Magubane in images, gives us further insight into relations between the ANC and NIC in 1953. Known for his pan-Africanist views, Mphaphele clearly claims Dadoo as one of his own, as a leader of the broader black population.

It is not surprising then that during this non-racial political climate shared between these liberation groups, a photograph taken during the Treason Trial focuses on Dr Monty Naicker, Dr Yusuf Dadoo and Nelson Mandela as co-accused, during recess outside the synagogue in Pretoria. Naicker and Dadoo were arrested in 1957 along with 154 others from the Congress Alliance in the much publicised Treason Trial, and *DRUM* (February 1957:20-21) published photographs of every one of the 156 arrested, which included among them numerous members from the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the Natal Indian Congress (NIC).



‘Indian’ and ‘African’ women defy regulations in Germiston. Photo by Bob Gosani.



Some of the 800 children raise their thumbs in the Afrika sign during the Defiance Campaign in 1952



Dr Yusuf Dadoo warms up before the game ‘Poltical Football’. Photo by Peter Magubane 1952.



Dr Monty Naicker in the centre facing; Dr Yusuf Dadoo, behind him to the right; Nelson Mandela to the left of Dadoo as co-accused in the Treason Trial in Pretoria in 1958.

There are numerous depictions of other political voices showing a very active 'Indian' engagement in liberation politics during the Defiance Campaign, The Congress Alliance campaigns and the Treason Trial, which dominated *DRUM*'s political coverage in the 1950s. Although *DRUM* is not primarily known for its political coverage, it sufficiently reflected the diversity of the many different political groups working towards a non-racial democracy. Bailey, Sampson and the *DRUM* photographers and journalists had close ties with people like Dadoo, Mandela and Sisulu, and this may have in no small way influenced *DRUM*'s inclusive non-racial coverage. It was this kind of atmosphere and thought that allowed people like Goonam, Naicker and Dadoo to be embraced as symbols of a broader black resistance that was suitably covered in *DRUM*.

The *DRUM* photographs that extensively depict 'Indian' and 'African' women in Germiston during the ANC-NIC led Defiance Campaign, the various race groups that made up the Congress Alliance, and individuals such as Dadoo and Naicker effectively challenged notions of an homogenous African continent, of a homogenous African country, and lastly of the homogenous notion of the magazine *DRUM* as being exclusively 'African'. The self-assuredness of the 'Indian' political leadership, that included women and children in collaboration with other resisters, strengthens Appiah's view of Africa as a continent of multiple existences (Bell 1996:10). These images of self-determined, cosmopolitan black politicians transported ideas of non-racialism to readers throughout the country and beyond, subverting the racial limits of the state. Images and stories that reveal disciplined and non-violent remonstrations in the Defiance Campaign undermine ideas of 'undisciplined Africans' and 'conformist Indians', as well as of racially separate politics.

Papwa and the Politics of Sport

As I have already stated, there was a close relationship that existed between sport and politics. There is also wonderful material in *DRUM* of one of the country's most successful sporting heroes, who became an icon of black political resistance. Talented golfer Papwa Sewgolum was a favourite in 1950s *DRUM*, and his success abroad meant than he was more than just a sporting hero. Emerging from an impoverished family, and being illiterate, the talented golfer won the compassion of many. Being self-trained, he developed his own unorthodox golf grip of left hand over right, which was to be his characteristic trademark throughout his golfing career.

But Papwa's classic rags-to-riches tale held deeper significance in the era of dominant white rule. In 1956 Minister of the Interior, Dr Eben Dönges, dictated that blacks and whites organise their sporting events separately, and that there be no inter-racial competition within South Africa. Christopher Nicholson (2005:48) observes that among the sports personalities who left the country during this time were football star Steve Mokone, also known as 'Kalamazoo', who played in Holland, Spain and Italy; cricketer Basil D' Oliviera, who left for Britain and was selected for England on several occasions; Ron Eland, who left to represent Great Britain as a lightweight weightlifter; boxer Jake Ntuli, who became the British Empire and Olympic flyweight champion; and later Precious Mkhize, who became the British Commonwealth weightlifting champion in Jamaica. Unlike the other talented sportsmen who felt that the country offered no opportunities to develop their skills and compete against the best regardless of colour, Papwa was adamant that he would not emigrate, in spite of apartheid and the numerous obstacles the government placed in his path.

Because of his success against white opponents, with his 1959 win at the Dutch Open, and subsequent victories over the more famous Gary Player, Papwa became a threat to the superior racial theories underlined by apartheid. Jay Naidoo (1990:205) gives us some insight on the extent of apartheid's racial indoctrination of white superiority so deeply ingrained in every aspect of life:

> I had always wondered about the superiority of the whites, not only above us Indians but also above everybody else who wasn't white. How was it that their domination was so naked and evident? How was it that they were so superior in every field? How was it that they were with their Samson, Hercules, Tarzan and Superman stronger? How was it that they were with their Galileo, Harvey, Pasteur and Einsten cleverer? How was it that they were with their Jesus, St. Francis of Assisi and Albert Schweitzer more moral? How was it that they were with their Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo, Van Gogh and Toulouse Lautrec more artistic? How was it that they were with their Denis Compton, Rocky Marciano and Stanley Matthews sportingly superior?

Papwa's local victories and national visibility in journals like *DRUM* openly challenged white superiority locally. His first international win at the Dutch Open in 1959 transmitted images of his success across the world, causing a lot of embarrassment to the apartheid government's policies based on racial hierarchy. Here was a poor black player from South Africa, denied privileges and seen as inferior to whites, who was triumphing over the world's best players on foreign soil. Nicholson (2005:65) reports:

> The people of South Africa rejoiced in the main – certainly the Black people applauded the deed of their man in Holland. He had shown the whites that people of a darker hue could compete on equal terms and win.

On his return to South Africa after winning that tournament, Papwa was treated to a hero's welcome in his community. *DRUM* (September 1959:60-61) shows the humble man stepping off the plane on arrival, when even the white policeman "grinned in wonder at South Africa's golfing marvel." Other images show him at Curries Fountain where he was paraded to fans in the stadium in the convertible owned by his employer E. Anderson and his wife, who had funded his trips abroad. In one photo many admirers extend their hands to reach out to him and Papwa reciprocates the gesture from the back of the car as it slowly makes its way around the stadium. The moment was one of pride for all present: for the Andersons who part-funded his trip abroad with Graham Wulff; for the adulated Papwa; for the fans to whom he had become a hero. *DRUM* covered Papwa's success widely. In other photographs included in the article *Triumph of a Modest Man*, Papwa is captured drinking champagne at Club Lotus in Durban, next to another image of a triumphal arch made of the golf sticks of local golfers under which his wife passes. There is also a picture of the celebrated golfer hitting autographed balls into the stands at the stadium, showing his form.

The lead photograph showed a white cabin attendant waiting at the bottom of the descending staircase from the plane, smiling warmly at Papwa on his return home. Not only was Papwa a unifying force amongst non-whites, but many whites, too, were as proud of him (*DRUM* September 1959:60-61):

> A white woman from a crowd of about 300 white admirers jostled her way to the champion, and grabbing both his hands, said: 'On behalf of the whites of this town who can't get anywhere near you, welcome home, Papwa, and congratulations.'

It was this kind of reaction to Papwa's success from people of all races, who saw him as a national icon, and which made the golfer a political thorn to the South African authorities. Each time Papwa was to play against white golfers in more prestigious local competitions, he had to apply to the Minster of Interior Affairs for permission. Later in 1963 he was given permission to play in the Natal Open at the Durban Country Club, but he took his homemade sandwiches and tea from his flask in a car that functioned as his dressing and dining room because of apartheid regulations. He won the tournament, but had to be content to collect his winning cheque in the rain due to enforcement of the Separate Amenities Act, which excluded him from the clubhouse. The big moment came when Papwa faced Gary Player in the 1965 Natal Open. Player had won the event in 1958, 1959, 1960 and 1962. When Papwa had won the Natal Open previously in 1963, Player was not in the field.

Player had referred to 1965 as his golden year when he won the South African, the United States and the Australian Opens all in the same year. Nicholson (2005:115) states that Player triumphed at the World Series, the World Match Play, the NTL Challenge Cup and the World Cup Individual – "he was clearly a man in his best form and on top of his game". But after Papwa triumphed over Player in this instance, winning the 1965 Natal Open, the government made a point of making it much more difficult for him to succeed again.



Papwa in classic swing, 1959.



Papwa with his family at home after his return from winning the Dutch Open in 1959



Papwa at Curries Fountain in 1959 after winning the Dutch Open for the first time.

Papwa was refused permission to compete against whites, denying him qualification to international tournaments abroad, the funding for which, in any case, was previously raised from within members of his community.

Nicholson (2005:114) quotes Player a year after the tournament in *Grand Slam Golf*, published in 1966, saying: "I am a South African. This is my land. And I must say now, and clearly, that I am of the South Africa of Verwoerd and apartheid." Player further describes South Africa as "a nation which is the result of an African graft on European stock and which is the product of its instinct and ability to maintain civilized values and standards amongst the alien barbarians, because to have abandoned them would have meant its disappearance" (Nicholson 2005:149). It was later revealed in Muldergate by Rees & Day (1980:186), the exposé on the Government's secret Information Scandal that:

> Player was used by Rhoodie–and paid for out of secret funds–to host American corporation bosses who were brought to South Africa in a bid to stem the anti-investment tide which rose in the United States in the mid-1970s. The Americans were brought to South Africa on 'golfing holidays'. And then introduced to South African businessmen and politicians, including John Vorster.

Thus the victory of Sewgolum over Player was a particularly political one in 1965, and in light of Player's later involvement with apartheid authorities, makes it an even more politically significant moment today. Nicholson (2005:76) records that Player was at the time the top-earning golfer in the world, accumulating $64, 450 in 1961. Player, who resides in the United States, continues to have golf circuits and golf estates around South

Africa named after him. Papwa, by contrast, was unable to sustain his career through the various restrictions imposed on him by the state. He became depressed, and died an alcoholic in Chatsworth, where his family was moved to under the Group Areas Act.

Sport

The physical identities of the 'Indian' men portrayed in *DRUM* fly in the face of more passive notions of the 'Indian' discussed in the last chapter. *DRUM* during the 1950s offered an astounding amount of material showing 'Indians' as ardent sportspeople, engaged in such 'masculine' sports as boxing and football. Extensive reportage of 'Indian' footballers and boxers are complemented by articles on 'Indian' lifesavers, wrestlers, gymnasts, tennis players and table tennis players, that give a more complete picture of the various sports enjoyed by 'Indians'. In addition it showcases many prominent 'Indian' promoters and administrators directing the more political and managerial aspects of sport.

Sport, like other aspects of life in apartheid South Africa, was never neutral. The apartheid state also classified sports along racial lines, to the extent that the type of sport a person played was deemed to help officials determine the racial classification of that person. Posel (2001:61) demonstrates this absurd phenomenon:

> The *Cape Times* revealed that according to 'methods reported in Johannesburg as being used by the Race Classification Board to determine whether a man was native or Coloured: a soccer player is a native, a rugby player is a Coloured.

Within this peculiar context of racially associated sporting codes, it is apparent how those racial stereotypes dominated. Edwards (1992:6) observes: "Central to these models was the belief in the intrinsic relationship between the physical, biological nature of man and his cultural, moral and intellectual nature. Thus culture was seen as being biologically determined." It was this kind of thinking that entrenched racial stereotypes of the Other as having distinctive biological features, which was often backed by 'scientific' and 'social studies'. Many prominent photographs shown on the exhibition, *The Indian in DRUM in the 1950s*, defy these conventional racial associations with the 'Indian'. Let's turn our attention to two such photographs which illustrate this.

Flying Men! – The Sonny Moodley Troupe

The first photograph shows three men engaged in an acrobatic act on a secluded Durban beach, which formed part of a series of images taken for the feature *Flying Men!* in *DRUM* (October 1952:6). A previously unpublished image from the series, the photograph focuses on the Sonny Moodley Troupe, an acrobatic ensemble. Being one of the less dramatic action shots in the series, the photo was chosen for its aesthetic value over the others depicting the troupe.

What the image describes is three figures locked in an intricate knot that rises skywards. The first figure forms the base of the human pyramid and supports a second man, standing on his shoulders, with his arms locked around the base of his legs. The bent legs and tight arms of the supported figure reveal the tension in supporting a third figure, engaged in the most athletic twirl. The suspended figure is upside-down in the air, his hands behind him,



The Sonny Moodley Troupe practising on a Durban beach, 1952

held only near the wrists by the supported figure on the shoulders of the first, who remains firm on the ground. The legs of the suspended figure point skywards and are controlled only by his abdominal muscles. He is caught in motion by the photographer, about to dismount the acrobatic pyramid. All three men are shirtless and dressed in the same loose dark sports trousers with bold stripes. The routine seems to be part of an accomplished act and we find ourselves part of a privileged audience, witnessing the intimate and private rehearsal. The sand dunes on the beach, topped with foliage indicative of this tropical environment, define the horizontal backdrop that runs through the middle of the picture, in contrast with the vertical line created by the trio. A fourth figure appears as a speck in the distance to the right, emphasising the magnitude of the dunes behind him. Against this figure, the dominating presence of the three figures in the foreground is heightened. The tall solitary shadow cast in the direction of the dunes accentuates the unison of the figures.

The three images that were published in the feature captured the three performing a "three turn somersault dive" in unison with perfect timing; a different human pyramid formation of "careful balance and poise" where the technique of support lends little strain on the supporting figure on the ground; and two acrobats doing a "jugglery" dive. The article reported that the troupe, which performed amazing feats under A.S. Pillay, Nam Moodley and Johnny Maistry, was named after one of the founders of the South African Amateur Weightlifting and Physical Culture Association.

A remarkable aspect of *DRUM*'s coverage was that it focused on newsworthy events and individuals in the black communities that took these community figures into the homes and imaginations of thousands around the country. So a group like the Sonny Moodley Troupe, well-known in the 'Indian' community, became part of the national imaginary through

DRUM. The magazine recognised special talent and individual efforts and included them in its content, even if it meant journalists travelling the breadth of the country to cover them as is reputed to have been the case in 1952. Images like those of the troupe bring to our attention the full complexity of the people represented, not as caricatures or cartoon like figures (as revealed in the previous chapter), but in full multidimensional expression (hooks 1994:392). In the case of 'Indian' men, who have generally not been associated with 'macho' sports like rugby, these images of the troupe – of strength, timing and balance – chip away at those conformist representations.

How Lives are Saved – Durban Indian Life Savers Club

A series of images focused on the excellent work done by the Durban Indian Life Savers Club (consisting of thirty voluntary members led by B.B. Singh) at Battery Beach, published in *DRUM* (August 1952:24-25) under the heading *How Lives are Saved*. The members could be seen on the beaches on the weekends in their familiar red bathing costumes with silver emblem.

This depiction of the Lifesavers Club draws interesting comparisons with a white beach culture that was already more developed at the time. Crispon Hemson (2001:63) reports that white surf lifesaving clubs were operational from the 1920s, and provided training to and employed lifesavers on its beaches from the 1930s. By contrast, the 'Indian' lifesavers from 1952 were not paid by the City Council, and volunteered their services while all holding full time jobs. The six images included across the double spread pages in *DRUM* reveal a disciplined and serious team, the pride of watching bathers. The photographs capture the lifeguards in drills on the racially segregated beach, and in action saving a



Members of the Durban Indian Lifesavers Club, 1952

bather. They engage in lifesaving in the interests of providing an essential service to their community.

The article emphasises the active role of the club in pressing for better facilities and a swimming pool from the City Council, and attributes the growing bathing facilities for 'Indians' to the club's enthusiasm. This depiction reveals the high level of activism by the lifesaving club in challenging authorities for better conditions, and underlines their political and social astuteness, fighting for their rights to equal treatment.

This idea of sacrifice on the beach also stands in contrast to the escapist notions of white beach culture and surfers in Durban during the 1970s where prevailing attitudes among white surfers tended to be totally oblivious to the radical politics taking place in the country around them. Glen Thompson (2001:100) suggests that surfing seemed to escape the harsh social realities in 1977 at a time when the quality of the waves took priority over the civil unrest in the townships.

These images of 'Indian' lifesavers from the 1950s confound general notions of the 'Indian' as purely the business type. At the time, a relationship with the perilous sea and the adventure associated with it was dominated by images of a predominantly English middle class white surfing culture in Durban. The fact that the dark haired South African surfing icon and 1977 world professional surfing champion, Shaun Tomson, who was white, challenged previous images of the long blonde-haired beach bum (Thompson 2001:98) further suggests the extent to which these images of 'Indian' lifesavers challenge previous racial associations with the sea. These images of the Durban Indian Lifesavers

Club reveal instances of a culture with the beach underlined by a political conscience and social activism.

Boxing

In Port Elizabeth they have a saying: As rare as an Indian boxer.[27] Contrary to this popular view, *DRUM* showed that boxing was an immensely popular sport among 'Indians'. The many depictions of boxing also suggest that it was a sport that transgressed social and racial barriers, and that gave expression to forms of black urban masculinities around the country. This is particularly significant when one looks again at notions of passive 'Indian' men depicted in the previous chapter. The contemporary debates around South African masculinities seek to reveal that it is a contested area where masculinities are not fixed and are constantly changing.[28] While some examples reveal instances of deviation from the archetypal South African male, both black and white, I would argue for an expression of 'Indian' masculinity in the 1950s – immersed in the cosmopolitan, hard-hitting and physical world of boxing that drew different 'races', classes and nationalities together – that challenges those notions of 'Indian' passivity.

Some of the more dominant 'Indian' boxing figures featured in *DRUM* were Louis Joshua, captured by G.R. Naidoo and later by Casey Motsitsi as one of the last in a long line of Indian champs; Benny Singh is portrayed as the darling of the sport, a father figure to black boxers; and little Mohamed Shaik, son of promoter Tiger Shaik and boxing mascot to

27 This was relayed to me in a discussion with Mario Stevens from Port Elizabeth after he had seen the exhibition the Indian in DRUM in the 1950s. He was totally amazed to see images of Indian boxers.

