SURINAM

RELIGIONS AS A PERCENT OF POPULATION
Hinduism 27.4 percent
Protestantism 25.2 percent
Roman Catholicism 22.8 percent
Islam 19.6 percent
Other religions 5 percent

COUNTRY OVERVIEW
The territory of what is now the nation of Surinam (or Suriname), located on the north-central coast of South America, was originally settled by the Arawak (ca. 3000 B.C.E.), and later by the Carib, Native American Indians who lived in small communities of hunters and gatherers. Christopher Columbus navigated the coastline in 1498 and Amerigo Vespucci in 1499 (who gave his name to the American continent). Spain officially claimed the territory in 1593; however, it was not until 1650 that the first Europeans settled there, starting with the British and followed by the Dutch in the 1660s.

Christianity was introduced to the Guianas (or Guayanas) by Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries after the Treaty of Tordesillas gave this territory to Portugal. However, after the Dutch assumed control of the territory that is now Surinam by the Treaty of Breda in 1667, Dutch Guiana became a Protestant colony. The first Roman Catholic priests arrived in 1683 but only stayed four years; there was another brief attempt from 1786-1793, but these efforts had little lasting impact.

During the Dutch and English colonial periods, the colonists developed an agricultural economy that produced sugar, coffee, cacao and cotton on more than 400 plantations. In the beginning, manual labor was provided by Native American Indians, after 1640 by African slaves, and after slavery was abolished in 1863 by a series of immigrant contract laborers. These included Chinese from the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia), starting in 1853; East Indians (consisting of about 80 percent Hindus and 20 percent Muslims) from India, beginning in 1873; and Javanese (Muslims) from Indonesia, starting in 1894.

The official abolition of slavery in Suriname took place on July 1, 1863, which was 15 to 20 years after the English and the French terminated slavery in their respective colonies. Many of the former slaves received contracts to work on the plantations with payment for another 10 years.

Today, the Surinamese population (estimated at 428,000 people in 1998) is composed of many ethnic and religious groups, each of which has contributed to Surinam’s unique cultural heritage. The largest ethnic group is the Hindustani, which makes up 37 percent of the population; it is composed of descendents of immigrants (1873-1916) from India and is predominantly Hindu with a minority of Muslims. The Creoles, about 31 percent of the population, are the descendents of African slaves (1612-1818) and European settlers, mainly of Dutch origin, and reside on the Atlantic coast; they are largely Christian (both Catholic and Protestant) and practitioners of Obeah, a syncretistic religion of West African origin that is similar in some respects to Vodou in Haiti and Santería in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Javanese, about 15 percent of the population, are descendents of immigrants (after 1890) from Indonesia and are predominantly Muslims. The Bush-Negroes or Maroons, about 10 percent of the population, are the descendents of run-away African slaves who fled the plantations in the 1660s and took refuge in the dense tropical forests, where they continue to live in relative isolation and preserve their ancient culture and religious traditions; they are grouped in five major tribes and practice the Winti religion (similar to Vodou). About three percent of the population consists of Native American Indians, and the remaining four percent are
descendents of Dutch, Chinese, Portuguese (mainly from Madeira), Lebanese and Jewish immigrants.

Suriname became part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1922. Following Suriname's independence in 1975, many Surinamese left the country for the Netherlands to take advantage of their Dutch citizenship. It is estimated that around 250,000 people of Surinamese descent currently live in the Netherlands, while thousands more live in the Dutch West Indies, the United States of America and in countries neighboring Suriname.

Although the official language of Suriname is Dutch, most Surinamers can communicate with one another through the use of the lingua franca, Sranantongo. Other languages spoken are Hindi, Javanese, Hakka Chinese, English, and about nine other tribal languages of the Native American Indians and the Bush Negroes (Maroons).

The capital of the Republic of Suriname is Paramaribo (pop 240,000), where over 50 percent of the population resides; it is located in the northern part of the country on the Atlantic coast.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE
The Constitution provides for freedom of religion and allows all the various faiths to worship freely. There is no state or dominant religion. Foreign religious workers face no special government restrictions. The Constitution prohibits racial and religious discrimination.

A large number of faiths, including U.S.-based church groups, have established missionary programs throughout the country since World War II. It is estimated that nearly 90 percent of the American missionaries are affiliated with Baptist churches. There is an Inter-Religious Council, composed of representatives from various groups, with monthly meetings to discuss and plan ecumenical activities.

HINDUISM

1DATE OF ORIGIN IN SURINAM
1873 C.E.

2NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS IN SURINAM
About 27 percent of the population is Hindu, or about 115,560 people.

3HISTORY
After the final abolition of slavery by the Dutch in 1863, many former African slaves abandoned the plantations and the owners were faced with a shortage of manual labor. Consequently, the Dutch colonial authorities approved the importation of East Indians (from India) as “indentured servants” between 1873 and 1916; they had to work for five years to pay plantation owners for the cost of their ship fare to Surinam. After the East Indian laborers were free of their contract obligations, they could return to their home countries or renew their contract to work in Surinam for real wages. About one-third of the East Indian laborers returned to India after their initial five-year contract was completed. Those who chose to remain in Suriname were given land, a bonus payment from the government, and special loans to assist them in beginning a new life as independent farmers. In 1927, they became eligible for Dutch citizenship.

The majority of the 37,000 East Indian immigrants were drawn from various parts of India (mainly from the United Provinces of India, West Bihar and the Ganges Plains of North India) and had different linguistic, caste, socio-economic, ecological, cultural and religious traditions. However, their ethnic identity as Hindustanis was based on a concept of “Mother India,” which the East Indian immigrants to Suriname considered the place of origin of their common cultural and religious traditions.

Although the Hindustanis brought the Indian caste system with them to Suriname, eventually this system underwent many modifications in a new, multi-ethnic and multi-religious national environment. The majority of the immigrants were of the lower castes who entered Suriname as contract laborers, but some of them were of the higher castes who arrived on their own as non-agricultural workers. About 3,000 East Indians came to Suriname from the English and French-speaking Caribbean after 1882. Today, many high caste Brahmans continue to enjoy a privileged position in society.
Language is an important element of ethnic identity. Therefore, the efforts of the Hindustani community in Suriname to revive the Hindi or Sarnami language, beginning in the 1950s, is seen as a conscious attempt to recover their distinctive ethnic heritage. Several religious and cultural organizations have played an important role in this revitalization process. Although the orientation of the Hindu organizations is primarily religious, the cultural dimension should not be overlooked.

The majority of the Hindustani immigrants were Hindus, about 80 percent. Some of them eventually returned to India, but those who remained in Suriname and their descendants constitute a “diasporic community” that, today, constitutes approximately 37 percent of the total population. However, based on “religious affiliation,” only about 27 percent of Suriname’s population claim to be Hindus; they are the ones who have remained loyal to the faith of their ancestors.

4 HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY LEADERS
The primary historical and contemporary leaders within the Hindu community are unknown.

5 MAJOR THEOLOGIANS AND AUTHORS
There are no major Hindu theologians and authors in Surinam.

6 HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND HOLY PLACES
There are nearly 220 Hindu temples (mandirs) in Surinam, and it is clear that the East Indian population has immense respect for its roots. The oldest temple is a Sivalay (dedicated to Shiva), located on Gangaram Pandayweg road in the Saramacca district, that was rebuilt and reinaugurated on July 10, 2003. The temple was constructed originally in 1890 by British-Indian contract workers. After forty years of neglect the temple was renovated on the initiative of the Maa Chand Foundation of the Netherlands. Hindustanti leaders hope that this new temple will serve as a stimulus to the Hindu community to recover their cultural roots and to learn the traditional Hindu beliefs and practices that have not been passed on from grandparents to their children and to grandchildren in recent times.

7 WHAT IS SACRED
Tradition Hindu religious beliefs and practices are observed by most Hindustanis in Surinam today, including reverence for sacred books, images (statues and paintings), dances, songs and temples.

8 HOLIDAYS/FESTIVALS
The festivals of Diwali and Phagwah have developed as community activities among the Hindustanis in Suriname. During Diwali, or the Festival of Lights (celebrating the triumph of good over evil and Lord Rama’s return from exile), in November, it is customary to light diya (coconut oil lamps) at home and to organize other illuminations in public places. Holi Phagwah (the Hindu New Year’s festival) is held in March or April and celebrated in a traditional manner, which includes the ceremonial burning of the demon Holika. The communitarian nature of the celebration of these festivals obviously serves as an important political symbol of solidarity for Hindustanis.

Navaratri, literally meaning “nine nights,” is also one of the biggest annual celebrations of Hindustanis in Surinam; it is celebrated twice yearly (April/May and September/October). This is chiefly a woman’s festival. Navaratri is the worship of the three divine goddesses, Saraswati (goddess of learning and speech), Lakshmi (goddess of wealth and prosperity), and Durga (goddess of strength and courage).

