

# Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond

Co-edited by Beatriz Labate & Clancy Cavnar

Oxford University Press

*Summary:* This book discusses how Amerindian epistemology and ontology related to certain indigenous shamanic rituals of the Amazon spread to Western societies, and how indigenous, mestizo, and cosmopolitan cultures have dialogued with and transformed these forest traditions. The collection also focuses on how shamanic rituals have been spreading and developing in post-traditional urban contexts throughout the world. Special attention is given to ayahuasca, a psychoactive drink usually composed of two plants, the vine *Banisteriopsis caapi* and leaves of the *Psychotria viridis* bush. Ayahuasca use has spread beyond its Amazonian origin and instigated a variety of legal and cultural responses in the countries it has spread to. The chapters in this book address some of the ways these responses have influenced ritual design and performance in traditional and non-traditional contexts. The book analyzes how displaced indigenous people and rubber tappers are engaged in creative reinvention of rituals, and how these rituals help build ethnic alliances and cultural and political strategies for their marginalized position. It also explores modernity's fascination with "tradition" and the "other." This phenomenon is directly tied to important classic and contemporary issues in anthropology. One of them is the relationship between the expansion of ecotourism and ethnic tourism, recent indigenous cultural revivals, and the emergence of new ethnic identities. Another focus of this book is on trends in the commodification of indigenous cultures in post-colonial contexts, and the combination of shamanism with a network of health and spiritually related services. Finally, the book addresses the topic of identity hybridization in global societies. The previously unpublished ethnographies and analysis collected in these chapters will add to the understanding of the role of ritual in mediating the encounter between indigenous traditions and modern societies.

## *Table of Contents:*

Foreword: Authentic Ayahuasca, by Oscar Calavia Saéz

Introduction: Notes on the Expansion and Reinvention of Ayahuasca Shamanism, by Beatriz Caiuby Labate, Clancy Cavnar, and Françoise Barbira Freeman

The introduction provides an overview of the expansion of ayahuasca shamanism, and places this in the context of its interactions with Western therapies and the New Age movement. It also contemplates the role of shamanism as a mediator in contemporary indigenous ethnic relationships. The authors review the existing field of research and offer a comment that gives context and provides synthesis for each of the papers that comprise the book.

1. Will the Real Shaman Please Stand Up? The Recent Adoption of Ayahuasca among Indigenous Groups of the Peruvian Amazon, by Glenn Shepard Jr.

Recent studies of global ayahuasca usage have documented the diverse and dynamic ways in which indigenous Amazonian shamanistic practices have been adopted and reinvented in urban contexts by mostly non-indigenous practitioners. This dynamism and diversity in urban usage presumably stands in contrast with a uniform, static, even millennial tradition of

indigenous ayahuasca usage. Several authors have challenged this view, hypothesizing a recent introduction of ayahuasca shamanism to many groups. Because ethnographic evidence on the subject is limited, this paper presents a clearly documented case of very recent introduction of the actual ayahuasca formula (*Banisteriopsis caapi* and *Psychotria viridis*) as well as ayahuasca-based shamanism in two neighboring but very different indigenous groups of southern Peru: the Matsigenka and the Yora (Nahua). The Matsigenka people appear to have used and cultivated *Banisteriopsis* liana for many generations, however they did not learn to add the potent *Psychotria* admixture in preparing the brew until the 1950s. Introduction of ayahuasca to the Yora (Nahua) was even more recent and drastic. Shortly after their contact and decimation by contagious diseases beginning in 1985, the Yora were introduced to and learned to use and prepare ayahuasca and quickly became enthusiasts. These two case studies demonstrate how recently ayahuasca shamanism has been adopted in two groups of fairly recent Western contact, suggesting similar processes may have occurred in other groups. The studies also attest to diversity and dynamism in indigenous practices on par with the differences observed among various urban ayahuasca practices.