28 See Robert Morell (2001)

Elijah "Ellis Brown" Mokone, is captured by Barney Desai in a most memorable image. All of these portrayals show that boxing was not isolated within racially separate communities, and it was a domain that typified non-racial attitudes around the sport in the preceding decades.

DRUM (September 1956:21) reports that Joshua was a "killer" in the ring, but soft-hearted outside of it, in 'The last of the Indian Champs'. Joshua knocked out Makhene, who had to be carried off to hospital at the end of the tenth round. Makhene was the third fighter to whom Joshua had awarded this fate. In a sport that is often merciless, Joshua did however show his emotional side, something rarely associated with the brutality and fierceness required in the sport:

> That night I kept phoning the hospital to find out how he was faring. I couldn't sleep. Some guy said I ought to be glad about it. I almost busted his face. Every fighter I meet in the ring is my enemy only inside. Outside he is my colleague in the same business.

Joshua's allegiance to his boxing colleague demonstrates the strong identities formed in sport across the lines of colour. This is a recurring theme in boxing, and cannot be over-emphasised. We see it again with Benny Singh, who featured prominently in *DRUM* under the headings 'Benny Singh: Champion of African Boxing' (June 1952:41) and 'And Boxing Makes Three!' (October 1952:18-19), where he is profiled as the "father of 'non-European' boxing". Singh was a prize boxer himself in his younger days, with eighteen fights as a lightweight, and later turned his attention to promotion "in the interests of the non-European people who, it is a fair bet, would scarcely have gone as far as they would

have done in the game without him."[29] Singh took Baby Batter – the former South African welterweight champion – to England in 1949, where Batter won two of his three fights, paving the way for other black boxers to compete in England. Singh's close relationship with Baby Batter is published in his first book, My Baby and Me, parts of which were republished in DRUM (October 1952:18).

In it Singh describes a world of boxing where 'White', 'Coloured', 'African' and 'Indian' boxers competed against each other. This mixed world of boxing that brought together men from different classes, nationalities and race is recalled by Singh (1950:4-5) when George Bull, a sports journalist, wrote in 1921 in his column 'The Latest':

> Boxing evidently breeds cosmopolitanism, drives away class and national prejudice, and develops broadmindedness in the individual. The crowd at The 'Vic Rink' last Saturday night on the occasion of the Dixon-Hommel contest was a sight worth seeing. Asiatics from far Bombay, woolly haired non-descripts from African recess, Whites, near Whites and Blacks all jumbled together and the best of it was that nobody minded. Every class of several races was represented in the mob from a white magistrate to a coloured peanut vendor.

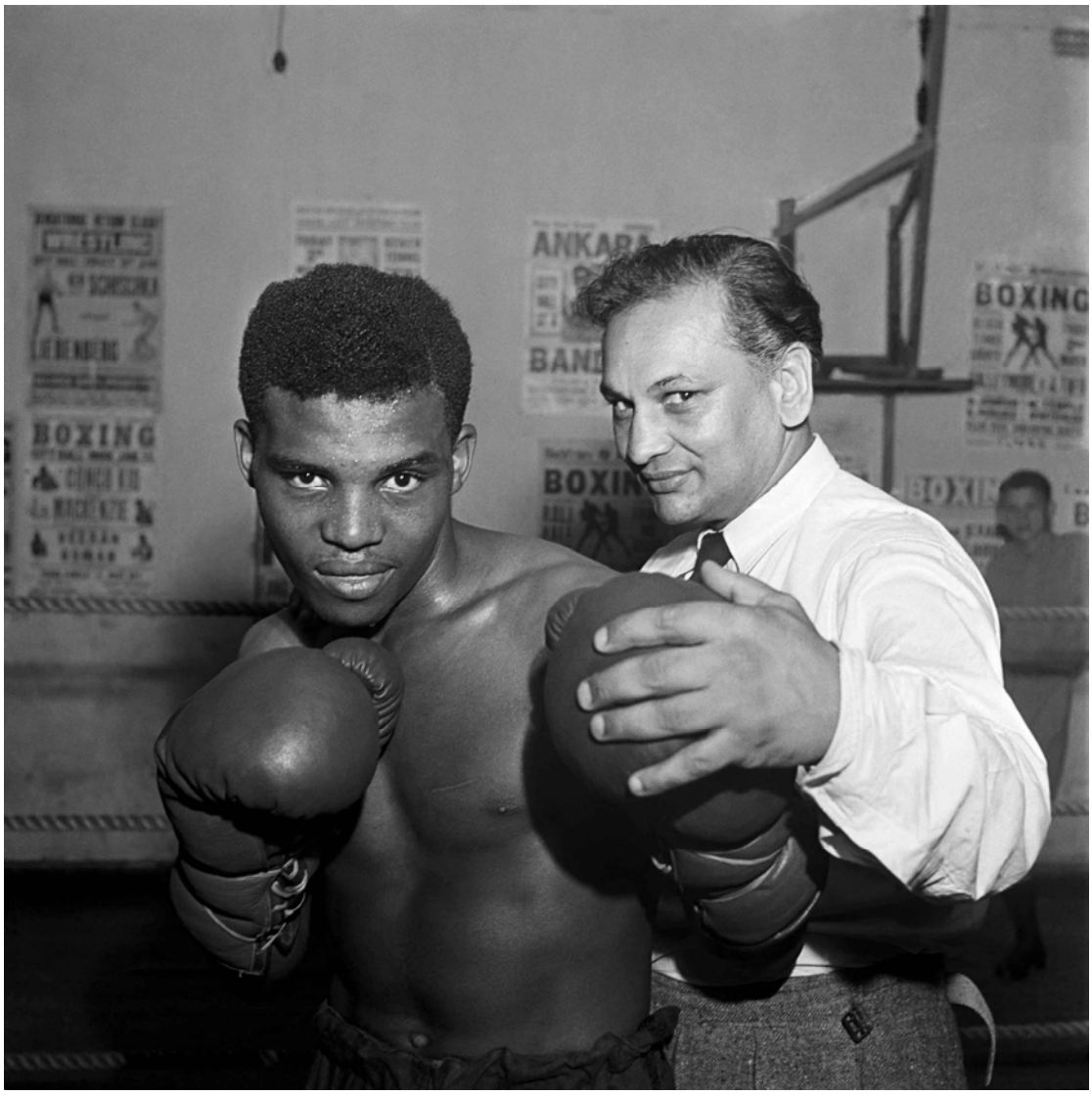
Singh (1950:51) gives great insight into the world of boxing in the decades before the 1950s and elaborates on the heterogeneous world that was enhanced through international networks. For instance, 'Coloured' boxers such as Jimmy Dixon and Arthur Cupido went to South America as deck-hands on a ship and returned as unbeaten boxing champions,

29 DRUM (June 1952:41)

beating Brazil's best in their divisions. Another story from My Baby and Me highlights Mottee Kid Singh, originally from Trinidad, who enriched the local scene in 1933 after winning fights in New York and London. Mottee Kid Singh was brought to South Africa from England by J.B. Panday and Mohamed and left undefeated a year later, taking the scalps of boxers of the calibre of the great Arthur Cupido. Singh (1950:64) also refers to Percy Vengan who, after successful wins in South Africa, toured India to become Champion of India; and Jack Moodley was another who for years was the light- and middleweight South African featherweight champion before leaving to settle in Australia.

These descriptions recount the dynamic world of the interracial South African boxing scene that was linked to boxing in Trinidad, Brazil, USA, Australia, India and Britain. Singh himself had contact with boxing promoters in Belgium and world boxing champions in France (Singh 1950:42).

The image on the 'Indian in *DRUM* in the 1950s' exhibition, titled *Benny Singh*, from 1952, embodies this cosmopolitan world. It is a portrait of Singh with the boxer Mckenzie, who faces the camera in a boxing stance with his hands raised, able to punch or defend at any sudden movement. His killer stare penetrates the lens and counters the affable personality that is traced through his smile. Singh, dressed in white shirt with dark tie, stands at an angle behind the boxer, his left arm containing the boxer's left glove, and he offers a friendlier promoter's smile. His containment of the boxer's powerful left hand indicates the directing role he plays in refining the raw power of the young boxer. The gym walls display advertising posters of contests gone by and forms a graphic backdrop to the obsession with the sport.



Benny Singh in his gym in Durban with protégé Mckenzie in 1952.



Louis Joshua, 1956. Photo by G.R. Naidoo



Mohamed Shaik with ‘Ellis Brown’ Mokone, 1956. Photo by Barney Desai.

Singh's nurturing relationship with his boxers can be seen in other images of him in his gym, shown in *DRUM* in the June issue of 1952. In the image with Lingum Pillay sparring with another boxer from his stable, Singh looks on critically, suggesting a coaching role. In another he fastens the gloves of another boxer, while Mckenzie skips in the background. No time is lost here: the background boxers in the gym make it a hive of activity, and one can almost smell the sweat and hear the skipping, with the sound of boxing gloves being cushioned against bodies lingering in the milieu.

Singh (1950:51) recalls the legendary boxers of the past – with names like Jack Moodley, Bob Narandas, Kid Mayet, Young Craig, Rajah Moodley, Peter Sam, Young Sadow, Harry Appal, Percy Vengan, Jack Abrahams, Seaman Chetty and Young John – in posing the question of who the best of the long line of 'Indian' fighters since 1903 was. Clearly there was a strong boxing tradition among 'Indians' who made a considerable contribution through 'Indian' boxers and promoters in 'non-European' boxing in the first half of the twentieth century.

DRUM's coverage of boxers like Singh and Joshua show some trace of this, but do not reveal the extent or the history of 'Indian' boxing from earlier decades. The story of Louis Joshua marks the beginning of the decline of 'Indian' boxing champions, after fifty years of distinction in the sport. The other photograph included on the exhibition shows boxing mascot Mohamed Shaik in a boxing pose facing Elijah "Ellis Brown" Mokone in 1956 – a playful scene cleverly set up by Barney Desai, and which comments on the cosmopolitan nature of the sport that cut across age, class, colour and national boundaries.

The *DRUM* images of the 'Indian' in boxing assist in recalling a much longer history of 'Indian' boxers who were integral in asserting an image of tough masculine identity, based on raw strength, balance, reflex, fitness and endurance. They challenge the depiction of 'Indian' men as being fragile with "bare scraggy shin bones" (Phillips 1975:22).

Football

Football and boxing were strongly identified under apartheid as black sports linked to poverty and the lower classes of society, while rugby was seen as a sport of white affluence. Socially football differs from boxing in that it is a sport where players from many different backgrounds, ethnicities, ages and class don the same kit and play against an opposition as part of one team. While this has been a unifying agent in many ways, football identities have also been formed around ethnic, national, linguistic, religious, social, and political allegiances.

Ethnic identities revealed themselves strongly in football during the first decade of apartheid as the different segments of black national teams played against each other in the South African Federation League (SAFL) in cities around the country. This was reflective of the political developments of black political groups in the early fifties, where groups like the ANC and SAIC united in the defiance campaign, but maintained their separate ethnic identities. "Africans Beat Indians in Thrilling Game" is a headline in *DRUM* (August 1952:38-39), indicative of the racial categorisation of the time, where "Prince Mabila, African captain, shoots the ball past Jackie Naidoo, Indian goalie, in the first few minutes of the African-Indian Federation match at Durban". The win was in reply to "the African

players' prayers who were determined to win this time after last year's 2—0 defeat by the Indians". The S.A. Soccer Federation, led by president S.L. Singh, was played on a league points system, with matches spread through Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town, in home and away fixtures between 'Africans', 'Indians' and 'Coloureds'.

G.R. Naidoo reported on the Sam China Cup in *DRUM* (September 1959:44-45), when for the first time in the 56 years since the formation of the cup, teams could field players from all 'race' groups. The annual Sam China Cup Trophy was sponsored in Kimberley in 1903 by Sam China – the founding president of the South African Indian Football Association (SAIFA), the first national black football association – towards an 'Indian' inter-provincial competition. 'Indian' football history goes back to the Natal Indian Football Association that was formed as early as 1886 in Durban. In 1896 the Transvaal Indian Football Association was formed (Alegi 2004:18), and by June 1900 the Blue Bulls, the Crimson League, Sydenham Unity and the Pirates of India played in the central Durban area (Henning 1993:136). In 1959, *DRUM* published a photo from 1897 of the Pirates of India Football Club in the article, 'The History of the Indians in South Africa: Part 1', written by G.R. Naidoo, which showed the importance of football in the culture and history of 'Indians' in the country.

With the atmosphere of racially separate black teams and associations dominating the football environment, *DRUM* football experts would often draw up a list of players to watch out for in the coming season of the SAFL. In profiling nine promising 'non-European' players from around the country, football expert Dan Chocho reported in *DRUM* (June 1955:24) on Links Padayachee, one of the legendary 'Indian' players from the era:



A scene from the Sam China Cup in 1952 at Curries Fountain, Durban.



Football supporters enjoy a game at Curries Fountain, 1952.



Football players run onto the field at the start of the Sam China Cup in 1952.



The non-racial Textiles Football Club pictured in DRUM in 1957.



Textile's players togging up before the game, 1957.

> Links Padayachee, handsome, well built, unmarried. Gifted left-winger who can pierce through any backline. Scores of young ladies are willing to marry him, but soccer comes first! A must in the next South African Indian side.

Chocho also profiled Matambu Marimutu, "the fierce full-back and brainy schemer" from Natal who will "stop even an express train to get into the next South African first team".

Sometimes *DRUM*'s football expert would indulge his imagination and defy the authorities by publishing their non-racial team, which included white players, to represent the country – a sort of dream team from South Africa that would take on the world's best. Chocho gives such a selection in *DRUM* (March 1956:28-29) under the headline 'All-Race Soccer Team!', subtitled, 'Chocho shows FIFA how to pick a Springbok XI with no colour-bar'. Of the fifteen that make the grade are the white South African Bill Perry (he is listed as leftwing playing for Blackpool and representing England), and the legendary notorious dribbler "Stadig" Makatini. Padayachee and Marimutu also make it into this finest selection along with V. C. Moodley, "the one-eyed soccer wonder of the world", being the first choice goal keeper.[30] This non-racial team selection in 1956 came after the Congress Alliance that brought different ethnic political groups together with unions and women's organisations in a mass pact against the government and saw the creation of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown in 1955.

Football became increasingly identified as a working class black sport during the apartheid era and the photograph, *Football Supporters at Curries Fountain*, reveals a section of fans, dressed to the nines, attentively watching a game in the famous stadium. Black politicians

30 Two other 'Indian' footballers who made their mark in the 1950s were Juggie Naidoo, "Indian SA goalie" and P. Gabriel, "Transvaal Indian's crack goalie" (DRUM August 1952:13).

often exploited the popularity of the sport to win the confidence of the people by being directly or indirectly involved in the administration of black soccer. The Kajee Cup, sponsored by the ousted SAIC leader in 1952, became a prominent biennial knockout competition played between national 'African', 'Indian' and 'Coloured' teams at a time when the more progressive SAIC leadership, led by Naicker and Dadoo, had joined forces with the ANC in the Defiance Campaign. Kajee's £500 donation towards the competition can be seen as a political strategy to win over black working class support, a move away from his more conservative ethnic stance that had cost him the leadership of the SAIC. The 1952 Kajee Cup Final was characterised by different styles of play between the 'Africans', who played the "short-passing Motherwell positional style" while the 'Coloured' team played a more "physical, direct, English kick-and-rush style" (Alegi 2004:109). It was described as a match of "brawn against brain" and saw the 'Africans' come from 5-2 behind to draw level through three goals by Buya Msotho, who had also scored the other two goals for his side (*DRUM*, November 1952).

The Moroka-Baloyi Cup, sponsored in 1938 by Dr James Moroka (ANC president, 1949-52) and Richard Baloyi saw another ethnic competition for 'Africans' (Alegi 2004:62), initiated by a politician, dominate in the 1950s. And when Albert Luthuli was elected President of the ANC in 1952, he was president of the Natal Inter-Race Soccer Board (Ibid:108). The link between politics and football is also revealed through the workers unions' use of "boxing and soccer as conduits for cultural communication between leadership and the rank and file" (Alegi 2004:34-35). *DRUM*'s prominent coverage of the game "Political Football" in 1953, that was touched on earlier, explicitly brought these two worlds together through the images of Yusuf Dadoo (SAIC), Oliver Tambo (ANC) and Moses Kotane (SACP). A few decades earlier the strong links between political leaders and

the popular game is revealed through Mohandas Gandhi's association with football in the photograph from 1911 (Itzkin 2000:58) at the Rangers Football Ground in Mayfair, Johannesburg, albeit in a game between two passive resistance teams.

The potential power of football to win over the masses was identified by politicians at from Gandhi's time in South Africa, and football also allowed for a space away from politics, for politicians and citizens alike.[31] The expression of black masculine identities in football, suppressed by colonialism and apartheid often spilled over into physical contests, which were not restricted to the game, and which sometimes resulted in the loss of lives. 'Football Murder' (*DRUM*, June 1957:53) recounts one such incident:

> Violence at football matches in Natal is one of the great vices of the post-war years. The two groups of supporters are watching a match–just a pleasant way of passing the time it's supposed to be, not a battle for life–when they get into an argument…Up shoot the tempers, out come the knives and there's a fearful fracas. Sometimes it seems to become so important that even the team members leave the field and join in. There's a huge, wild, foolish war.

Johannesburg and Pretoria also had their equal shares of violence that went with 'Indian' football. Jay Naidoo (1990:29) describes a violent turn of events at an 'Indian' soccer match between Swaraj and Cambridge in Pretoria.[32] Football was closely linked to the

31 Alegi (2004:106) notes the comments of a Robben Island prisoner who said: "You can only sit around and read about Marxism and imperialism for so many hours a week."

