Dutch spirits, East Indians, and Hindu deities in Guyana: Contests over land

Marcelo Moura Mello

Department of Anthropology and Ethnology, Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil

Correspondence
Marcelo Moura Mello, Department of Anthropology and Ethnology, Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, Brazil.
Email: mmmello@gmail.com

Abstract

In modern-day Guyana (formerly British Guiana) residents of the coastal region of the country are susceptible to other-than-human powers: the spirits of Dutch colonizers, who claim ownership over the land, especially in areas where sugar plantations once operated. Regarded as the "masters of the land," or "boundary masters," Dutch spirits demand offerings and the recognition of land rights from their human co-habitants. Through a description of rituals towards the land performed by members of a heterodox Hindu sect, the worship of the goddess Kali, this article addresses territorial sovereignty through the lens of lived and embodied practices of co-habitation between East Indians and Dutch spirits, giving special attention to the processes of establishing proprietary rights over the land through such acts as planting trees.

KEYWORDS
colonialism, Guyana, land, plantation, spirits

Resumen

En la actual Guayana (anteriormente Guayana Británica), residentes de la región costera del país son susceptibles a otros poderes no humanos; los espíritus de los colonizadores holandeses, quienes claman propiedad sobre la tierra, especialmente en áreas donde plantaciones de azúcar una vez operaron. Considerados como los "señores de la tierra", o "señores de límites", los espíritus holandeses demandan ofrecimientos y el reconocimiento de derechos sobre la tierra de sus cohabitantes humanos. A través de una descripción de los rituales hacia la tierra llevados a cabo por los miembros de una secta hindú heterodoxa, la veneración de la diosa Kali, este artículo aborda la soberanía territorial a través de los lentes de las prácticas vividas y corporeizadas de cohabitación entre indios del este y espíritus holandeses, dando atención especial a los procesos de establecer derechos de propiedad sobre la tierra a través de tales actos como plantando árboles. [*espíritus, colonialismo, tierra, plantación, Guayana*]

Résumé

Dans la Guyane contemporaine (autrefois Guyane britannique), les habitants de la région côtière du pays sont sous influence de pouvoirs extrahumains : les esprits de

colonisateurs hollandais qui revendiquent la propriété de la terre, en particulier dans les zones de plantations de canne à sucre. Considérés comme les « maîtres de la terre », ou les « maîtres de la frontière », les esprits hollandais exigent de leurs cohabitants humains des offres et la reconnaissance de leurs droits territoriaux. Par le biais de la description de rituels pour la terre faits par les membres d'une ligne hétérodoxe hindoue, le culte de la déesse Kali, cet article aborde les questions concernant la souveraineté territoriale à travers l'analyse des pratiques incarnées et vécues de cohabitation entre Indiens et esprits hollandais, en portant une attention particulière aux processus d'établissement des droits territoriaux par les actes tels que la plantation d'arbres. [*esprits, colonialisme, terre, plantation, Guyana*]

Resumo

Na Guiana contemporânea (antiga Guiana Britânica), moradores da região costeira do país estão suscetíveis a poderes extra-humanos: espíritos de colonizadores holandeses, que reivindicam a propriedade da terra, especialmente em áreas onde plantações de açúcar operaram. Considerados como os "senhores da terra," ou "senhores da fronteira," espíritos holandeses demandam de seus coabitantes humanos ofertas e o reconhecimento de seus direitos territoriais. Por meio da descrição de rituais para a terra realizados por membros de uma vertente hindu heterodoxa, o culto à deusa Hindu Kali, este artigo aborda questões relativas à soberania territorial por meio da análise de práticas incorporadas e vividas de coabitação entre indianos e espíritos holandeses, conferindo atenção especial aos processos de estabelecimento de direitos territoriais por meio de atos como a plantação de árvores. [*espíritos, colonialismo, terra, plantação, Guiana*]

INTRODUCTION

At some point along the road that connects Georgetown, the capital city of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, to the region of Berbice, the road expands on both sides to accommodate, in its center, a tree. In many places, the road is surrounded by abundant vegetation, but only this tree, a silk cotton tree, is rooted—in the strongest sense—in the middle of it, for no attempt to uproot it has succeeded. In Guyana, it is widely reported that an excavator was once brought to the site to take the tree down, but that the machine suddenly stopped working, and the uprooting was abandoned. Within a few days, the machine operator died from a heart attack. The sudden stalling of a huge machine and a person's death were said to be predictable consequences of trying to remove a tree from which blood seeps when anyone threatens its integrity. The tree rests at a "Dutch spot,"[1] a place inhabited by the spirits of Dutch colonists, in a village called Perseverance (Figure 1).

During my fieldwork in the coastal region of Guyana between 2010 and 2012, and in short visits in 2018,[2] dozens of people recounted this story. They usually explained that the spirits of Dutch colonists were born out of struggles, in a remote past, between two competing European colonial powers: the Dutch and the British.[3] In the struggle for control of territories, several Dutch colonists were brutally killed by the British, or they died of suicide in preference to being murdered or raped. The overpowered Dutch colonists were not buried and did not receive proper funeral rituals. Subjected to violent and unquiet deaths, the colonists, in their afterlives, became physically disembodied beings attached to the land, seeking continuous revenge against contemporary Guyanese, seen by the spirits as those who ultimately inherited the properties, and the power, lost by the Dutch colonists in the distant past (Williams 1990, 138).

Dutch spirits are considered the "masters of the land" or "boundary masters," retaining prerogatives over the places previously ruled by colonists, particularly places where sugar plantations once operated. Claiming ownership and sovereignty over the land, they are considered to be the first occupants of the coastal region of the country,[4] a condition that grants them certain rights, especially toward the land. As a consequence, they require continuous offerings and demand compensation from their human cohabitants. When not appeased, they possess and otherwise attack people, disturbing their lives. Tricky, deceitful, and malevolent, these spirits can sexually assault people in their dreams; cause sickness, mental confusion, and compulsive desires (such as heavy drinking and hypersexuality); and precipitate suicide, contributing to Guyana having one of the highest per capita suicide rates in the world (see Edwards 2016).

FIGURE 1   The silk cotton tree in Perseverance. (Photograph by author, June 2018) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

In this article, I demonstrate that stories about the Dutch spirits evoke acts of occupation of the land by humans and nonhumans, pointing to the lasting effects of colonial violence, which still engender and require forms of repair in the present. Through a description of rituals directed toward the land performed by members of a heterodox Hindu sect, worshippers of the Hindu goddess Kali, I argue that living with spirits brings forth overlapping sovereignties in which humans are not the only meaningful agents. In contemporary Guyana, contested forms of cohabitation between humans and spirits (Crosson 2019; Johnson 2019) are integral to the very definition of proprietary rights over land and bodies.

As an always-emergent form of authority grounded in violence, the imposition of forceful relations—which are not restricted to the boundaries of state institutions— and acts performed and designed to generate commitments, mutual rights, arbitrations, and loyalties (Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Ram 2012; Thomas 2019), sovereignty is premised on variably negotiable bonds between humans and nonhumans (Mello 2021; Singh 2015). Mundane disputes over land are not precluded from supernatural agency (Chakrabarty 2001), nor are they restricted to the world of the living. Given that Dutch spirits, contrary to other "jumbies" (spirits of the dead), cannot be completely expelled from the land, practices that both reinforce previous commitments to the spirits and simultaneously aim to restrain their sphere of influence are performed by Kali religious experts. As I will show, in such dynamics, under the shadows of plantation life, planting trees was integral to Kali-worship territorial projects, insofar as plants and trees are fundamental to the very mobilization of other powers (of the Hindu deities) to arbitrate land disputes and make people less susceptible to the masters of the land (the Dutch). The plantation was foundational to the settlement of Indian indentured laborers in colonial British Guiana and still engenders processes of territorial sovereignty in the postcolonial state of Guyana. Collective and personal stories about plantation life are traversed by relations of possession and dispossession, violence and loss, dominion and exploration, including in

the domain of territorial dominion (Crosson 2019; Johnson 2019; Strange 2019).

