

# (Neo)Shamanic Dialogues

## Encounters between the Guarani and Ayahuasca

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper is a reflection on the ritual incorporation of ayahuasca, an Amazonian psychoactive ritual substance, by members of a Guarani Indian village on the Atlantic coast of the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil. Their shamanic leaders have adapted the use of this beverage into their ritual practices and recognize it as part of their culture and tradition. This process of appropriation is a result of the formation of a network that involves various actors, among them the Guarani Indians, members of Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan, followers of the Brazilian ayahuasca religion Santo Daime, and a health team employed to provide primary attention to Indian communities. Based on this case study, we demonstrate that shamanisms today emerge out of specific political and historic contexts. If the concept of shamanism is useful as an analytical paradigm, it must be thought of as a dialogical category constructed through interaction between actors with diverse origins, discourses, and interests.

**KEYWORDS:** Guarani Indians, ayahuasca, shamanism, neo-shamanism

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Guarani from Clear Waters village, located on the coast of southern Brazil, have incorporated *ayahuasca* into their traditional prayer and chanting

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ceremonies.<sup>1</sup> They claim that this beverage, a tea-like substance used in Amazonian shamanic practices and widely known for its psychoactive and visionary properties, is part of Guarani culture and tradition.<sup>2</sup> The nature and process of this appropriation is related to the formation of a formal network of relations between several different groups over the last ten years. This network includes participants from the Guarani community, the international spiritual group Sacred Fire of Itzchilatlan, the Brazilian ayahuasca religion of Santo Daime, and the health team that provides services to the Guarani. We examine in this article the dialogues and negotiations involved in this network, called *Aliança das Medicinas*, or “Medicine Alliance.” On the one hand, its formation reflects local, national, and international processes that involve diverse representations of shamans and indigenous medicine, while on the other, it is a result of the relations and interactions between the members of this Guarani community and the surrounding society in the context of Brazilian public health policies that have favored innovative actions to address racial inequalities.

Historically, shamans and shamanisms have been the object of speculations regarding magic, “primitive mentality,” and madness. Early anthropological analyses viewed forms of shamanism as archaic survivals doomed to disappear in the face of modernity.<sup>3</sup> Contrary to such a view, shamans today circulate in many parts of the world, and their practices are perceived by many individuals as representing primordial truths that offer solutions for the afflictions of contemporary society. In Brazil, shamans and their knowledge are regarded to be the essence of indigenous traditional medicine, an image held by medical personnel working in Indian health programs as well as by many New Age therapists and clients. This representation of the indigenous shaman plays an important role in the dialogues that we are examining here. Based on this case study of the introduction of ayahuasca and other ritual practices in the Clear Waters village, we demonstrate that the shamanism that has emerged out of this particular historical and political context is more adequately comprehended as a dialogical category resulting from the interaction between actors with different origins, discourses, and interests, and not as a historically and politically disembedded philosophy, logic, or spiritual consciousness.

### SHAMANISM IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Shamanism has been a favorite topic in anthropology since the discipline emerged over a century ago. Classic studies were concerned with understanding “primitive mentality” in contrast to the “civilized mind” through binary classifications such as rational/irrational, magical/religious, and natural/supernatural. Shamans’ activities and social roles

confounded western classifications, and they were often designated by ambiguous and contrasting categories such as magician/priest or doctor/sorcerer. Classic studies interested in shamans as individuals focused on their mental states, in which ecstatic practices, transvestism, and other behaviors were perceived as deviant, abnormal, and primitive. Among these some argued that shamans had schizophrenic personalities.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1960s, a revival of ethnographic studies in shamanism began, along with a growing popular and multidisciplinary interest in altered states of consciousness and transpersonal psychology.<sup>5</sup> The investigation of psychotropic substances, referred to as hallucinogens, was characterized by an interdisciplinary focus accompanied by a strong experimental ethos on the part of many researchers. The number of publications and symposiums dedicated to examining shamanism and the use of hallucinogens multiplied, and some researchers became shamans themselves. While many of the studies in psychology and altered states of consciousness searched for universal characteristics of the shamanic experience, the new impetus of research in anthropology reflected changing analytical interests away from a preoccupation with definitions, essential traits, and cultural boundaries of shamanism, and toward understanding its dynamics, particularly in interethnic contexts. This trend is in accord with current anthropological theory that includes situating the local within wider political and historical processes.<sup>6</sup> By the beginning of the 1990s, anthropologists were talking about shamanisms in the plural,<sup>7</sup> and rejecting its characterization as a unified transcultural phenomenon.

The 1960s also marked the beginning of a more intense phase of ethnographic research on lowland South American indigenous groups, a trend that has continued and has resulted in a deeper understanding of these cultures and the development of new analytical models.<sup>8</sup> Recent scholarship on Amerindian cultures has allowed us to perceive that there are certain underlying aspects of Amazonian shamanisms, while recognizing the diversity of shamanisms and the kinds of practitioners that may be grouped under the general label of “shaman”; those identified as shamans range from generalized religious-political leaders and other more limited roles that work for the benefit of the community to those who are dedicated only to evil through chants or poisonous substances.<sup>9</sup> In spite of this diversity of roles and practices, there is no one generalized emic designation or category in Amazonia that refers to them. In this sense, it is the anthropologists who interpret them as “shamans” or *pajés*, as they are frequently called in the literature in Portuguese.<sup>10</sup> The use of a single gloss is an anthropological interpretation.<sup>11</sup> However, most authors agree that the varieties of indigenous shamanisms in the Amazon nonetheless share a number of aspects grounded in a common cultural tradition and cosmology.<sup>12</sup> Shamanism is perceived as a collective institution, central to lowland

Amerindian cosmologies and societies, which expresses the culture's central themes, such as the principle of transformation, concern with the flow of vital energy, and the influence of occult forces on humans. As a cosmological vision, it provides the basis for the interpretation and understanding of daily events, as well as for the attempt to mediate with the invisible forces that affect them. In its broader sense, shamanism is concerned with the well being of society and its members, with maintenance of social harmony and with growth and reproductive processes. It embraces the supernatural, as well as the social and the ecological.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, shamanism is a central cultural institution, which, through ritual, unifies a culture's worldview with its mythical past and projects them into daily activities.