## 2. Kuntanawa: Ayahuasca, Ethnicity, and Culture, by Mariana Ciavatta Pantoja

The Kuntanawa are a tribe that belongs to the Pano linguistic branch, who, by the early decades of the 20th century, were assumed to have been exterminated due to the expansion of rubber production in the upper reaches of Amazonian tributaries, and in particular in the state of Acre in Brazil and the area that borders Peru. By the dawn of the 21st century, descendants of a Kuntanawa woman, who had until then been identified as mestizo rubber tappers, began a process of ethnic auto-recognition (self-identification) as well as a struggle for territorial rights. The ritualized use of ayahuasca plays an important role as part of this double (internal and external) process of cultural reinvention, acting as a Kuntanawa subjectivity operator, as well as working as an ethnic identifier in the larger field of interethnic relations. This double movement will be the subject of ethnographic and theoretical reflections on the issue of “ethnicity” and “culture.”

## 3. Materializing Alliances: Ayahuasca Shamanism In and Beyond Western Amazonian Indigenous Communities, by Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen

Indigenous political and cultural meetings and training courses have become one of the contemporary spaces where indigenous leaders, spokespeople, and community members establish new alliances, and also develop their shamanic skills. This chapter looks at the ayahuasca shamanism that is occasionally practiced in the evenings during these encounters in the state of Acre, Brazil. People from some ethnic groups, such as Cashinahuas and Ashaninkas, typically lead ayahuasca rituals, but healing methods and chants from other indigenous groups are also integrated. In this way the participants can communicate information about their history, ancestors and non-human beings. For indigenous people from different ethnic backgrounds, these ritual spaces are important for identifying people with whom they want to co-operate, exchange substances, and share shamanic experiences and knowledge. Another important aspect is that some indigenous people with shamanic skills, not necessarily ritual leaders, have been invited over state borders and to foreign countries. There, they have been received mostly by non-Indian alternative therapists and New Age movement members. That has engendered new hybrid forms of shamanism. Sometimes this has also meant the involvement of economic resources, making it a sensitive issue for indigenous communities. This chapter also discusses how people who introduce shamanic practices outside “indigenous spaces” have been viewed in their home region. Thus, it looks

at the question of what kind of shamanic contacts made through shamanism are accepted. Ayahuasca shamanism makes indigenous knowledge visible, but the preference is to keep this at a personal level, inside the controllable body space.

#### 4. Medicine Alliance: Contemporary Shamanic Networks in Brazil, by Esther Jean Langdon & Isabel Santana de Rose

This text is a reflection on a contemporary shamanic network in Southern Brazil. The emergence of the Medicine Alliance network began with the dialogues between representatives from an international contemporary shamanic group, a Santo Daime community, and a Guarani Indian village. In this context, the interchanges between these different groups have given rise to an intense circulation of people, knowledge and substances. Symbols and meanings flow in many ways. Interchanges and appropriations occur on many levels in a multi-directional dialogue among the diverse participants. This study points out that in order to understand native shamanisms, it is necessary to consider the broader dialogical contexts in which they take place. We propose that shamanisms today emerge out of specific political and historic contexts and that shamanism is a dialogical category, constructed through interaction between actors with different origins, discourses and interests.

#### 5. Ritualized Misunderstanding between Uncertainty, Agreement and Rupture: Communication Patterns in Euro-American Ayahuasca Ritual Interactions, by Anne-Marie Losonczy & Silvia Mesturini Cappo

This presentation explores a particular aspect of religious practice and migration. Shamanism presents itself today as a multi-sited landscape, painted by regular movements of ritual experts and practitioners and by the continuous diffusion and reconfiguration of practice. These transcontinental travels and settlements influence the local communities and lead them to rethink and adapt their own practices of internal and regional use. The transcontinental version of shamanism presents an organizational continuum that reproduces a set of itineraries that binds, on a national and international scale, the territories of so-called “ethnical” shamanism and its urban adaptations. In fact, this continuum rests on the encounter of national and international “urban shamanisms” that structure themselves by looking at the “indigenous” as a revalued and ultimate resource. By addressing the shamanic expertise classified as “knowledge” in this particular context, we shall question its influence on the national and international social hierarchies that originated from colonization.

