

The Sound of Belonging

Music and Ethnic Identification among Marrons and Hindus in Paramaribo, Suriname



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Background picture: Hindu Dancer

Small photograph: Marron Dance Group

Both pictures were taken during a performance for festivities of the women's club "Soroptimist", March 19th 2015.

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Content

1. Introduction.....	9
2. Theoretical Frame.....	13
2.1 Ethnomusicology.....	13
2.2 The Role of Music in constructing Identity.....	16
2.3 Music and Ethnic Identity in the Context of Cultural Diversity and Creolization.....	20
3. Introducing Suriname.....	23
4. Marrons.....	24
4.1 Introducing Marrons	24
4.2 Music and Ethnic Identification among Marrons.....	25
4.2.1 Group Identity – Ethnic Identity.....	27
4.2.2 Individual identity	31
4.2.3 Creolization and its Opportunities.....	34
5. Hindus.....	38
5.1 Introducing Hindus	38
5.2 Music and Ethnic Identification among Hindus.....	39
5.2.1 Where it all started.....	41
5.2.2 Connected through Music	43
5.2.3 In between two Identities	46
5.2.4 Creolized Music	49
6. Discussion.....	53
7. Conclusion.....	59
8. Bibliography.....	61
9. Appendix A: Summary in Research Language.....	65

Acknowledgements

In the first book of our entire study, Paul Rabinow (1977) explains in the introduction his inspiration for writing a reflection about the actual process of conducting fieldwork: “In the graduate anthropology department at the University of Chicago, the world was divided into two categories of people: those who had done fieldwork and those who had not; the latter were not “really” anthropologists...” (Rabinow 1977:3) Because of this apparent importance of fieldwork, yet a lack of literature on that topic, Rabinow decided to fill this gap and introduce undergraduates to the ups and downs of fieldwork. As complete novices that we were in anthropology, this notion of the importance of fieldwork impressed us deeply. As our fieldwork came closer we became even more expectant of what this “rite of passage” (Rabinow 1977:4) would hold ready for us. We were not disappointed: We too, did experience memorable encounters and special situations, difficulties and challenges during our ten weeks in Paramaribo and ultimately even felt comfortable with conducting fieldwork. However, we owe this special experience also to a lot of people and this is why we want to take the opportunity to express our gratitude to all the individuals who enabled us to prepare and conduct our fieldwork.

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Verena Brey and Anne Goudzwaard

1. Introduction

Stepping into our cab that was supposed to take us from the airport to our accommodation we were welcomed by loud music out of big, scratchy speakers that accompanied us the whole journey, guiding our first impressions of the country. This situation was surely not unique, there were many more to come. When walking the streets of Paramaribo during our first days of fieldwork we encountered our research topic in many aspects of Surinamese daily life: Reggae, *Aleke*, and Bollywood music blasted out in the streets, from cars, CD shops or private apartments and we were constantly impressed by the role that it played for Surinamese people. When meeting people and talking about music, we soon discovered that they often compared music to language. This inspired us to approach music as a means of communication.

The question about the role of music for people and cultural processes has occupied many scholars for a long time. That is why the study of ethnomusicology evolved from the fields of anthropology and musicology in the 1950s. (Merriam 1964) Since then ethnomusicologists have been studying music within culture. The question of why music is worth being investigated by scholars and researchers is a very important one. Music is considered to be a very powerful manner to get insight into people and cultures since it mirrors social processes and topics that are important to people. Besides functioning as a strategic instrument (being implemented and consumed with a particular aim) music also has an emotional aspect: sensitive topics and emotions are processed and communicated. Especially for an outsider (that researchers most of the time are) music offers an effective way to get insight into important aspects of people's lives. A prominent topic in this context (among many others) is that of identity. Various scholars (e.g. Rice 1987, Turino 1999, Frith 1996) investigated the role that music plays for identity construction and renegotiation, whereby concepts like ethnicity cannot be excluded. As a communication medium music manifests interactions that take place within as well as across people's communities. Especially in a culturally diverse context, music becomes a powerful medium to express ethnic identities. When this communicative power of music is recognized one can become sensitive for the matters that occupy people.

The Sound of Belonging

These topics caught our interest and attention so that we looked at the role that music plays for the ethnic identification of two ethnic groups in Paramaribo, Suriname. As already stated, Suriname is the ideal place to conduct research on music since it plays a major role in people's lives. Furthermore Surinamese society is characterized by high diversity. The Census of 2012 included eight different ethnicities (categories as “mixed” or “no answer” are excluded here), of which Creoles, Hindus, Marrons and Javanese people constitute the biggest groups. For this fieldwork project we focused on two of the biggest population groups: Marrons and Hindus. Marrons are the descendants of escaped slaves who established their own communities in the interior of Suriname and who came to the urbanized coast (and especially Paramaribo) in the last century. (Heemskerk 2003) A large group of Hindus came from India to Suriname between 1873 and 1916 (St-Hilaire 2001:1006) and still strongly identify with their cultural background. Even though they have been living in Suriname for quite a long period, they still cherish their Indian roots. Despite diversity within the respective groups, these two communities are also quite distinct from each other due to their different origin, history and position they occupy in society. Marrons are regarded as a rather marginalized group, whereas Hindus enjoy a more established position at the center of Surinamese society. These socio-economic and political differences between those two groups enabled us to get a deeper understanding of the relationship between music and ethnic identity as a communication medium.

Here we argue that creolized music, in the highly diverse Surinamese context, functions as a communication medium through which individuals as well as groups form and express (among other things) their ethnic identity and ultimately celebrate the diversity they live in. We shall demonstrate this through analyzing these cultural processes within the ethnic groups of Marrons and Hindus. Individuals and groups are inseparably linked; however, they communicate different forms of identity. Individual identity is more culturally diverse oriented, whereas group identity is mainly characterized by a more traditional orientation. The dynamics that develop from this linkage result in new cultural expressions, in our case creolized music forms. These new forms give the possibility to position oneself in society, however this is not our main outcome. We shall conclude that the underlying processes by which ethnic identity is communicated through creolized music is very similar amongst Hindus and Marrons in Suriname. Looking at music as a form of communication enables the

The Sound of Belonging

researcher and society as a whole to identify the role that music has for individuals as well as groups. Because music has conscious as well as unconscious aspects, since it combines reason and feeling, it is a powerful manner to investigate cultural processes. Besides that, music as a marker of ethnicity does not always necessarily need to be considered and analyzed as a politically charged defensive dimension. It can also be approached as a way to celebrate diversity in a politically uncharged manner. The inter-ethnic comparison that is made in our case, results in the insight that music serves as a celebration of difference, an expression of the positive side of diversity.

In order to conduct our research we chose to make use of the anthropological methods hanging out, participant observation, various forms of interviews, and some ethnomusicological methods. Hanging out allowed us to introduce ourselves to the research field and become familiar with it. This enabled us to get a feel for the everyday lives of people and to establish rapport with informants. Through participant observation we took part in musical activities, got to know the music scene and gathered important data on, for example, live performances. Further, we met informants at these occasions which led to follow up meetings. The different interviews enabled us to deepen our knowledge that we acquired through hanging out and participant observation. Further, we managed to gather data that were otherwise hard to get, e.g. about feelings and emotions triggered through music as well as practical information about musical habits of informants. The ethnomusicological methods were also applied in interview form. A reflection on a live performance gave deeper insights into the event and the motives behind the performance and made the data even more valuable. Another method that was used was the analysis of a hit list or rather a communal music collection. It shed light on the taste of the community and the topics that were expressed in these songs.

More hanging out would surely have advanced the quality of our data, but constraints of time (ten weeks) prevented us from establishing deeper relations with a number of people. Other methods that we would have used more often in order to give the data more depth are the ethnomusicological methods, yet we first had to focus on more conventional methods (participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews) in order to establish a good basis. In order to formulate our argument and draw general conclusions, we first worked inductively and subsequently linked it to the body of scholarly literature. The concepts used in

The Sound of Belonging

the literature allowed us to interpret and analyze the data that we had gathered in Paramaribo.

During our time in the field, we emphasized informed consent, in order to inform the people involved about the consequences of their participation within our project and asked the person for permission in using his/her information for research purposes. An ethical dilemma that arises from this project is that the institutions of the Marron community that were involved with music are quite limited, so that we fear that complete anonymity may not be guaranteed. We will do our best to protect our informants and make all the data anonymous. We took into account the possibility of socially desirable answers, and critically reflected upon what people told us and what we observed.

Concerning the influence that we as researchers had on the project, we think that the fact that we were both female research students made it easier to have access to the mainly male dominated music scene. Members of the scene seemed quite open towards females who are interested in their opinion and experiences within the music scene. Besides this, we were often seen as interns, which was a familiar concept in Suriname, and although we explained our role as anthropologists from the outset, it may have given us easier access to groups and places.

This thesis consists of a theoretical vantage point, an introduction of the context in which the project took place, followed by the empirical chapters about Marrons and Hindus in which the main argument is dissected and discussed, and finishes with some concluding remarks. In the theoretical context, we locate our research in the study of ethnomusicology and introduce the central concepts of this project. These concepts include music as communication, identity and ethnicity, cultural diversity and creolization. We shall then introduce the fieldwork location and give a short outline of the cultural characteristics of both ethnic groups. This is followed by the empirical part, in which we dissect our main argument with the collected data and the concepts and theories that we have explained earlier. In the discussion, we will thoroughly compare the findings from the empirical chapters of Marrons and Hindus. Through our analysis of the similarities and differences between the two groups, we were able to draw our main conclusions. These led to a deeper understanding of the involved processes, which are also applicable to other contexts. But first, we will turn to our theoretical vantage point.

2. Theoretical Frame

In what follows we will introduce the theoretical background against which we prepared, conducted and analyzed the data we gathered in the fieldwork period in Paramaribo. We choose to keep the theoretical discussion mainly apart from the empirical chapters to avoid repetition in the analysis of the two ethnic groups. We will first outline what the vision of ethnomusicologists entails, secondly we will consider the concept of identity and ethnicity within ethnomusicology to finally put it in the context of cultural diversity and creolization.

2.1 Ethnomusicology

In order to understand the vision with which we approached the field and the target group we would like to begin our theoretical discussions with explaining the field of ethnomusicology. Ethnomusicology evolved around the 1950s from the study of comparative musicology which emerged in central Europe around the end of the 19th century with an approach that sought to compare various music styles cross-culturally. (Oramas and Cornelis 2012)

Music was seen to mirror aspects of human culture which is the reason for it becoming an interesting field of study for anthropologists. Merriam already stated this in 1964: “...music sound is the result of human behavioral processes that are shaped by values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people who comprise a particular culture” (1964:6) As will become clear later in this paper the themes of identity and identity construction became very central to ethnomusicology evolving from the basic assumption that music mirrors human culture. (Merriam 1964) This assumption is not restricted to scientific debate: Everywhere in Paramaribo music was among other things used to express cultural identity and shaped many aspects of daily life. How that actually takes place is discussed in the empirical chapters.

Since music is considered to show aspects of people and their lives (such as emotions or tastes) which otherwise might be difficult to get to terms with for outsiders and researchers

The Sound of Belonging

in any other way, ethnomusicology became a great way to approach those otherwise hidden elements of human culture especially in the context of ever-increasing cultural change and variety. Furthermore, music is considered to contain some areas of conflict: on the one hand it can function as a strategic, consciously deployed instrument being used by musicians or listeners in order to reach some sort of goal (e.g. recognition, differentiation from other groups etc.), on the other hand it can be a quite unconscious expression of emotions or taste (Turino 1999, MacDonald et al 2002, Frith 1996). These different forms that music can take on – conscious and unconscious – were also visible in Suriname. Even though they cannot necessarily be regarded as two distinct forms it was apparent that music was applied differently in various contexts.

In summary: ethnomusicology is thus the study of the relationship between music and a (ethnic) group or people. Rice (1987) introduced quite an important approach to the study of music and people which we will apply to our case in order to shed light on this relationship. He suggests to investigate the relationship between the *historical construction* of music, its “*social maintenance*” and the *individual creation and experience* of music (Rice 1987:477)¹. For the case at hand all three aspects of the model are of great interest. When looking at the *historical construction* of music Rice suggests to look at the following two processes: “the process of change with the passage of time and the process of reencountering and recreating the forms and legacy of the past in each moment of the present.” (Rice 1987:174). Since history and its legacy plays a very important part for both target groups of this research we find it important to include this aspect of Rice's model. To get a grip on the *social maintenance* of music the author suggests to look at the way “music is sustained, maintained, and altered by socially constructed institutions and belief systems” (Rice 1987:475) thereby concretely investigating e.g. performance situations and practices (“traditions”) or “beliefs about the power and structure of music” (Rice 1987:475). The social component of music is quite important for Marrons and Hindus so that this analysis contributes to the investigation. According to Rice the *individual creation and experience* is identifiable among other things by considering “perception of musical form and structure;

1 Rice (1987) visualizes his model/approach as following (1987:484):

how do people	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{historically} \\ \text{socially} \\ \text{Individually} \end{array} \right\}$	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{create/construct} \\ \text{maintain} \\ \text{experience} \end{array} \right\}$	music?
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The Sound of Belonging

emotional, physical, spiritual and multisensory experience mediated by music” (Rice 1987:476). We experienced in Suriname that the individual creation and experience of music often differed from the experience within the group so that the model with its simple distinctions actually comes in handy to investigate these different aspects. Yet we are conscious that these three parts cannot be regarded separately. They are interconnected and deeply embedded in Surinamese society.

