

# RACE, CLASS AND NATIONALISM: THE 1947 VISIT OF MONTY NAICKER AND YUSUF DADOO TO INDIA, 1947<sup>1</sup>

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## *Abstract*

*This article focuses on a 1947 tour of India by two South African Indian doctors, Yusuf Dadoo and GM (Monty) Naicker, during which they met with Mohandas K Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and attended the All-Asia Conference. The visit provides an opportunity to examine the links between Indians in the diaspora and homeland, and the issues that South Africans were grappling with – race, class, and nationalism, in the struggle against segregation and apartheid. In the decade that followed their visit, Dadoo and Naicker became national political figures and helped to break the racial boundaries around the anti-apartheid struggle. By the end of the 1950s, when armed struggle came to be seen by many activists as the only option to overthrow the apartheid regime, the communist Dadoo and Gandhian Naicker would part ways. While Naicker remained in South Africa, where he was subject to a series of banning orders, Dadoo went into exile to stitch together a broad coalition of forces. Into the twenty-first century Dadoo's and Naicker's ideological beacons are under intense pressure. Soviet Communism is dead, Gandhi's India is proud of her nuclear arsenal, and the two doctors' belief in non-racialism is under strain in their own country.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This article focuses on a tour of India that Dr Yusuf Dadoo, a communist, and Dr GM “Monty” Naicker, foremost adherent of *satyagraha* (passive resistance), the leaders of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) and the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) respectively, undertook from March to May 1947, where they met with, amongst others, Mohandas K Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and attended the All-Asia Conference from 23 March to 2 April 1947. Their visit is useful as a lens through which to attempt to understand the relationship between the Indian Congresses in South Africa and the Indian National Congress (INC), and the local issues that Dadoo and Naicker were grappling with – Indo-African relations (race), national liberation (nationalism), and the place of the Communist Party (CP) (class) in the struggle against white minority rule in South Africa. It also underscores the very

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1 Essop Pahad, “A life of struggle”, *The African Communist* 78, 3rd Quarter 1979. <<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/dadoo.html>> (Accessed 15 October 2009.)

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different paths taken by two men whose beginnings were similar in many ways and whose lives crisscrossed at a number of key moments.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The two Edinburgh-trained medical doctors, Yusuf Dadoo and Monty Naicker, were central figures in the fight to wrest control of the Indian Congresses from moderate leaderships. Monty Naicker was born in Durban in 1910. His father, PG Naicker (1887-1953), was a banana exporter who had arrived from Mauritius in the late 1880s. Monty attended Marine College in Durban and after completing his schooling in 1926, proceeded to study medicine at Edinburgh University where his contemporaries included two other “coolie doctors”, fellow Durbanite Keseval Goonam and Dadoo. Dadoo was born in Krugersdorp on the West Rand in 1909 and matriculated from Aligarh College in India. Aligarh stimulated the first stirrings of opposition to British imperialism in him. He returned to South Africa for two years before going to Britain in 1929 to study medicine. Monty returned to Natal from Edinburgh in 1934 while Dadoo, who completed his degree in 1935, spent time with Krishna Menon and the Indian National Congress in London before returning to South Africa in July 1936.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of their return, Indian politics in South Africa was controlled by moderates. For most of the next decade younger “radicals” challenged the old guard for control of the Indian Congresses in Natal and the Transvaal. These battles raged through the first half of the 1940s against the AI Kajee/PR Pather faction that held sway in Natal and the SM Nana/ME Valod group that dominated politics in the Transvaal. Naicker was supported by people such as Cassim Amra, Dawood Seedat, George Ponnen, HA Naidoo and George Singh, while Dadoo’s supporters included TN Naidoo, PS Joshi, Molvi Cachalia, Nana Sita, and GH Pahad. In the Transvaal in particular the faction fight within the TIC took a particularly vicious form between Dadoo’s Nationalist Bloc and the SM Nana/ME Valod group. At a meeting on 4 June 1939 at Osrin’s Picture Palace, for example, a fight broke out between these groups. Manilal Gandhi, Mohandas Gandhi’s son and editor of *Indian Opinion*, who attended the meeting, wrote that it “resembled a slaughter house, butcher knives being freely used in addition to bottles, heavy clubs, bicycle chains and knuckle-dusters”.<sup>4</sup> Dayabhai Govindjee was killed in this confrontation.

The name of Dadoo’s group, the “Nationalist Bloc”, is especially intriguing and one for which there is no ready explanation. In Natal, those who opposed the

3 See Dowlat Bagwandeem, *A people on trial. The struggle for land and housing of the Indian people of Natal, 1940-46* (Durban, 1991) for a detailed discussion of this conflict in Natal.

4 Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie, *Gandhi’s prisoner? The life of Gandhi’s son Manilal* (Cape Town, 2007), p. 255.

conservative faction likewise styled themselves “the Nationalist Bloc within the NIC” (which was called the Natal Indian Association at times as the names changed frequently during this period). Why Nationalist Bloc? Was this a reference to the Indian nationalist struggle against British rule which was led by the Indian National Congress? Was it a reference to the struggle within South Africa for national (multiracial) liberation from white minority rule? Or was it deliberately ambiguous so as to encapsulate both possibilities?

Dadoo was intensely aware of the Indian nationalist struggle and Gandhi and Nehru’s centrality to it. “At many meetings of the Nationalist Bloc, Indian nationalism was a rallying-point. A picture of Nehru...hung high alongside the flag of India.”<sup>5</sup> At Edinburgh, Dadoo had been active in politics as a member of the Independent Labour Party and the League against Imperialism. It was during these years that he was influenced by the rising star of the INC, Nehru, as well as Marxists who were campaigning for a “united front” against fascism.<sup>6</sup> His fellow South African at Edinburgh, Dr Goonam, would recollect:

“[Dadoo] didn’t attend lectures [laughs]. How he ever got through, I don’t know because he was busy attending all the political meetings there ... in the streets, in little halls. He wanted to gather as much information [and] we all took [it] from him. He was a very powerful speaker and a good, wholesome sort of individual. Quite a character in the sense that he enjoyed life and was also serious and went to rock bottom to the workers ... and he was a good-looking man. Women were after him. He had time for that too [laughs].”<sup>7</sup>