Building on the increased research and growth of knowledge about Amazonian cultures since the 1960s, Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro introduced the concept of perspectivism (*perspectivismo*) in the 1990s.<sup>14</sup> Perspectivism is a complex notion that synthesizes research concerning symbolic ecology, eschatology, nature, culture, the body, and the notion of transformation that is so central in Amazonian cosmologies.<sup>15</sup> Viveiros de Castro's discussion constitutes an excellent synthesis of recent ethnographies, and one that seeks to establish a pan-Amazonian thought and philosophy.<sup>16</sup> The concept of perspectivism has had an important impact on the study of shamanism by drawing attention to a darker side of indigenous shamanisms.<sup>17</sup> The "perspectivist" paradigm builds on themes of sorcery, predation, and cannibalism,<sup>18</sup> illustrating that Amazonian varieties of shamanism are not necessarily good or noble.<sup>19</sup> This is an important corrective to earlier romanticized visions of indigenous peoples and their cosmologies.<sup>20</sup> Since Viveiros de Castro's 1996 article was published, studies informed by this perspective have multiplied.

These studies and new paradigms have made an increasingly important contribution to our understanding of shamanism as a phenomenon undergoing constant transformation and innovation. Contemporary research in ethnology aims to document its richness and diversity in order to understand its particular manifestations from an emic perspective, honoring internal concepts and perspectives, and the interplay between symbolic and social action within specific historical, cultural and political contexts.

Just as an interest in shamanism has grown among scholars since the 1960s, so too has popular fascination and appropriation of indigenous practices; today there is a transnational shamanic market, with a circuit of tourists that connects Europe and the Americas.<sup>21</sup> In addition, throughout the Americas, non-indigenous groups have constructed new shamanic rituals and practices, such as the Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan discussed below. The use of psychotropic (psychoactive) substances has been important in both shamanic tourism and the formation of hybrid

shamanic practices. These substances have, at least in the Americas, inspired the construction of new rituals reputed to have their origin in indigenous cultures. The spread of the use of ayahuasca is one such example, and, as we shall demonstrate through this case study, it has become a substance that circulates between the diversity of groups that practice contemporary shamanisms. The multiple forms of shamans and shamanisms are not only a result of cultural diversity, but are also part of the persistent interest in shamanism and its substances, and the increasing interaction that indigenous groups have with the larger society. Based on these premises, many current manifestations of shamanism are better understood as products of modernity.<sup>22</sup>

### CONTEMPORARY SHAMANISMS

As early as the 1990s, Jane Monnig Atkinson's review of the renewal of academic interest in shamanism documents the varieties of studies that have resulted from earlier interests of anthropologists, dramatists, physicians, archaeologists, and others, joined by modern psychologists and those seeking alternative spiritual practices. She emphasizes that we must speak of a plurality of "shamanisms" and points out that the term is no longer useful as a unified trans-cultural category. The category of shamanism has been reconstituted and revitalized due primarily to popular interests in alternative spirituality and the multidisciplinary study on states of consciousness and psychotherapy.<sup>23</sup> The growth of research and experiences with altered states of consciousness caused by psychoactive substances such as mescaline, LSD, and *banisteriopsis caapi* (the vine used to make ayahuasca), has been accompanied by the discourse of psychotherapists, ethnopharmacologists, anthropologists, and others who argue for their beneficial use independent of cultural origins, some affirming that these substances work to liberate the mind and integrate the psyche, rather than to disintegrate it.<sup>24</sup> The connection between shamanic altered states and the sacred has assumed central importance in the therapeutic and spiritual discourse of contemporary shamanisms, and today the most common term to designate the countless substances used in these contexts is *entheogen*, which connotes the "God within" and the quality of the sacred that their ingestion evokes.

These emerging and newly constituted shamanisms do not represent a homogeneous universal phenomena or a unified cosmologic system that can be considered exclusively traditional or modern.<sup>25</sup> The global revival of shamanism combines indigenous and non-indigenous elements originating from different places and contexts. The roots of the contemporary shamanic movements are linked to a wider context in which shamanism is regarded as a representation of indigenous peoples who are objectified as "primitive others" and the possessors of an

ancestral and primordial knowledge. The emergence of these New Age shamanisms, as they are beginning to be documented among urban and privileged classes,<sup>26</sup> forces us to recognize, as pointed out by Atkinson, that shamanisms must be comprehended as historically situated and culturally mediated social practice.<sup>27</sup> As an analytical paradigm, shamanism is best understood as a dialogical category, negotiated on the borders of local indigenous societies and their interactions with national and global groups.<sup>28</sup>

### **Contemporary shamanisms in Brazil: Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan**

Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan, also known as Red Path, is an international spiritual group that can be found in most countries of continental Latin America, as well as in the United States and Europe. Its leaders claim inspiration from the Native American Church, a pan-Native American religious movement that is known for its ritual use of the peyote cactus, and other North American Indian practices, especially those of the Lakota.<sup>29</sup> Yet Sacred Fire's rituals combine elements not only from the Native American Church but also from indigenous traditions throughout the Americas and beyond. The group's leaders claim they are drawing upon the ancestral or primordial roots of humanity that remain preserved in the knowledge and rituals of indigenous peoples.

