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Peace Through Music: Music and Multiculturalism in Fiji

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PEACE THROUGH MUSIC:
MUSIC AND MULTICULTURALISM IN FIJI

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ABSTRACT

The music of Fiji is as diverse as its population, and acts as both a mirror and catalyst to the culture. Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians have been the main players in Fiji's multiculturalism, and are therefore focused upon. This paper explores the ways in which music is used to extol the benefits and cope with the problems of Fiji's multiculturalism through cross-cultural listening (viewed from a perspective of radio) and fusion music. Fusion between Indo-Fijian and indigenous Fijian music is especially important – although extremely rare, it is in many ways a metaphor for attempts at racial reconciliation in Fiji.. The paper also seeks to provide a basic foundation of the musical systems involved, with an emphasis on traditional genres.

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to Tim Cary, Carol Cary, and Eve Cary

and

to Music, and those who love it

Vinaka vakalevu

to Mrs. Qiliho for being our rock, to Calvin Rore for being wise, talented, and more

helpful than I could have dreamed, to the fantastic kids of SIT Fiji Fall 2006 for being

the loves of my life, to my family for their bravery and support, to the talented

interviewees who so generously shared their time with me, and lastly, **vinaka**

vakalevu,

bahut dhanyevaad, and thank you very much to the ceaselessly amazing nation of

Fiji, and all of her wisdom.

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INTRODUCTION

Music bounces through the streets of Suva, as boisterous as the zooming taxis, as diverse as the people meandering on her sidewalks and parks, and as unavoidable as the rain. The songs represent the multiculturalism that is Fiji: Bollywood hits and Karnatak or Hindustani classics from the 44% of Fijians that are of Indian descent – the Indo-Fijians. *Vude* hits and other island music songs represent the 50% of the population that are indigenous Fijians. The remaining 6% are comprised of Chinese, Rotumans, Banabans, Europeans (in the Fijian sense of the word), and other Pacific Islanders, including (but certainly not limited to) Tongans, Samoans, Papua New Guineans, Tokalauans, Tuvaluans, Solomon Islanders, and Ni-Vanuatan. The remaining music is just as diverse – pop tracks or rap, generally from the United States, reggae from the Caribbean, Chinese songs, popular or classic rock from the U.S. or elsewhere, Samoan hip-hop, traditional music from other island nations, and much, much more. The immense amount of choice offered to music listeners in Fiji combines with the importance that music holds in defining and solidifying each group's unique identity. This creates an atmosphere in which music acts as a metaphor for how Fijians cope with the problems and extol the benefits of their multicultural society.

The problems cannot be ignored: four military coups have been carried out – two in 1987, one in 2000, and one in 2006 – all (except 2006) arising out of racial problems between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians, who mostly came to Fiji as indentured laborers between 1879 and 1919. It should be noted that an underlying, hidden reason for the 2000 coup, led by George Speight, was tensions within the indigenous Fijian population (Tarte, lecture, 17.10.06). Nevertheless, scars from violence during these coups remain, as shown in the rapidly declining Indo-Fijian population. Besides outright violence, there are other problems between the races, including leases of farming land to Indo-Fijians by indigenous Fijians beginning to expire in mass numbers. Many indigenous

Fijians decide not to renew, displacing the farming families. Poor race relations have been cited as one cause of this. There is very little interaction between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians – in fact, laws during colonial times kept Indian workers out of Fijian villages, and even now, inter-racial marriage is almost unheard of (Sen, lecture, 3.10.06). Even on the open-minded University of the South Pacific campus in Suva, students' preference for friends of their own race is quite evident. It cannot be denied that the country is in need of some form of reconciliation. Therefore, in this paper this question is being asked: How do musical interactions in Fiji promote multicultural reconciliation, especially through fusion and cross-cultural listening?

As strong as the Indo-Fijian/indigenous Fijian dichotomy is in Fiji, and as much hurt as these two groups' tensions have caused, I chose to focus on them. I will first describe each of the groups' musics[1], focusing mainly on more traditional aspects of the music in order to get a basis for underlying principles in which today's musical culture is rooted[2]. Next, I will introduce the phenomena of fusion music in Fiji. This section will include both theoretical and philosophical theories behind fusion, and will include a song analysis. After this, I will move on to cross-cultural listening – the prevalence of indigenous Fijians listening to Indo-Fijian or other music, and vice-versa. Finally, I will briefly analyze my findings and speak on the future of music and reconciliation in Fiji.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS STUDY

Justification for this project rests on three goals: 1.) To document a system (Indo-Fijian/indigenous Fijian fusion) that has had little to nothing written about it, and therefore giving

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[1] Though some Indo-Fijians believe that their culture is now too far removed from India for them to be deemed "Indian", (Sen, lecture, 3.10.06), their musical culture has not diverged significantly from that of India, except perhaps by being less innovative (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06).
[2] The large number of pages devoted to this section should not be interpreted as an indication of importance to the central ideas of the thesis; describing musical systems is simply requires a lengthy process.

respect to the musicians involved; 2.) To attempt to understand Fiji's society through looking at its representative music; and 3.) To attempt to understand music and society in order to someday (after this research is completed) use it in an activist way.

Though there is plentiful literature on classical Indian music, and a decent (if antiquated) amount on traditional Fijian music, I found almost nothing on contemporary Fijian or Indo-Fijian music, and absolutely nothing on instances of these musicians stepping into the other culture, or of the way that music functions in contemporary Fijian society. Though I could not, within one month, take on the task of thoroughly documenting any of these systems for posterity, I felt particularly uncomfortable with the lack of current ethnomusicological information, especially in relation to cultural relations in Fiji. There are countless artists (and not just musicians), who have dedicated huge amounts of time to reconciliation and understanding through their art. I believe that to document their efforts is the least I can do, as a student who is currently chained to the academic structure, as an outsider, and as a person with little money or resources –besides my time and love - to dedicate to their efforts. (However, I do not wish to portray myself as a blessing to these people – when, in fact, they are a blessing to me.) Also, I found the lack of writing on music and contemporary society in Fiji to be upsetting – it is a unique situation that is extremely interesting to write about, and, I hope, interesting to read about.

However, it is far more than just interesting. Music is an interpretive mirror of society; it reflects, but also explains. Attempting to understand Fijian society is no mean feat, and to look at it through its music is just one way to attempt to do so.

Although this paper remains a piece of academic work that only seeks to educate and explain, I hope to someday use the skills that I have learned from creating this in a more helpful way. The ability to research and talk to people in order to find out how music hinders or helps healing will, I hope, be extremely useful when I arrive in the real world outside of academia. Perhaps, with these

skills, I will be able to transcend mere fact gathering and analyzing and actually aid the processes which I judge to be positive. In the meantime, I certainly pray that this paper will fall into the hands of those who can do something about its contents.

AUDIENCE

While I do hope that this paper will be able to reach those who can do something positive, this is not a plea for activism. It will have no recommendations for actions and no suggestions for legislation. I understand that my primary audience is academia outside of Fiji, and that my primary purpose is fact gathering. I therefore write this paper assuming that the reader has little knowledge of Fiji.. **The paper also assumes that the reader has a basic knowledge of Western music theory and vocabulary** (to explain Western music as well would have been highly impractical). I regret if parts of this paper (especially "An Introduction to the Music of Fiji" and "Example: Valu ni Vanua by Freddy Kado") seem confusing because of an excess of Western music vocabulary. I do hope, though, that this paper reaches Fijian hands. I humbly hope that, despite my status as an outsider, they will be able to pass over the theory descriptions, of which they are already familiar, and realize something about their culture from my information gathering.

METHODOLOGY

Before arriving in Fiji, I was perusing a popular Fijian website that streamed radio stations online. I noticed that the radio stations were culturally divided – Hindi stations, with all of the Bollywood hits, and Fijian stations, with *vude* and reggae. I realized I had come across my ISP topic: how music *divided* the two dominant ethnicities from one another. However, as I spent time in Fiji, I realized that music had the potential to be a great unifying force in this multicultural society, both

through fusion and cross-cultural listening. Therefore, I geared my research towards the positive affects that music has or could have upon coping with multiculturalism. This hypothesis was challenged, though never negated, by some information I encountered.

RESEARCH METHODS

The methods I used were interviews, participant observation, and literary research. In order to fulfill my desire for a positive-angled project, I searched for local musicians engaged in fusion. Luckily, my advisor, Calvin Rore, was able to put me into contact with a few such people through his own connections as a practicing musician. He was also a valued resource, having created fusion. I also made appointments with representatives at two radio broadcasting companies, and stopped by Radio Pasifik, USP's student radio station. I was interested in addressing the division that I had seen before stepping foot in Fiji. I found another valuable resource in the Suva Multi-Ethnic Cultural Center, where I was able to speak to the director (who is, obviously, actively engaged in reconciliation through arts) and learn from teachers. I was able to attend several music and dance classes at the center. Lastly, I interviewed the woman who had taught me Fijian and *meke*, Mrs. Tuberi. I came into all of these interviews with lists of questions that I used more as goals than structure – I tried to make the conversations free-flowing, but referred to a question when there was a break in speaking.