32 Jay Naidoo (1990:29): "Maga, like a shadow, brushed past his rear, and made several sweeping movements across the blue-striped jersey covering his Brooklyn-bridge back. At first, I thought he was making crosses on the Bully's back with some indelible marker. Dark stains, a fraction after he had moved away, spread out on the surface of his jersey like ink on blotting paper."

tough men of the streets too, who took pleasure in spending weekend afternoons watching. In a second part feature on 'Pataan' in *DRUM* (June 1958:74), the gangster reveals how he spent his Sundays watching football and openly drinking gin with his friends at Curries Fountain. Football was seen as a tough sport for tough men, and being a football player often meant defending yourself against another player and supporters of the opposing team, or joining your team mates in a free-for-all on the pitch against the other team. Footballers looked down upon sports such as tennis, which was seen to be more effeminate (Alegi 2004:36). Football was a comfortable sphere for expression of masculine identities across racial and class difference, both on the pitch and in the stands.

But football conflicts were not limited to the playing and spectator arena. 1957 marked a year of chaos for non-white soccer by infighting within the different black soccer bodies. The 'Africans' had their own squabbles with the South African Football Association and The South African Bantu Football Association not wanting to merge; the Transvaal Coloured Soccer Board and the Transvaal Coloured Football Association had outstanding disputes; and the withdrawal of the Transvaal 'Indian' side from the Sam China inter-provincial tournament reflected trouble amongst the 'Indian' soccer authorities, and widespread division among all black soccer authorities (*DRUM,* October 1957:27).

While football was closely linked to politics, it also allowed breathing space from the daily repressive and discriminatory realities. During the year of the "Big Soccer Mess" (*DRUM*, October 1957:26-27), Textiles Football Club in Durban was one of the few exceptions to show off the ideal of racial unity. Two photographs on the exhibition confirm a mixed black team of 'Indians', 'Coloureds' and 'Africans'. The first, which was published in *DRUM* with the article shows the players, most seated on the grass, changing into their

football kits: v-neck t-shirts with the word “Textiles” emblazoned across the front of the tops. A player stands to the left, ball in hand, clearly anticipating the game ahead, and the coach communicates the game plan to the players, while supporters on the edge of the circle listen attentively.

The second photograph, sourced in the archives, but which was not published, is more interesting. It reveals a conventional football team photograph featuring the final eleven players after the match, with some of the team standing in the back row, and the rest of the team forming a second row squatting in front. The players are all dressed differently – some wearing shirts and jackets, while others are more informally, but still smartly attired. The standing player on the extreme right is dressed in formal pants and jacket, and carries a packet in his hand. Maybe he still has to go to work for the day? Or perhaps it is simply his football boots in the packet. Here we get much more information about the individual players, their personalities evoked through different clothing, possessions and expressions. Although there is no additional information supplied in relation to the team or the photograph, it is possible that this was a line-up from the textiles union. What is clear though is that the team defied the institutionalised racial categories of exclusive ‘Africans, Indians and Coloureds-only’ teams, by playing under the Textiles banner.

Football spaces were also important spaces for political and cultural expression. The stadium in the 1950s was so much more than a recreation space away from the economic and racist exploitation of the time. Curries Fountain in Durban hosted twenty thousand people in the stands when Papwa Sewgolum returned from his Dutch Open win, the organisers using the big crowds of a football match to show support for Papwa’s success. And Papwa’s presence in turn was sure to have brought in the numbers for the football

match to follow his grand reception at the stadium. In this regard, football was a major crowd-puller, capable of mobilising tens of thousands to celebrate other events and achievements affecting the community. Another image entitled *The Protest Grows*, from 1958, records a day when sixteen thousand people, mainly 'Indians', went to Curries Fountain to object to the Group Areas proclamations. The image reflects the quiet sadness in the face of the old woman in a sari whose head is bent in prayer, and who is no doubt affected by the laws. Curries Fountain becomes a space of multiple memories, beyond the arenas of football and masculine identities.

The fact that football was such an integral part of 'Indian' life was also clearly demonstrated in Coolie Location, where football took precedence over other cultural activities like Tamil school, and where Swaraj Football club in Marabastad, with their red, green and white strip, was to Jay Naidoo's (1990:29) memory as "magic as Real Madrid and Honved".

Crossing the COLOUR BAR

While the images of the Defiance Campaign and the Congress Alliance, and the solidarity shown among all those from different ethnic backgrounds in the Treason Trial, publicly defied the state's separatist 'racial' policies, *DRUM* also reveals the crossing of the colour bar in areas such as romance and marriage; as well as in the underworld of gangs, brothels and prostitution.

Probably the most high profile case of a mixed marriage in *DRUM* in the 1950s was a white woman, Regina Brooks, who was living with an 'African' Zulu police sergeant, Richard Kumalo, in Orlando. The couple was arrested and charged under the Immorality Act, and Brooks was sentenced to six months in prison. She appealed, and won on the grounds that she dressed like an 'African', could speak Zulu fluently, and had grown up with 'Africans' on her parents' farm in the Orange Free State, and on that basis identified more with 'Africans' than with 'whites' (Sampson 2005:192). The Regina Brooks story showed that she did not conform to the state's assumed boundaries of racial separation. While Brooks was 'White' in appearance, born of white parents, she identified more with black culture and looked to black men in her own romantic relationships.

Two lesser known examples of mixed couples that immediately come to mind in relation to 'Indians', are Rose Bloom and Syrub Singh, and Sonny Pillay and Miriam Makeba. The example of the white Afrikaans woman, Rose Bloom, who married Syrub Singh, the Pretoria 'Indian' businessman, was well documented in *DRUM* and its weekly *Golden City Post*. Bloom and Singh are pictured coming out of court in 1959 where they were charged under the Immorality Act.[33] Bloom, elegantly dressed in a sari and wearing Indian sandals, walks down the court stairs with her arm comfortably wrapped around Singh's. Her traditional 'Indian' dress reveals her adoption of 'Indian' cultural modes in the face of apartheid laws. The story made headline news back then, and is recalled by London-based author, Jay Naidoo, (1990:117) who grew up in Marabastad:

> "Then, there was this guy Singh who lived a few blocks away from 226
>
> …Then, like a bolt from the blue, we heard that he and a laanie cherrie

33 This image formed part of the exhibition Ranjith Kally: 60 years in black and white that was held at the Goodman Gallery in April 2004.



Miriam Makeba with Sonny Pillay’s family in 1959. Photo by Ranjith Kally.

had been arrested under the Immorality Act. He eventually got married to this sweet Afrikaner girl who worked in the passport office. Boy, was that news sensational."

Forbidden by law, it was the 'European'/'non-European' sexual transgression that captured the public's attention, and which had been forbidden by the state since the nineteenth century.[34] Less in the spotlight were the intimate relations that existed between the different categories of black South Africans. The famous diva Miriam Makeba is captured with Durban singer and composer, Sonny Pillay, and his family in Durban in a photograph from 1959. Despite the stark contrast of Makeba in modern dress and Sonny's mother in a traditional sari, the image relays a sense of cultural ease. There is an effortlessness with which Miriam and Sonny, who were romantically involved at the time, relate to each other, in spite of the racial categories that separated them under apartheid. Here the lines between documentary photography and artistic portraiture are blurred, and the subtle intimacy captured by the lens gives us a keener insight to the understanding between these two, possibly based on a shared love for music and respect for each other's talents.

If the racial confines were crossed by ordinary citizens and entertainers, then *DRUM* throws up many other examples of interracial conversations that were widespread in the 'Indian' underworld. Lighty Salot – who took over the family gang after his brother Chappie was murdered in 1940 – was an interesting character who defied many 'Indian'

34 Meer (1969:49) "Laws were passed in the Transvaal in 1897, 1903 and 1908, making marriages and sex relations between Non-White men and White women a criminal offence. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (No. 15 of 1949) prohibits all marriages between Whites and Non-Whites in the Union, and makes all such marriages if contracted outside the country null and void in the Republic. The Immorality Act (No. 21, 1950) makes all sexual associations between White and Non-White illegal and subject to punishment by imprisonment up to five years."

stereotypes regarding marriage. Lighty, a Muslim, first married Eunice, a Hindu Tamilian, defying both religious and linguistic barriers (*DRUM*, January 1955:49). He later married across the 'racial' divide, tying the knot with Katie, a 'Coloured' woman, with whom he had five children.

Lighty's multiracial, multi-religious romantic links extended to other aspects of his life too. His gang comprised of an interracial mix, drawing on 'Indian', 'Coloured' and 'African' criminals (*DRUM*, February 1955:55).

And while some gangs had interracial membership, other gangs were involved in interracial conflict in contesting territory. The notorious Sheriff Khan band related one such battle against a white gang in Johannesburg:

> When we boarded the tram, Sheriff greeted our former partners. He came straight to the point. He said 'You can join hands with us again or we will bash you up,' but the Europeans jeered at Sheriff. We got stuck into them …and the Europeans were laid out (*DRUM*, September 1956:79).

This example is particularly revealing in the context of apartheid that was predicated on white superiority. Taking on a white gang and beating them in a physical contest could define a better sense of the self in the face of repressive laws. Such examples speak of shared notions of masculinity across colour lines – in mixed race gangs and between different ethnic gangs, over contested territories and masculine superiority. The underworld, by its nature, showed a total disregard for the law, which saw conventional rules fly out the window in a world where tough masculine identities reigned supreme, and

where women defied 'feminine' and societal norms. Further evidence of multiracial collaboration is seen in the Durban underworld where another 'Indian' gangster, Shaffey Bux, constituted a mixed 'club' for the visiting seamen stopping off at the port city:

> We got eight Coloured girls from Cape Town. I selected them when I went there by air, and gave each the money to fly to Durban. Uncle George brought six white women with him from Johannesburg. In addition, I got nine Durban girls to join us (*DRUM*, March 1959:39).

The racial divide was transgressed in other urban spaces too. Cato Manor**,** classified as an exclusive 'Indian' area under the Land Tenure Act in 1946, arguably reflected this attitude of the cosmopolitan fifties. The contested area, the site of many destroyed lives and buildings during the 1949 riots, was where many 'Indian' merchants and aspiring 'African' middleclass owned the land that was let and sub-let to working class 'Indians' and 'Africans' alike (Desai 1996:10). An 'African' woman recalls living there:

> We stayed closely and freely with all our Indian neighbours. We all had big families and we used to sleep together on the floors like one family. We shared what food we had in times of trouble. We were a close community, sharing our times of happiness and our sorrows together. We mixed English and Zulu and some Indian language and made our own language (Meer 1986:66).

The Cato manor example demonstrates a commonality shared by space and similar situations between working class 'Indians' and 'Africans' living in Umkhumbane. The

melange of English, Zulu and Indian languages also hints at the creolisation of the different ethnic groups living together in that shared space.

'Pumpy' and the Goodwill Lounge

'Pumpy' Naidoo was another colourful character, and owner of the Goodwill Lounge, the legendary club in Durban that gives us insight into other aspects of Durban nightlife in the 1950s. Pumpy was an icon in Durban and a character who appeared regularly in *DRUM* as a showbiz and boxing promoter. Together with his brother Nammy, he owned the Goodwill Lounge in Victoria Street, the centre of 'Indian' urban life in the seaside city. The famous street was also host to a few cinemas, the Indian market and many late night cafés. Hassim (2001:340) recalls the two brothers who seemed to embody all that was taking place around them:

> The Naidoo brothers, Pumpy and Nammy, were proficient restaurateurs whose personal attention to every facet of their operations had created a haven in the midst of the Casbah. Pumpy, the supreme showman whose presence alone was sufficient to elevate the restaurant to a status unparalleled by any such rival establishment anywhere in the city famed for its eating houses, was a man of immense charm and a raconteur of great talent. Nammy, the elder of the two, was a hulking giant who, it was rumoured, had stopped a bullet in his chest without flinching…

Many who visited in the 1950s reported that the curry and rice restaurant was the only place in Durban where people of all colours could meet. The brothers had a reputation that stretched beyond the borders of Durban and Pumpy, described as a "naughty, cheeky,

chirpy and loving fat man", was well known to the *DRUM* newsmen "and whenever a journalist or editor came to Durban, the Goodwill was always the first call" (Bailey, 1987:159).

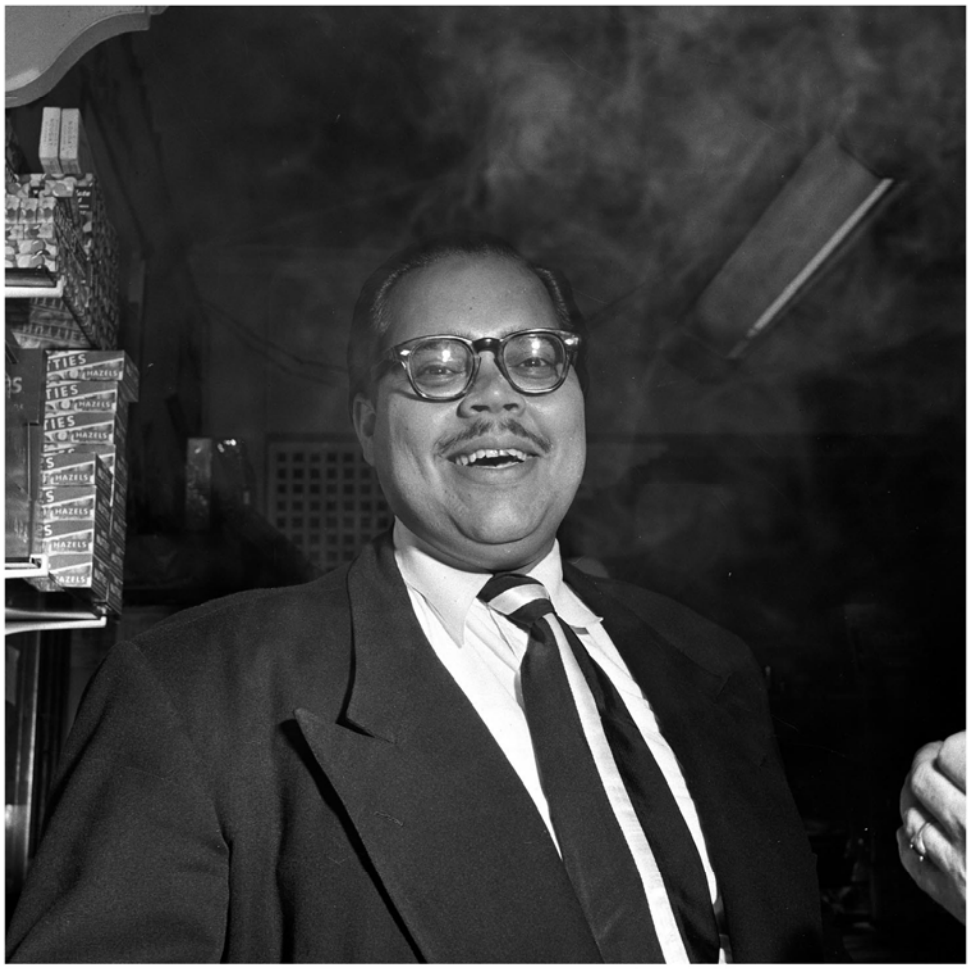
But it was the jazz and the cosmopolitan atmosphere that the Goodwill Lounge was best known for. Nat Nakasa, who moved from the Zulu newspaper, *Illanga Lase* in Durban to work at *DRUM* in Johannesburg (Bailey 1987:81), compared the Crescent in Fordsburg – that ran jazz sessions with the likes of Jonas Gwangwa, Kippie Moeketsi, Lenny Lee and others every Sunday night – to the Goodwill Lounge:

> …It was reminiscent of the jazz nights at Goodwill Lounge in Durban. The Goodwill opened its doors once or twice a week and jazz addicts piled into the back rooms where Dalton Khanyile and other Durban jazzmen belted their instruments (Patel 2005:10).

Whenever the likes of international stars such as Tony Scott, or Bud Shank and Jazz West Coast came to Durban, they spent more time at Pumpy's place in Durban than anywhere else (Bailey 1987:157). The photograph of Tony Scott at the Goodwill Lounge in 1959 on the exhibition lends credence to the ambience of international jazz players, and an appreciative broad-based local audience. The modern jazz club invites comparisons with jazz clubs in the world's major capitals and is part of the legend of black Durban life in the 1950s. Pumpy was also known as a promoter of note, and other photographs in *DRUM* depict him posing with boxers before a fight or handing over prizes at ballroom competitions:

> Whenever a poster was read 'Pumpy presents …' it was sure to be a sell-out. Pumpy ran innumerable shows and dances at the Goodwill, all in aid of charity. And when it came to charity, the 'Jazz King', big hearted Pumpy, did more for his city than any other Durbanite (Bailey 1987:157).

Pumpy and the Goodwill Lounge represent a lively cosmopolitan nightlife in Durban that has hardly been mentioned in references to the fifties, to *DRUM* or to the 'Indian'. Contrary to other characters that embody a cosmopolitan nature, like Yusuf Dadoo or Monty Naicker or Benny Singh, Pumpy did not travel far and wide, rather international worldly figures were attracted to the environment of the Goodwill Lounge with its diverse crowds, its world class jazz and its renowned local food. Pumpy brought the world of coexistence, of people engaging with each other across boundaries, of free association, to the Goodwill Lounge and Durban, and herein lies the difference. The idea of cosmopolitanism is not only to be found in the big cities of the world: "the well travelled polygot is as likely to be among the worst off as among the best off–as likely to be found in a shantytown as at the Sorbonne." (Appiah (2006:xix) The worldliness of international jazz groups playing at the Goodwill Lounge along with local musicians, and the local flavour of the food and audiences brought together many varied expression of identities in one space. The *DRUM* journalists from Johannesburg and the worldly Jim Bailey identified with Pumpy and the Goodwill Lounge as being part of their kind of world, reflecting their view on the world. Where racial boundaries were crossed in many aspects of life by politicians, entertainers, journalists, gangsters and ordinary citizens, 'Indians' were implicitly a part of this story.



