

## **The Place of India in South African History : Academic Scholarship, Past, Present and Future\***

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In 1971 Robert E. Gregory wrote a book titled *India and East Africa* deftly covering some 555 pages even though his narrative took him only up to 1939.<sup>1</sup> Though the title of my survey is as far-reaching as his, I do not have the luxury of Gregory's space so I shall not even attempt a Gregory. In a foreword to a brochure published by the Indian High Commission in South Africa titled *India-South Africa ; Strategic Partnership in a Changing World* the then Indian High Commissioner Shiv Shankar Mukerjee pointed to three significant links between the two countries. First and foremost, he lists Gandhi's presence in South Africa for well over two decades in South Africa during which he developed satyagraha and his subsequent return to India to lead that country to independence. Secondly, India played a significant role in the anti-apartheid movement. Thirdly, he points out, Indians in South Africa constituted the 'important bridge between our two countries'.<sup>2</sup> These sentiments have been echoed by many others both before and since. These do to some extent provide a guide to the place of India in South African history - Mr Mukherjee was indeed only penning a few paragraphs. This paper will, however, show that these parameters make no room for complexities, for other narratives - the tendency is to cast this history in fundamentally romantic and heroic proportions. The paper aims also to more modestly focus on historiographical questions and the sources available to scholars. It does not provide a comprehensive historiographical focus on the entire history of Indians in South Africa but highlights certain key themes.<sup>3</sup>

### **Indian Slaves**

Most accounts of the settlement of Indians in South Africa point to 1860 as the founding year when the first indentured Indians arrived in Natal to work on the cane fields. It took a non-academic who has nonetheless written extensively on various topics relevant to the political history of Indians in South Africa to draw scholars' attention to the fact that one needs to move that date almost two centuries earlier. In a thoughtful essay subtitled 'A Little Known Aspect of Indian-South African Relations', E.S. Reddy has detailed the existence of many Indian slaves in the Cape during the period of Dutch rule. They came from

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\* This was a keynote address presented to the Colloquium 'India/South Africa : Re-imagining the Disciplines', University of the Witwatersrand, 19-21 May 2006. I would like to thank E.S. Reddy and Goolam Vahed for their comments and help.

Batavia where the Dutch had taken Indian slaves but they also came directly from India - from Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, the Coromandel coast, and the Malabar coast - yes, there were slaves from Bombay and Surat too. Reddy argues that 'there were almost as many if not more slaves from India as from Indonesia'. Reddy's statistics point to as many as 70% of slaves originating from the east with at least a third or more directly from India. Using an article published in 1966 in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* Reddy provides evidence that Warren Hastings the British Governor-General of India in 1774 expressed some consternation at Indian children being kidnapped and taken to distant lands as slaves by Dutch and French ships. Reddy thus with great validity laments 'It is a pity that there has been hardly any research by scholars in India on the export of Indians to slavery in Indonesia and South Africa'. He expressed the wish that 'with the changes now taking place in South Africa, Indian and South African historians will co-operate to produce an authoritative study of the transport of Indians into slavery in South Africa ...' <sup>4</sup>

Rob Shell provides a much lower estimate of slaves from the east. He argues that while it was indeed so that in the 1730s slaves from the east constituted the largest number in the colony, for the entire period from 1652 to 1808 a total of 25.9 % came from India and 22.7% from Indonesia, thus making slaves from the east just less than half of the total. There were Indian women slaves amongst these. Shell notes 'Female slaves from Bengal or the Coast of Coromandel, from Surat and Macassar, are in great demand, because they have a reputation as skillful needlewomen.' While Scipio from Bengal spoke in Portuguese, Jacob from Cochin spoke in Dutch and on the farm of one Van der Bijl, Hindi was spoken.<sup>5</sup>

South African scholars specialising in the field of slavery have not been able to render the Indian slave visible. We do know that at some stage in the Cape' history, there developed a tendency to eventually refer to all Muslim slaves as Malays and it is perhaps so that within the category Malay lies some history of the Indian slave. Nigel Worden, the most eminent of our historians on the Dutch period of slavery, in South Africa cautions against making firm conclusions from toponyms. A slave from Bengal could mean that he or she was simply drawn from that trading area and not that the slave was a Bengali. His research has shown that some such slaves were in fact from Persia or Arakan (in Burma). It is, further, difficult to clearly identify the south Asian slaves by distinguishing language or religious markers. The most serious constraint on opening up this area of study is, as Worden, explains: 'There are no surviving records of slave imports from South Asia (nor from South East Asia) for that matter.' He recalls that when he addressed a gathering in Delhi in 2005 on the India-South Africa slave linkages 'there was absolute astonishment'. Reddy's wish expressed sixteen years ago remains simply that. Work by Anjana Singh on the Dutch rule

in Cochin may however be of interest to Cape scholars seeking a comparative understanding of company rule.<sup>6</sup>

### **Indentured Indians and Traders**

While the continent of Africa provided the source for captive human cargo that were sold as slaves in the colonies of the European powers, and the Indian sub-continent indeed provided a source for slaves to the south-western Cape, it was following the abolition of slavery that India became the key source of what Hugh Tinker has aptly referred to as a 'New System of Slavery'.<sup>7</sup> From its inception in the early 1830s to 1917, 1.3 million Indian men and women were shipped out of India as indentured labourers. Natal which absorbed 152 184 was the third largest importer of indentured labour; Mauritius which had provided the early model for such a system took in the largest - close to half a million; British Guiana followed by taking in 238 909.<sup>8</sup> Following on the heels of the indentured to Natal were Indian traders from the west coast of India and within two decades of their arrival came the young lawyer Gandhi. By the close of the nineteenth century there was a substantial Indian population in Natal, a significant number in the Transvaal and yet smaller numbers in the Cape Colony. Indians for most of the twentieth century and after have nonetheless never constituted more than 3% of the total South African population.

While Leonard Thompson, a liberal Africanist, is well-known for his general histories of South Africa and his work on the unification of South Africa, it is, however, less-well-known that his Masters degree published in 1952 (but completed in the 1930s) was on indenture in Natal. His conclusions are directed towards establishing how indentured immigration contributed to the making of a 'South African problem'.<sup>9</sup> While there was too the pioneering work of A.G. Choonoo on workers in the sugar industry in 1967,<sup>10</sup> it was only in the 1980s that the study of indentured labour was given a real boost most particularly by the work of Fatima Meer, Maureen Swan, Surendra Bhana, Joy Brain, Jo Beall and Rajend Mesthrie.

While revisionist scholars were making a major impact on the writing of South African History in the 1970s, they were by and large not attracted to the study of indentured labour. Frene Ginwala must count as one of the first of the scholars following in the Marxist tradition in that decade to write about Indians - indentured, traders and Gandhi. Her contribution sadly did not make an impact as she never published her work and the thesis is a bit unwieldy covering a large period and many topics from 1860-1946. Yet her approach was significant. It was she who first argued that we need to move a way from a focus on Gandhi, on laws, and to instead prioritise the masses as subjects and agents. Why did the workers come out in full force as they did in 1913 and why not before?<sup>11</sup>

Meer was instrumental in publishing in 1980 a documentary collection edited by Y.S. Meer *et.al* on indentured labour thus placing important primary sources within easy reach of scholars and the public. <sup>12</sup>Joy Brain was a pioneer in the field producing a detailed monograph in 1983 on the Christian indentured in Natal. The first part of the book is largely statistical drawing on details from the ships' lists of indentured migrants. The second part focuses on Christianity in India and the activities of the missionaries in Natal. <sup>13</sup> The Department of History at the University of Durban-Westville headed by Surendra Bhana took an important step in 1985 to commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of indentured labour. The proceedings of that conference were published only six years later by a small publishing house with very limited circulation. Nonetheless, these contained the important contribution of the Scottish born, Maureen Swan, on worker resistance; Daniel North-Coombes on workers in the sugar industry of Natal and Mauritius; Jo Beall on indentured women; the Bhanas on suicide amongst the indentured; Rajend Mesthrie on Indian languages and indenture; and finally, Joy Brain on the religious practices of the indentured.<sup>14</sup>