The literary research I conducted at the USP library resulted in information about each musical system separately. There is nothing written, that I could find, about ethnic relations and music in Fiji. I found much of the material on music in Fiji to be antiquated or incomplete; therefore, I checked most of the information over with musicians. In all of my library research, I found only two pages of text on Indo-Fijian music.

Another research method I attempted was talking to random people in parks, to get a feel for what people listen to in Fiji. However, after speaking to four different people in Ratu Sukuna Park in Suva, I realized that I would need to speak to a very large number of people, at least a few within each demographic group (young adult indigenous Fijian, old Indo-Fijian, young Chinese-Fijian, middle-aged European Fijian, etc.) to get any sort of accurate information. Even then, I know nothing about the procedures of surveying. Mostly, however, I just didn't have the time to spend on this part of my research. This lack of time brings me to the challenges and dilemmas that I faced in my research.

CHALLENGES/WEAKNESSES

Although my research was fairly non-problematic, I did find a few hurdles. These included lack of time and issues with interviewees.

Contrary to what I believed before the month started, one month is an extremely short time to conduct a broad research project. I found more and more directions for my research to take with every person I spoke to. For instance, I realized during an interview in the third week that the music taught in schools is extremely important to my project – if children are learning about Fiji's other cultures at a young age, they will be more open to fusion and cross-cultural listening in the future. I also wish that I had researched music in public spaces. Radio is public, but individuals can control this - what music gets played in public spaces like buses, stores, and cafés? Discovering the history of fusion in Fiji would have been good, as well. I felt I didn't have enough time to adequately research all genres of Fijian popular music. In fact, I didn't realize until close to the end of the project how important researching popular music, as opposed to traditional influence, was. However, I had other crucial interviews scheduled, and ran out of days to look into this avenue. As I

had thrown myself into my research at the very beginning of the research period, I know that the information I missed out on came not from laziness on my part, but a lack of time.

The research was considerably slowed down by the difficulty that I had in setting up many of the interviews. The radio stations were the easiest to reach, and the interviewees were there to greet me when I came at the designated time. However, I had difficulty contacting some of the other interviewees – for example, arriving at a meeting place and finding no one, or calling a series of people to find someone, finally to find out that their cell was still at home. I also wasted a fair amount of time trying to secure interviews that never came to be. I called the Fiji Arts Council six or seven times over two weeks, and even took a taxi to their building near USP campus. By various means ("Oh, you don't want to talk to *me*", "She's out of the office", "Come back tomorrow", "I'll have someone call you") they were able to avoid my interview. The same sort of situation occurred with the Ministry of Multi-Ethnic Affairs and Reconciliation, and with the Department of Cultural Heritage. As I had researched and formulated questions for all of these interviews, I lost valuable research time.

Once I sat down with each interviewee, I found very few problems. I found that people were very receptive to my project, and were quite happy to talk to me after I told them that I was a musician myself. It was difficult, however, to ask questions directly about race. I felt intrusive, especially interviewing people on the street (another reason that I abandoned that enterprise). With my interviewees, I found them to be less keen to answer questions about race – especially at the radio stations. I therefore didn't press the issue – I believe it would have been rude to do so. This weakness may show through in the paper, which I would have preferred to have more content related to race relations.

ETHICS

I can think of very few ethics issues that I had throughout my research, other than my attempt to be sensitive in questioning. I had to acquire consent from Freddy Kado to transcribe his song. I also found that one of my interviewees was extremely excited to have his activist ideas propagated through my paper. As much as I may believe in his cause as a fusion artist, I must recognize that the purpose of this paper, as written above, is not to incite social change in Fiji. Therefore, I have had to make an attempt to be unbiased about the information I present, keeping it academic and not activist.

Lastly, it is very important to me that I quote correctly the people that I have interviewed. As I used note taking, as opposed to recording and transcribing, I had to recall everything that my interviewees said in perfect detail. To misconstrue any idea that these people conveyed to me would be unethical and unfair to them, as they have taken me into their confidence. Therefore, I have worked extremely carefully to represent accurately what people have told me.

TERMS

Please excuse variations of spellings, especially of words within the Indian traditions. The many dialects and languages from which these terms arise make for many variations within research materials.

INDO-FIJIAN

akshara (Karnatak) or *matra* (Hindustani)
Beats in a *tala* (Malm 120)

anga
Karnatak subdivision of tala (Malm 122)

anibaddh
Unmetered Hindustani music (Ruckert 82)

anudruta
one beat *anga* (Karnatak) (Malm 122)

arohana (South) or *aroh* (North)
Ascending scale pattern in *raga* (Alves 138)

avarohana (South) or *avaroh* (North)
descending scale pattern in *raga* (Alves 138)

bansri or *venu*
side blown flute made of cane (Malm 129)

bhajan or *bhajana*
simple devotional songs using traditional *ragas* (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06)

Bollywood
A popular term used to mean the Indian film industry, which is the largest in the world (Miner 347).

dholak
two-headed barrel drum (Malm 127)

dhrupad
metered, fixed composition Hindustani piece (Ruckert 83)

druta
two beats *anga* (Karnatak) (Malm 122)

harmonium
small, portable reed organ with Western scale keyboard of twelve notes per octave

Hindustani
Classical Indian music coming from North India

kalpana sangita
improvised Karnatak music (Kassebaum 98)

kalpita sangita
composed Karnatak music(Kassebaum 98)

Karnatak
Classical Indian music coming from South India - the states of Andrha Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu (Kassebaum 89)

khali
beats in a Hindustani tala cycle that are felt but not aurally accented (Malm 122).

khyal
Hindustani metered composition which can be used to improvise off of (Ruckert 83)

komal
Slightly lower pitch (flat) (Dass, class, 27.11.2006)

laghu
three, four, five, seven, or nine beat *anga* (Karnatak) (Malm 122)

mridangas
South Indian two-headed barrel drum that uses paste patches for tuning (Malm 129)

nibaddh
metered Hindustani music (Ruckert 82)

pakhavaj
North Indian two-headed barrel drum that uses pieces of dowling for tuning (Malm 129)

raga
Guiding principle of Hindustani and Karnatak music: scale, mode, tonal system, melodic motifs and themes, microtones, ornaments, and improvisation (Kassebaum 89). Also described as "color" (Ruckert 64)

rasa
Mood created by a *raga* (Widdess 67)

sam
First beat in each cycle in a *tala* (Malm 120)

sarod
lute with six melodic strings and two drone strings on a metal fingerboard and sympathetic strings within the body (Malm 133)

sitar
two-gourded lute with two-four melody strings, three drone strings, and thirteen sympathetic strings (Malm 130)

shanai
double reed instrument (Malm 129)

shudh
natural or pure note (Dass, class, 27.11.2006)

sruti box
one-note, drone-providing hand pumped reed organ (Malm 133)

svara or *swar*
note (Dass, class, 27.11.06)

tablas
set of two small drums using permanent tuning patches and other tuning methods (Malm 129)

tala
cyclic measures of time (Malm 120)

tali
accented beats in Hindustani *tala* cycle (Malm 122)

tambura
lute with only drone strings (Malm 133)

that
heptatonic scales made of *svara* (Alves 140)

tivra
slightly higher pitch (sharp) (Dass, class, 27.11.2006)

INDIGENOUS FIJIAN

bibi
heavy, the prescribed vocal quality for the *druku* in a *meke* (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

cobo
cupped clapping (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

davui
conch trumpet (Goldsworthy 776)

derua
bamboo stamping tubes (Goldsworthy 776)

druku
bass voice in a *meke* (Lee 213)

ie sasa
antiphonal phrase in meke (Lee, "Naloto", 778)

kena i oti
closing verse of a *meke* "its end" (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

laga
to sing, to start a *meke*, the person who starts the *meke*, one of the leading voices in a *meke* (Lee 96, Lee, "Naloto", 777)

lali
large wooden slit drums

lali ni meke
small wooden slit drums

lewe ni meke
body of the meke (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

meke
indigenous Fijian sung narrative texts with instrumental and dance accompaniment, performed in ceremonial and social contexts (Goldsworthy 774)

meke iri
meke with fans (Goldsworthy 774)

meke i wau
men's *meke* with clubs (Goldsworthy 774)

qaqana ni meke
stanzas of a *meke* (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

ra bose vata
rhymes in a *meke* (Lee 104)

same
Fijian biblical songs deriving musical structures and pitches directly from traditional *meke* (Goldsworthy 776)

sausau
flat clapping (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

seasea
standing women's *meke* (Goldsworthy 774)

sere
to sing, song (Lee 96)

sere ni cumu
Western-style Fijian songs accompanied by guitars or ukuleles, sung for relaxation (Goldsworthy 161)

sere ni lotu
choral polyphonic singing of various religious texts in Western tonal harmonies (Goldsworthy 776)

tagica
the second high voice in a meke (Lee 213)

taralala
lively dance songs, similar to *sere ni cumu* (Lee, "Naloto", 780)

taro
Religious song in responsorial form from Fijian hymnal (Goldsworthy 776)

ucu ni meke
introductory verses, "the nose of the meke" (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

ukuuku
elaborations upon a basic *lali* beat (Lee, Naloto, 777)

vakababa
Voice in a *meke*, close to *laga* and *tagica* (Lee 213)

vakatale
refrain in a meke (Lee, "Naloto", 778)

vakamalolo
men's or women's seated *meke* (Goldsworthy 774).