9 MODE OF DRESS
Part of the cultural renaissance taking place among East Indians in Suriname today can be seen in the use by women of traditional dresses, such as the sari, dhoti-kurta, or pyjama-kurtha on special occasions.

10 DIETARY PRACTICES
Tradition Hindu dietary practices are observed by many Hindustanis in Surinam today.

11 RITUALS
Although in Hinduism there is no specific time for making temple visits, among Hindus in Suriname it is customary to visit the temple on Sunday mornings, probably due to the influence of Christianity.
RITES OF PASSAGE
Tradition Hindu rites of passage are practiced by many Hindustanis in Surinam today. Hindus call their naming ceremony for children “Tatakarma,” which traditionally takes place ten days after the child’s birth and before the umbilical cord is cut. Of the various ethnic groups in Surinam, Hindu weddings are the most extravagant, which include exquisite costumes, special ceremonies and a huge feast for those attending.

MEMBERSHIP
There are five known Hindu groupings in Surinam today: Shri Sanatan Dharma Mahasabha (the “eternal religion” of orthodox believers, the majority group), Arya Samaj (a 19th century liberal reform movement from north India, known as the “society of nobles,” with about 16 percent of the Hindu population, which arrived in Suriname in 1928), Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba International (followers of Sathya Sai Baba), Transendental Meditation or TM (followers of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi), and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (known as ISKCON, followers of A. C. Bhaktive-danta Swami Prabhupada). Although Hinduism is limited largely to the East Indian immigrant population and their descendents in Suriname, where it provides social cohesion, some of the Hindu-based religious groups mentioned above to seek to gain followers among the non-Hindu population.

SOCIAL JUSTICE
The importation of East Indians to Suriname further complicated the nation’s social stratification system, in which “whites” (plantation owners and overseers, owners of merchant houses, and administrators), Creoles (in a variety of intermediate occupations), and former Black slaves (mainly agricultural workers or peasants) formed a hierarchy in that order. The East Indian contract laborers also were placed at the lowest level of the social order, because they occupied agricultural jobs vacated by freed slaves.

East Indians immigrants in Suriname, called “coolies” by the larger society, tended to maintain their traditional cultural and religious values brought with them from India. Consequently, they formed an new ethnic group within a pluralistic society and developed a new consciousness as “Hindustanis,” which enabled them to effectively resist the process of cultural and racial syncretism later. However, all East Indians, whether or not they were born in Suriname, were considered aliens until granted citizenship in 1927.

SOCIAL ASPECTS
The historical ethnic division of labor has broken down during the last half century, especially after World War II (1939-1945) and the achievement of Independence (1975). New avenues of economic competition have emerged in business, the government bureaucracy and the professions. However, the stereotypes originally derived from the ethnic division of labor and internalized by the subjugated groups, and the attitudes associated with it, are still prevalent. Nevertheless, the considerable wealth of many East Indians in Suriname today attests to their success in overcoming social discrimination and political alienation and to achieving upward social mobility and a higher standard of living than their predecessors. The pressure to maintain traditional marriage and family values is very strong among the Hindustanis, but intermarriage with other ethnic groups has resulted in an erosion of those values.

POLITICAL IMPACT
The East Indians were disfranchised politically until 1927 when those born in Suriname were granted Dutch citizenship, which opened the door for political participation and defending their rights. Historically, the “pundits” (Hindu priests) have been important opinion leaders within the Hindustanis, and have been sought out by politicians who want to advance their political careers.

Since the 1950s, the Progressive Reform Party has come to represent the social and political aspirations of the Hindustani community in Surinam, whereas the National Party of Suriname represents the Creoles, the Indonesian Peasant’s Party represents the Javanese, and the Surinamese Labor Party represents the general population.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
Although, while most East Indians had arrived in Suriname with hopes of improving their lives, these hopes were met with broken promises, mistreatment, suffering and despair, which they eventually resisted and gained a measure of triumph over. The perceived attack on their ethnic identity and its aggressive defense, at least by a significant portion of the immigrant East Indians and their descendents, has shaped the Hindustani community as a significant political force to be reckoned with today. Ethnic conflict (social, religious and political) on the one hand, and interracial harmony on the other, are creative tensions in Surinamese society.
CULTURAL IMPACT ON MUSIC, ART, LITERATURE

The majority of Hindustanis in Suriname remain faithful to their ancient traditions, language and beliefs, which sets them apart in this multi-cultural society. Hinduism is a family and home religion that is characterized by many rituals and religious festivals, which can be performed at home or in community halls rather than in the Hindu temples. Within their own community, Hindustani music, dance, art and literature are very important for maintaining cultural cohesion.