Swan's research gave a major fillip to the study of indenture. Her first significant essay on indentured labour in Natal appeared in 1978 in the *Indian Economic and Social History Review* but remained inaccessible to South African scholars for some time. <sup>15</sup> A few scholars secured access to her doctoral dissertation from Oxford but it was the publication of the thesis as *Gandhi : the South African Experience* in 1985 and her articles on worker resistance that proved most influential. Based on meticulous research in the Natal and South African Archives, the Public Office Records in London, and ships' lists from the Department of Indian Affairs, Swan provided tables profiling the caste and age of the immigrants from the ports of Madras and Calcutta. More importantly she painted a grim picture of forced emigration, of destitution and of dire socio-economic circumstances in Natal. While acknowledging the two extreme ends of relative success and absolute poverty she concluded that the vast majority fell within the middle range. Her conclusion about work conditions is that 'the vast majority of Indian indentured workers suffered extreme privation'. Swan (following on Ginwala) analysed the 1913 strike as something inherently worthy of detailed analysis on its own rather than as simply 'a new phase' in the Gandhi-led satyagraha campaign.<sup>16</sup>

Rajend Mesthrie's doctoral dissertation and articles drawn from that made use of important sources : Swan's sample of ships' lists which provided places of origin; the *Linguistic Survey of India* authored by Sir George Grierson, a British administrator and linguist whose research was undertaken in India in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early years of the twentieth century and which contained detailed linguistic maps of each district in north India; archival sources and,

finally, oral interviews (including the recording of folk songs) with aged Indians. From these, he was able to create a picture of the variety of Indian languages that existed in early colonial Natal and was able to question the label for the language of Natal's north Indian derived community. What was thought to be Hindi was in fact Bhojpuri. He also pointed to the influence of the colonial setting, the development of new vocabulary and new forms of communication. His work represents the use of innovative sources from India and locally that go beyond the archive.<sup>17</sup> Jo Beall's work focussed on the unwanted labour, the indentured women whom employers took in reluctantly and who because of their smaller numbers came to be blamed for moral laxity in the estates. While using the colonial archive, her research drew comparative insights from work from the West Indies and Mauritius. In particular, Beall was pioneering in employing a 'materialist-feminist discourse' to the study of indenture bringing gender to the fore in a significant way.<sup>18</sup>

Brain and Bhana went on to provide more detailed empirical studies of indentured Indians as well as the ex-indentured in the 1980s and 1990s. Brain, in particular, dispelled notions that it was only in the sugar industry that workers were employed and she provides extensive detail on the types of labour performed.<sup>19</sup> She made a foray into medical history looking at mortality rates.<sup>20</sup> Bhana's approach was largely a statistical one providing painstakingly detailed analyses of caste, place of origin, age, sex and place of employment based on the ships' lists over four decades.<sup>21</sup> Brain has since issued on cd-rom a full list of indentured passengers, with their numbers, places of origin and ultimate place of employment. For any Indian wishing to trace their heritage the ships' lists provide a valuable source to unlock that link with India. Bill Freund made a particularly significant contribution in his study of the rise and fall of the Indian peasantry. His account of the free Indians who took to commodity farming is framed broadly within peasant studies in South Africa as well as the bigger land question and poverty alleviation.<sup>22</sup>

In recent years a newer generation of scholars have taken our understanding of the indentured even further. While Rajend Mesthrie's work pointed to the importance of social history, it was Goolam Vahed's article on festivals like Mohurrum and their significance which pointed to new directions for study. In the colonial setting, Hindu workers joined in commemorating an essentially Muslim event. It was only after the arrival of an influential Hindu priest from India that the practice was halted as he advised Hindus to rather celebrate Diwali. This points to a tension between a newly developing colonial identity with the more pressing purist influence of India. More recent work by this prolific scholar provides a gendered understanding of male indentured workers.<sup>23</sup> A thesis by Nafisa Essop Sheik recently completed at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal points to the much broader scope with which the study of

indenture is being approached.<sup>24</sup> She provides a gendered history of the laws applicable to indentured Indian immigrants; the efforts of the Natal government to intervene in the personal law of Indians (i.e laws that were determined, for example, by their religion or caste). Her goal is 'to show how the writing of the history of Natal's Indians can be framed more widely'. Sheik seeks 'to link the position of indentured women to African and settler women in the Colony, women in Europe, Indian women in India and indentured women in other colonies.' To fulfill this objective she draws admirably on comparative literature from the Indian sub-continent; from the Caribbean and Mauritius; and in her analysis of issues in Natal she makes useful comparisons between the customs of the Indian immigrants and the larger African population. Her thesis requires an understanding of British attempts to intervene in personal law in India and how this may have influenced interventions elsewhere in the empire. Prinisha Badassy has also opened up a new area of focus by looking at the crimes committed amongst those employed as domestic servants.<sup>25</sup>

From the above we can draw various conclusions. The study of the indentured in colonial Natal remains a vibrant field of study. In 1993 C.G. Henning attempted a full history of indenture from 1860 to 1917 and produced a useful factual and descriptive text<sup>26</sup> but it must be stated that we lack a solid comprehensive monograph on the indentured comparable to Marina Carter's work on Mauritius. Despite attempts in the direction of a social history, the voices of the indentured remain rather muted.<sup>27</sup> The Indian context is crucial. India is ever present in all these histories. Why did the migrants leave India? What were the conditions in particular districts? Why did more migrants leave from certain districts? What do we know about the ports of Madras and Calcutta? To understand caste in Natal we need to understand caste in India. To understand the linguistic map of colonial Natal we need, as research has shown, to understand the linguistic maps of districts in India. What were gender relations and gender roles like in India in the 19<sup>th</sup> century? How did the colonial setting in which the indentured found themselves disturb what was known and conventional in India? From what experiences and lessons did colonial officials in Natal draw from their counterparts in India? Scholars have asked these questions with different degrees of success. While the Indian context is significant, it must be said that the history of indenture has been written by those in the diaspora. The established scholarship has also drawn on comparative work from places like Fiji, Mauritius, the West Indies and healthy dialogues continue among scholars. However, at least two of the books on indenture were in fact published by a New Delhi publishing house, given the lack of interest by South African publishers.