Vanua
The land – a complicated and central indigenous Fijian concept that combines land, people, trees, water, and soul

vucu
The poetry that comprises the words of any *meke* (Lee 213)

Vude
A popular Fijian music style that combines disco, rock, country, and *meke* (www.calabashmusic.com). Popular singers are Laisa Vulakoro and Seru Serevi.

yatu ni vosa
lines of a *meke* (Lee, "Naloto", 777)

yaqona
grog; a traditional drink made from the roots of the *yaqona* plant, drank extremely frequently by many Fijians

PEOPLE, AS USED IN THIS PAPER

European (in the common Fijian way)
Generally, a white person of (possibly remote) European ancestry. Although not all Fijians do so, a Fijian could say this and be referring to Australians, New Zealanders, people from the United States, or true Europeans – Irish, Scottish, German, Austrian, British, etc.

Fijian
Any person from Fiji (when used to describe music or language, refers to indigenous Fijian).

Indigenous Fijian
A person who defines themselves as having ancestry in the Fiji islands. This term tends to exclude Indo-Fijans and other ethnicities.

Indo-Fijian
A person from Fiji who has ancestry originating in India, most came to Fiji as indentured laborers between 1879 and the 1910's.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MUSIC OF FIJI

Traditional indigenous Fijian music and classical Indian music continue to hold influence in

Fiji. Although many radio stations may now prefer Paris Hilton or Nickelback over a traditional

Fijian *meke* chant or traditional Indian *bhajan*, this music still plays an important cultural role in

several ways. For one, it influences contemporary music – for instance, Bollywood music still

follows *raga* (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Traditional *meke* voice structure and the wooden *lali* is

used by contemporary artists, including the popular band Black Rose and those out of the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture on the University of the South Pacific Laucala Campus in Suva. *Meke* also influences *vude*, a style of music popular with indigenous Fijians that combines disco, rock, country, and *meke* (www.calabashmusic.com). Lastly, these systems influenced the popular band Black Rose, of whose fusion song will be analyzed in this paper. These two systems, however, are vastly different in every facet, from pitch material to spiritual significance.

GENRES

Meke is the dominant musical tradition of indigenous Fijians. The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music describes it as "sung narrative texts with instrumental and dance accompaniment, performed in ceremonial and social contexts" (Goldsworthy 774). In other words, *meke* is comprised of music and dance intertwined. The word can also be used in the imperative to command the start of a performance (Lee 96). The poetry that comprises the words of any *meke* is called *vucu* (Lee 213). Other words for singing include *sere*, which can be the verb "to sing" or the noun "song" (Lee 96). *Sere* has also been translated as "to sit and sing", referencing singing outside of ensembles (Lee, "Naloto", 776-7). The word *laga* refers to the act of singing as well, but can also refer to starting the meke, the person who starts the *meke,* or the leading voices in a *meke* (Lee 96, Lee, "Naloto", 777).

There are several genres of *meke*, each of which has had a varying amount of Western influence (Lee 96). Genres can be defined by the positions, movements, props, and genders of the dancers – for instance, *vakamalolo* (men's or women's seated dances), *meke iri* (dances with fans), *seasea*, (standing women's dances), or *meke i wau* (men's dances with clubs) (Goldsworthy 774). Another way to classify *meke* into genres is to look at their use in society, noticing the extent to which many reflect the importance that Christianity has had in indigenous Fijian society since its importation by

European missionaries in the nineteenth century. Genres that are still used today, at least to a certain extent, include *same*, *taro*, *sere ni lotu, sere ni cumu,* and *taralala.*   *Same*, or Fijian biblical songs (from the word "Psalms"), derive musical structures and pitches directly from traditional *meke* and have not been influenced by Western musical ideas. *Taro* is similar in its lack of Western influence, and is also religious, but is usually in responsorial form from the Fijian hymnal. *Sere ni lotu* are choral polyphonic singing of various religious texts in Western tonal harmonies. These are extremely popular in Fiji, and have a wide range of complexities (Goldsworthy 776).

    Genres that are unrelated to religion (as much as anything in Fiji can be unrelated to religion) are *sere ni cumu, taralala,* and *vude*. *Sere ni cumu*, translated "bumping songs", are sung in three- or four-part harmonies. Although these harmonies are Western (like *sere ni lotu*), they exhibit many characteristics from pre-European Fijian music (Goldsworthy 162). *Sere ni cumu* have been described as "western-styled popular songs" (Lee, "Naloto", 779), and although they have had considerable influence from Western and Westernized music (such as that from the Caribbean or other Pacific Islands), the words and melody are created by Fijians (Goldsworthy 161). They are often accompanied by guitars and ukuleles, but not danced to. *Taralala* is similar, but has livelier rhythms and is used at dances (Lee, "Naloto", 780). *Vude*, a genre quite popular with indigenous Fijians, combines country, disco, rock, and *meke* rhythms (www.calabashmusic.com). Popular artists include Laisa Vulakoro and Seru Serevi.

        Indian music is also divided between religious and popular. First, though, there are two separate but related traditions: Karnatak of South India (the states of Andrha Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu) (Kassebaum 89) and Hindustani of Northern India. Though the northern and southern systems are both built upon the important idea of *raga*, southern *raga* performance has less improvisation and incorporates more rapid ornamentation. Most of the Indian peoples in Fiji arrived as indentured laborers (1879 – 1916), many from the Northeastern part of India, and later

some from the South. People of the North – from Gujarat and Punjab – came mainly as free immigrants (Lal 39). Therefore, Indo-Fijian music draws from both the Karnatak and Hindustani traditions, though, according to Vimlesh, an Indo-Fijian musician, not many people in Fiji can tell the difference (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). It should also be noted that the circumstances of arrival of the great majority of Indians in Fiji – hard indentured labor – created a lack of time for Indo-Fijians to cultivate arts and music distinctive from India (Sen, lecture, 3.10.06). Therefore, the classical music of Indo-Fijians falls under the following divisions. Karnatak music includes both improvised music (*kalpana sangita*) and composed music (*kalpita sangita*) (Kassebaum 98). Most Karnatak music, however, is based on song forms, and includes improvisation throughout a performance (Malm 124). Many students of Hindustani music learn music through compositions, either metered (*nibaddh*) or unmetered (*anibaddh*) (Ruckert 82). The metered types are *dhrupad*, which is a fixed composition, and *khyal*, which can be used to improvise off of (Ruckert 83). There are many unmetered compositions of *ragas*, and Hindustani students collect as many as possible in order to better understand how the *raga* functions (Ruckert 83).

Genres common in Fiji that relate to both the Karnatak and Hinustani traditions include *bhajan* (or *bhajana*) and film music. *Bhajan* - simple devotional songs – are fairly common, especially amongst Indo-Fijians in rural areas (Brenneis 612). These songs (roughly, the *sere ni lotu* of Indo-Fijians), use traditional *ragas* – however, as Vimlesh emphasized, very few Indo-Fijians truly know any Indian classical music system (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Much more popular are film songs coming out of India's extremely large film industry (the largest in the world) – Bollywood. Almost all Indian popular films are musicals (Miner 347). Films from both the North and the South use Indian and non-Indian musical characteristics and instruments (Kassebaum 107, Miner 347). Unlike much Indian classical music, especially Hindustani, these genres are not centered upon improvisation, a characteristic they share with the indigenous Fijian music discussed.

