

Integration Hindustani Style?

On the Migration, History and Diaspora of Hindustanis

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Amsterdam, 2011
Free University Amsterdam

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Integration Hindustani Style?

On the Migration, History and Diaspora of Hindustanis

Prof. Dr. Chan E.S. Choenni

Inaugural lecture delivered upon the acceptance of the Endowed Chair Lalla Rookh Hindustani migration as established by the Diaspora Chair Lalla Rookh, at the Faculty of Arts of the VU University Amsterdam on 6th June 2011.

VU University Amsterdam

Dear Rector Magnificus, members of the board of the Diaspora Chair Lalla Rookh, ladies and gentlemen.

1. Lalla Rookh and Migration

Yesterday it was exactly 138 years ago that the first indentured labourers from British India set foot in Suriname, then a Dutch colony in South America. Having left Calcutta port on 26 February 1873 with 410 indentured immigrants on board, it took the sailing ship Lalla Rookh over three months to cross the Kala Pani (black water). Finally, on 4 June 1873, she arrived in Suriname with 399 British Indians left, as 11 had died on the way. Due to health reasons, the immigrants¹ did not disembark immediately, but one day later, on 5 June. These migrant workers *avant la lettre* belonged to the first batch of a total of 64 sailing vessels and steam boats heading for Suriname. My endowed Chair has been named after this very first sailing ship with Hindustani immigrants destined for Suriname.²

Between 1873 and 1916 – a time span of 44 years – 34,034³ men and women were shipped off to work on Surinamese plantations (De Klerk 1953, Verkade 1937, Adhin 1969, Tinker 1974, Emmer 1986, Emmer 1989, Emmer 1992, Bhagwanbali 1996, Hoefte 1998). A small group of children accompanied their parents.

Slavery was abolished in Suriname in 1863. Due to the expected shortage of labour the ailing plantation economy was on the verge of collapse. Next to a compensation of no less than 300 Dutch guilders per freed slave, the powerful planter class existing of plantation owners, had imposed a ten-year State Supervision. Thus liberated slaves were made to work on the plantations for another ten years (Siwipersad 1979, Schalkwijk 2010). Since this State Supervision would end in 1873, the highly influential plantation owners were very worried about the work that needed to be done in the fields and factories. Thus, a new labour force was urgently required to continue to work on the plantations; work that was previously done by former slaves. Many of those emancipated slaves no longer wanted to do the heavy work, such as cutting sugar cane in the killing (tropical) heat. Not even when offered payment.

¹ We have used the term ‘Hindustani indentured labourer’ and ‘immigrant’ alternately, as the immigrants also included children. Children under the age of ten were not allowed to work. As such, they cannot be regarded as indentured labourers. In the literature the choice for a particular term varies.

² Lalla Rookh meaning ‘tulip cheeked’ is the title and name of an Indian princess. She is glorified in an epic poem by the 19th century Irish poet Thomas Moore.

³ Between 1873 and 1916, 34,514 had originally left Calcutta, while 34,034 immigrants actually arrived. In other words, 480 (1.4%) people had died (De Klerk 1953). The number of 34,034 immigrants is more or less considered to be the benchmark. However, some researchers mention different numbers. Bhagwanbali (2010) for instance reports a number of 34,395, while Emmer (1989) brings the total down to 33,973. Snellen (1933) edges up to 34,848 and Verkade (1937) speaks of 33,773 immigrants. In addition, over 3,000 Hindustanis from the adjacent colonies in the West Indies migrated to Suriname. In all, more than 37,000 Hindustanis left for Suriname.

In 1873 – a time span of six months – five ships docked in Suriname with a total of 2,449 Hindustani immigrants aboard (De Klerk 1953:71-72, Verkade 1937: 175). So, there was a very clear nexus between the abolishment of slavery in 1863 and indentured labour that started ten years later. The continuation of producing bulk goods such as sugar, cocoa and coffee at competitive prices, was after all the main reason for wanting to have an indentured workforce in the first place (Hoefte 1998).

Coolie Treaty

Long before the abolishment of slavery in Suriname in 1863, Hindustani indentured labourers from British India had already been made to work in the neighbouring British colonies such as British Guyana (as of 1838) and Trinidad (from 1845) thus successfully saving the plantation economy. Although the British had promised the Dutch as early as 1862 to recruit indentured labourers in British India, they were rather reluctant. After much begging and pleading, the Dutch were finally able to recruit the first workers in 1872 for indentured labour in Suriname. To this end, both countries had signed the Recruitment Treaty, also coined the Coolie Treaty, in 1870⁴; a treaty that had been drafted earlier.

Britain had already signed a similar agreement with France in 1861 to ‘hire’ Hindustani indentured labourers. It was this very agreement that formed the basis for the Coolie Treaty with the Dutch government in 1870. The British imposed strict demands on the Dutch, specifically concerning the wages the indentured labourers should receive⁵. Extensive discussion took place regarding the duties to be performed and the wages to be received. As shows from correspondence with the British government, it was eventually decided that for the heavy work on the plantations and in the factories, abled-bodied men would earn 60 cents a day versus 40 cents for the women. Within the context of that time and all the more when compared to the wages in British India, 60 cents a day proved a pretty fair deal.

The Netherlands had sold its Dutch possessions on the Coast of Guinea (present-day Ghana) to Britain at a very good price, and it had gained control over the northern part of the island of Sumatra. As such, the Dutch were well off with this Anglo-Dutch deal to recruit Hindustani indentured labourers (Kruijer 1968, also see Tinker 1974). St. George El Mina Castle where former slaves were locked up, was one of the Dutch possessions that was ceded to the British.

⁴ At the time the derogatory term coolie (an unskilled labourer or porter usually in or from the Far East hired for low or subsistence wages, according to the *Merriam Webster Dictionary*) was used to refer to these indentured labourers.

⁵ In return for Dutch rights to recruit Indian labour, the British government demanded some overseas possessions belonging to the Netherlands. The Dutch did not approve immediately: ‘The government has carefully considered the objections of the Dutch House of Commons regarding its hesitance to approve the treaty with Great Britain, as signed on 9 September 1870, and has also closely reviewed the treaties concerning the recruitment of coolies in British India and the cession of Dutch possessions on the Coast of Guinea to England.’ See: ‘Tractaat tusschen Nederland en Groot-Brittannië regarding Sumatra, 21 November 1871, Handelingen der Staten-Generaal 1871/1872, number 1-269.’

The British government delayed matters as well, since the Government of India – read: the colonial Indian government – was pressing for high wages and a free-return passage to India at the end of the five-year indenture. The Netherlands did push for longer indentures, but to no avail (Tinker 1974: 112).

⁶ See: correspondence between the British/Indian government and the Dutch government in ‘West Bengal State Archives’ of the ‘Government of Bengal’.

The treaty consists of no less than 27 articles stipulating the rights and duties of the indentured labourers. The recruited workers signed contracts on a 'voluntary' basis binding them to five years of labour. Hence the term *indentured labourers* (Temorshuizen 2009). After those five years they were entitled to a free-return passage to British India. One should keep in mind that this deal involving two states - whereby the one state (the Netherlands) would hire subjects of the other state (Great Britain) for a definite period of time – also involved mutual obligations.

Urgent need

The British Indian government demanded protection of its subjects as well as supervision that the recruitment treaty was observed properly. To this end, a British consul was stationed in Suriname. The fact that the Netherlands had given in to the demands of the British Indian government and had made quite an effort to get Indian contract labourers to work in Suriname, has everything to do with the urgency to fill their labour needs. In fact, between 4 June 1873 and 8 April 1874 no less than eight batches carrying 3,833 Hindustani immigrants reached Surinamese shores (Verkade 1937: 175); in other words, well over 11% of the total number of contractual workers that would eventually come to Suriname. Taking into account that the entire time span of Hindustani indentured labourers lasted more than 40 years, this clearly illustrates the urgent need for workers (De Klerk 1953, Emmer 1989). Given the pressing need for Hindustani immigrants, recruitment and selection procedures were not applied too strictly. This shows from the fact that more than one third of the immigrants on the Lalla Rookh did not have a rural background, while they were required to work on the land in tropical temperatures. What's more, glib recruiters often resorted to deceptive practices regarding the work the potential immigrants were supposed to, but also regarding the destination. Many immigrants were told that they would journey to *Sri Ram Desh* (the land of Rama) or *Sri Ram Tapu* (the island of Rama). The name Suriname was bastardized to Sri Ram, the holy land of the 'avatar' Rama, as such associating the country with paradise where a lot of money could be made under decent working conditions and in service of the government.

Notwithstanding the hasty selection, the immigration proved a big success during those first years; that is, according to the perspective of the Dutch colonial government. It was customary to submit an annual colonial report concerning (the state of) the colony Suriname to the Dutch House of Commons. Suriname's first Agent General of Immigration, Cateau van Roosevelt, reported the following regarding the year 1875:

'Immigrants from British India had already shown a discipline and diligence that has only evolved even more over time. Therefore, one may safely assume that many of the largest plantations owe their very survival to these immigrants. This is mainly the case for the sugar plantations, but there are some cocoa plantations as well, which are almost entirely run by coolies. Had we not imported these coolies, most plantations in the old colony would have been done for, as one cannot rely on the Creoles at all to work on the sugar plantations (Creoles refer to the 'liberated slaves', C.C.). Besides, it would have been nearly impossible to pay the high wages Creoles were now entitled to, had these immigrants not come around the time that State Supervision was about to end'. (Colonial Report 1876, enclosure c).

Cateau van Roosevelt also said that 'coolies' looked awfully well. This also applied to the children. Besides, according to Van Roosevelt, the Surinamese climate fully suited the constitution of the immigrants. He continued: *'the children born in Suriname are bigger and heavier than the children born before the departure in India or during the journey'*.