#### 6. Shamans' Networks in Western Amazonia: The Iquitos-Nauta Road, by Françoise Barbira Freedman

Waterways and crossroads have played an important part in the development and expansion of Amazonian shamanism, facilitating syncretism and transformation through the exchange of goods and knowledge in relation to ethnic contacts, colonization and participation in the global political economy. This paper focuses on a current area of intensive shamanic interaction along the Iquitos-Nauta road, in the context of the recent evolution of Peruvian *vegetalismo* and the proliferation of Ayahuasca lodges for foreign visitors around Iquitos. An overview of the shamans who have settled along the road reveals a great ethnic diversity of self-declared indigenous, covert indigenous, Mestizo and Gringo actors, in a complex process of interaction that includes alliances and feuds. This overview is complemented by the presentation of three “road” shamans' extensive biographical networks. The mapped

networks show trajectories linking indigenous sources –real or partly fictitious– to a variety of transnational circuits reaching North America, Europe and Asia. The process of appropriation and integration of techniques, knowledge and forms among the “road” shamans ranges from undisputed synthesis to open conflict in relation to both local and foreign clientele. The Iquitos-Nauta road provides a dynamic experimental space in which accommodation to imported values and forms can be perceived as it is happening and as it affects interactions with both foreign agents and local forest people who rely on shamanism as popular medicine.

#### 7. On the Uneasiness of Tourism: Considerations on Shamanic Tourism in Western Amazonia, by Evgenia Fotiou

This chapter examines the cultural constructions of ayahuasca and shamanism, their manifestations in the western imagination and experience, and their localized experience in the city of Iquitos, Peru, in the context of the phenomenon of *shamanic tourism*. Shamanic tourism has flourished in the last few years and is promoted internationally by several agents both local and western. Iquitos, Peru was chosen as a research site because, as a gateway to eco- and shamanic tourism, it serves as a place where different cultural constructions of ayahuasca co-exist; namely urban mestizo and western, and it can offer a distinct perspective on the appropriation of ayahuasca by westerners. I place the phenomenon of shamanic tourism within the historical context of the relationship of the West to the exotic and spiritual “other,” a history that has gone hand-in-hand with colonialism and exploitative relationships. I argue that shamanic tourism is not an anomaly but is consistent with the nature of shamanism, which has historically been about intercultural exchange, as shamanic knowledge and experience has been sought cross-culturally. In addition, in the West, esoteric knowledge has often been sought in faraway places, thus this intercultural exchange is also consistent with Western tradition. Western interest in ayahuasca is much more than a pretext for drug use, but rather is often perceived as a pilgrimage and should be looked at in the context of a new paradigm, or rather a shift in the discourse about plant hallucinogens; a discourse that tackles them as sacraments, in sharp contrast to chemical drugs. However, while the existence of the phenomenon of shamanic tourism is not problematic per se, I present some of the problems in the ways Amazonian shamanism is perceived by westerners; mainly the dangers of further essentializing and marginalizing indigenous cultures and their knowledge.

#### 8. The Internationalization of Peruvian Vegetalismo, by Beatriz Caiuby Labate

This text analyzes the relationship of foreigners with Peruvian vegetalismo. It contemplates outsiders traveling to Peru in search of ayahuasca-consuming experiences, gringos who themselves became *curanderos* and Peruvian *ayahuasqueros* who travel to hold workshops for urban middle-class clients in Europe and the USA. The research does not focus on ayahuasca tourism linked to sophisticated lodges in Iquitos but on retreat centers in Pucallpa where outsiders join ceremonies in search of altered states of consciousness, healing, contact with traditional cultures, or simply out of curiosity. Through the analysis of the trajectories and activities of various *curanderos*, including indigenous, poor mestizo, middle-class Peruvian, and gringos, the paper charts the expansion, diversification, and internationalization of Peruvian vegetalismo. The study identifies the contours of transnational networks and circuits that promote the migration and flux of people and “sacred technologies” on a global scale. It is argued that this phenomenon should not be understood as merely commodification of indigenous spirituality, or neocolonialism, but as a product of deliberate local strategies to adapt to changing socio-economic conditions. Creative translations are performed on both

sides. The foreign references are dynamically incorporated and reappropriated under the logic of vegetalismo. This process could be said to represent some sort of continuity with the historical process of synthesis between different indigenous traditions and Christian elements. It will be argued that it is no longer possible to consider the local practices of the *curanderos* apart from their interactions with foreigners, or separate from articulations between the local and the global.