In contemporary Guyana, the unresolved legacies of colonialism are discursively and pragmatically addressed by practices that are designed to arbitrate power over land. Informed by local categories of sovereignty (Bonilla 2015), this article contributes to deepening anthropological understanding of overlapping sovereignties in a context in which different orders of relationships between humans and nonhumans, founded in colonial encounters, turn possession over land, especially in plantation areas, critical. I first describe how the Guyanese in general evoke the Dutch colonial past discursively and through references to material features of the Guyanese coastal landscape. Then I turn to Kali worship and to the narratives of Kali members about both the Dutch and British colonial periods. Finally, drawing attention to the notion of "inheritance" and describing the case of a woman afflicted by a Dutch spirit, I present my final remarks.

DUTCH (NON)MATERIAL TRACES

The Guyanese in general seem propelled to remind visitors, guests, and foreigners that Guyana has a Dutch history behind its history as a former British colony. Besides the abundant stories about spirits, two legacies of the Dutch colonial period are constantly evoked: the sea defense system that runs along the country's narrow coastal strip and the Berbice Slave Rebellion (1763–1764).

Dutch attempts[5] to settle and cultivate staple food crops on a large scale are materialized not only in the ruins of military forts[6] but most prevalently in the elaborate system of sea defenses, canals, and irrigation channels that run along the coast. In Guyana, which is situated below sea level, all cultivated areas on the coastal plain must be drained and protected from tides and flooding, and the volume of water in each estate's canals is regulated by large sluices or "kokers." People commonly say that the country was built by Dutch engineering and technology, without which sugar cultivation would have been impossible. In this view, the manual work of the enslaved in the "humanization" (Rodney 1981) of the coastal environment tends to be ignored. However, slavery is not erased from accounts about the "Dutch time," which is defined as the cruelest of all for the enslaved. Not by chance did the urge of Dutch colonists to make their fortune at the expense of the enslaved result in a bloody uprising, as the imposing monument to Cuffy, one of the Berbice Slave Rebellion's leaders, reminds us (Figure 2).

The Berbice Slave Rebellion threatened Dutch rule in the region. The insurgents took over the colony of Berbice for more than a year, but their attempt to expel the Dutch and create two separate sovereign states—one occupied by Europeans, the other by Africans and Creoles—was brutally repressed by colonial forces reinforced by Amerindian troops (Farage 1992; Kars 2020; Whitaker 2016). In addition to the killing of Africans and Creoles during the revolt, dozens of the rebels were gruesomely executed before an audience of prisoners. In this period, around 350 Europeans and 5,000 enslaved people

lived in the tiny Dutch settlement in Berbice. In the aftermath of the Berbice Slave Rebellion, the population of the colony dropped consistently (Kars 2020; Thompson 1987; Williams 1990).

The Cuffy monument, a twenty-five-foot-tall bronze structure, was built and carved by the African Guyanese artist Philip Moore, who declared himself to be spirit-trained. It depicts in a nonnaturalistic way a defiant warrior with a knife on his hip, whose corrugated body is carved with masks. The plaques around the plinth evoke, among other things, the African spiritual world, planters' greed, and slave resistance. Located in central Georgetown, in the Square of the Revolution, close to the former Presidential House, the sculpture was commissioned by Forbes Burnham (1923–1985), the controversial prime minister and president of Guyana from 1964 to 1985 (see Taylor 2020), whose nationalist propaganda involved the retrospective resignification of several past events, including the Berbice Slave Rebellion. After independence from Britain in 1966, the republic was proclaimed on February 23, 1970, 207 years to the day after the uprising had allegedly begun in 1763 (Thompson 2006). As Williams (1990) remarks, far from merely providing an alternative, and subaltern, interpretation of historical events, the retrospective significance of past events (Trouillot 1995) forms assemblages of past events selectively emphasized to converge with present concerns and speculative futures.

The British had an enduring and powerful influence after independence, as patterns of dominance sustained by Anglo-European values and ideologies set their roots in the country. As Williams (1991) elegantly puts it, the "ghost of Anglo-European hegemony" was an "ever-present presence." Simultaneously, the Guyanese were haunted by other colonial ghosts (Williams 1990), whose existence was far from a mere historical metaphor or an idea of history (Kwon 2008; Langford 2009).[7] Possessing a discernible European origin entangled with Guyanese *colonial* history, Dutch spirits attacked and possessed the most affluent of the poor rural Guyanese. In recounting their personal tragedies and thereby making their stories known, they contrasted the power and social position that they possessed prior to the Berbice Slave Rebellion with their ultimate social, political, and economic place in the social world that followed. In parallel, people used representations and stereotypes of Anglo–Dutch relations to formulate the content and structure of rituals in which Dutch spirits participated, informing human responses to the spirits' continued presence (Williams 1990).

During my fieldwork, no interlocutor linked the rise of Dutch spirits directly to the outbreak of the Berbice Slave Rebellion. In professional historical accounts, the switchover from Dutch to British sovereignty is framed as a (long) process that unfolded smoothly.[8] However, the rise of vengeful spirits is conceived by many Guyanese as the result of an abrupt and traumatic transition in which ruthless colonists, cruel by nature to their slaves, became vulnerable to the excessive power of the British, who figure as inflictors of merciless deaths and inducers of suicide. In such accounts, then, colonial violence is foundational; it can reorient our understandings of the relationship between temporality and sovereignty (Thomas 2019), for the rise of spirits can be

FIGURE 2   Monument to the 1763 rebellion. (Photograph by author, June 2018) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

interpreted, on the one hand, in terms of vulnerability, as a tale that begins with weakness rather than strength (Rutherford 2018), and, on the other, as an inaugural (and lasting) event built on collective loss and disjuncture (Forde 2018).

If the coastal Guyanese landscape physically embodies and contains traces of settler colonists' acts (Gordillo 2014; Manning 2017), it must be emphasized that spirits are fluid and evanescent entities that disturb any reification of memories fixed in space, ruins, and material sites (Edensor 2005). Presenting themselves as living evidence of past injustices, Dutch spirits carry acts of violence inflicted on them, troubling easy forms of reconciliation and requiring, often forcefully, forms of repair from humans. In contemporary coastal Guyana, undead representatives of colonists still exert power over the living, claiming their condition of masters of the land in terms of autochthony (compare with Santos 1995; Strange 2019). As I will show, Kali devotees also articulate discourses of origins, as the notion of "inheritance" illustrates. Inheritance, far from being a given, is subjected to change and is cultivated through diverse practices that simultaneously incorporate spirits into family traditions and contest spirits' attempts to seize the land and the people living on it.