Partly due to the frantic selection, a relatively large number of contractual workers arriving in the period 1873-1874 had succumbed to the hardships endured on the journey as well as on the plantations. As a result, no less than 18.5% of the Lalla Rookh immigrants died of disease or exhaustion. In the first six months – in 1873 – 17% had perished. And in 1874 this percentage had even gone up to 19% (De Klerk 1953).

Temporary ban

Due to the high mortality rate the British government unilaterally decided to suspend immigration to Suriname, stating that certain conditions in the Treaty had not been met. This suspension which interrupted the constant flow of Hindustani indentured labourers, led to an economic depression in the colony. In the colonial report of 1877 aforementioned Agent General of Immigration, Cateau van Roosevelt, refers to timing of the suspension as being unfortunate:

'the lack of urgently required agricultural workers impacted the country's economy to such an extent that cattle and other assets considerably decreased in value. Houses and plantations were sold at ridiculously low prices or, when offered for sale, did not spur any buyers. To give you an example, on 14 December 1876 the sugar plantations Goudmijn and Rozenburg and others were sold for 15,550 guilders' (Colonial report 1877).

During this period of suspension the Dutch government was subsequently forced to give in to the demands of the British authorities. Improvements were made, amongst others in the field of health care. Medical doctors, for instance, were given an additional training courses, which eventually resulted in a fully qualified medical school a few years later. Because of these very developments Surinam enjoyed excellent health care provisions for years (Van der Kuyp 1973). The recruitment system, the accommodation in the depots, the transportation *i.c.* the facilities on the ships, it was all subject to improvement.

The Agent General of Immigration, Cateau van Roosevelt, was seen as some kind of ombudsman in favour of the indentured labourers. He played an important role when it came to improving abovementioned aspects. As such, he was lovingly called 'coolie papa' by the Hindustani contract labourers.

Migration resumed

When the improvements began to pay off, the British government agreed to resume the migration of British Indians to Suriname in 1877. From that moment onwards, recruitment became more focused and meticulous, allowing more workers to be shipped off to Suriname with a rural background. Much to the approval of all parties, some transports were entirely casualty-free during the long journey. This did not go by unnoticed in the colony. Those responsible for the colonial report were quick in passing on this news to the Dutch House of Commons, not failing to mention that after a journey of three months no one had died on the *Erne* in 1890. Upon arrival the ship was inspected:

'The immigrants looked well and had no reason to complain. The ship was as clean as a hound's tooth, on the upper deck as well as below decks. The ventilation system was in order, as were the food supplies and medical attention. Not a single death, 5 births instead.' (Colonial report 1890).

However, since the working conditions on the plantations remained bad, part of these workers nonetheless perished during the indentureship – more than one in seven – because of exhaustion and disease (Bhagwanbali 2010: 152)⁷.

⁷ Bhagwanbali states that 5,490 immigrants – 16% of the total number – had died during the period of indentureship. Unfortunately, he does not explain how he arrived at this conclusion. He refers to reports that encompass the period 1850-1900, whereas the Hindustani contract labour – excluding a possible renewal of contracts because of the last batch – ended in 1921. After all, the last transport arrived on the *Dewa* in 1916. This might at the very least be regarded as inaccurate. As such, not all sources cited by Bhagwanbali are accounted for (Bhagwanbali 2010: 152)

2. Why Hindustani indentured labour?

Before Hindustanis were recruited, experiments were taking place with indentured labourers from Madeira, China and the neighbouring island of Barbados. This proved less successful. The largest group, namely the Chinese, who had been working on the Surinamese plantations as early as 1853, opted for jobs in the trade sector once their five-year term had ended. Besides, in 1872 the Chinese government prohibited indentured labour from China. Imported workers from Barbados did not do the trick either as they failed to live up to the planters' rosy expectations (Steel 1923: 22. See also: Colonial report 1872).

Given the experience in the British colonies the image emerged that Hindustanis were particularly suited for heavy field work. This was also the case in Suriname. Not only as temporary labourers, but also as 'colonists'. Their zeal (work ethic), resilience, love for agriculture and trade, but also their frugal lifestyle, their sobriety and their frontier mentality, is praised in various studies. The researcher Karsten is one of them:

- *'In the long run the British Indians will form a population in Suriname, equipped with characteristics that will benefit the country' ...*
- *'From an economic viewpoint these immigrants have become a blessing to the colony' ...*
- *'As we have mentioned before, they were first destined to replace the liberated workforce on the large agricultural plantations. And they have proven to be quite up to the task. That said, it is a fact though that their immigration has not halted the further downfall of the plantations, but they are not to blame for this. Other independent factors also played a role, such as the outbreak of crop diseases and increasing competition of other countries like Burma, Java, Brazil, Cuba that have a competitive edge on the world market (Cited in: De Klerk 1941: 103)*

Assessment Hindustani indentureship

Despite improvements in healthcare and transportation, the question remains how to characterise the system of Hindustani indentureship. To what degree did these contract workers come of their own free will? Was the migration to Suriname part of the labour migration system in British India? How did this cunning recruitment system work? And more importantly, how did it unfold in practice and how did the indentured labourers look upon all this? Did they and their descendants benefit from this system? Interesting questions that merit more research.

As for the assessment of the system of indentureship and its consequences, there is as yet no consensus, but rather controversy. Was it simply a new system of slavery, as is asserted by the British historian Hugu Tinker (Tinker 1974)? Given the inhumane practices fellow historian Radjinder Bhagwanbali opines that indentureship was a new manifestation (avatar in Hindi) of slavery. After all, many migrants workers had been duped and even kidnapped into indentured servitude under slave-like working conditions, their rights being violated almost on a daily basis by plantation owners and managers (Bhagwanbali 1996, Choenni 2003, Bhagwanbali 2010).

What if the system entailed a promise for a better life compared to the living conditions in British India? In this respect, historian Brij Lal postulates that most people, despite false pretext and deceit, will not immigrate to some far away land as inarticulate simpletons. As acting individuals (agency) most indentured labourers will claim their own independent space and chalk out their own paths of life (de Certeau 1984, Lal 2000, Ahearn 2001, Lal 2004)⁸.

Finally, we should ask ourselves whether this system can be compared to the labour migration of Europeans to North America as suggested by the historian Piet Emmer. This migration occurred in the same period and was aimed at improving one's life (Emmer 1989)⁹.

In the near future I hope to formulate an answer to these questions **I shall thus initiate PhD research regarding the reconstruction of the immigration of British Indians to Suriname. This research may shed new light on this chapter of Dutch-Surinamese history.(1)**

It was the former Dutch government that organised and financed recruitment, selection and transportation through agencies. A tremendous amount of unearthed material can be found in the annual (colonial) reports and in Dutch, British and Indian archives. Combined with historical and anthropological fieldwork in India in the main recruitment areas, the cooperation with the University of Allahabad and the Anton de Kom university in Suriname, an accurate picture can be drawn from the first Hindustani migration. Researcher Sashi Roopram is the first PhD candidate to unravel all this in a doctoral thesis.

Remarkably enough, hardly any research has been done on the second Hindustani migration, namely the trek from Suriname to the Netherlands, which peaked over 35 years ago. The Lalla Rookh Chair focuses on the Hindustani migration. **Therefore, I see it as my task to promote research on this new Hindustani migration trek (2).**

⁸ Agency is defined as the manner in which individuals use strategies and tactics to carve out a semi-independent domain of practice within the constraints placed on them by the powerful (de Certeau 1984).

Based on the analysis of well over 46,000 '*emigration passes*' of the contract labourers that left Northern India and went to Fiji, *Hindi folk songs* and answers of the indentured labourers themselves, historian Lal questions: '*the prevalent view of indentured labourers as inarticulate simpletons who were continually acted upon by forces beyond their control*'.

And he: '*recognizes them as actors in their own right who were consciously aware of their situation*', see: Lal 2000:101.

⁹ When evaluating the system of indentureship one should of course not look at the position of the indentured labourers after the migration, but rather assess the immigrant's mindset to improve his fate through indentureship. In this respect, one should note that the author Sandew Hira has quite unfairly classified me amongst what he calls 'scientific colonialism', see: Bhagwanbali 2010: 8-10.

3. How British Indians experienced their indentureship in Suriname

It is important to delve into the question as to what happened to the Hindustani indentured labourers after their term of servitude in Suriname had ended. Well over one third of them returned to India once their contract had expired. One part, namely 16%, appears to have perished during the indentureship as hard work took its toll in the form of disease and exhaustion (Bhagwanbali 2010:154). The rest eventually settled down as colonists in Suriname.

Little has been published regarding the personal experience of the Hindustani indentured labourers. There is the biography of indentured labourer and teacher Munshi Rahman Khan. Other than that, we have some fragments of the lives of some workers (Chandrasekhar 2010, Loo 2009). What is interesting is how these indentured Indians themselves perceived this period of contract labour and how they lived their lives during this work stint. It should be seen as a grave oversight on the part of the Dutch, and particularly Surinamese, (*i.c.* Hindustani) historians and researchers to have shown so little interest in the personal accounts of these pioneers.

And now that there is an interest to cover this part of history the indentured labourers are no longer alive. Reconstructing their stories can only be done through oral history. To this end, in-depth interviews with the children and grandchildren of these *Kalkatias* are required, as well as with professionals who were in touch with them, such as former civil servants and doctors. These will make up the most important data sources. The Hindustani contract labourers were called *Kalkatias* after the port of Kolkata - formerly known under its anglicised name Calcutta - from which they set off to Suriname.

It is of paramount importance that extensive research should take place as soon as possible. After all, those children and some grandchildren who still have recollections of these *Kalkatias* are themselves now in the autumn of their lives (3). It is not inconceivable that within five to ten years most of these so-called second and third generations (we consider the Hindustani indentured labourers to be the first generation) will no longer be amongst us. Quite often, those that weathered the indentureship, the so-called *survivors*, turned into successful colonists. As early as in 1910 a committee examining the – future – colonisation of Suriname concluded the following: *'Of the Asian races it is the British Indians that showed a disposition towards colonisation. Experience has taught us that, albeit in a material sense, that they are excellent colonists'* (Report on colonisation 1910:63).