#### 9. From the Native's Point of View: How Shipibo-Konibo Experience and Interpret Ayahuasca-Drinking with "Gringos", by Bernd Brabec de Mori

The experience of indigenous people in their confrontation with the growing interest of people from Northern countries in drinking ayahuasca has hitherto received little attention. More commonly, "traditional" ways of using the brew have been studied by various scholars. In newer research, the influence of tourism on the modes of using ayahuasca has also been included. In this chapter, I will first embark on a brief historical summary to show how the use of ayahuasca had already changed its meaning and value among Shipibo-Konibo around the 1960s. Observing that visitors' interests centered on ayahuasca ingestion, many Shipibo shifted their representation of "indigeneity" towards pleasing the expectations of paying anthropologists and tourists (two groups they do not necessarily distinguish between). Presenting six sample biographies of indigenous people involved in the commercialization of ayahuasca-drinking, I will analyze the motivations of becoming a *chamán* (in contrast to the *médicos*, who do not work with foreigners). First I will concentrate on explaining the highly diverse economics connected to ayahuasca. Then, potential conflicts resulting from Amazonian native ontology merging with the visitor's expectations are analyzed, including aspects of representation that fit better with popular images of nature-bound noble savages and eco-spiritualist healers than with the actual history of ayahuasca in Eastern Peru as a warfare and hunting based instrument. Finally, the indigenous specialist's problems and the profits which emerge from commercial ayahuasca-drinking will be discussed, as well as the way they ridicule us, and the function of a legion of "apprentice shamans" in the Shipibo context.

#### 10. Ayahuasca's Attractions and Distractions: Examining Sexual Seduction in Shaman-Participant Interactions, by Daniela Peluso

This article will provide an overview of the predicaments of ayahuasca tourism in a regional Amazonian capital, Puerto Maldonado, in Peru and its environs, as a contribution toward understanding how ayahuasca tourism affects the localities in which such encounters take place. Through an analysis of local and global narratives, the paper will engage with Amerindian epistemologies and perspectivism to examine local concerns and interactions between shamans and ayahuasca participants regarding the recent proliferation of ayahuasqueros, the sanitization of rituals, the discounting of the potential role of malevolence and conflict, and the positioning of various intermediaries and authorities. The paper will also explore gender relations between shamans and local and non-local participants and the resultant ensuing debates about sex and sexuality as discussed among locals and by larger Internet-based audiences. In these contexts, the adoption and reinvention of ayahuasca rituals is examined as part of the ongoing challenges and experiences that contemporary ayahuasca usage undergoes.

#### 11. Yage Related Neo-Shamanism in Colombian Urban Contexts, by Alhena Caicedo Fernández

Traditionally used by various ethnic groups and peasants in the region of Putumayo-Caqueta, Colombia, yage, also called ayahuasca, remained confined for decades to rural and urban folk sectors. However, since the early nineties, the ritual consumption of yage has had a profuse dissemination among middle and elite social sectors in cities across the country. Increasingly since then, intellectuals and artists began to invite *taitas* (indigenous shamans) to perform yage ceremonies in the city. The transformation of yage's consumption field in Colombia shows how the phenomenon has been mainly national, with tangential but increasing foreign participation, yet also how yage and its applications remain tied to a matrix of representations of being indigenous that circulates in national society. Offered in cities as "traditional indigenous medicine," yage consumption has been institutionalized around new figures of intersection, new *taitas yageceros*, who combine practices of indigenous traditions with new forms of rituals. More recently, urbanization of yage consumption in Colombia has led to the formation of clusters of neoyageceros around these new *taitas*. Best known as *malocas*, these groups have institutionalized ritual consumption of yage, offering different kinds of therapeutic and spiritual services. This paper analyzes and contrasts two new *taitas yajeceros* and their *malocas* in the city of Pasto, in southern Colombia. The first case is characterized by claiming its adherence to the "Siona Indian tradition," the other is characterized by having a more multicultural perspective linked to discourses of the New Age.