The Indian Cultural Centre is located in Paramaribo and is under the jurisdiction of the Indian Embassy. The center is oriented towards a number of educational activities: classical music, dance, yoga and the Hindi language are taught. East Indians in Suriname speak the Avadhi dialect of Hindi, which is known as Sarnami Hindi. There are two popular local TV channels that broadcast Hindi programs around the clock, namely Trishul and RBNM, for the Hindustani community.

PROTESTANTISM

DATE OF ORIGIN IN SURINAM
1735 C.E.

NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS IN SURINAM
About 25 percent of the population is Protestant.

HISTORY
The Protestant movement in Suriname is composed of about 20 denominations, the oldest of which is the Dutch Reformed Church, founded in 1668, now called the Reformed Church in Suriname. At the beginning it was a church for the Dutch colonists and most church activities took place in Paramaribo and around the various plantations in the countryside. Until the 1850s it was a Dutch-speaking state church, with the state paying for pastors and church upkeep, and existed almost exclusively for the elite class. After the 1850s this denomination opened itself to the lower classes and to the African slaves; the latter used a pidgin English in worship services. The central church building in the capital city still serves as the auditorium of the University of Suriname, and it was there that the first president of the country took the oath of office when Suriname became an independent state in 1975.

The German Moravian Brethren arrived in 1735 to work with Amerindians, and after 1830 with African plantation slaves. The Moravian missionaries received only enough money from the mother church in Germany to take them to their port of departure in Europe, and had to work for their ocean passage. After arriving in Suriname, they worked at whatever occupation would provide their necessary food and clothing: picking coffee, mending shoes, dress-making, gardening, working in construction, etc. These lay missionaries were successful in establishing many local congregations among the lower classes and the slave population. Today, the Moravian Church is the largest Protestant denomination in Suriname.

The Dutch Evangelical Lutherans arrived in 1741, mainly to serve the small White population of plantation owners, administrative officials and merchants. The Anglican Church arrived during the British occupation of 1799-1816 to serve English colonists and other international residents.

Most of the other Protestant groups arrived after World War II, mainly from the USA, to serve the general population: Pilgrim Holiness Church (now, Wesleyan Church) in 1945; the Seventh-day Adventists, 1945; West Indies Mission, 1954; the Assemblies of God, 1959; the Southern Baptists, 1971; the Church of God (Cleveland, TN), 1982; the Church of the Nazarene, 1984; the Mennonite Church, 1985; the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1987; the Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1987; the Church of God of Prophecy, 1992; among others.

HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY LEADERS
The primary historical and contemporary leaders within the Protestant Movement are unknown.

MAJOR THEOLOGIANS AND AUTHORS
There are no major Protestant theologians and authors in Suriname.
6HOUSES OF WORSHIP AND HOLY PLACES
In 2000, the largest Protestant denominations in Suriname were the following: the Moravian Church (46 churches and 29,000 members), the Seventh-day Adventists (18 churches and 3,400 members), the Dutch Reformed Church (6 churches and 3,100 members), the Lutheran Church (6 churches and 2,050 members), the Evangelical Church of the West Indies (20 churches and 1,600 members), all Pentecostal denominations (18 churches and 1,330 members), and all other Protestant denominations (about 70 churches and 3,770 members). The total number of Protestant houses of worship in Suriname was estimated at less than 200.

7WHAT IS SACRED
The nature of the Protestant movement dictates against the establishment of “sacred” objects or places, and this is true of Evangelicals in Suriname.

8HOLIDAYS/FESTIVALS
There are no known holidays or festivals that are unique to Protestants in Suriname.

9MODE OF DRESS
There are no special dress codes among Protestants in this country.

10DIETARY PRACTICES
The Seventh-day Adventists are the only known Protestant group in Suriname that has special dietary practices; they are vegetarians.

11RITUALS
Each denomination has its own special traditions and rituals: the Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterian and Reformed, Methodists and Moravians have a more liturgical form of worship in Suriname, whereas the majority of other Protestant groups are less formal and more spontaneous in worship and practice.

12RITES OF PASSAGE
There are no unusual rites of passage among the various Protestant denominations in Suriname. Each denomination has its own traditions and practices.