South African scholars like Bhana who were fortunate to have contact with other writers in the Indian diaspora found that the Settlement Reports that the British

administration undertook in the districts of India provided useful demographic and other statistics. Yet he struggled to find archival sources in India - possibly because he simply did not know where to look.<sup>28</sup> It would be hard to believe, despite these failures, that these sources do not exist. Just as Indian scholars have not been drawn to a study of the export of slaves so too by and large the study of the export of indentured labour has not been an area of interest. Indian scholars may be put off by the fact that they would need to visit the former colonies of the empire and all the logistical difficulties that this might bring. Tejaswini Niranjana, then of Hyderabad University and now based in Bangalore at the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, pointed to the fruitfulness of new engagements across the continents. Her study of Trinidad Indians was motivated by a desire to compare 'the formation of the "Indian" in the subaltern diaspora with the hegemonic construction of "Indians" in India'. She sought 'to investigate a conjuncture of modernity, Indianness and "Woman" that is radically different from our own in India'. Her foray into the place indenture had in India's nationalist discourse provides an example of the new insights that scholars from the Indian sub-continent may bring to a study of indenture.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Mesthrie, found contact with those in the field of Indian sociolinguistics useful to his work. A joint project or dialogue bringing together Indian scholars and South African scholars would not be inappropriate given as Nelson Mandela so eloquently put it 'The indentured labourers also served to establish an umbilical cord that ties together the people of our respective countries. As much as India is a part of our country, so are we too are a part of India'.<sup>30</sup>

While Swan was successful in her analyses of the underclasses, she was less successful in her account of the Gujarati Hindu and Muslim trader population. She creates an impression of very powerful wealthy elites whose reach stretched across colonial boundaries and who were interested only in economic pursuits.<sup>31</sup> A far more nuanced picture is presented by Fatima Meer and much later Padayachee and Morell.<sup>32</sup> There were indeed the wealthy but there were also those much poorer small Hindu and Muslim immigrants (in Meer's opinion these constituted the majority) who started out as hawkers or as assistants and then progressed to establishing their own little shops. These lives also contain struggles and sacrifices. Bhana drawing on editions of the *South African Indian Who's Who* successfully plotted places of origin and established how village networks influenced settlement patterns in Natal and the Transvaal. He focused too on trade and immigration laws aimed to restrict the size of the trading class. His attempt at oral history, however, led to a somewhat conservative use providing hard facts of biographical data and mobility.<sup>33</sup> Brain made an important contribution in trying to establish Indian entrepreneurial activity in the Cape Colony, a fairly neglected area of study with difficult sources to work with.<sup>34</sup> Kalpana Hiralal's thesis provides a detailed analysis of the early trader

experience, in particular, the hostility they drew from white competitors.<sup>35</sup> Vahed once again pioneered a move beyond the political in his construction of the life of Aboobaker Amod. He explores the relevance of polygamous marriages amongst Muslims and the failure of the colonial legal system to recognise these.<sup>36</sup> Prinisha Badassy's honours thesis shifted focus from the indentured and the traders by focussing on the social world of another group of Indians -the interpreters in the colony.<sup>37</sup>

There are other research areas where there has been considerable interest by Indians from India and there are indeed areas of study where South African scholars have most successfully tapped into sources in India and it is to those areas that this paper now moves. These, in particular, point to what place India has in South African history.

### **The Appeal to British India**

Gregory's study of East Africa and India argues that the central theme of such a story is fundamentally one of race relations within the empire - it thus involves a 'triangular study' with Britain as the third party.<sup>38</sup> This theme is echoed in the works encompassing South Africa such as that of R.A. Huttenback, Bala Pillay and B. Sacks.<sup>39</sup> Bridglal Pachai was most encompassing in his account of over a century when the so-called South African Indian question featured in the triangular relationship which ultimately fractured so badly and led to the intervention of the United Nations.<sup>40</sup> These works illuminate the dilemma of the imperial government in having to reconcile the claim to equal treatment made by Indians in Natal and the Transvaal with the demands of imperial interests and the claims of white settlers there. The government of India as a party to the legalised export of indentured labour would always claim to have an interest in the Indians in the colonies. The governments in Bengal and Madras became directly involved in matters relating to the supply of labour. The Indian government took the step of temporarily suspending labour to Natal in 1871 on the basis of complaints made by returning immigrants. Swan has shown how from the earliest political action of traders there was an appeal to both Britain and India. In 1891, for instance, merchants in Bombay made an appeal on behalf of their counterparts in Natal to the Governor of Bombay, who then drew the attention of the India Office and Colonial Office in London to their grievances.<sup>41</sup> The very first resolution on the position of Indians in South Africa was passed by the young Indian National Congress sitting at Madras in 1894. From 1900 onwards, in particular, resolutions focussing on the disabilities of Indian settlers in Natal and the Transvaal became an annual affair and they called on the government of India to take necessary steps to secure justice.<sup>42</sup>



Indian nationalists were initially discouraging about what they could achieve for Indians in the colonies given the major issues in India. Gandhi regarded support from India as crucial during the satyagraha struggle. In Bombay, a public meeting called by the Sheriff of Bombay in January 1908, the month in which Gandhi began his first prison sentence, and attended by prominent Indians like Sir Dinshaw Petit, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Jehangir Petit to mention just a few, reflected the outrage that Indians felt. The chairman, the Aga Sir Sultan Mahomed Shaha, argued for retaliation : `If the Boers close their doors against Indians, the British government in fairness to India, should insist on keeping the ring clear of Boers and let us at least retaliate with similar laws in our own country'.<sup>43</sup>

Gandhi deputed his friend Henry Polak in 1909 to make an extensive trip to India to raise funds and rouse public opinion. Mass meetings were held throughout India and from India came thousands of rupees towards the satyagraha campaign. In 1911 India terminated the supply of indentured labour to Natal. In a momentous trip, the Indian nationalist leader Gopal Krishna Gokhale came to South Africa in 1912. He was received with decorum by the Union ministers and raised concerns about the three pound tax paid by the ex-indentured, which he believed would be withdrawn. During the final stage of satyagraha when thousands of workers went on strike against the tax, it is well-known that even the Viceroy Lord Hardinge was compelled to issue a statement on the grave situation in South Africa. South Africa was on the agenda of both the Indian government and Indian nationalists and the Indian government deputed an official Sir Benjamin Roberston to appear before the Indian Inquiry Commission of 1914. The souvenir issue of *Indian Opinion* to celebrate the conclusion of the struggle in 1914 pays special visual tribute to Jehangir Petit, a joint secretary of the Bombay South African Committee, his wife Mrs Petit, G.A. Natesan, the secretary of the India South African League in Madras, K. Natarajan an editor of the *Indian Social Reform* who was also secretary of the Bombay South African committee, Mrs Jamnabhai Sakkai, president of the Gujarati Hindi Stri Mandal.<sup>44</sup> While there is an extensive literature on Gandhi and satyagraha in South Africa from both India and South Africa (far too numerous to list here) there is room for an in-depth analysis of the campaign's support in India. All narratives get caught up in the story of satyagraha and even key issues like the termination of indentured labour to Natal get short shrift.

The focus in studies such as that of Judith Brown is how the South African setting - which brought together in a microcosm Indians from different parts of the sub-continent - shaped Gandhi in so many ways : his nationalism, his identity, his experience of colonialism, his relationship with people of different religions in particular Muslims, his attitude to caste. `South Africa made the Indian Gandhi', by giving him the opportunity to be a `critical outsider', Brown

asserts. 'Here was someone who came to maturity outside India, outside its social and political patterns, someone who, looking in from the outside, was able to perceive India's problems and the issues at stake in the corporate life of its people with a particular insight and clarity, because he was drawing on alternative experiences and ideas'.<sup>45</sup>

Given the crucial significance of South Africa in Gandhi's life one has to observe that researching Gandhi's South African life has been extraordinarily difficult for scholars from India. For over four decades in the apartheid era there was no possibility of Indian scholars visiting South Africa. Pyarelal, Gandhi's secretary and chronicler, struggled to obtain information and relied on material that Gandhi had taken back with him. For most scholars Gandhi's autobiographical accounts are the key sources and Swan has argued these can lead to silences and differences in representation and emphases.<sup>46</sup> Dhupelia-Mesthrie has also pointed to how the *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* while providing a rich and invaluable source on Gandhi's writings effectively silences those with whom Gandhi corresponded.<sup>47</sup> Claude Markowitz has consequently and interestingly labelled Gandhi's South African years as 'the real black hole in Gandhi's life' leading to the impossibility of writing an adequate biography.<sup>48</sup>