Governor Staal (from 1916 to 1921 governor of Suriname) asserted in 1923:

'The British Indian grows crops intensively, continuously using the same patch of land; he has a natural tendency for farming; he prefers to settle down in a place that allows him to sell milk and other products – in other words, where he can trade his goods. That is his nature: he is frugal and intent on making money so as to advance in life' (Staal 1923:49).

In her doctoral thesis on white colonists, PhD candidate Eline Verkade wrote the following, thereby slightly overdoing it:

'British Indians are outstanding colonists – they hardly have any needs, simply an urge to advance. They are stingy rather than frugal.they crave for material prosperity....They also realise the benefits of cooperation and, in contrast to the other Surinamese groups (including the Dutch farmers in) they are capable of working together' (Verkade 1937:184).

In short: the Hindustani *survivors* proved very diligent and managed to deal with the killing tropical heat in Suriname. They handled the hard work on for instance the sugar and coffee plantations to everyone's content. The work they did was comparable to that of slave labour. After all, before the Hindustani indentured labourers set foot on Surinamese soil, this same work was done by slaves.

4. History of descendants

A fascinating question is of course what happened to the descendants of these contract labourers in Suriname and in the Netherlands. About one third (11,623) out of the total of more than 34,000 indentured labourers, returned to British India after their work stint had finished, taking with them their savings. What happened to those people and their descendants is equally interesting. Insofar as we know, little has been done to pursue this line of study. **Further research is required, although the memories of Suriname will have faded. In cooperation with the University of Allahabad more legwork could be done (4).**

Now, 138 years and five, even six generations later, the overall majority of the Kalkatiya descendants are living in Suriname and in the Netherlands. Before we address the question of what happened to the descendants in Suriname and in the Netherlands, it is first necessary to determine to what extent one should refer to them as an ethnic group.

By Hindustanis we refer to the people of Hindostan. In other words, the term for British India in Hindi. In English this is written as Hindustan. In Suriname and (later) in the Netherlands as well, the term -‘Hindostanen’- became popular to refer to the descendants of British Indian contract labourers. Until 1927 these men and women were referred to as British Indians. Since they had become Dutch citizens in that very year, the usage of the term Hindustani gradually became more common. Sometimes it is also spelled ‘Hindoestaan’. Yet this spelling is associated with only one cultural-religious group, namely the Hindu. ‘Hindustani’, however, refers to an ethnic group, thus including Hindus, Muslims, Christians and non-believers. In the Dutch version of this inaugural lecture, we have adhered to the Dutch spelling and shall thus use *Hindostanen* rather than *Hindustanen* (with a *u* instead of an *o*), as is done in Surinamese spelling. Nor shall we use *Hindoestanen*, as that would refer to Hindus only. In the English translation, we have consistently used the spelling *Hindustanis* when referring to *Hindostanen*.

If one wishes to refer to a ‘Hindustani’ with a Surinamese background, the qualification Hindustani is always added to the term ‘Surinamese’, both in Suriname as in the Netherlands. And sometimes only the name ‘Hindustani’ is used when referring to (members of) this group¹⁰. Apparently, there is this assumption that the term Surinamese primarily refers to the Creole group, whereas the Hindustanis in Suriname make up the largest group (Choenni 2009). In the Netherlands, too, the term ‘Surinamese’ is usually associated with Creoles. Hindustanis are seen as a separate group that is less well known and visible (Choenni 2003, 2009). Even after 138 years, and more specifically, after nearly 100 years - in 1916 when the last Hindustani indentured labourers emigrated to Suriname- Hindustanis have remained a clear identifiable group. A large part of their descendants did not mix with other ethnic groups¹¹.

Hindustanis form an Ethnic Group

The influential sociologist Max Weber who first made the distinction between racial and ethnical identification, defined ethnic groups as follows:

“those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for group formation; furthermore it does not matter whether an objective blood relationship exists” (Cited in Banton 2007: 19–35).

¹⁰ See also: Van Stipriaan 2007: 158

¹¹ There are no official data on mixed races in Suriname. In the first half of the 20th century some prominent Hindustani men mostly mixed with light-skinned Creoles. Even after that there was some degree of mixing with dark-coloured Creoles and other ethnic groups. Yet most Hindustanis, particularly those in rural areas, married within their own group or had a partner belonging to the same group. It is generally believed that the descendants of a mixed relationship between Hindustani and Creole (the so-called doglas) often felt more Creole than Hindustani. Studying the identity of these mixed people would generate more insight into their group identity. In the 2003/2004 census a new category was added: ‘Mixed’. Some 12% of the Surinamese population says it belongs to this group. Over the last years an increasing number of Hindustanis in the Netherlands tend to marry outside their ‘own ethnic’ group, mostly choosing native Dutch people as their partners.

Insofar as the identity 'Hindustani' is concerned, it involves the same origins and '*ancestral land*'. One is recognisable because of Hindustani *c.q.* Indian 'physical' traits. And since they did not they did not engage in interethnic marriage or romantic relationships neither in Suriname nor in the Netherlands, there is as yet still talk of 'racial' continuity. When using the term 'racial' descent, it is not so much a question of '*blood relationship*' but rather of physical traits that pegs someone as Hindustani *i.c.* 'Indian'. Besides, the majority of Hindustanis share a common culture. Whenever a census is conducted in Suriname, one's ethnic background is registered.¹².

According to research done by Martens and Verweij (1997: 74)¹³ 95% of Hindustanis in the Netherlands in 1996 viewed themselves as Hindustanis. Ten years later a follow-up study showed that a considerable part (93%) of this group still identified themselves as Hindustanis (SCP/SIM 2006). This suggests that there is indeed a Hindustani identity: common racial origins and a cultural identity setting them apart from others¹⁴. As such, Hindustanis form an ethnic group.

¹² During the military regime the 1980 census did not include ethnically based registrations out of ideological reasons. This proved a wrong decision, as much of the information gathered did not make any sense. In the following census (2003/2004), ethnic registration was reintroduced.

¹³ It concerns a survey conducted amongst primary family breadwinners. In this survey 'Sociale Positie en Voorzieningen gebruik allochtonen' (SPVA) Surinamese respondents were asked if they labelled themselves as part of a specific ethnic group.

¹⁴ Of course some individuals may not share the Hindustani culture, while they are racial-ethnic Hindustanis. The reverse also holds true, as there are individuals who have internalised Hindustani culture, but are not racial-ethnic Hindustanis. These numbers are small though.

5. The Ethnicity Perspective

Talking about a Hindustani group thus implies that there is a common identity, namely being a 'Hindustani'. Ethnic identity differs from other social identities in the sense that it involves common denominators such as origins, history and cultural heritage –for example language and religion- that are shared by members of an ethnic group. So, the crux of this particular type of identity is formed by the group's ethnicity, namely 'racial' background, common origins and culture. In essence, ethnicity comes down to having common origins, shared roots. Ethnicity suggests a sense of unity, a sense of kinship between members of an ethnic group based on common origins, culture and history (Bulmer 1996). It is of secondary importance whether such common descent really exists or not. The only thing that matters is whether people believe it to be true and experience a sense of belonging. Even if an ethnic group would be nothing more but an illusion, it still is an important factor to be reckoned with, when its members feel they actually belong to this community (Anderson 1996). Hence ethnicity involves a set of common denominators, such as race, culture and history, whether or not hypothetical. In this respect, origins and history are constantly reinterpreted and adapted, depending on the circumstances. As such, ethnicity is dynamic, subject to a changing social context. Yet the idea itself, this sense of continuity with the past, forms the core element of ethnicity.

Within the multi-ethnic societies that numerically accommodate a substantial part of the Hindustani diaspora, image and identity have proven to be essential concepts. This view is supported by researcher Narayana Jayaram who, in an overview of studies relating to the Indian diaspora, has stated the following about their specific identity:

"In the literature on the subject arereferences to such expressions as 'East Indians', 'Girmitiyas', the 'Asians', and the prefix 'Indo' being attached to Indians forming nationality groups in a country. For example there are such hyphenated expressions as 'Indo-Americans', 'Indo-Canadians', 'Indo-Guyanese', and 'Indo-Trinidadian' " (Jayaram 2009: 407).

Anthropological approaches

Cultural anthropology distinguishes three approaches to the study of ethnicity: the primordial, the instrumental and the constructivist approach.

- In the primordial approach ethnic identification is based on primordial (origins) ties of a group or culture (Geertz 1963).
- In the instrumental approach ethnicity is considered a product of political myths created by the cultural elite so as to remain in power.
- In the constructivist approach the context and dynamic aspect of ethnic identity are underlined. Here, ethnicity is mostly a product of social and historical changes, and not a static given as is the case with the primordial approach (Clifford 1997).

The literature regarding the Hindustani group and the Indian diaspora suggests that a combination of the primordial and constructivist approach of ethnicity offers the best starting point to study the Hindustani group in Suriname as well as the in Netherlands. Hindustanis usually vote ethnically and generally prefer representatives that share their own ethnic background when it comes to looking after their interests. (Dew 1977, Choenni 1982, Dabydeen & Somaroo 1987, Eriksen 1992, Hempel 2005.)¹⁵.