13MEMBERSHIP
In 2000, the Protestant community in Suriname was estimated at 107,000 persons. Despite the growth of new Evangelical groups in Suriname in the post-WWII period, the Moravian Church continues to be the largest Protestant denomination, with about 10 percent of the country’s population claiming to be Moravian. The Adventists and the Pentecostals are the most aggressive of the Protestant groups in their evangelistic activities.

14SOCIAL JUSTICE
Traditionally, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Lutherans and the Anglicans have mainly served the small White population of plantation owners, administrative officials and merchants, whereas the Moravians, Methodists and Baptists have predominantly served the former slave population, the racially mixed Creole population, and the Amerindian groups. The later is true of the various Evangelical groups that arrived in Suriname after 1945. Historically, the older liturgical denominations (Reformed, Lutheran and Anglican) have supported the political concerns of the upper class, whereas the denominations in the “Free Church” tradition have defended the human and civil rights of the middle and lower classes.

15SOCIAL ASPECTS
Most Protestants in Suriname are conservative and maintain traditional marriage and family values.

16POLITICAL IMPACT
The political impact of the various Protestant denominations and their constituencies in Suriname is unknown at this time.

17CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
Currently, there are no known controversial issues that affect the Protestant churches in Suriname.
CULTURAL IMPACT ON MUSIC, ART, LITERATURE

The cultural impact of the Protestant movement on the larger society in terms of music, art and literature has been minimal, due to the strong bonds of cultural and religious unity that exist within the respective Roman Catholic, Hindu and Islamic communities in Suriname.

OTHER RELIGIONS

Roman Catholicism. After two Catholic priests from The Netherlands settled in the colony in 1817 and established the Prefecture Apostolic of Dutch Guyana-Suriname, the Roman Catholic Church soon had a large following among the general population. The Vicariate Apostolic of Dutch Guiana, with its seat at Paramaribo, was established in 1852 and missionary work was assigned to the Redemptorists by the Holy See.

In 1852, there were only about 13,300 Catholics in Suriname but, today, almost a quarter of the total population claims to be baptized Roman Catholics. In 2000, there were an estimated 385 Roman Catholic parishes in Suriname.

There has been a serious decline in the quality of pastoral care given to the Catholic community as a result of the decline in the number of Catholic priests since 1966.

Traditionally, Catholic religious devotion in Suriname is a sphere of activity dominated by women and children, whereas men were not expected to show much concern about religion. This trend has been strengthened by the role of church-run public schools administered by the Roman Catholic Church in partnership with the government.

Prior to independence in 1975, most of the religious schools in Suriname were operated by the Roman Catholic Church, which provided all the needed funding with the exception of teachers’ salaries and a small maintenance stipend that was provided by the government. The government educational system subsidized many of the primary and secondary schools established and managed by religious organizations, and these were considered public schools and the teachers were considered public servants. Consequently, the Roman Catholic Church played an important role in the socialization process by providing religious and moral instruction to a diverse of ethnic groups. School attendance is compulsory for all children until 12 years of age.

Particularly influential has been the important role played by the Roman Catholic Church in preparing leaders of the nationalistic movement in the post-WWII period. The influence of Roman Catholic social thought has continued to affect Surinamese political life until the present, mainly through church-run primary and secondary schools.

Catholicism has had a significant influence on many aspects of Surinamese life, including music, the arts and literature, due to its role in public education and mainly among the Creole and Maroon populations.

Islam. In 1890 the first Javanese Muslim immigrants began to arrive in Suriname from Indonesia, where they were recruited as indentured laborers to work on sugar plantations in Suriname as replacement labor for the freed slaves and to complement the Hindustani laborers. Between 1890 and 1940 about 33,000 Javanese immigrants arrived in Suriname. After the closure of many of the sugar plantations, the Javanese began to establish themselves as small-scale farmers as did the Hindustanis. Most preferred to live close together in family units or villages in rural areas, where they maintained their culture, language and religious practices.

Islamic mosques in Suriname are led by the “Maulana” or Muslim priest, who also functions as a traditional healer. Most Javanese villages have two mosques, which represent two groups within the Islamic community: the East prayers and the West prayers. The latter also believe in Agama Djawa, in which ghosts and their ancestors play an important role. When important events happen, there is always a sacrificial meal in which only the men take part.

The “Dukun” is also a traditional healer in Javanese communities, and her principal task is to serve as a midwife and to prepare natural medicines from a variety of herbs, leaves, rhizomes, flowers and fruits.