INHERITANCES

Transplanted to British Guiana by Indian indentured laborers, Kali worship involves the "manifestation" of Hindu deities (possession of people by them), animal sacrifice, and healing practices. "Pujas" (offerings) are performed weekly in temples to a number of gods and goddesses (usually seventeen) emplaced in shrines and "murtis" (sculptured images of deities). The religious service is followed by the invocation of the deities ("deotas"), who look after devotees and heal them through the bodies of religious experts known as "marlos." These marlos perform healing treatments and deliver oracular messages that reveal the sources of people's afflictions, which range from depression and infertility to diseases caused by witchcraft.

Kali worship is defined as South Indian in origin and is considered distinct from Sanatan Dharma, the dominant and self-proclaimed orthodox Brahminic and North Indian Hindu sect of Guyana. In a context in which Anglo-European (and Christian) values were hegemonic (Drummond 1980; Jayawardena 1963; Smith 1956; Williams 1991), Sanatan Dharma emerged as a centralized Hindu sect through an effort to legitimize itself as a religion in the early twentieth century. In this

process, Sanatan Dharma condemned animal sacrifice and spiritual possession, assigning these practices to the dark-skinned "Madrasis,"[9] the people of South Indian descent who since indentureship have been stereotyped as superstitious, backward, and savage (Jayawardena 1966; Kloß 2017; McNeal 2011; Vertovec 1996). Currently, most Sanatanists do not consider Kali worship a religion, but rather a satanic cult, a distortion of Hinduism. In turn, Kali devotees, especially their leaders, stress that they follow a traditionally Hindu and Indian religion and condemn North Indians for implicitly absorbing British and Christian values. In fact, Madrasis claim that Kali worship is the most faithful of Hindu religious traditions, since, unlike Sanatanists, Madrasis did not "drop" their own "traditions" to appease Christians.

Contesting the stigmatization of Sanatanists and other detractors, Kali members are proud of their openness to the inclusion of non-Indians and non-Hindus in their religious ceremonies. They are equally proud of the knowledge that they claim to possess to "deal with" malevolent beings—a knowledge that Muslims, Christians, and Sanatanists lack, and something that does not prevent them from attending Kali religious services insofar as they, too, attend Kali rituals and are subjected to spiritual attacks. At the same time, for Kali devotees, their religion's emphasis on healing is what is distinctive. Not by chance, the main deity in Kali worship is the South Indian goddess Mariamma, a healing goddess.[10]

Despite the ready inclusion of non-Indians and non-Hindus in Kali religious ceremonies,[11] full membership is not immediately granted, as newcomers must devote themselves continuously, or "do devotion," as it is put locally. This entails attending weekly religious services, making offerings to deities, participating actively in rituals, and fasting for three days before attending weekly religious service.[12] To protect themselves from potentially nefarious forces, persons afflicted by malevolent beings, such as the Dutch spirits, must engage in several practices that aim to incorporate divine power ("shakti") into their own bodily essences (Busby 1997; Ishii 2013; Marriott 1976; Mello 2020a; Nabokov 2000). Depending on the circumstances, more elaborate rituals are performed to the deities, either inside temples, on their precincts, or where the consultants live.

Three domestic rituals can be cited in this respect: Sangani work, boundary work, and family puja. Sangani work aims to establish the presence of Sangani, who protects the boundaries and entrances of villages and temples[13] within a domestic unit (compare with Dumont 1957, 1970). Offerings are made to the deity, and a black rooster is sacrificed. Its blood is poured around the house to "close" the boundary, settling the god's power within and at the edges of the plot of land. Thus, Sangani becomes the master of the land.[14]

Boundary work is distinct from Sangani work in that spirits are invoked to be propitiated and to talk with people. Far from being mere rites of separation (Douglas 1966), in which the ties with selected supernatural beings are cut, boundary work can be considered rituals of incorporation (Pitt-Rivers 2017) insofar as they are designed to both "settle" spirits' demands and guarantee the well-being of human persons who live with spirits.

Finally, family pujas, also known as "ground pujas," are more elaborate rituals performed regularly to praise deities worshiped by the ancestors both in the distant past, in India, and in the "British time" (i.e., the indentured period) in the Caribbean. In describing family pujas, Kali devotees often refer to the British time, which is equated with "bondage." In accounts about the indentured, my interlocutors stress that "Old Indians," which they also refer to as "bound coolies,"[15] managed to keep their ancestral religious traditions against all odds. Living and working in a foreign land, in which they were bound by labor contracts, indentured laborers were despised for their habits and religious practices, which were deemed demoniac and heathen by the British. Traditions were subsumed, Kali devotees say, and the goddess "punished" devotees, making their children sick, as a consequence of "forgetting" the deities (see also Stephanides and Singh 2000, 6–10).

Over time, however, Kali devotees managed to promote religious feasts and build temples to Mariamma and other deities and relieved themselves of the "burden" of not worshiping the deities. According to "pujarie" (priest) Bayo, head priest of the Blairmont Kali temple, in the first decades of the twentieth century, the feasts to the goddess—or "Mother," as she is affectionately called—were financed by both Indian devotees and white managers of the Blairmont sugar factory, which is located opposite the temple. Funding Hindu feasts was a form of investment for white managers and Christians, Bayo remarked ironically, since even they had to recognize Mother's power in protecting her "children"—who, for the most part, worked and lived on sugar plantations—from spirit attacks. By extension, the land and the crops were protected.[16] In parallel, Indians struggled to keep their family traditions, which involve praising the deities worshiped by their forefathers. This is essentially what my interlocutors call "inheritance.'" Inheritance is related to a domestic group and to a genealogical regime of descendance. Although prescriptive, it is not immutable (see, for another context, Bulamah 2015; Dalmaso 2018; Richman 2014), for its continuity and adaptability depended on how indentured servants managed to deal with the power of both the British and the disembodied representatives of deceased Dutch colonists.

"Indians arrived in a land where many wars and murders had happened. The Dutch were bad people, and they did lots of cruel things. . . . They [the spirits] were here before us. We inherited that," Pujarie Bayo explained to me during a long conversation about ancestors and family pujas and how "bound coolies" survived in a hostile land. The spirits not only disturbed the sugar harvesting—preventing machines from working, for instance—but also caused misfortune and injuries, sometimes fatal, to sugarcane cutters. According to Bayo, in the first decades of indentured labor, Indians performed offerings, libations, and other rituals to appease and calm down the spirits in order to protect themselves from their attacks. Eventually, through the continuous offerings to the Dutch spirits made by Madrasi family ancestors, the spirits were incorporated into Madrasi family traditions as an inheritance. In summary, according to Kali devotees, "Old Indians" were attacked in the plantations by spirit residents of the land. In response, Madrasis fixed other powers—those of Hindu deities—in domestic spaces and in public temples. As I will show, planting trees in areas adjacent to plantations was fundamental to successfully settling these Hindu deities.

FIGURE 3 Tree in front of Blairmont sugar factory. (Photograph by author, October 2018) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

PLANTING INHERITANCE

The temple where I conducted most of my research, Blairmont, is located opposite a sugar factory where two trees stand (Figure 3). They cannot be cut down as they are the abode of Dutch spirits. The temple was built around the 1950s and rests on a "Dutch spot." As a consequence, the performance of pujas demanded that ritual offerings be made to the spirits.

According to temple members, religious ceremonies were performed in the middle of grass, bush, and clouds of mosquitos until the 1980s. The shrines, built from bamboo poles and coconut leaves, were precarious structures. The performance of the pujas benefited from the soil's fertility, and plants and trees flourished within the temple compound. Trees of neem,[17] whose sacred leaves are the goddess herself—for the Mother "takes the form" of neem to heal people—flourished in its new environment away from India.[18] With the repetition of the pujas, the construction of shrines, and the emplacement of murtis (sculptured images of deities) on them, the space was transformed, becoming "sacred" and "pure," for the deities eventually "replaced" the Dutch spirits, as it is said by my interlocutors. Thus, plants, bamboo poles, trees, and flowers are, in many ways, the foundation of the Blairmont temple (Figure 4).