Mexican artist Aurélio Díaz Tekpankalli founded Sacred Fire in the United States in the early 1990s. Its expansion began with a gathering of more than one hundred pilgrims, originating from Alaska to Patagonia, in Morélia, Mexico in 1992. Their purpose was to reaffirm the ancestral wisdom and unity of all American Indigenous peoples, which is expressed through the depiction of the North American eagle and the South American condor on ceremonial altars around the sacred fire. Subsequently, Sacred Fire spread to several Latin American countries and later to Europe. Rituals from various indigenous cultures, particularly the Lakota and other plains Indians, were adopted, including the medicine ceremony, vision quest, sun dance, temzagal, and shanoopa. The leaders, known as "medicine men," direct carefully orchestrated rituals exhibiting sacred elements that represent ancestral knowledge passed down through the generations: fire, spring water, the four cardinal directions, and "medicinal" plant substances. Tobacco, a ritual substance used among indigenous peoples of the New World, is employed by the group to establish connection with the Divine. Many of these ceremonies, as well as their symbolic references to holistic healing, sacred energy, and indigenous knowledge, are not limited to the Sacred Fire and can be found in many New Age spiritual gatherings and therapeutic practices.

Sacred Fire began its activities in Brazil in the late 1990s, founded by a young non-indigenous medical doctor known as Ehekateotl. He established its national headquarters in the mountains of the interior of Santa Catarina. Among its many activities, an important month long annual gathering attracts participants from many parts of the world. All the rituals characteristic of Sacred Fire are performed. Those seeking to become medicine men participate in the vision quest by isolating themselves in the headquarters forests and fasting for several days. Yet these ritual performances in Santa Catarina exhibit a local configuration that distinguishes them from other Sacred Fire groups as well as from similar practices within New Age groups. This is due to the Brazilian context and the particular history of Sacred Fire there, that has been influenced by the widespread use of ayahuasca and contact with the Guarani and other indigenous groups.

For instance, the medicine ceremony in Brazil, which combines Sacred Fire's key elements of fire, tobacco, and spring water, has added ayahuasca to the list of sacred plants that are ingested as well as the Guarani tobacco pipe. This ceremony is held around a low half-moon clay altar adorned with graphic representations of the condor and American eagle in its center. Nested in it is the fire, built out of wood arranged in the form of an arrow. The medicine ceremony brings holistic healing to the participants, achieved through revelation of the "true nature" or "essence" of transcendental reality.<sup>30</sup> With the air charged with tobacco smoke and expectation, the ritual performance is punctuated by extensive spiritual discourses, chants in various languages, and music. All rituals are designed with special attention to highly elaborated aesthetic and symbolic details expressed in formal ritual structure and process to enhance or intensify the experience. Many of the aesthetic and symbolic elements reference an indigenous origin: the arrangement of the fire, psychoactive plants as medicines, shamanic drums and chants, eagle feathers, flowers, woven cloth with Indian designs, animal pelts, and so on. The participants tend to use clothing and personal adornments that reference indigenous groups. For Sacred Fire's members, the various plants considered as sacred and the rituals described above represent practices that access pan-indigenous ancestral knowledge.

### **Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions**

In the Amazon region of Brazil, several religious movements were founded on the use of the indigenous substance ayahuasca. Ayahuasca is a psychoactive tea-like beverage prepared from the vine of the genus *banisteriopsis caapi* and other plant additives. It is widely known for its visionary and purgative properties. Many, although not all, indigenous groups of the Amazon used this beverage as a central part of their

shamanic rituals. The most well known ayahuasca religions are Santo Daime, União do Vegetal, and Barquinha.<sup>31</sup> All three originated among *caboclo* (mixed-race) populations that migrated from northeastern Brazil to the Amazon between the 1920s and the 1960s. Their founders were charismatic leaders whose visionary experiences with ayahuasca attracted countless followers. Although their myths of origin locate the adoption of the brew from contact with indigenous groups, the ayahuasca religions' symbolic constructions and practices draw upon popular Catholicism, Afro-Brazilian religions, and spiritualism, which has led them to be identified as authentically Brazilian because of their multi-ethnic origins.<sup>32</sup> Since the 1980s, these religions have spread beyond the Amazon, first to major cities in Brazil and a decade later to the rest of the world.<sup>33</sup> Collectively they can presently be found in at least twenty-three countries on three continents. The ritual use of ayahuasca is legal in Brazil, but is not in some of the countries to which these religions have spread.

Ayahuasca religions today are part of a multi-directional circulation of symbols and practices that flow between different ethnic and social groups.<sup>34</sup> Not only have urbanites been attracted to them and journey to their centers in the Amazon, but Indians have also adopted their practices. The Apurinã Indians from Boca do Acre adopted the use of ayahuasca as a result of contact with these non-indigenous cults.<sup>35</sup> The Cashinahua Indians in the state of Acre, long known for their shamanic use of ayahuasca, participate in local Santo Daime rituals. In another direction of the circulation, young Cashinahua shamans perform ayahuasca rituals for non-Indians in large cities in different parts of the world.<sup>36</sup> Therefore the Guarani case described here is not unique and should be understood as part of a wider context of the expansion of ayahuasca religions and the diversification of contemporary usages of ayahuasca.