Muslims celebrate two official religious holidays in Suriname. “Id al-Fitr” celebrates the end of fasting during Ramadan, and the time of the feast day depends on the Muslim lunar calendar. “Id al-Adha” is the feast of the sacrifice, a four-day event that concludes the annual pilgrimage rituals. These two holidays are occasions for the
Muslim family to come together, particularly during the main meal of the day, and to visit other Muslim families, which is a means of paying their respects and of maintaining community bonds.

Most people of Javanese ancestry in Suriname are Muslims today, and very few have converted to other religions. About 20 percent of the Surinamese population is culturally Javanese and religiously Muslim. The majority of the Javanese are Sunni Muslims of the Shafiite School, whereas there are a small numbers of other Islamic groups. The Ahmadiyya Islamic Movement (founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in the 1890s in the Punjab of India), which was declared apostate and non-Muslim by orthodox Muslims in India and Pakistan during the 1980s, has a small following in Suriname, as does the Bazuin of God movement.

As with the East Indians who came before them, the Javanese immigrant laborers were placed in the lowest level of the socioeconomic hierarchy during the late 1880s, and the plantation owners maintained their control over the labor force by enforcing the physical isolation of the Javanese during the period of their “indentured servitude” status, which also isolated them culturally and limited syncretism in any significant way. Most Javanese continue to work in agricultural occupations and are farther behind other major ethnic groups in achieving upward social mobility in Suriname. Although this traditional ethnic division of labor has no doubt broken down since the end of WW II (1945) and the achievement of Independence (1975), the Javanese are still struggling to rise out of poverty and to achieve greater equality of opportunity in a pluralistic society.

The struggle to maintain their ethnic and religious identity by a significant portion of the immigrant Javanese and their descendants has helped to shape the Javanese community as a significant political force that must be taken into consideration by the nation’s power brokers. The Indonesian Peasant’s Party is composed of Javanese political leaders and their supporters, who represent the political, religious, social and economic interests of the minority Javanese population.

Other religious groups compose about five percent of the Surinamese population.
The Bush Negroes (Maroons) practice the Winti religion of their African ancestors, and some of the Creoles practice Obeah, which developed among the African slaves in the British West Indian colonies, such as Jamaica. Winti, meaning “wind,” is derived from a traditional African polytheistic belief system of West African origin. It acknowledges many gods and ghosts with each one having their own myths, rites, offerings, taboos, and magical forces. Obeah is a form of black magic that can be used to bring sickness or clamity on one’s enemies.

The Jewish community in Suriname dates to the arrival of Sephardic Jews in the mid-1600s, followed by a group of Ashkenaze Jews from England who arrived a short time later. Today, there are two synagogues in Paramaribo, both Sephardic, which serve a Jewish community estimated at 700 people.

After World War I, a new wave of Chinese (largely Buddhist), Lebanese (Muslim and Eastern Orthodox Christians) and Portuguese (mainly Madeira islanders who were Roman Catholic) immigrants arrived in Suriname, as well as Portuguese-speaking migrants (Roman Catholic) from neighboring Brazil. After World War II, several marginal Christian groups arrived: Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons. There are also small groups of Baha’i, several groups of Druids, and at least one group affiliated with the Ancient and Mystical Order of the Rosacruz (AMORC).

Clifton L. Holland

BIBLIOGRAPHY


The PROLADES-RITA (Religion-In-The-Americas) Database at: www.prolades.com

[Other Internet resources consulted:]
http://www.surinaminfo.com/htm/english/english.htm
http://www.rrnet.org/Surinam.htm [Lingnet: World Religions and Cultures]
http://www.sr.net/srnet/InfoSurinam/history.html [The History of Suriname]  
http://www.surigids.com/geography.htm#Scene_1
http://www.rrnet.org/Surinam.html
http://www.pajtroon.dds.nl/Surinam.html
http://www.xs4all.nl/~cvdmark/main.htm [Winti Culture, an Afro-American Religion]
http://lanic.utexas.edu/la/sa/Surinam/ [University of Texas, LANC: Suriname]
http://nersp.nerdc.ufl.edu/~arm/Surinam.html [University of Florida Database: Suriname]
http://www.surinam.net/ [Suriname.net]
http://www.bramley.demon.co.uk/Surinam/Surinam.html [About Surinam]
http://www.indolink.com/Forum/Fiji/messages/142.html [Indo-Caribbeans Observe Shivarti]

Last revised August 27, 2004