



Embodying Colonial Memories: Spirit Possession, Power, and the Hauka in West Africa

Paul Stoller

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A study of the West African Hauka - spirits that grotesquely mimic and mock "Europeans" of the colonial epoch. The author considers spirit possession as a set of embodied practices with serious social and cultural consequences. *Embodying Colonial Memories* is the first in-depth study of the West African *Hauka*, spirits in the body of (human) mediums which mimic and mock Europeans of the colonial epoch. Paul Stoller, who was initiated into a spirit possession troupe, recounts an insider's tale of the *Hauka* with respect and "brotherly" deference. He combines narrative description, historical analysis, and reflections on the importance of embodiment and mimesis to social theory, with particular reference to the Songhay peoples of the Republic of Niger.



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