Another point needs to be made about the Gandhi period in South Africa. While the literature has taken note of Gandhi's thousand strong Ambulance Corps in the South African War (1899-1902), E.S. Reddy has pointed to the role of the almost ten thousand Indians from India who came as auxiliaries to South Africa and worked as grooms, water carriers, washermen, artisans, cooks, servants etc. Some of these managed to stay on in South Africa at the end of the war.<sup>49</sup> David Grant, a veterinarian, has also uncovered fascinating aspects of India's role during that war. His research uncovered not only the role of thousands of white soldiers from India, the thousands of Indians who came in various capacities to assist but he writes about the important services India provided in the veterinarian field, those taking care of the thousands of horses and other animals injured in the war. He tells of one Risaldar Haji Mahomed Suleman who worked in the Army Veterinarian Department for three years securing at least two royal medals. The hospitals set up by them were staffed by surgeons, assistants, shoeing smiths and other attendants. His research seeks to establish names, medals, and geographical location.<sup>50</sup> His work points to how a Gandhi-centred approach to this period all but over-shadows other contributions. In South Africa there exist memorials to the Indian dead (as noted by Erik Itzkin) and in India lie the graves of about 140 Boer prisoners, the unfortunate amongst the thousands that were incarcerated on the Indian sub-continent.<sup>51</sup> While Grant has drawn on the South African archives, Indian national, T.G. Ramamurthi, has drawn on the Indian archives to document the role of the Indian auxiliaries.<sup>52</sup>

Here exists an opportunity for a dialogue. But to return to the narrative of the appeal to India.

In 1915, Gandhi returned to India and his subsequent domination of INC politics ensured that Indians in South Africa would always have a lobby in Indian nationalist circles. The support in Bombay for the cause of Indians overseas crystallised in the formation of the Imperial Indian Citizenship Association in 1915. Indians in South Africa had sent delegates to INC annual conferences during the Gandhi period in South Africa and this continued subsequently. There would be growing links in the 1920s. Sarojini Naidu, yet another prominent Indian nationalist visited South Africa in 1924 and even addressed the Prime Minister and members of parliament on behalf of Indian South Africans. She was elected President of the South African Indian Congress (f. 1919) and was not just a figure-head.<sup>53</sup>

Works such as that of Hugh Tinker<sup>54</sup> and S. R. Mehrotra<sup>55</sup> have pointed to how the status of the over two million Indians in the dominions and colonies came to occupy an important place in the discourse of Indian liberals and nationalists right up to independence.<sup>56</sup> In all the dominions there were restrictive immigration policies against Indians and several denied the existing residents political rights. In South Africa, from the end of the First World War through to the 1950s there were various phases of anti-Indian agitation with calls for repatriation and segregation and the legislation slowly moved to curb land ownership and occupation. In the crown colony of Kenya, white settlers seeking protection against established Indian traders demanded political safeguards, segregation and the reservation of the most suitable lands for themselves. In the 1920s, Indians in South Africa constituted the fourth largest settlement of Indians outside India after Ceylon, the Federated Malay States and Mauritius; in Africa, the largest group of Indians were to be found in South Africa.<sup>57</sup>

Indian nationalists took up the cause of Indians overseas in the Empire arguing that an insult to Indians overseas was an insult to the millions in India. Mehrotra has shown how the issue became linked to the model of independence that India should strive for - should it be on the model of the dominions or should it be quite outside the Empire? Many began to favour the latter.<sup>58</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru promised that appropriate action could take place only by an independent India. Nonetheless the structures of the INC had within its scope the cause of Indians overseas : its Foreign Department with Dr Rammanohar Lohia took heed of developments. Seth Govind Das a member of the INC even toured South Africa in 1937 to obtain better information on Indians settled here.<sup>59</sup>

There was another grouping equally concerned about the position of Indians overseas. Indian liberals in India argued that the Empire stood for `justice,

equality, freedom and brotherhood'. They began to raise the question of the status of Indians outside India in forums such as the Imperial Conferences to which India had been admitted with the dominions after the First World War. Prominent amongst these liberals, were Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sir Satyendra Sinha.<sup>60</sup>

Indian nationalists and Indian liberals took an important role in trying to secure an improvement in the status of Indians in South Africa. Pressured by these two groupings the government of India made many interventions to show that it was at one with public opinion on this matter. This topic has been the focus of Dhupelia-Mesthrie's doctoral thesis completed in 1987.<sup>61</sup> She focuses on those 'unusual years in the history of Indo-South African relations' when the Indian government appointed Agents to South Africa (later known as Agent-Generals and then High Commissioners) to represent the interests of Indians in South Africa but more importantly to form a link between the two governments. The first appointment in 1927 was preceded by a South African Indian delegation led by Dr Abdurahman to India, an Indian deputation led by Sir George Paddison to South Africa, a goodwill trip by several South African ministers and members of the white parliamentary opposition to India, a round table conference between South African government representatives and the white opposition on one side and an Indian delegation headed by Sir Muhammed Habibullah on the other. These were the years of Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Kurma Venkatta Reddi, Sir Kunwar Maharaj Singh, Sir Syed Raza Ali, Sir Benegal Rama Rau, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad Khan and Ramarao Deshmukh. While the brilliant Sastri has been all but forgotten in his own country,<sup>62</sup> in South Africa his name was immortalised in concrete in the form of Sastri College, the best known Indian high school in Durban which he helped start.<sup>63</sup> Reddi has but a small road in Clairwood named after him while most of the rest have fallen into oblivion. These men stood outside of the fold of Indian nationalism which for the greater part of these two decades followed a path of non-co-operation. Their role in South Africa is, however, one that needs mention in this story of India-South Africa relations.

Dhupelia-Mesthrie owed a huge debt of acknowledgement to Essop Pahad. While in exile, Pahad completed a doctoral thesis at Sussex University in 1972 and his work not only pointed to the important role of the Indian Agents in South African Indian politics but he also drew most significantly on sources in the National Archives of India.<sup>64</sup> She consequently undertook a long research trip to India in 1983, braved the bureaucratic tangles necessary to get permission and consulted no less than fifteen major manuscript collections of individuals who had been involved in matters concerning South Africa such as Sastri, Benarsidas Chaturvedi, Deshmukh, Gandhi, Kodanda Rao, G.A. Natesan, Nehru, Jagdish Prasad, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Purshottamdas Thakurdas, as well as the

Indian Congress papers. Further, she drew extensively on the official papers in the National Archives of India which contained a wealth of information on the activities of the Indian representatives and South African Indian politics and negotiations between the Indian and South African governments.

The narrative she constructed is not one that fits in with the romantic story of post-independence India's efforts against apartheid South Africa. It is a tale in which the repatriation of Indian South Africans features prominently - a story of great shame. The poorest of Indians in South Africa, many of whom were in fact colonial-born, were encouraged by various bonus schemes to return to India permanently with the aid of the Indian government only to find that they had not exchanged the miserable life they led in South Africa for a better one in India. Under the conditions of repatriation, one provided for in 1914<sup>65</sup> but reframed euphemistically as an assisted emigration scheme in 1927, over close to 40 000 South Africans sold forever their rights to return to South Africa. The statistics of repatriation do not include the indentured who were coerced to return to India between 1902 and 1913 under pressure of payment of the three pound tax should they have remained in Natal.<sup>66</sup> The Natal House established at 89 Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras in 1929 to cater temporarily for the Indian returnees hosted the old, decrepit and the hopeful job-seekers and there was many a sad soul that occupied those quarters despite the efforts of the kindly official appointed to assist them. From Calcutta too, South African Indians fanned out into the villages of the north-eastern region only to find Indian socio-economic conditions, especially caste prejudices, not quite to their liking.<sup>67</sup> Then too there is the quite extraordinary story of the Indian government represented by Sir Fazl-i- Husain with the agreement of an Indian nationalist like Sarojini Naidu, offering to help to find a colony in some remote part of the world where Indian South Africans could be persuaded to emigrate. Fortunately nothing came of this plan though the South African government had some keenness for this to materialise.<sup>68</sup>

Yet there is another side to this story. It is a time when Sastri weaved magic in South Africa with his brilliant speeches on Indian culture and civilisation, hoping to convert whites to a better understanding of the Indians in their midst. This was a time when educational facilities for Indians improved, when many social welfare groups were started (notably that of JISWA) with the encouragement of the Indian Agents, where Indian women were persuaded by the Kunwarani Maharaj Singh and Lady Benegal Rama Rau to take a more public and visible role, when bridges were built between Indian South Africans and white liberals in the form of the Indo-European joint councils. Further, the offer of the Indian government to help with repatriation and colonisation helped keep at bay, at least until 1946, permanent legislation to enforce residential and commercial segregation.