Within the scholarly debate about the role that music plays several ethnomusicologists agree that music has a communicative character. Feld for example argues that music is “a socially interactive and intersubjective process of reality construction through message production and interpretation.” (Feld 1984:2) We found this idea very useful for our case study and used this notion to analyze the way that music functions as a communication medium for various groups in Suriname. To order and analyze our data we mainly used a model which was developed by Inskip et al (2008). In this communication model the authors suggest that a producer (performer, DJ, composer) and a user (consumer of music) are the main parties in the musical communication process. The producer will encode his or her message based on his/her knowledge and world logic (Inskip et al call it Competences and Codes, we will be satisfied with the notion of world logic) which will be decoded by the user again in turn. The decoding also takes place based on the logic of the user.

Within this communication, music and its messages may be better understood when the performer and listener share the same cultural experiences (Blacking 1973 in Inskip et al 2008:5). The moment at which the performer and listener or consumer meet, is when musical communication takes place (Inskip et al 2008:36,38) and communication only occurs “when the music has the same meaning for the person who makes or performs it as the person who hears it” (Inskip et al 2008:13). Some authors even see music as being a language (Inskip et al 2008:33) in which messages and expressions of feelings are communicated that spoken language cannot communicate (Blacking 1969:59).

The recently introduced model is quite simplistic yet it helps to reduce the complex processes to make analysis of the music scene in Paramaribo possible and to focus on the essentials of communication. In the case at hand we experienced that investigating the underlying world logic is crucial when looking at complex communication processes. How music functions as a communication medium and how these processes can become more

The Sound of Belonging

complicated is elaborated on in the empirical chapters over Marrons and Hindus. Since we mainly gathered data on the side of the producers and lesser on the side of the audience we focus on the world logic that is communicated by the producer.

According to Feld, the content of the messages that are communicated is generally known but multilayered and reveals particular ideas about identity, personality and a particular logic about the world. (Feld 1984:16) In other words, music is communication of "world view as the feeling of reality" (Feld 1984:2,13). As this short discussion of the origin and the different approaches of ethnomusicology shows the field is quite dynamic. (Oramas and Cornelis 2012) As outlined earlier the study thus engages in the analysis of musical sound and the corresponding cultural patterns of a particular society. Integral in this perception is the idea that "music reflect(s) the life of a society and its culture" (Shiloah and Cohen 1983:228). Yet according to various authors (e.g. Rice) there is more to the study of ethnomusicology than "only" looking at cultural patterns. Rice (2010) adds that the theme of identity became more and more prominent and explicit in the last decennia (2010:320). This short introduction to the field of ethnomusicology and some basic assumptions about it form the basis of our research. In the following sections of this paper the relationship between music and identity will be elaborated upon.

2.2 The Role of Music in constructing Identity

Different authors suggested over time the idea that music acts as an expression for various forms of identity (Turino 1999, Frith 1996, Waterman 1990, etc.). As Migge notes, identity is "a person's sense of belonging to a specific social group, society or place" (Migge 2010:3) and since music is "used as a resource for managing everyday situations" music is an important aspect of personal identity (Hargreaves et al 2002 in Inskip et al 2008:37). This is also reflected in our case, since music constitutes a meaningful part of the everyday life of Marrons and Hindus in Suriname. We shall employ Feld's (1984) approach to get a deeper understanding of the way in which identity is communicated within music. Identity is constructed, reconstructed and experienced in interaction with others and through communication. Within this interaction, music is a source of communication and a medium

The Sound of Belonging

through which people construct their identities or may change their existing identity. Feld is spot on with this argument. He states that “in and through framing, music communicates identity, sameness or difference of character, as it exists among, makers and listeners, persons and groups.” (Feld 1984:12). This communication, taking place through and with music can happen consciously or unconsciously, and it is important to take this point into consideration when investigating music. Even though the conscious and unconscious expressions of music cannot be separated clearly, we choose to discuss them separately for reasons of clarity.

Most of the time identity and its expression is rather unconscious. Identity is a natural process interwoven with every-day interactions that do not necessarily require conscious decision-making. Music as an expression of identity operates at the same level. Turino in particular stresses the power that music has in communicating cultural signs and symbols that are based on “feeling and experience” (Turino 1999:224). We choose to connect Feld’s argument with Turino’s approach in our analysis of the relation between music and identity in the Surinamese context. According to Turino, the focus on emotion and knowledge enables music to be “a key resource for realizing personal and collective identities which, in turn, are crucial for social, political, and economic participation” (Turino 1999:221). Feld also argues that music and its interpretation is quite an experience based on feelings and emotions: “we might speak of music as a metaphoric process: a special way of experiencing and knowing and feeling value, identity, and coherence.” (Feld 1984:13)

Yet music can also be regarded as a conscious decision that individuals and members of groups make. In choosing what music to listen to, what concerts to visit and what sort of music to create people display their individual and collective identity. As MacDonald et al notes, music preference is an instrument by which an individual defines to which social group he/she belongs (MacDonald et al 2002). Through music one makes decisions about how one wants to present oneself to others (Frith 1996), which is in our case reflected in the differences in music styles between the Marrons and Hindus. Since music preference in Suriname is inseparably linked to individual identity and the sense of belonging to a particular group, we will apply the approaches of Robertson (2004), Waterman (1990), and Shiloah and Cohen (1983) to group identification, and further connect this to Nagel’s (1994) interpretation of ethnicity. The study of Robertson demonstrates that “listening to South African music may allow the listener to imagine him/herself in relation to other South Africans” (Robertson 2004:

The Sound of Belonging

136-137). In their choice of music, individuals identify themselves with members of their group and distinguish themselves from other groups at the same time. Music in this way emphasizes boundaries of group membership (Robertson 2004: 136-137). For example Waterman shows in his study of Yoruba society that popular music is a medium for the imaginative modeling of Yoruba society and a way to claim membership of the community (Waterman 1990:376).

Whether the choice of music (and the expression of identity) is an unconscious or a conscious decision, music connects members of the same group with each other. Shiloah and Cohen note, “the sharing of similar experiences and satisfactions from the same tunes provides, as Lomax argued, a sense of security and identification with the group” (Shiloah & Cohen 1983:228). Group identification has much to do with a shared ethnic identity. Ethnicity is based on shared markers of identity such as origin, religion, physical characteristics, culture, history etc. (Nagel 1994:152-153,161). These elements shape the ethnic boundaries of a group and provide the members of the group with a shared ethnic identity and culture. It should be mentioned that within the group, individuals will always vary in the way they express their ethnic identity. We are aware of the differences between individuals and the diversity within the Marron and Hindu communities, but in order to research ethnic identity, we study the groups as a whole.

We find the ideas of the “imagined community” by Benedict Anderson (1991) quite appealing in the Surinamese context, even though we do not place our research in the context of nationalism (what Anderson does) but we rather want to make use of his ideas in order to focus on group identity. Anderson sees the nation as an “imagined political community”, where the *imagined* conceptualizes the fact that people of one nation will never know each other personally, yet feel a strong connection with other members of the same nation. Anderson even generalizes his idea in that he says “In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact are imagined.” (Anderson 1991:6). We want to continue with this notion and apply it to ethnic communities. All people of an ethnic group make up one of these imagined communities where members feel a strong connection with each other even though they may not have personal ties with each other. (Anderson 1991:5-6) Frith applies the ideas about (group) identity to music as a form of cultural activity in that it “articulates in itself an understanding of both group relations and individuality” (Frith

The Sound of Belonging

1996:110-111). To sum up, the role of musical practice in constructing identity is a unique sense of personal self and membership of a social group (Frith 1996:110-111).

As this discussion about the relationship between music and ethnic (group) identity showed music is a convenient way to get insight into these identity processes. In order to get a grip on these processes and being able to operationalize the influence that music has on the expression of ethnic identity we choose to apply the concepts of performance and performativity to our case.

Frith recognizes this practical manifestation of the above-mentioned phenomena: “Music, like identity, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social” (Frith 1996:109). *If we combine these ideas with Feld's approach to music as a communication medium, performances are moments at which communication happens in quite an intense form. Therefore we choose to approach performances as moments of communication between different social actors.* Kartomi sees musical performances as live productions of musical artists at a particular moment and a specific place. Often an audience and other persons that are in some way involved in the performance are present at these events. Musical performativity however has to do with everything the musician produces: the musical sounds, the actual activities, body language etc. Kartomi summarizes: “a musical event may be said to be 'performative' because it is performed by musicians, is usually experienced directly by an audience...” (Kartomi 2014:190-191)

To link these concepts back to our case, ethnic identity in Suriname is thus amongst other things expressed and communicated through musical performance and the performativity of an artist. We will apply Duffy's approach to musical performance to our analysis of the communication of ethnic identity through music, and will explain its meaning within the Marron and Hindus communities in Suriname. According to Duffy musical performance has meaning, it represents a communal identity and belonging. Musicians may represent this (group) identity and communicate with the audience through sounds and emotions (Duffy 2005: 682-683). Thus the social interaction and communication between musician (performer) and audience is mainly based on emotions. Langer (1942) emphasizes the uniqueness of music as a medium to communicate emotions that “cannot be expressed by any other medium” (Langer in Duffy 2005: 678). To conclude: musical performance and the communication between the performer and the audience is a space in which people define

The Sound of Belonging

meaningful concepts of identity and belonging mainly based on emotions. We think that a profound investigation of the expression of ethnic identity through music will be possible on the basis of regarding music as a medium of communication, which amongst others takes place during musical performances. Performances do not take place as isolated events, but rather in a context of cultural diversity as demonstrated in Douglas' study: "Cultural performances by the groups discussed above sometimes articulate their differences both sonically and choreographically, but at other times assert their shared allegiance and camaraderie." (Douglas 2013:204). Douglas' study of the various ethnic communities corresponds well to the Surinamese case, since Hindus and Marrons do also not live isolated but in a framework of cultural variety and change. In the following the context in which they live is presented.

2.3 Music and Ethnic Identity in the Context of Cultural Diversity and Creolization

Music and (ethnic) identity do not exist in a vacuum but in dynamic social and cultural contexts, whereby identities are constantly negotiated and shaped anew. Since Suriname is a highly diverse country it is important to approach the target groups and the research topic in this light. As was already stated in the introduction the Census of 2012 counted eight different ethnicities who all live closely together especially in the densely populated Paramaribo. Ethnic groups and individuals are thus continually confronted with other ethnicities and cultural behavior. Identities and identity construction are therefore always in a process of change and negotiation. If one considers the last discussions about the relationship between music and identity, music is naturally not excluded from these processes of cultural change and variation, but also undergoes renegotiations.

Yet cultural diversity and change are nothing new (only its current accelerated form due to 20th/21st century globalization). Especially in the region of the Caribbean and South America high cultural diversity and complexity have existed for already some hundred years. "The process by which people, animals, ideas, and institutions with roots in the Old World are born, grown, and prosper in the New" (Price 2007:18) is commonly called *creolization* and

The Sound of Belonging

evolved in the 17th and 18th centuries from colonialism and the resulting slave-trade. The legacy of this era was also very apparent in Suriname. Cultural mixing is very common, being manifested in the very simple example of one ethnic group being called “creole”. Even though the term “Creole” and the categorization of people as such differ from country to country in South America “Creoles' are uprooted they belong to the New World, are the products of some form of mixing, and are contrasted with that which is old, deep and rooted.” (Eriksen 2007:112) The encounters of the Old and the New world thus resulted in creolization which also manifest itself in cultural forms such as music and dance (de Jong 2003:373). Cohen (2007) defines Jazz as a famous example of these new emerging cultural forms evolving from the encounter of rural and plantation music with the urban black music from New Orleans (Cohen 2007:373). Creolization is thus the result of the “social encounter and mutual influence between two or several groups, creating an ongoing dynamic interchange of symbols and practices, eventually leading to new forms with varying degrees of stability.” (Eriksen 2007:114) Khan (2007) gives further insight: She argues that creolization even takes on a discursive character in the Caribbean where “unity is achieved with each ethno-cultural-racial part standing both separate and together.” (Kahn 2007:54) Applying the ideas of mixing and creolization to the communication of music and the expression of identity, one can argue that during e.g. musical communication new encounters that entail small forms of creolization happen. The same way in which ethnic identities are constantly renegotiated, musical performance also always exists in the context of constant mixing and creolization (Duffy 2005:688-689)

This discussion about the complexities that are entailed in high cultural diversity and creolization processes shows in what a dynamic context ethnic identities are constructed, asserted and constantly renegotiated. The analysis of the communication of ethnicity through music offers the opportunity to get insights into these complex processes. Yet we want to take the concept of creolization one step further and argue that the creolization processes which take place in the music scene in Paramaribo, enable ethnic groups and individuals to express (amongst others) their ethnic identity and ultimately celebrate the diversity they live in. In order to prove this point we will now turn to unravel the role that music as a communication medium of ethnic identity plays for Marrons and Hindus in Paramaribo in the context of high cultural diversity.