The significance of planting trees, whose fruits and leaves are fundamental to the very performance of the pujas and the effectiveness of healing treatments, is better understood when considered alongside the settler politics of the plantation. As a political and social institution, the plantation arose as a means of establishing a new territorial organization in an alien environment through mechanisms of conquest and exploitation and coercive forms of labor control. In this process,

"invading life-forms" and "pioneer plants" played an essential role, as Thompson ([1932] 2010) suggests in his classic book.

It is well-established among scholars that colonial projects produced new social and ecological arrangements (Besky and Padwe 2016; Drayton 2000; Schiebinger 2007). Thus, the landscape (and closely related concepts like land and territory) must not be framed in a human-centered approach only; we must recognize that human and nonhuman territorial projects are entangled (Navaro-Yashin 2012). In such a perspective, power over land can involve processes of boundary-making and the establishment of proprietary rights through acts of planting bushes and crops, designing gardens, and rooting and uprooting trees. Indeed, plants have a materiality that, while perhaps not as immediately obvious as that of kokers, seawalls, and monuments, is equally important for projects of control over land (see Besky 2017; Bhan 2018; Bhan and Duschinski 2020; Braverman 2008; Ram 2012; Singh 2015; Taneja 2018; Wahbe 2020).

These perspectives offer new contributions to understanding Hindu rituals toward the land, which have received relatively little attention from Caribbean scholarship compared to the vast range of studies among African Caribbean groups describing the interconnections between kinship, land tenure, funerary rites, and the memorialization of ancestors around the land (Yume 2018). Overall, this specialized scholarship has focused on the strategies employed by the African Caribbean in the interstices of the plantation labor regime, especially in the aftermath of abolition in the British West Indies (Besson 1984; Carnegie 1987; Clarke 1957; Mintz 1974).[19]

In Guyana's case, Smith (1956, 1971) describes kinship roles among the African Guyanese, showing how transactions were governed by systems of control over the land and by attempts to avoid its alienation by outsiders, especially East Indians. His analysis of the

FIGURE 4   View of the temple from the Blairmont compound. (Photograph by author, June 2018) [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

interdependence between members of descent groups (which included the nonliving) describes how mechanisms for maintaining and reinforcing communal bonds were favored, particularly in situations of interethnic competition. Land possession also articulated claims of national belonging, as in discourses concerned with determining which racial group had contributed most to the country through their work on the land and agricultural staples (Williams 1991).[20]

Monographs on the Indo-Caribbean contain scant information on these topics, although some authors have documented the propitiation of both spirits and Hindu deities for the sake of the crops and to guarantee the well-being of residents of plots of land guarded by such beings (Benoist 1998; Desroches 1996; Guinee 1992; Klass 1961; McNeal 2011; Vertovec 1993). Klass (1961) and Niehoff and Niehoff (1960) describe domestic and communitarian pujas made to guardian spirits for the sake of rice crops in Trinidad. Intriguingly, spirits of European plantation overseers, whose tombs were located on sugar estates, were also propitiated (Niehoff and Niehoff 1960, 158).[21] These "Spanish spirits" resided particularly in silk cotton trees, in which they buried chests filled with money.[22]

During my research, it became evident that to understand Kali worship I needed to take into account different rituals toward the land[23] and the circulation of consultants, religious experts, spirits, and Hindu deities through private, domestic, and public spaces instead of restricting my observations to temples only, as many researchers did before (Bassier 1977; Singh 1978; Stephanides and Singh 2000; but see Kloß 2016). Rituals performed outside the domains of Blairmont are coextensive with the healing practices performed within its boundaries. Pujas and Hindu rituals toward the land can be analyzed from a different perspective when considered alongside the competing territorial projects of spirits.

By the same token, a simple description of ritual episodes of spirit possession is insufficient to understanding sustained practices of living with spirits. As immanent presences (Wirtz 2014) attached to the land, Dutch spirits produce effects in the present. "Effect," here, is employed as a heuristic category that helps us to understand the different ways that persons evoke the "intersections" of the lives of spirits and humans, the "centrality of bodily experience" in the "differing regimes of evidence and validity" that determine "what is acting" and the relevance of "peripheral forms" of encounters between humans and spirits, such as dreams (Blanes and Espírito Santo 2013, 17). Historical accounts, oracular messages, and narratives about individual biographies that are intertwined with the social lives of spirits are essential to understanding, from an ethnographic standpoint, the effects produced by spiritual entities in the world. Close contact with Dutch spirits can result, as Kali devotees say, in "affections" on human bodies and states of mind. In other words, in their attempts to govern people's bodies, spirits can "affect" people, forcing the living to engage in forms of compensation that often require the mobilization of other powers.

POSSESSIVE AFFECTS

Jennifer,[24] a nineteen-year-old woman, lived with her grandmother, mother, and one-year-old sister, Agatha, in a village that once had been a Dutch-owned sugar plantation. According to Jennifer, the (male) spirit that lived in the plot had afflicted her family, with the exception of Agatha,[25] for three generations and demonstrated a special affinity for her, making her the victim of sexual assaults in dreams since the age of five. I met Jennifer in December 2010, when the physical and

psychological consequences of these attacks were affecting her health. Jennifer and her mother sought assistance in a Kali temple.

During one visit to a temple, Jennifer manifested the Dutch spirit several times, always "wildly," as people put it. After these episodes, she would fall to the ground as though she had blacked out, before rolling around on the floor. When she recovered her senses, Jennifer was dizzy and bruised from injuries. I witnessed one of these episodes during my second field trip to Guyana. Upon seeing this, one of her friends remarked that the "thing" had always possessed Jennifer wildly, making her suffer and bleed. Soon afterward, I spoke to another temple member, called Green:

> Marcelo: I've never seen a person manifesting like that.
> Green: That girl has been sick for a long time. She manifests a Boundary Master.
> Marcelo: I don't get it.
> Green: A Boundary Master is a Dutch spirit. All Guyana is surrounded by them.

According to Green, Jennifer could be healed at the temple, but she needed to attend the religious service to purify her body, as well as pray to the deities with more devotion. After all, he added, "it's worthless praying with the mind if the body cannot sustain the devotion" (i.e., withstand the divine manifestation, see below).

Within minutes, our conversation was interrupted by an argument between Jack (another temple member), the priest, and Jennifer's mother, Paula. Jack and the priest complained that Jennifer always manifested the Dutch spirit when she attended the temple's functions. Annoyed, Paula left with her daughter soon after. Jack, in turn, remarked angrily, "The temple is not the place to worship this kind of thing." The proper thing to do, he assured those present, would be to go to Jennifer's house, invoke the spirit, and try to find out how the spirit could be "compensated."[26]

Jennifer was the subject of gossip. Many people attested that she had been sexually assaulted continually in her dreams since childhood and had developed, over time, an uncontrolled sexual appetite for men, even married ones. Two of my male friends suggested during a conversation in a bar that, as Jennifer grew up, she had felt the urge to have real relations with "men of flesh and bone" rather than with spirits in dreams only. She had thus become lascivious because of the spirit's attacks.