#### *Co-editors biographies:*

**Beatriz Caiuby Labate** has a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the State University of Campinas (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, UNICAMP), Brazil. Her main areas of interest are the study of psychoactive substances, drug policies, shamanism, ritual, and religion. She is Visiting Professor at the Drug Policy Program of the Center for Economic Research and Education (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, CIDE - Región Centro) in Aguascalientes, Mexico. She is also Research Associate at the Institute of Medical Psychology, Heidelberg University, co-founder of the Nucleus for Interdisciplinary Studies of Psychoactives (NEIP), and editor of its site (<http://www.neip.info>). She is author, co-author, and co-editor of twelve books, two with English translations, one journal special edition, and several peer-reviewed articles. For more information, see: <http://bialabate.net/>

**Clancy Cavnar** is currently completing her clinical postdoctoral hours in clinical psychology at the Marin Treatment Center, a methadone clinic in San Rafael, California. In 2011 she received a doctorate in clinical psychology (PsyD) from John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill, California, with a dissertation on gay and lesbian people's experiences with ayahuasca. She attended New College of the University of South Florida and completed an undergraduate degree in liberal arts in 1982. She attended the San Francisco Art Institute and graduated with a Master of Fine Art in painting in 1985. In 1993, she received a certificate in substance abuse counseling from the extension program of the University of California at Berkeley and, in 1997, she graduated with a master's in counseling from San Francisco State University. In that same year, she got in touch with the Santo Daime in the USA, and has traveled several times to Brazil since then. She is also co-editor, with Beatriz Caiuby Labate, of two books: *The Therapeutic Use of Ayahuasca* (Springer, 2014) and *Prohibition, Religious Freedom, and Human Rights: Regulating Traditional Drug Use* (Springer, 2014).

*About the authors:*

**Bernd Brabec de Mori** is an ethnomusicologist specializing in indigenous music from the Ucayali valley in Eastern Peru. He spent some years in the field and became integrated in the indigenous group Shipibo-Konibo. He now lives in Austria and has been working at the audiovisual archive Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and as an assistant at the Centre for Systematic Musicology at the University of Graz. His publications address the fields of Western Amazonian indigenous music, arts and history as well as the complex of music, ritual and altered states.

**Alhena Caicedo** is a Colombian anthropologist and a PhD candidate in social anthropology and ethnology at Ecole de Hautes Etudes Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. She teaches in the Department of Social Studies at the Icesi University, in Cali, Colombia and is a member of the *Centro de Pensamiento Latinoamericano Raiz.AL* ("Raiz.AL" Center of Latin American Thought). Her PhD thesis, entitled "The new Places of Shamanism in Colombia," explored the changing dynamics of yage's consumption field in the country, examining the processes of urbanization and elitization on ritual consumption.

**Mariana Ciavatta Pantoja Franco** is a native of Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo and graduated from the social sciences program at Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). She entered the master's program in sociology at the same institution, and in 1992 defended a thesis on processes of social identity construction among the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) in southern Brazil. In 1991, as a member of the Ecumenical Center for Documentation and Information (CEDI), she participated in a census of the rubber-tapper population in the Alto Juruá Extractivist Reserve in the state of Acre, where she had her first contact with the Amazon. In 1993, after leaving CEDI, she moved to Acre to participate in a broad research project jointly sponsored by USP and UNICAMP and financed by the MacArthur Foundation, spending two years in the Alto Juruá Extractivist Reserve engaged in political consulting and academic research. In 1996 she entered the PhD program in social sciences at UNICAMP, and in 2001, defended her dissertation, which won an award from the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation and was published in 2004 as *Os Milton: Cem Anos de História nos Seringais* [The Milton: One hundred Years of History of the Rubber Tappers Camp] (Recife: Editora Massangana; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Acre Federal University Press, 2008). She has published a series of articles on her experiences in Alto Juruá and worked as a consultant in development projects in Acre and beyond. Since 2004, she has lectured at the Federal University of Acre, where she is working on a research project about the relations between ethnicity, territory and culture.