ENSEMBLE AND INSTRUMENTATION

The standard vocal structure of *meke* includes four harmonizing voice parts: *laga*, *tagica*, *vakababa*, and *druku* (Lee 213). These voice parts are assigned not by vocal range but by particular skills or for social reasons, and are habitual rather than lifetime positions (Lee 98). The *laga* starts each verse of the *meke*, setting the pitch and tempo. The *tagica* enters in the middle of the first line of each verse (Lee 98) and sings slightly above or around the *laga* (Goldsworthy 775). These voices should be light, small, and soft, and lead the ensemble (Lee, "Naloto", 777). The more recent and lesser known *vakababa* enters with the *druku*, but falls in sings in the range of the *tagica* and *laga* (Lee 213). Lastly, the *druku* is the bass, the drone, and the loudest voice. It should sound *bibi* (heavy) (Lee, "Naloto", 777). Anyone can sing the *druku* with little practice, and most of the people involved in the performance of the *meke* sing this part. The purpose of the *druku* is to add substance and weight and to make sure that the audience can understand the words of the *meke* (Lee 98). However, the *laga* and *tagica* remain important, being heard because of their drastically different sound (Lee 99) and taking the principal melodic lines (Lee 100). In fact, unlike Indian music, where musicians play off of each others' moves, the *druku* follows the faces of the two lead singers of the *laga* and *tagica* for structural cues (Lee, "Naloto", 777).

The very few instruments used in *meke* emphasize the importance of the voices. The most widely used are for rhythmic accompaniment, and include the *lali ni meke*, *derua*, *davui*, and percussive movements of the body. The *lali ni meke* is a roughly foot-long copy of the much larger wooden slit drums used to this day in indigenous Fijian communities to call people together. It is beat with two loosely held wooden sticks to a basic pattern throughout the *meke*. The *derua* are bamboo stamping tubes – used in many places in Fiji, they generally have a large circumference and can be of varying lengths. They are hit upon the mats on the floor by backup singers, providing a

low booming sound. The *davui* is a conch trumpet, little used now but formerly used as a herald to gather (Goldsworthy 776). Lastly, movements of the dancers and singers provide rhythmic accompaniment. Two types of clapping are used: *cobo* (cupped clapping, also used in *yaqona* drinking traditions), and the less common *sausau* (flat clapping) (Lee, "Naloto", 777). Feet stamping, brushing of fans against hands, and brushing against leaf wreathes tied to the waist, ankles, or wrists by the dancers also provide rhythmic accompaniment.

Pan-pipes and nose flutes, the only indigenous melodic instruments, are very old parts of indigenous Fijian *meke* and are now *highly* rare (Lee 115). Guitar and ukulele, often used for *sere ni cumu* and *taralala*, were brought in with Western influence (Lee, "Naloto", 777). The instruments are common in ensembles created for tourist's pleasure; four men with guitars (and possible a ukulele) are extremely common sights in Fijian resorts. A guitar is present in most informal *yaqona* drinking sessions, where indigenous Fijians will use it to accompany *sere ni cumu* in a Western style. However, these guitars and ukuleles are certainly not a part of traditional indigenous Fijian music.

Indian music incorporates far more melodic instruments. Some of the best known instruments of the Indian traditions include strings: the *sitar*, *sarod*, *tambura*, and others. Each use different combinations of three types of strings: melodic, sympathetic vibrators, and drone (Malm 130). The *tambura* has only drone strings, implying its function; the *sruti box* (a one-note hand-pumped reed organ) is also commonly used for the drone (Malm 133). Drums include two headed barrel drums such as the *dholak, mridanga,* and *pakhavaj* (Malm 127), and *tablas*, which are a set of two small drums, played together (Malm 129). Some of these drums, including the *tabla* and *mridanga*, are tunable, and therefore add a melodic layer as well as a rhythmic foundation. Wind instruments include the *venu* or *bansri*, a side blown flute made of cane or bamboo, and the *shanai*, a double reed. The harmonium is commonly used in Fiji, to accompany *bhajanas*. It is a portable reed

organ which has a keyboard with a Western scale of twelve notes per octave, making it impossible to achieve the subtle variations of pitch characteristic. However, players "fudge" ornamentations, as they do on electric keyboards, which are also becoming popular in non-classical music (Reck 364).

Bhajan is one non-classical genre that uses the harmonium. The songs usually accompanied by a *tabla* or *mridangam*, a tambourine, a drone instrument (*tambura* or *sruti box*), and hand cymbals, as well. Violin, another Western instrument adopted by Indian music, is occasionally part of the ensemble as well. The individualism in this ensemble is characteristic of much Indian music; many classical performances have very few musicians, perhaps just a *sitar*, *tabla*, and *tambura*. Film music is quite different. Directors of this music incorporate huge amounts of foreign instruments in their compositions, mostly in the past few decades. Just a few of these include violin sections, electric guitar and bass, trumpets, piano, conga drums, maracas, accordion, and harmonica – played together with *tabla*, *sitar*, *tambura*, *dholak*, and other Indian instruments (Reck 368). Guitar has not achieved the popularity with Indo-Fijians that it has with indigenous Fijians, however – besides its role in film music, according to Vimlesh, the instrument is mostly used for late-night sing-alongs amongst Indo-Fijian friends (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06).

PITCH MATERIAL

According to Vimlesh, the biggest difference between indigenous Fijian and Indian music is harmony and melody (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Pitch material supports this: Indian music includes many variations of pitches and places great importance on melody through *raga*. Meanwhile, indigenous Fijian music has small melodic ranges, and, as shown above, vocal structures based on harmonies.

Extremely traditional indigenous Fijian music generally uses no more than five or six pitches within a range of a perfect or augmented fourth. As a result, melodic intervals are quite small: major

seconds and minor thirds, with leaps to the top part of the fourth being used to signal melodic

accents. Melodies generally have a descending contour (Lee 101), and scale pitches can vary (Lee

99). Harmonies in indigenous Fijian music are important, as mentioned above. As Calvin Rore, a

musician at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, said, dissonance is a hallmark of Pacific music

roots (Rore, interview, 10.11.06). In traditional *meke*, the *laga* and *tagica* often sing very close

together by Western standards – in *same*, they sing on seconds, thirds, and sometimes unison. In

earlier *meke*, all the voice parts commonly sung in clusters of seconds and fifths. The *druku*

provides "several levels in chordal harmony". However, modern *meke* often use Western harmonies.

(Goldsworthy 775). For instance, the three- or four-part harmonies of *sere ni cumu* focus mainly on

the tonic, subdominant, and dominant triads (Goldsworthy 162). According to Calvin Rore, these

types of harmonies are part of some people's attempt to make indigenous music "easier to listen to"

– in fact, he says, many musicians have modernized traditional music (Rore, interview, 10.11.06).

   Although it is accepted that there are twenty-two pitches available in each octave of Indian

music, in common understanding (definitely in Fiji) there are twelve equally spaced notes and seven

scale degrees (*svara* or *swar*), just like in Western music. They are known by names similar to

Western solfege: Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni. Some of these notes can be flat (*komal*) or sharp

(*tivra*), and all can remain natural, or pure (*shudh*). If all are *shudh*, the pattern is roughly equal to a

Western major scale (Dass, class, 27.11.06). These heptatonic scales made by the *svara* are called

that. Although these pitches are written as equally spaced notes, tunings between the pitches in a

that vary with each player and vocalist, depending on the decorations and emotions called for by the

raga (Alves 140).

   The main theory governing the use of these pitches, however, is *raga*. Each *raga* uses five to

nine pitches (usually seven, though, a normal *that*). But, *raga* is much more than the notes to be

used. A *raga*, of which there are many, describes many melodic elements, including scale, mode,

tonal system, melodic motifs and themes, microtones, ornaments, and improvisation (Kassebaum 89). It is often described as "color" (Ruckert 64), for each creates and represents a unique *rasa* (mood) by its many features (Widdess 67). Examples of rules a *raga* provides include the Karnatak *arohana*/*avarohana*, or Hindustani *aroh/avaroh* (ascending/descending) scale patterns (including turns and repeated tones) that guide the melodic material (Alves 138), and the *vadi* and *samvadi*, tones that take principal and secondary melodic importance in improvisation (Alves 140). Some *raga* are associated with a mood and time of day, and therefore, under strict practice, may only be performed or practiced at that time of day (Kassebaum 90).