¹⁵ An instrumental approach of ethnicity, based on political myths as used by political leaders does not apply so much to the Hindustani group. This view is held by Hempel (2005) and based on a study in Mauritius where Hindustanis form the largest ethnic group: *"Despite the prevalence of instrumentalist approaches in the literature on ethnicity, little analytic attention has focused on whether, in fact, perceptions of group instrumentality do influence ethnic identifications. Using survey data from the multi-ethnic country of Mauritius, I address this issue by examining the relationship between political and economic instrumentalism and ethnic identification across ethnic groups. I find limited support for an instrumentalist approach as this approach explains only a modest amount of variance in ethnic identification. Moreover, significant differences emerge in forms and extent to which instrumentalism affects ethnic identification across ethnic groups. These results suggest a number of deficiencies in instrumentalist approaches to ethnicity and in approaches to ethnic mobilization that build on an instrumentalist premise."*

It should be noted though that during the last elections in Suriname (May 2010) younger generations in particular did not exactly vote 'ethnically'. The limited number of Hindustanis participating in the new parliament and government is the very result of this voting behaviour. Even more so, a considerable number of Hindustanis voted for a non-Hindustani president.

That is why I have opted for the ethnicity perspective when studying the Hindustani groups in Suriname and in the Netherlands. This, however, does create the impression that I have adopted an essentialist approach in the sense that only one aspect is being researched. Yet this ethnic lens has been chosen deliberately, as there is still little data available regarding the relevance of the ethnic factor *i.c.* the Hindustani identity¹⁶. Basic data is lacking, such as the exact number of Hindustanis in the Netherlands, but also numerical data regarding their position in society. It goes without saying that individual Hindustanis have a plural identity. For instance, it may involve a Dutch or Surinamese person, a man or woman. The person may be young or old(er), academically educated or low-literate.

¹⁶ Schiller *et al* state that: “*The new Diaspora studies perpetuate the problem by defining the unit of study as people who share an ancestry and a history of dispersal. The ethnic lens used by these scholars shapes -and, in our opinion, obscures- the diversity of migrants’ relationships to their place of settlement and to other localities around the World.*” See: Schiller N.G. *et al.* (2006: 613). These authors believe that surroundings and social networks have become more important for immigrants in British and American cities. Remarkably enough, through the growing ICT possibilities such as satellite TV, the internet and cheaper calling rates, the transnational identity appears to have strengthened, while the influence on the direct surroundings is on the decline.

6. Integration as an umbrella concept

To gain a better understanding of how Hindustanis developed both in Suriname and in the Netherlands, an umbrella concept is needed, allowing for as many factors as possible. This would involve studying the development of the socio-economic position on the one hand and culture and socio-cultural life on the other. The political incorporation, specifically the participation in and the identification with the receiving society is also important.

The extent to which this process took place within the Hindustani group may offer insight into the history of Hindustanis in Suriname and in the Netherlands. What matters is the question how Hindustanis gradually became part of the receiving society and how this group is functioning in both societies. To describe this process and chart their achieved position, existing concepts such as incorporation, conformity and adaptation will not do. Integration, however, is an umbrella concept. It may refer to the process of incorporating individuals as equals into society, but it may also relate to an achieved position or situation.

*I would define integration as the degree to which and the way in which a group that started out as a community of immigrants, has become part of the receiving society.*¹⁷

The *degree* to which refers to the achieved position and *the way in which* refers to the style. The *process* of becoming part of the receiving society relates to the process of integration. We shall use the terms integration styles and integration process when referring to these last two aspects.

Using an umbrella concept does have some disadvantages. However, the broad concept of integration is highly suitable to describe the development of a migrant group. The same has been done before me by Hans Vermeulen and Rinus Penninx (2000: 2-5) who, despite objections used the familiar and broad concept of integration when describing six ethnic groups in the Netherlands. They state the following:

“the term is preferable precisely because it covers a wider area and can function as an umbrella concept” (Vermeulen & Penninx 2000: 2-5).

¹⁷ Integration is an old, familiar concept and is often used as an umbrella concept. Verwey-Jonker have defined integration as *‘all possible ways in which groups of other ethnic origin may be incorporated in society* (Verwey-Jonker 1973:10). In the *Dictionary of race and ethnic relations* integration is described as follows: *“Integration describes a condition in which different ethnic groups are able to maintain group boundaries and uniqueness, while participating equally in the essential processes of production, distribution and government”* (Cashmore 1994: 148).

Three dimensions

I shall study and describe the development of the Hindustani group on the basis of three dimensions of integration:

- The socio-economic dimension;
- The cultural dimension;
- The political dimension¹⁸.

Integration can only be considered successful once an equal position or equality has been achieved when juxtaposed with relevant comparison groups (Penninx & Slijper 1999: 20).

This broad definition of integration fits in well with the four aspects of (social) integration as defined by Hartmut Esser (Esser 2000, Esser 2004). Acculturation is to be compared to cultural integration while one's acquired position belongs within the field of socio-economic integration. Esser distinguishes two other dimensions as well: interaction and identification. I would classify 'interaction' (with society at large) under cultural integration, and identification under the political domain.

What makes matters more complicated is that the concept of integration often remains limited to the cultural domain. Integration implies that the receiving society and immigrants at least respect each other's cultures and, due to increased interaction and communication, have merged certain elements, while at the same time remaining a cultural distinct group (Entzinger 1984:40, 41)¹⁹. Integration is sometimes seen as a political weapon and has as such become rather controversial in some circles. Former Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins defined the ideal integration as: "*not a flattening process of assimilation, but as equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance*" (cited in Vermeulen & Penninx 2000:2-3)²⁰

As stated before, I subscribe to a broader point of view regarding the concept of integration, thereby not limiting myself to the cultural domain alone. Two other dimensions of integration will also be taken into account in order to depict the history (the integration process) and the (achieved) position of Hindustanis. Insofar as the socio-economic dimensions are concerned, the following indicators must be considered: position on the labour market, income and level of education. Relevant ethnic groups may be used as comparison groups.

¹⁸I do not limit myself to the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of integration alone, as is the case in certain Dutch policy circles. According to a parliamentary inquiry in 2004 into the integration policy '*a person or group is integrated in Dutch society when they have acquired an equal legal position, when there is talk of equal participation insofar as the socio-economic domain is concerned, when they know how to speak and write Dutch and when all accepted values, norms and social behaviour patterns are respected.*

Integration is a two-way process: on the one hand, newcomers are expected to be prepared to integrate. On the other hand, Dutch society should enable this very integration.' (Tijdelijke Commissie onderzoek Integratie beleid, 2004) If a group does not fully participate on all levels, and does not participate in the political institutions of a society, full integration has not been achieved, I believe. Therefore, I prefer to include the political dimension as well.

¹⁹ Integration is seen as a middle-of-the-road compromise between assimilation and pluralism (Entzinger 1984: 35). Assimilation is the process in which a migrant group blends into the receiving society culturally, thereby giving up its own culture (Gordon 1964). Pluralism is a situation or process in which the migrant group fully keeps its own culture and only participates in society on a functional level; sometimes this is compared to separation.

²⁰ Schermerhorn defines integration as a development in which parts of society are brought in line with the aims and ambitions of the dominant group in society (Schermerhorn 1970: 4).

Integration can be considered a success once the group in question has achieved the same socio-economic position or is on its way of achieving this; all this within the framework of the group's stay in the receiving society.

When using the population contribution as a reference point to cover the political domain, representation in relevant institutions and sectors is an important indicator. Participation in and identification with the surrounding society are also relevant indicators. Within the context of political integration, research is done as to why the (ethnic) group in question settles down in a certain society and how this group profiles itself in relation to the surrounding society.

As for the cultural dimension, research is done into the degree to which a migrant group keeps to its own culture, (formation of) a specific cultural infrastructure, interaction and harmony or (cultural) conflicts with the surrounding society.

Based on these three dimensions of integration, one can describe both the development process and the achieved position within a certain period. Thus insight can be gained into which integration style applies to the Hindustani group.

7. Integration Hindustani style?

Now that we have a classification scheme to chart the integration process, I shall present my provisional findings regarding the integration of Hindustanis in the Netherlands. In order to do this, we first require the exact number of Hindustanis in the Netherlands. Now, there is the rub, for until recently, we did not have such data in the Netherlands. In Suriname, census always takes place on the basis of self-identified ethnicity. Yet such periodical censuses based on self-identified ethnicity have never been conducted in the Netherlands. Today I have a scoop though!

Statistics Netherlands, an autonomous agency collecting and processing data on a multitude of societal aspects, has joined forces with me to accurately map the ethnic composition of the various Surinamese groups here in the Netherlands. Thus, it is now possible to analyse their position from various viewpoints. We have used a method whereby 338,000 Surinamese were classified by ethnicity based on their family names. Insofar as the technical aspects of this classification method as well as the statistical reliability are concerned, I refer you to an article to be obtained from Statistics Netherlands (Oudhof & Harmsen 2011).

On the reference date of this pilot survey, late September 2008, 150,610 Hindustanis had been living in the Netherlands. This breaks down as follows: 71,410 men and 79,200 women.

Table 1: Surinamese ethnic groups in the Netherlands as per September 2008^{1,21}

Group	Men	Women	Total
Hindustani	71,410	79,200	150,610 (44,5%)
Creole	62,530	68,970	131,500 (38, 9%)
Javanese	10,280	11,440	21,720 (6, 4%)
Chinese	5,400	5,850	11,250 (3, 3%)
Maroon	5,110	5,710	10,820 (3, 2%)
Other	3,390	3,790	7,180 (2, 1%)
Unknown	2,850	2,330	5,180 (1, 5%)
Total	160,950	177,300	338,250 (100%)

For more detailed figures, I refer you to the article written by Ko Oudhof, Suzanne Loozen, Carel Harmsen and myself that will be published at the end of June 2011 in a Statistics Netherlands publication 'Bevolkingstrends'.

These numbers do not include the third-generation Surinamese. Those are children of parents born in the Netherlands. Statistics Netherlands considers the third generation to be native Dutch. On 1 January 2009 26,800 Surinamese belonged to this third-generation category (Nicolaas *et. al*, 2010). Estimates take the number of Hindustanis up to more than 10,000 (44.5% of 26,800). In other words, some 10,000 Hindustanis belong to the third generation. All in all, there are over 160,000 Hindustanis in the Netherlands, roughly 1% of the total Dutch population.