The Sound of Belonging

To summarize: We take the vision of ethnomusicology (Merriam 1994) as a vantage point, regarding music as a means to get insight into cultural processes and combine it with models conceptualizing music as a communication medium (Inskip et al). In this approach a shared world logic underlies all communication processes between the producer and user of music, whereby we incorporate Rice's approach of music to analyze the meaning that music has for people. We look at the communication that takes place through the historical construction in the *social maintenance* of music and it's *individual experience* (Rice 1987). Central to this is the idea that music communicates various forms of identity through it's underlying world logic. The specific hybrid context that characterizes our research field is conceptualized in the notion of creolization. Particularly we will look at how communication of identity takes place through music and what influence Surinamese cultural diversity has on these processes. With this in mind we will now turn to look at how these processes take place within the Marron and Hindu communities of Paramaribo.

3. Introducing Suriname

Walking through the streets of Paramaribo, one cannot help but notice the culturally highly diverse cityscape. All senses are seized by these impressions: every imaginable music style blasts from open car windows, the smell of exotic food fills the air and people wear colorful clothing. These impressions are not unique for the streets of the capital, but rather for the whole country: “Suriname, a South American state wedged between Brazil, Guyana and French Guyana, takes pride in its reputation as a peaceful multicultural nation.” (Jaffe and Sanderse 2009:1564). Music makes its contribution to the experience of this cultural diversity: all ethnic groups are associated with typical music genres and styles.

The diverse society of Suriname is largely a result of the colonial period. After the abolition of the Dutch slave-trade in 1863 a large part of former African slaves stayed in Suriname (Jaffe and Sanderse 2009:1564-1565, Snijders 2003:11). In the same period a large group of British Indians and Javanese settled there so that “Suriname began the twentieth century as a multicultural society” (Snijders 2003:11-12). Marrons and Hindus, as already stated in the introduction, constitute two of the biggest and most dissimilar ethnic groups of Suriname. The dissimilarity of the two groups made them even more interesting to study and discuss since these differences make the similarities even more powerful. In the following we will shed light on the two groups, and especially on the role that music plays in their lives.

4. Marrons

4.1 Introducing Marrons

In order to understand the role that music plays in the ethnic identification of Marrons it is important to introduce some basic information about Marrons, especially how they are positioned within Surinamese society. Marrons as a cultural group, originally from the interior of Suriname, “form an ethnic category broadly perceived as distinct from other groups of Afro-Surinamese” (Jaffe and Sanderse 2009:1564-1565) which is based on their history as descendants of slaves who escaped during the Dutch colonial period and built up their own communities in the interior of the country. (Jaffe and Sanderse 2009:1564) Since the 1960s many Marrons left the interior and moved to the city of Paramaribo (Heemskerk 2003:936-937). Today the degree that individuals living in the city are connected to the interior varies: some have strong connections and visit the interior several times a year, others have never been there. Marrons constitute the second largest ethnic group of all people in Suriname and the fourth biggest ethnic group in Paramaribo. Statistics of the most widely spoken languages within households hint at a strong identification of Marrons: Marron languages are the second most spoken languages in Suriname, after Dutch and closely followed by Sarnami (spoken by the Hindustani part of the population). (Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek van Suriname, received April 8th 2015)

When talking about ethnicity takes place, Marrons mostly identify as Marrons and not necessarily as members of one of the six “tribes” (as they call them themselves). Only when the conversation is directed towards more detail, they explain whether they are Kwinti, Matawai, Saramaccan, Paramaccan, Ndyuka/Aukan, or Aluku. Some Marrons explained that diversity within the ethnic group is among other factors based on the different tribes: language and the way of living are seen as characteristic for belonging to a particular tribe. Another difference that plays a role within the Marron community is related to religion: one part practices traditional Marron beliefs, another part participates in various Christian ceremonies. Marrons that consider themselves as traditional practice traditions and rituals as they were

The Sound of Belonging

passed from generation to generation. Although Christian Marrons were baptized, they often hold on to parts of their culture (e.g. clothing, language, music) but do not necessarily participate in spiritual activities that are traditionally Marron and which are not in accordance with their Christian belief. Despite all these differences Marrons generally see themselves united as one group and due to the size of this paper this notion is maintained for analytical reasons (yet the diversity within the group needs to be kept in mind). The conceptions of identity are not limited to ethnicity; various individuals stated that they feel Surinamese just as much as they feel Marron.

Heemskerk noted in 2003 that Marrons are “economically, socially, and politically disadvantaged” within the society of Suriname (Heemskerk 2003:935, 937). Individual Marrons expressed a similar understanding of their position within society. They argued that they feel stigmatized and are seen as having a bad reputation, especially compared to other population groups of Suriname. Yet it was also articulated that a reputation shift took place when Marrons were represented in the Surinamese government in 2005. This gave especially young Marrons the feeling of being able to participate in society and being part of it. (John 03.03.15, Brian 22.03.15)

4.2 Music and Ethnic Identification among Marrons

We will now turn towards a closer investigation of the Marron music scene in Paramaribo where the just above mentioned societal, historical and social aspects need to be kept in mind. In particular we will investigate the relationship between Marron group and individual identity, communicated through music and the musical forms that result from these encounters. We argue that the dynamic which exists between Marron group identity and Marron individual identity leads to musical creolization processes. These new creolized musical forms give new opportunities for Marrons to participate in the wider Surinamese society. In order to analyze this, the dynamic between the ethnic identity of Marrons and that of individuals is unraveled and subsequently the new musical forms that result from these encounters are looked at. We will then take a look at the possibilities that these new musical

The Sound of Belonging

encounters entail.

Magda is sitting comfortably in the chair, her voice trying to beat the sound of the sudden, tropical rainfall. She is the head of a Marron dance and music group and explains to me proudly that she has been a member of the group from the beginning on and that she became head of the group over time. We chat about performances that the group had in Suriname but also in the international arena representing the country. I ask her what she enjoys about performing and representing Suriname; she answers “Suriname is a very unique country. It is a melting pot of the world.” - “Are you proud of this country?” Her “yes!” does not leave any doubt about her affection for her country. (Magda 07.03.15)

As this short conversation shows identity of individuals is often two-fold: Surinamese identity (whatever that may be exactly) and ethnic (group) identity do not exclude each other. Yet these different identities surely do not simply coexist separately but influence each other and lead to different cultural processes.

The encounter between these two forms of identity – ethnic group identity and individual identity – can result in interesting cultural expressions. This phenomenon is obviously also observable with Marrons in Paramaribo as an ethnic community and members of this community, whereby group identity and individual identity cannot be regarded as completely separate entities. As we will see later, they are closely related and dynamic processes. Yet for analytical reasons characteristics of group identity and individual identity are discussed separately before they are related to each other. From the vantage point of our paper we regard music again as a communication medium and analyze this with Inskip et al's model of musical communication. And because “the ethnic group is an imagined, constructed community, created through social relations” (Demmers 2012:26) we will now integrate Rice's approach into that of musical communication. We will investigate what music communicates in the *historical construction* and during its *social maintenance* in the Marron community of Paramaribo.

The Sound of Belonging

4.2.1 Group Identity – Ethnic Identity

The communication of identity that takes place within the ethnic group and through music is mainly based on a shared understanding of producers and users of music. As we will see, Inskip et al's model (producer and user of music linked through a shared world understanding) is perfectly applicable in this context. The communicated content is rooted in a shared understanding of musical forms and cultural symbols that allows producers of music and users to understand each other. We will now take a look at what kind of world logic and what forms of identity are communicated in the group context through music in the Marron community.

The imagined ethnic community of Marrons in Paramaribo is mainly based on obvious markers such as a shared history, worldviews and values. These pillars of ethnic identity are constantly redefined in social contexts. Since Marron music is the focus here we will consider this group identity in the manifestation through music or what Rice calls the *social maintenance* of music (Rice 1987). We argue that the *social maintenance* of Marron music (and Marron ethnicity) is largely based on the *historical construction* of music and thus alter his model since we do not agree with Rice that the *historical construction* of music stands apart from the *social maintenance* (and the *individual experience*). During social meetings Marrons reencounter musical forms from the past and perform them again in the present. One can think of traditional music styles which are still performed on various social occasions. *Matos*, which are often sung at funerals, are a concrete example of such a traditional music style. These musical forms are narratives that do not necessarily have to be entirely based on reality; they are often a mixture of different or slightly changed happenings. During the singing of *Matos* various individuals join in and take the lead in turns. They originate from life in the interior of Suriname and clearly have a very social character, since they are still practiced also in the city. These historical references which take place, e.g. in *Matos*, during social encounters communicate a traditional group identity of Marrons and form the underlying world logic of the group (but also that of individuals). This shared world logic was also observed during a music show of Marron artists:

The Sound of Belonging

Excitement is in the air as people are standing on the side of the dance-floor, waiting for the band to play. The whole village seems to be present and people chat cheerfully. Anne and I stand out as we are the only people being completely new to this setting. As soon as the band enters the stage people stream on the dance floor moving their bodies to the music. The crowd dances in a slow rhythm that fits the beat of the music. Even though it is late at night the air is hot and humid, yet nobody seems to notice. The band clearly enjoys the excitement and enthusiasm of the crowd.

Tap Yari festivities in Companycreek, April 4th/5th 2015

The attended music show took place in a Marron village some distance away from the city and celebrated the beginning of the year. The bands and the audience – except for us two European anthropology students – consisted of Marrons. It was apparent that band and audience adhered to the unwritten rules of the event: the dance moves, the response to the address of the lead singer and the music, and even the waiting for the bands followed particular rules that only insiders knew. These unwritten rules formed the shared understanding of each member of the group which allowed communication between the various parties to happen. Here the communication through music was confined to the ethnic group since outsiders had no insight into the underlying logic.

To understand how the *social maintenance* and the *historical construction* of music take place we make use of what Anderson calls an imagined community where individuals feel connected strongly to other members of the same group even though they do not personally know each other. Social media create space where this imagined community can be socially maintained and where actual encounters take place. The radio station Radio Yaleka, located in Paramaribo, is a radio station that mainly targets Marrons as an audience and shows how the *social maintenance* of Marron ethnicity is institutionalized. Here traditional and typical Marron music styles (e.g. *Aleke*, *Seketie*), news from the interior and important programs targeting the Marron community are broadcasted. This station creates among other things the space to maintain Marron music as well as the community: “Some people call in every day” John, one of the moderators tells me in between two phone calls, “then you feel some sort of bond with them... even though you don't see them.. that feels good.” (John 17.03.15) When I talked to a listener of Radio Yaleka she confirmed this conceptualization of

The Sound of Belonging

the influence that the radio station has on the *social maintenance* of the ethnic community: Turning up the radio as we speak, she declares that she listens to the radio station all day long, enjoying the programs and the music that are played. She explains that she has a good relationship with almost all radio staff since she calls in often asking for a song or giving her opinion during a program. (Aldith 07.04.) The concept of Anderson's imagined community thus helps understand how these feelings of connectedness are established and maintained. I was wondering why especially Radio Yaleka was so important for the Marron community. John thinks that it has a lot to do with recognition and feeling understood. He illustrates his point with the example of why mainly Marron languages are spoken at the station:

“My grandma, for example, she doesn't understand a word of Dutch. If she listened to *Radio Now*², she wouldn't understand anything... With young people it's the same. It's way more difficult to do your best to understand [Dutch] whereas here [Radio Yaleka] you understand what people say right away.” (John 17.03.15)

In many ways the radio station communicates a world logic that frequently refers to a rather traditional Marron identity. The languages spoken there, the programs, and even more so the music refer to conventional and even historical cultural expressions. “Radio Yaleka gives people a homefeeling” John concludes. (John 17.03.15)