Jennifer was aware of the gossip, but she was more concerned with how to deal with the "thing" who troubled her life, making her sick and weakening her body and mind. Her dream was to migrate to the United States to provide for her family, be more "independent," and thrive in life, she constantly remarked. However, the moments before sleeping were filled with anxiety: her dreams were nightmares, and awakening was a moment of simultaneous relief and anguish. The young woman expressed a strong conviction that she could be healed in Kali temples, especially by devoting herself to the goddess Kateri, whose power (shakti) surpasses the agency of evil beings like the Dutch spirits. In January 2011, Jennifer started her training to manifest Kateri more fully, to strengthen her body and mind through the deity's presence.

With the "development" of Kateri's manifestation, the Dutch spirit that afflicted her would be unable to attack her as easily as before, for her body would be protected. Three months later, I had to return home for unexpected reasons and was only able to receive news via the internet. In June 2011, one of my Guyanese friends posted a comment on a photo on my Facebook account, which I had taken with Jennifer during my fieldwork: "That girl in the picture drank poison [agricultural pesticide] some weeks ago. She is dead."

I went back to Guyana in September 2011, four months after Jennifer's death. It is impossible to contemplate here the whole set of stories, versions, points of view, speculations, accusations, quarrels, and disagreements surrounding her case.[27] I had access to several sources of information prior to my return to Guyana, but I also spoke with more than fifteen people who were acquainted with Jennifer and whose views about her tragic end very often diverged. Nevertheless, there were many agreements concerning some reported facts. From what I could grasp, the events described below took place between March and June 2011.

A critical turning point in Jennifer's fate took place at a weekly service, when the Dutch spirit possessed her body, stating that he owned her. A priest approached him, asking what he wanted in order to "release" her. The spirit answered, "Do my puja" (i.e., a boundary work). Later in the same week, the priest and some temple ritual experts performed a boundary work at Jennifer's household. Among other things, a rooster, alcohol, cigars, and sweets were offered to the master of the land, who was invoked into a marlo's body. Interacting with Kali religious experts, the spirit promised that he would cease the attacks because he was satisfied with the offerings. After some days, his promise was broken. The attacks became more frequent and were no longer restricted to sleeping time. Jennifer got worse.

In hindsight, Jennifer's friends defined the spirit's conduct as deceitful and cruel because false hope had been offered. Usually, boundary work sets the limits of the spirit's sphere of influence. But this was not the case for Jennifer. She was again possessed in another Kali temple she attended, and, in front of Hindu deities and dozens of people, the spirit shouted that Jennifer was his alone and he would kill her if necessary. After this episode, a second boundary work was performed by another priest at her home. Fifteen days later, Jennifer drank agricultural pesticides and died.

The deceitful promise of the spirit is consistent with its mimetic versatility (Basso 1979; Stoller 1995; Taussig 1993).[28] Infused in different places, in heterogenous religious and ritual scenarios, and in various domains of human life, Dutch spirits are enmeshed with uncertainties. It is not surprising, then, that the episodes surrounding Jennifer's death provided new material for discussion among my interlocutors rather than a definitive explanation of it (Irvine 1982). According to those who attended, Jennifer's funeral was full of grief and gossip. Jennifer looked pretty and at peace. However, an open issue remained: for some, Jennifer was finally able to rest in peace after her suicide, but for others, she became the spirit's wife, (still) being subjected to male authority and living in the very place owned by the spirit.[29]

FINAL REMARKS

In modern-day Guyana, remnants of the Dutch period are disseminated in the landscape, many villages are still known by their Dutch names, and sugar plantations are inhabited by undead colonists. Like the seawall, Dutch spirits are entrenched in the landscape. Navigating the borderland between the material and the nonmaterial, the afterlives of Dutch colonists replicate acts of violence embedded in the land. They are part of a treacherous spiritual terrain (Shaw 2002) in which trees figure as spiritual repositories and as marked territories of colonial sovereign power (Brown 2008; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Sheller 2007).[30]

In the distant past, Dutch colonists managed to suppress a rebellion that resulted in the assassination of hundreds of Africans and Creoles. However, Dutch sovereignty was never fully settled. Within a few decades, after 1763, British ascendency aborted Dutch colonial projects in Berbice (and in Demerara and Essequibo). While professional historiography tends to document several factors and forces that resulted in the switchover from Dutch to British rule, including the long-term consequences of the Berbice Slave Rebellion, for Coastal Guyanese, the birth of British power is conceived as the outcome of killings, massacres, and mass murder-suicides.

The dead weighed heavily on people's social lives in Atlantic plantation societies, informing contested conceptions over property, authority, territory, and belonging (Brown 2008). Removed to long-distant shores, Indians arrived in British Guiana without ancestral connection to a land already inhabited by unfamiliar dead who, without proper compensation, resisted alien settlements, as Indians eventually came to learn. In such "spiritually perilous grounds" (Brown 2008), the removal of early (colonial and European) settlers was an impossibility, although the territory was rendered familiar by Indians through the cultivation of plots of land that originated Hindu temples and through the mobilization of alien powers (those of Hindu deities) to counteract the malign influence of representatives of Dutch plantation settlers.

Working under British surveillance, Indians were bound to plantation life. Still contending with the discord and disharmony that developed from competing European sovereign powers, Kali devotees articulate the knowledge they possess about both the Dutch and the British colonial period to recount how Hindu deities, plants, and trees, transplanted from India to the Caribbean, were territorialized amid competing colonial sovereign projects. Unburied, the Dutch left no inheritance to their offspring, but they are still fond of possessing the land. As the outcome of Jennifer's case might suggest, the conquest of the land is not confined to life. The very possibility that Jennifer had become the spirit's wife suggests that Dutch spirits can multiply themselves, create new family arrangements, and even beget heirs. Whether that is the case, Dutch spirits seem to have the capacity to put down strong roots in the land, creating dead-ends like the silk cotton tree in the village of Perseverance, a living material entity that still expels the blood of the unhealed wounds of vengeful spirits.

NOTES

[1] In this article, double marking quotes signal local terms and concepts.

[2] Between 2010 and 2012, I spent ten months in coastal Guyana doing fieldwork. My main interlocutors were East Indians—or "Indians," as they call themselves—and Kali devotees in particular. My observations were carried out mainly in one Kali temple, Blairmont. I also attended religious ceremonies in several other temples. In 2018, I made two short trips to Guyana, which totaled two months of field research.

[3] Essequibo, Demerara, and Berbice were three different Dutch colonies until 1815, when they were officially ceded to the British, who unified them in 1831, creating British Guiana.

[4] These are the perceptions of residents of the Atlantic coastal region, which are not shared by Amerindians (see Mentore 2018; Rivière 1981; Whitehead 2002). At the coast, there is a strong sense that Amerindians live, and belong, to the deep forests, somehow apart from the plantation labor regime and excluded from the coastal society and its economics (Williams 1991, 138–39).

[5] As in other Dutch colonies, Dutch settlers were supplemented by large contingents of Germans and, in small measure, groups of Scandinavians, British, French, and Swiss (Oostindie 2012).

[6] In Kars's (2020, 6–7) description of her visit to Fort Nassau's ruins, we read that "people pointed out the tall silk cotton trees under which the Dutch allegedly buried their silver at the start of the revolt. . . . Dutch bewitched these trees to keep their coins safe from their slaves. Wherever you see such a tree rising above the bush, people say, there would have been a Dutch plantation. Many African-Guyanese still consider these trees cursed."