The label “Nationalist” is also intriguing because by 1939 Dadoo’s communist leanings were well known. Sushila Gandhi, for example, wrote to a friend in India that Dadoo “has strength of character and other good qualities and does not seek status. He is a Muslim but not a sectarian. He is a communist and is counted as one of Jawaharlalji’s followers...right now there are lots of people with red ties.”<sup>8</sup>

From the import of the letter one can discern the outlines of Dadoo’s politics that were to be a constant thread throughout his life. Even as a communist, Dadoo paid homage to Gandhi as the anointed leader of the nationalist struggle and the Indian Congress, rather than to the Communist Party of India. This approach prefigured his subsequent attempt to suture the struggle for socialism and the struggle for national liberation by subsuming the fight for the former under the umbrella of the latter. The Dadoo-led Bloc sought to engage in passive resistance to ward off impending segregation measures. A mass meeting of 3 000 Indians at Patidar Hall, Johannesburg, on 1 March 1939 resolved to embark on a passive resistance campaign against segregation. When the Transvaal Asiatic Land and

5 *Ibid.*, p. 252.

6 “Dr Yusuf Dadoo, Mahatma Gandhi and the South African struggle”. <<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/gandhi/8.html>> (Accessed 20 August 2009.)

7 Interview by Julie Frederickse, University of the Witwatersrand.

8 Dhupelia-Mesthrie, p. 252.

Trading Act was published in May of that year,<sup>9</sup> plans began in earnest to embark on passive resistance on 1 August 1939. A Passive Resistance Council (PRC) was elected with Dadoo as chairperson. Members travelled throughout the Transvaal to raise consciousness and funds for the campaign which was aborted when Dadoo received a cable from Gandhi a week before the campaign was scheduled to begin, advising that the time was not ripe for *satyagraha*, and that there was space for negotiations. Dadoo complied with Gandhi's request for the postponement even though he felt that the chances of resolving their grievances were "slender" and he realised that the momentum would be lost.<sup>10</sup>

World War II saw Dadoo and other communists in South Africa oppose the British-led offensive against Nazi Germany. Both Dadoo and Dawood Seedat of Natal were arrested during 1941 and imprisoned for three months for their stance. For Rusty Bernstein, their arrest "triggered the biggest campaign of meetings, handbills and posters that the Party had managed for years... Whether we affected the fate of Dadoo and Seedat is hard to say. Both were found guilty and sentenced to short terms of imprisonment, making them the first martyrs of the Communist Party revival."<sup>11</sup>

Despite the war, the state continued its thrust to segregate Indians. Prime Minister Smuts announced in Parliament on 21 January 1946 that the Government would introduce the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act. The "Ghetto Bill", as it came to be known, was introduced on 15 March 1946. Gandhi sent a telegram to Smuts on 18 March to withdraw the Bill, and issued a press statement describing it as a challenge to Asia and Africa. When the debate on the Second Reading of the Bill began on 25 March, the Indian government gave formal notice that it was terminating a 1938 trade agreement.<sup>12</sup> At its conference on 30 March 1946, the NIC declared that it would embark on a passive resistance campaign against the Ghetto Bill. A joint Passive Resistance Council (PRC) was formed with five members from Natal and five from the Transvaal, with Naicker and Dadoo alternating as president. The campaign began on 13 June 1946 and lasted almost two years until June 1948.<sup>13</sup> Whatever its limitations, the campaign consolidated Dadoo's and Monty's leadership of the Indian congresses. While they had studied together at Edinburgh, both were medical doctors and had renewed bonds in the context of the fight for control of the congresses, Naicker, unlike Dadoo, was not a

9 In terms of this Act, Asians would not be able to rent premises except with a special permit and no new licences would be issued to Asians except in locations.

10 Dhupelia-Mesthrie, p. 256.

11 Rusty Bernstein, *Memory against forgetting* (London, 1999).

12 <<http://www.sahistory.org.za/pages/library-resources/online%20books/passive-resistance/1946-NIC%20meeting.htm>>

13 See S Bhana, *Gandhi's legacy. The Natal Indian Congress 1894-1994* (Pietermaritzburg, 1997), pp. 73-77.

member of the CPSA. He was an avowed Gandhian. This difference would impact on the future trajectories of their political lives.

It was in the midst of this passive resistance campaign that the two doctors undertook a tour of India. Infused into local struggles were links with the Indian nationalist cause. This relationship had a long history. The struggles of Indian South Africans had always been linked to that for freedom in India. Indentured labourers had started arriving in 1860, carrying with them memories of the 1857 mutiny. During Gandhi's stay in South Africa, the language of upholding India's "dignity" as a way to mobilise was paramount. From the late 1920s to the early 1940s the link with India was official through the office of the Indian Agent General who was appointed following the Round Table conference between the South African and Indian governments in 1927.<sup>14</sup> The link with Gandhi continued, both through association with the leading figures in the Indian Congresses, such as Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Kalam Azad, Subhash Chandra Bose and Nehru, and through Gandhi's son Manilal who had remained at the Phoenix Settlement in South Africa.

When Gandhi was observing a fast in 1943, for example, there was a "solemn gathering" at the City Hall where "Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsees offered prayers for the preservation of the life of the greatest living Indian – Mahatma Gandhi".<sup>15</sup> Both the Nationalist Bloc of the NIC and CPSA held meetings in Durban to protest against Gandhi's arrest, as well as that of Nehru and Maulana Azad, and a cable was sent to Winston Churchill demanding their release.<sup>16</sup> Dr Goonam chaired a meeting of women where speeches were given in Hindi, Tamil and Gujarati, and a resolution was passed that the British Government was "offending womanhood by imprisoning Mrs Gandhi, Mrs Sarojini Naidu and other women".<sup>17</sup> Important events on the Indian calendar were observed in Durban. The Indian Independence Day celebration was organised annually from 26 January 1942 by the Indian League of Durban.<sup>18</sup>

Portraits of Sarojini Naidu, Gandhi, Nehru and Maulana Azad were hung on stage as the history of each was recounted, and the "playing of national songs added to the atmosphere of solemnity".<sup>19</sup> Naicker, Dr Goonam and trade union leaders such as HA Naidoo, in addressing these meetings, emphasised the link with India. For Dr Goonam "all Indians must observe this day. It is their duty." Indian independence was seen as "an historic step in the natural consciousness of the Indian and their kinship with the people of India".<sup>20</sup> Pictures of Nehru and Gandhi

14 See US Mesthrie, *From Sastri to Deshmukh: A study of the role of the government of India's representatives in South Africa, 1927-1946*, D.Phil, University of Natal, 1987.

