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Introduction: Family, Race and Narrative

Between 1908 and 1938, 130 young women and men of ‘mixed’ ancestry were sent from St Andrew’s Colonial Homes in Kalimpong, northeast India, to New Zealand. There they would complete the final stage of a planned transformation that began when their British fathers sent them away from their place of birth on tea plantations, away from their South Asian mothers and kin. Most had spent a decade at ‘the Homes’¹ (as it became known and is referred to hereafter), before embarking on the journey reserved for the ‘best and brightest’. In New Zealand they would be placed as household and farmworkers with Presbyterian families known to the scheme’s founder; from this protective setting they would leave behind the stigmas of race, illegitimacy and institutionalization, blending into a reputedly egalitarian society unburdened by concerns about racial purity. They would forget India, their birth families and the traumas of separation, attaching instead to settler colonial communities. In time, and over generations, their shameful beginnings would be entirely lost and the racial hiccup bred out.

The existence of this book attests to – and ensures – the failure of the future-forgetting aim of the scheme. That is not to say that the emigrants from Kalimpong did not attempt, albeit with good intentions, to shield the next generation from knowledge of their Indian heritage. As I will show, descendants interested in knowing more about this ancestry, myself included, have had to grapple with pronounced silences. We have proceeded with sensitivity, often after a parent’s (or grandparent’s) death, to find out what happened and to understand why they never spoke of it. In this task we are part of a global spirit of re-aligning ancestries, a reaction to a century characterized by upheavals, migrations and family secrets, and facilitated by digital technologies and greater ease of international travel. We are families of our times just as they were of theirs. As Deborah Cohen has argued, though the gulf between Victorian privacy and today’s confessional culture may seem wide, families in both historical moments have been part of a continual endeavour to define the space between public and private life.²

This book tells the story of the telling of a story. Its academic contribution is made within that riddle, exploring the way that archives and narratives, stereotypes and stories, have combined, conflicted and intersected over generations to arrive at this point of a public telling of a collective family history. Historians over the past two decades have cast a critical light on the colonial archive and its role in nation-building; and in a related project, scholars have looked to family histories as a means of decentring the nation as the primary entity around which the past is organized, tracing lives that have existed across boundaries and defied historical time frames.³ Here I want to bring these concerns together to examine the role of archives – public and private, written and heard, colonial and current – in the construction of transnational family histories. Further, I connect these history-making ventures to national narratives, and, importantly, to relationships between nations. I argue that shifts in the relationship between India and New Zealand, and in their respective places within the British Empire, were deeply aligned with the archival renderings that would become the stuff of narratives woven by descendants of the Kalimpong emigrants.

Family fragments

This book is structured around the lifeways of Homes graduates to New Zealand, yet it is continuously attentive to the larger familial framework within which their story unfolds. This framework addresses a scholarly gap between imperial and colonial families, a quest also at the core of Adele Perry's recent excellent work *Colonial Relations*.⁴ Perry traces the history of an iconic Canadian settler family through a 'critical ethnographic conversation with the colonial archives', lifting this family from its visible, national place and repositioning it on the margins of empire.⁵ With a purpose similar to Perry's I begin with a set of families at the other end of the visibility spectrum: the interracial tea plantation families of northeast India. My starting point is not one family but an entire category of family; one that was problematic, suppressed in colonial archives, and absent from the public record. They have not been called colonial families, nor have they been included in the 'empire families' from which many of them sprung.⁶ My task is, therefore, to bring these families into view and to find a place for them in a moment where historians are extremely alert to the power of such positioning.

It is in an economic setting that I contend the tea families must be situated. Their existence was not simply a consequence of imperial circumstance; rather,

they were integrated into the development of the tea industry, which was built around an idealized plantation space that functioned as a microcosm of British rule. The autocratic planter might have been at the head of the plantation complex, but at its heart were the intimate interracial relationships that I believe the majority of planters engaged in. The families created by these relationships evidenced the adaptability of family formations to shifting economic realities; but they also reveal the weight of social pressure to suppress racial transgressions in British India.⁷ We need to be mindful, too, that this was an era when familial ties had come to be viewed as unproductive – when workers needed to behave as individual profit-seeking entities. In the settler colonies, there was some adaptation of this idealized separation between work and family, since families were held up as the stable and moral nucleus around which new societies should be built. But India was not a settler colony, and by the late nineteenth century it held no acceptable place – and no ideological space – for interracial families.