The content that is communicated in this group context of *social maintenance* is thus quite traditional and refers a lot to the roots. It was noticeable that this communication of rather established ethnic identity was implemented consciously. That means individuals consciously implement particular music (songs or styles) which is thought of as suitable for the ethnic community (thus mainly Marron music). As we will see the intentions behind it are multifaceted. Christiaan explained that traditionally, Marron culture is mainly a verbal and not a written culture. (Christiaan, 25.03.15) Important communication that addresses community affairs often takes place through music, so that within songs messages and morals are spread:

Thea turns the volume down and lets the song fade out right in the middle, thereby smoothly leading in a new song. “I have to remove this [song] really quick...” she murmurs. A few minutes later the ringing of the phone interrupts the music. Thea answers and talks to the listener seriously and

2) popular Surinamese radio station, which targets all Surinamese and where only Dutch is spoken

The Sound of Belonging

self-consciously, this time leaving out her cheerful laughter. “He called to ask what happened to the song I removed and he had originally requested. The song is about a man talking about a girl he had for a dollar. And I said it's abusive if you sing something like this. This means that you reduce us women and I am not going to allow this. So I'll play something different.” (Thea 31.03.15)

Comparable values and norms are constantly promoted and implemented in the social context which happens through playing particular music and forming the general understanding of the group. Another example is the strategic use of music for political and personal goals. Marron languages and music styles are implemented in order to promote particular political agendas. During the last week in the field we met an artist called Ronnie. He was recording a song in Aucan for a political Marron party. His aim was to sell this song to the party, get some publicity and perform during big events for the political party. By this goal-oriented targeting of a Marron audience through the style and the language he applies, he tries to achieve more publicity in order to get fame within the community which will enhance his later music career. (Ronnie 07.04.15)

As all these examples have shown, within the social context of music Marrons frequently refer to a traditional world logic. Based on this shared world logic, Marron artists or DJs playing more traditional music can communicate straightforward with their audience, which is also mainly made up of Marrons. The communication is confined to the ethnic group since not many outsiders share the same cultural insights as Marrons do. The above outlined scenarios suggest straight-forward communication between users and producers of music, yet communication can surely never be that simple. That is why we will consider a more complicated scenario, in which the understanding necessary for communication to take place is not necessarily the same and not shared by all parties involved in the process. We will now take a look at some individuals who consider themselves part of the Marron community (and make up this community) and how they experience music as a form of ethnic communication.

The Sound of Belonging

4.2.2 Individual identity

We are sitting in the small broadcasting studio, chatting about our music preferences. “What kind of music do you enjoy listening to?” I ask him. “Actually I listen to all kinds of songs... everything.” he says and continues to explain that songs which contain violent propaganda or gay erotic content are excluded from his music preference. “Would you play a Hindu song?” I keep asking. He is surprised: “Of course! I do that often!” (John 17.03.15)

This situation has to be seen as an example for many other situations where individuals reacted in similar ways when I asked them about their music preferences. John, the radio moderator from the conversation in the broadcasting studio, is well familiar with the Marron community and a member of it, but also enjoys the diversity that Suriname offers him, in this case the musical possibilities. First I interpreted his comment as socially desirable thus wanting to express his openness towards Suriname and all the different musical forms, but he convinced me in the long run. During one of our last encounters he casually informed me in a side-note that he once played in a Javanese band for quite some time and that he really enjoyed the music styles which were new to him. John's taste in music certainly does not reflect that of others who consider themselves part of the Marron community yet it brings the point across: as a Marron individual who is well committed to the Marron music scene and enjoys all different styles which are played there, he is open to other music styles which are not instantly associated to his Marron identity.

This short description from the field shows that individual identity and group identity vary from each other and cannot be regarded as uniform in the ethnic context. Visitors of Marron music shows, that we attended and where mostly *Aleke* or *Kaseko* was performed told me that they actually listened to other music styles like *Hiphop* or *Dancehall*, but that they still enjoyed to attend the show. Here I have to agree with Rice when he argues that the meaning of music can be analyzed through looking at the musical preference of individuals and the reactions that music evokes for individuals. As became apparent in John's music preference, *individual experience* is often two-fold. Especially younger individuals enjoy traditional Marron music, but at the same time they also enjoy more Western and Surinamese music. Styles which were often named were *Zouk*, *Jazz*, *Dancehall*, *Soul* or, as in John's case,

The Sound of Belonging

also Javanese or Hindu music. This duality reflects the fact that individuals consider themselves part of their ethnic group (through listening to ethnic music) but also have an individual identity where other feelings of belonging play a role (listening to other music). Individuals' underlying understanding of music thus expands and may even deviate from that of the general understanding of the group. These new understandings are incorporated in the existing ones and DJ or artists may play music based on this new and changing understanding. The different world logic manifests itself in a broader musical repertoire, the use of different music elements which are incorporated in the own music and other languages that are sung.

Music in this context is mainly used unconsciously according to taste or particular moods, yet the communicative power is not less powerful (unfortunately, our research methods did not allow to investigate the unconscious music choice of individuals further, but is mainly based on perceptions and statements of individuals). Individuals stated that they often choose the music they listen to when they are alone based on emotions, which does not particularly entail a music choice which is made after conscious and deep considerations but rather from spontaneous inspirations. Variation can also be observed on the basis of the age of individuals. Older people (from 45 onwards) told me that they mainly cherish more traditional Marron music in the individual context, also in various moods, whereas the younger generation also appreciates and consumes more modern music. This diversity of music tastes and preferences of individuals of the Marron music community may lead to changes in the music and its communicative power.

In 2014 a music compilation was released under the name “*Aleke roots riddim*”. Various different artists participated in this project, even a few Creole singers took part. What was unique about this CD was its new approach to *Aleke*: Western instruments were used to the traditional *Aleke* beat, yet, as one informant told me, some singer sang *Dancehall* instead of *Aleke* to the basic beat. Rudy, an *Aleke* artist, told me that he appreciated this newer and more Western approach that was used but mainly because it targeted a wider audience and not because it satisfied his taste in music. Nevertheless he told me that only particular kinds of musical change were acceptable to him. The basic elements still needed to be included in the development, that is the three main drums, a *Djoe* (a particular kind of drum made from an oil barrel) and the characteristic rhythms. Rudy concludes: “things may be added but particular

The Sound of Belonging

elements may not lack”. (Rudy 18.03.15) If we consider Inskip's model of music functioning as a communication medium the picture is different from that of the group context. At an unconscious and individual moment individuals (who are members of the Marron community, of course) may use music which is based on a different world logic than the one used in the ethnic group context. We consider Rudy here as an advocate for typical Marron music styles that are used in the ethnic groups context. The producer and the artists of the CD are individuals with a new understanding of music and how (and with whom) it communicates, which deviates from Rudy's understanding.

Obviously the communication that took place between the artists/producers and some of the users (Rudy) was not so straight-forward and uncomplicated as Inskip et al's model suggests. The user was irritated by the new influences and the apparently changing underlying understanding of how *Aleke* should be played. Frictions and tensions thus appear when the advocates of traditional music and the advocates of more modern styles do not understand each other. However, Rudy was not the only one we talked to about the CD. Other individuals told us that they highly appreciated the new mix that was presented. They found the idea of mixing these two styles admirable and ingenious and celebrated the success of the project. (Arlan 04.03.15, John 17.03.15) What becomes apparent is that individual preferences and ultimately identities and ethnic group identities are highly diverse and that they even influence each other. It exposes a spectrum of music styles of individuals as well as of the ethnic group that ranges from consuming traditional music to modern (Western) music and a high capacity to combine these extremes.

However, this finding is nothing new in the social sciences. Bilby (1999) wrote a whole article on this spectrum and capacity of Marron artists with the title “‘Roots Explosion': Indigenization and Cosmopolitanism in Contemporary Surinamese Popular Music”. He argues that the “constant fluctuation between two opposing poles of attraction” (Bilby 1999:257) (that is the traditional and the modern musical forms) lead to new musical products in the form of new genres and styles. However, in his paper he mainly looks at how these new evolving forms interact and harmonize (he even gives a list of “new restructured styles of Surinamese popular music” in his appendix), but we want to go one step further and consider what these new forms entail.

The Sound of Belonging

The dynamic that exists between the ethnic group identity and individual identities as they are expressed in music influence each other. These influences were observable in the field and we will argue next that this interaction leads to creolization processes which ultimately also entail possibilities to reposition the group and the individual in Surinamese society.

4.2.3 Creolization and its Opportunities

“I'm crazy about his music!” John declares and turns up the volume. He is playing a “Golden Oldie”, how he calls old Soul songs. The song fills the broadcasting studio. “We are in Suriname and we have a 30% free choice [at this radio station.] It is 70% Marron music and 30% anything I want.” he explains. (John 17.03.15)

A Golden Oldie is not normally considered to be typical Marron music, yet it finds its way into the broadcasting studio of a Marron radio station. This shows how individual preference is exposed onto the wider ethnic group. Slowly these new unusual music styles are incorporated into the repertoire of the whole community and become a part of it. The musical repertoire of the group is thus always changing and developing. Not only the repertoire is constantly changing due to the interplay of individual and group identity but also the underlying understanding of what is appropriate music for communicating identity. But this interplay surely also works the other way around. Since traditional music is still widely played and individuals are mostly confronted with it during social gatherings traditional music remains part of the individual's feeling of identification. The content which is communicated in social contexts might bring individuals back to the more traditional musical forms that they also cherish. Ethnic identity, communicated through music is thus constantly in a state of being negotiated, drawn between an interplay of individual dynamic identities and traditional group identity. How this new world logic, developed from the interplay between individual and group identity, manifests itself can best be explained with the concept of creolization.

Eriksen (2007) writes in his book about the key concepts of globalization that the concept of creolization is often criticized for its essentialist approach of culture, yet as Eriksen

The Sound of Belonging

argues “the concept nevertheless helps making sense of a great number of contemporary cultural processes, characterized by movement, change and fuzzy boundaries.” We totally agree with Eriksen's caution for essentialism, but also with his note about the usefulness of the concept in complicated settings. The concept of creolization and cultural mixing indeed suggests a purified nature of culture, yet the hybrid culturally diverse context that Suriname constitutes almost does not allow for another approach when cultural processes are to be analyzed. We suggest therefore that it needs to be kept in mind that the here described and analyzed case is not characterized by strict and clear borders and unmixed cultural content.

Communication between Marron group identity and individual identity may be more complicated than Inskip et al's model suggests. New influences stem from the hybrid and diverse Surinamese society and also from international influences. The once agreed upon shared understanding underlying communication may change so that not all participants of the music communication process can successfully take part. However it has to be kept in mind that the analyzed processes here often take place over various years and in very light forms. What can be observed in the Marron community is thus a slow process of creolization where fusion of different music styles and forms (traditional and modern) take place through the constant renegotiation of ethnic identity. Within this new constantly changing shared understanding there are probably always individuals who appreciate and who depreciate these processes. Yet Marron group identity as a whole slowly changes and moves towards a new world logic/shared understanding upon which communication can take place and new contents are accepted and used.

“Back then we tried to bring the youth back to their roots and now they try to bring the roots to the youth.” Rudy told me low-spiritedly. When he was in a band playing *Aleke* he tried to encourage younger people to join in playing this style, but now only some elements from *Aleke* are taken and incorporated in new musical forms (using other instruments and singing another style). According to him the more traditional Marron music styles are not practiced enough anymore since more and more (young) people play genres like *Dancehall*. Rudy interpreted the new method of communication as destroying the older musical forms that he especially cherishes. It shows that a changing understanding of how music is supposed to sound like may complicate the communication between the parties. What is striking here is

The Sound of Belonging

that the informant told me around half an hour before that *Aleke* (which he considered to be a typical and traditional Marron music style) is actually also a music style which evolved from cultural mixing in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Rudy it evolved out of the combination of a more traditional Marron music style which is called *Longsee* and Merengue influences. Creolization thus always already took place, whereas new styles were incorporated in the music repertoire of the group and considered to be traditional and typical for Marrons. (Rudy 18.03.15)

Creolization is not restricted to a fusion of different music styles, however the use of different languages is also part of this cultural mixing. Rasko, a popular Marron artist is a good example for this point. He mainly sings in Dutch or Surinamese and composed a song called “Super Saamaka” in 2013. With this he refers to his ethnicity and sings about being proud to be a Saramaccaner (one of the six Marron groups). Rasko's music targets a broad audience since it is made accessible to them. The underlying logic necessary for communication between music producer and user is adapted to a Surinamese audience (through language), thereby also using references of his ethnic belonging. However, artists like Rasko do not only target a broader audience, they also strongly influence the own ethnic group. As a fan told me the success that these artists experienced in the whole country (and even internationally) contributed and boosted the self-esteem of other Marrons according to the slogan “if he can do it, I can do it”. (Jaden 29.03.15) This form of creolization thus opens up spaces to actually participate in the national music scene (and ultimately in society) as an individual combining musical forms that stem from different cultural vantage points but also changing the sense of the ethnic self within this society.