15 *Leader*, 27 February 1943.

16 *Ibid.*, 15 August 1943.

17 *Ibid.*, 29 August 1942.

18 This day was observed annually long before actual independence was obtained in 1947.

19 *Ibid.*, 30 January 1943.

20 *Ibid.*, 31 January 1942.

adorned many an Indian home in South Africa. Many Muslims looked to Maulana Kalam Azad for inspiration, while Subhash Chandra Bose was an icon for young activists. Mac Maharaj recalls in his memoirs:

“I read about Gandhi and Nehru a lot while I was still a high school student. At home there were four photographs – of Gandhi, Nehru, Maulana Kalam Azad, and Subhash Chandra Bose. Nehru, Azad, and Bose were the lynchpins of the Indian Youth Congress. They were the young Turks. Bose argued for open warfare against Britain during the Second World War to achieve India’s independence. He went so far as to say he would form an alliance with Hitler and Japan if that would help the struggle. He disappeared over the Himalayas, purportedly on a flight to Germany to discuss a pact with Hitler. Bose was a hero to me. I saw Gandhi as a hero, but I was prepared at that age to favour Bose. I was still of the view that the enemy of my enemy is my friend.”<sup>21</sup>

When India achieved independence on 15 August 1947, Naicker requested that “this happy occasion of our Motherland’s march towards her cherished goal be celebrated in a fitting manner”. The NIC appealed to Indians to close their places of business, and asked religious bodies to hold “special services for the safety and progress of our Motherland”. A meeting at Albert Park was attended by over 15 000 people; the flags of India and Pakistan were unfurled side by side, pictures of Gandhi, Nehru, Maulana Azad, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and Sarojini Naidu adorned the platform, and women stood on stage in saris in the national colours of India and Pakistan.<sup>22</sup>

At the same time, a combination of factors pushed the NIC and TIC into a substantial working relationship with the ANC. The most obvious was that the NIC and its counterpart in the Transvaal had wrenched control from the conservative factions and broadened their leadership and support base. Much the same happened in the ANC where younger leaders like Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela came to the fore. Their professional middle class Indian counterparts included the likes of Naicker, Dr Goonam, IC Meer, Dadoo, Yusuf and Molvi Cachalia, and JN Singh.<sup>23</sup>

The membership of the ANC, NIC, and TIC also came to include industrial workers who had joined trade unions as the manufacturing sector expanded in South Africa during the early 1940s. The Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), until its banning, played a crucial role in all these organisations. Additionally, small traders in the Transvaal were directly threatened by apartheid and supported a widening of the struggle. All round then, there was “less to be gained than before from isolating Indian struggles from those of other Blacks”.<sup>24</sup> While the first steps

21 Pdraig O’Malley, *Shades of difference Mac Maharaj and the struggle for South Africa* (London, 2007).

22 *Leader*, 2 September 1947.

23 See Ahmed Kathrada, *Memoirs* (Cape Town, 2005), for a first-hand account of closer links between Indian and African activists during the 1940s.

24 Tom Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg, 1985).

towards unity were tentative, and a degree of suspicion would remain among some in the ANC, there is no denying that there was also genuine camaraderie.

This growing working relationship did not break the link with the Indian nationalist cause, although it took on a different guise. As the British conceded ground in India, so did Indian South Africans call on the Indian government to apply sanctions to South Africa, recall its High Commissioner, as the Agent General came to be known, from South Africa, and raise the plight of South African Indians at the United Nations (UN) in order “to uphold the honour and dignity of Indians abroad”.<sup>25</sup> The Delhi government severed trade links with South Africa and withdrew High Commissioner Ramrao Deshmukh,<sup>26</sup> thus ending a critical epoch, as this office was a concrete link to India, and a continual reminder that the status of Indians in South Africa differed from that of Africans.

The ending of official relations with the South African government did not end the relationship between the local Indian Congresses and the INC. In many senses it was strengthened as the local leadership of the Indian Congresses developed links with the INC beyond Gandhi. Nehru was important in this regard, as were South African students studying in India, many of whom were members of movements opposing the British Raj. The strengthening of the links with the INC by the Indian Congresses did not simply reinforce an ethnic exclusivity, but also facilitated the embracing of a broader alliance against apartheid because of Nehru’s determination to locate India among those countries involved in anti-colonial struggles. He refused to deal with local organisations proposing racial and ethnic exclusivity. Nehru took office on 1 September 1946, and immediately made South Africa’s racial policies an important concern at the UN. He also opposed South Africa’s request to annex South West Africa (Namibia). In December 1946, February 1947 and again in April 1947, the NIC called for a Round Table Conference to discuss the problems of Indians.<sup>27</sup> It is in the context of failed negotiations with the South African government that Dadoo and Naicker visited India.

### 3. MISSION TO INDIA

Churchill’s words in 1935 that “a seditious Middle Temple lawyer, now posing as a fakir of a type well-known in the East, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal Palace...there to negotiate and to parley on equal terms with the Representative of the King-Emperor”,<sup>28</sup> point to the growing influence of Gandhi on

25 Bridglal Pachai, *The international aspects of the South African Indian question 1860-1971* (Cape Town, 1971).

26 *Leader*, 16 June 1946.

27 *Passive Resister*, 6 June 1947.