²¹ As regards the number of Chinese, one should note that quite a few Creoles have Chinese names. Despite the classification by both a Surinamese-Chinese and a Surinamese Creole expert, it is possible that some have been classified as Chinese while they may well be Creole.

In 2008 the Surinamese population in the major Dutch cities broke down as follows:

Table 2: Composition Surinamese ethnic groups as per September 2008 in %:

Group	Amsterdam	Rotterdam	The Hague	Utrecht	Netherlands
Hindustani	26	49	77	50	45
Creole	59	38	14	36	39
Javanese	4	3	2	3	6
Chinese	4	6	6	4	3
Maroon	5	3	1	4	3
Other	2	2	1	2	2
Unknown	1	1	1	2	2
Total (x 1,000)	68.7	52.1	46.2	7.6	338.2

In 2008 more than half of the Hindustanis in the Netherlands lived in the province of Zuid Holland. Of all the Surinamese in The Hague more than 75% were Hindustanis. Rotterdam and Utrecht each accounted for 50% and in Amsterdam this percentage was down to 25.

Socio-economic integration

Hindustanis are often said to be successful in terms of their socio-economic integration. Their position is regularly compared to those of Turks and Moroccans, and also with Creoles. It is true that Surinamese have a better position than Turks and Moroccans. However, to say that they have a better position than for instance Creoles cannot be backed up with solid data analysis (van Niekerk 2000, Choenni 2003, Liem and Veld 2005). Gradually, Hindustanis did, however, and this specifically holds true for the second generation, achieve better positions.

A first analysis of the Statistics Netherlands survey held in September 2008, shows that where education is concerned, second-generation Hindustanis are doing relatively better than second-generation Creoles. Thus, Hindustanis aged 25 to 35 tend to have a bachelor's education slightly more often than Creoles, while in the age group 35 to 45 the reverse holds true. When it comes to an academic or master's education, it seems as if in the age groups 25 to 35 and 35 to 45 Hindustanis have outranked the Creoles.

Hindustanis have also progressed on the labour market. For 60% of the Hindustani men aged 15 to 65 a job as an employee formed their main source of income. Some 4.3% was self-employed. In the case of Hindustani women, these percentages were 57% and 1.6% respectively.

Creole men in the same age group illustrated the following: 58% employed elsewhere and 3.6% self-employed. Where Creole women are concerned, the percentages were 58% and 2.2% respectively. It should be noted though that the differences between both groups are small.

As yet I do not have any data regarding the third indicator: level of income. In order to compare between Dutch natives and, for instance, Turks and/or Moroccans, an in-depth analysis is required. In the coming period I shall therefore collect and analyse all data. Based on my initial findings the bottom line is that Hindustanis in the Netherlands seem to be integrating well.

Cultural integration

With respect to cultural integration, we may conclude that Hindustanis generally recognise the basic values and norms of western countries *i.c.* the Netherlands, such as the freedom of speech, freedom of religion *i.c.* no religious coercion and the equality between men and women (SIM 2006, Choenni 2008)²². What's more, their cultural values do not seem to interfere with the prevailing cultural norms in the Netherlands. The same goes for their attitude to live harmoniously with the surrounding society. As such, there are hardly any cultural conflicts with the Dutch natives.

²² Nobel Prize laureate and economist Amartya Sen considers these basic values as universal values. He also believes there is a historic justification for Hindustanis to observe these values (Sen 2007).

Hindus in particular, making up over 75% of the Hindustanis, show an adaptive attitude, their motto being: '*Jaisa des, waisa bhes*'. In other words, '*when in Rome, do as the Romans do*', the core message being to 'adjust as much as possible'. At the same time, Hindustanis do their utmost to preserve some cultural values that have diluted in western culture. In this respect, one should think of honour, family loyalty, hierarchy, humility, respect for the elderly, and they prefer to play things safe.

Hindustanis do not lock horns with Dutch society, keep a low profile and thus remain relatively invisible. The fact that Hindu schools (on average they do well) are hardly criticised when compared to Islamic schools, confirms this supposition (Roelsma-Somer 2008).

Hindustanis have a strong focus on their own group. Below, you will find some figures:

- Only 36% has indicated to socialise with Dutch natives in their spare time;
- Well over 17% has indicated to mingle more with Dutch natives than with their own ethnic group or with other groups;
- Some 32% has indicated to hang out more with their own group or other ethnic groups. Of the Hindustanis who are actually a member of an association, nearly half (43%) is active in 'ethnic' clubs. Only 19% holds a membership in native Dutch associations. The rest participates in mixed clubs (SCP/SIM 2006).

As a result, Hindustanis have less interaction with the surrounding society (Choenni 2008). Based on these figures, we may conclude that in terms of cultural integration, Hindustanis in the Netherlands are more successful in some areas, while they stand out less favourably in other fields.

Political integration

In the area of political integration we may conclude that Hindustanis are much less successful. If we take the population contribution of Hindustanis in the Netherlands, there is a definite underrepresentation of Hindustanis in political institutions. With a total population contribution of 1% (over 160,000) we have only one Hindustani Member of parliament. In The Hague this representation is slightly better. We have one Hindustani alderman in the city council of The Hague and some other municipal councillors of Hindustani descent. However, in influential organisations in The Hague they are completely absent.

Virtually the same holds true for other cities with a large Hindustani population; and on a provincial level one would need a magnifying glass to spot a Hindustani— with the exception of the Labour leader in the city council of Rotterdam. Practically no Hindustanis are found in boards of political parties. The same can be said about union boards and social welfare organisations such as education boards, housing corporations and advisory boards. However, the picture is not all that gloomy, because every now and then we do stumble on a Hindustani trade union official or school board official. The political participation based on the Hindustani turnout during elections, is lower than those of Dutch natives or for instance of Turks (Forum 2010)²³.

²³ For argument's sake, we have assumed that the figures for the Surinamese also apply to Hindustanis. Between 1994, 2002 and 2010 the turnout amongst Surinamese in Amsterdam fluctuated between 30%, 25% and again 25%; amongst Turks between 66%, 30% and 44% respectively (Forum 2010: 3).

Hindustanis are hardly represented in today's visible professions. As a group they are therefore virtually unknown and invisible when compared to, for instance, the Creoles. In media, sports, entertainment, arts and culture, Hindustanis are practically absent, while they are well represented in the medical and legal sector.

The identification with and orientation on India is strong. This *low profile* strategy, namely remaining in the background and blending in harmoniously with the surrounding society, also contributes to the fact that Hindustanis as a group remain fairly invisible. They can be regarded as 'silent' immigrants.

This relatively successful socio-economic integration, the partly fruitful cultural integration and the less successful political integration, is what I would call '*Integration Hindustani Style*'. It is a working hypothesis. **In cooperation with Statistics Netherlands I hope to publish a study next year in which I aim to establish whether there is actually such a thing as Integration Hindustani Style in the Netherlands (5).**

Integration Hindustani Style in Suriname?

The pattern of Integration Hindustani Style also seems to apply to the integration of Hindustanis in Suriname. We have demographic figures regarding Hindustanis in Suriname, but we have much less reliable data regarding their position. Nonetheless, from the available literature the following can be deduced: Hindustanis are the most affluent group in Suriname. On average, their education and income tend to be higher when compared to other ethnic groups in Suriname. Unemployment amongst Hindustanis appears to be lower than that of other groups. Data from the Anton de Kom University show that Hindustanis, based on a declining population growth from 38% in 1973 to 27% in 2003/2004- were proportionately or more than proportionately represented amongst the graduates.

Between 1973 and 1997 39% of the graduated medical doctors, 42% of the graduated social scientists, 34% of the master graduates and 39% of the bachelor graduates with a technical specialisation, were of Hindustani descent. Between 1986 and 1996, the average of 34% of the number of registered students at the teacher's college was of Hindustani descent. During 1985-1997 the number of Hindustani third-grade graduates amounted to 31% (Badal 2000:10-13). In 2002, the percentage of Hindustani graduated lawyers and economists reached 34% and 58% respectively. A year later, in 2003, these figures totalled 47% and 36% (Hasnoe 2004:5)²⁴

In a nutshell, there seems to be a successful socio-economic integration. Insofar as cultural integration is concerned, Hindustanis are not doing bad either, in the sense that there is a separate and flourishing cultural infrastructure with hardly any cultural conflict. Hindustanis live in relative harmony with other ethnic groups in Suriname. Again, however, the group is less successful when it comes to its political integration in Suriname. Being the largest ethnic group in the country, only few Hindustanis were elected to President of Suriname in the past and only for short periods of time. Suriname's current government has relatively few Hindustani ministers. Thus, it is significant that Hindustanis in the Netherlands as well as in Suriname are insufficiently represented in visible professions. Hindustanis play a marginal role in media, sports, entertainment, arts and culture. It is mostly Creoles who play a leading role when it comes to Suriname's national identity. The identification with and orientation on India also strongly applies to Hindustanis in Suriname; and again Hindustanis are mostly preoccupied with their own ethnic group. **In the years to come I hope to shed some light on this particular pattern in Suriname. (6)**

²⁴ It is tricky to obtain up-to-date figures regarding ethnic groups in Suriname. I aim to gather and process such data in the coming years.

8. Unravelling the ins and outs of this remarkable form of integration

It is essential that we delve into the mechanisms underlying this remarkable form of integration. In order to explain this Integration Hindustani Style we need to gain insight into the factors related to the receiving society, the so-called environmental factors. We also need to address the factors pertaining to the Hindustani group itself, the so-called group factors.

Exploring the various research avenues regarding the integration process of Hindustanis in Suriname and in the Netherlands, the following *three environmental factors* appear to play a significant role: the opportunity structure (the labour market included), the government policy and the degree of discrimination *i.c.* acceptance.

