Chapter 7

The Diasporic Rasa of Suffering: Notes on the Aesthetics of Image and Sound in Indo-Caribbean and Sikh Popular Art

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This chapter examines the critical nexus that exists between suffering, aesthetics, and the social formations of diaspora as articulated in contemporary Indo-Caribbean and Sikh popular art. While we retain a commitment to our ethnographic examples in the areas of South Asian art, music, and performance throughout the text, we have arranged our argument around two thematic fields: (1) the framing of the relationship between art and suffering (including discourses on trauma) in the contemporary theory of art and aesthetics and (2) the conceptualization of diaspora as an aesthetic force with the capacity to produce particular subjectivities. Despite the widely recognized historic specificities and the fluctuating cultural makeup of diverse diaspora formations, scholarly research has for a considerable time prioritized the various cultural, political, and social forces that solidify social imaginations of places of origin (the ancestral home) and the collective destinies binding a people to these places. Acknowledging the possible range of diasporic junctures and the distinct forms of collective social imagination resulting from them, typologies of diaspora (e.g., Cohen 2008) have nonetheless often prioritized the
significance of (post)traumatic loss and suffering as one of the key foci for diasporic memories. It is in reference to such notions of collective suffering, loss, and trauma, as Brian Axel notes, that the concept of diaspora has acquired a profoundly homogenizing effect and has been turned into “a totality with a particular kind of aesthetic force that inspires the unification of particular segmented groups” (Axel 2001, 29). This tendency can be observed in the context of Sikh diaspora art discussed below. At the same time, however, postcolonial scholarship has destabilized the diaspora concept by drawing attention to the cultural heterogeneity and the heterodox conditions of diasporic subjectivity. This relates directly to how suffering, as a social experience, is written into the broader public narratives of identity formation.

Artistic and academic contributions to the study of Caribbean diasporas have been particularly instrumental in moving the conversation away from the dominant focus on a Western metaphysics of collective suffering in diaspora theorizing (e.g., Gilroy 1993; Hall 1990; Niranjana 2006), which is one of the reasons for us to juxtapose Sikh and Indo-Caribbean art works in this text. Indeed, in the context of postcolonial critique, the Caribbean diaspora today occupies a privileged position. For historical reasons, the Caribbean has been identified as a complex site defined by multiple waves of forced, semi-forced, and voluntary migration from Africa, India, Syria, China, Europe, and many other locales. More importantly, however, it occupies this place because migrants to the Caribbean have generated new forms of arts and culture based on a process of creolization. As Conerly Casey points out in Chapter 5, processes of creolization have not only been defined by the shifting, intermediate zones emerging from the violent juxtaposition and imposition of European social and political formations upon indigenous, enslaved, and indentured people, but the term has also indexed the cultural creativity of resistance, resilience, and other embodied practices associated with (popular) art forms. This has been part of the appeal of adopting “creolization” as a key metaphor and framework for analysis by a number of postcolonial theorists (e.g., Hall 2003; Hannerz 1987; Palmić 2006).

If creolization has affected the understandings of diaspora in such ways, it is only fitting that we view the universalization of trauma discourses through the circuits of global humanitarian interventions and media representations of global suffering with some skepticism. In light of the global crises witnessed in recent decades, trauma discourse has expanded from psychoanalytical contexts to the broader cultural field. Various social and political actors have called upon art
as a witness to traumatic suffering. Rendering suffering in the language of trauma affects both social imaginations of the past and the various constellations in which art registers the psychic imprints of specific events, which in turn are identified as constitutive moments for diasporic groups, their memories of past experiences, and the kinds of social and cultural identities defined by such relations to the past. The broader implications of the academic and political reorientation (around testimonies) of trauma have been addressed by a number of recent anthropological studies on political violence and suffering (e.g., Das 2007, 205; Das and Kleinman 2000; Fassin and Rechtman 2009). Beyond this specific engagement with violence, and the critique of traumatism, trauma has also acquired a key role in contemporary art theory, as for instance the work of Hal Foster or Jill Bennett illustrate. Indeed, as Bennett points out, trauma discourse in art has, at least in an aphoristic sense, continued “the poststructuralist critique of the subject by other means” (Bennett 2005, 5), precisely because of the ability of trauma art to render visible the contradictory effects and affects of the traumatized subject, the simultaneously being “evacuated and elevated” (ibid., 5).

Trauma art is also where we can draw a link to the “diasporic sublime,” which is similarly concerned with the paradoxical co-occurrence of absence/distance and overwhelming affect. This point has been taken up by Axel, who provides an important compass in making sense of a connection that has defined the very idea of the diasporic as a discursive and aesthetic category of signification. In his analysis of Sikh diaspora representations found on the Internet, Axel (2007) argues that the circulation of martyred bodies (photographs and other imagery of male Sikhs, tortured and killed during the counterinsurgency operation in the 1980s and early 1990s) has had the paradoxical effect of producing an image of the “homeland” precisely among those who did not have a “firsthand” account of the violence and suffering itself. It is through the reversed diasporic gaze, Axel argues, that it becomes possible to see how “the marking out of the inexperi- enceable and unimaginable” (absence) translates into reconfigurations of the “homeland” in the sense of a mythic wholeness and emotive force. The “diasporic sublime” that Axel identifies with this process then implies that the diaspora (and diasporic subjectivities) comes to be constituted “by means of an irruption of what has not been lived into a moment that comes to be lived” (ibid., 128, emphasis added).

We employ the question of how suffering is translated “into a moment that comes to be lived” by those not sharing an “immediate,” firsthand witness account of diasporic loss as the main lens for our
analysis. However, we see the need to further scrutinize the different
temporalities and perspectival modalities of past-ness that are charac-
teristic of how memories of suffering are wedded to contemporary
diasporic art. This will require a shift from the notion of the sub-
lime to alternative aesthetics through which trauma discourse might
be either averted or subverted. Furthermore, if suffering and diaspora
become mutually constitutive through changing contexts of cultural
translation and genre mediations, we also need to ask how differently
the aesthetic of suffering is woven into the realms of the diasporic
imagination. If we take into consideration the moments of disjunc-
ture and conjuncture that have defined the diasporic as precisely not
the pure assimilation into Western categories, how are aesthetic sen-
sibilities articulated and shaped in virtual and embodied diasporic
contexts and in what manner have they become intertwined with cul-
tural and political concerns shaping the life of diasporic communities?
And, finally, what are the lines of consolidation and contestation of
respective ideas of “communities in suffering” that surface in relation
to popular art?