Pumpy Naidoo, owner of the Goodwill Lounge Jazz Club, 1960. Photo by Ranjith Kally.



Tony Scott at the Goodwill Lounge Jazz Club in 1960. Photo by Ranjith Kally.



Popular American jazz band Jazz West Coast sign autographs at the Goodwill Lounge. Photo by Kally.

The Indian 'Underworld'

DRUM (July 1952:14) reported that Victoria and Grey Streets were known as Durban's little Chicago, a battleground for rival gangs marking their territory where the very mention of the name Victoria and Grey Streets struck terror into the hearts of respectable citizens for "they were automatically associated with everything vile and ruthless in the underworld of crime".

Victoria Street was also home to the Victoria Picture Palace and The Victoria Theatre, and the Avalon Cinema was close by. It was home to the Goodwill Lounge and jazz at night, and during the day thousands of shoppers would come from far and wide to shop at the Indian market on the western end of the street, which was in close proximity to the Bantu Men's Beer Hall and the transport hub of the Victoria Terminus. Hassim (2001:109) describes the greater 'Indian' area around Victoria Street, known as the Casbah:

> Each street served a specific function. The eastern end of Victoria Street was theatre-land, the western half reserved mainly for the markets and grocery stores. Grey Street, from the racecourse to the West End Hotel in Pine Street, was the clothes-horses' paradise…Prince Edward Street the neatest sari houses and craftsmen jewelers. In between and at every corner was the inevitable tea-room, serving the best chilli-bites and confectionery.

The Casbah area in Durban was host to a whole range of gangs with names like the 'Victorians', the 'Beatrice Street Gang', the 'Young Americans', the 'May Street' gang,

and the 'Dutchenes', who originated from Old Dutch Road in Warwick Avenue (Hassim 2001:194). The most notorious of these gangs from Durban, who were widely reported on in *DRUM*, were the 'Salot' gang and the 'Crimson League', whose battles against each other captured the imagination of *DRUM* readers across the continent. Gang battles were furious and violent and seemed commonplace in Victoria and Grey Streets, the site of contested taxi territory. Dawood Salot recounted for *DRUM* (April 1955:67) readers a battle with the Crimson League that resembled two days in Capone's Chicago:

> Then the next day Fishy was attacked by the League again at Patel's Café in Grey Street with milk bottles. He drew out a knife and stabbed one of the League. At about 7.30 p.m. the same evening, I was sitting in one of our cars in Victoria Street when a black car sped past me and men inside it shot at me. A second car followed, and also shot at me. I was hit in the wrist while other bullets shattered the windows and one was embedded in the car-seat.

The rivalry between the Crimson League and the Salot gangs featured prominently in *DRUM* in the 1950s. In 1955 *DRUM* devoted a special four-part exposé on the feud between the Salots and the Crimson League over consecutive issues, that disseminated this story of this local gang feud nationally and internationally. The Salots' feud with the Crimson League was mainly over legal and 'pirate' taxis operating out of Grey Street, and territorial rights over the area. If a single Salot taxi was in the rank at a given time, then no other taxi was allowed to take passengers. If it did then both the taxi owner and the passenger would be beaten up:



A photo from 1952 that accompanied the feature *Durban Exposed*.



Rank for 5 Taxis, Cnr Grey & Victoria Streets, Durban 1958. Photo by Kally.

> The League blocked us on all sides, even when we least expected them. Like the time my younger brother, Essop, had his car booked by an Indian boxer to take him to Cape Town for a fight. At the last minute the boxer walked out on us and hired a Crimson League car … Essop gave him the beating of his life that I don't think he's forgotten yet. (*DRUM* April 1955:67)

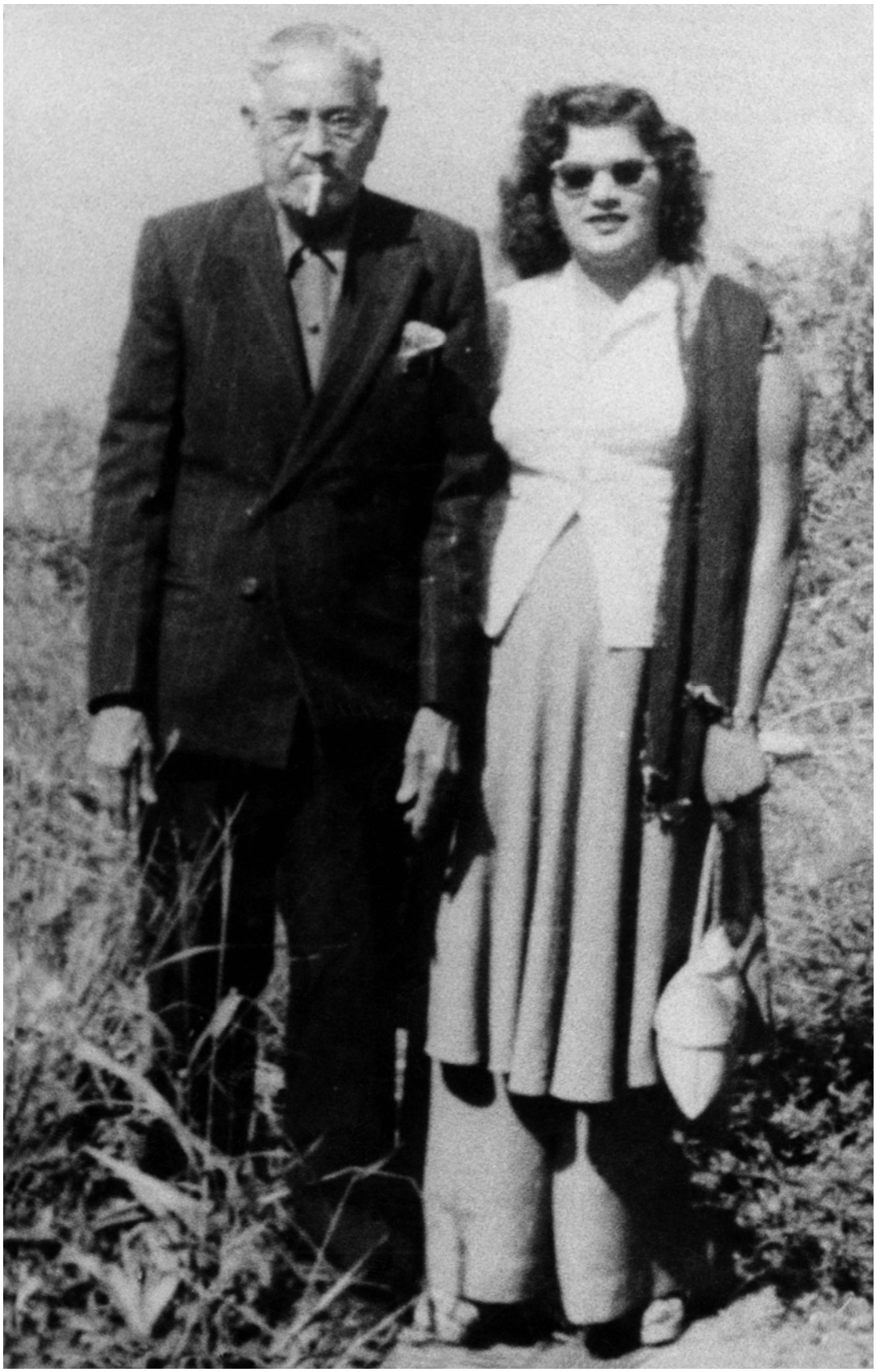
Giving evidence in a sworn statement at the inquest after Lighty Salot's death, Detective-Sergeant Alexander Hendrie commented that the Salot Gang terrorised the 'Indian' community in Overport and the Durban Central Asiatic areas, "by means of assault, extracting protection monies and extortion" (*DRUM*, February 1955:55). For Lighty – the second son of 'Old Man' of Moosa Salot, who took over the gang after his elder brother Chappie was found dead in a pool of blood (*DRUM*, January 1955:49) – the taxi business was used as a front for other activities that included dagga smuggling, gambling and shop-breaking. The "protection racket" was a lucrative money-spinner for gangsters. A large number of big businessmen in the heart of Durban were frequently visited by gangsters who demanded fixed sums of money under conviction of various threats (*DRUM*, December 1960:54). The younger step-brother, Dawood, ruled the gang after Lighty was murdered – allegedly by members of the Crimson League gang – and later his sister, B.B. Salot, was notorious as gang leader in Overport in the 1970s.

Initially formed as a vigilante gang by businessmen who were tired of being exploited by other gangs, the Crimson League was reputed to have a membership of three hundred, made up of mainly business and working class 'Indian' males (*DRUM*, February 1955:55). Hassim (2001:179) also hints at the widespread control the mob and its junior wing, the

Victorians, exercised over the entire Casbah and beyond, with "blatant disregard for the law".

The Crimson League and Salots were only part of the focus on the 'Indian' underworld. Headlines that blurted out "Durban Exposed", "Gang War Crisis!", "Terror comes to Pretoria", "My Life in the Underworld", "The Howick Falls Murder", and "The Dramatic Trial of Seven Men" are a just a few which focused on the daily realities of gangland. These features centred on tough guys like Pataan, who was described as being "as strong as an ox" (*DRUM*, June 1958:74). A similar feature over consecutive months portrayed Shafey Bux, who described himself as "a gunman, a drug pedlar, a brothel keeper, a thief" (*DRUM*, February 1959:22), who was supposedly saved from a life of crime by religion. Puther Hoosein Khan, who was pinned for the Howick Fall's murder, was involved in one of the most brutal killings of the fifties when he murdered Passing Show (*DRUM*, June 1954:40). Old Man Kajee, who ruled the underworld in Johannesburg had four bullets pass through his leg while his henchman, German West, was viciously chopped to death in an open battle on the streets of Johannesburg (*DRUM*, May, 1953:8); and "Trigger Happy Tommy Nair", also described as a "heartless thug", who never hesitated in pulling the trigger, was another 'Indian' gangster written about in the magazine (*DRUM*, February 1956:63). Another figure to emerge in Durban, who was feared by individuals in both the Salot and the Crimson League gangs, was Michael John, a promising "writer turned gangster" who also made it to the pages of *DRUM* (March 1956:57) in the feature 'Death of a Bad Man':

> Mike, a tall, always smartly dressed young Indian man with a cluster of wavy hair neatly combed back. Mike had something of 'Knock on any



‘Old Man’ Salot and his gangster daughter ‘BB’ Salot, 1952



The notorious gangster ‘Pataan’ in Victoria Street in 1958. Photo by Kally.

> door' Nick Romano about him–'live fast, die young and have a good looking corpse'…

It took seven men, with alleged links to the Crimson League, to kill him when they surprised him at his home one evening with tomahawks, guns, irons and knives. The Michael John case received vast coverage in *DRUM*, and was fervently followed by the public. The seven accused from the Crimson League were eventually acquitted for insufficient evidence against them.

But it was Sheriff Khan that emerged from the 'Indian underworld' as the most notorious and complex underworld figure of them all.

Sheriff Khan

DRUM (October 1952:6) reported that Khan was physically strong, and someone who revelled in street and gang fights. He was also reported to have not depended on his bodyguards in times of trouble, and was described as "an expert gunman who handled a knife with great skill". He was further given the title of "South Africa's Al Capone" for his reputed control over the Johannesburg underworld. Although there is no direct reference to Khan in his book, it was probably the gangster that Anthony Sampson (2005:80), *DRUM* editor from 1951-1954, was referring to when he mentioned "the Sheikh".

Khan was the gangster *DRUM* most loved to feature in profiles and interviews that spanned the fifties. The other favourite was the leader of the Americans gang, known as 'Kortboy' because of his height. *DRUM* (October, 1952:6) ran the story 'The Sensational Story of a Master Crook', while the 35-year-old was serving a nine year jail term for shop-breaking.

Other features on Khan ran headlines such as "Sheriff Khan smuggled liquor from Natal" (August 1956: 69), "Khan's Last Job" (September 1956:77), and numerous gangland reports implicated or referred to the mobster.

Khan's gang also specialised in housebreaking, shop-breaking, dagga smuggling and extortion. In addition he owned a gambling school in Ferreirastown, and also collected regular protection fees from other gambling schools. The gangster had extensive national networks and was known to drive down to Durban, at very short notice, with cars filled with vicious criminals to 'take care of' other gangs who threatened his family there.[35] Khan's gang came into formation with several members of the Durban gang who had been contracted by extorted 'Indian' businessmen in Johannesburg, which *DRUM* reported on in October 1952. Bailey (1987:209) recalls the emergence of the Sheriff Khan gang:

> In the summer of 1950 gang warfare broke out in Johannesburg. The 'Y' gang, run by 'Old Man Y' had terrorised Indian businessmen for over fifteen years. The businessmen imported the twelve-strong 'Durban' gang, led by a Muslim Indian, to eliminate the 'Y' gang. They came armed with knives, axes, guns and bicycle chains and attacked the 'Y' gang openly on the streets of Johannesburg. Sheriff, who had just been released from jail, saw a splendid opportunity to regain power. With the majority of the 'Durban' gang and the survivors of the 'Y' gang the terrifyingly powerful Sheriff Khan organisation came into being.

35 DRUM (August 1956:69) reported: "Just as he finished his sermon to me, the phone rang. It was a call from Durban. As Sheriff listened in, I could see the look of anger on his face. Still listening, he pushed his hat to the back of his head. The red light was on! I knew there was trouble some place. Sheriff did all the listening and the only thing we heard him say was 'I'm coming.' He banged the receiver down and slumped on the chair. He told us that his brother was attacked with an axe at the Victoria Street bus rank in Durban, and that we were going down to bash up the Durban Gang once and for all. Two cars set off from Johannesburg loaded with vicious criminals and our destination was Durban …"



Sheriff Khan photographed by Alf Kumalo in 1952.

Contrary to an American scientist's study that supposedly proved that gangsters and *tsotsis*[36] have a low intelligence, as was reported in *DRUM*, Sampson (2005:79) explains that they were not as stupid as the study portrayed them to be. He clarified that within the context of apartheid, and the humiliation experienced by blacks through whites in the cities, (where blacks had to produce passes after hours, where gambling, shebeens, and gangster films were accessible to all, but where "libraries, decent houses, open spaces, travel abroad, were for Europeans only") this was an ingenious way of outwitting the system:

> To some extent the *tsotsis* were the African aristocracy. They not only earned more money, and led a more comfortable life, but they were often in the first place more lively and intelligent than their law-abiding brothers…The legal opportunities for an ambitious young African were small, and the rewards of crime were big. You could land up in jail for lack of a pass and to be called a 'criminal' was no great insult.

Bloke Modisane, *DRUM* writer and author of Blame Me on History, indicates that his heroes were seldom, if ever, on the right side of the law. His *tsotsis* were glamorised in flashy clothes and fast cars:

> Like me, my characters were invested with a contempt for the law, their efforts were directed towards a flaunting of the law; my heroes were social maladjusts in a society where heroism is measured by acts of defiance against law and order… (Chapman 2001:205)

36 The South African term is used to describe someone who is generally up to no good, someone who is a petty criminal involved in pick-pocketing, housebreaking and shoplifting.

Chapman (ibid) observes a different set of values operating amongst non-whites "where a substantial proportion of the population did not subscribe to the norms imposed upon it by whites." Viewed in this light Khan could be viewed as something of a champion, rebelling against the laws of apartheid. Henry Xhumalo (*DRUM*: November 1951) also reported that many a *tsotsi*, after a few years of housebreaking or shoplifting, retired quietly from crime to set up respectable homes, with enough money to marry and have children. The lines between the law-abiding or 'respectable' black citizen and the *tsotsi* in the context of apartheid were ambiguous and ask for more complex readings of characters such as Sheriff Khan, especially considering the description of him that appeared in *DRUM* (October 1952:6):

> …outside his profession, Khan is said to have behaved like a gentleman. A social worker who once interviewed him told me that she could not have hoped to have met 'a finer gentleman.' A census collector was equally eloquent. A boxing promoter said: 'Khan was a great guy. All I can say is that he would have made an excellent boxer if he wanted.' But the ruthlessly brutal and he-mannish gangster and 'nice gentleman' who was the undisputed king of South Africa's underworld was a henpecked husband. His legal wife, a former Miss Miriam Singh of Durban, whose mother was European and father Indian, is said to have virtually pushed the tough man around.

Defying many laws, Khan further operated a multiracial gang[37] of Muslim and Tamil 'Indians', 'Malays', 'Africans' and whites that one assumes went with the underworld territory as was the case with the Salots. The gang sometimes went as far as collaborating with white policemen who were implicated in robberies with Khan:

> The judge found Lindvelt guilty of parking a Flying Squad car (of which he was crew commander) in Troye Street … for the protection of Indians and Africans involved in the case, and of escorting out of the 'danger zone' one of the vans which remove the loot. This is believed to be one of the most ingeniously conceived and brazenly executed burglaries recorded in South African crime… (*DRUM* October 1952:35)

In Khan we find a tough, streetwise criminal, the underworld gang-leader whose crew constitutes of a membership made up of strongmen from all sectors of society. But it is surprising that characters such as Khan are not more widely known. While I have only elaborated on Khan, other characters akin to Michael John, Lighty Salot, Pataan, Shafey Bux, Tommy Nair, and the members of these various gangs reveal a substantial physical and aggressive 'Indian' masculinity that is in stark contrast to the images of the weak, subordinate indentured labourers in the late nineteenth century. They conjure a world of floating masculine identities, ones that are not fixed and universally true at all times for all people (Bailey and Hall 1990:382). This would assert then that not all 'Indians' have an underlying 'Indian' identity, which ask to reconsider stereotypical notions of the passive and fragile 'Indian'.