Yet it is not only the audience that becomes broader and more Surinamese but also the cooperation of music artists. On the already mentioned CD “*Aleke roots riddim*” not only Marron artists contributed to the compilation but also Creole musicians. One of them is Aryan who sung one of the most successful ones of the CD but who also already performed in the interior of Suriname. He can speak and sing some Aucaans (Marron language) and adapts to the fast *Aleke* beat. He told us that he feels comfortable using Marron musical forms and that he appreciates the treatment he receives from a Marron audience. This encounter does not only show that the borders of Marron ethnicity are fluid but also that cultural content is

The Sound of Belonging

exchanged and that fusions of musical forms and expressions take place.

These experiences and data indicate that these creolized music forms target a wider audience and other artists which also consist of non-Marrons. This hints towards the possibility of music to open up spaces that enable Marrons to participate in the broader Surinamese society. Through these creolization processes society becomes more accessible and open to Marrons. They are literally heard within the Surinamese music scape.

As this discussion has shown the interplay which exists between the ethnic community, the ethnic identity that is manifested there, and the individual identity that is made up of more feelings of belonging than “just” ethnicity, produces interesting and complex processes. Through this interaction ethnic identity is constantly subject to change which was observable in the Marron community through music. The creolizing change that Marron music is undergoing entails the repositioning of individuals but also of the whole group within Surinamese society. The usage and combination of different musical forms and languages opens spaces on the national level where exchange happens and where Marrons can negotiate their participation in the nation. Music communicates thus always a particular world logic which is surely dynamic, where creolized music combines a traditional world logic with a culturally diverse oriented world logic. How these processes take form in another ethnic community is now discussed in the chapter about Hindus.

5. Hindus

5.1 Introducing Hindus

The Hindu community is an interesting second group for our research because they are quite different to the Marrons in how they are positioned within Surinamese society and the way they give content and meaning to their cultural expression of music. Hindus constitute the biggest group of Suriname and the second largest group of Paramaribo. Besides Dutch and Maron languages, Sarnami is the third most spoken language in the country (Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek van Suriname, received April 8th 2015). When at home, Sarnami is the most spoken language among Hindus, since especially the younger generation does not speak Hindi any more. Sarnami is a compilation of different Indian languages depending on where Surinamese Hindus originate from (Mohan 02.03.15).

Hindus living in Suriname share a cultural and geographical origin, since their ancestors mainly came from Uttar Pradesh, a state located in northern India. Their ancestors migrated between 1873 and 1916 from India to Suriname (St-Hilaire 2001:1006) and have passed down their cultural roots to the next generation through (among other things) music. Already the fifth generation of Hindu immigrants is living in Paramaribo, and even though they have been living in Suriname for quite a long period, they are still strongly connected to India and its cultural traditions. This is reflected in the presence of Hinduism and Hindu traditions in their daily life and ceremonial occasions such as weddings.

Indo-Caribbean culture is transnational and mainly spread through Trinidad, Guyana, and Suriname (Manuel 1997:18). In these new homelands, “music came to play a particularly important role in sustaining Indian culture and ties to India itself” (Manuel 1997:19). Due to the lack of literature on the relationship between identity and music in Suriname, we choose to rely on studies from Trinidad, because when it comes to music and identity, these countries are quite comparable to each other. Hindus in Trinidad identify themselves through music with Indianness, which takes on various forms. In Suriname similar processes can be observed. Having a shared history is important to connect to other group members within the

The Sound of Belonging

Hindu community in Suriname: they felt strongly connected to their Indianness, but at the same time they identify themselves with being Surinamese (Van der Burg 1986:520-522, Sinha-Kerkhoff 2007:18).

Hindus should not be confused with people inseparably connected to Hinduism, since “Hindustani people are largely Hindu (76 per cent) and the remainder is either Muslim (20 per cent) or Christian (4 per cent)” (Van der Burg 1986:515). In our research, we focused on Hindus that identify themselves with Hinduism. Besides that, diversity within the group is mainly based on differences in personal identifications. Hindus who feel a strong identification with India and also might have been there, differ from their group members who feel more Surinamese. For some their Indianness is strongly connected to India, for others their Indianness is closely related to Indo-Caribbean culture (Manuel 1997:27).

Generally speaking, Hindus are strongly family oriented (Mohan 02.03.15) and attach great importance to their cultural life. The number of cultural and religious activities that the Hindu calendar counts, shows the significance of rituals, cultural activities and gatherings of people to Hindus. These days are accompanied by special songs that characterize the moments, at a Hindu marriage for example, there are different songs for each part of the day. This procedure is also applied to the seasons: during the rainy season in Suriname especially romantic songs are written. Most Hindus start their day by listening to *Bhajans* (divine songs from Hinduism) from a Hindu radio station. But, according to Mohan (27.02.15), identification with India is becoming less among Hindustani youth in Suriname, they feel more connected to being Surinamese than being Hindu.

5.2 Music and Ethnic Identification among Hindus

The warm afternoon air is filled with coloured powder and loud Hindu music. The streets of Paramaribo are crowded with people being painted in bright colours all over their faces and clothes. We are in the middle of Holi Phagwa which is celebrated by the whole city today and

The Sound of Belonging

soon we are as unrecognizable as all the people around us by the powder paint that is being thrown at us. The Surinamese idea of “diversity within unity” is clearly present today, since this original Hindu tradition is celebrated together by Surinamese of different ethnic origins (Esmail 01.03.15). Still, the performances of different popular Hindu bands, encouraging their audience to dance, and loud Hindu music that is blasting from speakers through the whole city, reminds us of the Hindu roots of this holiday. I remember what Stanley told us when we first met him: “Music lives in people and we [Surinamese] cannot live without music” (27.02.15).

His words made us wonder what music means to Surinamese, since it seems to be strongly connected to their daily life. In this chapter we will focus on Hindus, whose ancestors migrated from India to Suriname between 1873 and 1916 (St-Hilaire 2001:1006). More precisely we focus on the Hindu community who lives in Paramaribo and who practice Hinduism in their daily lives. The empirical data gathered during ten weeks of fieldwork among the Hindu community in Suriname, focussing on people within the Hindu music scene and their audience, will be connected to different approaches to the fields of ethnomusicology, ethnic identification, creolization and musical communication. These approaches, in which the models of Rice (1987) and Inskip et al (2008) are leading, will support and challenge our argument in this chapter: We shall argue that the creolization of music connects Hindu group identity and individual identity and allows them to combine their Indianness and their Surinamese identity. Creolized music opens up spaces that allows Hindus to feel connected to on the one hand their ethnic group and on the other hand to their individual identity. Indianness refers to their Hindu group identity, which is characterized by their cultural roots in India, and individual identity is shaped by both group identity and being part of Surinamese culturally diverse society. Group and individual identity cannot be considered separately from each other, rather they complement and influence each other constantly. In the concluding part of this chapter, the meaning that creolized music has as a communication medium for the group and individual identification of Hindus will be clarified.

The Sound of Belonging

5.2.1 Where it all started

Music reveals a lot about Hindu group identity since those two are closely related. Music is represented in many aspects of daily life of Hindus and the importance they attach to it is very deep: “music is in the life pattern of Hindus” (Samir 04.03.15). Following the approach of Timothy Rice (1987:484), it becomes clear that the importance of music is related to their Indian roots, social structure, and experience of music. In his model, Rice (1987:477) argues that looking at the relation between the *historical construction* of music, its *social maintenance* and the *individual creation and experience* of music may lead to a deeper understanding of what music means to people.

If we look at the historical roots of Hindus, it becomes clear that music gives meaning to their cultural roots in their everyday life. Since the ancestors of Hindus living in Suriname brought a *harmonium* and a *dholak* (double-headed drum) with them from India to Suriname (Kishan 23.03.15), these musical instruments became of great importance for the Hindu community in Suriname. With these two instruments and a *dhantal* (long steel rod based percussion instrument), they developed *Baithak Gana*, a Surinamese music style that has its roots in North India (Nahir 24.02.15), which allows them to remain connected to their cultural roots and origin. The fact that they took these instruments all the way with them to Suriname hints towards the great significance that music has for Hindus (Kishan 23.03.15). Following the model of Rice, it becomes clear that *Baithak Gana* is the result of change and historical processes. By practicing it today, historical construction of music takes place: “the formative power of previously constructed musical forms” (Rice 1987:474-475) thus largely determines the way people generate music today.

Baithak Gana is still the most popular music expression among Hindus (Nahir 24.02.15) and almost every Hindu party, including cultural festivals, weddings (*Bhatwans*) and birthdays, are accompanied by a *Baithak Gana* group (Rajesh 31.03.15). During a Hindu wedding the *Baithak Gana* song “Ek Baap Ke Do Beti” (Kishoor and Friends) is blasted from the speakers and when the band “Melody” starts to play its modern version of *Baithak Gana*, the wedding guests begin to dance immediately. It is because “*Baithak Gana* represents our [Hindu Surinamese] roots”, Naina (12.03.15) states. Many Hindus are raised with *Baithak*

The Sound of Belonging

Gana music in their daily life and therefore keep a certain connection with it during their entire life wherever they are. It gives them a sense of belonging or home feeling (Nahir 24.02.15). When Naina (12.03.15) listens to a Hindu song on the radio that she recognizes, she immediately turns up the volume. She likes it, because she knows it is part of who she is, where she comes from.

“Music is not universal, it is about the musical sounds that you grew up with. Your mother culture will always remain with you. What you have inherited unconsciously, will always remain with you.” (Mohan 27.02.15)

In other words, “every culture has its own rhythm” (Blacking 1969:37), and is best recognized by the people who feel connected to it as a result of their cultural roots. The meaning of music to Hindus as a community is reflected within their daily life. According to Hinduism, the universe was created by sounds: Shiva, king of the dance and one of the main deities of Hinduism, danced on the sounds of music and this is how the universe was created (Nahir 24.02.15). Because Hinduism plays an important role in the life of many Hindus, they see music as an essential part of their life, as explained by Shareef: “in everything you do, you need music.” For every moment of the day there is a different song and “everything is experienced through singing” (Kishan 23.03.15). The religious character of Hindu music is reflected in the content of the songs, since “music always has a religious meaning” (Mohd Nizam 05.02.15). It too is reflected in Hindu dance, that is closely related to music:

“I like different music to get to know the roots of Suriname. I have danced Hindu style and I was one of the three girls who were not Hindu. It was like a family but I also felt conflicted: the deeper I went into the dance, the more Hindu rituals became central. This was difficult for me, because I feel connected to the Roman Catholic Church. So I decided to dance with more distance and experienced no more [identity] conflict.” (Elisah19.02.15)

Elisah, a Creole, shows here that religious and ethnic boundaries in Suriname still play a role in the choices people make regarding music and dance activities. Hinduism may shape group boundaries through religious content that is communicated within music or dance. Even though they do not promote religion, the songs played during the music classes at the Indian Cultural Centre in Paramaribo have quite a religious character. This shows how big of a role religion plays in Hindu music. Furthermore, students learn to sing *Bhajans*, divine songs of

The Sound of Belonging

Surinamese Hindus (Shekhar 05.02.15) that are also broadcasted every morning until ten o'clock by different Hindu radio stations in Suriname. These programs are part of a daily ritual for many Hindus (Eswin 14.03.15).

5.2.2 Connected through Music

Music functions as a medium through which members of a group feel connected to each other, even though they might not personally know each other. Here we rely on Benedict Anderson's (1991) concept of "imagined communities" with the focus on ethnic group identity. According to Anderson, an imagined community is a group of people who feel a strong connection to each other, even though they do not have personal ties with all members of that group (Anderson 1991:5-6). Within the Hindu community, people meet each other at ceremonial occasions like weddings and birthdays, and in more public spaces like cultural festivals accompanied by popular Hindu bands. Shared experiences and cultural traditions are expressed within music through rhythms and messages, that are closely related to the life of many Hindus. *Bollywood* music, broadcasted by different Hindu radio stations during the whole afternoon express everyday concerns of people (Meena 02.04.15, Stanley 03.03.15). "Music brings people together" (Saeed 01.04.15), and is therefore a powerful medium to create an imagined community among the Hindus. However, the imagined community is also maintained through actual encounters. The ritual of rice popping, a very important and central element of weddings, is traditionally accompanied by a *Baithak Gana* band that plays *Lawa* songs (cheerful songs aim to create a good atmosphere) for this moment of the ceremony:

As the ritual of the rice popping starts, a little group of woman in the middle begin to sing in Hindi and clap their hands on the rhythm of a *dhol* and *tambourine* that accompanies them. The continuous rhythm and their repeating words fill the room with calmness and happiness at the same time. People are watching the rice popping and softly talk to each other.