There was, however, a space for ‘mixing’ in the developing racial politics of New Zealand. The state strategy of ‘racial amalgamation’ with Māori (the Indigenous people of New Zealand) was much lauded, and as Damon Salesa has argued, New Zealand’s international reputation as an exemplar of race relations was established very early, before it established any kind of ‘track record’ to earn the characterization.⁸ This reputation became central to the operation of the Homes scheme; the relationship between the state and Māori was understood to align with a broader egalitarianism, which, from the Kalimpong perspective, made New Zealand an ideal destination for racially marginalized adolescents from India. The solution was, when framed in familial categories, to cleanly separate the children from their British ‘empire families’ and insert them into settler colonial families, which were more open to ‘blending’ across race and class lines. At the same time, their tea plantation origins were to be written out of existence, out of history, and out of the future.

In the following chapters I argue that there was no clean break, and that beneath the Homes archival record, the plantation children grew into adulthood by negotiating a place in kin structures that cut across all of these familial boundaries. To place the Kalimpong emigrants in a familial setting is to grapple with a complex transnational structure that spans distinct ideologies, economies, physical spaces and imagined futures. While the structure of this book follows the physical and social movement of children from plantation to institution, of adolescents from the institution to settler colony, and of adults negotiating a place for themselves in New Zealand communities, it certainly does not adhere to the associated narrative of progress and improvement. Instead, I redirect

the focus intermittently 'back' to the continued presence of their tea planter fathers in India, within the greater structure of their imperial families; to their mothers on the plantations, and wherever they might end up after the planters left India; and to the Homes in Kalimpong, which retained a role in connecting families and was considered 'home' by many emigrants. To simply label this complex configuration a 'transnational family' is clearly inadequate if we want to understand the strategies the Kalimpong emigrants used to make a history for themselves, and to begin to reconstruct their intergenerational familial narratives.

This attempt at reconstruction is profoundly affected by the archival inequalities that pervade these family histories. As Perry and others have argued, archives were not simply a by-product of colonialism but a tool used to produce it.⁹ Antoinette Burton's scholarship taught me in my first excursions into the Kalimpong story that archives are 'fully fledged historical actors', and I have continued to treat them as such.¹⁰ Here I am interested in the way that archives were used to prise apart problematic families into 'productive' components and to ensure that they would never re-form. Interracial tea plantation families were comprised of three distinct racial, economic and gendered types: British male plantation managers, South Asian female labourers and mixed-race offspring dependent on either or both parents for survival and facing an undefined future work-life. Together, they formed families regarded as wholly unstable and stigmatized, and prevented by social convention from being legitimated. Only by physical separation from such families could the child be 'rescued'.

But separation was about more than taking children out of problematic circumstances. It also meant that British planters, freed of responsibility to their illicit families, could retain their social standing, marry British women and produce white children, and continue their documented participation in imperial expansion, production and profit-making. At the same time the South Asian mothers could be discarded – from the record, from any long-term entanglement with respectable British men, and by extension, from the men's imperial families. The children were the most troubling component but also held the most promise of salvaging something from these unsavoury families, through reform into productive workers in settler colonies. A constant process of telling, reminding, forgetting, recording, writing, photographing and ordering the information about these parts was required in order for the Homes to make a bright, progressive narrative out of a highly sensitive, fraught entanglement whose undoing caused pain in every direction.

My composition of photographs from three different Kalimpong families in New Zealand (Figure 1.1) might stand as a metaphor for the difficulty of reconstructing coherent narratives from these extremely uneven archival inscriptions; it is also meant to signal the limits of the reconnections that descendants have brought about by travelling to India and to Britain. To reinforce this point it is useful to bring my analysis of a familial phenomenon into conversation with scholarship that addresses knowledge-gathering and -production in British India. I refer particularly to studies that have examined late-nineteenth-century practices whereby objects and images and information were not simply gathered but also typed and separated, then recorded in such a way as to facilitate cross-referencing.¹¹ I want to think about archives not just as distinct according to who might access them, or the form that they take, but also to consider the sequence of taking pieces of information that described a coherent whole in a moment of time and depositing them in the appropriate container (be it a file, a drawer, a memoir), each of which took on their own trajectories, and then connect this wider practice to the project at

Figure 1.1 Family fragments: photographs from three different tea families represent the limits of reconstruction. Main photo: Woodburn Cottage group, Kalimpong, c. 1916, Lorna Peters standing far right with hand on hip. Author's collection. Left: Gilbert Langmore at Darjeeling. Courtesy Langmore private collection. Inset: Norah at Lakhimpur, Assam. Courtesy Gammie private collection.

hand – of attempting to fit together surviving/located pieces of families in order to imagine what they originally described, a century before.