37 DRUM October 1952 reported that: "Khan was the 'Strong Man' in his outfit while another Indian Moslem was the 'Brain.' In his last burglary Khan was involved with four others: Mishack Sibise and Enoch Zuma, Africans; Mohamed Saloojee Loonat, Indian; and Vincent Forstman, and Albert Jacobus Lintveld, Europeans."

Poverty

While the many crime and gangster stories in *DRUM* reveal many aspects of 'Indian' masculinity that have not been remarked upon in other literature from that time, it highlights a deeper social problem within the community: that of poverty. A few vivid examples stand out from the fifties that highlight poverty as an outcome of unemployment and the reasons why many turned to gangsterism and prostitution in the 'Indian' community to make ends meet.

'Durban Exposed' (*DRUM*, July 1952:13-17) looked at gambling, extortion, brothels and prostitution in the "city with two faces". It revealed that behind the picture of affluence and stylish nightclubs, "there are areas like the Indian Jacobs and Magazine Barracks slums: at least as bad as Cato Manor, where three quarters of the Indian population live below the bread line in extremes of poverty".

G.R. Naidoo (*DRUM*, June 1959:43-47) focused on the larger issue of unemployment and poverty via the Pillay family, eking out an existence in their one room shack in Clairwood South. Naidoo described the only room, used as a bedroom, kitchen, dining room, and a living room, that housed Mr Pillay, his wife, his mother, and his five daughters, aged four to nineteen. The journalist spent the day with Mr Pillay, who would earn a few pennies by selling old newspapers. Mr Pillay was retrenched from his job of twenty years in the textile industry and had been unemployed for two years. His wife and eldest daughter kept the food on the table by working as domestics in other homes in the area. The large unemployment figures quoted were depicted as part of a nationwide crisis, with Durban the

worst hit among the cities. The Pillay situation was reported to be so dire that Mr Pillay would stay away from home each day in order to save on food:

> Everyday – if he can find the time and the energy after walking miles for jobs – Mr. Pillay ends up in his trade union office. First of all, if he stayed at home all day, it would mean one more mouth to feed. Then, he can get an occasional cup of tea for free at the union office. 'I live on that tea,' Mr. Pillay told me. And he confided, also, that sometimes the trade union secretary gives him a couple of shillings for food.

This revelation of poor 'Indians' was further revealed when Mr DRUM (Henry Xhumalo) visited the sugar cane farms in Natal. The exposé proceeded in the tradition of the Bethal story, where Mr DRUM disguised himself as a worker in order to get the inside story on the maltreatment of black workers by a white farmer. The story was an unprecedented hit that dramatically boosted sales and increased its black readership many times over.

The investigation into the sugar farms in Natal was no doubt to reveal *DRUM*'s sensitivity to the 'Indian' community and to show *DRUM* to be a non-racial magazine covering all communities equally, in the process of which also winning over more 'Indian' readers (Sampson 2005:36). This feature followed the trend of the investigations into the Cape vineyards 'tot' system, where 'Coloured' workers were paid in alcohol produced on the farms, encouraging alcohol dependency, and the Bethal story that revealed the exploitation of 'African' workers on potato farms. In Natal, Mr DRUM discovered families living in appalling conditions of poverty, where hundreds of 'Indian' children, some of whom were



Mr Pillay with his daughter outside their home in Cato Manor in 1959. Photo by G. R. Naidoo.



Children working on the sugar farms of Natal, 1957.



An ‘Indian’ family working and living on a sugar estate in Natal, 1957.



Children at work on a sugar farm in 1957.

not yet ten years old, were employed doing adult work for a fraction of the pay (*DRUM*, March 1957:51).

The example of eleven-year-old Ganas Kistensamy illustrates a young boy who worked from seven in the morning until three in the afternoon, six days a week, in order to supplement the family income, "Working in the fields is very hard, but I have to work as my father is poor. My brother is at school and my wages help the family."

The investigation further revealed a 'no work no pay' arrangement, and on rainy days children could only leave the fields when they were wet to the skin. Mr Venketas revealed the dilemma he faced: on the one hand he wanted to educate his daughter, Sheila, but on the other he had no money to clothe and feed her so that she might go to school. Her fate was already sealed to working the fields, where she was already employed.

A series of photographs on the exhibition corroborate the scenes of young boys and girls on their way to work on the farms, carrying tools and food parcels wrapped in cloth. Tattered clothes and unkempt appearances reveal the hopeless economic situation of a family, with a number of children, who live and work on a farm. This image recalls some of the harsh accounts of indentured labourers in the nineteenth century. The *DRUM* depiction reveals the continued dependence by a large number of 'Indian' families on their jobs on the sugar farms, many generations after their arrival from India to work on the sugar estates. The further entrenchment of their young children in that way of life ensured that the cycle of poverty would continue for yet another generation.

Poverty was also listed as the reason many ‘Indian’ women, from all class backgrounds, turned to prostitution in Durban, a far step from their strong moral traditions. The spotlight on ‘Indian’ women in bars commented on the links between prostitution and poverty through the exposé entitled ‘Indian Women Take to Booze!’ (*DRUM*, May 1957:37) As well as the fact that some ‘Indian’ women were seen in bars from sunrise to sunset, the article reported that some ‘Indian’ women picked up white men in bars and later robbed them of their money, with the assistance of a gang of thugs.

The main photograph accompanying the article revealed what appears to be a domestic scene consisting of a living room, with a few small round tables and couches following along the edge of the wall. A few ‘Indian’ women are seated on these couches with two on the left along the one wall, and another facing the camera at right angles to them at the corner. A middle aged ‘Indian’ man dressed in a suit sits adjacent to her at the corner on the same side as the other two women, and between her and the other two. Another younger ‘Indian’ man on the extreme right of the picture seems startled by the photographer and is caught turning towards the camera with an anxious expression. A few bottles of beer sit on the table near the couple at the corner, and the woman drinks the alcohol from a small glass. She is dressed in a floral dress, while the other two women seem much older and are dressed in traditional saris. The picture would appear very normal, except for the startling contradiction of older ‘Indian’ women, the very notion of tradition, old-fashioned customs and teachers of tradition, sitting in a bar in an urban setting drinking with men as equals. It is this aspect that shocks convention and requires and second look. The power of the photograph brings home an alternative depiction of ‘Indian’ women to the traditional one we are used to seeing in the description of the ‘Indian’ master narrative.



‘Indian’ women in bars, 1957.

The article discloses that three bars catering for 'Indian' women around the Point and Dock areas seemed to be especially popular, and it is there that women also made contact with visiting seamen from the ships. Prostitution levels were reported as being very high and in combination with their dependency on alcohol, it increasingly led to situations where drunken women openly 'sold' their bodies. The piece further reported that the women left home for a variety of reasons, citing poverty along with social problems with husbands and parents, as the primary reasons:

> The majority of children from broken homes follow in the mother's footsteps. Girls become liquor addicts and boys enter other fields of vice like theft and robbery. Such fellows usually end up as confirmed gangsters.

This profile on the underworld of 'Indian' women, as related in the article 'Durban Exposed' (*DRUM*, July 1952:16), which revealed that 'Indian' women were a regular feature in brothels and prostitution in Durban, is a very different image of the conservative 'Indian' woman generally shown. What this does indicate is that women took their fate into their own hands, some by rejecting the oppressive families in which they lived, others by being self dependent where their profession was seen as a sincere way to make a living as reported in *DRUM* (July, 1952:16):

> The girls are mostly victims of poverty and look upon their trade as a honest way of earning a living. I spoke to one of them who told me: 'I see nothing shameful about it. I like it because of the pleasure I get and because of the money I earn from it. I might otherwise have to starve.'

The open response to enjoying sex while earning a living from it is in stark contrast to the image of partners being arranged according to marriage and caste. Meer (1969:85) quoted figures indicating that sixty-four percent of 'Indians' in Durban were living below the poverty datum line, and over twenty-eight percent just above it, in areas like Springfield, Clare Estate, Merebank, Clairwood, Newlands, Cato Manor and Chatsworth, according to a 1960 census. These figures tell of very different economic realities against the picture of the affluent 'Indian' that tended to dominate public perception at the time.

The Modern 'Indian' Woman

The photographs of Nirmala Dayal, profiled in *DRUM* (April 1955) as South Africa's first 'Indian' film star, and film producer of Nirmala Productions, were typical of the exotic glamorisation of other 'Indian' women depicted in *DRUM*. Dayal was the lead in *Kahan hai Manzil* (*Whither be my Destiny*), reported to have been the first full-length Indian film made outside India, which was completed in 1954 at a cost of £8000 (DRUM, April 1955:27).

The representation of 'Indian' women in *DRUM* offered up many contradictory and ambiguous presentations. Several features depicted a modern, stylish, fashion conscious woman who asserted her independence and excelled in her chosen profession, while others conformed to portraying the women as objects of male fantasy.

In February 1958 *DRUM* ran a feature titled 'Meet Durban's Miss Modern'. The article addressed the issue of the changing influences affecting 'Indian' women, at a time when

blacks all over the country, from Sophiatown to District Six, were shedding old traditions in favour of modern western influences. 'Indian' women were pictured in bathing costumes, wearing trendy modern outfits in jazz clubs, dance halls and at socials. The article opened up public debate on 'Indian' women.

The piece inspired the Johannesburg *DRUM* office to later do a similar focus on "Modern African Women", in March 1958. This is very enlightening in that it demonstrates the extent to which the Durban office, under G.R. Naidoo, had control over what emerged from the Durban bureau, and that this office influenced the main office in Johannesburg through its own features. *DRUM* had tended to depict women as "fickle temptresses, shebeen queens or models of dull domesticity" (Chapman 2001:225), but G.R. Naidoo inspired a focus on modern black women in Durban and Johannesburg.

One of the surprising findings in the initial article by photojournalist G.R. Naidoo (*DRUM*, 1958 March:23) was that 'Indian' women were breaking away from age-old customs of arranged marriages, and were choosing partners themselves rather than being passive recipients of their parents choice, "It's time parents were told that girls want to be able to choose their own husbands. A girl has to live with her husband all her life, so she ought to have a say in who he is."

All were not in favour of the changes taking place. Mr V.C. Naynah Rajh, a marriage officer and social worker in Durban, was not in favour of these new influences which he listed as also contributing to prostitution among Indian women:

> Dancing brings women to men physically. This is prohibited in an Indian upbringing. Bathing costumes? A woman who dresses this way in public must realise she is exciting animal instincts in man. This is absolutely disgusting.

G.R. Naidoo on the other hand, was one of many who seemed to be all for the new changes symbolised by the bikini.[38] And most of the women interviewed were in favour of the changes, as it gave them a greater sense of independence and freedom. The new generation of independent, professional women contributed incomes to their families, and inspired a new-found respect in the community.

The issue was followed up two years later under the heading 'Indian Women: It's Time for Freedom!' in *DRUM* (June 1960:50-51). G.R. Naidoo again covered the issue, and photographed symbols of emancipated 'Indian' women whose new-found status was characterised by education and the ability to compete as equals. For some, like high fashion expert, Yvette Gengan, this was reflected in an independent and deliberate choice in dress. In addition, Devi Bhugwan attributed as a factor the encouragement women received from their "menfolk". But photographer Priscilla Moodley countered this by saying that it was precisely because of 'Indian' men that it had taken women so long to get to that point of liberation. And Ms Sharma Singh, sportswoman of the year – captured in an active sporting shot – commented on the increased number of 'Indian' girls taking part in competitive sport, where "the days when Indian women remained in the home are now something of the past".

38 DRUM East Africa (March, 1958:20) read: "Meet Miss 1958. Meet the Miss Who's Rebelled. Or maybe at the beach. Bathing costume. Maybe a bikini. Salt water running over smiling healthy cheeks. A glint in her eyes, and sharp retorts to the guys who get too fresh. HORROR! Say the old folks. HOORAY! We say."

The article must have evoked a tremendous response as it was followed by another in the next edition titled, 'They are all worked up about Indian Women' (*DRUM*, July 1960:43), which focused on men's views on the issue. One student, Thumba Pillay, remarked: "Given the opportunity they would go places in the modern world." Sonny Moodley, a soccer player, was also all for the changes:

> …Socially they have advanced beyond description and in the sporting field they have made great progress. Those who criticise the girls of today for being out-of-date, simply show they are still living in the past themselves.

The article juxtaposed archival images of traditional 'Indian' women with big families against contemporary images of empowered women from the community, emphasising the strides that women had made in emancipating themselves from old fashioned ideas where they have primarily been responsible for producing children. One of the reasons for this change in mindset was listed to be the breakdown of the joint-family system, where the mother-in-law was boss:

> In the majority of cases she [the mother-in-law] was uneducated and full of old-fashioned ideas. She dictated terms to her sons and their wives and in some homes, she had the right to say whether her son could even take his wife out. The system had broken down and all of the taboos associated with it seem to be fast disappearing.



Photographer Priscilla Moodley, 1960. Photo by G. R. Naidoo



An ‘Indian’ woman with her moped, 1950s.

This image of the mother-in-law is in itself an interesting one and runs counter to the image of the docile 'Indian' woman. *DRUM* (August, 1960:66) concluded the focus on 'Indian' women with the third consecutive story in as many months, under the banner, 'Nothing is for "Men Only" Now', which focused on women who had proved themselves in male dominated professions, including mechanics, watchmakers, transport owners, and machine operators, giving a new angle to the pressing issues of the day. These articles inspired by G.R. Naidoo were a contemporary reflection of changing attitudes and the effective influence of modernity, which challenged older conventional representations of traditional 'Indian' women.

Amaranee Naidoo

While many 'Indian' women were challenging conventions in their homes and in society, there was one woman who rode a motorcycle perpendicular to the floor at very high speeds, on the "Wall of Death". The profile of the stunt rider in *DRUM* (October 1957:19) revealed that Amaranee Naidoo had a strict upbringing and never really imagined she would eventually be a stunt rider until, at the age of seventeen, she saw Tommy Chetty performing his stunts with a motorcycle in Durban. It was then that she decided that this was what she wanted to do, no matter the risk, and against the advice of her parents. She joined Chetty's stunt act on the "Wall of Death", first riding pillion and later riding solo "after having learnt the hard way–19 spills and lots of blood during the first two weeks of training".

An article entitled 'Where Defying Death and Gravity, Too, Is All in a Day's Work'[39] that appeared in the *New York Times*, showed American Samantha Morgan performing a similar stunt in 2006 that helps us better understand the enormity of the task and severity of the risks involved:

> The Wall of Death motordrome is a nine-meter movable circle. It is 4, 5 meters tall and looks like an old-fashioned wooden tank or silo, and within that circle, motorcycle riders seem to defy both the laws of physics and common sense. They ride a couple of loops around the arena until they are going fast enough to make their bikes cling to the wall. They don't wear helmets, because the G-force would exert such a pull on the helmets that it would be impossible to hold up their heads.

The vision of an 'Indian' woman dicing with death in the 1950s is even more astonishing than the image of the emancipated American daredevil woman in The *New York Times* in 2006. Amaranee appeared in *DRUM* throughout the 1950s and was photographed around the country as she toured with Tommy Chetty on the travelling "Wall of Death". She is pictured in 1952 riding pillion on Tommy's bike and later riding solo alongside on her own bike in 1957.

The Wall of Death image from 1957 reveals the intense concentration of Tommy and Amaranee in action on a death-defying stunt. Both riders are captured on their bikes on the wall, glamorously outfitted in their shiny black daredevil uniforms with white trims, which capture attention against the gritty wooden panels of the stunt wall. Chetty's eyes are

39 'Where Defying Death and Gravity, Too, Is All in a Day's Work' by Jim Robbins New York Times articles selected for the Sunday Times. Sunday, September 3, 2006.

focused on the curve ahead, his teeth clenched in determination, while Amaranee coolly rides her own motorbike lower down the inclined wall.

The profile of Amaranee in *DRUM* shows other photographs of her as a modest young woman, a distinct contrast from those of her on the wall. The confident heroine is also shown signing photographs for adoring young fans, after her great feats, that look up to her as a unique role model of adventure and freewill. A picture of the traditional 'Indian' girl next door, she was described as:

> A shy and attractive girl who was at one time too nervous to ride a bicycle has won fame throughout Natal by her daring escapades on the Wall of Death. And while other girls of her age are wondering who their next 'date' will be, she often wonders if she will be alive for another 'date.'

The *DRUM* photographs provide evidence of this extraordinary humble but self-assured woman who challenged not only conventional images of 'Indian' women, but of all women at the time, and even of those today. They further hint at other bohemian 'Indian' lifestyles that might have existed at the time.

A browse through copies of *DRUM* of the 1950s reveals other images of emancipated 'Indian' women playing leading roles in society. Dr K. Goonam was seen to be at the forefront of politics (*DRUM* March 1959:48), and a young Fatima Meer was often shown juggling the roles of motherhood, politics and academia (*DRUM* June 1960:26), while Ansuyah Singh, the doctor and novelist of *Behold the Earth Mourns*, is shown in a photograph with her family (*DRUM*, December 1960:55). This spate of articles in *DRUM*



Amaranee with Tommy Chetty on the Wall of Death, 1952.



Amaranee in preparation before the Wall of Death, 1957. Photo by Kally.



Amaranee Naidoo with young fans after her stunt performance, 1957. Photo by Kally.

seemed to represent the shift that was occurring in the values of these newly empowered and educated 'Indian' professional woman, against the eastern customs that dictated a woman's place being at home, and which asserted that "an educated girl was a menace to society" (Henning 1993:168).

These images represent a whole spectrum of emancipated 'Indian' women, who liberated themselves long before modes dictated, and defied the passive objectivity of conventional depictions of 'Indian' women.

Elsewhere in the magazine 'Indian' women appeared as beauty queens and glamour models, revealing a more ambiguous depiction of such emancipation. The pin-up genre was intrinsic to *DRUM*, which often depicted glamorous black women in bathing costumes 'on the beach'. For the first time black women were represented in a magazine for their beauty and style in an artistic manner. But these photographs often blurred the lines between voyeuristic portrayal and glamour images of women. It was this ambiguity of the image, which often made the cover of *DRUM* that was its success. For the chosen model, her alluring depiction within *DRUM*'s pages, or on the cover, was to be the very picture of desire by hundreds of thousands of readers all over the continent. These pin-up women were objects of longing for many men, and the envy of many women.