28 Quoted in D Judd, *Empire The British imperial experience, from 1765 to the present* (Fontana Press, 1997).

the Indian nationalist struggle. Just over a decade later when the two old Edinburgh mates visited India, Gandhi was at the height of his influence, and Nehru was making his mark as an international leader. Their express purpose was to conduct a propagandist campaign in India which, aside from being the “mother country”, was also a significant part of international left wing discourse of national liberation, and attend a conference of Asian leaders. Dadoo and Naicker issued a joint statement on the eve of their departure from Johannesburg on 11 March 1947, where they were given a rousing farewell at the appropriately named Gandhi Hall. Their statement emphasised the intransigence of the Smuts government and the growing political links with Africans:

“We are leaving the shores of South Africa at a critical and decisive phase in her history. The Smuts Government has shown a bankruptcy in leadership in dealing with the acute post-war problems... Instead of giving a strong lead on the decision of the United Nations, the Government is guilty of... fostering race antagonism. This antagonism has begun to express itself in the boycott of Indian traders and the open propagandist of our vulgarly fascist bodies... The historic joint meeting last Sunday between representatives of the ANC, the NIC and the TIC, and the Joint Declaration ensuing there from, have paved the way for greater and closer cooperation between the African and the Indian people... We appeal to all true democrats and men of goodwill in the European community to throw in their lot wholeheartedly on the side of progress. They can either... go forward in step with the world democratic forces to a greater and happier South Africa or allow the fascist forces to lead us into racial antagonism, a totalitarian regime and war. The battle for democracy is on! *Au revoir.*”

The “historic joint meeting” that they referred to was Dadoo and Naicker’s joint declaration of co-operation in March 1947 with Dr AB Xuma, pledging “the fullest co-operation between the African and Indian peoples”.<sup>29</sup> It was not simply a bolt out of the blue, but in large part a result of the lessons learnt from the passive resistance campaign, Dr Xuma’s visit to the UN with HA Naidoo and Sorabjee Rustomjee in late 1946, and Dadoo’s increasing links with the ANC through his membership of the CPSA and participation in the 1946 African mineworkers’ strike.

The visit to India gave Dadoo and Naicker access to prominent political and community leaders, such as Major Mohan Sing (Jodhpur), KHS Tathore (Udaipur), Dr Chandra (Calcutta), KP Peters (Andhra Pradesh), Krishna Ayer (Bombay), N Vengopal (Madras), Hakim Mohammed Sehwanji (Karachi), Dr AA Khan (Karachi), NZ Faruqi (Jaipur), Dr LNJ Madani (Jodhpur), T Sadasuvan (Bombay), PB Roy (Calcutta), and, of course, Gandhi and Nehru. While we have not been able to trace Dadoo’s perceptions or record of this visit, Naicker kept a fairly detailed diary of their visit and an early snippet indicates the route to India and the full itinerary:<sup>30</sup>

“10 March: Vandayar. Films, Left for Johannesburg 11:00 am.

29 S Bhana and B Pachai, *A documentary history of Indian South Africans* (Cape Town, 1984).

30 The diary is in the possession of Naicker’s son, Dr Kreesan Naicker.



11 March: Left 5:30 am Palmerfontein. Arrived at Nairobi at 2:00 pm. Met by thousands at aerodrome. Press conference 5:50 pm. Meeting at 6:30. Azad. Public Dinner 8:00 pm. Guest of Kassam Kanji.

12 March: Left for Khartoum. Arrived 11:30 am. Arrived in Cairo 5:30 pm. Met Advisor to Arab League, Margaret Pope, at the port.

13 March: 10:00 am. Told of departure for Karachi at noon. 12:00 – Assam port; 2:30 pm – Left Cairo.

14 March: Arrived at 6:00 am. Met by Mayarant Sudhiva; Conference at 3:00 pm. Swami Kistavand M.L.A. and Chairman Provincial Congress with his executive visited us at 8:00 pm at hotel.

15 March: 8:30 am - Addressed Congress High School; 10:00 am – K. Punniiah, editor of Sind Observer; 11:00 am – Invited to Legislative Assembly; 3:00 pm. Met C.H.V. Pathy [photographer/journalist for weekly journal Free India]; 6:00 pm - Drive with Mayor; Met Dr. Chockram – Sind Province C.C. President.

16 March: 7:30 am – Mayor Reception; 4:00 pm – met Congress workers; 8:00 pm – Dinner at R. Puna; Major Mahomed Aksee Sikwani.

17 March: 10:00 am – C.H.V. Pathy; 2:30 pm – Congress students; 4:00 pm – Shaikh Ghoolam; 8:30 pm – Ranchod Ward; Dinner – Dr. A.A. Khan.

18 March: Nanski; Mir Ahmed Talpier; Left for Karachi; Arrived 6:00 am. Met by Dr. Appadurai, S. Mehta; Pandit Rungaru; Dr. Lundra Sunderam. Guest of Lala Shankerahan.

19 March: 10:30 am – Addressed Jawaharlal Nehru at Assembly; Left for Lucknow at 2:00 pm. Arrived 4:00 pm. Met the Pundit Odaught at 6:00 pm; Left for Patna at 8:00 pm.

20 March: Arrived at Patna. Met by Chief Commander of Police and Congress representatives. Guest of government. Left for Masauri with J.J. Singh. Met Gandhiji. Had one hour talk. Lunch. More talk. Chat with Abdul Gaffur Khan. Went to Harley. Saw acreage devastated by floods. Prayer meeting at 7:00 pm. 50,000. Left for Patna.

21 March: Met at Patna by P.M. Shri Singh. Congress President. Left Patna by rail to Delhi.

22 March: Arrived at 8:00 am at Constitution Social. Met Mr. Sunderam. Met various delegates, etc.

23 March: 4:30 pm. Asia Conference. Great gathering at Old Fort Purana Qila (500 years old).

27 March: Baldeo Sing; Babu Rajendragosad.

28 March: Met South African students at Aligarh; Special film at 3:00 pm; 6:00 pm – Viceroy; 9:00 pm – Nehru at Home.

29 March: Scripts for broadcast.”

Dadoo and Naicker attended the All-Asia Conference from 23 March to 2 April 1947. The setting highlighted feelings of history-in-the-making: Purana Qila was “a large, somewhat rundown yet still majestic stone structure built by Sher Shah Suri in the sixteenth century”. The opening and closing sessions drew crowds in excess of 20 000, with Nehru giving the inaugural address and Gandhi the

concluding talk.<sup>31</sup> Though the conference had been initiated by India, Nehru told delegates that the idea “arose simultaneously in many minds and in many countries because there was a widespread awareness that the time had come for us, peoples of Asia, to meet together, to hold together, to advance together”.<sup>32</sup>