This composite image (Figure 1.1) is the closest we might get to an interracial tea family portrait; I have found no photographs of a ‘whole’ family. There were, however, many portraits of the planters and they have made it into Kalimpong families’ private collections. For Figure 1.1, I cropped one such photograph, of Gilbert Langmore, taking out the wider, and very typical, scene of a planter participating in social life among other European men. The second photograph is very special. In all of my research this is the only image that has surfaced of the mother of a Kalimpong emigrant from a tea plantation. It has not been cropped. It measures about one inch square, and has obviously been cut from the corner of a photograph. The family has no knowledge of the story behind it. The woman’s name was listed in Homes documentation as Norah, and she was of the Khasi people in northeast India. Norah’s intense gaze carries a knowing quality; one that could not be more appropriate to her place here as a stand-in for all of the women who have been erased from our visual histories. When I think of my great-grandmother now, I visualize Norah.

The group photograph is the one that includes my grandmother, Lorna, as described in the Preface, outside Woodburn Cottage in Kalimpong. She is standing on the far right. For most of the descendants I have met, the only photographs we have of our Kalimpong forebears as children are like this – group photographs taken at the Homes which commit to future eyes their categorization as Anglo-Indian. They were captured for publication in the magazine produced by the Homes, and to send to planters who requested photographs of their children. By placing portraits of a mother and a father inside the group image I want to visually populate the children’s physical world with the thoughts that must have loomed large in their inner worlds, their dream worlds, which were still made of the stuff of their early lives. Despite the enforced distances and shifting configurations of the families (women, planters, children) over their lifetimes, each was ever-present in some way in the shared internal, intimate world that originally connected them.

Anglo-Indians?

To include the tea plantation children uncritically under the broad categorization of ‘Anglo-Indian’ is, I believe, misleading, and a missed opportunity to build upon the ways scholars have theorized mixed-race communities in India,

especially those produced by interracial relationships after the 1857 rebellion when such crossing of racial boundaries was not supposed to be occurring. The tea plantations in the northeast were perhaps the last in a long line of specific sites that produced mixed-race communities in British India.

The term 'Anglo-Indian' was initially used to describe a British person resident in India; it was co-opted by the mixed-race community, previously known as Eurasian, in 1911.¹² The mixed community in India has the unfortunate characterization – perhaps unique, and largely true – of being rejected by both its native and European sides. While the particularity of identity on either side was the subject of considerable delineation and description, when these lines were crossed the offspring of many different nationalities (on the 'Anglo' side) and ethnicities (on the 'Indian' side) were compressed into an increasingly segregated Anglo-Indian community. Its earliest members sprung from sixteenth-century Portuguese encounters, and grew in number and complexity. Over time, any knowledge of original ancestry was lost in the quagmire of mixed-person marrying mixed-person. By the time the British tea planters arrived in northeast India, there was a substantial Anglo-Indian population in earlier sites of encounter (especially cities like Calcutta) who might look back five, six, seven generations to find a European ancestor. As scholars of this community have described, out of a blanket racial rejection developed a specific cultural identity – a segregated 'caste' that inevitably embodied aspects of hybridity but was invested solely with its British heritage.¹³

When Scottish missionary John Anderson Graham opened the Homes in Kalimpong in 1900, he did so in the midst of increasing debate about what had come to be seen as the 'Anglo-Indian problem', or the 'Eurasian question'. This was perceived as a city problem, where Anglo-Indians, it was claimed, lived scandalous lives, residing in slums and behaving in a manner that brought disrepute to the British community. Indeed the very existence of a mixed community was regarded as evidence of immoral British behaviour, and thus as a threat to rule.¹⁴ These anxieties about racial mixing, as Durba Ghosh has convincingly argued, had always been present to some extent; but most scholars agree that the hardening of racial boundaries after 1857 made committed relationships between British men and South Asian women utterly unacceptable if 'respectability' was to be maintained.¹⁵ Scholars do not suggest that this social pressure put an end to sexual relationships that transgressed racial boundaries, but it did drive them underground, removing any traces of their existence from colonial archives. As a consequence, studies by Laura Bear, Lionel Caplan and others have focused on the Anglo-Indian community as defined by the presence

of a *distant* European male ancestor.¹⁶ There simply has not been evidence to corroborate the existence of families producing 'first-generation' Anglo-Indians in this later period, and hence an entire category of racial mixing in India has gone unconsidered.