Sublime Suffering

As our first vantage point, we want to engage the 1984 artwork by the
Singh Twins, which is currently shown in an exhibition celebrating
the “Legacy of Punjab” at the Washington Smithsonian. British-Asian
artists Rabindra Kaur and Amrit Kaur Singh created the first version
of the painting, then titled The Storming of the Golden Temple (figure
7.1), in a response to the Indian army’s attack on the “Golden Tem-
ple” (for Sikhs it is the Darbar Sahib) in Amritsar, India, which today
is considered by Sikhs worldwide as the most important religious
and cultural heritage site. Readers not aware of the events around
this critical year of sweeping political transitions in India should note
that “1984” marks a context of heightened state and communal vio-
lence directed against, and partially enacted by, (militant) Sikhs, who
were perceived as a terrorist threat by the Congress government led
under then prime minister Indira Gandhi. The damage and loss of
life that occurred at the Darbar Sahib and the riots that followed
Indira Gandhi’s killing by her two Sikh bodyguards in the same year,
when according to official figures alone, 3,000 Sikh residents in Delhi
lost their lives in an orchestrated act of arson and mass murder, have
fundamentally transformed political constellations in India and the
diaspora context. The narrative on Sikh trauma and martyrdom that
has emerged in the years after 1984 has had a deep impact not only
Figure 7.1 1984 and the Storming of the Golden Temple by the Singh Twins
www.singhtwins.co.uk.
on those witnessing these events but also on sections of a younger
generation of Sikh youth in the diaspora (Arora & Nijhawan 2013).

The Storming of the Golden Temple is apparently ‘about’ the specific
event of ‘Operation Blue Star,’ which led to the partial demolition of
the Darbar Sahib complex and a high death toll among civilians. In the
artists’ own words, the first painting occurred less out of an intent
to commemorate, but rather as a spontaneous response to come to
terms with what the event indexed in the moment of its unfolding. 5
Miniature artwork is based on a time-intensive detailed brushwork of
multiple layering. We can thus imagine each brushstroke to constitute
a form of witnessing, a way to encompass time in an attempt to make
sense out of the suffering of others.

This piece of art can certainly be seen to invest in a heavily gen-
dered, spectacular visibility of violence and suffering, which is not
untypical for other visual representations that one could find in Sikh
religious art, especially martyr art decorating the walls of diaspora
gurdwaras. One of the leading scholars in Sikh studies today, Arvind
Mandair (2009, 237), has termed this emphasis on martyrdom the
“necrophilic tendency of the modern Sikh imaginary,” which he
identifies as a key aspect of modernist-reformist Sikhism.

In the case of the Singh Twins’ artwork, however, these
“necrophilic aesthetics” define the frame exactly at the point when
their painting has been recommissioned 15 years later as a second,
‘revision’ of the earlier work, then titled 1984 (figure 7.2). This sec-
ond image has gained prominence as a cover of books, calendars,
and postcards. Most importantly, as a permanent exhibit in the Sikh
heritage exhibition in the Washington Smithsonian Institute, it has
been authorized as a representative piece of Sikh history. To some
extent the focus of its reception has thus been shifted from how
its iconicity and representational styles are culturally
mediated by a diasporic lens, to political framing of recognition claims. In that sense
the enhanced scale of the 1984 painting functions within a logic of
response to the complaint that ‘the Sikh trauma experience’ had found
no appropriate memorials or monuments in Sikh art and literature.
It is understandable that this argument resonated especially strong
in diaspora contexts where the “necrophilic aesthetics” might have
dominated the viewer’s perspective. 6 Nonetheless, there is more to
say about what motivated the Singh Twins in making 1984. In fact,
if this painting has played a formative role in the public reframing of
Sikh suffering, it is also an expression of how making suffering visible
has recently evolved in the context of the proliferation of photographs
and popular images on trauma. Hence, by drawing attention to the
new commissioning and remaking of 1984, we can also identify how a new optics of suffering has had the potential to render this suffering as sublime.

In the original small-scale work (figure 7.1), it is interesting that the artists employ a perspectival lens that connects it to a modern optic
and temporality. The use of color and arrangement of bodies is not
untypical for traditional miniature paintings, but compared to other
artwork by the Singh Twins, there is an element of avant-garde or pop
art à la Andy Warhol, which must strike the onlooker as something
novel, particularly so in the mid-1980s, when a hybrid British-Asian
art scene was just emerging. The choice of the frame is also interest-
ing. From the specific angle in which the picture is drawn, we can
only see part of the architecture that has been ruined by the heavy
shelling. In offering a bird’s-eye view of the sacred center, the Darbar
Sahib complex surrounded by the pond and the religious architec-
tures built around it, an almost pure photographic perspective is given.
By capturing this particular historical moment, the painting is thus
unambiguously about a specific event, and though this about-ness
does not determine the way this work of art is perceived, it certainly
cannot be seen as completely separate from the political conditions in
which it has emerged. Artwork here, in its very style and the artists’
choices and omissions, produces a diasporic subjectivity of suffering
that is necessarily partial while generative of new and multiple inter-
pretations and ways of seeing. Its original moment is formative in the
sense of a particular orientation toward suffering expressed in the very
act of making art.

In the capture of the new commission that exhibited at the
Smithsonian (figure 7.2), the artists write that 1984 expresses their
own “mixed feelings” and the “personal sense of suffering and injus-
tice felt by Sikhs worldwide.” The bird’s-eye view is self-reflexively
chosen here to acknowledge the physical distance of the diasporic
onlooker, whereas close-up views on the atrocities are meant to con-
vey emotional proximity by the very same diasporic viewer—this is
self-reflexively realized in the young man with the Manchester United
sweatshirt at the bottom of the picture. Compared to the original
work, we can see that guns and tanks have multiplied, whereas indi-
cations of an active, militant Sikh resistance from within the site are
still omitted. The image is now populated by many more bodies and
atrocities.