While Ginwala, Pahad and Dhupelia-Mesthrie did thorough archival work, they were not in a position to extensively consult Indian journals and newspapers. Articles on South Africa featured in many prominent papers such as the *Hindu* and journals such as the *Indian Review* and *Modern Review*. Locally, *Indian Opinion*, extracted relevant articles and reproduced these but these remain a valuable untapped source for future researchers. These should provide a gauge as to what interested India and how South African matters were reported.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Meaning of India to Indian South Africans**

A recent book by Bhana and Vahed explores the nature and construction of Indianness in colonial Natal and has rich detail on what India meant to the early Indians.<sup>70</sup> Their research agenda was motivated to look 'for activities that signified values transplanted from India'. Their research was underpinned by the notion that 'immigrant communities recreate the worlds they leave behind in their new environments'. Chapters detail the religious practices of Hindus and Muslims. We are provided with lists of cultural and religious bodies and extensive evidence of links with villages in India. Surplus wealth from traders and indentured Indians made their way back to their families and villages contributing thus to social and developmental improvements. They do, however, in my opinion over-emphasise the 'point of connectedness with things Indian' by predominantly focussing on the Gujarati Hindu and Muslim and neglecting those who may have sought to free themselves from India and were more distinctly shaped by the African setting. But this will be clearly a point of debate. How important was India in social and cultural terms to the growing numbers of the colonial born? Chetty's study significantly points to how the Indianness of the trader was distinct from the Indianness of the worker.<sup>71</sup> Hilda Kuper's work carefully detailed Indian social and cultural practices in the late 1950s and provides a useful source for example on how traditional rites of passage were adhered to, or were adapted or simply lapsed.<sup>72</sup> Rehana Ebr.-Vally's more recent work significantly probes the myth of a homogenous Muslim population and while she argues for the importance of the Indian past especially in the hidden influence of the caste system and Hindu practices, she also points to the growing influence of the Middle East which then strips away Indian influences.<sup>73</sup>

Dr Goonam's autobiographical account<sup>74</sup> and Sita Gandhi's recent memoirs<sup>75</sup> shed light on how South African-born Indian women encountered the strangeness of India. Jay Naidoo's charming tale of growing up in a Pretoria Location for Indians is very much about the influence of the South African environment with India in the distant background.<sup>76</sup> Yet Pahad's thesis<sup>77</sup> and Dhupelia-Mesthrie's recent biography of Manilal Gandhi<sup>78</sup> illuminate what meaning India had to Indian South Africans as the twentieth century advanced. A.I. Kaje, a politician and businessman would argue before white legislators in

the 1930s 'to us India is a mere geographic term'.<sup>79</sup> This is, however, not quite accurate and has to be understood in the context where Indians in South Africa had to prove their South Africanness to hostile South African governments. For many Indians, South Africa, rather than India, was indeed home but India was much more than just a place on the map. For Gujarati Hindus and Muslims, in particular, it was a place to which they returned every three years or so to reconnect with villages and families. But India's meaning took on a deeper role in the context of the non-co-operation movement begun in the 1920s. That it was led by Gandhi who had lived amongst Indian South Africans was especially significant to all. Three thousand Indians could fill the Rawat's cinema in Victoria Street in Durban to protest against the Rowlatt legislation in 1919 which gave extensive powers to police in India; shopkeepers in Durban would close their shops in 1922 and a thousand Indian children marched through the city centre when Gandhi was arrested; coverage of events in India expanded in a papers like *Indian Opinion* and *Indian Views* to counter the inaccurate reports of the imperialist press in South Africa who reported extensively on India; the Dandi salt satyagraha drew resisters from South Africa and this and the Quit India movement of 1942 contributed to the radicalisation of local politics; it was not unusual at meetings in the Transvaal of the radical group led by Dr Dadoo to find photographs of leaders like Nehru; the growth of communalism in India fueled by Jinnah also had an impact on Muslim and Hindu relations in South Africa; Gandhi's fasts and detentions always drew mass meetings. The life histories of Dr Dadoo, Dr Goonam, Moulvi Ismail Cachalia, Nattoo Babenia point to how important India's struggle against colonialism framed their own politics of resistance.<sup>80</sup> Dadoo, Cachalia and Babenia had all at some significant stage of their lives received an education in India and in the course of that came to experience the growing Indian nationalist movement. These are just some examples of the enduring influence of India in South Africa.

### **A New Phase in India-South Africa Relations**

By the early 1940s, the strategies of the British government of India to ward off segregation legislation were clearly failing. The government of Jan Smuts passed legislation in 1943 to temporarily freeze the status quo regarding land purchases and occupation in Durban in a move to stop what they regarded as extensive penetration of Indians into white areas. In 1946 more permanent legislation was passed affecting the whole of Natal. It proposed the demarcation of Natal into controlled and uncontrolled areas - once more a bid to prevent Indians from acquiring or hiring or leasing property anywhere in Natal. These two measures raised the temperature of public opinion in India to a height not seen since the satyagraha campaign. Even in the Legislative Assembly and Council of State, where opinions tended to be more moderate, feelings ran high. Dr N.B. Khare as head of the Department of Indians Overseas, for instance, informed members of

the Legislative Assembly :

I wish India was in a position to declare war on South Africa. Some day or other - and we are all hoping it will be sooner rather than later - India will come into her own and will be in a position to take more effective action against those who persist in assailing her national honour and self-respect.<sup>81</sup>

The Indian High Commissioner in South Africa was no less temperate in his despatches home. A former Professor of History, Shafa'at Khan wrote back home

:

Unless South Africa and East Africa do justice to the Indian, an armed conflict with these colonies is inevitable ... we can pour our Punjabis into this beautiful country ... One week will decide the paper conflict and vexatious quarrels of eight-three years.<sup>82</sup>

What India did do in the dying days of the empire was firstly in 1944 to apply a Reciprocity Act to South Africa. The rules under the Act mirrored legislation against Indians in South Africa and declared South Africans of 'non-Indian origin' as 'prohibited immigrants'. White South Africans could not acquire property or occupy property without a permit nor could they enjoy any political rights. The measure was largely a symbolic one as there were so few white South Africans in India. The notice the Taj Hotel put up in Bombay that it was not open to South Africans was nonetheless a reflection of temperatures in India.<sup>83</sup>

As the 1946 legislation passed through the South African parliament the Indian High Commissioner returned to India in March never to return and on 23 June 1946 the trade agreement between Indian and South Africa was terminated.<sup>84</sup> During the war India had become South Africa's most important trading partner after America, the United Kingdom and Canada and the South African agricultural industry was dependent on gunny bags from India. Trade sanctions were more than a symbolic gesture (India sacrificed an export trade with South Africa that was 5.55% of its total exports)<sup>85</sup> and were meant to have an effect, though it meant a sacrifice too.