Graham's intervention in the Anglo-Indian problem occurred, therefore, at a time when it would have been quite shocking to discover that British men were not only cohabiting with South Asian women but producing numerous children. His work in the Church of Scotland's Kalimpong mission in the 1890s led to this discovery, and Graham made it his life's work to provide a future for the mixed-race children he encountered on tea plantations. To this end he combined the discourse of child rescue in Britain with that which had developed around impoverished urban Anglo-Indians. Importantly, his plan also included 'rescuing' these city children as a means of tapping into an existing source of fundraising and to mask an activity that could be (and was in some quarters) understood as assisting tea planters' bad behaviour. I remake the distinction between these categories of children admitted to the Homes as a crucial prerequisite to analysing the emigration scheme. While Graham's rhetoric was based on tropes of Anglo-Indian destitution, it was the tea planters' children whom he was most anxious to send to the colonies, and they had for the most part grown up in anything but destitute circumstances. Furthermore, they carried none of the markers of Anglo-Indian culture, instead arriving at the Homes in Kalimpong from considerable immersion in their maternal cultures.

My analysis offers a new transnational – and generational – reading of Indian mixed-ness, the basis of which needs to be clearly articulated. Residents at the Homes were, I estimate, split evenly between plantation children and Anglo-Indian children from the cities. As I will show, Graham's vision of colonial emigration for all Homes children ran into immediate problems; in the first two decades of the scheme, only about 20 per cent were sent abroad. Of those 20 per cent, the large majority were tea planters' children, and most went to New Zealand. This overrepresentation is important, since this study centres on the process whereby plantation children were wrenched out of relatively comfortable existences and placed into a narrative of rescue and improvement. Those who did not emigrate (among them many plantation children) were placed in India, among the upper echelons of the established Anglo-Indian community, which historically had been managed into employment and housing in railway 'colonies'.¹⁷ Graham sought innovative solutions for his graduates in India, but was essentially limited to the historically defined sites of employment and channels of movement.

Although Graham was open to sending his graduates to any of the settler colonies, New Zealand was the only one that ever granted entry to groups of Homes graduates. The first two young men were sent to Dunedin in 1908 and the final group arrived in Wellington, the capital city, in 1938. A total of 130 adolescents were sent from Kalimpong to New Zealand over this thirty-year period. Their arrival was distributed unevenly across these years as the scheme fluctuated in tandem with global and imperial shifts and upheavals. I refer to the emigration of these young people as a 'scheme' by virtue of its organization: chaperoned groups of graduates were sent from the institution to prearranged employment and housing at their destinations, and managed thereafter by local committees. Despite the emigration of these groups over a prolonged period, the scheme is remembered mainly for the difficulties Graham encountered. Lionel Caplan affords three sentences to it in *Children of Colonialism*, concluding with a statement from Graham's biographer that the 'Whites-only' policy of New Zealand and Australia 'was a constant source of irritation and sadness to Graham'.¹⁸

While New Zealand turned out to be the only destination for the emigration scheme, it was by no means a straightforward path for Graham, who was dogged in his persistence to continue sending Homes graduates there. He was persistent too in his efforts to convince Australian authorities to allow Anglo-Indians to enter. This attempted transfer of a mixed-race community from a 'conquest' colony to white settler colonies facilitates my transnational approach, and positions this study among those addressing the lack of comparative work on colonial states.¹⁹ Graham's pressure on Australia and New Zealand to accept Homes graduates was documented in his public and private writings. The outcomes of his efforts highlight the need to bring the racial policies used to manage relations between the state and Indigenous peoples into conversation with 'raced migration' restrictions developed in the same era.²⁰ Both policies are regarded as crucial in building distinctive national identities and narratives, and they relate to each other in obvious and subtle ways; yet they are seldom examined together. Graham himself made explicit the connections between the two, through his many pronouncements that harmonious race relations in New Zealand was the reason for the scheme's success there, in contrast to the attitudes and actions of officials that he encountered in Australia. By this logic he smoothed the inherent complexity of transferring mixed-race adolescents steeped in South Asian diversity and social stratification into a settler colony built upon a simplified, binary understanding of race relations.