Berger (1973:47) suggests that this kind of representation of women that is caused by the male creates an unequal power relationship between men and women that forces women to behave and view themselves in a certain light, "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves."



An ‘Indian’ glamour model from DRUM in the 1950s.



Rita Lazarus, Miss Durban 1960. Photo by Kally.

Here the representation of women creates a desire to imitate the imitation of reality. Avgikos (1983:340) The image of *Miss Durban* reveals one such glamour photograph of Rita Lazarus, shown to be the picture of femininity. Dressed in a one piece bathing suit with small patterned print, Lazarus embodies the picture of sensual exoticism from the east, typified by her long black hair. Miss Durban is captured at the beach, the delicate curves of her body revealed in profile, while her face is turned towards the lens. The depiction conforms to other *DRUM* pin-up pictures, in her confident return of the gaze to the viewer.

While the classy pin-up genre has generally been celebrated as one of the elements that made *DRUM* so distinctive, a more feminist psychoanalytic reading of similar images reveals the representation of these women subjects as passive objects for male consumption.

McGrath (1987:330) reads photographer Edward Weston's relationship to women as a subjection of women, where photo shoots were interrupted for intimate exchanges (as graphically revealed in Weston's dairy) between the photographer and the women being photographed. The act of photographing emphasises the unequal power relationship between the male gaze and the female subject in the *DRUM* pin-up model, where the female model is paraded as an object of male desire.

Writers and Photographers

There is no doubt that *DRUM* magazine gave expression to emerging black writers and photographers, who documented black life at the time. Xhumalo, Mphaphele, Themba, Lewis, Maimane and Nakasa are some of the names that made up the core of classic black literature in the country. Although he has never published a biography, nor has any collection of his works ever been put together; and in recognition that he has been completely dismissed in the acknowledgement of those who made a valuable contribution to early *DRUM*, I would like to add writer, editor, photographer, and Durban bureau chief, G.R. Naidoo, to that list. Naidoo was as competent a photographer as he was a writer, which is saying a lot, and together with Ranjith Kally, the two provided the bulk of the photographs that came from Durban during the first decade of National Party rule. As the work of photographers in other parts of the country – such as Schadeberg, Lionel Oostendorp, Ian Berry, Bob Gosani, Peter Magubane, Gopal Naransamy and Alf Kumalo – and in other parts of Africa – such as Salla Casset (Senegal), Seydou Keita (Mali) and Malik Sidibe (Mali) – employed narrative in depicting the African experience of the period, so do the photos of Naidoo and Kally in bringing home the complexities and ambiguities in reclaiming the identities and histories of the South African Indian.

G.R. Naidoo

DRUM's first black editor-in-chief in 1969, Naidoo worked for the magazine from 1954 until 1971, and the mention of his contribution by Enwezor (1996:271) is a rare one in the overall acknowledgment of the photojournalist, which is also reflective of the general neglect of the 'Indian' content in the re-representation of *DRUM*. Naidoo set up *DRUM*'s

office in Durban in the mid-fifties and headed the launch of *DRUM*'s East Africa edition in Kenya later in the decade.

As bureau chief in Durban, Naidoo covered most of the assignments, taking the pictures and writing the stories himself. Many features, such as the series related to the 'modern Indian woman' speak of the autonomy he enjoyed in relation to the commissioning of stories about the 'Indian' community in Durban. Naidoo brought to national and international attention the changes taking place in 'Indian' society in Durban, which reflected his sensitivity to women's issues long before it became the subject of much enquiry. Given the disproportionately small number of 'Indians' to other 'racial' groups in the country, Naidoo further articulated an 'Indian' presence, giving it visibility as a substantial and equally considered element of black South African culture.

Further evidence of this recognition of 'Indian' history as tangible to the broader black identity is contained in the serialised two-part-feature on the history of Indians in 1960, the centenary year of 'Indian' arrival in the country (*DRUM*, November 1960 and *DRUM*, December 1960). Not only did Naidoo use this feature to commemorate 'Indian' history and instill a sense of pride and self-respect among 'Indians' – a valuable survival tool in the face of the segregated laws which dehumanised blacks – but it gave other readers a more intimate understanding of the history of the 'Indian' in the country, and the hardships they faced. In this way Naidoo played an instrumental role in forming opinions among 'Indians' and 'non-Indians' alike.

He used his role in the international journal to create a greater understanding of the 'Indian' experience and a greater cooperation with 'Africans', especially in the wake of the



G. R. Naidoo – DRUM bureau chief in Durban, 1950s.

catastrophic 1949 riots that damaged relations between 'Indians' and 'Africans' in Natal. In '100 Year Saga of Indians in SA – Part II' (*DRUM*, December 1960:54) Naidoo quotes *African National Leader* to show the contribution of Indian activism in the formation of a united black political movement:

> Chief Luthuli once said, that probably the greatest contribution made to the non-white struggle in South Africa, has been by the Indian community who continually pressed for a wide united front of all non-whites and later a united front of all peoples who subscribed to the 'Congress policy.'

This feature is immensely significant in taking the history and achievements of a minority community to a national and international readership, recounting the struggles of the indentured labour class and showing the political contribution of Mohandas Gandhi in the early years of 'Indian' arrival. The feature further elaborated on the 'Indian' activism of the 1940s against the Asian Land Acts, firmly entrenching the idea of an 'Indian' existence in the country and as part of the broader continent.

From 1959, Naidoo also featured 'Indian Men that Earned Fame', in which he profiled a few legendary names of the early 'Indian' history. Among them he listed Parsee Rustomjee (*DRUM*, November 1959:88), a high profile and wealthy character who was on best terms with port officials in smuggling 'Indian' goods and spices into Durban, and who was also a close friend of Mohandas Gandhi; M.L. Sultan (*DRUM*, December 1959:63), who arrived as a fourteen-year-old boy in Durban in 1890, and worked his way up from a porter to a wealthy businessman, and who is said to have donated £200 000 to charity in his lifetime, £100 000 of which was donated to the formation of the M.L. Sultan Technical College; and

Ramdeen Singh (*DRUM* February 1960:48), who was one of the earliest 'Indian' outlaws of reputable strength and accomplished fighting skills.[40]

Naidoo's restoration of these stories offered alternatives to the monolithic and biased state versions of history depicted through 'Bantu Education' textbooks. It articulated early 'Indian' folklore, illustrating a range of figures – from merchants with political connections, to self made businessmen, to outlaws – which was disseminated to hundreds of thousands of readers on the continent, making it part of the transnational African imaginary.

Naidoo covered many of the momentous political events in *DRUM*, such as the Treason Trial, the Cato Manor Uprising, the Defiance Campaign, and the Passive Resistance Campaign, and in 1965 he was jailed for ninety-seven days for publishing a series of photographs critiquing the South African government (Enwezor 1996:271). His social and political consciousness ran deep. His background before photojournalism was in the trade unions of the felt and leather and the hairdressing industries. His sympathy for the working class and impoverished 'Indian' around him in Durban is revealed through features such as 'Men without Work' (*DRUM*, June 1959:47), in which he highlighted the plight of the poor and destitute among 'Indians' via his illustration of the Pillay family, discussed earlier.

This gave the small 'Indian' readership a sense of belonging and ownership, with stories emanating from their society being recorded by journalists and photographers from their

40 "Ramdeen Singh was only five-foot-six, but he was incredibly strong. When he bared his chest and twirled his handle-bar moustache, he instilled fear into the bravest. He was an accomplished fighter with the 'lathi' – a stick – having the reputation of being able to fight no fewer than ten strong men with it single-handed …" (DRUM February 1960:48)

community, and in touch with developments therein. This sense of self expression allowed for more intimate portrayals, which transgressed notions of the sacred, and revealed the intimacies of the private spheres of the population who made it to *DRUM*'s pages (Enwezor 1996:190).

Naidoo further recommended Lewis Nkosi and Nat Nakasa to the *DRUM* office in Johannesburg (Bailey 1987:81), from whence their exposure flourished into international careers. Both of these journalists went on to become part of the classic names of black literature in the country. Considering the enormous role that Naidoo played in *DRUM*, at a time when black journalists were a scarce commodity[41], it is surprising that Naidoo has only been mentioned as a passing reference amongst the reams of research produced on *DRUM* during that era. What made Naidoo special was his versatility, unlike many of the major *DRUM* contributors who tended to be either specialist writers or photographers, and which makes his absence in the articulation of the *DRUM* legend even more conspicuous by its absence.

I would further argue that Naidoo was much more than a photojournalist. He used his writing skills as a consciousness-raising tool on women's issues, on poverty, on politics, which the exposure that the magazine enjoyed and his independent voice in *DRUM* permitted. In his depiction of local stories, his close relationships with liberation political leaders and journalists from the *DRUM* office in Johannesburg, and his international exposure in setting up the *DRUM*'s East Africa edition in Kenya, Naidoo is another that

41 Sampson (1990:10): "…To many white secretaries or messengers who visited this multiracial enclave, it was an astonishing revelation that black men were able to type, to operate a telephone exchange, to take photographs – and even to engage visitors in lively repartee."



Boxer Louis Joshua with his manager Govender, 1956. Photo by G. R. Naidoo

recalls Appiah's (2006:xxi) ideal of the cosmopolitan values which are made up of a mixture of the local and the universal.

Photographers

Gosani, Schadeberg, Magubane, Kumalo all have photos included on the exhibition, 'The 'Indian' in *DRUM* in the 1950s', for a variety of reasons, which are discussed under the section on *Curatorial Notes*. But there other names from the 1950s in the accompanying exhibition that gain exposure alongside the great *DRUM* photographers of the era. Barney Desai's beautiful image of *Elijah "Ellis Brown" Mokone with boxing mascot Mohamed Shaik* in 1956 shows the muscular boxer going toe to toe with little Mohammed, son of promoter Tiger Shaik. But it is G.R. Naidoo and Ranjith Kally that emerge dominant in the representation of the 'Indian' by sheer quantity of photographs in the archives on the subject.

G.R. Naidoo's football photographs of the Sam China Cup and the interracial Federation soccer days recover a lost era of 'Indian' football. His depiction of 'Indian' women spans the range from the educated, professional and political, to the pin-up and glamour model. In addition to his social concerns, Naidoo also had an exceptional eye, as the photograph of the boxer, Louis Joshua leaning on the open door of the 1948 Buick attests to. "The Last of the Indian Champs", Joshua is dressed in a dark suit and his confident body language resembles a suave, stylish gangster. His manager, Govender, dressed in a lighter suit, is seated in the car with his feet on the ground and faces him, his body half in, half out of the car, with his arm leaning on the leather car seat. To the left, a modern apartment block rises towards the sky, its longitudinal windows emphasising its vertical aspiration against the level lines of the chrome studded car. The bold Las Vegas letters in the billboard advertisement, together with the Buick, recall Hollywood film culture and American roadhouses. The photograph is an

example of extraordinary composition and wonderful aesthetic coming together to transcend the documentary image, and reveals the diversity and range within his oeuvre.

Ranjith Kally

Kally too has an exceptional lens as the photos of Pumpy Naidoo, the Goodwill Lounge, Pataan, Miriam Makeba with Sonny Pillay, Rita Lazarus, Amaranee Naidoo, Papwa Sewgolum bear out. It is Kallys' portraits that speak most powerfully and directly to the viewer, ignoring the photographer's presence in the construction of the picture and "which penetrate the surface of appearances to probe the psychological states of their subjects as well as their environments" (Enwezor and Zaya 1996:185).

Kally's own story also reflects the hardships of the 'Indian' working class. Born in 1925 in Isipingo, Durban, Kally worked in a shoe factory from a very young age. It was during this time that he discovered the camera:

> While rummaging through the wares at a jumble sale in Isipingo I happened upon a small Kodak Postcard camera which I bought for six pence … I was consumed by my newly found interest in photography and spent almost all my free time pursuing the art form. (Riason Naidoo:2004)

Ranjith Kally was twenty-one when he made this important purchase, and one of the first pictures that he took with it was of his mother draped in a lightly coloured sari sifting through lentils placed on newspaper on the floor of their home. The photograph is a classic,

and was included in Kally's first solo exhibition at the Goodman Gallery in 2004.[42] While working at the shoe factory, Kally supplemented his income by photographing social events for *The Leader* newspaper on weekends:

> I remember doing my first enlargement in a makeshift darkroom in Plowright Lane, not far from *The Leader* offices in Pine Street [Durban]. We got under way at 8pm and at 4am we were cursing as the sun began rising, jeopardising our print…In the early days we had to envisage a whole host of diverse criteria before pressing the shutter. (Naidoo:2004)

Kally's introduction into photography and his self-taught approach showed his artistic eye in the early image of his mother from 1946. Another beautiful composition is dated one year earlier, and has all the trademarks of a professional photographer. It depicts two young girls climbing a path to their shack at the top of the hill. Dark swirling clouds gather above in contrast to the fixed land mass below. It creates a tremendous range of shapes and tones and shadows and captures the stormy mood of the moment. It also reveals that Kally was already an accomplished photographer from the mid-forties. In contrast Schadeberg (1987:7) reveals that in 1952 "the only Black photographers I found in Johannesburg were street photographers who set up makeshift studios near bus terminals taking portraits of people with wooden, black-clothed cameras."

Most depictions of the DRUM office that speak of the black photographers gaining in stature attribute this to Schadeberg's skills in training them in the art of photography at the Johannesburg office. Bob Gosani, who initially worked on the switchboard, became

42 See Annexure 1 on the coverage of Kally's photographic exhibitions, which commenced with the exhibition at the Goodman Gallery in 2004. The section on Curatorial Notes also expands on the discussion of Kally's late recognition since then.

Schadeberg's darkroom assistant before producing great pictures from about mid-1953 to become one of the great picture takers of *DRUM* (Schadeberg 1987:7). He is noted to be the first accomplished black photographer at the magazine, which is attributed to Schadeberg by Schadeberg. Peter Magubane followed, making his way to the *DRUM* darkroom, via first being *DRUM* driver and messenger in 1955 (Schadeberg 1987:7). And Schadeberg (1987:7) reinforces the point that the "informally trained" Ernest Cole, Alf Kumalo, Victor Xashimba, Gopal Naransamy and others all followed in stature only after gaining experience on the finer points in *DRUM*'s darkroom under his supervision.

What this depiction suggests is that most of the black photographers had little or no formal training, and only learnt their skills in the *DRUM* darkroom in Johannesburg. While Kally does not even feature in this acknowledgement, his artistic images, from as early as 1945, tell a different story in Durban. G.R. Naidoo too had already worked as a photojournalist for *Flick*, *Afrika*, and *Graphic* since 1950, before he came to *DRUM* (Enwezor 1996:271) in 1954, and this experience as a photojournalist allowed him a certain autonomy in running the Durban office.

Both Kally and Naidoo defy the depiction of the white hand leading the black subject, of the civilised teaching the uncivilised. Both were already experienced photographers when *DRUM* employed them, which further would have expected one to see them portrayed as leading role models in black photography. Kally's recent recognition has been due to personal efforts which gave rise to his visibility at prominent galleries. Others such as Naidoo, Naransamy, and Desai, among others around the country, have had limited exposure and been relatively anonymous. It is the challenge of the present to redress this oversight while the archives are still available and still make it possible to do so. The photographs in

this exhibition are only part of a selection of one important archive that can start to restore contributions and histories; but there remain many private collections and family albums that can also be used to demonstrate these complexities of repressed identities and contributions, to make the picture more whole.

Conclusion

The representation of *DRUM* recounted in this chapter reveals complex and ambiguous identities that give new insights into the 'Indian' experience beyond the conventional homogenous depictions of 'Indian' middle class affluence.

While early portrayals of 'Indian' politics in the nineteenth century were concerned with 'Indian' rights as British settlers, *DRUM* exposes 'Indian' political parties such as the Natal Indian Congress and the Transvaal Indian Congress as having actively engaged with other political bodies such as the African National Congress in the Defiance Campaign of 1952, where 'Indian' men, women and children demonstrated a vital role in resistance politics. The stories and images divulge that Yusuf Dadoo, Monty Naicker and Dr K. Goonam fought alongisde Albert Luthuli, Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo in Durban and Johannesburg, and were seen as important political voices to the broader black community.

Papwa Sewgolum's triumph at the Dutch Open in 1959 showed that blacks could succeed in spite of having underprivileged backgrounds and facilities, and his win endeared him to many blacks, who saw in him a figure of black resistance. The touching pictures of him being received by thousands at Curries Fountain on his arrival attest to his iconic status and

the importance of that win. This inclusive approach in black politics typified the decade and influenced many areas of social and cultural life that saw racial boundaries collapse and relationships form along the lines of personal interest.

The image of Sonny Pillay and Miriam Makeba also contests the representation of the 'Indian', where 'Indian' notions of romance and love are determined by caste and arranged marriages; and it goes further in providing another instance of Afro/Indo romantic associations that is not popularly known.

Ideas around 'Indian' masculinities were asserted in sports such as boxing and football, which often involved brutal encounters linked to the game, as was seen in football. These identities contest notions of the passive 'Indian' that has governed general portrayals. It also recovers legendary figures such as Links Padayachee, Matambu Marimutu and V.C. Moodley whose reputations were widely known around the country, and who were considered to have been among the best in the sport during the decade. These figures, as well as those in boxing, show a prolific 'Indian' presence in these sports generally associated with tough 'African' urban masculinities.

Linked to this was an 'Indian' underworld of gangsters, brothels and gambling dens that countered conventional representations of passive 'Indian' men and docile women. The numerous underworld figures, such as Pataan, Shafey Bux, Dawood Salot, Sheriff Khan, Old Man and B.B. Salot, featured on the exhibition, reveal tough street identities defined around survival and power through physical force and gangs. The abundant underworld culture was not excluded from interracial gangs and territorial fights, revealing the extensive proliferation of cross cultural and ethnic interaction.