**Oscar Calávia Saez** graduated in Geography and History at the Complutense University of Madrid (1986). He has a Master's degree in Social Anthropology from the State University of Campinas – Unicamp (1991); he has a PhD in Social Science (Social Anthropology) from the University of São Paulo - USP (1995) and a Post Doctorate degree from the National Center of Scientific Research - Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (2003). Currently he is adjunct professor of the Federal University of Santa Catarina. He is also an Associate Researcher of the National Center of Scientific Research – EREA (Équipe de Recherche en Ethnologie Amerindienne). His main areas of interest are: Ethnohistory, Pano, and Yaminawa.

**Françoise Barbira Freedman** received her PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Cambridge. She has been teaching and working in Medical Anthropology in an interdisciplinary perspective at Cambridge with successive innovative outreach projects, first on the simultaneous use of health services and local healers in the Amazon and the Andes, and later on aspects of maternity care and early parenting (1983, 1988). Longitudinal fieldwork with the Keshwa Lamas in Peru has led to the initiation of a community forest reserve and an ongoing “forest pharmacy.” After illness and ten years spent developing applications inspired from Amazonian parenting (11 books and DVDs) she is now resuming academic publications and contributing to the Keshwa Lamas cultural patrimony. A BBC Channel 4 documentary “Jungle trip” (2001) offered a TV glimpse of the interplay between Keshwa, Mestizo and Gringo shamans mediated by an English shaman apprentice.

**Evgenia Fotiou** is a cultural anthropologist with an interest in health and healing in cross-cultural perspective. Her teaching and research interests include indigenous religions and she is currently researching the revitalization of Greek religion in modern Greece. She has lived, worked, and studied in Greece, Austria, Peru, Germany, and the United States and is fluent in four languages. She received her PhD in cultural anthropology and Latin American studies from University of Wisconsin (UW)- Madison in 2010. Her dissertation research was on ayahuasca use in the context of shamanic tourism in Peru. After teaching at the UW-Madison departments of anthropology and gender and women's studies (2011-12), she received an ACM-Mellon postdoctoral fellowship in indigenous religions at Luther College for 2012-14. She has served on committees and as a manuscript reviewer for the journal *Anthropology of Consciousness*, and she was guest editor of a special issue on ayahuasca and healing, published in the spring of 2012. She has presented at several professional meetings and has chaired and organized panels, bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplines.

**Esther Jean Langdon** was born in 1944 in Denver, Colorado in the United States, and has lived in Brazil since 1983. She graduated in Sociology and Anthropology at Carleton College, Minnesota, USA in 1966, and did her Master's at the University of Washington in the USA. She conducted fieldwork about shamanism and indigenous cosmology in Colombia from 1970 to 1974. In 1974, she obtained her PhD degree at Tulane University, United States. The focus of her PhD thesis was the relationship between cosmology, illness and the daily practices of the Siona from Colombia. Currently she is full professor at *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina* (Florianópolis, Brazil), where she has been working since 1983. Between 1993 and 1994 she conducted post-doctoral research with Richard Bauman at Indiana University, emphasizing studies on performance. She has published several articles in books and national and international specialized journals. The books she has edited include: *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America* (1992), co-edited with Gerhard Baer; *Concepciones de la Muerte y el “Mas Allá” en las Culturas Indígenas Latinoamericanas* (1999), co-edited with Maria Susana Cipolletti; *Xamanismo no Brasil: Novas Perspectivas* (1996) and *Saúde dos Povos Indígenas: Reflexões Sobre Antropologia Participativa* (2004), co-edited with Luiza Garnelo. She is researcher at the *Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* (CNPq) and currently coordinates an investigation on contemporary forms of shamanism. She is also coordinator of *Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Brasil Plural*.