There were 190 delegates and 45 observers from such countries as Afghanistan, Indonesia, the Arab League, Egypt, Iran, Korea, Indo-China, Malaya, Palestine, the Soviet Republics, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tibet, Mongolia and Nepal. Most delegates represented the dominant liberation voice in their countries, and would make their mark on the world stage in the decades that followed the conference. They discussed a host of issues and were unanimous that the first step to freedom was the “liquidation of imperial regimes” and establishment of socialist economies free from foreign capital.<sup>33</sup> There was optimism that freedom was on the horizon, a sentiment voiced by Sarojini Naidu: “Fellow-Asians, my comrades and my kinsmen arise: Remember the end of darkness is over. Together, men and women, let us march towards the dawn!”<sup>34</sup> The conference was officially closed on 2 April 1947 by Gandhi who, in a stirring speech that would be one of his last, spoke of the pernicious effects of European cultural imperialism and the bankruptcy of European ideas:

“You, friends, have not seen the real India and you are not meeting in conference in the midst of real India. Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Lahore - all these are big cities...If some of you see the Indian villages, you will not be fascinated by the sight. You will have to scratch below the dung heap. I do not pretend to say that they were places of paradise [but] today they are really dung heaps...I have travelled from one end of India to the other and I have seen the miserable specimens of humanity with the lustreless eyes. They are India... I want you to understand the message of Asia. It is not to be learnt through the western spectacles or by imitating the atom bomb...In this age of democracy, in this age of awakening of the poorest of the poor, you can redeliver this message with the greatest emphasis...It is up to you to tell the world of its wickedness and sin - that is the heritage your teachers and my teachers have taught Asia.”

This was Gandhi – a speech full of homilies that was partly political economy, potted history, prophecy and deep insights based on his journey through rural India, which captured the imagination of those committed to ending colonial rule.

“3 April: Left for Jaipur.

5 April: Left for Jodhpur. [Met K.H.S. Rathore, Major Mohan Singh, Maharaja Kumar.]

10 April: Left Jodhpur for Delhi.

11 April: Saw Sundry.

12 April: Saw Patel [this was probably a reference to Vallabhai Patel, the second in command of the independent India’s first government].

31 R Guha, *India after Gandhi* (London, 2007), p. 154.

32 Nicholas Mansergh, “The Asian Conference”, *International Affairs* 23(3), July 1947, pp. 296-306.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 298-299.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 301.

13 April: Gandhi's house.”

The meeting with Gandhi was the highlight of the tour for Naicker who would subsequently write that he “was not going to meet a stranger. His teachings had become part and parcel of my life. His autobiography had been my Bible.” When they met “the Father of the Indian Nation, the welcome was naturally that of a dear father to his affectionate children”. Dadoo and Naicker were encouraged by Gandhi's continuing interest in the *satyagraha* movement in South Africa, notwithstanding developments in India. Gandhi emphasised that “the central lesson of the *satyagraha* movement [was] that non-cooperation was not the weapon of those who found a shelter in a negative attitude of life; it was a positive action leading straight to success if the principles were not compromised”. This is how India won her freedom and South African Indians should “follow the example of the mother country”.<sup>35</sup>

“14 April: Aligarh College. Tea Reception [Dadoo's old college].

15 April: Met by leaders. Reception of British India Association Central Committee.

16 April: Saw Dr. Chuni Lal Lahlavad. Press Conference.

17 April: Local committee. At home at 6:30 pm.

18 April: Dinner at 7:30 pm. Ushee Chagler.

20 April: Tea Party at 9:30 at Taj by Imperial Citizenship Association. [Given the name it is a pity that Naicker does not discuss what the import of this Association was. As it stands it seems that it is a hangover from Gandhi's early position that he was struggling for equal rights within the British Empire.]

21 April: Meeting 5:30 – Andhra Provincial Trade Union.

24 April: Legislative Assembly Council, Madras.

27 April: 8:30 pm. Wedding. Mrs. & Mr. T.V. Purushotam.

28 April: 6:50 am – Left for Barada from Sayan.”

Dadoo and Naicker returned to South Africa on 28 May 1947.

The importance of the Indian nationalist struggle in radicalising South Africans was emphasised by Unus Meer, son of AI Meer, a leading official of the NIC who had represented Indians at the UN in 1946. Unus was at this time a young medical student in Bombay (Mumbai) with Chota Motala and Omar Hassim, who would be key figures in the NIC during the 1950s. South African students in India took an active part in student politics. OV Jooma, for example, was General Secretary of the student body at Grant Medical College and participated in student uprisings against the British from 1942, and Ismail Meer, the brother of Fatima Meer, was

35 Speech on 16 September 1948, NIC Conference. Title: “What I owe to Mahatma Gandhi”. Contained in *Monty speaks. Speeches and writings of Dr GM Naicker*, edited by ES Reddy, 1991. Accessed at <<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/congress/gmindes.html>>

joint secretary of the leftist Bombay Students Union. South African students were active in Gandhian, Socialist and Communist movements.<sup>36</sup> Chota Motala, Omar Hassim, Ismail Meer and Unus Meer were at Gowalia Tank, Bombay, when Gandhi moved the “Quit India” Resolution in August 1942.

Unus Meer recalls the visit of Dadoo and Naicker:

“I landed up going with them to all their meetings, organizing some of the meetings, some of the people and sorting out problems.... They addressed a meeting of the Gani Kamdar Union which is the biggest and one of the oldest trade unions in India ... under the control of the Communist Party. Incidentally, the Indian press, while passive resistance was on, used to have continuous coverage on what was happening here. Everyday it made front page news, always South African Indian [sic!] news was prominent in the Indian press. While the passive resistance was on, I went to one of the large Leftist, anti-British papers, not pro-Congress. A fellow called Karanja was the editor. I spoke to Karanja and arranged for my father to send news regularly. So we [Dadoo and Naicker] went to that paper... We went to the Home Minister of Bombay –Moraji Desai. We had a long discussion there on the Congress. Then the CP of India headquarters was in Bombay. We were invited for lunch and we had a talk there with the top three people...P.C. Josh, Dr. Adhikari and Randhiwe. While in Bombay, Dadoo, because of his Aligarh background, knew a lot of Urdu and we arranged *masha'ira* and *qawwalis* and he enjoyed that sort of thing.