### **The Medicine Alliance**

The emergence of the Medicine Alliance network in the metropolitan area of Florianópolis, capital of Santa Catarina, is the result of dialogues between the Guarani from Clear Waters, Sacred Fire of Brazil, and the Santo Daime community of Céu do Patriarca. These dialogues began with the visits of Brazil's Sacred Fire Leader, Ehekateotl, to the Guarani village and the subsequent introduction of the use of ayahuasca and the temazcal ceremonies at the end of the 1990s. Shortly thereafter the local Santo Daime center, Céu do Patriarca São José, entered into these encounters when it began to supply ayahuasca for the Guarani rituals.

Although Amazonian indigenous groups have used ayahuasca for centuries, there is no archeological or ethnobotanical evidence of

either the plants or their ritual use in southern Brazil. The local ayahuasca religious groups introduced its cultivation to Santa Catarina approximately twenty years ago. In order to find a constant supply of the substance for its use in Guarani rituals, Ehekateotl initially contacted the ayahuasca religion União do Vegetal, but it was the Santo Daime community that responded positively to his request for collaboration. Thus, Céu do Patriarca São José joined the partnership that was being formed between Sacred Fire and Clear Waters Guarani village, creating the Medicine Alliance. In 2003, the Santo Daime leader (*Padrinho*) from Santa Catarina traveled to the international headquarters of Sacred Fire in Itzachilatlan, Mexico, where the two groups reaffirmed their collaboration. Currently in Santa Catarina, there are a number of medicine rituals hosted throughout the year by these groups in which members from all three are present. The Guarani participate in important ceremonial activities sponsored by both Sacred Fire and Santo Daime, and, in turn, members from these groups attend rituals and other activities performed in the Guarani village. As a result of this interaction, the groups have mutually influenced the ritual practices of each other.

In sum, these three groups—Sacred Fire of Brazil, the local Santo Daime community, and the Guarani Indians of Clear Waters—are tightly bound in relations of mutual influence, forming a network in which people, knowledge, and substances circulate. More recently, the ceremonies of this alliance have benefited from an ever-expanding inclusion of new participants, such as the Cashinahua and Yaminawa from the Brazilian Amazon, the Shuar and lowland Quichua from Ecuador, and members of *sangoma*, a shamanic and healing tradition from South Africa.

### **AYAHUASCA AND ITS ADOPTION BY THE GUARANI**

The Guarani are a large Indian population numbering approximately 65,000. Composed of several sub-groups speaking languages belonging to the Tupi-Guarani family, they live across a transnational territory of approximately 1.2 million square kilometers encompassing Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay. Traveling in small groups, they circulate between their settlements dispersed throughout this region, that is mostly populated and controlled by non-Indians, and includes a number of large urban areas.<sup>37</sup> Due to constant mobility in extended family groups, they form a large network of relatives whose migrations contribute to communication, reciprocal exchange, and transformations between settlements. Of the sub-groups living in Brazil two, the Mbya and Chiripá, are found on the Atlantic coast, from the state of Espírito Santo to that of Rio Grande do Sul, which borders Uruguay

and Argentina. The Mbya are the most numerous, but the inhabitants of Clear Waters tend to identify as part of the Chiripá sub-group.

Despite the Spanish and Portuguese presence in Guaraní territory since early colonial times, the maintenance of the native language and traditional religious practices has functioned as an important strategy of resistance throughout their history of contact. Although unable to isolate themselves from non-Indians in many situations, a large number of the Guaraní remain monolingual in their native language. In the presence of non-Indians, they are characterized as extremely silent and closed and are known for excluding outsiders from their ritual practices. A central element of a traditional village is the *opy* (prayer house),<sup>38</sup> in which the *karai* (spiritual leader; plural *karaiqueri*) performs important collective rituals that exclude non-Indians.

In southern Brazil, many Guaraní villages are located on the periphery of large cities, confined to small and non-productive lands. Many communities suffer from poverty and its consequences, such as disease, violence, and alcohol abuse, which are reflected in higher mortality rates than those of non-Indian. Not all villages have a prayer house or perform the collective rites that are so important to the community's health. Their subsistence agricultural practices are subsidized by government pensions and the sale of handicrafts. It is common to see Guaraní Indians selling baskets and carved wooden animals on city sidewalks and busy highways. Like most Indians in southern Brazil, they are marginalized and labeled as ignorant and lazy by non-Indians.

Clear Waters village is located near Florianópolis, a metropolitan area of 700,000. Created in 2003 as an Indian reserve (*Terra Indígena*) with 59 hectares, it was the first officially recognized Guaraní reserve in Santa Catarina state. Although it was traditionally part of Guaraní territory, the village was only reoccupied in the 1980s with the arrival of a Chiripá extended family that originated from the south. Today Clear Waters holds an important position in the exchange network of the Guaraní villages along Brazil's southern coast. Different from most other Guaraní villages, it has demonstrated an unusual openness to interactions with non-Indians in recent years. Due to changes in the Federal Constitution of 1988, that recognizes the multi-ethnic nature of Brazil, Indian communities have been the focus of public service projects, such as schools, health, and agricultural assistance. The Guaraní settlements in general have experienced increasing interaction with the surrounding society over the last twenty years as a result. However, Clear Waters appears to be assuming leadership in the mediation of ritual practices with non-Indians through the adoption and incorporation of the ritual use of ayahuasca.