But whereas the artists retain the overall stylistic frame of the
earlier painting by populating the same scene with a myriad of beau-
tifully drawn figures, there are some decisive alterations. First of
all, they seem to go back to an ornamental style in drawing the
outskirts of the religious architecture, which stands in some con-
trast to the three-dimensional center. This contrast has a captivating
effect. Furthermore, the geometric patterns reemphasize that which
for earlier miniature painting was indeed a characteristic feature,
especially so for illustrations of religious or courtly literature: the symbolic depth of religious place and the apparent transcendence of time indexed by that very place. Sikh bodies dressed in colorful garments, seen wounded and in agony, and, of course, the tanks intruding into the sacred site then seem ever more disturbing. The same contrast is achieved in the portrayal of actual figures. In classical miniature style these would be drawn in great individual detail, but what changes is the stylistic conventions of emotional expression, which traditionally would look rather detached or sublime (in the case of portrayals of the gurus or saints). But the depiction of pilgrims trapped inside the Darbar Sahib confronts us with fear, distress, and great sorrow as highly individualized emotional expressions.

What is further striking about 1984 is the appearance of historical actors, whose significance can only be understood from the dominant narrative of how the 1984 story is told in the Sikh context. There is the archetypal figure of eighteenth-century saint-soldier Baba Deep Singh, popularly venerated and shown in the favorite iconographic rendition with his decapitated head placed on the palms of his hand. Indira Gandhi, former Indian prime minister, who was responsible for Operation Blue Star and was later assassinated by her two Sikh bodyguards, enters the scene on a tank and is portrayed like the demon Ravana, as a five-headed monster showing the counterfeit of other political leaders, including ‘iron lady’ Margaret Thatcher, who dominated the political scene in Britain in which the Singh Twins were coming of age in the 1980s. Indian soldiers are shown brutalizing civilian pilgrims, such as in the scene in the lower left part, where a grim-faced soldier pierces his bayonet into helpless bodies. This scene alone resonates strongly with popularized accounts in Sikh storytelling genres, with the mourning of the innocent civilians killed at the hands of eighteenth-century rulers being a common trope in Sikh mythico-history.8

The time of suffering encompassed in the 1984 painting then has significantly expanded, and this has been achieved at the level of artistic technique and convention as well as at the level of representation, where it seems the Singh Twins have succumbed to new demands to translate Sikh suffering into universal suffering. The enthusiastic welcome of their artwork by British and North American multicultural liberalism and related interfaith platforms indicates a further and successful entry into a translation regime through which particularized Sikh suffering as defined by this specific event is written into dominant Western frameworks of conceptualizing collective suffering.
We can briefly illustrate this with the Singh Twins’ contribution to the “Via Dolorosa” project. This is a British Christian-based, inter-faith art project in which artists from a variety of faiths were invited to select and relate to one of the 15 Stations of the Cross, which further testifies to the importance of the Judeo-Christian blueprint of suffering and martyrdom in these regards. In their short documentary *Nineteen Eighty-Four and the Via Dolorosa Project*, the two Sikh artists present two of the 15 Stations of the Cross that they had chosen when asked to participate in the art project. These are two videos that conflate a camera close-up moving and zooming on details of the painting with their own poetic verses that frame the 1984 events in metaphors of universal suffering hinging on the sacrifice of Christ. Stations one (“Jesus is condemned to die,” the scene where Pontius Pilates is seen symbolically washing his hands of blood) and ten (“Jesus is stripped,” as the symbol for ultimate humiliation), which the artists chose for their contribution, highlight two key aspects that are identified as similar to the fate of Sikhs: the ignorance and deliberate miscarriage of justice at the hand of a central power (hence equated with the Indian government) and the stripping of the symbolically charged body as a form of ultimate humiliation and degradation. Both issues resonate with predominant representations of Sikh victimization in the context of 1984. The stripped body (in particular the forceful removal of turbans and cutting hair in addition to the photographs of mutilated dead bodies) has been a powerful image to evoke the alienation from the Indian state felt by many even today in the Sikh diaspora. The two artists clearly avoid any reference to the political struggle that contributed to the standoff in Amritsar and what followed. The message is generally captured in the image of the ‘political manipulation of religion,’ against which Sikhs are positioned in a gesture of fearless defense of the self and the religious neighbor (Hindu or Muslim). In the poetic verses, Sikhism is translated as the “faith in one God” that like other world religions has a “holy shrine” and membership of innocent devotees, who are like “lambs” led to “slaughter.” Sikh suffering then becomes sublime suffering in the sense of Axel’s diasporic sublime, for clearly 1984 achieves this irruption of the distanced viewer into the proximate witness. Yet, this sublime is a very specific diasporic sublime, for it rests on the temporality and ontology of Judeo-Christian templates of suffering that are widely perceived as normatively shaping the public sentiments on collective suffering as universally translatable.
Prosthetic Suffering

As a counterpoint to the 1984 painting example, we introduce an expressive medium that memorializes the suffering of a distant Indo-Caribbean past through Internet slideshows of archival photographs and old postcards. The suffering encoded in the Caribbean slideshows is veiled to such an extent that one might anticipate universalist readings by a global Internet viewership. Instead, the transcontinental slideshow audiences attach personal memories to the anonymous photographs to construct specific narratives of diasporic heritage, illustrating what Alison Landsberg (2004) has termed “prosthetic memory,” or the suturing of individuals to narratives of pasts they have never experienced through modern mass media. Landsberg’s prosthesis metaphor theorizes memories that are transportable and commodified, but also felt in deeply personal and embodied ways, marking a difference from earlier sites of collective memory (i.e., monuments) that were directed toward nationally or geographically bounded groups. Because of their transportability, prosthetic memories are not confined to particular class, ethnic, or other groups, but because they may be directed toward—and embraced by—particular social groups, they also resist the homogenizing gestures characteristic of national monuments that elide identities when they threaten to pull allegiance away from the nation (Landsberg 2004, 2, 6–9). Like the slavery and Holocaust films and novels analyzed by Landsberg, Indo-Caribbean indentureship slideshows provide a connection beyond “living memory,” but while she is most interested in the (liberal) politics of the consumption of these films and novels outside of African-American and Jewish communities, Internet ethnography suggests that Indo-Caribbean indenture videos become prosthetic memories primarily for those who identify as Caribbean, Indian, or Indo-Caribbean. Moreover, Landsberg (2004, 19–20) explains that prosthetic memories “derive from a person’s mass mediated experience of a traumatic event of the past” and that, like an artificial limb, they mark trauma.