[7] Since at least the groundbreaking work of Derrida (1994), the haunting metaphor has been regularly used to theorize a variety of issues. The figures of ghosts, specters, and phantoms gained prominence less

as literal or real beings and more as reminders of recurrent inequalities, traumatic memories, experiences of regret, loss, and injustice, figuring as evocative tropes of unsolved pasts and prefiguring alternative futures (Gordon 2008). In spite of the tentativeness of such metaphors, it is empirically crucial to discern precisely who is being haunted by whom, and under what circumstances (Hollan 2020; Lincoln and Lincoln 2015; Luckhurst 2002).

[8] The ascendancy of British investment in the region was already noticeable in the 1760s. The three colonies were seized by the British in 1781, temporarily ceded to the French, and returned to the Dutch Republic in 1784. Meanwhile, property was transferred from Dutch to British hands rapidly (Browne 2017; Oostindie 2012).

[9] During indentureship, which lasted from 1838 to 1917, the majority of Indian laborers hailed from North India; around 10 percent of them were originally from Tamil- and Telugu-speaking districts and had sailed to the Caribbean through the port of Madras, now Chennai (Look Lai 1993). From a historiographic perspective, it would be simplistic to reduce Kali worship to its South Indian origins, insofar as the distinctions that already existed in the subcontinent have been reduced to a few contrastive categories in the Caribbean plantations (Khan 2004). Most importantly, in the Caribbean a heterogenous set of Hindu practices of various origins were reconfigured in relation to one another.

[10] Mariamma is a well-known village deity in South India. In Guyana, for the sake of communication with North Indians, Madrasis themselves identify her with the pan-Indian goddess Kali (Stephanides and Singh 2000; Younger 2010). I have not spelled the names of Hindu deities with phonetic and orthographical consistency. I raise no objection to any other forms of spelling. Mariamma is a well-known village deity in South India.

[11] It is beyond the scope of this article to fully address the inter- and intrareligious hostilities and solidarities among East Indians in Guyana. See Jayawardena (1963) for a classic, and still valid, account.

[12] Attendees and devotees must abstain from consuming meat, ingesting alcohol, and engaging in sexual activities three days prior to the weekly religious function. Menstruating women, people that have had close contact with corpses, and newborn children cannot attend the ceremonies.

[13] Sangani, as well as Munispren and Khal Bhairo, protects the outermost boundaries of temples: entrances, passages, and exits, which must be strictly guarded, insofar as the "the garden must fulfil certain conditions as a threshold zone in which transformations are enacted" (Stephanides and Singh 2000, 131–33). These three deities are also referred as "masters," for they are guardians of different spaces. As such, many Kali devotees consider that these deities and Dutch spirits share similar attributes.

[14] However, the settlement of Sangani also requires the cultivation of reciprocal relations, through yearly offerings. Otherwise, the god himself would "infest" the house, making people sick, or abandon the place, leaving it open to be reoccupied by maleficent beings

[15] "Coolie" is an acceptable designation term among Indians, but is otherwise considered an offensive and derogatory term.

[16] Many Indian indentured laborers lived in single-story barracks, previously occupied by the enslaved (for a good sense, see Bahadur 2013, 83–85).

[17] *Azadirachta indica*, also known as *margosa*. Philips (1960), describing a Kali feast in 1923, suggests that the neem was imported from India during indentureship for religious reasons.

[18] When invoked to look after people, the deities are welcomed with a garland of fresh flowers waved with bunches of neem leaves, and two other instruments: a stick of a malleable wild cane, and a bunch of neem leaves, which is brushed against people to heal them. The wild cane is managed by the deities to expel maleficent forces.

[19] In the aftermath of abolition, Africans and Black Creoles purchased collective plots of land. About the so-called village movement, see, among others, Adamson (1972) and Rodney (1981).

[20] As in Trinidad (Munasinghe 2001), there is a strong sense among the Indo-Guyanese that Indian indentured laborers "saved" Guyana from an economic disaster through the work on the land.

[21] McTurk (1912) remarks that, in British Guiana, old Dutch graves were constantly dug up by people searching for money. In the 1980s, Williams's (1990, 145) informants stated that during the Berbice Slave Rebellion, the Dutch "took time to bury their valuables before running for their lives." This account is consistent with the stereotypes attributed to the Dutch, for "who except those blinded by greed, informants ask, would take time to bury valuables under such conditions?" On the intimate connection between money, wealth, supernatural beings, and racial and ethnic stereotypes in the Guianas, see Pires, Strange, and Mello (2018).

[22] The parallels with the Guyanese case, which will not be explored further here, are striking: "Certain trees are considered to be the special abodes of spirits. Among these . . . the silk-cotton-tree, which is considered to be the particular abode of the Spanish spirits. People are very reluctant to cut such trees, lest ill luck befall them. It is believed that blood will spurt out if one of these spirit-abode trees is hit by an axe" (Niehoff and Niehoff 1960, 161).

[23] The most important feast of Kali worship, the Big Puja, involves processions that are carried out across the village where the temple is located to cleanse it and expel maleficent forces (Stephanides and Singh 2000).

[24] All names employed here have been changed or invented.

[25] Some of my interlocutors suggested that the infant was named Agatha, which is considered a Dutch name, to please the spirit.

[26] Dutch spirits sometimes are invoked into religious expert bodies—always male—to talk with people and reveal what they demand to cease attacks. Eventually, they can act as "advisers" to make people thrive in life. However, it is not recommended that they be trusted, for they are deceivers. In Kali temples, those who manifest the Dutch must also manifest Hindu deities, too, otherwise the person's body and mind can be easily controlled by the spirits (Mello 2020a).

[27] A more detailed account was presented in my PhD dissertation (Mello 2014).

[28] Dutch spirits eventually mimic Hindu deities during the religious service to disguise themselves and sneak into the temple's compound. Also, they can assume different forms in dreams in order to sexually attack people without being easily identified (see Mello 2020b).

[29] Jennifer's mother moved to Georgetown shortly after her daughter's death. I was never able to get back in touch with her.

[30] As Brown (2008) and Paton (2002) show, in colonial Jamaica, enslaved people were deliberately lashed beneath large silk cotton trees, and their body parts were nailed to these trees, which were full of spiritual significance to the Black population. In other words, planters asserted their sovereign powers through practices that terrorized the spiritual imaginations of the enslaved (Brown 2008). See also Skinner (1926, 267) and his remarks on the silk cotton: "a negro will rarely put an ax to the tree," for he "fear[s] . . . the deaths that live in the trunk will enter his soul through his nostrils if he tries to destroy it."

REFERENCES CITED

Adamson, Alan. 1972. *Sugar without Slaves: The Political Economy of British Guiana, 1838–1904*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Bahadur, Gaiutra. 2013. *Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bassier, Dennis. 1977. *Kali Mai Worship in Guyana: An Overview*. Georgetown: University of Guyana.

Basso, Keith. 1979. *Portraits of the Whiteman: Linguistic Play and Cultural Symbols Among the Western Apache*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Benoist, Jean. 1998. *Hindouismes Créoles: Mascaraignes, Antilles*. Paris: L'Éditions du C.T.H.S.

Besky, Sarah. 2017. "The Land in Gorkhaland. On the Edges of Belonging in Darjeeling, India." *Environmental Humanities* 9(1): 18–39. https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3829118.

Besky, Sarah, and Jonathon Padwe. 2016. "Placing Trees in Territory." *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 7:9–28. https://doi.org/10.3167/ares.2016.070102.