STRUCTURE

Meke poetry, which is pre-composed, is divided into several *qaqana ni meke* (stanzas) – anywhere from one to twenty. They can be repeated. These stanzas are divided into *yatu ni vosa* (lines), which can also vary in length depending on the *meke* (Lee, "Naloto", 777). There is flexibility while composing in the number of syllables in each *yatu ni vosa*, and also in the metrical structure of the verse – syllables may be added or deleted to fit (Lee 104). Rhymes (*ra bose vata*) usually are based on last two vowels of each line (Lee 104). To organize the stanzas, some *meke* distinguishes between *ucu ni meke* (introductory verses, "the nose of the meke"), *lewe ni meke* (body of the meke), and *kena i oti* (closing verse, "its end"). These can be different from each other through melody, text, tempo, or actions of the dancers (Lee, "Naloto", 777). Differences in genre include the *vakatale* (refrain) that can be found in *taralala* and *vakamalolo* and an *ie sasa* (antiphonal phrase) that is in *seasea* (Lee, "Naloto", 778).

The voices provide structure by their specific roles, mentioned earlier – the *laga* beginning each verse, the *tagica* entering, and the *druku* helping to continue the drone, seeing as Fijian music

"requires a continuous sound" (Lee, "Naloto", 779), an element that indigenous Fijian music shares with Indian music.

A classical Indian performance will always start with this drone, which will use "sa" and "pa" (tonic and fifth), and sometimes "ma" (fourth) (Malm 123). After this, the possible structures vary far more than even indigenous Fijian music – Indian music traditions are vast. As mentioned, the music can include both improvised and precomposed material. Film songs also have vast amounts of forms. The genre of *bhajan* has a specific structure, though. These songs are based around brief melodies, and can be verse and chorus (possibly using a one-line refrain) or strings of verses (Reck, "Worlds", 284).

RHYTHM

Rhythms in indigenous Fijian music also vary with genre (Lee 114). Many meke use triple divisions of the beat (Goldsworthy 775) – 12/8, 9/8, 6/8, and 3/8, but *taralala* are in duple meter (Lee, Naloto, 780). The cyclic beat that the *lali* uses to keep the rhythm throughout a piece varies. (see Appendix 1 for typical beat patterns). Players can elaborate over such basic beats with decorations called *ukuuku*. (Lee, Naloto, 777). The *derua* is stamped at the beginning of each rhythmic pattern – for example, on the first pattern in Appendix 1, the *derua* would be hit on each quarter note. According to Sailasa Tora, an expert musician at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, *meke* is guided by a driving rhythm focused on downbeats (Tora, interview, 29.11.06).

Indian music also uses cyclic measures of time throughout a composition, but they are far more codified, and cannot be described with Western terms like 'duple' or 'triple'. The cycles are called *tala*. Almost all *tala* have between seven and sixteen beats (though some can have as few as three or as many as 128!). These beats, called *matra* in Hindustani and *akshara* in Karnatak, are subdividable by the melody or rhythm. The first in each cycle is called *sam*, which is the rough

equivalent to a downbeat. After this, Karnatak and Hindustani diverge in theory from each other.

Karnatak subdivides the cycle by different *anga* (rhythmic group), which can be *anudruta* (one

beat), *druta* (two beats), or *laghu* (three, four, five, seven, or nine beats). A Hindustani *tala* cycle is

divided by accented beats, called *tali*, at the beginning of each subsection within the cycle (Malm

120). When this is felt but not stressed aurally, the beat is called *khali* (Malm 122). The *tali* and

khali are spaced differently depending on the *tala* (See Appendix 2).

Like the *ukuuku* of indigenous Fijian music, players may elaborate on the basic pattern of the

tala. In fact, some musical performances can become a contest between the musicians over

ornamentation of the *tala.* This is especially true in Karnatak music, where the melody and rhythm

instruments give much attention to the *tala*. Hindustani musicians tend to stay closer to the specific

drum patterns so that the melodic performers will feel safer in their improvisation (Malm 122).

CIRCUMSTANCES OF PERFORMANCE

Fiji is a highly religious country. Over half of the country are Christian, and the rest profess

to be Hindu or Muslim – there is a tiny minority (2%), that are split between other religions and no

religion (www.cia.gov). Therefore, it makes sense that religion provides one of the largest

opportunities for music performance. *Same*, *taro*, and *sere ni lotu* have all been described as having

religious significance (Christian), and are performed by women at church and at casual gatherings

(Lee, "Naloto", 779). Indigenous Fijians also sing religious songs at conferences, bazaars, and

competitions (Ratawa 781). Similarly, Indo-Fijians also sing religious songs (Hindu or Muslim) at

bhajan groups with parents, teachers, prayer groups, or at a cultural center. In fact, according to

Vimlesh, all local Indo-Fijian music is religious. (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Indian film music

is a mainstream, popular genre in Fiji, and therefore, recordings are played on radio and by

individuals (mostly CDs) on a regular basis. Likewise, *sere ni cumu* and *taralala* are popular genres;

however, they are often performed live so that people can sing along. *Sere ni cumu* are often sung for relaxation at grog drinking sessions (which are frequent and can last all night), while *taralala* is played at dances. Both Bollywood and *vude* are most frequently listened to on the radio, in public buses, taxis, and other public venues. Occasionally, a Bollywood or *vude* artist will have a show in one of the larger towns.

The traditional circumstances of performance for *meke* have changed. Where they used to have religious significance in the pre-Christianity days, *meke* are now used for entertainment, social interaction and solidarity, and cultural identity. They are also sometimes used for record keeping (Goldsworthy 774). This can occur at festive and official occasions such as religious conferences, weddings, festivals, or official visits by dignitaries (Goldsworthy 774). An example of this is the Melanesian Arts and Cultural Festival, hosted in Suva in 2006, where a group of musicians and dancers performed a traditional *meke i wau*, among other dances. Also, competitions are also occasionally held throughout Fiji in which *meke* are performed (Goldsworthy 774).

Tourism plays a large role in performance of indigenous Fijian music. The many *mekes* that are performed for tourists emphasize energy, surprise, and humor – but not traditional values, such as honoring the *vanua*, that *mekes* in other contexts may impart (Ratawa 781). Though the benefits and downfalls of commoditization of *mekes* through tourism could be debated for days, the fact remains that performances of *mekes* for tourists are helping to keep the dance alive (Tuberi, interview, 28.11.06). Indo-Fijian music, on the other hand, has barely been touched by tourism. The industry tends to sell indigenous Fijian culture predominantly – one would be hard pressed to find a resort offering Indian musical performances.

FUSION MUSIC

Although the traditions above are unique and self-reliant, there are instances of them coming together within a single local composition. Although extremely rare, fusion of Indo-Fijian and indigenous Fijian music is in many ways a metaphor for attempts at racial reconciliation in Fiji. This is shown especially strongly in the various rationales given by artists for the creation of fusion music, and is interesting to analyze on a musical basis. First, however, the definition of fusion should be discussed, as this is debated.

WHAT IS FUSION?

The individual musicians spoken with articulated two definitions of fusion. The first is expressed mainly through the actions of Frederick Kado, a member of a band called Divine (playing an eclectic selection of music), and previously of the popular band Black Rose. By the music he describes as fusion, he shows that his definition is: using elements from more than one musical culture, including language and instruments. This may or may not include collaborating with the musicians themselves (Kado, interview, 14.11.06). Vimlesh, however, clearly stated a different definition: fusion only exists when two musicians of different musical systems sit down together and create. Simply using another culture's instrument, or telling someone what to do with their instrument, is not fusion, for it does not incorporate the feelings and creativity of both cultures (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Therefore, Kado creates music with his definition, while Vimlesh is careful to always get other musician's input while using their material. This paper will treat music of either definition as proper fusion.

Fusion in Fiji is still rare, as extensive research led to only a few artists who combined Indo-Fijian and indigenous Fijian music. The first, Frederick Kado, is based in Nadi with his band, Divine, and was previously a member of the popular Fijian band Black Rose. Black Rose was formed in 1995 to tell Fiji's story, which Kado describes as a story in Fijian, Hindi, and English.

They have made quite a few albums, and on their most recent, entitled *Kila…?* they laid down a potent fusion track called *Valu ni Vanua* (Kado, interview, 14.11.06). Though their music is by no means exclusively fusion, Black Rose is by far the most popular and well-known of the artists engaged in fusion that I will speak of. There are also instances of fusion music being created at the Suva Multi-Ethnic Cultural Center, which teaches Indian and indigenous Fijian dance, arts, music, and language (though the Indian classes are far more numerous than the Fijian). The teachers there occasionally work together to create fusion music; in fact, they composed music for the Fiji Day celebration at Albert Park in Suva. Another fusion artist is George Soni, a Fijian who studied classical music in India and speaks Fijian. His hit was the "ultimate party song," "Chuluchululu", which combined Indian and Fijian music with island rhythm (Naidu 79). Calvin Rore, a resident musician at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture, occasionally makes Indo-Fijian/indigenous Fijian fusion, such as the track that he just laid down with a *tabla* player. Sailasa Tora is also a resident musician at the Oceania Centre. He plays mostly indigenous Fijian music, but has also played with Indian musicians. Tora has played extensively with an Indo-Fijian friend who played *dholak* while Tora played *lali*. In fact, it was a performance of this drum duo in 1997 led to Tora's invitation to the Oceania Centre (Tora, interview, 29.11.06). Tora collaborated with Manoa "Twisti" Sugata on the album Ousenia, in which Twisti recorded a fusion track called *Quickening in Our Terra* (notes: "Ousenia").