Mohan (27.02.15) noted, that music is not something universal, because you need to have a certain cultural and religious background, in order to understand the messages of music. As we see it, a shared world logic underlies the communication through music. John Blacking

The Sound of Belonging

(1973) states that “if listeners share the same cultural experiences they are likely to respond to the signs and signals of music in similar ways” (Blacking in Inskip et al 2008:688). We agree with Blacking and believe that within communication through musical activities, music and its messages may be better understood when the performer and listener share the same cultural experiences. It explains the words of Meena, a radio moderator, who believes that communicating a message to her audience is easier when you understand each other. This mutual understanding occurs, according to her, when you share the same cultural roots. “You understand best what is familiar to you”, which may include your mother tongue and cultural background (Meena 02.04.15). The notion of a shared world logic can be connected to Inskip et al’s (2008:700) user centred communication model, in which they state that musical communication is based on cultural and sociocultural codes. They state that “communication only takes place when the music has the same meaning for the person who makes or performs it as the person who hears it” (Inskip et al 2008:691). Since certain Hindu songs are connected to specific moments of the day, a person with Hindu roots will immediately recognize the moment of the day (Naina 12.03.15).

The importance of language in the communication process becomes apparent in both spoken form and musical communication. Sarnami, the Surinamese Hindu language, functions as a connective medium between a radio moderator and his/her audience, because in the words of Meena (02.04.15): “Communication in the own language is the best way to reach people.” Here, we are in line with Rice (1987) when it comes to the communicative power of music. Messages that are exchanged through songs on the radio station, which may include messages of love, suffering and congratulations (Meena 02.04.15), are often more powerful than spoken messages. Through the choice of particular songs, radio moderator Meena (02.04.15) conveys a message, since her audience understands the meaning of those songs and to what circumstances it is related. However, the signs and signals of music that Blacking (1973) mentions, show the existence of a deeper cultural and emotional level within music. In other words, music functions on a deeper level of communication compared with for example language, since the experience of music is based on feelings and emotions (Feld 1984).

The Sound of Belonging

It is late in the afternoon as the Bollywood song “Jeena Jeena” is broadcasted by Radio Aasmaan:

Dehlez pe mere dil ki, jo rakhe hain tune kadam, tere naam pe meri zindagi, likh di mere humdum. Haan seekha maine jeena jeena kaise jeena, (...) na seekha jeena tere bina humdum.

[Translation:] When you stepped on the doorstep of my heart, I dedicated my life to your name. Yes, I learnt how to live life, (...) I had never learnt how to live life without you my be loved.

This Hindi love song, originating from the *Bollywood* movie “Badlapur” and covered by many artists, including Rajesh, is now number two in the top five of Radio Aasmaan (Meena 02.04.15). Love and its meaning in life are the most popular topics in Hindu music. Many Hindus recognize themselves in the content that is communicated through this song, which also contributes to the popularity of the song. As reflected in their music, the content of Hindu songs is often related to their world logic and matters that occupy them. *Bollywood* songs for example are about everyday concerns and people feel connected to them because they know these songs are about them. The content is often based on feelings and social relations; when one is in love, a little sad, or heart-broken, there are always special songs that enable individuals to deal with these moods (Ashna 12.03.15).

As becomes apparent, traditional music communicates membership of the group through referring to a shared world logic within the group. *Baithak Gana* refers to cultural roots, and communicates a shared ethnic world logic at occasions like weddings and birthdays. The above mentioned ritual of rice popping at a wedding, is carried out extensively and collectively, and is an example for communicating a particular world logic. Only group members will recognize the significance of the ritual through the rhythm and content of *Lawa* songs, since it is part of their shared world logic. In this way, music communicates group membership through referring to a particular historical world logic, that is created within its *social maintenance*: “Social maintenance can be seen as an ongoing interaction between historically constructed modes of behaviour, traditions if you will, and individual action that recreates, modifies and interprets that tradition” (Rice 1987:479). The social maintenance takes place in a social context like music performances and religious celebrations, but also

The Sound of Belonging

through the spaces shaped by media such as radio and TV. Since music performances of Hindus mainly take place in the city, Paramaribo, through music events, religious celebrations, radio, and family occasions, it functions as a medium to connect people: “One day I was working on my program at the radio station, when someone called me from the supermarket: “play a song for us, we are listening, Combi market is listening to your program!”.” (Naina 12.03.15)

5.2.3 In between two Identities

Individual identity is inseparably linked to group identity. Here we agree with Rice (1987:479), who states that an individual experience is partly determined by historically constructed forms, learned in social contexts. We believe that through music, Hindus explore and develop their personal identity: “Music plays a role in the personal development of people: for every moment in life there is different music” (Kishan 23.03.15). These moments include the sounds one unconsciously grew up with, or consciously chosen pop music one listens to (Mohan 27.02.15). According to Mohan (27.02.15), the unconscious has to do with romantic symbolism: a strong connection and identification with India and a reaffirmation of identity through music like *Bollywood* songs. “As a Hindu you have to recognize and identify with *Bollywood* music, otherwise you are not a Hindu” (Mohan 27.02.15, 02.03.15). Stanley argues that people identify with *Bollywood* songs, because it is about everyday concerns that have been expressed within the music (Stanley 03.03.15). “Kuch Kuch Hotahai”, which originates from a *Bollywood* movie is such a song (Eswin 14.03.15). Particularly among young Hindus *Bollywood* is quite popular, as reflected in the music they prefer on parties, in the CD player of their car, or on the radio at work. At parties, people sing along popular *Bollywood* songs, even though not everyone understands Hindi (Latika 20.02.15). When listening to the radio, *Bhajans* that are broadcasted in the morning are followed by *Bollywood* music the whole day by different Hindu radio stations (Meena 02.04.15, Eswin 14.03.15).

The Sound of Belonging

Meena thinks that we will always be connected to our roots and therefore feel attracted to people of the same ethnic origin. Also Samir (04.03.15) believes that “culture is the way you live”, which is in line with Meena (02.04.15), who explains that identity is shaped by roots. However, we want to add that individual identification is also strongly linked to a person’s origin or country of living:

“Are you Hindu?” a girl of about twelve years asks me. “No, I am not”, I reply and ask her the same question, to which she replies that she is a mix: her father is Dutch, her mother Surinamese, and she was born in Suriname. I ask her to what she feels connected most. She replies without hesitation: “To with my own country” [Suriname].

Since Hindus live together with other ethnic groups in Suriname, they have innovated their Indian roots. This is expressed in the Surinamese version of Hindi that they speak with each other (Sarnami), and the typical Indian Caribbean/Surinamese music styles *Baithak Gana* and *Chutney*. “If there had not been different ethnic groups within Suriname society, reconfirming the Hindu identity through music would not have been necessary” (Mohan 02.03.15).

“We are Surinamese of Hindu origin. Culturally we are Hindu, everything we do at home regarding cultural activities is Hindu. In terms of nationality we are Surinamese. After the independence we all became Surinamese, but ethnicity is maintained (among the different groups in Suriname). The distinction remains in the cultural world.” (Samir 04.03.15)

However, this notion of identity is changing due to creolization processes that characterize Surinamese society. This change is reflected in the music taste of young people (who also listen to modern music) and in the language that is spoken at home: young Hindus speak Sarnami and no longer high Hindi (Samir 04.03.15), while the older generation feels more connected to Hindi and classical Indian music. We have not further researched these contrasts, but what became apparent were the differences between the younger and older generations reflecting the continuous change and negotiation of ethnic identity within the broader creolization processes. “Surinamese Hindus identify themselves less and less with India, they feel more Surinamese than Hindu” (Mohan 27.02.15).

The Sound of Belonging

As shown above, the inspiration that Hindus draw from India constitutes an important part of their group identity and sense of belonging. Further we argue that music choices of individuals are related to their ethnic group identity. This has everything to do with, in the words of Rajesh: “You need to know your roots to know who you are” (31.03.15). Rajesh learned through music more about his roots. He believes that the importance of music to his personal identity has to do with the presence of music in his life: he grew up with music, watching his father playing *Baithak Gana*, and playing in a band when he became older. As Stanley believes, “popular music has nothing to do with your cultural background” (03.03.15), which is why, according to him, Hindus remain connected with typical Surinamese Hindu music like *Chutney*, *Bollywood* and *Baitha Gana*. *Chutney*, “a product of the East Indian communities of Guyana, Suriname, and especially Trinidad” (Manuel 1998:21), is a modern Hindu music style by which Hindus identify themselves with their ethnic group. It expresses a distinctively local kind of Indianness and has become an Indian diasporic art form, in which popular music styles are combined with traditional influences (Manuel 1998:21). Manuel argues that a product of globalization, like *Chutney*, can emphasize issues of social identity (Manuel 1998:40): it articulates “the Indo-Caribbean community's ongoing process of redefining its character and its relation to national culture” (Manuel 1998: 21).

However, individual music choices also reflect a strong interest in modern music. When being at home, Ashna (12.03.15) likes to watch *Bollywood* music channels on TV, listening to the radio, playing CD's and downloading songs on the internet, which may include Hindu music as well as modern music. Within the interplay between individual and group identity, personal preferences of Hindus influence the musical expressions of the group. Since modern or Western music is popular, especially among the younger generation, Hindu bands incorporate Caribbean styles and English lyrics in their music, or cover modern songs in their own style. Thus, individual identity is also closely related to being Surinamese and shaped by modern musical influences. By listening to music that is not related to the ethnic group, individual's music choices influence the music repertoire of the group. The interplay between individual and group influences the group identity and changes its world logic. Modern music, expressing new topics, might be incorporated into the group identity and world logic. This stands in contrast to e.g. *Bollywood* music which is mainly related to religion.

The Sound of Belonging

Musical choices that individuals make thus reflect their Surinamese identity. To come back to the information about the ancestors of Hindus, who brought a harmonium and a dholak with them, music always played a key role in transmitting cultural values within the Hindu community in Suriname. This is also reflected in the study of Mary Robertson, who states that people identify themselves with members of their own group through their music choice (Robertson 2004:136-137). MacDonald et al even go a step further by saying that music preference is an instrument by which an individual defines to which social group he/she belongs (Macdonald et al 2002). According to Robertson through this, music may emphasize boundaries of group membership (2004: 136-137). The consequence may be, in the words of Clifton: “We live next to each other when it comes to music” (31.03.15). Rahul (11.03.15) supported this point and told us that due to the music repertoire of his band, mainly Hindus visit their performances. Besides being interested in popular music which reaches almost every country and any young generation, Hindus still strongly identify with music that is connected to their cultural roots:

It is late in the evening and the popular dance club Havana in Paramaribo is crowded with people, waiting for the two popular Hindu bands, Expression and Friends, that are playing that evening. As Expression enter the stage they fill the room with their songs and fast rhythms, which became so familiar to us. People come closer to the stage and a little group starts to dance. When walking around, we notice that apart from two other persons, we are the only outsiders. It feels like India came to Suriname.

The words of Clifton (31.03.15) are quite applicable to the situation above. We observed a quite homogeneous group that evening, which is in contrast to the wish of artists like Mahila (07.04.15) and Rahul (11.03.15), who like to attract a more diverse audience.

5.2.4 Creolized Music

The evening in Havana gives an impression of the public music experience among Hindus in Suriname, yet there are also different stories to be told:

The Sound of Belonging

“I like it when I am walking down the street and hear a Creole singing “Pyar Hamara” in Hindi, it’s so great to hear that! And soon the Hindus will sing for example in Javanese.” (Mahila 07.04.15). – “Yes, when I was in the supermarket, a Creole woman was singing along with the song [Pyar Hamara] that was broadcasted on the radio.” (Keshav 07.04.15)

The song “Pyar Hamara”, that became a hit in Suriname, shows how fusion within music is received in Suriname. Creolized music opens up spaces in order to get to know each other through music. After “Pyar Hamara” became a number one hit, also other *Bollywood* songs like “Jeena Jeena” reached the top 40 at radio stations of different ethnic origins in Suriname (Mahila 07.04.15). For both individuals and groups, influences of unfamiliar music changes their world logic, which enables individuals to feel connected to both Suriname and their roots in India. As a result, creolized music enables Hindus to connect their Indianness to being Surinamese.