Besson, Jean. 1984. "Family Land and Caribbean Society: Toward an Ethnography of African-Caribbean Peasantries." In *Perspectives on Caribbean Regional Identity*, edited by E. Thomas-Hope, 57–83. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Bhan, Mona. 2018. "Jinn, Floods, and Resistant Ecological Imaginaries in Indian-Occupied Kashmir." *Critique of Anthropology* 37(2): 67–92.

Bhan, Mona, and Haley Duschinski. 2020. "Introduction: Occupations in Context—The Cultural Logics of Occupation, Settler, Violence, and Resistance." *Critique of Anthropology* 40(3): 285–97. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308275/20929403.

Blanes, Ruy, and Diana Espírito Santo. 2013. "Introduction." In *The Social Life of Spirits*, edited by Ruy Blanes and Diana Espírito Santo, 1–32. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bonilla, Yarimar. 2015. *Non-Sovereign Futures: French Caribbean Politics in the Wake of Disenchantment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Braverman, Irus. 2008. "The Tree Is the Enemy Soldier: A Sociolegal Making of War Landscapes in the Occupied West Bank." *Law and Society Review* 42(3): 449–82.

Brown, Vincent. 2008. *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Browne, Randy. 2017. *Surviving Slavery in the British Caribbean*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bulamah, Rodrigo. 2015. "Um lugar para os espíritos: Os sentidos do movimento desde um povoado haitiano." *Cadernos Pagu* 45(1): 79–110.

Busby, Cecilia. 1997. "Permeable and Partible Persons: A Comparative Analysis of Gender and Body in South India and Melanesia." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 3(2): 261–78.

Carnegie, Charles, ed. 1987. *Afro-Caribbean Villages in Historical Perspective*. Kingston: African-Caribbean Institute of Jamaica.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2001. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Clarke, Edith. 1957. *My Mother Who Fathered Me: A Study of the Families in Three Selected Communities of Jamaica*. Kingston: The University of West Indies Press.

Crosson, J. Brent. 2019. "What Possessed You? Spirits, Property, and Political Sovereignty at the Limits of 'Possession.'" *Ethnos—Journal of Anthropology* 84(4): 546–56.

Dalmaso, Flávia. 2018. "Heranças de família: Terras, pessoas e espíritos no sul do Haiti." *Mana—Estudos de Antropologia Social* 24(3): 96–123.

Derrida, Jacques. 1994. *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*. London: Routledge.

Desroches, Monique. 1996. *Tambours des dieux: Musique et sacrifice d'origine tamoule en Martinique*. Montréal: L'Harmattan Inc.

Douglas, Mary. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Drayton, Richard. 2000. *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the "Improvement" of the World*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Drummond, Lee. 1980. "The Cultural Continuum: A Theory of Intersystems." *Man* 15(2): 352–74.

Dumont, Louis. 1957. *Une Sous-cast de l'Inde du Sud: Organisation sociale des Pramalai Kallar*. Paris: Mouton.

Dumont, Louis. 1970. "A Structural Definition of a Folk Deity of Tamil Nad: Aiyanar, the Lord." In *Religion, Politics, and History in India*, 20–32. Paris: La Haye, Mouton.

Edensor, Thomas. 2005. "The Ghost of Industrial Ruins: Ordering and Disordering Memory in Excessive Space." *Environment and Planning* 23(6): 829–49. https://doi.org/10.1068/d58j.

Edwards, Duane. 2016. "Suicide in Guyana: A Parsonian Corrective to Durkheim's Theory of Suicide." *Canadian Journal of American and Caribbean Studies* 41(2): 197–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/08263663.2016.1189650.

Farage, Nádia. 1992. *As muralhas dos sertões: Os povos indígenas no Rio Branco e a colonização*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra/Anpocs.

Forde, Maarit. 2018 "Introduction." In *Passages and Afterworlds: Anthropological Perspectives on Death in the Caribbean*, edited by M. Forde and Y. Yume, 1–29. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gordillo, Gastón. 2014. *Rubble: The Afterlife of Destruction*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gordon, Avery. 2008. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Guinee, William. 1992. "Suffering and Healing in Trinidadian Kali Worship." PhD dissertation, Indiana University.

Hansen, Thomas, and Finn Stepputat. 2006. "Sovereignty Revisited." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35:295–315. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.35.081705.123317.

Hollan, Douglas. 2020. "Who Is Haunted by Whom? Steps to an Ecology of Haunting." *Ethnos* 47(4): 451–64. https://doi.org/10.1111/etho.12254.

Irvine, Judith. 1982. "The Creation of Identity in Spirit Mediumship and Possession." In *Semantic Anthropology*, edited by D. Parkin, 241–60. London: Academic Press.

Ishii, Miho. 2013. "Playing with Perspectives: Spirit Possession, Mimesis, and Permeability in the Buuta Ritual in South India." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 19(4): 795–812. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.12065.

Jayawardena, Chandra. 1963. *Conflict and Solidarity in a Guianese Plantation*. London: The Athlone Press.

Jayawardena, Chandra. 1966. "Religious Belief and Social Change: Aspects of the Development of Hinduism in British Guiana." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 8(2): 211–40. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417500004011.

Johnson, Paul. 2019. "Possession's Native Land." *Ethnos Journal of Anthropology* 84(4): 660–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2017.1403459.

Kars, Marjoleine. 2020. *Blood on the River: A Chronicle of Mutiny and Freedom on the Wild Coast*. New York: The New Press.

Khan, Aisha. 2004. *Callaloo Nation: Metaphors of Race and Religious Identity among South Asians in Trinidad*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Klass, Morton. 1961. *East Indians in Trinidad: A Study of Cultural Persistence*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kloß, Sinah. 2016. *Fabric of Indianness: The Exchange and Consumption of Clothes in Transnational Guyanese Hindu Communities*. New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Kloß, Sinah. 2017. "Manifesting Kali's Power: Guyanese Hinduism and the Revitalisation of the 'Madras Tradition.'" *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies* 41(1): 83–110.

Kwon, Heonik. 2008. *Ghosts of War in Vietnam*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Langford, Jean. 2009. "Gifts Intercepted: Biopolitics and Spirit Debt." *Cultural Anthropology* 24(4): 681–711. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1548-1360.2009.01044.x.

Lincoln, Martha, and Bruce Lincoln. 2015. "Toward a Critical Hauntology: Bare Afterlife and the Ghost of Ba Chú." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57(1): 191–220. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0010417514000644.

Look Lai, Walter. 1993. *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Luckhurst, Roger. 2002. "The Contemporary London Gothic and the Limits of 'Spectral Turn.'" *Textual Practice* 16(3): 527–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502360210163336.

Manning, Paul. 2017. "No Ruin, No Ghosts." *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* 6(1): 63–92. https://doi.org/10.5325/preternature.6.1.0063.

Marriott, McKim. 1976. "Hindu Transactions: Diversity without Dualism." In *Transaction and Meaning*, edited by B. Kapferer, 109–42. Philadelphia, PA: Institute for the Study of Human Issues.

McNeal, K. 2011. *Trance and Modernity in the Southern Caribbean: African and Hindu Popular Religions in Trinidad and Tobago*. Miami: University Press of Florida.

McTurk, Michael. 1912. "Some Old Graves of the Colony." *Timehri* 2:357–65.