The turn to sanctions and the ruptured diplomatic relations all constitute the concluding chapters of Dhupelia-Mesthrie's thesis. In preparation for Indian independence in September 1946 an interim government was formed in India with Nehru as head and the first file the Viceroy received from the new government was an indictment against South Africa. In October, in response to the appeal from India, the General Assembly of the United Nations Organisation



placed the question of the treatment of Indian South Africans on its agenda and it would remain on the agenda for some time. The case before the UNO has been dealt with by Pachai but independent India's efforts against apartheid beyond the UN is a very under researched effort. We owe some thanks to E.S. Reddy and T.G. Ramamurthi. Reddy, who for many years headed the Centre Against Apartheid at the UN, has written two short useful papers on the subject. In particular, he drew attention to Nehru's role.<sup>86</sup> Ramamurthi, a former Indian diplomat authored *Fight Against Apartheid* (1984) and *Apartheid and Indian South Africans* (1995). An editor of *Africa Quarterly* which is published by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations he has edited issues on South Africa. His collection of documents on the apartheid and post-apartheid period is a valuable beginning on this subject.<sup>87</sup>

There remains much research to be done. What for instance was the impact of the trade and cultural sanctions? While the Indian High Commissioner departed in 1946 his office in South Africa was nonetheless manned until 1954. In these eight years what role did the office serve? Nehru, in particular, calls for a detailed study. As Reddy points out, Nehru's frame of reference was so much wider encompassing a deeper understanding of Africa's oppression and India's role in assisting that continent. Nehru's influence on the political thinking of African politicians in the 1950s and 1960s like Mandela is yet to be explored. The struggle against apartheid by an independent India was one that was not limited to the cause of Indian South Africans but spoke to the needs of all the oppressed in South Africa. Recognising this lacuna, the South African Democracy Education Trust has commissioned an essay to be published in the third volume on *The Road to Democracy*.<sup>88</sup> This project could be a joint Indian-South African one. Important manuscripts lie in India. Many South African exiles were assisted by India - no less than Oliver Tambo - to flee South Africa. India supported the opening of an ANC office in New Delhi. African students also studied in India. The collection of oral histories both in India and South Africa is urgent. While India maintained a sanctions and boycott policy, there is another area that calls for some study. When the independent homelands of Transkei and Venda were established - although all Indian nationals carried a notice in their passports saying it was not valid for travel in South Africa, many Indian professionals (doctors, teachers, lecturers) settled in these homelands (coming in through, for example, Lesotho). Their histories in these homelands need recording.

India also has some meaning in the life histories of white politicians - some of them liberals like Jan Hofmeyr who were sympathetic to Indian South Africans but the vast majority not. While Smuts features in Gandhi's life as a man who betrayed a promise thus leading to a renewed satyagraha campaign in 1908 with the burning of the passes, India features in bigger terms in Smuts's life as his biographer Hancock details in a chapter 'the Quarrel with India'.<sup>89</sup> The

biography of Smuts by his own son is coloured by prejudice against Indians and is focussed on the question of who got the better of whom - Smuts or Gandhi? In his opinion 'His [Gandhi's] outwitting by my father had been complete, and it was in this sense of failure that he had set out dejectedly to brood and scheme in India'.<sup>90</sup> Smuts was again deeply caked in mud when India imposed sanctions and took the case to the UN. In his life, India became a source of his international humiliation. Smuts's own thoughts on India's role in the 1940s as evidenced in a letter written to a friend are worth noting :

South Africa is a little epic of European civilisation on a dark continent. India is threatening this noble experiment ... All along this east coast of Africa from Mombasa to Durban and ultimately to Cape Town they are invading, infiltrating, penetrating in all sorts of devious ways to reverse the role which we have thought our destiny ... We stand for something which will go and be lost to the world, if India gets control of eastern Africa.<sup>91</sup>

His successor as Prime Minister, D. F. Malan, thought no differently. When relations between India and South Africa took a particular turn for the worse in 1953 and 1954 Malan accused Nehru of having designs on Africa and particularly criticised Nehru's support for anti-colonial and anti-white sentiments on the continent.<sup>92</sup> The role of India in Afrikaner nationalist thought deserves more detailed analysis. While John Coetzee highlights the influential works of Geoffrey Cronje in shaping and reflecting Afrikaner nationalist thought and in particular analyses key books he wrote, he stops short of an analysis of *Afrika sonder die Asiaat* which Cronje wrote in 1946.<sup>93</sup> From the 1930s, Afrikaner intellectuals and politicians lobbied against the small Indian shopkeeper seeing him as a danger to the *volk* in the rural towns. This was an important issue along with the *swart gevaar* rally.

In conclusion, while this historiographical account has pointed to the predominance of the political, it is likely that future studies will move in the direction of the cultural. There is interest from India in Indian South African history as evidenced in the publication of an issue of the *Africa Quarterly* in 1999 which creatively drew on South African and Indian authors.<sup>94</sup> A new wave of immigrants have now come from India, a Sikh temple is opened in Sandton, Indian South Africans have greater access to India's arts and dances, homes have access to Sony, B4U and NDTV, Bollywood's popularity has been resurrected, Mittal steels is an established presence in south Africa and on our freeways the little Tata Indica weaves its way, and so the influences continue. Indian South Africans are now confident South Africans, which allows them to explore their cultural identity in a freer manner than before. The right to be and the right to be proud too are entrenched. The role of the Indian government in promoting