But how can we understand prosthetic memories of suffering in which trauma is left “out of the picture”? While prosthetic limbs mark traumatized bodies, they also have the potential to make those bodies whole, transforming the memory of the trauma and sometimes even shielding it from public view. In contrast to the Singh Twins’ irruption of violence into the lived experience of diasporic Sikhs, Indo-Caribbean indenture slideshows hide the suffering that marked
the production of their photographic images, and diasporic viewers acquire prosthetic memories that narrativize wholeness and benign heritage.

The rural Indians who began arriving as indentured servants in Guyana in 1838 and in Trinidad in 1845 were falsely told that their labor would be light and conditions hospitable, only to find after the long journey that the work was intense, wages were negligible, living quarters were inhumane, floggings were frequent, and medical care was inadequate (Ramnarine 2001, 6–8; Vertovec 2000, 43). Despite this troubling history, Indian Arrival Day is celebrated in Guyana (May 5), Trinidad and Tobago (May 30), and Suriname (June 5) as an exuberant festival of Indian cultural heritage in which friends wish one another “Happy Indian Arrival Day.” Though festival participation declined over several decades, it was revived in 1995 and made an official national holiday in Trinidad, in large measure due to the efforts of Indian political parties and organizations.

During Indian Arrival Day celebrations, one hears tassa drumming, sees slick, costumed Bollywood dance performances, or watches Ram leela (enactments of Rama’s exploits), but performances of indenture are rare. This trend is reflected online, with celebratory artworks far outnumbering depictions of suffering. A YouTube.com search on “Indian Arrival Day” and “Indian indenture” yields results of two types: the most common are video clips of Indian Arrival Day celebrations in the Caribbean and North America—and the other includes video slideshows of archival photos of indenture-ship combined with a soundtrack chosen by the slideshow creator. Three YouTube videos are of particular interest: In Memory of the Jahagis by Barry Joel Desaine, 170th Anniversary of Indo-Caribbeans by Jonathan Budhram, and East Indian Pioneers of the Caribbean by “hisdreams.” Most of the black-and-white images used in the videos were found on the Internet and many are shared by all three videos. Budhram described his image search process: “I found them on the Internet just by ‘Googling’. If you use tags like ‘Guyana’, ‘Guiana’ and ‘Coolie’ etc. you will find lots.” They include images of clipper ship exteriors, interiors overcrowded with laborers, white plantation owners with East Indian workers, East Indian people in Caribbean villages, and postcards depicting women laden with jewellery and men with turbans and dhotis, often accompanied by the descriptor “Coolie type.” Some of the photographs record the domination of Europeans overseeing laborers in fields or standing next to neatly cued Indians at lunchtime, while the posed photos of “coolie types” project a subjugated Other via a hidden “self”
of the European gaze. Most are colonial-era postcards that British colonial agents would have sent to their homes across the Atlantic Ocean.

In contrast to (or defiance of?) the colonizer’s perspective that marks the original photographs, the YouTube videos composed of these postcards are historical narratives of modernity from the perspective of those whose ancestors provided the labor upon which modernity was built. The social networking aspects of YouTube enable communication between people in the UK, India, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, the United States, and Fiji, creating ephemeral comings-together within the Indian diaspora. The postcards and other images compiled for indenture music slideshows are interpreted by many diasporic viewers as “heritage,” ancestry, or family, transforming documents of colonial domination into something more akin to family photo albums.

One reason for the difference between the benign heritage of the Indo-Caribbean example and the jarring violence depicted in the Singh sisters’ paintings is the temporal distance and perhaps less acute trauma of Indo-Caribbean suffering. The Singh Twins heard firsthand accounts of 1984 and saw photographic images of shattered bodies, and it is not surprising that their art would depict this trauma with such vivid detail. What is perhaps more vexing is the extent to which suffering is veiled in the indenture slideshows, given the contexts of abuse and violence in which the photographs were created. The passage of time certainly affects individual and collective memory, but just as important are the contemporary diasporic conditions in which they are currently presented and performed. Until Guyanese and Trinidadian independence from Britain in the 1960s, people of African and Indian descent were in similarly disadvantaged positions vis-à-vis the colonial regime. During the first 30–40 years of independence, that is, until ethnic Indian political parties gained prominence, national identities were constructed around signifiers of black or creole culture, most prominently carnival and calypso music in Trinidad (Dudley 2008). In response to their political and cultural marginalization, Indo-Caribbeans have since the 1960s resisted hybrid identities marked as black, but have also avoided a strong trauma narrative that would suggest a shared history of suffering with the victims of slavery. This contrasts to the Singh sisters’ work, where trauma discourse allows for a boundary-crossing idiom that aligns Sikh suffering with Jewish or Armenian suffering, and hence a retrospective suffering which has had a similar significance for the shaping of diasporic subjectivities.
The Rasa of Sonic Visuality

In further contemplating the entrenchment of the politics and aesthetics of suffering in popular art, we now suggest a move from image to sound and from concepts drawn from Western art theory to a conceptualization of rasa, which is an aesthetic idiom that informs a wide range of South Asian art forms, including drama, music, and film. It might of course seem counterintuitive to suggest a critique of the “occularcentric” regime of modern aesthetics at a moment when leading art theorists evoke the “pictorial turn” (Mitchell 2005, 5) as a response to the “linguistic turn.” And so our motivation here is not to join the philosophical chorus of authors lamenting the modern disinchantment with the image, but to further think about how other sensory modalities and other modes of art production, in their capacity to complement or disrupt images, shape subjectivities in suffering. In fact, as our initial examples suggest, subjectivities in suffering comingle and change as (aesthetic) sensibilities are reconfigured on the basis of social histories of sensory practices and genre-specific modalities of art production and their public reception. Despite the immense influence of modern aesthetics, it is also not necessary to limit the discourse on contemporary art as defined by the emphasis of a rupture with mimesis. As Michael Taussig (2009, 264) points out, at the bottom of much modernist conceptions of art as essentially defined by a break with mimesis (e.g., Rancière 2004) lurks a colonial trap, especially when art experts subscribe to the idea that whereas we, as modern consumers of art, are emancipated enough to “walk the thin crust” between image and reality, the non-modern or postcolonial subject remains superstitiously thrown into the belief of some ontological truth behind the image.13 In contrast, we would like to discuss diasporic regimes of art as situated at a nexus of sight, sound, and body that is contingent on the heterogeneity of how senses are culturally honed and politically configured. The work of music scholars would further suggest that the transportability of recordings offers unique possibilities for “diasporic intimacy” (Gilroy 1993, 16; Lipsitz 1994, 44) in contexts of “capitalist chill” (Slobin 2003, 288), and a comfort or discomfort with particular soundscapes can signal diasporic belonging, making South Asians in Australia, the United States, or the UK feel equally at home (or lost) at Bollywood-infused cultural shows. The various ways in which the cultural past is restaged in such contexts and in which moments of suspension are achieved in and through the arts, all point to a more complex and complicated understanding of aesthetic sensibilities and the extent to which they can
become critically emancipated from powerful discursive framings. This is something we now would like to discuss with a few further examples from Indo-Caribbean and Sikh YouTube clips.

