

50 Years after Hilda Kuper: Case Studies of Courtship and Marriage in the Hindustani¹ Community in Durban

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ABSTRACT The Hindustani community of South Africa was researched and written about by Hilda Kuper in the 1950s and 1960s. One of her papers was on marriage within the orthodox (Sanathanist) segment of this population. This paper revisits the issues that she focused upon then (in 1955) by providing a critique and an updated account of courtships and relationships among Hindustani couples in Durban. It focuses upon the changes that have taken in the ways individuals are choosing marriage partners, the courtships that precede their marriages and the changes that families are exhibiting in their once strong proclivity towards caste choices. The evidence herein demonstrates that while caste is not as much an issue as it used to be, linguistic background and academic cum professional status are the new norms in marriage choices.