Indian culture and in maintaining important Gandhi heritage sites are all aspects of a new role in South Africa, one beyond this paper. A growing India-South Africa dialogue amongst academics in the humanities can provide new interactions, new debates, new paradigms and new historiographies and is to be welcomed.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> R. E. Gregory, *India and East Africa : a History of Race Relations within the British Empire 1890-1939* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971).
- <sup>2</sup> This is undated but was definitely post 2000. See p.7.
- <sup>3</sup> K. Hiralal has written a paper highlighting early works, for instance, by white liberals which this paper neglects and S. Bhana and U. Mesthrie have, for instance, considered the historiography around passive resistance. See K. Hiralal, 'Trends in South African Historiography', Unpublished paper, undated and S. Bhana and U.S. Mesthrie, 'Passive Resistance Among Indian South Africans : a Historiographical Survey', *South African Historical Journal*, Nov. 1984, No. 16, pp.118-31.
- <sup>4</sup> See E.S.Reddy, 'Indian Slaves in South Africa : A Little Known Aspect of Indian -South African Relations' in E.S. Reddy, *India and South Africa* (Occasional Papers No.1, University of Durban-Westville, 1991), pp. 26-28.
- <sup>5</sup> R.C.H. Shell, *Children of Bondage : A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 2001), pp.41, 51, 59.
- <sup>6</sup> Email communication to author from Nigel Worden, 8 May 2006.
- <sup>7</sup> H. Tinker, *A New System of Slavery : the Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920* (London, Oxford University Press, 1974).
- <sup>8</sup> S. Bhana, *Indentured Indian Emigrants to Natal 1860-1902 : A Study Based on Ships' Lists* (New Delhi, Promilla and Co., 1991), p.17. The list could, however, look different if one added all the West Indian islands. The West Indies drew in a total of 534 109.
- <sup>9</sup> L.M Thompson, 'Indian Immigration into Natal, 1860-1872', in *the Archives Year Book for South African History* (Pretoria, Government Printer, 1952, Vol.2).
- <sup>10</sup> A.G. Choonoo, 'Indentured Indian Immigration into Natal, 1860-1911, with Particular Reference to its Role in the Development of the Natal Sugar Industry' (MA, University of Natal, 1967).
- <sup>11</sup> F. Ginwala, 'Class, Consciousness and Control : Indian South Africans 1860-1946 (DPhil, Oxford, 1974).
- <sup>12</sup> Y.S. Meer *et. al Documents of Indentured Labour Natal 1851-1917* ( Durban, Institute of Black Research, 1980). While the book represents a collective effort and Fatima Meer is not listed as an author, she was the key inspiration behind the volume.
- <sup>13</sup> J.B. Brain, *Christian Indians in Natal 1860-1911 : An Historical and Statistical Study* (Cape Town, Oxford University Press, 1983).
- <sup>14</sup> S. Bhana (eds), *Essays on Indentured Indians in Natal* ( Leeds, Peepal Tree Press, 1991).
- <sup>15</sup> See M.J. Tayal, 'Indentured Labour in Natal, 1890-1911', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XIV, No.4, 1978.
- <sup>16</sup> M. Swan, *Gandhi : The South African Experience* (Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1985), pp. 19-28, 246,281-7. See also M.Swan, 'The 1913 Natal Indian Strike', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 10, No.2, April 1984, pp. 239-58.
- <sup>17</sup> See R. Mesthrie, 'Prolegomena to the History of Indian Languages in South Africa', *Journal of the University of Durban-Westville*, New Series, 1, 1984); R. Mesthrie, 'New Lights from old Languages : Indentured Languages and the Experience of Indentureship in South Africa' in Bhana (ed.), *Essays*, pp. 189-208 and R. Mesthrie, *Language in Indenture : A Sociolinguistic History of Bhojpuri-Hindi in South Africa* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1991)
- <sup>18</sup> See Bhana (ed.), *Essays*, pp. 89-116.
- <sup>19</sup> See for instance, S. Bhana and J. Brain, *Setting Down Roots, Indian Migrants in South Africa, 1860-1911* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1990), especially chapters 1 and 2; J. Brain, 'Indentured and Free Indians in the Economy of Colonial Natal' in B. Guest and J. M Sellers (ed.), *Enterprise and Exploitation in a Victorian Colony* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1985).
- <sup>20</sup> J.B. Brain and P. Brain, 'The Health of Indentured Indian Migrants to Natal, 1860-1911', *South African Medical Journal*, Vol. 62, 1982, pp. 739-42 and 'Nostalgia and Alligator Bite : Morbidity and Morality Among Indian Migrants to Natal, 1884-1891', *South African Medical Journal*, Vol. 65, 1984, pp. 98-102.
- <sup>21</sup> Bhana, *Ships' Lists*.
- <sup>22</sup> B. Freund, 'The Rise and Decline of an Indian Peasantry in Natal', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 18, No.2, January 1991, pp. 263-87.
- <sup>23</sup> G. Vahed, 'Constructions of Community and Identity among Indians in Colonial Natal, 1860-1919 : The Role of the Muharram festival', in *Journal of African History*, 43, 2002; Uprooting, Rerooting : Culture,

Religion, and Community Among Indentured Muslim Migrants in Colonial Natal, 1860-1911' in *South African Historical Journal*, 45, 2001; 'Indentured Masculinity in Colonial Natal, 1860-1910' in L. Luzgane and R. Morrell (eds), *African Masculinities : Men in Africa from the late Nineteenth Century to the Present* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Press, 2005).

<sup>24</sup> Nafisa Essop Sheik, 'Labouring under the Law : Gender and the Legal Administration of Indian Immigrants under Indenture in Colonial Natal, 1860-1907' (M.Soc, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> P. Badassy, 'And my blood became hot' : Crimes of Passion, Crimes of Reason : An Analysis of the Crimes Against Masters and Mistresses by the Domestic Servants, Natal, 1880-1920' (MA, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> C.G. Henning, *The Indentured Indian in Natal 1860-1917* (New Delhi, Promilla and Co. Publishers, 1993).

<sup>27</sup> See by way of comparison the work of Marina Carter, *Voices from Indenture : Experiences of Indian Migrants in the British Empire* (London and New York, Leicester University Press, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Email from Surendra Bhana, 8 February 2006.

<sup>29</sup> 'Left to the Imagination" : Indian Nationalism and Female Sexuality in Trinidad', Paper presented to Department of History and Institute for Historical Research, South African and Contemporary History Seminar, University of the Western Cape, 23 May, 1997.

<sup>30</sup> T.G. Ramamurthi, *South Africa India : Patnership in Freedom and Development* (New Delhi, ICCR and New Age International Publishers, 1995), p.144.

<sup>31</sup> Swan, *Gandhi*, pp.2-8.

<sup>32</sup> F. Meer, *Portrait of Indian South Africans*, pp.16-17; R. Morell and V. Padayachee, 'Indian Merchants and Dukhwalas in the Natal Economy, c.1875-1914, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 17. no.1, March 1991.

<sup>33</sup> Bhana and Brain, *Setting Down Roots*, chapters 3,4,6,7; see also pp.225ff in Guest and Sellers (eds), *Enterprise and Exploitation*.

<sup>34</sup> Bhana and Brain, *Setting Down Roots*, chapter 5.

<sup>35</sup> K. Hiralal, 'The Natal Indian Trader : a Struggle for Survival' (MA, University of Durban-Westville, 1991).

<sup>36</sup> G. Vahed, '"A Man of Keen Perceptive Facilities" : Aboobaker Amod' in *Historia*, Vol. 50, No.1, May 2005, pp.49-74; G. Vahed, 'Muslim Marriages in South Africa : the Limitations and Legacy of the Indian Relief Act of 1914', in *Journal of Zulu History*, 21, 2003.

<sup>37</sup> P. Badassy, 'Turbans and Top Hats : Indian Interpreters in the Colony of Natal, 1880-1910', Hons essay, University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal, 2005.

<sup>38</sup> Gregory, *India and East Africa*, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> R. Huttenback, *Gandhi in South Africa : British Imperialism and the Indian Question, 1860-1914* (Ithaca, 1971) also *Racism and Empire : White Settlers and Colored Immigrants in the British Self-Governing Colonies 1830-1910* (Ithaca, 1976); B. Pillay, *British Indians in the Transvaal : Trade, Politics and Imperial Relations, 1885-1906* (London, 1976); B. Sacks, *South Africa, An Imperial Dilemma : Non-European and the British Nation 1902-1914* (Albuquerque, 1967).

<sup>40</sup> B. Pachai, *The International Aspects of the South African Indian Question 1860-1971* (Cape Town, Struik, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> Swan, *Gandhi*, pp.38,41,60-61,84-5.

<sup>42</sup> For all the resolutions see *The Indian National Congress* ( Madras, G.A. Natesan, 1917).

<sup>43</sup> *Bombay's Protest Against the Treatment of Indians in South Africa by the Colonists, 29 January 1908*, p.5

<sup>44</sup> *Souvenir of the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa, 1906-1914*.

<sup>45</sup> See J. Brown, 'The Making of A Critical Outsider' in J.M. Brown and M. Prozesky (eds), *Gandhi and South Africa : Principles and Politics* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, 1996). pp. 22-23.

<sup>46</sup> The key autobiographical texts are *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, Second Edition, 1940, first published in 1927) and *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, Second Edition, 1950, first published in 1928). See Swan, *Gandhi*, p.xv.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Dhupelia-Mesthrie, *Gandhi's Prisoner? the Life of Gandhi's Son, Manilal* (Cape Town, Kwela Books, 2004), p. 26.