The modern ‘Indian’ woman in Durban emerged in the late 1950s via a prominent survey in *DRUM*. The professional working woman took her place in society as an equal, defying her limited place in the home. She chose her own partners and dressed as she chose to, and was vividly articulated through images that responded to representations of traditional ‘Indian’ women. ‘Indian’ women in *DRUM* were depicted as emerging figures of emancipation, as well as figures of objectification in the pin-up model genre, which contested the earlier home-bound, family-oriented, and subservient depiction. This is observed through numerous examples of self-determined women who aspired to independent lives and achieved them, as demonstrated in the example of Amaranee Naidoo.

Unambiguous images of poverty from Clairwood South in Durban, and the dire conditions of children working on the sugar farms in Natal, revealed a side of the ‘Indian’ rarely depicted. The high unemployment and poor conditions of people led to the proliferation of gang cultures, gambling, prostitution, brothels and alcoholism which found plentiful depictions in *DRUM*. These other identities challenged ‘Indian’ societal taboos and common presentations of ‘Indians’ in official representations as conservative and submissive. They revealed instances of rebel cultures, for which the neat confines of society and the imposed laws provided new opportunities of challenge. These images of poverty challenge the homogenous presentation of the ‘Indian’ defined by the rich ‘Indian’ shopkeeper.

This melting pot environment that typified the decade, so influenced by political alliances formed across race and colour, influenced the diverse coverage of all black communities in *DRUM* by black journalists and photographers from different communities around the country. G.R. Naidoo and Ranjith Kally from the Durban office are the prolific recorders of

this history in the 1950s. Naidoo is a remarkable individual for his contribution and talents in both photography and the written word and used the space in *DRUM* not only to bring the sensational stories required to sell copies, but also to highlight pertinent social and political issues from Durban. His marginalisation in the subsequent rewriting of the *DRUM* story in the last decade or so is reflective of the general dismissal of the 'Indian' history contained in the magazine, that in reality provides a rich source of a more complex representation of the 'Indian' in South Africa in the fifties.

It is only when looking at the original *DRUM* copies and encountering so many diverse 'Indian' identities linked with other groups, along different sporting codes, political organisations, cultural interests, and underworld activities, that one gets an idea that the magazine wasn't just the images and stories of Sophiatown, but of spaces like Fietas, Newclare, Cato Manor, Victoria Street and District Six too. *DRUM* didn't speak exclusively of The Americans gang from Sophiatown, but covered the Salots and the Crimson League too. It did not exclusively focus on the notorious gangster Kortboy, but gave detailed portrayals of Sheriff Kahn throughout the 1950s. It meant that along with images of Miriam Makeba and Dolly Rathebe that transported the ideas of a black bohemian jazz, Sonny Pillay, Pumpy Naidoo and the Goodwill Lounge Jazz Club took notions of a cosmopolitan 'Indian' to Africans on the continent.

This re-reading of *DRUM*, with a focus on the 'Indian', thus offers new perceptions of 'Indians', of the histories and identities which counter many preconceived notions of them as conservative, insular, traditional, weak, passive and wealthy.

The *DRUM* depictions also reveal a vibrant, varied lived experience, the restoration of which helps us reconstruct images of a cosmopolitan life, such as those portrayed by the Goodwill Lounge. The accompanying touring exhibition of seventy images selected from *DRUM* will go some way towards restoring a memory and a dignity of a self-determined and complex image of the 'Indian', representations of which were repressed during the apartheid era and in the subsequent recovery of the *DRUM* archive, and gives new meaning to Appiah's notion of Africa as a multiple existence (Bell 1996:10).

CONCLUSION

This investigation has revealed much more than I had originally hoped for. The search for material that could show evidence of a different, more vibrant and complex lived 'Indian' existence in politics, sport, social life and even the underworld, has more than been fulfilled by the vast and rich archive contained in *DRUM*.

This visual and written store of black experience from 1951-1984 includes an invaluable archive of stories and photographs of the 'Indian'. The vastness of the material and the depth and diversity of the experiences and identities depicted therein, easily counter the limited

stereotypical notions of the 'Indian'. Aspects of these repressed identities have been vividly shown in the previous chapter.

The particular exotic cultural characteristics of the 'Indian' that were drawn upon in numerous portrayals of 'Indians' to indicate difference, as discussed in Chapter 1, seem to dissolve into a cosmopolitan fluidity, immersed in a national black identity of the time so poignantly depicted in *DRUM*. The role of photography proves vital in *DRUM* and integral to this exploration in demonstrating the traces of a more vibrant lived experience. The *DRUM* staffers knew the importance of the photograph in bringing the realities home to their readers. This recording of experience was far removed from the official white gaze and official representations of black life discussed earlier in this text.

The numerous readings of *DRUM* that perpetuate the idea of the magazine as an 'African' one, defy the intentions of Bailey and Sampson, who did not want the magazine to be seen as racist by only focusing on 'Africans'. These re-representations guilty of an 'African' bias do a grave injustice to the magazine that made a point of destroying racial barriers and opening up conversations across the continent. This one-sided representation of *DRUM* has restrained the potential of this valuable record of other black identities that is so useful in countering the depictions of them produced under apartheid. This intentional or unintentional misrepresentation of *DRUM* in South Africa as a solely 'African' magazine, has deviated research away from more complex readings of the 'Indian' and other black identities contained within it. This has effectively contributed to the effacing of the various other vibrant histories within the magazine in the restoration of a black memory post-1994, which serves to deny the complexity of the country that is broader than the black/ white divide.

This skewed portrayal refutes a multifaceted depiction of Africa too by subscribing to the colonialist views of the continent as a homogenous one.

This research and exhibition attempts not to make the same error. By revealing the diversity of the 'Indian' experience via *DRUM*, it not only seeks to challenge conventional portrayals of the 'Indian', it also reflects on the diversity in the country, which in turn reflects and counters homogenous impressions of the continent. I have stated at the outset that this is an exploration of the 'Indian' representation contained in *DRUM* to restore to public memory experiences of events that have been suppressed in the retelling of the 'Indian' story.

But is the selective reading of *DRUM*, which focuses on Sophiatown, indicative of naïve recordings by whites, based on subconscious confirmation of mythical European notions of a black continent? Or is it a case of selective personalities wanting to align themselves with the new order at the expense of other histories? Or are new hegemonies making the same mistakes as older ones, where the previously dominated 'African' memory of spaces now presides over other suppressed black memories, histories and identities?

Emerging out of a repressive and inhumane history of subjection, the making of public memory can still be a contested one in a democracy. In dealing with the field of countering hegemonic depictions, the intimate portrayal of a black sub-culture and contested identities of that culture can stress the plurality of blackness, the diversity of the country's histories, and the heterogeneity of the continent. In this space of new found freedom where the former subjugated people reclaim their sense of self and repossess their own histories, this may be assumed as a necessary process of healing.

This exploration into *DRUM* magazine, and the production of the accompanying exhibition, have revealed a brief moment of 'Indian' memory within a particular decade. The process of seeing more ambiguous and contradictory images of South African 'Indians' can begin. Dignity can start to be restored through reflections of a more emancipated and confident 'Indian' self. Cross-cultural conversations, despite having been officially repressed by the state, are revealed through pictures as an inevitable process of living in a multicultural context. The photographs speak loudly and confidently and provide material reference to memories jogged by tales recounted, where the distinction between mythology and reality becomes exceedingly blurred.

And in no way am I choosing to play a dispassionate role in it! The photographs and investigations into this 'Indian' experience do not speak to me purely in my role as a researcher or curator assembling images based purely on aesthetic criteria. The memories that these photographs evoke are necessary for healing and restoring a new found sense of self that can be publicly and proudly claimed for others to see.

The depiction of Runga Naidoo and Violet le Tange evoke for me memories of my parents following the Dukes Combo Band to various venues around Durban on Saturday evenings. The images of Curries Fountain in the exhibition recall many visits to the stadium in my youth, when I accompanied my father to watch Manning Rangers (for whom his brother Sivarungan played) and Berea football clubs in the 1970s. The physical fist fights with gangsters, street fighters and members of other football teams as recounted to me by my father and his brothers took place in the context of the local football clubs that they managed in Sea View. Some of their encounters at football grounds, especially in Overport, indicated deeper links that the football clubs had to gangs in Durban. My grand-uncle Thumbi Reddy

was a talented left-winger (and known for handling himself with his fists) of the Crimson League Football Club, which came into being at the very beginning of last century (discussed in Chapter 2 under football). The club had obvious links to the notorious Crimson League gang, which counted among its football players and supporters in its reputed three hundred working class gang members. Thumbi's wife Ruby was a close acquaintance of B.B. Salot, who lived near her in Overport, and who is depicted with her father 'Old Man' Salot in the exhibition. The portrayal of the tough underworld in the exhibition calls to mind my experience of growing up around Victoria Street, and reminds me of another of my father's brothers, Nithianundan. His tough street fighting abilities and close associations with Uncle Mac's *Stiles* gang, recalls a story related to me by my father of when the Crimson League gang cornered him and his brothers at their stall at the Victoria Street Indian Market in the 1960s after they had beaten up some of their gang members in Asherville but that is another story.

So these images are not only aesthetic and historic. I am deeply connected to these identities that are reflected and the memories that are evoked in the photographs, in which I see, as Said (1983:1088) says of Malek Alloula, 'instances of myself' and my own fragmented history in these pictures, and I suspect that I am not alone in this.

CURATORIAL NOTES FOR THE EXHIBITION:

The Indian in DRUM in the 1950s

These exhibition notes give some insight into the process of putting together the visual photographic exhibition related to this research report and outlines decisions regarding some of the photographs selected. This task was not an easy one considering that the images were not exhibition ready, and were chosen from the few hundred thousand unidentified and uncatalogued negatives from the 1950s in Baileys' African History Archive (BAHA), which houses the old *DRUM* archives. Various criteria were used to refine the many selections down to the final seventy images shown at the Old Fort, Constitution Hill, Johannesburg. These notes will assist in clarifying some of the intentions of the show and reveal some of

the criteria used. These notes also intend to provide insight into the processes of putting the exhibition together for public audiences beyond the confines of the university.

After discovering that *DRUM* contained such an immense archive of 'Indian' experience, I spent many hours reading articles from the original copies at Bailey's Archives. I considered the access I had to these originals to be quite a privileged one, and reading articles of events and lives recalled by stories I had heard was quite a cathartic process, especially since I had not encountered any visual or written evidence of it before. Once I had gone through all the copies from the 1950s, I had a keen idea of the content within *DRUM*, and of the important personalities and identities that could be useful to support my argument, and I set about looking at the negatives.

Looking at the Negatives

The negatives at BAHA were not labelled and unidentified and the only consistent aspect of the filing was that they were grouped by the year in which they were taken. Some negatives had additional information attached to them, such as the name of the photographer, but these were few and far between. Often I would have to cross check the images found in the negatives with the corresponding *DRUM* copies to get more information on photo credits, and confirmation of images as relating to certain stories.

What it meant was that for each year there would be approximately twenty files, each consisting of approximately one hundred inserted pages, and with each page containing around thirty negatives. This meant that to look at one year of negatives from *DRUM* in the archive, would mean going through tens of thousands of negatives for each year. The

negatives in the main spanned from 1952-1960, and I must have gone through a few hundred thousand negatives, at least. This also meant that if I was looking for a specific negative from a copy of March 1953, for instance, I would need to go through all the anonymous negatives from that year in search of that particular image; and then there was no definite guarantee of that image being in the archive, as some searches revealed. Indeed, many important images are not in the archive. I also had to learn very quickly to recognise the inverse of what an image looked like in print, and after looking at hundreds of thousands of negatives, this eventually came to be second nature. In many ways it was like looking for a few needles in many haystacks as I browsed through each and every negative from the 1950s in the *DRUM* archive.

Selection

My initial selection from negatives amounted to 133 images. These initial selections list a diversity images: of 'Indian' boys playing classical Indian instruments, to events that made the news, like the photograph of a 107-year-old 'Indian' woman shows the range of coverage of 'Indian' life in the DRUM archives. This selection includes images of football selectors discussing their final selection over tea at the football grounds in Stanger on the KwaZulu Natal north coast where I spent many of my school holidays. Images of the Asian/SA cricket tour of 1956; an 'Indian' dancer in classical pose; and negatives of 'Indian' wrestling were also on my original lists. Having not encountered much on 'Indian' life in the country previously, the initial urge was to show it all!

These inventories also included images of Fatima Meer and Alan Paton in prayer outside the Durban Jail; Syrub Singh and Rose Bloom outside court; and Miriam Makeba and Sonny Pillay together. But I had already shown these images in the exhibitions on Kally's work that

I had curated[43] during the course of my MA, and it was my intention not to repeat any of these.

At least seven or eight selections were made before arriving at the final exhibition which made it to Constitutional Hill. In the end, the final selection had to answer questions that related to the specific aims of the MA: it had to restore a popular 'Indian' memory through photography; it needed to demonstrate personalities and identities that challenged stereotypical depictions of the 'Indian'; and by way of attributing the photographs, it would also pay homage to unacknowledged 'Indian' photographers who contributed greatly to recording his history in *DRUM*. The intention was that the exhibition would further (indirectly) demonstrate that there was more to *DRUM* in the fifties than the depictions and accounts that focused on Sophiatown and the contributions by photographers and writers linked to the head office in Johannesburg. The richness of the history contained in the exhibition would need to imply that the 'Indian' in *DRUM*, and the vital contribution of its 'Indian' photographers had been overlooked.

Digitisation

The negatives had to be scanned and brought into a digital format. Many negatives were badly scratched and had to be digitally restored. The digitisation of the negatives by scanning was chosen over the manual printing process as it gave more flexibility to printing the images and easily transporting them. In the case of the exhibition needing to be shown at more than one venue at the same time, this created an additional advantage, where the digitised versions could easily be sent to the appropriate destination for printing. Manual

43 During the course of my MA I also curated the first exhibitions on the work of photographer Ranjith Kally. His first exhibition, at the age of 79, opened at the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg in April 2004, which was followed by a larger showing at the Durban Art Gallery later the same year. The exhibition also travelled to Mali, Austria, Spain and Reunion Islands. Kally's work has since 2004 been collected by public institutions and private collectors.

printing would not have allowed this flexibility, and would have restricted printing to the availability of the actual negatives. By having digital scans that were print ready the whole process would not need to be repeated, saving time and expenses. The copyright for the images rests with Bailey's African History Archives.

Restoring a Memory, challenging stereotypes and acknowledging contributions

The exhibition was put together to restore a small part of a communal, vibrant and lived 'Indian' experience that is lacking in South African popular culture. The image of Kisten Toplan at the funeral of the infamous suicide, where his five sisters hanged themselves, recalls one of the most startling news events from *DRUM* in the 1950s. In John Matshikisa's (2001:ix) recollection of *DRUM*, referred to in Chapter 1, the story still rings sharply in his mind in his recollection of the decade.

Sheriff Khan, Pataan, Shafey Bux, the murder of Michael John, the Salots and the Crimson League are names that I had often heard mentioned associated with the 'Indian' underworld of the time. 'Pumpy' Naidoo, the Goodwill Lounge, Sonny Pillay and ballroom dancers such as Runga Naidoo and Violet le Tange revealed new insights into Durban's lively nightlife, and showed the 'Indian' engaging in aspects of urban social life with others of different races as a normal consequence of living in the same spaces.

The research also revealed that Pumpy was a key figure in the discussion of Durban social circles and nightlife, and he is represented through three images on the exhibition. In one, the focus is on Tony Scott, the famous London-born, New York-based clarinet player, captured enthralling the crowds at the Goodwill Lounge – revealing the vibrant atmosphere of the place and its diverse racial audience, which lives up to the legendary reputation of the place.

Another picture focuses on Bud Shank and Jazz West Coast that were touring from the United States, showing off the glamour of 1950s American jazz stars at the Goodwill Lounge, who mingled with locals at the 'Indian' restaurant and jazz club. The last image is a portrait of Pumpy, showing the showbiz man in all his charisma and revealing aspects of his open and charitable nature.

The images of Benny Singh with Mckenzie, of Louis Joshua and Elijah 'Ellis Brown' Mokone with boxing mascot Mohamed Shaik illustrate the interracial world of boxing that was well supported and an integral part of sport in the 'Indian' community. Images from the Sam China Cup and the Federation League hint at the popularity of football, where Curries Fountain was home to the Durban football community. Within football, the Textiles Football Club reveal evidence of a multiracial team of 'Indians', 'Africans' and 'Coloureds' in 1957, when it was illegal to do so. The Durban Lifesavers Club and the Sonny Moodley Troupe show instances of other sporting achievements in the community, not generally associated with South African 'Indians'. All these images around sport start to evoke notions around 'Indian' masculinity, which has not been prominent in South African popular culture.

Portraits of photographer Priscilla Moodley and of Rita Lazarus (Miss Durban 1960) show more modern 'Indian' women. The exhibition also includes pictures of a woman on a moped, and a group of women out at a nightclub together. Amaranee Naidoo is also featured within the context of 'Indian' women on the exhibition. She is represented in this instance by photographs other than her better-known portraits, such as the one included on the Ranjith Kally exhibitions in which she is pictured riding the Wall of Death on her own Harley Davidson. The image appeared, among other places, on the cover of *Friday* in the *Mail &*

Guardian (April 16 – 22, 2004).[44] In order not to repeat the image in this exhibition, I had to look at other ways of showing Naidoo's defiant spirit and coverage in *DRUM* throughout the fifties and the three images that focus on her reveal different aspects of the rebel.