When we landed at Madras station, there must have been about five to six thousand people with banners. Both Dadoo and Naicker did imbibe a bit and in India, they were very puritanical ... even the CP would not have anything to do with alcohol and the Congress too. They were very strict about how you dressed and how you behaved. So these people came to the compartment and asked me, ‘Where’s Dr Dadoo and Dr. Naicker?’ I said, ‘Wait, wait, sit here, and wait here.’ I rushed over there and found these two saying, ‘U-n-u-s...how you? Have one of these’, and so on. I said, “Look, there’s a serious...’ They said, ‘don’t worry, don’t worry,’ and looked outside. I never saw two people become so sober and so clear so quickly. In Madras, we met Sir Aliga Chettiar. He was a brilliant man who had a degree in law, engineering plus some literature and other things. He had a whole city named after him – Aliga Parnagar - just like you have Tatanagar after Tata’s. ... So, anyway, they were feted by the topmost people in India and feted [sic!].

They were supposed to go to Baroda for a meeting. Now that was strange. They were still divided...Congress, Muslim League, Communist Party. So, the Congress people say, we will not have a joint meeting with the Muslim League, the Muslim League says we won’t have anything with the Congress and both won’t have anything to do with the communists. So Dadoo said, ‘look, you [Unus] better sort this out, go to Baroda, we are only spending a day, we’ll meet all three of them but please try to sort it out.’ So I went there. I stayed at the government guest house and I went first to the Congress people, then the Muslim League and the Communist Party. I said, ‘It doesn’t matter, we won’t argue...I am convening the meeting. Will you all come?’ So the meeting was organized in Baroda under my name.... The Indian public regarded them as great heroes. They knew about Dadoo and Naicker.”

Shortly after his return, Naicker, speaking on behalf of himself and Dadoo, told the 1947 conference of the NIC that every political party in India had pledged its full support:

“We were inspired..by the fighting spirit of the masses who everywhere encouraged us to fight with increased vigour...India recognised that we in South Africa were not only fighting

36 PG Altbach, “The transformation of the Indian student movement”, *Asian Survey* 6(8), August 1966, pp. 448-460.

for our just rights but also to preserve the national honour and dignity of all Indians...A mighty India is arising and will allow no country to trifle with her sons and daughters in other countries.”<sup>37</sup>

The Asian Conference was a seminal moment for Dadoo and Naicker, as the latter outlined in a lengthy appraisal. It linked their struggle to the broader decolonisation struggle, they met other similarly minded leaders and drew inspiration in their struggle to overthrow the apartheid regime. While they forged powerful links across the “Motherland”, they were equally committed to the struggle for the rights of all South Africans.

“The unqualified success of the Conference was the manifestation of the indomitable urge for freedom, culture, unity and strength. It was a challenge to dying and tottering imperialism...When any item on the agenda was discussed the delegates went straight to the root of the problem which, when unearthed in each case, was found to be imperialism. And they decided unanimously that as a prerequisite to progress this decaying root must be pulled out and hurled into the dust bin of history...We took the opportunity of meeting and discussing our problems and struggle with delegates...fresh from the trenches, the battle-scarred patriots... This is a reminder to us that Freedom must be won and cannot come as a gift.... During our short stay in our Motherland we travelled extensively from West to East and South to North...In our ears still ring their determined and passionate promise to give us all possible help in our unequal battle for fundamental rights. Our struggle is not merely a struggle for fundamental rights of the Indian minority in South Africa but a spearhead of the struggle of the oppressed people against the establishment of this Master plan... A year ago we took a solemn pledge to suffer for our freedom. Then we were alone. India was under the heel of imperialism. Today we are assembled to renew our pledge and we can do so with greater determination for we have India on the verge of complete freedom....”<sup>38</sup>

Sentiments from India bore out support for the cause of black South Africans. Pillamani Venkateswurtu, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Secretary of the Andhra Provincial Trade Congress, Bezwada, on 26 April 1947 wrote to Dadoo and Naicker “to congratulate you, the valiant working class for waging relentless struggle for their elementary civic rights and for a minimum living wage...The Andhra working class is carefully following your struggles and they are with you in all these struggles.” Sayed Miran Mahomed Shah, Speaker of the Sind Legislative Assembly, wrote on 17 March 1947 that “for a long time” he had been “studying the situation in South Africa...and have always felt the pinch of the injustice that is done to our Indian brethren...I have not only sympathy with the South African Indians in their struggle for freedom, but exhort all those at the helm of affairs in India to throw their weight on their side and make the South African Union feel the enormity of the inhuman treatment.” Honorary Sri OP Ramsamy Reddy, Prime Minister of Madras, on 25 April wrote to “(m)y Indian brethren in South Africa”:

“Your representatives, Drs. Dadoo and Naicker have met me and I have heard with much interest and poignancy an account of your problems and travails. Our country is on the

37 *The Leader*, 7 June 1947.

38 Speech by Monty Naicker on his return from India in 1947. Treason trial transcript, pp. 3729-3732. Exhibit GMN 13.

threshold of freedom and I am sure it would help to solve your problems enormously. May I request you to forge common bonds of unity among yourselves as well as with our African Brethren and set a glorious example to the world. The eyes of India and the world are on you and you are setting a glorious example by your supreme fight. We wish you a successful end to your fight for freedom and human rights.”

The President and members of the Vanniakula Kshatriya Mahasangam, Madras, on 27 April 1947 presented Dadoo and Naicker with a plaque:

“No nation ever became glorious without bitter struggle and sacrifice. You are holding the flag of India aloft by such means and we feel particularly gratified that one of their own members [Naicker] aided by his colleague, is in the forefront of the battle for freedom. The fight you have put up against the Ghetto Act, the sacrifices you have made and the indignities you have suffered at the hands of an arrogant race, who have no intellectual pretensions to superiority over us, but pride themselves of having white skin forgetting that pigment is due only to climatic conditions, have made deep and indelible impressions upon our minds and we all passionately look forward to that day when pride would be humbled and humility, universal love and the feeling of brother-hood will triumph. Your names will go down in history as the great makers of nations and will always be coupled when the South African questions are discussed with that great name of Mahatma Gandhi. The Poorest of us who have no Silver and gold to give you, give instead our hearts and tears and pray God that He will prosper and bless you.”