A key to the transformation of YouTube indenture videos from suffering to heritage can be found in the late-twentieth/early-twenty-first-century music of the soundtracks, which include a Hindi popular studio rendering of a Biblical text, a late 1970s popular song, and a Hindustani classical performance. Given the similarity of the images, the stylistic difference between the three soundtracks is striking. Ethnographic scholarship on YouTube and other social networking sites has almost exclusively looked at linguistic and visual aspects of communication (e.g., Jones and Schieffelin 2009; Salvato 2009), often leaving music and sound “out of the picture.” It would be tempting to do the same for YouTube indenture slideshows given that music is rarely a topic of discussion for viewer/listeners and the compiler is not the composer or performer, but we propose that the music of YouTube slideshows provides an important interpretive lens and emotional filter for images. Music in indenture videos facilitates the transition from suffering to “heritage,” and the ongoing negotiation of the politics of memory can be traced through the dialogic space of the comments section (Jones and Schieffelin 2009). We are inspired here by Matthew Sumera’s (2013) research on music’s importance for the “feelingfulness” of YouTube war music videos even when music is left out of viewers’ assessments of an image’s truth content. We argue that music is key to the politics of visibility on the Internet, guiding the attachment of viewer/listeners’ subjectivities and rendering some images more visible than others.

Anil Kant’s arrangement of the 91st Psalm used as the soundtrack for *In Memory of the Jahagis* employs a highly produced style reminiscent of popular ghazals by singers from India like Pankaj Udhas or Jagjit Singh. A combination of Western, global, and Indian classical instruments accompany Hindi vocals softly crooned into a reverb-effected microphone. This soothing style and slow tempo aesthetizes the potentially troubling indenture images and hides the seams between those images and the postcards of people in Indian clothing with captions including “East Indian Woman and Child, Trinidad,” “Coolie Types,” and “Lower Caste Coolies, Port of Spain, Trinidad,” with these two sets of images corresponding to the two-part north Indian *sthai* (lower refrain)–*antara* (higher verse) form. B. J. Desaine is a Christian minister and teacher from Trinidad and Tobago, and his musical choice articulates a shared East Indian (Hindi language and Indian popular style) and Christian (91st Psalm) identity.14 Despite
the English text slides describing hardship, a Hindi song text about faith in troubling times, and images of Indian people doing grueling labor for white bosses, the viewer comments are about pride in brave ancestors, memories of sugarcane, and the mechanics of the video’s construction. Servitude and suffering, as represented directly through labor images, or indirectly through the touristic staging of exoticism in postcards, are transformed into heritage and Christian courage by music that tells listeners that these images from the past are about being Indian today: the “timeless legacy.”

There are very few comments to Desaine’s In Memory of the Jahagis video, which has been up for a shorter period of time than Budhram’s 170th Anniversary of Indo-Caribbeans and his dream’s East Indian Pioneers of the Caribbean. The latter two were posted one and two years ago, respectively, and have had several thousand views and numerous pages of comments. Many viewers of these videos invoke their own heritage in relation to the “foreparents” depicted in the slides: “This is a beautiful video. I’m Trinidadian born Indian. Thanks for posting this footage, I am so proud to be a product of these people.” This move is akin to what Marianne Hirsch describes as “familial postmemory,” that is, the activation of “memories” of other people’s (traumatic) experiences by attaching family narratives to nonfamily photographs as an “affiliative act” (Hirsch 2012, 29–40).

Given that these slideshows are wordless music videos, it is surprising that the only comments on music reference the Boney M song “I See a Boat on the River,” which accompanied 170th Anniversary. The song was key to how Budhram conceptualized the video, since he wrote that “I think the song matches the theme perfectly” and that it is “quite apt for this video.” Only two viewer comments addressed the music directly: “hello are u disrespectfull wat kind of song is that” and the “touching song brings tears to my eyes.” Its catchy major mode melody, danceable 1970s calypso beat, and lyrics of a loved one sailing away to follow a dream are devoid of aural references to India and are juxtaposed with weighty visual images of plantation suffering and women of a bygone era in lehenga choli. While at least one viewer saw the contrast between images of suffering and sounds of celebration as disrespectful, Budhram’s comments suggest that he was attempting to write agency into the story of Indian Caribbean migration by framing it as the fulfillment of a universal migration “dream.” Indeed, Budhram, son of an Irish mother and Indo-Caribbean father, was born and raised in the UK and shares a transatlantic Caribbean diaspora story with Boney M, a group of Afro-Caribbean singers settled in the UK and Germany who were a huge disco and pop sensation.
in the 1970s, producing Caribbean-flavored danceable songs such as “I See a Boat on the River” (1980).

All three videos reference—in text and image—indenture and its injustices, but viewers do not respond in direct ways to those images. Likewise, the videos of colonial postcard images display captions of colonial racist “types” that are neither referenced nor critiqued by commentators from today’s diaspora. In the YouTube commentary, the photographic subjects become representatives of heritage or ancestry, and the photos of indentured labor are reframed as “hard work” and “sacrifice.” The more painful aspects of these image narratives are elided from the discourse about them, to be infused with positive meanings and affective contents through music of the present. Sound, in other words, is reconfiguring sight. Clear markers of recent studio recording technology such as reverb, close miking, and multitrack recording characterize all three musical soundtracks, but the pieces also reference India or the past (for Indo-Caribbeans, India sometimes stands in for the past) through genre, form, instrumentation, or language. Desaine’s choice locates the images within a Christian narrative of refuge, hisdreams’ photos are more firmly located in the past and are accompanied by north Indian classical music, and the Caribbean flavored, upbeat “Boat on the River” creates a late-twentieth-century sonic context while reframing indenture journeys as travels of choice that lead teleologically toward a happy future. The ordering of the images and the accompanying text guide listeners toward particular interpretations, and music further renders markers of strength and hard work visible while suppressing visual signifiers of subjugation.