The following history of the incorporation of ayahuasca by those living in Clear Waters is based on fieldwork conducted by the second author of this text. From 2006 to 2009, Isabel Santana de Rose conducted

research on ayahuasca's use among the Guarani and the formation of the Medicine Alliance. This research was multi-local in character, aiming to emphasize the dialogues and negotiations, as well as the emergence of symbols and meanings, within this growing network. Participant-observation included an extended period of residence in the Clear Waters village, as well as participation in different activities sponsored by Sacred Fire and Santo Daime in their respective centers outside the Indian community.<sup>39</sup>

The conversations between the Guarani from Clear Waters village and Sacred Fire of Brazil began in 1999. The contact between these two groups resulted from a Guarani patient who was interned in a Florianópolis hospital after traditional Guarani healing techniques failed. Seriously ill, he refused to submit to medical treatment and was uncooperative with the hospital personnel. At the time, Ehekateotl was a resident physician, and he befriended the Guarani patient, slowly gaining his confidence and inquiring about Guarani spiritual leaders. Alcindo and Rosa, the *kariakuery* of Clear Waters, had led their extended family there in the 1980s, following a prophetic dream. This couple is well recognized among the Guarani villages along Santa Catarina's south coast as healers and shamans and as the eldest and most powerful *karaikuery* in the region. When told about them, Ehekateotl was curious to know the couple and gained an invitation to their village through this patient.

The Guarani discourse about the arrival of Ehekateotl and the adoption of Sacred Fire's ritual practices speaks of spiritual crisis that was troubling the village at the time, as well as the growing expectations of a messianic leader who would revitalize their culture. Although Alcindo and his wife had been responsible for leading the group to Clear Waters because of a visionary shamanic dream, their spiritual influence at the time was weak and the community members did not participate in the collective prayer rituals or accord them proper respect. Alcindo's grandson and current political leader (*cacique*) Hyral Moreira and his wife Celita Antunes, a female spiritual practitioner (*cunhá karai*), are explicit about the context of crisis and the manner in which Ehekateotl's arrival coincided with aspects of the Guarani shamanic system that led to the legitimization of the new ritual practices that he introduced. According to Hyral, the situation of cultural was not new, but indeed had been predicted by his great-grandfather and others some thirty years ago, before the move to Clear Waters. His great-grandfather had told him that "Guarani culture will be in danger" but the coming of a savior would reverse this. This messianic prophecy was reaffirmed in a shamanic dream to Alcindo, when it was revealed that it would be not be an Indian leading them back to their spiritual tradition. Alcindo had told him that,

Nobody cares about our culture and tradition anymore, but I had a vision. In this vision, I saw someone that is not Guarani; someone who isn't part of our culture. It is this person who is going to help the Guarani culture to rise again." We didn't pay attention to what he said. But eight years ago this person showed up. His name was Ehekateotl. We didn't know who he was. He said he had come from Mexico and he wanted to speak to Alcindo. One day, Ehekateotl came to our village and talked to Alcindo. We see this as something magical; you can't explain why it happened. When Ehekateotl arrived at our village, Alcindo ran to him, saying, "That is the person I was waiting for!" People thought he must be crazy to say this to someone he had never seen. Then the relationship between them started. They started to talk about spiritual things and their friendship began.<sup>40</sup>

Celita Antunes was even more expressive about the crisis that the village was experiencing and the weak influence of the couple. Frustrated with the problems of alcohol abuse and its consequences of social and spiritual disorganization, she was thinking of migrating to another village. Although she knew of Alcindo's dream, when Ehekateotl first appeared in the village, her response was that of doubt.

I had almost forgotten about this [dream], when I heard people were saying that Alcindo had gone crazy. He was bringing a white person to the village, and this person wanted him to build a prayer house. People said this white person was also quite crazy, and was bringing bad things to the village. I asked Alcindo what had happened, and it was Ehekateotl who had arrived. He had come to talk to Alcindo about ayahuasca and all the other medicines, and about the Red Path. But Alcindo had recognized him when he arrived here. I don't know if he had dreamed about Ehekateotl, or if he had already seen him before, but I know he recognized him immediately. And Alcindo supported Ehekateotl unquestioningly. Alcindo told us that Ehekateotl had brought knowledge from other peoples and that he would help our people to rise again.<sup>41</sup>

Celita's history above reflects not only the doubts that the Guarani had, but also the process of legitimization of the incorporation of ayahuasca in Guarani rituals. Ehekateotl visited the village periodically, taking part in Guarani ceremonies that were held in Alcindo's house. Subsequently, he came to reside in the village for a number of months, was baptized with a Guarani name and invited to help in healing rituals. The idea of conducting a ceremony with ayahuasca at Clear Waters village resulted from the conversations between Ehekateotl and Alcindo and his family. The narratives about the first rituals with ayahuasca express how Alcindo's family experienced contact with their "ancient grandparents" and with other spiritual beings. As we can see in the

example transcribed below, they often associate the use of ayahuasca with the ancestral past and Guarani tradition, since it stimulated Alcindo's memories of abandoned practices and beliefs. Celita Antunes discourse below reflects a perspective held by most participants in the rituals that affirms the authenticity of ayahuasca as a source of the ancestral knowledge about tradition and culture and its link with Sacred Fire's discourse about sacred medicines, fire, nature, tradition, and knowledge.