The trip achieved the objectives that Dadoo and Naicker hoped for. Their leadership, contested both inside the Indian community, and by the South African Prime Minister Jan Smuts, was endorsed by both Nehru and Gandhi. This was a major fillip because it signified support for their politics, which was to seek greater co-operation with the ANC.

The support of Nehru, an internationalist, was crucial, not only because he was respected across Africa and Asia, but because he insisted that Indians in South Africa link their struggles with that of the African majority. Shortly after he had become head of the Interim Government on 1 September 1946, Nehru exhorted Asia to help Africa and had a special message for Asians living in Africa. He said on 15 September 1946:

“While India must necessarily aim at protecting the interests and honour of her nationals abroad...we do not seek any special privileges against the inhabitants of the countries concerned. This would apply specially to African countries where the inhabitants are relatively backward and have been exploited in the past by others, including to some extent even Indians. Our objective should be to help in the rapid progress of these African territories towards political and economic freedom.”

Nehru was keen to ensure that Indians did not seek special privileges vis-à-vis the African majority, and in this his views were progressive. But his world view also reflected a modernising imperative that was impatient with tradition that was defined as “backward”. One must ask what he meant “by relatively backward” and in relation to whom? Nehru, in his tenure as Prime Minister of India, defined progress

as encouraging heavy industrialisation, and big projects like dams, which he called “temples of modern India”.<sup>39</sup> But while the moderniser Nehru’s views could easily translate into a kind of Eurocentricism, he was committed to the struggle against apartheid, and insisted that Indians join in an alliance with Africans. During the 1946 passive resistance campaign he emphasised that the struggle was “not merely an Indian issue. It concerns ultimately the Africans who have suffered so much by racial discrimination and suppression. Therefore, the Indians should help in every way and cooperate with the Africans. Indians should remember that they were the guests of the Africans... We do not want any Indians to go abroad to exploit the people of any other country. We want to build up one world where freedom is universal, and there is equality of opportunity between races and peoples.”<sup>40</sup>

These arguments were progressive politically but they were also contradictory. Would Indians be eternal “guests” in South Africa? And did this mean that they could be asked to leave at any time? Contrary to Nehru’s horizon, Dadoo expressed a clear desire that Indian South Africans should be full and equal citizens in a free South Africa. Nehru’s insistence though was important given Gandhi’s hesitance on this issue. In 1939 Gandhi had told Rev. SS Thema of the ANC:

“You will be pooling not strength but weaknesses. You will best help one another by each standing on his own legs. The two cases are different. The Indians are a microscopic minority. They can never be a ‘menace’ to the White population. You on the other hand, are the sons of the soil who are being robbed of your inheritance. You are bound to resist that. Yours is a far bigger issue. It ought not to be mixed up with that of the Indian. This does not preclude the establishment of the friendliest relations between the two races. The Indians can cooperate with you in a number of ways. They can help you by always acting on the square towards you. They may not put themselves in opposition to your legitimate aspirations, or run you down as ‘savages’ while exalting themselves as ‘cultured’ people in order to secure concessions for themselves at your expense.”<sup>41</sup>

This statement was made at a time when Dadoo and HA Naidoo were members of the Non-European United Front (NEUF) which had been formed in 1938 to unite “non-European” peoples into a single organisation. Indian communists subsequently withdrew from the NEUF, not because of pressure from Gandhi, but from the Communist Party which felt that such cross-race alliances were premature.

Dadoo and Naicker also secured Nehru’s support to raise the South African issue at the UN. India’s insistence on putting the South African government’s policy of apartheid on the agenda of the General Assembly raised both the local struggles on the international stage but also put, first Smuts and then the apartheid government, on the backfoot.<sup>42</sup>

39 <[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Why\\_did\\_Jawaharlal\\_Nehru\\_call\\_dams\\_as\\_temples\\_of\\_modern\\_India](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Why_did_Jawaharlal_Nehru_call_dams_as_temples_of_modern_India)>

40 All three quotes accessed at <<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/solidarity/articbk.html#NEHRU>>

41 Dhupelia-Mesthrie, p. 259.

42 SB Mukherji, *Indian minority in South Africa* (New Delhi, 1959), pp. 154-160.

In securing this support Dadoo, unlike Naicker who was not a communist, had to make important compromises. He kept some distance from communists in India and refrained from any critical eye on the Indian National Congress. Adherence to Gandhi's vision at the time also meant that Dadoo and Naicker failed to recognise the contending forces within Indian nationalism, its class basis, the struggles of subalterns outside the gaze of the dominant anti-colonial politics, and also the debates on non-violence itself as a strategy of resistance.<sup>43</sup> The working classes had their own heroes and leaders who argued, in various ways, that the INC was compromising with the British, and advocated violent mass uprisings based around a well-organised CP.

One important figure was Dr Bhimrao Ramji (BR) Ambedkar (1891-1956), who was born into a Dalit family and spent a lifetime fighting against social discrimination in the form of the caste system. He fought to have a say in the drafting of India's constitution and remains a figure of inspiration to the Dalits.<sup>44</sup> There is no mention of him in Monty's diaries though he was at the height of his influence. Dadoo, like Naicker, limited his comments to admiration for Gandhi and Nehru and the INC. Naicker may be excused, given that he was not a communist but an ardent follower of non-violent resistance and a confessed admirer of Gandhi, it was expected of him to stick close to the leaders of the Indian Congress. But how does one explain Dadoo's shying away from the CP of India, which many South African students in India supported, and his genuflection to Nehru and Gandhi?

Part of the answer lay in Dadoo's understanding of the national question and more profoundly the race issue.

In the struggle to win hegemony within the Indian Congresses, Gandhi's support was crucial. Gandhi's work for the Indian nationalist cause had increased his stature in the diasporic (South African) Indian community. When Gandhi requested a postponement of passive resistance in 1939, Dadoo probably chafed at the bit. He had staked much on the campaign and had galvanised a wide array of support. Six thousand attended a meeting on 9 July 1939. Among them were the children of fellow travellers of Gandhi. Ahmed Cachalia and Thambi Naidoo had marched with Gandhi in 1913 and now their sons Molvi Ismail Cacahlia and Naranswamy Naidoo were prepared to resist under the leadership of Dadoo. But it was not to be.