Mello, Marcelo Moura. 2014. "Devoções manifestas. Religião, pureza e cura em um templo hindu da deusa Kali – Berbice, Guiana." PhD dissertation, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

Mello, Marcelo Moura. 2020a. "Materiality, Affection, Personhood: On Sacrifice in the Worship of the Goddess Kali in Guyana." *Vibrant—Virtual Brazilian Anthropology*:1–20. https://doi.org/10.1590/1809-43412020v17d506.

Mello, Marcelo Moura. 2020b. "Mimesis, dúvida e poder: Divindades Hindus e espíritos de colonizadores na Guiana." *Horizontes Antropológicos* 56(1): 57–86. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-71832020000100004.

Mello, Marcelo Moura. 2021. "Spirits, History, and Colonialism in Guyana." *Revista de Antropologia* 64(2): 1–22. https://doi.org/10.11606/1678-9857.ra.2021.186650.

Mentore, George. 2018. "Of Vital Spirits and Precarious Bodies in Amerindian Socialities." In *Passages and Afterworlds: Anthropological Perspectives on Death in the Caribbean*, edited by M. Forde and Y. Hume, 54–79. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Mintz, Sidney. 1974. *Caribbean Transformations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Munasinghe, Viranjini. 2001. *Callaloo or Tossed Salad? East Indians and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Trinidad*. Ithaca. NY: Cornell University Press.

Nabokov, Isabelle. 2000. *Religion against the Self*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Navaro-Yashin, Yael. 2012. *The Make-Believe State: Affective Geography in a Post-War Polity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Niehoff, Arthur, and Juanita Niehoff. 1960. *East Indians in West Indies*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum.

Oostindie, Gert. 2012. "'British Capital, Industry and Perseverance' versus Dutch 'Old School'? The Dutch Atlantic and the Takeover of Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo, 1750–1815." *Low Countries Historical Review* 127(4): 28–55.

Paton, Diana. 2002. "Punishment, Crime, and the Bodies of Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica." *Journal of Social History* 34(4): 823–954.

Philips, Leslie. 1960. "Kali Mai Puja." *Timehri* 39:37–46.

Pitt-Rivers, Julien. 2017. "The Law of Hospitality." In *From Hospitality to Grace: A Julian Pitt-Rivers Omnibus*, edited by Giovanni daCol and Andrew Shryock, 163–84. Chicago: HAU Books.

Pires, Rogério, Stuart Strange, and Marcelo Moura Mello. 2018. "The Bakru Speaks: Money-Making Demons and Racial Stereotypes in Guyana and Suriname." *New West Indian Guide* 92(1–2): 1–34. https://doi.org/10.1163/22134360-09201001.

Ram, Kampala. 2012. "How Is Afflictive Possession 'Learned'? Gender and Motility in South India." *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 77(2): 203–26.

Richman, Karen. 2014. *"Possession and Attachment: Notes on Moral Ritual Communication among Haitian Descendent Groups." In Spirited Things: The Work of "Possession" in Afro-Atlantic Religions*, edited by Paul Johnson, 225–55. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rivière, Peter. 1981. *Individual and Society in Guiana: A Comparative Study of Amerindian Social Organization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rodney, Walter. 1981. *A History of the Guyanese Working-Class People, 1882–1905*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Rutherford, Danilyn. 2018. *Living in the Stone Age: Reflections on the Origins of a Colonial Fantasy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Santos, Jocélio Teles dos. 1995. *O dono da terra: O caboclo nos candomblés da Bahia*. Salvador: Sarah Letras.

Schiebinger, Londa. 2007. *Plants and Empire: Colonial Bioprospecting in the Atlantic World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Shaw, Rosalind. 2002. *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sheller, Mimi. 2007. "Arboreal Landscapes of Power and Resistance." In *Caribbean Land and Development Revisited*, edited by Jean Besson and Janet Momsen, 207–18. New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Singh, Bhrigupati. 2015. *Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Singh, Karna. 1978. *Kali Mai Puja: A Study of a Guyanese East Indian Folk Cult in Its Sociocultural Context*. Georgetown: University of Guyana.

Skinner, Charles. 1926. *Myths and Legends of Flowers, Trees, Fruits, and Plants: In All Ages and in all Climes*. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company.

Smith, Raymond. 1956. *The Negro Family in British Guiana*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Smith, Raymond. 1971. "Land Tenure in Three Negro Villages in British Guiana." In *Peoples and Cultures of the Caribbean*, edited by Michael Horowitz, 243–65. New York: The Natural History Press.

Stephanides, Stephanos, and Karna Singh. 2000. *Translating Kali's Feast: The Goddess in Indo-Caribbean Ritual and Fiction*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Stoller, Paul. 1995. *Embodying Colonial Memories: Spirit Possession, Power, and the Hauka in West Africa*. London: Routledge.

Strange, Stuart. 2019. "Indigenous Spirits, Pluralist Sovereignty and the Aporia of Surinamese Hindu Belonging." *Ethnos* 84(4): 642–59.

Taneja, Anand. 2018. *Jinnealogy: Time, Islam, and Ecological Thought in the Medieval Ruins of Delhi*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Taussig, Michael. 1993. *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. London: Routledge.

Taylor, Moe. 2020. "Walter Rodney, Forbes Burnham, and the Spectre of Pseudo-Socialism." *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 45(2): 193–211.

Thomas, Deborah. 2019. *Political Life in the Wake of the Plantation: Sovereignty, Witnessing, Repair*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Thompson, Alvin. 1987. *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in Guyana, 1580–1803*. Bridgetown: Carib Research & Publications Inc.

Thompson, Alvin. 2006. "Symbolic Legacies of Slavery in Guyana." *New West Indian Guide* 80(3–4): 191–220.

Thompson, E. T. (1932) 2010. *The Plantation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Vertovec, Steven. 1993. "Hindu Mother-Goddess Cults in the Caribbean." *Ethnolog* 54(3): 179–94.

Vertovec, Steven. 1996. "'Official' and 'Popular' Hinduism in the Caribbean: Historical and Contemporary Trends in Surinam, Trinidad, and Guyana." In *Across the Dark Waters*, edited by David Dabydeen and Brinsley Samaroo, 108–30. London: Macmillan.

Wahbe, Randa May. 2020. "The Politics of Karameh: Palestinian Burial Rites under the Gun." *Critique of Anthropology* 40(3): 323–40.

Whitaker, James. 2016. "Amerindians in the Eighteenth-Century Plantation System of Guianas." *Tipití: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America* 14(1): 30–43.

Whitehead, Neil. 2002. *Dark Shamans: Kanaimà and the Poetics of Violent Death*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Williams, Brackette. 1990. "Dutchman Ghosts and the History Mystery: Ritual, Colonizer, and Colonized Interpretations of the 1763 Berbice Slave Rebellion." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 3(2): 133–65.

Williams, Brackette. 1991. *Stains on My Name, War in My Veins: Guyana and the Politics of Cultural Struggle*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wirtz, K. 2014. "Spirits Materialities in Cuba Folk Religion: Realms of Imaginative Possibility." In *The Social Life of Spirits*, edited by R. Blanes and D. Espírito Santo, 126–56. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Younger, Paul. 2010. *New Homelands: Hindu Communities in Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, South Africa, Fiji, and East Africa*. London: Oxford.

Yume, Yanique. 2018. "Death and the Construction of Social Space: Land, Kinship, and Identity in the Jamaican Mortuary Cycle." In *Passages and Afterworlds: Anthropological Perspectives on Death in the Caribbean*, edited by M. Forde and Y. Hume, 109–38. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.