Archives and methodology

The archival material used in this book is usefully placed into three distinct categories. The first is that generated by Graham, and stored at the Homes in Kalimpong and in the 'Kalimpong papers' at the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh. When I visited the Homes in 2007, I was shown three historical sources: the original admissions book, the *St Andrew's Colonial Homes Magazine* (hereafter *Homes Magazine*) and the Peters (my family) file. I was told that there was a file for every family that has had children resident at the Homes. All three sources were considered highly sensitive and were hence made available only to the families of those concerned. In 2012 I returned to Kalimpong with letters of permission from a number of families to obtain copies of their files. The NLS collection includes an almost-complete set of the *Homes Magazine*, plus private and published material relating to the emigration scheme – including notes typed by Graham in preparation for an autobiography (which was never published). All of these papers were accessible to the public. From these sources, mainly the *Homes Magazine*, I was able to compile a comprehensive list of the arrivals to New Zealand. No such data set was publicly available previously and probably does not exist.

Having compiled the list of emigrants I consulted the second category of archival material deployed here: that sourced in New Zealand and generated independently of the Homes. In the first instance this comprised a systematic search of online official sources for each emigrant, including electoral rolls, cemetery records, newspapers, and government records of births, deaths and marriages. Probate files and personnel files from the First World War held at Archives New Zealand were also utilized. The war files were the first documentation by the state of the early arrivals. From 1923 onwards, the Customs Department recorded the entry of all non-British migrants, and this was another useful source outside the Homes archive. These records helped to confirm the lists of emigrants, and, having located most of them in electoral rolls, I was able to build a coherent data set of their locations, occupations and marital status. A further outcome of these searches was tracing a number of people who I was quite sure were descendants of the emigrants.

In 2011 I wrote to a small number of families – fewer than ten – whom I traced through my preliminary research. From this initial outreach I established contact with five families who were all very enthusiastic about the project and keen to participate. Along with my own family, these are the 'six families' that I return

to in several chapters in this book, namely the Gammie, Hawkins, Mortimore, Moller, Peters and Spalding families. They were not selected according to any particular criteria, but they do represent a good geographical spread and very different levels of awareness about their Kalimpong heritage before meeting me.

The Hawkins and Spalding families were both resident in Auckland; they knew each other because their fathers had been friends, but they had no contact with other Kalimpong descendants. The Gammie family in Wellington was distinguished by the fact that both parents were Kalimpong emigrants. They knew many of the names on the list I had compiled and were in contact with descendants of other families, and they had fond memories of Kalimpong 'aunties' and 'uncles' during their childhood. In Christchurch, Dora Moller's son recalled visiting other Kalimpong families when he was growing up, but these connections had been lost. For the Mortimores of Invercargill, in the very south of the South Island, my letter was the first concrete piece of information they had about their father's hidden history.

I was stunned to discover that in all but one of these families at least one descendant had made the journey to Kalimpong and retrieved copies of their family file. Only the Mortimores had not, and with their permission, I photographed their file when I returned to Kalimpong in 2012. All of the families were extremely generous in allowing me to view their personal files and include their stories in this book. I first met them – and other descendants – in November 2011, when I took a month-long trip around New Zealand to gather information that comprised the third category of source material: interviews with descendants and access to materials held within their personal collections, including photographs, letters, official documents, and artefacts from the Homes and the plantations. There was a shared sense that it was time for this story to be told, and recognition that we could only further our understanding through a collective enterprise – as this has certainly been. These sentiments were repeated when I issued a press release about my research in January 2013, and many more families approached me. I continue to receive regular contacts through my research website.²¹