The build-up to the trip to India and the trip itself revealed the broad outlines of Dadoo's political philosophy – the need to stitch the nationalist struggle for liberation and the struggle for socialism. For Dadoo, the Indian nationalist struggle

43 R Guha, *Dominance without hegemony History and power in colonial India* (Harvard University Press, 1997).

44 C Jeffrelot, *Dr Ambedkar and untouchability Analysing and fighting caste* (C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2005).



was important in the broader struggle to defeat colonialism. That struggle was also vital to win hegemony against the local conservative leadership of the Indian Congresses. Dadoo's communism did not mean that he ignored the race question as he sought to build a non-racial organisation. For him winning hegemony inside the Indian community was important as a base from which to stake his power claims.

At the same time the CPSA, with its openness to all racial groups, was an important precursor for what Dadoo saw as the future evolution of the liberation movement. If Dadoo looked past Gandhi's anti-communism, so did Gandhi in respect of Dadoo's communist leanings. Gandhi dismissed letters from South Africa complaining that Dadoo was a communist and should be isolated. On 27 November 1947 he wrote to SB Medh, "the best way is not to bother about what any 'ism' says but to associate yourself with any action after considering its merit. Dr Dadoo has made a favourable impression on everybody here [India]"<sup>45</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The trip to India renewed old connections such as that of Gandhi. His endorsement of the leadership with Naicker and Dadoo, and, importantly, of the tactics and strategies of passive resistance, was crucial to assert their leadership credentials. As if to reinforce this link, on their return Monty and Dadoo, as part of the passive resistance campaign, met at the border of Natal and Transvaal in February 1948, evoking memories of Gandhi's 1913 march. Both were imprisoned for transgressing the laws prohibiting interprovincial travel.<sup>46</sup> Crucially though, the transnational link did not foster a local struggle limited to Indians. Meeting with Asian anti-colonial leaders provided a powerful sense of international anti-colonial unity. The role of Nehru the internationalist was also important. Independent India not only supported local struggles against discriminatory legislation, but also emphasised the building of unity with indigenous peoples. The Indian Congresses were already moving in this direction but the Indian trip solidified this impulse.

The Indian nationalist struggle was not only important inside the Indian Congresses but also influenced the ANC itself. This ranged from leaders such as Albert Luthuli, who became ANC President in 1952, donning the congress cap to the non-violent way in which the struggle against apartheid was conducted. Luthuli visited India in 1938 when Gandhi's *satyagraha* strategy was the dominant strand in the tactics of the Indian National Congress and would remark in 1948:

"I have no doubt that Mahatma Gandhi's efforts for his people inspired the African people such as Dr. J.L. Dube and others to concern themselves with seeking human rights for their people, the Africans, in South Africa, their native land. His distinctive and unique contribution was his unshakeable belief in the dignity of man and the efficacy of non-

45 <<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/congress/passive.html>>

46 Pahad.

violence as an instrument of struggle for oppressed people...May those inspired by his philosophy become his undaunted disciples.”

Nelson Mandela, in a letter from prison in 1980, wrote:

“It would be a grave omission on our part if we failed to mention the close bonds that have existed between our people and the people of India, and to acknowledge the encouragement, the inspiration and the practical assistance we have received as a result of the international outlook of the All India Congress.”<sup>47</sup>

In the decade that followed the visit to India, Dadoo and Naicker became national figures in the burgeoning anti-apartheid struggles. Naicker was President of the NIC. They were central in driving the Indian Congresses into the 1952 joint Defiance Campaign with the ANC, which was a catalyst in building up the Congress Alliance, an alliance symbolised by the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1955. Dadoo’s influence was recognised when he was honoured with the award of the decoration *Istwalawandle-Seaparankoe* at Kliptown. The other two recipients were Albert Luthuli and Father Trevor Huddleston. Both Naicker and Dadoo were arrested on charges of treason in 1956 and bogged down in legal proceedings over the next five years. By the end of the decade many in the Congress Alliance came to see armed struggle as the only option available to anti-apartheid activists. This is where Naicker, the *satyagrahi*, and Dadoo parted ways.

Despite the intransigence of the state, Naicker adhered to his principle of non-violent resistance until his death in 1978. During this period, he and his contemporaries who remained in South Africa were subjected to successive periods of bannings and listings which destroyed many lives and cut activists off from longtime friends and acquaintances. These measures muted the effectiveness of organisations like the NIC.<sup>48</sup>

Dadoo went into exile in 1960 and was based mainly in London until his death in September 1983. Ezekiel Mphahlele wrote in 1956 that Dadoo “has a Marxist head, a Hindu heart, Mohammedan nails, and an African blood-system”.<sup>49</sup> It was testament to the boundaries that Dadoo was crossing in trying to stitch together the broadest coalition of forces. The communist as post-modernist politician! In exile, Dadoo still made the occasional trip to India and travelled on an Indian passport. But his main transnational link would become the Soviet Union.

47 ES Reddy, “India and the struggle against apartheid” <<http://www.africawithin.com/mandela/letter0880.htm>>

48 For a discussion of the dilemmas facing adherents of non-violence, like Monty Naicker, see Goolam Vahed, “Monty ... meets Gandhi ... meets Mandela: The dilemma of non-violent resisters in South Africa, 1940-60”, *Historia* 54(1), May 2009, pp. 51-91.

49 Quoted in ES Reddy. Written for the 80th anniversary of the birth of Dr Dadoo on 5 September 1989 and 120th anniversary of Gandhi, 2 October 1989. Published in *Mainstream*, New Delhi, 16 September 1989. Accessed at <[http://www.google.co.za/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1t4skpb\\_enZA305ZA305&q=luthuli+on+gandhi](http://www.google.co.za/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1t4skpb_enZA305ZA305&q=luthuli+on+gandhi)>

The two great friends who surmounted ideological differences in their quest to defeat apartheid were never to meet again once Dadoo went into exile. Into the twenty-first century both Dadoo's and Naicker's ideological beacons are in tatters. Soviet communism is dead, Gandhi's motherland India is proud of her nuclear arsenal, while the two doctors' belief in non-racialism is under strain in the country of their birth. Under apartheid, racial classification was carried out systematically for purposes of exclusion; in the post-apartheid context it is seen as necessary for social redress, while well-meaning, racial classification helps to create the meaning and implications of race in South Africa, especially in the face of rampant poverty and an assertive African nationalism.