Since we started to use the ayahuasca medicine, Alcindo is remembering forgotten things. Every ceremony he tells us something new. He is remembering what the Guarani people were forgetting: prayers, customs. He always says Guarani people are the guardians of fire, earth and nature. If we forget the knowledge about the plants and the spirits, about how to talk to nature and how to listen to it, our culture will end. The day our culture ends, our people also will end. We will no longer be the Guarani people. Alcindo says this knowledge is very ancient. He tells us it was taught by Fire, the oldest grandfather. And all this knowledge is passed on along the generations. . . . When we take the ayahuasca medicine we are ingesting knowledge itself. It is the knowledge of our grandparents; the blood of our grandparents. This is how we learn. I didn't understand why elder people cry when they pray. Now I understand: they are praying for our ancestors. And in their prayers, our grandparents always remember the Guarani people.<sup>42</sup>

There is a general consensus among Clear Waters' inhabitants that ayahuasca was important in the revitalization of Guarani ritual life. Until its use, the communal *opy* ceremonies were poorly frequented, evidencing little respect for Alcindo and Rosa's knowledge. Like Celita, many speak about the neglect of Guarani tradition or "culture" and problems such as alcohol abuse, violence, and family separation. The revitalization of collective spiritual practices has had extremely favorable results for Guarani identity.

It is important to point out that the adoption of ayahuasca and the interpretation of its benefits is not an isolated innovation in the village, particularly with respect to other activities initiated in the 1990s that were intended to draw the younger generations back to Guarani tradition and create a positive ethnic affirmation. *Yvytychi Ovy*, the Blue Clouds chorus, composed primarily of children and intended to present Guarani culture in public events, was founded in 1996. A new *opy*, the Guarani prayer house, was constructed in 1998; the first school was established in the village this same year with the goal of providing bilingual education. The choice by consensus of Hyral Moreira, an important spokesman for cultural revitalization, as *cacique* of Clear Waters reflects the changing attitudes occurring in this period. Hyral Moreira is currently becoming a *karaí* and expresses his intentions as political

and spiritual leader to teach the younger generations about the Guarani way of life.

We started to revitalize our tradition and we have the responsibility to keep this going . . . maintaining this tradition is a great responsibility. How can I explain the satisfaction that comes from making a tradition live again? It is impossible to measure this. We are responsible for a whole generation that is growing up according to our tradition, according to our culture and to our knowledge. Only a few years ago we didn't have this in our community. For example, when I was younger, I didn't want to be an Indian. I wanted to be like white people. Today I want to keep my culture. Today the children are going to the ceremonies in our prayer house. We explain to them about the ceremonies, about their reasons and purposes. This is a great satisfaction for me. I am very satisfied to be able to lead this young generation, to help the children to develop within our culture. This is priceless.<sup>43</sup>

This local cultural revitalization process is part of a broader context that involves both political and non-political influences from the local to the global. At the national level it is important to highlight the role of the 1988 Brazilian Constitution that recognizes the nation's pluri-ethnic and multicultural character. The constitution has a chapter dedicated to indigenous peoples' rights and has produced an important shift in their situation in Brazilian society. Along with the increasing growth of indigenous political associations, the new constitution has contributed to creating a favorable context for the manifestation of ethnic identity. Public policies in health, education, patrimony, and other areas call for the implementation of programs that recognize and respect cultural practices. The impact of the concept of "multicultural" in public policies is evident throughout the country and Indian groups are expressing their identity through a variety of activities and projects that promote "traditional culture" and native languages.<sup>44</sup> On a transnational scale, the recognition of indigenous rights and culture has been stimulated by international documents produced by the United Nations, the International Labor Organization, and national constitutions in Latin America, as well as the increase of popular interest in native cultures. Indigenous groups and shamanism have become core symbols and actors in ideologies and networks that connect local indigenous conflicts to international issues and social movements.<sup>45</sup>

It is within this local and international context that Ehekateotl, founder of Sacred Fire in Brazil, began his work with the Guarani. His solution to the health and social problems characteristic of many of the Guarani communities was to strengthen traditional ritual practices and fortification of the roles of the *karaí*. As a physician, he elaborated a project with regional governmental health teams proposing the incorporation of traditional medicine in public health initiatives among

the Guarani through the construction of temazcal shelters and *opy*, in those communities that did not have them. Incorporating Sacred Fire's concept of traditional medicine, the project also included the identification of potential *karai* so that they could participate in the various healing ceremonies performed during the annual gathering held in Sacred Fire's headquarters in the mountains.

The project's overall objective was to "promote the health of the Guarani people, recovering and strengthening the spiritual/mystical aspects based on the ancient traditional ceremonies."<sup>46</sup> With this project's approval, ayahuasca and temazcal ceremonies were conducted in at least ten Guarani villages during the four years of its duration. Ehekateotl's closest association was with the Guarani of Clear Waters, and it was there that this project had its greatest impact. A larger traditional prayer house was built with the Sacred Fire altar in its center. An igloo-shaped mud dwelling for the temazcal was constructed beside it. The number of community members participating in the *opy* ceremonies increased, and the *karaikuery*, including Alcindo and his family, incorporated ayahuasca into their traditional rituals.