In my meetings with families I have seen hundreds of images – of planters in Assam and children at Kalimpong, of John Graham in New Zealand and emigrants visiting India, and of Kalimpong emigrants working and socializing together. Family albums trace the emigrants' journeys through adult life in New Zealand: working, marrying, having children and grandchildren, and enjoying the usual past-times. In the *Homes Magazine*, I have also seen photographs

of many New Zealand emigrants, in studio group portraits taken in Calcutta before they departed India or photographs they sent to Kalimpong from New Zealand. Often I have seen these same photographs in family collections. I have limited the number of group photographs of children at Kalimpong and emigrant 'batches' at Calcutta for inclusion here, because I wish to avoid repeating the spectacle made of those young people. I do understand that for many descendants these are the only photographs they have of their parent or grandparent as a child – I am in the same position – but because most readers will not recognize individuals in the photograph it is difficult to avoid reinforcing the racial problematization that the images represented, and indeed, created. Instead I have prioritized photographs from private collections; all but two images in this book were sourced from family albums. For the reader/viewer perusing these photographs, bear in mind that each was a landmark in a constrained family history, prompting curiosity and imaginative engagement, and working against the future-forgetting aspect of the scheme.

In methodology this study heeds the call of historians such as Tanya Evans who insist that academic historians need to engage more seriously with the methods and findings of family historians and genealogists.²² The descendants I have met in the course of researching this book have provided much more than raw data about their family stories. In many cases they had already put considerable efforts into working towards their own conclusions, seeking a coherent history from the various materials they gathered and producing works for circulation within their extended families that brought together the fruits of their archival research, family photographs, reflections on their trips to Kalimpong, and understandings they have arrived at by reading academic histories. In my interviews with descendants we have shared our experiences and discoveries, and tried to reconcile differing perspectives; this was especially apparent when conducting small group interviews. Hence this book is well positioned to contribute to this burgeoning field, which is as much about learning from what family historians do, and why, and how, as it is interested in what they find out.

Family history has been revolutionized by the vast number of online sources that enable public access to a myriad of documents and facilitate connections to other branches of one's family tree. The value of the Kalimpong case in light of this phenomenon is that it makes clear the racialized limits of these genealogical tools. For Kalimpong descendants, online searches can be very useful for tracing their British side, augmenting the material from the Homes archive. But on the

South Asian side, there is little to be found unless there is a specific connection to empire and a reason (read 'problem') to be put in the archive. Evans does discuss race in her chapter on the construction of Aboriginal genealogies, but again we might make the distinction between Indigenous histories that have been suppressed and to some extent recovered within a *national* project, and transnational stories that remain in limbo. This is exacerbated by the fractured histories of northeast India and of the Kalimpong emigrants' forebears, many of whom were caught up in labour migrations to tea plantations.²³ The lack of a narrative anchor – or a place of belonging, or a structure of accountability – for the Kalimpong stories is, I believe, as much a reason for the absence of the scheme from the public record as the stigma and silences of those who were sent away.²⁴

Reworking the narrative

While the archive assembled for the task of telling this collective familial history is incredibly rich, the many voices and audiences it comprises can be highly ambiguous. But a high degree of consistency *has* been found in the way we have constructed our narratives. We have reached for some powerful colonial stereotypes to make stories of our origins; we have grappled with profound silences about Kalimpong and how it was that our forebears came to New Zealand; and we have reached for national tropes to make sense of the desire to send children away from India, and to New Zealand. We have also gone to considerable lengths to address these silences and inconsistencies, travelling to India and Britain, knocking on doors of distant relatives, conducting research in archives, collating family information, transcribing letters from our Kalimpong family files, and thinking a lot about it all.

The structure of the book, which follows a life-cycle chronology, is made bumpy by this nonlinear journey along the path from what descendants knew before to when we learnt more. Section I challenges the assumptions that have fuelled speculations about our origins, looking first at family life on the tea plantation and then at the Homes in Kalimpong. Section II offers a new narrative of the emigration scheme to New Zealand, consulting a range of sources to counter the Homes story of progression over the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s. The final section reveals the transnational legacy of the scheme and the complex engagements between India and New Zealand that continued throughout the period of 'settlement', both here and there. The book culminates in a cacophony

of voices that I bring together in the final chapter – where descendants reflect on the joys and the challenges, the gains and the losses, of growing up and living with the legacies of this ‘Kalimpong family’ heritage. From my privileged position at the centre of this dialogue and exchange, I have been convinced of the value of detaching our histories from their institutional foundations, anchoring them instead in the making and unmaking of ancestral ties.