The sonic reconfiguration of past suffering is something that we can also observe in contemporary YouTube videos produced by Sikh diaspora youth. Similar to the Indo-Caribbean indenture videos, some viewers narrate their own memories or what they have heard in their families about the chosen events, but for a majority this is a venue in which they are able to emotionally relate narratives of collective grief to the specific experiences with the regulative norms of social incorporation in immigration contexts (Nijhawan and Arora 2013). Thus, in recent years, we have seen the mobilization of a “postgeneration” (Hirsch 2012) to 1984 in the context of which a larger section of Sikh diaspora youth has emerged as cultural performers such as spoken word artists, musicians, and visual artists. Much of this art production that comes out of youth-organized events has become available on YouTube. We would like to just name one recently advertised music/art YouTube video that announced a Sikh youth event
Michael Nijhawan and Anna C. Schultz

(When Lions Roar) to show how music and poetry work to commemorate the suffering associated with the 1984 victims (the event was organized by the Sikh Activist Network in the Greater Toronto Area). This video begins as five young Sikh university students read, in English translation, bits from testimonies of the November 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi.\(^{15}\)

Introduced and accompanied by original Punjabi footage, the young students are shown in black-and-white close-ups leaning against a white wall, their voices poetically arranged and accompanied by a D natural minor progression on synthesized strings that alternates between the tonic and subdominant and is adorned by simple piano motives. The pathos of the speakers’ expressions and the simplicity of the black-and-white headshots are heightened by the spare, minor ostinato without the tension of leading tones or dominant chords. The incessant fluctuation between tonic and subdominant, and the melody that floats quietly along with the images and voices, appears to communicate that the atrocities were not only severe but also extensive, as this cyclical pattern could continue indefinitely.\(^{16}\)

The video has a staggering number of more than 200,000 views and well beyond 2,000 comments so far, which is truly astounding considering that this was advertised as a local performance event in the Toronto region. We have a situation here where the Sikh diaspora youth enforces the identification with the 1984 victims by an online restaging of the witness’ voice. A few commentators to the video have rightly remarked that this is a balancing act that can easily lead to the appropriation of the victim’s voice. The majority of comments would not see this as an issue and instead sympathize with the producers of the video, expressing how emotionally struck they were by watching it. However—and bracketing here the issue of online shaming that runs through many of the comments for a later analysis—substantial disagreement exists regarding who is representing the 1984 voice. In the first days when this video came online, there were a number of comments by those self-identifying with the religious and political cause of 1984 that noted the “inappropriate,” “disrespectful,” or “cool” attitude of the video protagonists. One of the narrators in the video was also known for his online slapstick videos and association with hip-hop music producers and was one example where opinion was split. The blending of the cool hip-hop and bhangra music scenes is of course popular with the large majority of Punjabi (Sikh and non-Sikh) diaspora youth. Traditional religious and political groups, especially so in North America, have in the past managed to normatively define the framework of Sikh remembrance of 1984. In recent years, however, we
have seen some significant shifts in this regard, which is also substantiated by research conducted in the United Kingdom (Singh 2013). In the new popular performances of Sikh youth, the sonic reconfiguration of Sikh suffering appears to be tied to the reconfiguration of diasporic youth cultures and their characteristic musical styles and aesthetics. The impact of this culture is something that even supporters of the Khalistan movement cannot avert; to the contrary, they have found in modern drum ‘n’ bass- or hip-hop-style productions a new aesthetic medium.

The sounds that are attracting Sikh youth (such as hip-hop, rap, or drum ‘n’ bass) are increasingly recognized for their capacity to instill emotions that lend themselves to conveying political messages to the youth. This might occur through the blending in of more traditional folk tunes and aesthetic idioms associated with martyr songs with the new urban sound forms. Kalra and Nijhawan (2007) have argued in a detailed analysis of these musical ventures that music producers and consumers have been quite successful in creating new venues to share in sonic pleasure or *rasa* among those who are already politically involved or sympathetic. In fact, diasporic Sikh music productions today allow those with sympathies for the political struggle safe access to the sounds associated with hip-hop and bhangra. What is “cool” about *rasa* in this context is that it allows subverting identificatory politics as far as the association between sounds and particular youth subcultures is concerned. Nonetheless, this is only half the story. For the story of diasporic *rasa* is also the story of the displacement of stigmatized social memories and the sacrifice of those social modes of belonging that do not neatly fit anymore, especially when they subvert the desire for purified identity by those on the track of social upward mobility.

**Coolitude Rasa**

*Rasa* can be translated as the “juice” or aesthetic essence of Indian aesthetic theory and was originally developed by Bharata Muni in the ancient dramaturgical treatise *Natya Shastra* (Ram 2000, 266; Schechner 1981, 100; Wulff 1986, 675; see also Chapter 3). As argued by Kalpana Ram (2000, 266) in an article on diasporic Bharata Natyam dance performance, the *Natya Shastra* inverts a Platonist ideal that judges an artwork by its resemblance to an original, instead offering an aesthetics in which art “surpass[es] the muddied flux of everyday experience” to arrive at an essence that is mutually savored by performers and spectators. As the more literal meaning
Michael Nijhawan and Anna C. Schultz

of rasa suggests, the senses are key to this theory, and, indeed, a
performance is successful only when it evokes an aesthetic response
in the listening, viewing, feeling, dancing rasika. We explored above
how rasa circulates on the Internet by enabling a sonic pleasure that
mediates affective engagement with images and subverts apparent
semiotic contradictions between image, text, and sound. Our final
elements address the remembering and forgetting of diasporic suf-
fering through performing bodies engaged in the live production of
rasa. As Scheper-Hughes and Lock have argued, affect is the thread
that brings together the individual body of embodied experience, the
social body that operates as a symbol, and the body politic of discipline
and identification (cf. Wolputte 2004, 254). Rasa is a theory of affect
enlivened through bodies and sensory experience but understood
through metaphor, making it a rich tool for exploring the social forma-
tion of subjectivity. Although it can be communicated in images and
through solitary encounters, the rasa ideal is an immediate interac-
tion between the performer and rasika. The discourse of rasa assumes
co-savoring, but in diasporas formed through colonialism, nationalist
violence, or slavery, conflict and trauma are painful ingredients in the
shared memories negotiated through art.