An earlier photograph from 1952 depicts her riding pillion with Tommy Chetty on the Wall of Death. It is interesting for having been first featured in *DRUM* in 1952, when Naidoo was only learning the ropes of the profession. As a key figure in the discussion around women, which questions the depiction of 'Indian' women as traditional and conservative, the images in the exhibition depict her as a professional stunt-rider, running through checks on her bike before the stunt. It also encourages comparisons with the 'modern' woman imaged on a moped, included on the exhibition: this beautiful woman, attired in a long, loose dress, sits on her bike with both legs to one side on a less threatening two-wheeler. The image of Naidoo on the other hand, shows her with her Harley Davidson, just before embarking on a death-defying stunt – a far cry from the notion of the 'Indian' woman whose sole function was to create a family and whose place was seen to be in the kitchen. The third image of Naidoo shows her signing autographs for young fans, an inspirational hero among the youth.

Other photographs of 'Indian' women on the exhibition reveal them in nightclubs, at dance halls and bars defying the many taboos normally imposed on and associated with them. The photograph of 'Indian' women in bars, for example, is contextualised in relation to the 'Indian' underworld of brothels and prostitution, even greater unmentionables. This is explained in Chapter 2 within a discussion around poverty, and the great number of impoverished 'Indians' are exemplified on the exhibition with the photograph of Mr Pillay, examining his worn out shoes, while his daughter, who is shy of the camera, looks on

44 See article entitled *Kally's open shutter* in *Mail & Guardian* (April 16-22 2004) in Annexure A, where the image appears on the cover.

helplessly from behind. Depictions of 'Indian' children working on the sugar farms capture the desperate situation of 'Indian' families locked into labour on farms over many generations, since indentured labour commenced in 1860. It is this link that is important in demonstrating that families that came from these disadvantaged conditions of indentured labour made up most of the 'Indian' population, which was predominantly poor. This fact is supported by statistics cited in Chapter 2 (pg 102), which reveal that most 'Indians' lived below the poverty datum line in 1960, in contrast to the image of the affluent 'Indian' vagrantly flouted. The few images that exist in *DRUM* of the Seine fishing community are also exhibited in this section as they were a poor community that lived solely off the sea.

This community, known as Seine netters, lived in houses on stilts near the harbour in Fynnlands, on the Bluff in Durban. There are many images among the *DRUM* negatives that show men, women and children living off their catches from the sea, and which recall an ancient link with the seas, that saw seamen from Gujerat, Cochin and Calicut on the east coast sail to the Persian Gulf and the east coast of Africa (Meer 1969:15). Two undated prints from the 1950s of Seine netters are included on the exhibition. One shows three elderly Seine fishermen seated on the ground, patiently and silently locked in concentration as they mend their fishing nets in preparation for the early morning haul, where one small tear in the net may mean a huge loss for the day.

The other image is a classic photograph and a personal favourite. A line of fisherman, dressed in dark shorts, with white collared shirts and hats, work in unison to pull in a small traditional boat onto shore. The handmade Seine boat contains the catch from nets a few hundred metres out to sea. The image brings to mind a depiction of the netters who were a constant source of fascination for many:



Seine fishermen on a Durban beach, 1950s.



Seine fishermen mend nets, 1950s.

> The seine netters have been going out after seasonal shoals for three generations now and they have become a constant source of interest and admiration, to those who frequent the Durban beaches. Visitors and locals watch and gasp as the fisherman cast their long nets expertly around the fish, suing brute force and the willing hands of onlookers to haul their wriggling silver catch ashore. (Phillips 1975:30)

The picture reveals the photographer's inherent sense of composition and form. Larger figures on the left of the photo lead the eye across the middle of the image, the perspective created by the ever-diminishing figures. Situated almost at the middle height of the photograph, a boat is located about three quarters to the right of the picture. In a separate perspective line of diminishing figures leading from bottom right of the photograph to the boat, two white children and their mother, whose figures are cut off by the right edge of the image, curiously watch the fishermen. Both racially separated lines – one of 'Indian' fishermen from the left, and the other of the white family on the right, separated by the sand of the beach – converge on the focal point, the boat. A white man, presumably the patriarch of the family, with his back to us, leans on the edge of the boat peering into it, and waiting in anticipation for his fresh catch of the day.

This fishing community that had lived in the bay from the earliest days of indentured labour (Freund 1995:34) in the mid nineteenth century were removed en masse to Havenside in Chatsworth in 1963 (during the enforcement of the Group Areas Act), 20km inland and away from the sea.

These photographs of the Seine fishermen reminds me of my grandfather's love of the sea and fish. He was an expert fisherman and the walls of his home were lined with rods of all sizes for the different weight of fish. One story recounted by my grand-aunt Saras speaks of him regularly taking his family out into the bay on Sundays on boats borrowed from his Seine fisherman friends. The old patriach loved the sea and always lived near the beach at South Coast Junction in the early 1950s and later under the Group Areas Act in Isipingo Beach. Said (1983:1088) refers to Algerian sociologist, Malek Alloula's work Le Harem Colonial, a study of early twentieth-century postcards and photographs of Algerian harem women in which Alloula "sees his own fragmented history in the pictures" and who is involved in the process of "recovery of a history hitherto either misrepresented or rendered invisible." The two photographs of Seine fishermen on the exhibition are as much homage to my grandfather and the memories of him as they are of that unique section of the 'Indian' community.

Peter Magubane's photograph of Yusuf Dadoo playing football was scanned from a print and not a negative, and remains one of the most memorable in recalling the great leader. *Political Footbal*l shows Dadoo in the unconventional setting, playing football, and was chosen to reveal a more personal side to the icon, albeit within the context of a football match between black political leaders. Dadoo and Naicker were two important figures from the 1950s and it was important decision to acknowledge the role that they, and other 'Indian' leaders, played in the struggle against apartheid. The image of Naicker shows him passionately addressing a crowd under the banner which printed the words 'Let Luthuli Speak'. With Naicker (NIC) and Luthuli (ANC) both from Natal, they shared many platforms together, addressing large crowds in the political campaigns of the decade as outlined in Chapter 2.

I have included an image of Naicker, Mandela and Dadoo coming out of court during a recess at the Treason Trial in Pretoria in 1958. The image reveals the close links between the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) during the 1940s and 1950s political campaigns, such as the 'Doctor's Pact' of 1947, The Defiance Campaign of 1952 and the Congress Alliance of 1955, which showed their solidarity. Their conviction amongst the 156 leaders held under the Treason Trial speaks of these long held links, and says much more than the countless texts on the subject.

Papwa Sewgolum is depicted in four images on the exhibition, as each image reveals a different aspect of Papwa the person, as well as reinforcing some of the themes in this discussion. The image of Papwa's wood-and-iron home revealed his impoverished background, where he lived near the Umgeni River in Durban and refers to the extent of the poverty among 'Indians', which is so vividly depicted in his story. Papwa's rags to riches tale is clearly demonstrated through these images, and I could not resist showing the sporting icon, who became famous throughout the world, demonstrating a classic golfing swing in front of his humble abode. His unorthodox grip of left hand over right, and the success he achieved with that grip, contributed to making him the darling of the international and local press. The photograph showing his family in front of his home appears in stark contrast to the image of his reception at Curries Fountain, where 20,000 people come to pay homage to the local hero, discussed in Chapter 2. His iconic status across the racial line is revealed in another image at Curries Fountain, when an 'African' football player shakes Papwa's hand with his right hand, placing his left hand on his right arm – a sign of respect among Zulus when greeting someone – clearly demonstrating that the man holds Papwa in high esteem. This image brings home the point of Papwa's success and status as having been celebrated



Papwa greets fans in 1959 at Curries Fountain before kick-off. Photo by Kally.

by blacks in general, and offers a view that their remained a space for easy Indo/Afro relations after the tensions of the 1949 riots a decade earlier.

Schadeberg's image of the 1952 Defiance Campaign, where eight hundred 'Indian' schoolchildren protested against their leaders being imprisoned; and Bob Gosani's image of 'Indian' and 'African' women defying the police in Germiston, demonstrate further widespread 'Indian' involvement in the politics of the forties and fifties, beyond the likes of more visible leaders such as Dadoo, Naicker, Goonam et al. The image of hundreds of 'Indian' schoolchildren provides a further example of the activism of these youths in politics, most strongly exemplified when thousands of Soweto schoolchildren protested against Afrikaans being taught at schools, on the 16 June 1976. In this regard these pictures were chosen for their "evidential force" (Barthes' 1981:5) in demonstrating historical events, and they further reveal the contributions of other *DRUM* photographers who recorded 'Indian' life.

Barney Desai's beautiful image of Elijah 'Ellis Brown' Mokone, with boxing mascot Mohamed Shaik in 1956, reveals the contribution of other lesser-known 'Indian' photographers via this exhibition. Unfortunately I could not find any negatives on the theme of this study in the archives by Gopal Naransamy – the other 'Indian' stalwart photographer from the 1950s who was based in the office in Johannesburg – who has rarely been acknowledged. Much work still needs to be done on his oeuvre.

Artistic

I have mentioned that my initial broad selections of photographs from my original lists included pictures that were ultimately not included on the final exhibition, having been

excluded for not addressing the criteria and objectives of the exhibition. But even when some did meet the objectives of the exhibition, there were still the overriding questions of aesthetic criteria that guided the selection.

For instance, images of 'Indian' wrestlers that were on the initial lists demonstrated an aspect of 'Indian' sport that was important, but the images that were available showed no artistic merit whatsoever. In light of the beautiful boxing images that demonstrated interracial engagement and showed signs of 'Indian' masculinities, I chose those that sufficiently supported the argument, while also retaining the aesthetic integrity of the exhibition. This recalls the image by G.R. Naidoo of the boxer, Louis Joshua, leaning against the door of the fancy American car, as described in detail in Chapter 2. While there was already an image included on the exhibition of Joshua in a boxing pose, the beauty of this image was too great to pass over, and further demonstrated the artistic vision of Naidoo, in addition to his social and political awareness as a writer and photographer.

Where there were missing negatives in the Bailey's archive that could not be found, I compensated using some prints that the archive had made during its operations in the 1950s. For example, Kumalo's portrait of Sheriff Khan is not in focus, and was obtained from an already blurred print, rather than a negative. Its selection, in spite of the poor quality of the image, is an exception on the exhibition, and was included because it showed the roughness of the notorious underworld figure, revealed by his total disregard for the camera, and any possible authority, in his defiant gaze. The only other image of Khan was dated from the 1970s and did not reflect the youthful Khan of the 1950s, which was the subject of the discussion. With Khan being such a notorious underworld figure in the fifties, the blurred

image of the kingpin of the crime world who defied so many 'Indian' conventions was therefore included.

The Venue

Gangsters Sheriff Khan and Kortboy (leader of the Americans gang) were two underworld figures depicted in *DRUM* who served sentences together at the Old Fort, the venue for this exhibition, which is described in Derrick Thema's biography of Kortboy. Some other major characters that were imprisoned in this notorious prison, were Mohandas Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, two of the most influential political names of the twentieth century. Gandhi's powerful association with passive resistance emerged out of a meeting at the Empire Theatre in Johannesburg in 1906 and he was imprisoned at the Old Fort on many occasions. Showing images of the 'Indian' underworld in *DRUM* in a space associated with Gandhi lends added weight to the exhibition's objective to deconstruct the stereotypical depictions of 'Indians' as being passive and non-violent; it simultaneously shows the active participation of black leaders of the 1950s, most of whom did share the ideals of passive resistance.

And one of the most famous *DRUM* exposés of the humiliating treatment of black prisoners in the courtyard of the Fort, was revealed with Bob Gosani's sensational image, entitled *Tauza!* Henry Nxumalo got himself arrested to tell the story of prison conditions at the Fort, after political leaders had complained of the appalling prison conditions there. The scene Bob Gosani photographed using a homemade four-foot long wooden telephoto camera, after gaining access to a high rise Hillbrow building opposite the Fort together with white *DRUM* staffer, Deborah Duncan (while pretending to be photographic assistant) was:

> …lines of naked men sitting on the ground and, in turn, rising, approaching the warders and clapping their hands – not holding anything, Baas! – and then leaping into the air to show their bare buttocks: nothing hidden up my arse, Baas…! (Schadeberg 1994:6).

Through this remarkable story published in *DRUM*, the photographic image reveals evidence of the illegality of prison officers' conduct and the historical link between *DRUM* and its writers and photographers with the Old Fort. This typified the need to visually depict stories based on real events and so the photographer and the images played an important role in conveying messages in DRUM. Enwezor (1996:185) elaborates on the significant role that DRUM photographers played and the great efforts undertaken to get a picture:

> Drum's photographers gave visual substance and glamour to the lives that comprised the intimate portraits of those stories. With equal scrutiny and attention to their diverse subjects, be they celebrities, hoodlums, or politicians, the photographers took pictures in the segregated, teeming, vibrant slums of South Africa's townships. Their nuanced images display an expressive freshness and energy borne out of an irrepressible hope and optimism. The photographers looked for their images in the most unexpected places. They donned disguises and had themselves arrested, whatever it took to obtain images to illustrate important stories. Schadeberg went to great lengths for the convict-labour story, as did Bob Gosani for the prison story, Magubane for the mine-workers story, G.R. Naidoo for the children's hospital story, and Lionel Oostendorp for the story of a drowned 'Coloured' boy.

As touched on earlier in Chapter 2 Enwezor is an exception in the retelling of the DRUM story and highlighting the role of photographers as (Bailey and Schadeberg were). He acknowledges photographers from the different communities such as Naidoo and Oostendorp and doesn't fall into the trap of exclusively focusing on Sophiatown and the DRUM photographers from the Johannesburg office.

The Old Fort at Constitution Hill was thus intentionally selected for the historical symbolism of the space. The aesthetic appeal of the Old Fort with its walls of un-plastered naked red bricks forms a striking backdrop to the black and white photographs. The peeling paint and the naked wooden beams of the overhead structures added to the textural complexity of the venue, which housed the dining halls of the prison warders based at the prison.

These images come back to haunt the official portrayal of 'Indians' as produced by the state, and as described in Chapter 1, in the spaces of the Old Fort.

Response

The show was first opened at the Durban Art Gallery on the 24th of May 2006 and received an unprecedented response from audiences there. The *Sunday Tribune* (weekend Sunday newspaper in Durban) commissioned a series of articles on photographs or themes from the exhibition, and this materialised as a series over eleven successive weeks. The *Mail & Guardian* also carried a feature article on the exhibition using the image from the invitation on its cover (May 26 – June 1 2006). I have included a series of press articles related to the exhibition for perusal in Annexure B.

In Durban, where the majority of these photographs were taken, the images in the exhibition confirmed a memory of lived experience mostly denied in the popular reading of 'Indian' history. These were images that members of the public identified with, as they pointed out friends and figures from their youth.

Through the articles published in the *Sunday Tribune* I was able to contact Amaranee Naidoo, who visited the exhibition with me. She has quietened down from her daredevil days and lives a quiet life with her husband in Reservoir Hills. Ranjith Kally also attended the opening in Durban. Judge Thumba Pillay and Ela Gandhi, both of whom are pictured in the photograph of students protesting outside the Durban City Hall in 1960 were also present and recognised younger instances of themselves in one photo. Ela Gandhi (great granddaughter to Mohandas Gandhi, the renowned Indian leader) was a student then and is a tangible link to Gandhi's presence in South Africa. Manilal Gandhi, Mohandas 'Mahatma' Gandhi's son stayed behind after his father left for India and lived in South Africa. He was part of the Defiance Campaigns and appeared several times in DRUM. It was after Manilal was imprisoned at the Fort and complained of conditions there that DRUM decided to do a feature on prison conditions. My grand-aunt Saras recognised one of her colleagues from medical school in a picture of three students celebrating news of their pass in 1960. And my aunt Ruby, who lives in Overport, recognised B.B. Salot, the notorious woman gang leader, who was also a close friend of hers as mentioned in the Conclusion. In this way I was able to see for myself how the images in the exhibition in Durban rekindled memories of the past and in many ways worked to restore a history and dignity of the 'Indian' denied for so long.

In Johannesburg, once home to old Sophiatown the exhibition raised the reaction of Bongani Madondo (*DRUM* expert at the Sunday Times Lifestyle). Madondo seemed irked by the

conflation of DRUM with Sophiatown and the notion that the 'Indian' history and the 'Indian' contribution in DRUM has been marginalised in the retelling of the DRUM story and the story of the 1950s in South Africa. Madondo and I exchanged email correspondence on the issue and editor Laurice Taitz (Sunday Times Lifestyle) published both sides of the story which resulted in *The Indian in DRUM in the 1950s: The Debate*[45], which gave the exhibition extensive coverage and raised these issues to a national audience in its February 4th 2007 issue (cover article in Annexure B). This raised the issues of Sophiatown and *DRUM*, both important spaces in black memory; it also raised the questions of who can talk about it and how it is allowed to be spoken of.

The photographs reveal alternate and more rich and ambiguous identities than the cartoon-like homogenous perceptions previously associated with the 'Indian'. And the exhibition reveals the substantial breadth of work of people like Ranjith Kally and G.R. Naidoo, whose considerable talents force us to notice them. As the exhibition travels and more people see it, I hope it will fulfil its intentions of showing a more complex 'Indian' experience that may lead to a greater understanding of the South African Indian experience.

Funding

For the printing costs I applied for funding to pay for the scans of the negatives and for the digital printing of seventy photographs. Fortunately, this was made possible with a combined total of R35, 000 allocated to the project by the National Arts Council (R20, 000) and The Nedbank Arts and Culture Trust of the President (R15, 000) and, had the project not received this money, it would have made the task of showing these photographs publicly much more difficult, and delayed the project considerably. Printing and scanning costs for the exhibition

45 Sunday Times Lifestyle in The Sunday Times, February 4, 2007.

amounted to R27, 000 alone. Once I was awarded these grants I confidently set about the task of putting the exhibition together. The Durban Art Gallery assisted with part of the framing costs and the opening costs in Durban, and in transporting the exhibition to the Old Fort in Johannesburg.

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