Through unfamiliar music individuals cross group boundaries. Musical communication within the group is associated with cultural codes and meanings related to shared cultural roots, religion and languages. However, musical communication outside the group is not necessarily an implicitness: as Clifton stated, Surinamese live musically next to each other (31.03.15). The song “Pyar Hamara” of Mahila and Marvin (Creole), which is originally a *Bollywood* song, seems to be the first big (Hindu) musical success in the top 40 of Suriname (released this February). In this song different languages and cultural roots are combined, which is also broadcasted by Surinamese radio stations of different ethnic origins. Especially the couplet “Pyar hamara amar rahega, yaad karega jahan” (Our love is immortal, and the world will always remember), became popular among Surinamese of all cultural backgrounds. One reason for this might be that Marvin sings it, next to Hindi, in Sranantongo (the lingua franca between different ethnic groups in Suriname), which made the message of the song easier to understand for everyone (Mahila 07.04.15). But this fusion within the music scene of Suriname really depends on the personal ideas and opportunities of artists, which is explained by Rice (1987:476) as the *individual creation and experience*. At the individual level, especially young Hindus look beyond the music they grew up with. They like pop music, listen to iTunes and have the latest American hits on their phone. Starting a musical carrier in a rock

The Sound of Belonging

band and being fan of Michael Jackson (Saeed 01.04.15) is also part of personal development through music.

The creolization of music crosses ethnic boundaries, since it can mediate between the different groups in Suriname. Stanley (Creole) grew up with Javanese music and is now singing in a Hindu band, which shows the dynamic of creolizing processes within Surinamese society (27.02.15, 03.03.15). Within the music scene of Paramaribo, it is quite popular to cover pop songs like “Habibi (I Need Your Love)” (Shaggy, Mohombi, Faydee, Costi) in a Hindu style, with the familiar rhythms and sounds. A song like “All of Me” by John Legend, but in Hindi, that's my style”, Rajesh (31.03.15) told us. Musicians of various bands explained that they enjoy to make cover versions of popular Hindu, Caribbean, and English songs in their own style (and language), because they like it when the audience is ethnically more diverse and recognizes the music. Mahila has another way of approaching creolized music with the same aim: “Pyar Hamara” is actually a cover version, but I have written a new couplet in Sranantongo” (07.04.15). Thus, Rajesh and Mahila use language and style differently in order to reach Surinamese audience. But there seems to be a cultural, religious and/or language barrier, since Hindu bands like the idea to incorporate Sranantongo lyrics in their music, to reach Surinamese audience as well, however their performances are mainly visited by Surinamese Hindus (Rahul 11.03.15).

Creolized music opens up spaces in which Hindus mix their music or language with other ethnic groups or modern music. When Naina (12.03.15) sang “My Heart Will Go On” of the movie Titanic and people liked it, she realized that she wanted to sing more often in English. Also Hindu bands incorporate English into their songs, as was done with the popular song “Rude” of MAGIC!. It became very popular among Hindus which was observable when Expression performed it during the night at the dance club Havana. Noteworthy is that the content of the song (difficulties in love), is related to the themes of many *Bollywood* songs, which suggests that the content of a modern song also determines its popularity among Hindus. However, they often sing in English with a strong Hindu accent, giving the impression they still sing in Sarnami or Hindi (Asha 12.03.15). This shows the way Hindus translate modern music to their own style, and suggests that language is an important element in the

The Sound of Belonging

way Hindu music is being creolized. Within the spaces where creolized music is created, different world logics interact and allow Hindus to combine their individual and group identity. In other words, since creolized music communicates and connects different world logics, it allows Hindus to feel Surinamese and Hindu at the same time. Here, we state that the creolization of music makes the connection between being Hindu and Surinamese possible, and thereby combines their Indianness and being part of Surinamese society.

In summary: music allows Hindus to position themselves within the culturally diverse society by combining their Indianness and Surinamese identity, allowed by the creolization of music. Creolized music opens up spaces for communication within and outside the own group. Through the choices individuals make within these spaces, they make the connection between their group identity and individual identity, which they express and communicate again through creolized music. Individuals invest into the cultural heritage of the ethnic group they feel connected to, as Nahir explained: talented children within the Hindu community are encouraged to improve their music skills, because they are seen as an investment for the future to maintain 'the Hindu culture' (24.02.15). However, at the same time Hindus experience diversity as very positive and express the wish to see more fusion within their music, comparable to the way that Holi Phagwa brought together all Surinamese.

6. Discussion

After the dissection of the main argument in the two empirical chapters on Marrons and Hindus we will now turn to a discussion of these findings. We will give an overview of the parallels and differences of the empirical results in the light of the theoretical frame and the literature we use. We will finish by outlining the main conclusions that we draw from the empirical data and the discussion.

The vision of ethnomusicology that we took as a vantage point to conduct research is quite interesting and valuable. Music and the study of ethnomusicology include elements that are not necessarily represented in other cultural aspects. The contribution that ethnomusicology makes is that it includes conscious as well as unconscious decisions of individuals and groups, which gives deeper insights into cultural processes. Through conducting fieldwork based on this vision, we felt that we could gather substantial data in order to formulate our argument. We shall now discuss the similarities and differences between Marrons and Hindus in the light of the literature and argue that creolized music, in the highly diverse Surinamese context, functions as a communication medium through which individuals as well as groups constitute and express (amongst other things) their ethnic identity and ultimately celebrate the diversity they live in. In the context of analyzing ethnic groups, identities and creolization processes we are aware of the danger of essentialism and do not regard either of the topics discussed in this thesis as neatly bounded entities or pure contents. Yet in order to analyze the complex phenomena we have to use these concepts.

We will shortly describe and contrast important characteristics of the two target groups, whereby the broader context of Surinamese diversity should not be forgotten. Marrons constitute the second largest ethnic group of Suriname and the fourth largest group in Paramaribo. The fact that Marron languages are the second most spoken languages after Dutch, hints at a strong identification with their ethnic background. Migrated from the interior of Suriname to the city in the 1960s (as one of the last migrant groups), they are still regarded as a marginalized group. However this reputation is slowly changing due to their representation in the government since 2005. Hindus, on the other hand, constitute the biggest

The Sound of Belonging

group in Suriname and the second largest group in Paramaribo whereby Sarnami is after Dutch and Marron languages the third most spoken language in the country. They migrated to Suriname between 1873 and 1916 and are now strongly represented in politics and economy of Suriname. Again, as previously demonstrated, the two groups are quite different from each other (amongst other things) due to their historical background and position in society. Furthermore, the groups are geographically segregated within the city of Paramaribo, which also contributes to the differences: Marrons mainly live in the South, while Hindus are more concentrated in the center and the North. Another aspect that marks the differences has to do with the fact that the label “Marron” does not imply a particular religion, whereas the label “Hindu” implies their religion (Hinduism). This difference influences the content of the music they produce. Because these groups are so distinct, the underlying processes of musical communication become even more apparent.

What needs to be emphasized here is that individuals in Suriname do not only have an ethnic affiliation, but they also have different feelings of belongings and identities. On the one hand they are members of an ethnic group, in our case of Marrons or Hindus, on the other hand they feel Surinamese and belonging to a diverse nation. We regard music in this context as a marker of ethnicity and thus as a communicator of identity. In the empirical chapters we used Inskip et al’s model to unravel these processes in closer detail. What needs to be kept in mind for the following discussion is the shared world logic which underlies all communication processes. Music in this sense thus communicates a particular world logic. The outcome of the dynamics which exist between these different identities of Marrons and Hindus is thoroughly explained in the empirical chapters. Here we will give a short recap and then compare and discuss the different forms that these dynamics take on.

The identity of individuals is strongly connected to ethnic group identity. The way in which the ethnic communities of Marrons and Hindus are constituted is best described with reference to Anderson’s concept of imagined communities. Spread throughout the whole city of Paramaribo, individuals do not know each member of the group, yet they still feel strongly connected. Rice’s model (*historical construction* and *social maintenance* of music) complements Anderson’s concept and enables us to research the role that music plays in maintaining and expressing ethnic group identity/the imagined community. We discovered that music communicates a rather traditional world logic (styles, content, language,

The Sound of Belonging

instruments) through the use of historically related music in the social context of both groups. Because music communicates a rather traditional world logic, normally people of the same ethnicity who share this world logic feel connected to the relevant group in question. We discovered that for both Marrons and Hindus music communicates membership and boundaries of the ethnic group by referring to a particular world logic that is shaped within the *social maintenance* of music. The *social maintenance* takes place in actual encounters (rituals, shows etc), but also through spaces provided by media (radio etc). We experienced that in the social group context the more traditional music is implemented consciously by some actors.

By using Rice's notion of *the individual experience of music* we were able to explore the way that individuals use music. Music used by individuals, Marrons as well as Hindus, communicates a rather culturally diverse oriented world logic, because individuals use Surinamese, ethnic, and modern/Western music. By doing this, their world logic differs from that of the ethnic group. Individuals, both Marrons and Hindus, stated that their music choice in the individual context often depends on moods and tastes of the moment, thus mainly unconscious decisions.

As we could see, groups and individuals may have a different world logic, but they both remain connected to each other. Different world logic and identities expressed in music influence each other: Ethnic group identity brings the individual back to his/her roots, communicating traditional ethnic contents, whereas individual identity innovates group identity, because new musical elements might be incorporated into group identity. What results from this dynamic is a slow change of the underlying world logic of the group, which is expressed in creolized music forms. *Aleke* is an example of creolized Marron music that developed in the 1960s/1970s and *Baithak Gana* as well as *Chutney* are creolized Hindu music styles that developed in Suriname.

How the world logic of a group (communicated through music) changes and creolizes is related to the approach of that group, which determines how the new world logic is realized. Different approaches of groups result in various forms that creolized music takes on. In other words: the new world logic is mirrored in what a creolized music form looks like. Creolization takes among other things, the form of new languages which are used and new musical forms that are incorporated into existing ones (new influences within the more

The Sound of Belonging

traditional styles). Marrons mainly mix styles and thus symbolize through this their new world logic: *Dancehall* and reggae influences are combined with traditional/typical Marron styles which develop into creolized music forms, in which mainly Marron languages or Surinamese and sometimes even Dutch are sung. Hindus on the other hand combine new languages (instead of music styles) to express their changed world logic: Their creolized music is characterized by the use of Surinamese and English in their music, often combined with Sarnami and Hindi. Thereby melodies, languages and lyrics are translated to their own music style.

These different forms that creolized music takes on shows that Marrons and Hindus have different approaches with regard to the way they realize a new world logic through their music. Marrons may be seen as creators of their music, since they write their own songs and music, spontaneously inspired by daily topics which shape their lives as members of their ethnic group in Surinamese society (which may be political, romantic, social, ...). Their creolized music often incorporates new music styles and instruments into existing ethnic music elements and the languages used are often Marron languages or Surinamese and sometimes Dutch. Hindus on the other hand may be seen as translators of music connected to their roots in India. They draw inspiration from Indian music styles and Hinduism, and translate this to the Surinamese situation. Their creolized music mainly incorporates modern/Western or Surinamese music styles and instruments, which they translate to their own style and vary in the use of languages between Hindi, Sarnami, Sranatongo and English. In their lyrics they mainly focus on topics they feel connected to (often with a social importance), also mirrored in their creolized music. In summary, within music of Marrons, creolization mainly takes place through the use of different styles, which may be connected to being creators, and within the music of Hindus creolization mainly takes place through the use of different languages, which may be associated with being translators.

These different approaches, or ways of being, are mirrored in the use of music that radio stations broadcast, among other things. Because Marrons combine different styles, the music repertoire of the group is quite diverse, as we observed in the music selection of Radio Yaleka, which stated to broadcast seventy percent Marron music and thirty percent any other music (John 17.03.15). On the other hand, we observed that the Hindu radio station Aasmaan (representing many other Hindu radio stations in Paramaribo) mainly broadcasted music that

The Sound of Belonging

remains quite group bounded or ethnic, so that their music repertoire includes less diverse styles than the Marron radio station. This use of more traditional music styles in the group context may explain why they keep their styles and mainly use language as a new element in their creolized music.

It becomes clear that both mixing and distinguishing occurs at the same time in both groups. In creolized music both Marrons and Hindus mix old and new elements, and at the same time express their distinctiveness through their particular approaches. With this we are in line with what Aisha Khan (2007:54) argues about creolization entailing both unity and diversity. The more creolized elements of music (including style, instruments, language and content), that are not historically or typically related to their ethnic group, are used to target an ethnically diverse audience, the more they are heard especially at the national level. As a result, creolization gives the possibility to channel things and bring them to the attention of society in general and to ultimately renegotiate their position in society. Rasko for example, is an artist that produces quite creolized music and allows Marrons to be heard within the Surinamese society, since music opens up spaces where they are literally being heard through adapting their language and their music styles. It seems that Marrons more unconsciously participate in creolization projects after experiencing the positive implications, like a wider audience and more recognition, this may deliver. Whereas Hindus show a more conscious consideration of the creolizing processes and consequently formulate an intention to attract a wider Surinamese audience. This analysis suggests that Marrons discover creolized music as a means to participate in society whereas Hindus rather aim at sharing the experience of music with other ethnic groups.