We bring Khal Torabully’s theory of “coolitude” (Bragard 2005;
Carter and Torabully 2002) in dialogue with rasa to think through
how social memories of labor migration trauma are negotiated in
performance. Torabully’s coolitude deliberately avoids the ethnicist
associations of the artistic movements of negritude and creolité that
had left diasporic Indians feeling somewhat “at sea.” “Coolie” was a
racial slur used in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to refer to
indentured laborers from Asia employed in European colonies, and
continues to be used derogatorily in reference to people of Asian
descent. Because there were also Portuguese, Chinese, and other
coolies, coolitude speaks more to the structural conditions of labor
migration than to ethnic identity. Torabully argued that the abo-
lition of slavery forever linked the histories of diasporic Africans and
Indians, positioning coolitude as a middle ground between the trauma
and hybridity models introduced at the beginning of this chapter.
Coolitude also engages with the non-dit, the unspoken speech, the
silence and loss that accompanied the Indian labor diaspora, both as a
strategy of self/social-defense and as an unwanted effect of the trauma
of harsh labor. This point resonates with Gilroy’s (1993, 201) discus-
sion of post-slavery cultural production that “seems to make a cultural
decision not to transmit details of the ordeal of slavery openly in story
and song.” In this section, we address what is not spoken as a response
to trauma, lingering on how vocal style stealthily generates rasas of ambivalent belonging.

Our comments on the rasa of coolitude derive from fieldwork with Indo-Caribbeans in Minneapolis, USA, a twice-migrant (Bhachu 1985) community for whom “home” has many associations and whose histories of travel include multiple settlings. The 1960s and 1970s saw mass migration of Indo-Caribbeans to Canada, the United States, and Britain in search of new economic opportunities and to escape the violence accompanying the politicization of ethnic identities (Vertovec 2000, 110–111). As in the YouTube videos discussed above, suffering and oppression are rarely invoked explicitly in Indo-Caribbean American musical performances of today, though such songs were still performed in the Caribbean in the 1960s. It would be impossible to identify definite causes for the relative absence of musics of suffering in a twice-diasporic community with a long history of labor injustice, but discourses surrounding performance suggest that delicate negotiations of class, ethnic identity, and relationship to the homeland are at least part of the story.

Most Indo-Caribbean American music today is associated with momentous or celebratory occasions, and indenture is mentioned only obliquely through jokes during the services at the Indo-Caribbean Hindu temples in Minneapolis, at the cultural shows organized by these temples, and at local chutney concerts. These coolie-themed comedy skits are based on stereotypic tropes of coolies as uneducated country bumpkins who drink excessively, evoking uncomfortable memories of prejudice while also using humor to cast the urban, twice-migrant viewers as decidedly unlike the stereotypic “coolee.” Though song lyrics rarely engage in serious ways with the traumatic past of indenture, collective memories of suffering continue to be negotiated through voice and song style, and discourses about voice are at some level about being or not being a coolie. As Torabully articulates, collective trauma is often met with silence, but in the Indo-Caribbean community, while referential speech is rarely about indenture, metaphorical speech and voice as sound and sensation are far from quiet.

At several points during Sunday services at Minneapolis Indo-Caribbean Hindu temples, the priest asks members of the congregation known to sing to take the microphone to sing a devotional song. On most Sundays, two song styles can be heard: the Bhojpuri style and the filmi style. Except for some subtle differences in rhythm and instrumentation, the Bhojpuri style is similar to what one might hear in Bhojpuri-speaking regions of rural north India. Like north
Indian group song, this style is performed using a strident vocal timbre and minimal melisma, and most songs employ a two-part sthai (lower refrain) and antara (higher verse) form. The vocalist is accompanied by dholak, harmonium, and dhantal, a metal pole idiophone that is ubiquitous only among East Indians in Trinidad and Guyana (Manuel 2000, 38–39). The second style is inspired by the aesthetics of Hindi film music, and, indeed, bhajans from films are a standard part of the Sunday service repertoire. This style is characterized by high tessituras (at least for women, who are the main performers of this style at Minneapolis temples), a light, thin timbre, and ample use of the melisma of north Indian solo vocal genres. Hindi film songs’ studio-produced, closed, linear forms provide a contrast to the open-ended performances in the Bhojpuri style and most other north Indian live vocal music. Some singers at Indo-Caribbean temples perform as close to the film song original as possible, while others improvise their own phrasing.

In various contexts, and for different reasons, the core temple singers all expressed a preference for the filmi style over Indo-Caribbean genres and styles, and, in some cases, made the claim that the filmi style is inherently more pleasing to members of the mandir. One young singer who performs with the big chutney and soca acts that travel through Minneapolis and New York said she prefers the filmi bhajans she sings in the temple because of their devotional texts and contexts. Another singer positioned the Bhojpuri style as a past against which her own style represented an improvement, metaphorically describing the older style as “unpolished” or “rough” and the newer style as “sweet.” She never explicitly identified her own style as filmi, though she cited Lata Mangeshkar, Anuradha Paudwal, and Alka Yagnik (all playback singers) as her major influences. When I (Anna) referred to the Bhojpuri style as “older,” a third singer gently corrected me, referring to the filmi songs learned from cassettes as “more authentic” because they are from India. When singers reminisced about rural lives they remembered, they talked about mothers and older female relatives who sang in a rural style, but for those who were upwardly mobile, these memories aligned with a past in need of improvement. Rural song in India is coded as “authentic” in the nationalist and post-nationalist eras, but the opposite seems to be the case for Indo-Caribbeans in the United States. Indenture and rural life are so entangled with one another and with Indo-Caribbean political marginalization that many temple singers choose to avoid singing rural songs altogether, looking instead toward the “authentic” and also urban sounds of Bollywood while avoiding the painful past of indenture.
Several people at Minneapolis temples expressed pride in the compliments they received from Indian immigrants on their singing or pronunciation, which they had painstakingly learned from Hindi film music recordings. To sing songs in a style shared with singers from India is to bring India into one’s own body and into religious rituals in which *rasa* is shared with co-participants. Indo-Caribbean temple singers employ Hindi film music as a ritual resource that serves rather than replaces face-to-face interaction. In so doing, they are privileging identification with the global Indian diaspora rather than the Indo-Caribbean branch and its traumatic memories. This reframing is a strategy of the *non-dit* of coolitude, but at a different register than that of the Bhojpuri style, which proudly embraces the creative memories of song enabled by the unspeakable labor migration and referenced obliquely through coolie humor. The laughter and song of coolitude *rasa* activates memory, forgetting, and creative negotiations of diasporic belonging.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter, we have interpreted the existing conjunctions between (popular) art and (representations of) suffering in Sikh and Indo-Caribbean diaspora contexts. In our interpretations we have been guided by an inquiry into the paradoxes of modern aesthetic experiences, which without doubt have reached diasporic people around the globe. In doing so, but with an eye toward the more complex cultural translations and modifications of aesthetic experience in our current times, we have suggested that the clear-cut rupture with mimesis as outlined in much of contemporary Western art theory remains problematic. As a matter of fact, all of our examples indicate that the aesthetics of suffering in the South Asian diaspora is enlivened through a wide range of mimetic and generic conventions that connect individuals with specific pasts and presents, and that these narratives may or may not be translated through a Western discourse of collective suffering. The spectrum of possibilities include Indo-Caribbean slideshows of indenture that render collective memories specific while de-emphasizing hardship, which contrasts with the Singh Twins’ British diasporic perspective on violent trauma that further lends itself to translational contexts of universal suffering. Our approach differs from classical diasporic theorization by shifting focus from the traumatic past to the artistic *renderings* of that past in current conditions that continue to reverberate with its aftershocks. In some cases, these pasts are elided in community memory with more recent hardships or less difficult migrations, and they always emerge in
contexts of dialogue, creolization, or conflict with other communities and cultural discourses.