There are also several artists who combine indigenous Fijian music with other systems. Calvin Rore plays this type of fusion, as well. Hailing from the Solomon Islands, he has produced an entire album that fuses Solomon Islands and indigenous Fijian music. As he has been in Fiji, working with Fijian musicians for many years, and cooperated with an indigenous Fijian musician to create the album, this fusion very much conforms to Vimlesh's definition. His album is one of the only instances of minority fusion that Rore knows of (Rore, interview, 30.11.06). Frederick Kado is

one more example, however. The band that he plays with daily, Divine, includes his wife, who is Rotuman. Rotuman/indigenous fusion is one of the many genres they play (Kado, interview, 1.12.06).

This paper will now discuss the reasons that these artists give for fusion; in other words, how these artists have chosen to face Fiji's multiculturalism.

RATIONALE FOR CREATING FUSION

1. PACIFIC MUSIC

The Oceania Centre was created with the mission of creating contemporary Pacific arts – including music. However, how does one define what is Pacific, and who is a Pacific Islander? To Calvin Rore, Indo-Fijians are included in the broad category of Pacific Islanders. Therefore, in his quest to create Pacific music, he includes the distinctive culture of the Indo-Fijian community in some of his music (Rore, interview, 10.11.06). Frederick Kado ascribes similar belief. Kado's ambition is to tell Fiji's story, much as the popular New Zealand Samoan band Te Vaka tells theirs. Just as Te Vaka includes many cultures, Fiji's story includes Fijian, Hindi, English, and others. He finds bands that inaccurately mimic Fijian music, yet sell themselves as Fijian, to be insulting and threatening to culture and language. Therefore, he says he will tell the story as it should be told (Kado, interview, 14.11.06).

The assumption that Indo-Fijians are members of the Fijian community is an idea that can be used outside of music. The ideas of *vulagi* (outsider or foreigner in Fijian) and *taukei* (indigenous Fijian) are still common in thought in Fiji; and these ideas were foundations for the political crisis of 1987. According to these labels, a *taukei* is a person who truly belongs to the *vanua* – they can trace their lineage and are certifiably indigenous to the Fiji Islands. A *vulagi* cannot. Therefore, they do not have claim to the land, and are forever foreigners. For many indigenous Fijians, this tag still

applies to Indo-Fijians, despite the fact that many generations have made their home in Fiji (Teaero, lecture, 26.9.06). The musicians above are attempting to ignore these problematic labels while still recognizing the existence of these varying groups.

2. CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Recognizing Indo-Fijians as member of the Fijian community does not render infeasible a realization that their culture is extremely different. Indigenous Fijians, Indo-Fijians, Rotumans, Chinese Fijians, and all the other groups in Fiji come from different contexts and cultures that have different privileges and stigmas associated with them. In light of this recognized difference, some musicians have decided to use their music to promote cultural understanding. Saras Goundar at the Multi-Ethnic Cultural Center explained that the Center provides time to people in which they can respect one another's culture and interact (as explained earlier, this interaction includes the creation of fusion music). She says that people need to invite each other into their culture, or else there will be no understanding, and therefore divisions between cultures. She believes that culture and music play a large part in multi-cultural harmony, and laments the fact that people in Fiji have been made to be separate (Goundar, interview, 23.1.06). Fusion, especially the personal relations of Vimlesh's definition, is a concrete example of people struggling towards cultural understanding, aided by music.

3. MUSIC IS UNIVERSAL

Calvin Rore uses one particularly common sense way to explain his desire to create fusion: Why not? He argues that music is universal. It doesn't matter what culture, language, or instrument – every person can understand what music is trying to say. Therefore, it makes sense to play music with any person, as we all speak this language. This universalism cuts across cultural lines and the

stigmas and privilege associated with them extremely quickly. However, Rore is not ignoring the differences mentioned above, he has simply found another way to transgress cultural boundaries (Rore, interview, 10.11.06).

4. POLITICAL MESSAGE

Although this subject will be touched upon later, it is important to note that some Fijian musicians target actual political events or issues in their material. The politics of race are etremely visible in Fiji; even the voting ballots have the race of each candidate written beside the name. The voting system is set up to allow candidates not from each political party or ideology, but from each race (Fraenkl, lecture, 18.10.06). Everything from day-to-day political squabbling to larger political strife can be traced to race in many people's thoughts. It makes sense that musicians would speak of an issue so prevalent in their society. Fusion is a good venue for this, as it attracts the listener's attention to a multi-cultural theme. For example, Black Rose's song, *Valu Ni Vanua*, written by Frederick Kado, is translated "War of the Land", and speaks of political struggle involved in intertwined land and race issues (Kado, interview, 14.11.06).

5. UNITY AND HARMONY

Kado also explained that on the whole, Valu Ni Vanua was about unity and harmony, and the second half prays to God for unity and understanding (Kado, interview, 14.11.06). This theme of unity and harmony was quite prevalent in fusion theories. George Soni, for instance, hopes that his music will "build a bridge" between communities in Fiji (Naidu 79), stretching out for unity. Sailasa Tora sees his identity as being multi-faceted, and as he has roots in the Western Viti Levu sugar cane belt, he has had many extremely close Indo-Fijian friends, who are just like family. He wishes to

extend lines to this and other cultures around the world (Tora, interview, 29.11.06). These particular ideas of Tora's can also be summed up by the word unity.

In fact, all of the rationales mentioned above seem to be reaching towards this goal of unity and harmony. Rore's musical universalism creates unity, while the Suva multi-ethnic Cultural Center promotes harmony between its artists, and those who hear their art. Cultural understanding leads to harmony, if not one-sided unity, while political messages urge for harmony to prevail above strife.

6. MUSICAL MATERIAL

Beside the noble theoretical reasons for fusion lies the fact that adding together musical systems gives the musician more musical material with which to work. Possible instruments double, huge amounts of rhythms, pitches, and harmonies become available, and potential styles increase exponentially. Goundar recognized this, stating that "culture is very colorful when it comes together". She acknowledges that people from one system don't "own" that systems' rhythm – it is free to be shared and used as anyone pleases (Goundar, interview, 23.1.06).

ARGUMENTS AGAINST FUSION

As positive as the tone has been thus far, there are arguments in Fiji against the creation of fusion and about its existence. Saras Goundar explained that there are people who believe that Indian music should not be blended. Prominent Indian people especially had trouble with fusion at first, because "people have political based minds" (Goundar, interview, 23.1.06). Tora also said that some people have had trouble with his fusion music – he sited his 1997 performance of tabla and

lali, which some people liked, and some strongly disliked. However, this is how it always is with music, he says (Tora, interview, 29.11.06)

Vimlesh argued not against the morality of creating fusion music, but that there was no fusion music that existed in Fiji, and very little possibility for it in the future. He believes that when using his definition of fusion, where two musicians from different systems directly collaborate, there has been no fusion in Fiji. Even Black Rose does not count, as they don't directly collaborate with Indo-Fijian musicians. Why is this? Part of the reason may be fear. Vimlesh, being Indo-Fijian, feels afraid for his safety to find and collaborate with indigenous Fijian artists (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06) (despite the fact that he has spent time at the Oceania Centre, which has many indigenous Fijians in residence). This is probably an example of the scars that last from the violence against Indo-Fijians during and after the coups. I've spoken to other Indo-Fijians who are afraid of indigenous Fijians, one Indo-Fijian cab driver showed me the scars he had received from indigenous Fijian youths who had attacked him with a knife while he was driving the cab. Although it can hardly be said that indigenous Fijian people blindly swing at any passing Indo-Fijian, it would be insensitive to deny Vimlesh his right to use fear as a hurdle to fusion.

As for the future, Vimlesh believes the forecast is dull. A huge problem is that there are few Indo-Fijian musicians – because parents are understandably motivated by the economics of putting food on the table instead of sending their children to music class, there have been very few Indo-Fijian children learning music (a sentiment echoed by Goundar, interview, 23.11.06). Those people who have learned music often learn by listening to recordings and copying them with their voices or instruments. Therefore, there are no Indo-Fijian musicians who understand Indian music well enough to be creative or to collaborate with indigenous Fijians. Even if this did occur, there is no market for such in Fiji (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06).