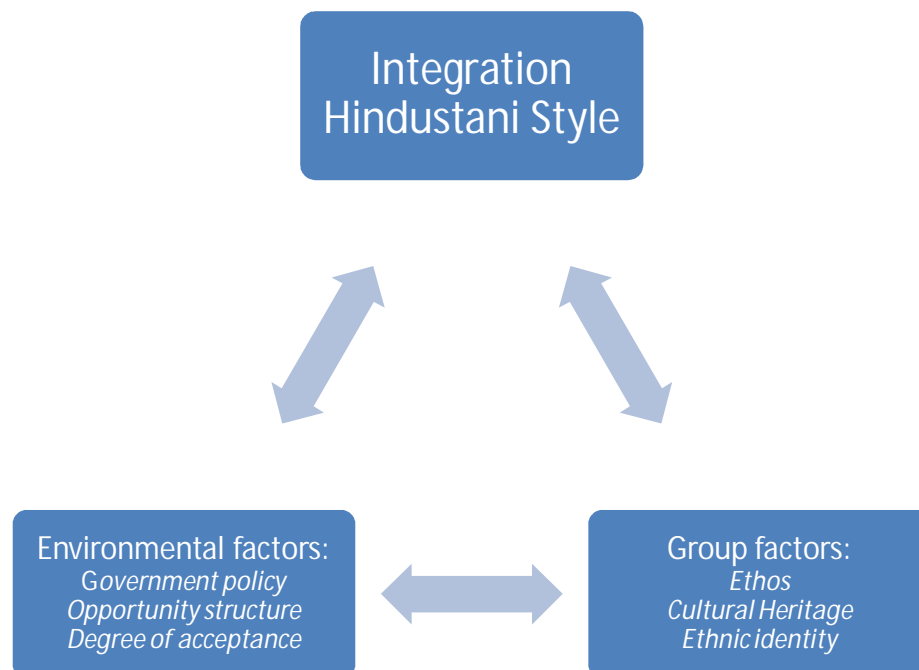
In terms of group factors, one should think more along the following lines: the ethos of the Hindustani group, the *cultural heritage* and the ethnic identity. The fact that the integration of Hindustanis also relied on opportunity structure – and not solely on group factors – shows from the fact that this opportunity structure already had its limitations in India. The indentured labourers hardly had any farming land of their own. Large groups of citizens wanting to work in the agricultural sector, had to do so in the service of others. Besides, Hindus in particular faced an extra drawback caused by the caste system.

As yet the historical account of the integration process of the Hindustanis in Suriname covers only one paragraph in the country's history. Many gaps still remain to be filled when it comes to outlining the history of this group, for instance, regarding the identity development and sense of community.

Together with my sister GhaRietje Choenni I shall soon publish a study on identity development and sense of community among Hindustanis covering the period 1920-1960. Thus, we aim to at least fill part of the gaps regarding Hindustani history (7).

Explanatory model

The explanatory model of the Integration Hindustani Style:



Government policy in Suriname

In the establishment stage, migrant groups usually face intensive government interference. Not only did the Dutch government facilitate the migration of Hindustani indentured labourers to Suriname, even after the work stint had expired, Dutch authorities conducted a specific policy regarding this very group. In contrast to the prevailing ideology of the local political elite that advocated assimilation, some governors of Suriname, like Johannes Kielstra, endeavoured to protect and preserve Hindustani

culture (Speckmann 1965). This seemingly noble goal was not so much inspired by ethically driven political goals, but rather by economically-driven motives. The general idea was that by allowing the indentured labourers to preserve their own culture and focus on agriculture, Suriname was able to benefit from the Hindustani labour force. In return Hindustanis in Suriname were able to establish a community. This was not at all the case in some other countries in the region. In Jamaica and the French colonies, for instance, an assimilation policy was conducted, as a result of which Hindustanis largely assimilated.

The policy of the Dutch colonial government also proved significant for the integration of the Hindustanis. Cultural characteristics such as diligence and frugality have contributed to the fact that they later became good colonists themselves (De Klerk 1941: 109). Hindustani (group) features such as their work ethic and frugality, were praised everywhere. Aforementioned governor Kielstra who ruled Suriname from 1933 until 1944, even preferred Hindustanis not to live in the same neighbourhood as Creoles so that the former would not be influenced negatively'. Creoles were usually considered less diligent with no focus on agriculture (Van Lier 1978). Hindustanis managed to cash in on the opportunities offered to them to preserve their culture. In fact, quite often Hindustanis looked upon the Dutch government and governors as champions of the Hindustani cause, warding off pressure from the local political elite that advocated assimilation (Van Lier 1978, Buddingh 1995, Ramsোধ 1990, Gobardhan 2001, Schalkwijk 2010). **We need to examine this process more closely in the near future. 8**

Slowly but surely things began to change. Fearing Creole dominance prominent Hindustani men appealed to the Dutch government to ward off the approaching Surinamese independence (1975), but to no avail. As a result, many Hindustanis decided to immigrate to the Netherlands (Dew 1977). From the seventies until roughly 1990, Dutch integration policy was based on the principle of 'integration while keeping one's own identity'. It was a time of ample financial means and plenty of facilities to set up one's own cultural infrastructure. In this respect, the Hindustani group benefited from all this, thus becoming firmly rooted in Dutch society. Their ethos and drive to preserve Hindustani cultural heritage and identity, led to the rise of numerous Hindustani organizations (Bloemberg 1995), Van Heelsum 2002). Although it became much trickier to hold on their cultural ground after 1990, the infrastructure nevertheless stayed intact. As such, Hindus still have their own radio and television station (OHM) and a number of Hindu schools in the Randstad, *i.e.* the conurbation of western Holland.

Opportunity structure

Those indentured labourers who decided to stay in Suriname after their work stint had finished, received a patch of land and a premium of 100 Dutch guilders. With this money and their own savings they managed to earn a living for themselves in the agricultural sector, quite often under bitter circumstances. Gradually, a number of descendants took over part of the trade sector, while others gained leading positions in nearly all sectors of Surinamese society. Secondary and higher education became the key to success in the public sector (and affiliated sectors). In the second half of the last century (starting from the mid-sixties) Hindustanis even became the largest ethnic group in Suriname as well as the most affluent. After a massive immigration to the Netherlands in the seventies, Hindustanis gradually also acquired a good socio-economic position in the Netherlands.

Level of discrimination

A significant factor that tends to influence the integration process of migrant groups is the level of discrimination they experience in the receiving society. In Suriname, Hindustanis were usually looked down upon. After all, they had taken over the much hated work formerly done by slaves. They were condescendingly called 'coolies' and faced discrimination in the colony. Hindustanis suffered from non-acceptance and even from intimidation. Several occupations such as gold mining and the lucrative rubber industry were even off limits to them. Nonetheless the group became successful in (small) farming, the trade sector and in many other sectors involving public life. Apparently, discrimination did not really affect the mobility of Hindustanis in Surinamese society.

In the Netherlands, too, Hindustanis faced prejudice and discrimination. Many of them quickly distanced themselves of the negative image the Surinamese had in the seventies and eighties; an image that characterised the Surinamese as being lazy, reluctant to work and unemployment benefit

claimants. In fact, on several occasions Hindustanis had even presented themselves as Indians and Dutch Indians. Or they made it clear from the start that they were different and did not match the image and the prevailing prejudice then existing towards Surinamese people in general. It appears that Hindustanis in the Netherlands suffered less discrimination. In general, it seems as if they are able to overcome the hurdles of everyday life fairly successfully in order to make a better life for themselves (Choenni 1995).

Work ethic

Despite the discrimination, Hindustanis as a group succeeded, both in Suriname and in the Netherlands. This can be credited to a number of remarkable group factors. One noteworthy characteristic of the Hindustanis as a group would have to be their ethos. Ethos is best defined as the leading principles and ideals characterising a community. The ethos of a group refers to the 'spirit' shaping those ideals and habits.²⁵

After the indentureship Hindustanis in Suriname were accredited with a certain ethos that boils down to a strong work ethic, sobriety, frugality, an urge to advance in life (also known as frontier mentality), and a focus on acquiring material prosperity. At the same time, Hindustanis also preferred a modest lifestyle, living in harmony with their surroundings. Dutch government official Junker voiced certain aspects of the Hindustani ethos in 1923, using words common during the colonial period:

'Of all imported immigrants the Surinamese economy benefited most from those of British India. Most of them stayed on as colonists after their indentureship had finished. With their strong racial disposition for agriculture and cattle breeding, their minimum needs coupled with an unsurpassed frugality, nearly all British Indians acquired material wealth. Large plantations, parts of the city of Paramaribo, vast rice paddies and pastures, have all become their property' (Junker 1923: 427).

²⁵ The leading and well-known anthropologist Clifford Geertz uses a broader definition of ethos: "the moral (and aesthetic) aspect of a given culture, the evaluative elements have commonly been summed in the term ethos, while the cognitive, existential aspects have been designed by the term "world view". A people's ethos is the tone, character and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood; it is the underlying attitude towards themselves and their world that life reflects. Their worldview is their picture of the way things in sheer actuality are, their concept of nature, of self, of society. It contains their most comprehensive ideas of order. Religious belief and ritual confront and mutually confirm one another; the ethos is made intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life implied in the actual state of affairs which the world view describe" (Geertz 1973: 141).

And according to Bar-Tal the Israeli ethos would come down to: "the configuration of central societal beliefs that provide particular orientation to a society...Ethos, then, combines dominant societal beliefs in a particular structure, and gives meaning to the societal life of a particular society. It constitutes one of the bases of social identity, by providing a common societal viewpoint that underlies the sense of belonging and identification" (Bar-Tal, 2000).