But rather than as an opportunity to renegotiate their position in society, within their communication through creolized music, both groups show their enthusiasm for diversity. In other words, creolized music as a marker of ethnicity shows that they enjoy the diversity that exists in their surroundings. By making use of diversity, they incorporate new elements and create new music forms, which they interpret as an enrichment. This means that within ethnic identities they also enjoy the diversity they live in and therefore respect each other's musical expressions. In the field artists expressed the wish to target an ethnically diverse audience, yet in reality we observed that the audiences were ethnically quite homogeneous. Apparently, this does not make a difference to them and they still continue practicing creolized music. This

The Sound of Belonging

means that, in Suriname, creolized music (however it is practiced and it is practiced differently by each group) is a celebration of diversity in itself.

7. Conclusion

Conducting fieldwork on the topic of music and ethnicity in Paramaribo enabled us to get very varied insights into Surinamese society: music accompanies people through many phases of their lives, from childhood through marriage and burials.

In general we conclude that regarding music as a communicator of identity, combined with an ethnomusicological vision, provides deep insights into individuals and diverse communities and societies. It allowed us to investigate how identities are expressed and what forms changing identities can take on. The special contribution that research about music makes is that it is an expression of conscious as well as unconscious decisions, which are rarely expressed through other cultural forms. Even though we researched two very different ethnic groups, what struck us was that we discovered that the ways music functions as a communication medium are very comparable. It always communicates a particular world logic, and in our case an identity, that needs to be shared by the producer and the user. Because Suriname is a diverse ethnic context, individuals have different identities and affiliations that they can express through their use of music. On the one hand they feel connected to their ethnic group, but on the other hand they feel Surinamese or particularly affectionate towards other ethnicities. In the group context music always targets an ethnic community through referring to the shared world logic and thus communicates group membership. Individuals' use of music communicates a rather culturally diverse oriented identity characterized by the use of Surinamese, Western or popular music. These different identities do not exclude each other, but create interesting interactions from which new cultural forms evolve from. The interplay between individual, culturally diverse oriented identity, and ethnic group identity leads to an innovation of group identity and world logic. The manifestation of this interplay and innovation is seen in creolized music in which mixing and distinguishing take place at the same time. Marrons and Hindus have their own specific way of realizing this new world logic in creolized music. Marrons mainly mix music styles using their own language and content, while Hindus combine different languages and content with their particular music style. Therefore it seems that Marrons constantly create new music and Hindus translate their inspiration from India to the Surinamese context. As we have seen

The Sound of Belonging

with the Marrons creolized music can function as a way to negotiate their position within society. By adapting and mixing their music and language they get the opportunity to express things that occupy them and be literally heard in the Surinamese music scene. That enables them to position themselves in society. What is noticeable here is that we found indications for this participation in society through creolized music for the Marron community, but we could not find any comparable indications for the Hindus. Because of this and the fact that this was not the focus of our research we cannot make any general assumptions about the role that creolized music plays for ethnic groups in Suriname with respect to negotiating a position in society. Here we suggest that more research is needed to find out what political and social effects this participation in society through creolized music really has.

However, we have reason to believe that creolized music is an important opportunity for the Marron community to participate in society, yet we do not regard this as the main function. We see creolized music rather as a means of communicating a culturally diverse world logic of both ethnic groups that cherish the diversity of Suriname and thus is a celebration of diversity in itself. This notion of creolization as a celebration of diversity might also be applicable to and valuable for other contexts since it removes the context of a politically charged nature in which creolization is so often analysed in.

Talking to artists and audience members, walking on the streets hearing loud music, and riding cabs and buses which were blasting a mix of Surinamese songs, all were small manifestations of this celebration of diversity and formed pieces of one colourful mosaic.

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received April 8th 2015. Tabel 6.1: Bevolking naar etnische groep, leeftijdsgroep en geslacht. Tabel 6.1: Bevolking van Paramaribo naar etnische groep, leeftijdsgroep en geslacht. Aantal huishoudens naar meest gesproken en tweede gesproken taal

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9. Appendix A: Summary in Research Language

Samenvatting van de Thesis in het Nederlands

Surinaamse ethnische diversiteit wordt ook in de muziekwereld weerspiegeld en is daarom een interessant onderzoeksonderwerp voor antropologen. Omdat we graag meer inzicht in de muziek scene van twee verschillende groepen wilden verkrijgen hebben we ervoor gekozen om onderzoek te doen naar Marrons en Hindustaanen in Paramaribo. Deze twee groepen zijn naast Creolen en Javanen de grootste bevolkingsgroepen van het land en door hun herkomst, geschiedenis en positie in de Surinaamse samenleving heel verschillend.

Als vertrekpunt van ons onderzoek hebben we de visie van ethnomusicologen gebruikt, die zeggen dat culturele processen door middel van muziek onderzocht kunnen worden. Het idee is daarom dat muziek identiteiten kan communiceren. Wanneer de producent en de gebruiker van muziek dezelfde world logic delen begrijpen ze elkaar beter en kan het communicatie proces plaats vinden.

In de groep context wordt door middel van muziek vaak traditionele ethnische identiteit gecommuniceerd, terwijl individuen zich wel tot verschillende culturele vormen aangetrokken voelen en met hun muziek vaak een cultureel diverse identiteit communiceren. Omdat individuele identiteit en groeps identiteit niet los van elkaar staan, beargumenteren wij dat de interactie tussen deze twee identiteiten tot nieuwe muzikale vormen leiden: gecreoliseerde muziek. Deze gecreoliseerde muziek geeft de mogelijkheid, vooral voor Marrons, hun positie in de Surinaamse samenleving opnieuw te onderhandelen, maar voornamelijk is gecreoliseerde muziek een viering van verscheidenheid. We zullen nu kort uitleggen hoe deze processen bij de Marrons en bij de Hindoestanen plaatsvinden.

De groeps identiteit bij de Marron community in Paramaribo heeft vaak een meer traditioneel karakter. Deze identiteit wordt vooral in sociale situaties zoals bij muziek shows of rituelen als een begrafenis geleefd. De radio speelt ook een belangrijke rol in deze context.

The Sound of Belonging

Individuele implementeren daarbij vaak bewust bepaalde nummers waarvan ze weten of denken dat het vooral Marrons aanspreekt en benadrukken daardoor weer het traditionelere karakter. Door middel van traditionele Marron muziek wordt dus een world logic gecommuniceerd die heel erg georiënteerd is aan de roots van de gemeenschap. Individuele Marrons die we spraken, gaven wel aan dat ze niet alleen maar Marron muziek luisteren maar ook heel veel naar andere Surinaamse en internationale muziek. De identiteit en world logic die individuen dus door middel van muziek communiceren is cultureel heel divers. Zoals we eerder al aangaven, beïnvloeden groeps- en individuele identiteit elkaar continue. Deze interactie is bijvoorbeeld te zien bij de radio. Moderatoren draaien soms hun eigen voorkeur die niet helemaal te maken heeft met wat typisch Marron is. Ze introduceren daarmee bijvoorbeeld nieuwe muziekstijlen die door de groep misschien overgenomen worden. Soms worden deze nieuwe muziekstijlen dan door artiesten genomen en met andere meer traditionele Marron stijlen gemixt waardoor gecreoliseerde muziek ontstaat. Een voorbeeld van gecreoliseerde muziek is bijvoorbeeld de CD “Aleke roots riddim”. Op deze CD werd Aleke (een meer traditionele Marronstijl) met Dancehall invloeden gemixt. Deze CD was een groot succes omdat ze blijkbaar een bepaalde world logic communiceert die veel mensen aanspreekt. De identiteit en world logic van de groep en het individu is dus vloeiend en verandert over de tijd heen wat door gecreoliseerde muziek duidelijk wordt. Verder spreekt gecreoliseerde muziek ook meer mensen buiten de Marron gemeenschap aan waardoor Marron artiesten en stijlen in de Surinaamse muziek scene bekender en meer gehoord worden. Een implicatie daarvan zou kunnen zijn dat Marrons door gecreoliseerde muziek hun positie in de samenleving kunnen onderhandelen omdat ze voor een breder publiek toegankelijk worden.

Hindoestanen vormen de tweede grootste groep in Paramaribo, spreken thuis vooral Sarnami en Hindi en zijn verbonden met het Hindoeïsme in hun dagelijks leven. Hun voorouders migreerden tussen 1873 en 1916 van Noord-India naar Suriname en vormen een gemeenschap die nog altijd sterk verbonden is gebleven met haar Indiase oorsprong, die hun groepsidentiteit karakteriseert. Muziek geeft betekenis aan hun culturele roots, omdat muziek nauw verbonden is met het dagelijks leven van Hindoestanen. “Baithak Gana representeert onze Hindoestaans Surinaamse roots”, vertelde een informant, omdat veel Hindoestanen hiermee zijn opgegroeid en er daardoor altijd mee verbonden zullen blijven: het geeft ze een

The Sound of Belonging

gevoel van thuis en het behoren tot een bepaalde groep. Om de boodschappen van muziek te begrijpen heb je een bepaalde culturele en religieuze achtergrond nodig, wat neerkomt op een gedeelde world logic, die ten grondslag ligt aan de communicatie door middel van muziek. Op deze manier functioneert muziek als een medium waarmee leden van een groep zich verbonden voelen met elkaar.

Individuele identiteit is onlosmakelijk verbonden aan groepsidentiteit, Hindoestanen identificeren zich met Bollywood nummers, omdat die gaan over dagelijkse beslommeringen die tot uitdrukking komen in de muziek. Individuele identiteit is in die zin verboden aan hun Indiase roots, maar daarnaast ook gerelateerd aan het Surinaams zijn. Hindoestanen geven aan zich Surinamers van Hindoestaanse origine te voelen. Individuele identiteit wordt beïnvloed door creoliseringsprocessen binnen de Surinaamse samenleving, zoals weerspiegeld wordt in de muzieksmaak van met name jonge Hindoestanen, die ook graag naar moderne muziek luisteren. Het wordt steeds gebruikelijker onder Hindoestaanse artiesten om Surinaamse, Caribische en Engelse invloeden in hun muziek te incorporeren. Het lied Pyarhamara, dat een nummer één hit werd in Suriname, laat zien dat fusion in muziek heel positief ontvangen wordt door Surinamers. Geacreoliseerde muziek geeft Hindoestanen de mogelijkheid om hun Hindostaanse identiteit te verbinden met het Surinaams zijn, omdat geacreoliseerde muziek over etnische grenzen heen gaat. Daarbij willen Hindoestaanse artiesten graag de verbinding leggen met de Surinaamse samenleving door bijvoorbeeld Sranatongo lyrics in hun muziek op te nemen, waarmee ze hopen een meer divers publiek aan te trekken. Geacreoliseerde muziek geeft ruimte aan communicatie processen, waarin Hindoestanen hun muziek vermengen met verschillende talen en stijlen, waaronder die van andere etnische groepen en moderne muziek. Aangezien geacreoliseerde muziek verschillende world logics communiceert en verbindt, geeft het Hindoestanen de mogelijkheid om zich tegelijkertijd Surinaams en Hindoestaans te voelen.

Door onderzoek te doen naar twee verschillende etnische groepen en te kijken wat muziek communiceert, zijn we erachter gekomen dat de onderliggende processen van communicatie door muziek bij beide groepen heel vergelijkbaar is. Bij beide groepen is de groepscontext best traditioneel terwijl het individu vaak heel cultureel divers ingesteld is. Het resultaat van de interactie tussen deze twee identiteiten wordt dan onder ander gemanifesteerd in geacreoliseerde muziek. Marrons en Hindoestaan maken allebei gebruik van nieuwe

The Sound of Belonging

invloeden en combineren deze met bestaande en meer traditionele muziek elementen. Bij de Marrons is dat bij voorbeeld de combinatie van Aleke en Dancehall terwijl het bij de Hindoestanen Chuthney met Engelse lyrics zijn. Wat dus altijd tegelijkertijd plaats vindt in gecreoliseerde muziek is een process van mixen en onderscheiden: Het mixen van oud en nieuw en het onderscheiden omdat het toch duidelijk als Marron of Hindoestaanse muziek te herkennen is. We concluderen dat deze nieuwe muziekvormen vooral voor Marrons de mogelijkheid bieden om hun situatie binnen de Surinaamse samenleving te onderhandelen omdat ze door gecreoliseerde muziek toegankelijker voor een breder publiek worden en daadwerkelijk gehoord worden. Omdat we bij de Hindoestanen niet perse een vergelijkbare conclusie kunnen trekken stellen we daarom voor dat er meer onderzoek naar gedaan moet worden. Wat we wel hoofdzakelijk voor beide groepen kunnen concluderen is dat hun gecreoliseerde muziek een expressie van liefde voor diversiteit is. Gecreoliseerde muziek is dus een viering van verscheidenheid.