Another hurdle to collaboration is simply getting artists together.   Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians often don't know enough about each other's music to know which artist is of high enough quality to collaborate with (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06). Also, though indigenous Fijians gather Indian music through Bollywood, many good indigenous Fijians stay in villages, away from Indo-Fijians who could learn from them, according to Vimlesh (Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.06).

EXAMPLE: VALU NI VANUA BY FREDERICK KADO

Valu ni Vanua, literally "War of the Land", is a song about unity and harmony, according to its indigenous Fijian writer, Frederick Kado. The song is performed by Black Rose in their popular album "Kila?...", which means, "understand?". Kado says that the first half [written in Hindi, with Indian musical traits] is about political struggle, while the second half [written in Fijian, with *meke* characteristics] is a prayer to God for unity and understanding in Fiji (Kado, interview, 14.11.06). The song moves gradually from Indian to indigenous Fijian musical material.

The song opens with an Indian bamboo flute (or the electronic synthesis of one). Soon enters the sound of an Indian double-headed barrel drum and light, shimmering triangle and bells, which are felt underneath most of the piece (though they change in nature occasionally). This assures that the Indo-Fijian presence is felt throughout. A single voice sings in an Indian fashion – the melody is ornamented, and the pitches bend to the singer's will. For example, the word "rahegah" in the thirteenth complete measure is sung melismatically, with ornamentations between pitches. (The flute at the beginning also bends pitches.) The voice's melody is followed by a flowing section of strings (layered electronically) and a double reed sound, with a keyboard entering near the beginning. This instrumentation is typically Bollywood.

Directly after the Hindi lines finish, however, an indigenous Fijian *lali ni meke* enters, layered on top of the Indian barrel drum. The Bollywood strings continue – but their rhythm has

changed from smooth to driving. The syncopation is more typically Indian, but the feel fits right in with the *meke* sound that the vocal part has taken on. After one line of this instrumentation – *meke* voices, barrel drum, *lali ni meke,* and driving strings – everyone drops out but the *lali ni meke* sound, which has a short, two-bar solo.

As this solo finishes, an Indian double reed sound heralds in the rest of the piece, which resembles a traditional *meke* quite closely. Here, the only instruments used are driving percussion and voice, with a deep bass sound underneath. The voices are structured correctly as a *meke*: a *laga* begins most verses by itself, and then enters the *tagica*, harmonizing closely with the *laga*, and the *druku*, providing a heavy, solid bass. The voices are layered to sound like a large ensemble. The melodic range is indeed small – only two notes, a step apart, dominate the melody. Also, the harmonies are close, using only thirds and layered octaves.

Besides the characteristic emphases of melody in the Indian section and harmony in the *meke*, the rhythms used are characteristic of the systems. The melody of the Hindi verses commonly crosses bars and is syncopated. It is changing and flowing. The Fijian words, however, are commonly evenly spaced eighth notes, with little syncopation. All of the percussion throughout, however, ornaments its basic underlying rhythm, as is customary in both traditions.

The musicians who created this song are indigenous Fijian, and not trained in classical Indian music. They did not directly collaborate with Indian musicians, either, so it is quite unlikely that the piece follows a specific *tala* or *raga*. However, the elements of Indian music still exist, alongside with the *meke* elements. Listeners in Fiji can easily recognize this; therefore, the song catches the ear as something that is speaking to multiculturalism in Fiji. Kado only hopes that this message – a call for unity and harmony in the multiculturalism of Fiji – will be heard (Kado, interview, 14.11.06).

Source: "Valu ni Vanua, off of the album "Kila…?" (Mangrove, December 2002), by Black Rose

CROSS-CULTURAL LISTENING

Cultural awareness and interaction can also be achieved by members of one culture listening to anther group's music, or by music that everyone listens to. The extent to which this happens in Fiji is most easily gauged through radio stations, as radio can be heard around every turn. It is one of the most dominate ways to listen to music in Fiji. After introducing radio, especially target audiences and stations, I will explore local music, attempts to cross racial boundaries, and finally, the workers at companies who control radio in Fiji.

AUDIENCES AND STATIONS

The two main radio companies in Fiji are Communications Fiji Limited (CFL), which controls five stations, and the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation (FBC), which controls six stations. I will also be mentioning Radio Pasifik, the student radio station of the University of the South Pacific, housed at the Laucala Bay campus.

All five of CFL's stations are commercial, while four of FBC's six are commercial and two are public service (www.cfl.com.fj, www.radiofiji.com.fj). Radio Pasifik is a student volunteer based non-commercial station (R.P., interview, 20.11.06). Each of the commercial stations caters to a specific target audience, although most audiences are covered by stations at both CFL and FBC (www.cfl.com.fj, www.radiofiji.com.fj). These target audiences can be assumed to be accurate in knowing their market, as the companies are competitive businesses. The audiences speak to the definite ethnic separation with which the stations treat their listeners.

CFL has set out three specific audiences to which it tailors: traditional Indo-Fijian, traditional indigenous Fijian, and Western, both under 30 and mature. The traditional Indo-Fijian market is comprised of people with "culturally Indian preferences", usually over 25 years old. Radio

stations for this market are one of the only ways for Indo-Fijians to get Fiji-based information in Hindustani and are especially well listened to in the cane belt areas of Western Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The CFL stations that correspond to this market are Radio Navtarang (Hindi speaking, "latest music and gossip from Bollywood") and Radio Sargam ("older, more traditional Hindustani market", plays a cultural and religious role in the Indo-Fijian community by taking part in all Hindu and Muslim religious festivals) (www.cfl.com.fj). FBC does not use the same market terminology as CFL but has a station that roughly corresponds to Radio Navtarang. It is called Radio Mirchi – "The Rhythm of India", which also brings Bollywood, but is "customized to the taste, language, and culture of the local audience" (www.radiofiji.com.fj). Radio Fiji Two, a non-commercial FBC station, is also tailored to a Hindi market. This station is a Hindi speaking, government-subsidized, and committed to Public Service Broadcasting. This includes content on weather, disaster warnings, children, youth development, deaths, festival coverage, religious programs, family, religious programs, cultural programs, and, finally, cross cultural programs (www.radiofiji.com.fj). The religious material it presents is mostly Hindu, with some Muslim and a very small amount of Christian (Bernerd, interview, 10.11.06).

The traditional indigenous Fijian audience, as described by CFL, is older (over 25) and more conservative. This is the fastest growing market, which "reflects the changing population of Fiji" (www.cfl.com.fj). In other words, there is a growing demand for indigenous Fijian music as the indigenous population continues to grow and the Indo-Fijian population continues to emigrate. CFL features one station for the traditional indigenous Fijian market: Viti FM. Viti (the Fijian word for Fiji) features Fijian language popular music, the biggest "stars" in Fiji (such as *vude* artists), and "rugby rugby rugby" (www.cfl.com.fj). This extremely indigenous catered station has no exact match at FBC. However, FBC runs two Fijian language stations: Radio Fiji One and Bula FM. Radio Fiji One is Radio Fiji Two's counterpart. Being a Public Service Broadcasting station as well,

it has similar content categories, but is conducted in Fijian and has mainly Christian religious

segments. Bula FM, "Naba Dua ena Sera", is also conducted in Fijian and is dubbed "Fiji's best

Fijian pop station". It targets "young, energetic music lovers".

The Western market has four popular radio stations dedicated to it. However, the Western

market is not targeted towards Western people. In fact, it is said to be multi-racial and to have an

indigenous Fijian, youth base (www.cfl.com.fj). Statistics show that more than half of this market's

listeners are indigenous Fijian, and the remaining listeners are divided between "others" and Indo-

Fijans (www. cfl.com.fj – see Appendix 3). It is urban based: Suva, Nadi, and Lautoka. Its listeners

are "trendsetters" who are "universal in nature", and are "typically many of our nation's decision

makers". It is split into two sections: under 25 years of age, and those who were adolescents in the

80's and 90's, all of whom are very Westernized. CFL claims that its Western under-25 station,

FM96, is the best known station in Fiji. It broadcasts the "latest pop and mainstream music hits

worldwide". The station broadcasts in English, but its online description states that it speaks "the

language of Fiji", and that "any resemblance to English is coincidental" (www.cfl.com.fj).   The

program director says that the station targets, specifically, the 21 year old indigenous Fijian female

(Tela, interview, 15.11.06). Its corresponding station at FBC is 2Day FM. This station targets the

same ages, and is also broadcast in English. It plays hits from 1997 to present day from many

genres, mostly Western – RnB, hip-hop, rock, rap, pop, dance music, and reggae. 2Day FM's

mission is to "educate, inspire, and inform the youths while playing today's hit music."