The members of the health team providing health services for the Guarani communities participated actively in the project. Not only did they administrate the project, but they also consumed ayahuasca along with the Guarani in their ceremonies. Their discourse, like that of the Guarani, affirms that ayahuasca and the temazcal are traditional medicine and thus their incorporation into ritual practices is in accord with the National Health Policy for Indian Peoples.<sup>47</sup> Their initiatives in the project were justified by the national policy that requires that medical teams working in Indian communities provide health services that respect native cultures and practices and, when possible, incorporate traditional healing practices.<sup>48</sup> The project designed to reinforce traditional healing practices (including ayahuasca and the temazcal) was expected to improve the general health situation of the Guarani, and their evaluation of its results has been positive. As a member of the health team, Ehekateotl stated, "the reinforcement of spiritual leadership is the basis for the success of the implementation of this model of attention of 'spiritual Indian health', not only in the cultivation of tradition, but in all the actions programmed for the Indian reserves."<sup>49</sup> Another member argued that the regular performance of the ceremonies together with increasing attendance by community members have accelerated cultural revival thus contributing to a reversal of social disintegration. Two members of the health team have actively trained with Alcindo as shamanic apprentices. According to one of them, the "revitalization of Guarani traditional medicine" has produced general improvement of the community as manifested in the reestablishment of family and community relations, the renewal of cultivation of native

varieties of plants, and a reduction of domestic violence and alcohol abuse.<sup>50</sup>

By the time the funding for this four-year project ended, the Guarani from Clear Waters had achieved autonomy in the organization of their rituals and in their contacts and negotiations with representatives of Santo Daime, their source of ayahuasca. Currently, they continue to conduct traditional ceremonies with the use of ayahuasca and the sacred fire in their village, as well as to take part in Sacred Fire's annual gatherings and in events sponsored by the local Santo Daime community. Recently they have instituted the vision quest within their own village. Additionally, they perform Guarani ceremonies and the temazcal rites for non-indigenous, urban, and middle class individuals in different religious and spiritual centers in the Florianópolis metropolitan area. In addition, they have interacted frequently with the students of Naturology, an alternative medicine course offered by a local university. The students participate in ceremonies in the village, and the Guarani helped them build a temazcal on the university campus. Other participants in the ceremonies included the various anthropologists who have conducted research in Clear Waters over the last 12 years.

Two of these anthropologists, Melissa Santana de Oliveira and Flávia Cristina de Mello, echo the favorable view of the health team regarding the adoption of ayahuasca and the temazcal. Oliveira briefly examines the children's participation and experiences in these ceremonies. She observes that the village's inhabitants attribute important healing powers to the use of ayahuasca and the temazcal sweat baths. For her, these practices have stimulated the "religiosity" of the community and have a central role in the "recovery of tradition." Mello observes that the use of ayahuasca has created social conflict among the Guarani, especially with those from other villages. Nevertheless, she affirms that its introduction in Clear Waters has stimulated the dialogue about cultural revitalization and has restored ritual practices to a central role in the village's daily life. She also indicates that the Guarani reorient and reinterpret these new traditions and practices according to their own symbolic structures and cosmology, reinforcing traditional leadership.<sup>51</sup>

As we have noted above, this process of cultural revitalization is associated with a series of earlier initiatives, such as bilingual education in the village, formation of the Blue Clouds chorus, and the building of a prayer house prior to the introduction of ayahuasca. Our field data indicates that initiatives like these were evidence of an ongoing cultural revitalization process, and that ayahuasca alone is not responsible. This process was stimulated by the increasing recognition and value that Indians and their cultures have received in Brazilian public policies and from alternative spiritual groups. All of these have had a role in stimulating the Guarani

from Clear Waters to engage in a broad cultural revival, and to interact more frequently with non-indigenous populations.

The use of ayahuasca in Guarani rituals has not been static or homogenous. Out of the ten villages to which ayahuasca was introduced, only Clear Waters has maintained its incorporation in community ceremonies. Inhabitants from other villages frequently participate in Clear Waters' rituals, but many Guarani, especially those outside the village, disagree with the substance's consumption as a Guarani tradition and consider it as "white people's stuff." Even in Clear Waters many families have ceased to participate in the ceremonies and some have begun to criticize and question ayahuasca's status as a Guarani tradition. There is currently no consensus in the network of Guarani villages along the southern coast of Brazil about the usage of ayahuasca and its benefits for cultural revival.

## DIALOGUES AND NEGOTIATIONS

Several groups were involved in the introduction of ayahuasca to Clear Waters village: the Guarani Indians, the medical team, members of Sacred Fire, and adherents of Santo Daime. We consider that all these actors have agency and possess an array of interests and agendas. These interests, along with the symbolic meanings of the elements that circulated in the Medicine Alliance, were negotiated among the various constituencies.

For the Guarani, their relationship with Sacred Fire and Santo Daime, as well as the appropriation of ayahuasca and other ceremonial practices, can be seen as strategies for attracting material and symbolic resources. It is important to remember that Brazilian federal health services financed the introduction of the ayahuasca rites. Since the conclusion of the federal project, the Guarani perform ceremonies for non-Indians, who pay a fee to participate, resulting in additional income for the village. Also, as privileged members of the Medicine Alliance, the Guarani are not required to pay the expensive fees for taking part in the activities sponsored by Sacred Fire. Their presence in these events has been an opportunity for contact with people, ideas, and rites from different parts of Brazil and the world, including leaders from other indigenous groups.