**Anne-Marie Losonczy** is an anthropologist, director of studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne, Paris, professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and member of the “Institut de Recherches Interdisciplinaires Sur le Social” (IRIS-CNRS-EHESS). After earning a Master's in Roman Philology and Clinical Psychology at the University of

Budapest, she continued in a Master's course in Anthropology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and at the EHESS in Paris. After completing a PhD at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in 1992, she taught at the University of Barcelona, at the University Paris X-Nanterre, and she directed the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Neuchâtel in Switzerland. She has taught as a visiting professor at the National University of Bogota in Colombia, at the National University of Budapest (EU, Marie-Curie Program) and recently at the University of Florianopolis in Brazil. She is the author of four books in French and Spanish, one of which is on the shamanic practice of the Emberà Indians of Colombia, and about sixty articles. Her fieldwork in Colombia focused on Afro-American groups and local multi-ethnic societies in the continental and insular Colombian Caribbean and on shamanism and society of the Emberà Indians of the Colombian Choco. In Cuba she studied emerging popular rituals in urban contexts. Her more recent research, together with Silvia Mesturini, uses a comparative approach to focus on certain rearrangements of ritual practice labeled as "shamanic" in urban social environments.

**Silvia Mesturini** has a BA degree in Social Sciences from the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium, an MA degree in Social Science of Religion from the Ecole Pratique d'Hautes Etudes of Paris (EPHE-Sorbonne), and recently obtained a PhD in Anthropology from the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium. Her thesis, "Espaces Chamaniques en Movement: Itinéraires Vécus et Géographies Multiples" (Shamanic Spaces on the Move: Life Itineraries and Multiple Geographies between Europe and South America) is based on multi-sited fieldwork including European (France, Belgium, Holland and Spain) and South American locations (Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Argentina) between 2004 and 2010. Her research on ayahuasca rituals and their internationalization is part of a wider interest in shamanic practice at large and its recent developments. Her ethnography has had a special focus on ritual interaction, cultural translation and the interactive construction of legitimized knowledge and meaning.

**Daniela Peluso** is a cultural anthropologist who has worked over the last two decades in Lowland South America, mostly with communities in Peru and Bolivia. She has been involved in various local efforts on issues relating to health, gender, indigenous urbanization and land-rights and works in close collaboration with indigenous and local organizations. She is a Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the University of Kent.

**Isabel Santana de Rose**, PhD, has an undergraduate degree in social sciences from the State University of Campinas (Unicamp) and master's and doctorate degrees in social anthropology from the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). Her doctoral dissertation, which concluded in 2010, focused on the emergence of contemporary shamanic networks in Brazil. From 2010 to 2012, she was a post-doctoral fellow at the Research Institute Brazil as Plural (IBP/UFSC). Currently she teaches as a member of the faculty of philosophy and human sciences at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (FAFICH/UFMG).

**Glenn Shepard** received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University, carried out postgraduate studies in Peru and Germany and, in 1999, received his PhD in medical anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley. He has worked with diverse indigenous groups of Peru, Brazil, and Mexico and speaks more than ten languages. He has published widely on ethnobotany, shamanism, medical anthropology, human ecology and indigenous environmental knowledge in journals including *American Anthropologist*, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, *Journal of Ethnobiology*, *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*,

*Economic Botany, Conservation Biology, Science, Nature* and others. After carrying out postdoctoral research in Manaus at the National Institute for Amazonian Research and in São Paulo at the University of São Paulo, he is currently curator of indigenous ethnology at the Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi in Pará (Belém, Brazil), at the mouth of the Amazon.

**Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen** is a researcher in Latin American Studies in the Department of World Cultures at the University of Helsinki. In 2009, she was a postdoctoral researcher at the University Paris Ouest-Nanterre La Défense, Centre EREA, where she continues as an associate researcher. Her research interests are Amazonian indigenous ontologies, Arawakan speaking peoples, migration, indigenous politics, cultural change, indigenous youth, and urbanization processes. She defended her doctoral dissertation on Amazonian indigenous youth in a reserve and in the city, in 2007. She has also been a member of various research projects in the state of Acre, Brazil. Her articles have been published in the *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology, Identities, Revista Amazônica, Anthropos*, as well as in chapters in edited compilations of Ashgate and the University Press of Colorado.