By comparing these examples we have intended to move beyond the classical comparison of case studies, as we are not trying to identify specific causes for variation as much as we are using these cases as a cautionary move against engaging in broad generalization from a narrow regional or generic perspective. Instead, we have related the various recorded, live, visual, and audio examples, which emerge in different (yet at least remotely related) diasporic conditions, to generate arguments about the aesthetics of suffering without overemphasizing the characteristics of one sensory modality over others. This approach not only resonates with the aesthetic theory of *rasa* formulated in the Indian subcontinent, but it also takes seriously the intermodality characteristic of diasporic arts in the era of the Internet and international air travel.

**Notes**

1. Floya Anthias (1998) has early on noticed the conceptual flaws of concepts of diaspora that are entirely arranged according to types of migration motivations. This often amounts to the silencing of gender- and class-specific narratives and their intersection.

2. Stuart Hall (1990) famously described the three sets of traces available for Caribbean diasporic identity as "*Présence Africaine,*" "*Présence Européenne,*" and "*Présence Americaine,*" in which the third trace represents the emergence of diasporic consciousness through the collision and hybridization of multiple cultural forces.

3. However, a progressive term such as "creolization" can in its common usage privilege Afro-Creole identity concepts that ignore or consume Indian and other cultural constellations in the Caribbean (Khan 2004; Mehta 2004, 7–8; Stewart 2007, 4) that have been revitalized in recent decades of cultural and religious transnationalism. Dougla identity (mixed African and Indian), for instance, is neither accepted in the Caribbean as a central part of creolization discourse nor is its emancipatory liminality recognized by East Indian Hindus, despite some theoretical attempts to claim the power of douga aesthetics (Mehta 2004, 14–17; Puri 2004; Stewart 2007, 4).

4. Art theorists such as Bennett stress the boundary-crossing work of contemporary proponents of trauma art in their attempt to break the distance of viewing suffering in a simultaneous attempt to foreclose any possible appropriation of the victim for consumption purposes. Yet it is interesting that this discussion is characterized by reference to particular forms of (post-)avant-garde art and by a lack of reference
to the culturally embedded art forms and sensory practices that many anthropological and sociological studies have prioritized.


6. Darshan Tatla (2005) recognizes a dearth of Punjabi vernacular expression in art and literature on this particular issue. Tatla’s call for a monumentalization of Sikh suffering emerges from his grassroots understanding of the disparity between political rhetoric and everyday life in Punjab. Yet, his analogies to Holocaust memorials in this regard are clearly driven by a discourse that is firmly embedded in contemporary minority discourse in the Sikh diaspora, specifically in North America.


9. John Scoble’s account of the injustices of Indian indenture was published in London in 1840 as a pamphlet: see Scoble (1840).


11. Videos in the first category are made with handheld cameras from a seat in the audience, a perspective and medium that has a long life outside of the YouTube.com context. The soundtracked slideshow, on the other hand, is a home studio art form with pieces created specifically for dissemination on YouTube though some YouTube slideshows were first presented at a live venue before being posted to YouTube.com from images and sounds found online.


13. We can assume that art theorists such as Jacques Rancière (2004) had something broader in mind in theorizing “art” rather than a single art form, and “sense” rather than any one sense, but the examples he for instance provides in his widely read Distribution of the Senses are, like in other contemporary treatises, of a particular art (usually visual) and a particular sense (usually sight).

14. The text of the psalm, which would not have been understood by children at his school, is given in the description accompanying the video: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.”
   The statements read by the students are likely translations from the official testimonies or first information reports (FIRs) that social activists recorded in the aftermath of that event. For a more detailed analysis, see Nijhawan (2014).

16. Thanks to Mark Nye for his analytical thoughts on this segment.

17. Transit, as Torabully says, was traumatic for Indian indentured laborers not only physically, but also spiritually and socially, since crossing the kala pani signaled ritual defilement and loss of social status (Carter and Torabully 2002, 1–16). But the ocean space is also a metaphor for the myriad changes that make the India that was abandoned never again accessible, even as it speaks to the journeys of cultural exchange between peoples forced together under colonial regimes.

18. In the 1960s, a substantial repertoire of Caribbean songs about indenture in a north Indian style was still in circulation, and about 45 of them were recorded in the field by B. V. Lal and published in the Journal of American Folklore (1964). These songs addressed deceit of recruiters, the force used to get people on boats in India, loss of caste, pain of separation, resentment at being called coolies, harassment, whippings, harsh labor conditions, strikes and riots, and the disruption of social norms (Vatuk 1964). We have not encountered this repertoire during our recent research, and if such songs are still performed in the twenty-first century, they are certainly not performed to the same extent as songs of celebration, devotion, or life cycle ritual.

19. This is our own term. Indo-Caribbeans in Minneapolis used myriad terms and descriptors to refer to this style.

20. The preference for filmi songs does not appear to be ubiquitous in Indo-Caribbean temples, and singers at the other main Indo-Caribbean temples in Minneapolis use the filmi style less often.

References