The relatively fast mobility amongst Hindustanis may be considered an example of that very Hindustani ethos. Gert Oostindie (2010) states that the Surinamese in the Netherlands benefited from a post-colonial bonus, namely their command of the Dutch language. One should keep in mind though that this does not apply to all Surinamese. Many Hindustanis living in the countryside lacked a good command of Dutch owing to the fact that they had a fairly low level of education. Nonetheless, because of aforementioned ethos, their children, in Suriname as well as in the Netherlands, managed to climb the educational ladder rather quickly, becoming, for instance, doctors, lawyers, notaries and economists.

Cultural Heritage

The Hindustani ethos is of course inextricably linked with a *cultural heritage* rooted in India. Cultural heritage comprises so much more than a set of traditions or one's cultural birth-right. Cultural heritage is the very core on which Hindustani culture is based. It is rooted in India's age-old culture and civilisation. Writing about the role of Indian civilisation and its influence on the Indian diaspora, Ravindra Jain said (1998: 346):

“The point of origin for the Indian diaspora has been the Indian civilisationa civilisation like India cannot be said to lack a common will.... The longue durée of civilisation distinguishes it from the short time-span of the settlement societies.”

In this respect, it is remarkable that ancient (mythological) stories, historical figures and religious performances are still popular in Suriname, but also with the older Hindustani generation in the Netherlands. Besides, they are often looked upon as a 'beacon' to overcome everyday problems and deal with disappointment. Stories about the 'divine' and ideal couple *Rama* and *Sita* or the ideal love couple *Radha* and *Krishna* act as a moral anchor to legitimize one's actions. These 'spiritual characters' are glorified in numerous songs.

Indian film, music and theatre are filled with moral lessons that are observed by Hindustanis from all walks of life. Indian film culture in particular was and still is some kind of cultural *lifeline* for the preservation of Hindustani cultural heritage. It should be noted that Indian Muslims play a prominent role in Indian film culture. They may well play mythological Hindu figures or 'deities' in the same way as Hindus may praise Allah in their songs.

In short, Hindustani cultural heritage draws on a wide spectrum of Indian cultural traditions, acknowledged by Hindus and Muslims alike, offering Hindustanis a vast (cultural) repertoire and strong cultural identity. Ethos and cultural heritage lie, so to speak, at the basis of Hindustani culture, a culture they aim to preserve as best they can, even in a new society.²⁶

²⁶ In the early sixties the Creole elite pressured the Hindustanis to assimilate. According to John Speckmann this prompted the following reply by prominent Hindustani leaders: *“the East Indians pointed to the cultural heritage of their motherland”* (Speckmann 1972: 608). Hindustani culture proved so strong that despite intensive missionary work in Suriname, only a small number of Hindustanis converted to Christianity. What's more, many Hindustani Christians held on to specific Hindu or Muslim practices. (Vernooij 1998: 50). Some missionaries *i.c.* evangelists were utterly enthralled by Hinduism or Hindustani traditions, even causing their evangelical missions to be put on a back burner. Thus father Cor de Klerk wrote an excellent book on the immigration of Hindustanis in Suriname. His PhD thesis was even on 'Orthodox' Hinduism. Evangelist Peter Martin Legêne studied 'pagan Hinduism' in India, after which he left for Suriname to do missionary work. However, Legêne got so intrigued by the Hindustani lifestyle, that his social work had gained the upper hand over his evangelisation activities.

Ethnic identity

As stated earlier, Hindustanis form an ethnic group because of their distinctive culture and strong roots in India. Being part of an ethnic group not only offers its members the possibility of mutual affective relations, it also forms the bedrock of an ethnic identity. Traditionally, this identification with India and Indian culture *i.c.* Hindustani culture has always played a prominent role.²⁷ Hindustanis have a strong ethnic identity, which is at the same time cementing group feeling. Primordial sentiments and characteristics are essential (Geertz 1973). Not only do you belong to an ancient civilisation, it particularly allows you to shape your very identity on the basis of a unique and great civilisation.

In his essay on 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries' Fredrik Barth (1969) points out that ethnic identity is a means to draw boundaries with other groups and to distinguish oneself from others '*and not the "cultural stuff that encloses it"*' (cited in Sollars, 1996, p. xxii). In the case of Hindustanis it most certainly is a matter of setting ethnic boundaries in terms of 'we and they' and it does include '*the cultural stuff*'.

Having a common culture and connection with ancient civilisations is a pivotal part of people's identity *i.c.* ethnic identification of Asian groups such as the Chinese and Hindustanis, *i.c.* Indians in the diaspora. And then there is the question of normative and emotional identification. We are well aware of the controversy over the notion of ethnic identity in the academic world. It is a much discussed topic at the moment.²⁸

²⁷ Common origins, culture, ties to India and the Indian diaspora, may have contributed to a Hindustani identity in the Netherlands and in Suriname, but this identity is by no means not identical to the Indian identity or the Hindustani identity elsewhere in the diaspora. Identity nearly always adapts to the new countries of residence. As a result, elements of the (original) Indian culture mix with the local culture. From this it follows that Hindustani identity is not static but dynamic. Our concept of identity is based on this very dynamic and contextual interpretation.

²⁸ Trimble & Dickson state the following about the etymological origins of the notion of ethnic identity: "*Ethnikas ... can mean a band of people (nation) living together who share and acknowledge common customs. The second part of the construct, identity, has Latin origins and is derived from the word identitas; the word is formed from idem meaning same. Thus, the term is used to express the notion of sameness, likeness, and oneness. More precisely, identity means the sameness of a person or thing at all times in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else. Combining the definitions and interpretations of identity and ethnicity it can be concluded that they mean, or at minimum imply, the sameness of a band or nation of people who share common customs, traditions, historical experiences, and in some instances geographical residence. At one level of interpretation the combined definition is sufficient to capture the manner in which the identity is generally conceptualized and used to understand ethno-cultural influences on its formation and development Definitions of ethnic identity vary according to the underlying theory embraced by researchers' and scholars' intent on resolving its conceptual meanings. The fact that there is no widely agreed upon definition of ethnic identity is indicative of the confusion surrounding the topic. Typically, ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group. An individual can choose to associate with a group especially if other choices are available (i.e., the person is of mixed ethnic or racial heritage). Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors. Racial factors involve the use of physiognomic and physical characteristics, natal factors refer to "homeland" (ancestral home) or origins of individuals, their parents and kin, and symbolic factors include those factors that typify or exemplify an ethnic group (e.g., holidays, foods, clothing, artifacts, etc.). Symbolic ethnic identity usually implies that individuals choose their identity, however to some extent the cultural elements of the ethnic or racial group have a modest influence on their behavior"* (Trimble & Dickson 2009: 1249).

As yet, we shall use this term when describing the Hindustani group. Insofar as *normative identification* is concerned, this involves a reference framework and a set of values that create stability and support. *Emotional identification* relates to the extent to which members may connect to a group or community on an emotional level. (WRR2007: 32, 33). It involves sentiments such as loyalty, pride and a sense of belonging. Here, it relates to the identification with the Hindustani group, the Indian diaspora and India. The Hindustani organisation *Seva Network Netherlands* serves as a good example, as it mostly supports development projects in India. In Suriname and in neighbouring country Guyana it does so primarily to cater for the needs of the Hindustani group.

Interaction between environmental factors and group factors

Insofar as the integration process of Hindustanis is concerned, there is a clear interaction between environmental and group factors. The (work) ethic of Hindustani contract labourers proved an important trigger for the immigration of this group to Suriname (De Klerk 1953). The fact that Hindustanis were able to successfully integrate into the receiving society was in part brought on by their own ethos, cultural heritage and ethnic identity. That said, the prevailing government policy as well as the opportunity structure, also contributed to this success. As mentioned earlier, Dutch governors in Suriname appeared to have had a favourable impression of Hindustanis and Hindustani culture. The policy to keep the Hindustani group apart from other ethnic groups in Suriname, and the ruling principle in the Netherlands to ‘integrate while keeping one’s own identity’, was wholeheartedly embraced by Hindustanis. Having their own infrastructure only enhanced the successful integration process of Hindustanis (De Klerk 1953, Thakur 1989, Ramsodh 1990, Bloemberg 1995, Van Heelsum 2002, Choenni 2004, Bosma 2009).

As regards the level of discrimination and (non) acceptance, Suriname has witnessed a remarkable development. Hindustanis suffered discrimination (*coolie, outsider, second-rate citizen*) which only strengthened their loyalty towards one another and emphasized their ethnic identity as a group. They were able to fall back on their cultural heritage and in doing so, gained a sense of pride as well. Their ethos helped them to overcome hardship and gradually become successful. Hindustanis also faced discrimination in the Netherlands. And here, too, it did not seem to affect them too much because of their distinctive group characteristics. In 1995 I conducted a survey among Hindustani and Creole servicemen. My findings showed that cultural heritage provides a cultural repertoire and basis to fall back on. More specifically: being able to fall back on Hindustani culture which is rooted in the ancient civilisation of India increases the resilience. Besides, Hindustani soldiers faced less discrimination than their Creole counterparts because of the prevailing images regarding both groups. Thus Hindustani soldiers were associated with India, a country that enjoys a positive image (Choenni 1995). Hindustani group features combined with environmental factors may offer an explanation for the Integration Hindustani Style.

Researchers Jan Rath and Robert Kloosterman (2001) put forward the theory of *mixed embeddedness*, which tries to explain the success of migrant entrepreneurs in the Netherlands. However, this theory is only valid insofar as the interaction between group factors and opportunity structure is concerned, as the authors have discarded the historical dimension and the role of ‘*human agency*’. As a result, they cannot explain the difference between the various ethnic groups.^{29 2}.