(www.radiofiji.com.fj) However, when asked what the station strives to "educate, inspire and

inform" *about*, the program director said health, education, HIV, and other empowerment –

multiculturalism was not one of the chosen topics. The Western stations for older audiences are

Legend FM at CFL and Radio Fiji Gold at FBC. Both stations are English speaking and play classic

Western hits from the 70's, 80's, and 90's (www.cfl.com.fj, www.radiofiji.com.fj). The extent to which these stations reflect or affect Fiji's multiculturalism will be discussed below.

Radio Pasifik, being a single, non-commercial station, does not have the specific marketing schemes that the large companies do. The station has extremely diverse programming – a volunteer spoke of cultural shows which highlight a different Pacific culture each year, a Fijian program, a Hindi program, a women's program, a French program, and Globe Trotter, a global news show. Radio Pasifik, therefore, is the only station that truly attempts to reflect the multiculturalism of Fiji. However, its listenership is probably low – it is very uncommon to hear Radio Pasifik in public spaces.

ATTEMPTS TO BE CROSS-CULTURAL

Even if the stations are not multicultural in mission or target audiences, there are a few instances of cross cultural content or listening. Edward Bernerd, a Human Capital Coordinator at FBC, said that the four commercial stations occasionally include jokes or lingo from one of the different languages spoken in Fiji, even if they don't play the music of those cultures (Bernerd, interview, 10.11.06). In terms of fusion, all of the stations at CFL, including the Hindi, Fijian, and Western stations, play Black Rose. However, Black Rose is the only fusion artist that they use, or even know of (Tela, interview, 15.11.06). Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two work with the Ministry of Reconciliation, which funds the Public Service Broadcasting. However, the long list of programming only once mentioned cross-cultural programs (www.radiofiji.com.fj). These stations remain as divisive as the others. Radio Pasifik is, of course, a notable exception.

There are also some instances of people listening to stations that do not belong to their race. Bernerd said that in his personal experience, people cross stations in the cane belts of Western Viti Levu [the same area that Sailasa Tora mentioned as being a racially harmonious space]. Here,

Bernerd said, some indigenous Fijians listen to Radio Fiji Two, and some Indo-Fijians listen to Bula FM. Other than this, there is little evidence of races listening to each other's stations, judging from the researched specific marketing schemes. If there were a fair amount of Indo-Fijians interested in Viti FM, for instance, there would certainly be more Indian content to suit these customers.

LOCAL MUSIC

Local music could play an important role in speaking to the problems and joys in Fiji, which certainly include its multiculturalism. Local music gives a closer understanding than the broader cultures of Bollywood, reggae, or island rhythms. Even if the locally created music stayed within one culture, it would have a better chance at addressing these issues. It is highly unlikely that local music could be used in a demeaning way against another group, because, as Charles Tela pointed out, all radio stations must adhere to the Media Code of Ethics (Tela, interview, 15.11.06), which would most likely bar music that speaks ill of another race or cultural group.

Regardless of how it could be used, there is little local Fijian music played. Viti FM plays local music, according to its program director. However, it seems that the director may consider all Pacific Island music local (CFL, interviews, 15.11.06), and of course the Pacific Islands are extremely diverse, dealing with a multitude of issues that may have nothing at all to do with Fiji's multiculturalism. Also, Charles Tela emphasized that local music would not be played if it was substandard, for the sole reason that it was local. The stations don't want to play it after a better band (such as Nickelback, he says), and get a bad reaction from listeners (Tela, interview, 15.11.06). Sargam, an extremely traditional Hindi station, plays a large amount of local music – one DJ said that on Sundays, the station plays all local traditional Hindi music, and the rest of the week plays 40%-60% local music (CFL, interviews, 15.11.06). However, the effectiveness of this music in speaking to locals about the issues of contemporary Fiji is diminished by the fact that the music

played consists largely of "golden oldies". Also, the audience is extremely small – 4.8% of CFL's

listeners (www.cfl.com.fj). Lastly, Radio Pasifik may occasionally play local music, according to

the whims of its volunteer DJ's (R.P., interview, 20.11.06). This could occur if Fiji is chosen by the

DJ as the subject for the station's weekly cultural show.

COMPANIES AND WORKERS

On whose whims is music in Fijian radio controlled? For as much as a company or station

can define their audience and aims, the people who put on the music are those who really control

what radio is and how multicultural it can be. Charles Tela of CFL provided information on the

workers of this large company. The age and race demographics of the stations generally correspond

with the target markets. Therefore, the company has close to half Indo-Fijian workers and half

indigenous Fijians, though since the company has one more Fijian station than Hindi station, there

are slightly more indigenous Fijians. English stations have an even blend of Indo-Fijian and

indigenous Fijian workers. Although the company has no policy directly involving multiculturalism

or reconciliation, it does conform to the Broadcasting Code of Ethics (Tela, interview, 15.11.06).

This Code includes four clauses that warn media against making discriminatory references about a

race, referring unnecessarily to race, offending vulnerable minorities, and promoting racial discord

or hatred (Media Council, 5-6). Workers making racist comments are in no way tolerated, though

this very rarely occurs at CFL. Workers sign a contract upon employment in which they promise

respect for other cultural groups, as there is an extremely wide range working at the company. The

company language is English, so as not to exclude any one group, though some of the radio

personalities can speak both Hindi and Fijian (Tela, interview, 15.11.06).

Interestingly enough, Radio Navtarang (CFL's Bollywood gossip station) recently hired a

young indigenous Fijian woman as a radio personality. This unique decision was made because Ana

speaks Hindi, dresses like an Indian, thinks like an Indian, and speaks English with an Indian accent. Although her race is not accented on the radio, her race is generally known by her name and reputation. As to her popularity amongst the predominantly Indo-Fijian listeners, she must be fairly well liked, said Tela. After all, she would have stayed far shorter than her current six months if she was disliked (Tela, interview, 15.11.06)

ANALYSIS OF RADIO IN FIJI

It is clear that most radio stations in Fiji contribute to division – the markets devised by the companies assure that listeners must choose to listen to either Fijian, Hindi, or Fijian-targeted Western programming. Even the government sponsored stations (Radio Fiji One and Radio Fiji Two) are segregated by their content. Radio Pasifik certainly attempts to be multi-cultural, but this is one station among many, and does not have the commercial appeal that the other stations do. Other than this, there is little action being taken to unite listeners through the stations they listen to. The extent to which Western stations unite is extremely hard to determine. However, the verdict is more probably negative: Fijians are the main target of Western stations (www.cfl.com.fj), as shown by the companies' goals, and also by the attendees at station-sponsored events, such as concerts. Most of the people who show up to FM96's events are indigenous Fijians, as they are the main marketing target of this supposedly cross-culture market. Most of the Indo-Fijians will show up at Hindi station events, according to a Charles Tela of CFL (Tela, interview, 15.11.06).

CONCLUSION

Music is far more powerful when it is *your* music – when your own people created it, and it speaks to your life, your problems, your joys, and your people's position within larger contexts in

the world. It creates communal understandings and pride. Therefore, the lack of local music in Fiji, speaking to all Fijians, is disturbing. Perhaps fear is the problem, or lack of approachable recording facilities. Perhaps there are too many stuck up musicians who won't collaborate or teach (all issues brought up by Vimlesh, interview, 22.11.2006). Perhaps people are expressing the divisions between races that have been placed upon them since they first came together on the Fiji Islands in the late 1800's. The divisions in radio stations are also worrying – how can people begin to understand one another when their cultures remain separate?

However, there are beacons of hope, which this paper strives to bring into the light. Fusion music speaks directly to all Fijians. It is a direct product of Fijians, and any definition has its benefits: Kado's fusion has strength in its gift to audiences, while Vimlesh's also promotes interaction between musicians. Radio stations have slowly begun to recognize cross-cultural leanings. The Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture regularly produces music that speaks to Fiji in a particularly potent and highly contemporary way. Other artists, such as Black Rose and vude artists like Laisa Vulakoro, also speak to Fiji about everything – ranging from deep racial divides to light Christmas carols. The Suva Multi-Ethnic Cultural Center provides a place where artists of different races can interact. In so many ways, music is gently working towards reconciliation in Fiji – one can only hope (or pray) that this will continue.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Common duple meter beats (Lee 114)

seasea   *vakamalolo*

Derua   *Derua*   *Derua*   *Derua*

Another common pattern (MacLaughlan 9)

Derua   *Derua*

APPENDIX 2

Hindustani *jhaptal tala* (Malm 121):   Karnatak *jhampa tala* (Malm 121):

APPENDIX 3

Source: http://www.cfl.com.fj/radio.html

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