- <sup>48</sup> See C. Markowitz, *The Ungandhian Gandhi : the Life and After Life of the Mahatma* ( London, Anthem Press, 2004) , p.46.
- <sup>49</sup> E.S. Reddy, 'India and the Anglo-Boer War', unpublished paper, undated, pp.3-4.
- <sup>50</sup> See D. Grant, 'Service of Veterinary Hospitals in South Africa, 1899-1902'; 'Indian Subordinate Veterinary Department'; 'Casualties and Memorials to the Indian Contingent to South Africa 1899-1902', 'Indian Transport Corps', 'Bronze Medals to Indians', 'Casualty Roll' Unpublished research papers.
- <sup>51</sup> Email from E.S. Reddy, 11 May 2006; Reddy, 'India and the Anglo-Boer War', p.6; see also E. Itzkin, 'Indian War Memorial : Selective Memories of the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902'. One memorial may be found at Steyn Street, Observatory, Johannesburg. At the end of the war there were 9 125 Afrikaner prisoners in India.
- <sup>52</sup> Email from E.S. Reddy, 11 May 2006. I have not managed to obtain this paper.
- <sup>53</sup> U.S. Mesthrie, 'From Sastri to Deshmukh : The Role of the Government of India's Representatives in South Africa, 1927-1946 (University of Natal, Durban, 1987), p.44; see also S. Bhana and B. Pachai (eds), *A Documentary of Indian South Africans* (Cape Town, and Johannesburg, David Philip, 1984), pp. 153, 156.
- <sup>54</sup> H. Tinker, *Separate and Unequal : India and the Indians in the British Commonwealth* ( Delhi, Vikas, Publishing House, 1976).
- <sup>55</sup> S.R Mehrotra, *India and the Commonwealth 1885-1929* ( London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1965).
- <sup>56</sup> This accounts for publications such as D. Yash Dev, *Our Countrymen Abroad : A Brief Survey of the Problems of Indians in Foreign Lands* (Allahabad, 1940); N. Gangulee, *Indians in the Empire Overseas : A Survey* (London, 1947), C. Kondapi, *Indians Overseas 1838-1949* (Bombay, 1951) and N.V. Rajkumar, *Indians Outside India : A General Survey* ( New Delhi, 1951).
- <sup>57</sup> See Mesthrie, 'From Sastri to Deshmukh', pp. 45-46.
- <sup>58</sup> Mehrotra, *India and the Commonwealth*, pp.120-21.
- <sup>59</sup> Mesthrie, 'From Sastri to Deshmukh', pp. 48,189.
- <sup>60</sup> Mehrotra, *India and the Commonwealth*, pp. 120-21, 149-60.
- <sup>61</sup> Mesthrie, 'From Sastri to Deshmukh'.
- <sup>62</sup> This point was made at the colloquium by Dr Kakarala Sitharamam.
- <sup>63</sup> Sastri College no longer functions as a school.
- <sup>64</sup> E. Pahad, *The Development of Indian Political Movements in South Africa, 1924-1946'* (Phd, University of Sussex, 1972).
- <sup>65</sup> Free passages were provided to any Indian wishing to return to India under the Indian Relief Act of 1914 but in 1921 bonuses were provided.
- <sup>66</sup> The conditions of indenture provided that on expiry of the contract Indians could either remain in the colony or secure a return passage to India. Because of the three pound tax should they remain in the colony 32 506 formerly indentured workers returned to India between 1902-1913. See U.S Mesthrie, 'Reducing the Indian Population to a Manageable Compass : A Study of the South African Assisted Emigration Scheme of 1927', *Natalia*, No.15, November 1985, p.37.
- <sup>67</sup> See Mesthrie, 'Reducing the Indian Population' pp.36-56.
- <sup>68</sup> The details of this is dealt with in U.S. Mesthrie, 'The Cape Town agreement and its Effect on Natal Indian Politics, 1927-1932', Paper presented to Conference of the History of Natal and Zululand, University of Natal, Durban, 1985. ,
- <sup>69</sup> Email from E.S.Reddy, 11 May 2006. Isabel Hofmeyr's paper at the colloquium on the *Modern Review* marks a significant move in this direction.
- <sup>70</sup> S. Bhana and G. Vahed, *The Making of a Political Reformer : Gandhi in South Africa, 1893-1914* (New Delhi, Manohar Publishers, 2005), pp.13, 51-92 and Appendix 1. The authors undertook research in India and uncovered manuscript material in the archives pertaining to Gandhi's stay in South Africa.
- <sup>71</sup> D. Chetty, 'Identity, Interpretation and "Indianness" : Some Stories from the Natal Cane Fields', Paper presented to ASSA conference 1991'
- <sup>72</sup> H. Kuper, *Indian People in Natal* (Natal, University Press, 1960)
- <sup>73</sup> R. Ebr.-Vally, *Kala Pani, Caste and Colour in South Africa* (Cape Town and Maroelana, Kwela Books and South African History Online, 2001), pp.151ff
- <sup>74</sup> Dr Goonam, *Coolie Doctor : An Autobiography* (Durban, Madiba Publications, 1991) especially chapters 9 and 10.

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- <sup>75</sup> U. Dhupelia-Mesthrie, *Sita : the Memoirs of Sita Gandhi* (Durban and Pretoria, Local History Museum and South African History Online, 2003), pp. 29-46.
- <sup>76</sup> J. Naidoo, *Coolie Location* (London, SA Writers, 1990)
- <sup>77</sup> See in particular chapter 4.
- <sup>78</sup> Dhupelia-Mesthrie, *The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal*, pp. 158-161, 200, 205-6, 216ff, 262-3, 275-79.
- <sup>79</sup> U. Dhupelia-Mesthrie, *From Cane Fields to Freedom : A Chronicle of Indian South African Life* (Cape Town, Kwela Books, 2000), p.22.
- <sup>80</sup> See E.S Reddy (ed.), *Dr Yusuf Mohamed Dadoo* ( Durban and Bellville, Madiba Publishers and UWC Historical and Cultural Centre, 1991), especially pp. 16-32; Goonam, *Coolie Doctor*, pp.39-44, N. Babenia with I Edwards, *Memoirs of a Saboteur :Reflections on my Political Activity in India and South Africa* (Bellville, Mayibuye Books, 1995), part 1. For Cachalia see Pahad, 'Indian Political Movements', pp. 260-62.
- <sup>81</sup> Mesthrie, 'From Sastri to Deshmukh', p. 269.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 299-300.
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.297,300.
- <sup>85</sup> E.S. Reddy, 'Introduction' in Ramamurthi (ed.), *South Africa India*, p. 5.
- <sup>86</sup> See E.S. Reddy 'Pandit Nehru and the Unity of the Oppressed People of South Africa' also 'India and the Struggle Against Apartheid' in Reddy, *India and South Africa*, pp. 1-7, 18-20.
- <sup>87</sup> Ramamurthi (ed), *South Africa India*.
- <sup>88</sup> Vol 1 only has been published thus far and Vol. 2 is expected later this year. See SADET, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa Vol 1 (1960-1970)* (Cape Town, Zebra Press, 2004).
- <sup>89</sup> See W. K. Hancock, *Smuts: the Fields of Force, 1919-1950* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp.450ff.
- <sup>90</sup> J.C. Smuts, *Jan Christian Smuts* (Cape Town, Cassell and Co., 1952), p.106.
- <sup>91</sup> J. van der Poel (ed.) *Smuts Papers Vol. 111*, p.101, Smuts to Gillett, 27 October 1946; see also p.47, Smuts to Gillett, 9 March 1946.
- <sup>92</sup> Pachai, *International Aspects*, pp. 248-9.
- <sup>93</sup> J.M. Coetzee, 'The Mind of Apartheid : Geoffrey Cronje, (1907-)' , *Social Dynamics*, 17, 1, 1991, pp. 1-35.
- <sup>94</sup> *Africa Quarterly*, Vol. 39, Number 2, 1999.