²⁹ The theory of mixed embeddedness assumes that the success of migrant entrepreneurs can not only be explained from cultural (group factors), but also from structural factors such as opportunity structure: “*The size and shape of the opportunity structure is in the mixed embeddedness approach an essential component in understanding both the number of immigrant entrepreneurs and their potential trajectories of incorporation*” (Kloosterman & Rath 2001). Apart from social networks within the own group, relations and transactions in economic and political networks of the receiving society are also included, as are the role of the individual and the historic perspective, opines Nonja Peters. She argues: “*that while the ‘mixed embeddedness’ approach gives a more comprehensive explanation than previous models.... it does not explain the wide-ranging inter-ethnic variation in entrepreneurial concentration observed among immigrant groups around the world* (Peters 2002:33). Peters justly acknowledges that it was these very the ethnic-specific case studies, labelled by Kloosterman and Rath as ‘*parochial research approaches*’ that were needed so as to unearth the differences between for instance Vietnamese and Chinese entrepreneurs in Western Australia (Peters 2002: 41).

As regards the preservation of Hindustani group characteristics, one should keep in mind one significant aspect: the large population growth of Hindustanis in Suriname until the seventies. Between 1922 (marking the end of the influx of indentured labourers from British India) and 1970 (heralding the Hindustani migration trek to the Netherlands) the Hindustani population increased from 28,084 to 142,049. In other words, a five-fold growth of its population in 50 years (Lamur 1973). This population surge has at the same time created the conditions to pass on Hindustani culture and preserve ethnic identity. One was able to marry within the group without the risk of inbreeding. **The factors behind this explosive growth merit further research (9).** Was it some form of selection? One thing is certain though: Hindustanis are descendants of a *survivors* group, as 16% (nearly 5,500) did not survive the period of indentureship (Bhagwanbali 2010).

9. Strong identification with the Indian diaspora?

When the first Hindustani workers came to Suriname, India was still a British colony. In the first half of the 20th century it was Mahatma Gandhi who led the freedom struggle that eventually brought an end to British rule. Although the country became the largest democracy in the world in the second half of the 20th century, it failed miserably on the economic front. The tables have turned though in the 21st century, with India emerging as an economic power house.

India is also flexing its cultural muscles in terms of the Indian diaspora. Of course this is bound to rub off on Hindustanis in the Netherlands and Suriname, especially on the younger, second generation Hindustanis in the Netherlands. Particularly India's influence as a successful ICT-powered nation and *Bollywood* (a popular umbrella term to refer to the mainstream Hindi cinema, dance and music industry from Mumbai) has increased over the last years thanks to improved transportation and further ICT developments such as satellite television and the internet. Over the last years the joys of the Indian media and entertainment industry really took flight, as did endeavours of the Indian government to specifically see to the needs of the Hindustani diaspora.³⁰ The Indian diaspora accommodates a wide range of identities and identifications, but common descent and culture constitute an acknowledged and recognisable identification with India and Indian roots (Appadurai 1996, Vertovec & Cohen 1999, Vertovec 1997, 2000, Jain 1998, Jayaram 2009, Gowricharn 2004, Hannerz 1992, 1996, High level Committee 2001).

In the old days one was able to bank on the glorious past of ancient India and Vedic civilisation (which goes back thousands of years). Today the new reference point is that of an emerging superpower. To many people outside India, the great Indian culture remains a source of inspiration. It is quite conceivable that ongoing globalisation and communication technology will bring about changes in India and in the Indian diaspora, thereby paving the way for mutual influence. This may in fact reinforce the ethnic identity of Hindustanis, all the more since certain elements of the Indian cultural heritage are already closely converging with global mainstream culture. Of note are Stuart Hall's (1991:225) views on identity, as he considers ethnic identity to be a 'malleable construct' following from the process of 'being' and 'becoming'. Hindustani *i.c.* Indian culture is becoming a contemporary complex culture, according to Ulf Hannerz:

"These are cultures in the making, there is culture-building going on; the processual point of view keeps time in the picture" (Hannerz 1992:38).

As to what extent a transnational identity in the making can be referred to as Global Indian is an important question. **The influence of the 'new India' on the identification process, and as such on the identity development of Hindustanis, particularly on the younger generation in accordance with the concept of the 'global Indian' requires further study. (10)**

³⁰ For instance through the activities of the Indian government (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), which has been organising the annual Diaspora conference (Pravasi Bharatiya Divas) in India since 2003. The GOPIO organisation (Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin) inaugurated a memorial at Kolkata port to commemorate the thousands of indentured labourers who left the shores of India in the last two centuries. GOPIO intends to set up a heritage museum and a resource centre. It is to be expected that this place will gradually become a reference point for descents and will contribute to the reinforcement of Indian identity and heritage.

10. The Indian diaspora in other countries, a comparison

It is also useful to examine how Integration Hindustani Style compares to the integration process of Hindustanis in other countries that had beckoned Hindustani indentured labourers in the 19th and 20th century. Or, zooming out even more: in countries where you have an indigenous Indian population. Another topic for research is to what extent the distinctive integration style amongst Hindustanis applies to other ethnic groups in the Netherlands and in Suriname. The integration process of the Hindustanis may differ from the Indian Diasporas in the various other countries. This depends on a number of factors:³¹

- The size of the diaspora community versus the surrounding society. In Jamaica, but also on smaller Caribbean islands such as St. Vincent and Grenada the percentage of Hindustanis remained well below 10% of the total population. This is probably one of the reasons why Hindustanis on those islands nearly completely blended into the receiving societies. When the Hindustani diaspora comprises more than half of the population, as is the case in Mauritius, chances are that the Hindustani community will acquire a dominant position.
- The socio-economic background of the immigrated Hindustanis; the Indian diaspora in for instance the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada by and large consists of well-educated migrants as well as their descendants. This cannot be said about contract labourers who settled down in the former colonies, as they came from various walks of life *i.c.* from different casts, and were largely illiterate or low literate.
- Government policy; in Suriname and –until the end of last century - in the Netherlands, the government facilitated the Hindustanis in preserving and developing their own culture, while in the British colonies such as Trinidad and Guyana the Hindustani community was pressured to assimilate.
- The degree to which an explicit assimilation policy was conducted; in the French colonies Guadeloupe and Martinique the Hindustani community became fully assimilated into the dominant group.³²
- The response and level of acceptance of the receiving society; in Fiji and Guyana there was and still is more reluctance to accept Hindustanis than was the case in Trinidad or Suriname.

Next to these differences, there are of course also similarities between the Hindustani *i.c.* Indian diaspora communities. In this respect, one should keep in mind the preservation of Hindustani culture by for instance setting up own institutions such as mandirs (Hindu temples) and mosques, all kinds of associations, schools and the institutionalisation of marriage practices. The ethos of the Hindustani group, the preservation of values and norms, religious practices based on Indian cultural heritage, but also social problems such as the relatively high number of suicides and suicide attempts, are more or less common patterns (see Bhugra 2002, Choenni 2009). **Again, an interesting field of research.** As yet, however, the integration process of Hindustanis in the Netherlands and Suriname will be the main focus of interest for the Lalla Rookh Chair

³¹For purposes of comparison it would of course be interesting to research the Hindustani Diasporas of for instance Mauritius, Fiji or Jamaica and Suriname. However, due to formation, available means and prioritization we are forced to narrow down the scope of this Chair. Besides, similar research is already conducted at other universities such as the 'University of the West Indies'.

³² Endeavours of the Indian government have in part sparked a new identification with India and Indian roots in these countries such as Guadeloupe and Jamaica, a cultural revival, so to speak; see also: Report of High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, New Delhi 2001.

11. Acknowledgements

Integration Hindustani Style shows that it need not be a contradiction in terms to integrate while keeping one's own culture or identity. From a structural viewpoint, migrant groups may integrate successfully while at the same time preserving their culture and living in harmony with their surroundings. The current multicultural spasm in the Netherlands, specifically concerning the integration policy, is too much based on seemingly conflicting values. The Hindustani case, however, makes it clear that values may complement each other and that it is possible for ethnic groups to live together harmoniously and respectfully. Studying the Hindustani integration and presenting the findings to a wide audience, also serves a social purpose. After all, Hindustani integration is a perfect of example of how integration of migrant groups in the Netherlands can – up to a certain level - indeed be successful.

We are much indebted to VU University Amsterdam which continues to cherish cultural diversity in spite of the current multicultural spasm. It has awarded this endowed Chair, thereby making it possible to study integration processes from an ethnic perspective. Many people have gone out of their way to support and advise me on the establishment of this Chair. I thank you all for this. I wish to acknowledge some people in particular.

For their unwavering support I thank Professor Douwe Yntema and Professor Coen Goudriaan of the VU University Amsterdam, Professor *emeritus* Hans van Amersfoort, Professor Karen van der Zee and Professor Ruben Gowricharn.

A special thanks goes to my immediate colleague and mentor Professor Susan Legêne. I am most grateful for the confidence given to me by members of the Curatorium – the VU supervisory board of the programme directorate –, and the board members of the Diaspora Chair Lalla Rookh, particularly Dr. Krish Sietaram.

I would also like to thank Rajendre Khargi, secretary to the Chair, and basically my outboard motor, for his support and feedback, but mostly for keeping me on the right track concerning the ambitions of this Chair.

I am counting on a fruitful cooperation with Ko Oudhof and Carel Harmsen of Statistics Netherlands. We now have access to reliable data in order to chart the development of Surinamese ethnic groups, but - in compliance with the demands of Statistics Netherlands - we shall only tap this source of information when this is strictly necessary.

I thank my sister GhaRietje for her unfaltering critical stance as well as her positive feedback. I hope to conduct several surveys together with her. I would also wish to thank my brother August for regularly feeding me with advice, articles, tips and - sometimes – an overkill of reading material. This also goes for others who regularly take an interest in the activities of the Lalla Rookh Chair.

And last but not least, there is my wife Binarai who patiently observes my musings and this new phase in my life, and who continues to support me to make this Chair successful.

I have spoken.

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