Without a doubt, the contact between the Guarani Indians of Clear Waters and members of Sacred Fire has stimulated a dialogue that reflects a new configuration of relations between Indians and non-Indians in Brazil. Indians have historically suffered from prejudice, violence, and exclusion by the larger society. While there has been considerable national growth in Indian political organizations, and Indians of Brazil have been increasingly exercising their rights as citizens since the 1980s, this

was not the case with the Guarani in the southern part of Brazil until more recently.<sup>52</sup> The Guarani living on the periphery of larger cities in the affluent southern region of Brazil have tended to resist outside influence by maintaining their native language and ritual secrecy in the face of marginalization, poverty, and their resulting problems. The dialogues between the different actors that form the Medicine Alliance and the introduction of contemporary shamanic elements in Clear Waters, has benefited the village's inhabitants by providing greater equality and respect than is traditionally seen in interactions between Indians and non-Indian.

Nonetheless, our observations indicate that relations are still not entirely equal between the Guarani and their non-Indian interlocutors. Yet the high regard for indigenous cultures held by many New Age practitioners has possibly contributed to the renewal of Guarani culture and ritual practices and has provided additional context for the Guarani to assume a more active role in negotiations with the larger society. The incorporation of ayahuasca by the Guarani from Clear Waters village has been accompanied by their insertion in a wide network in which symbolic and material elements, people, and knowledge circulate, resulting in enhanced power to negotiate with the broader society and new possibilities for Clear Water's inhabitants.

The Brazilian government, represented here by the medical team contracted to provide services to Guarani communities, had an important role in this process by supporting the project that funded ayahuasca and temazcal ceremonies for four years. The project elaborated by them was an innovative attempt to satisfy the National Policy for Indigenous Health that called for the "incorporation" of traditional medical practices when possible. In 2004, the World Bank founded the National Program of Traditional Medicine, and a series of programs were designed and implemented by the national agency in charge of Indian health.<sup>53</sup> However, the traditional medicine project of the Guarani was a spontaneous initiative, and not a part of this initiative. Although there is no clear epidemiological evidence that it has been effective in improving the health indicators of this Guarani population, we suggest that it has had a positive consequence by enabling inter-ethnic dialogue.

Benefits can also be perceived for the non-Indian groups involved. The Guarani presence at the ceremonies of Sacred Fire and Santo Daime legitimizes the claims of both groups that their knowledge and rites have indigenous sources. As noted, among of the main principles of Sacred Fire is the rescue of ancestral knowledge, and the idea that indigenous knowledge and all forms of shamanism reflect the same essence. Thus, the symbolic importance of Guarani participation in Sacred Fire is related to the central place that the "Indian" holds in this contemporary shamanic movement.

## CONCLUSION

As this article has demonstrated, there is a relationship between the search for indigenous authenticity by contemporary shamanic groups and the general process of cultural revival occurring among some of Brazil's indigenous peoples. We consider that the Guarani are not naive or passive in this process. On the contrary, they are actively engaged in dynamic dialogues and negotiations that go beyond the limits of their village and link them to regional, national, and global groups.

Marshall Sahlins proposes a reflection on how the limitations of culture coexist with innovation and the exercise of creativity. Trying to understand how cultural meanings are produced and recreated in a society, he underscores the capacity of indigenous peoples to encompass and integrate the global system into their own worldview.<sup>54</sup> Sahlins argues that, contrary to the expectations of the 1950s and 1960s, indigenous peoples have refused to disappear or become assimilated as a local subculture of the national one. Rather, they are engaged in an effort to integrate the world system into their own. It is this seemingly paradoxical refusal by the indigenous peoples to disappear that he calls the "indigenization of modernity."<sup>55</sup> This process is related to the selective incorporation of elements from the global society by indigenous cultures in their attempt to reflect the traditional notions of the good life with an explicit connection to the promotion of native culture. According to Sahlins, this process has been happening for centuries, yet has become more visible and acquired more global dimensions since the 1980s. For him, it is necessary to recognize that global integration and local differentiation are simultaneous developments, meaning that homogeneity and heterogeneity are not mutually exclusive.<sup>56</sup>

The discussion about the possibilities of cultural innovation and variation is of great interest to contemporary anthropologists. Reflection on these issues invites us to rethink concepts such as modernity and tradition, pointing to the idea that tradition consists of the different ways in which transformation is accomplished.<sup>57</sup> This view is grounded upon questioning the classical notion of culture as a self-contained social unit, an intellectual current that began in the 1980s.<sup>58</sup> Rather, contemporary thinking about culture sees all social units as situated in time and history;<sup>59</sup> insists that the process of construction of identities and boundaries has an important political dimension;<sup>60</sup> and proposes a vision of culture as fluid, emergent, and dynamic.<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, the growth of shamanic rituals practiced by non-indigenous groups in Brazil's urban centers forces us to review the concepts of shaman and shamanism. In a recent article, Esther Jean Langdon points out that the expansion of forms of shamanism to non-indigenous groups can be considered part of the exchange between the local and global.<sup>62</sup> The growth of New Age shamanisms among Brazil's urban

populations forces us to recognize that shamanism is more than an indigenous phenomenon. Shamans and shamanisms should be seen today as dialogical categories, often negotiated at the boundaries of local indigenous societies and their interfaces with national and global groups.

Shamanisms today are phenomena that emerge dialogically based on interactions between the actors involved in their global revival—anthropologists, journalists, environmental organizations, health care professionals, indigenous peoples, and neo-shamanic groups, among others. The close network of relations formed during the last decade between the Guarani from Clear Waters village, Sacred Fire of Brazil, the Céu do Patriarca São José Santo Daime community, the regional medical team funded by the government, and the intense circulation of people, knowledge, and substances that took place in the Medicine Alliance, provides an example of such shamanic dialogue. Contemporary cases such as this lead us to question the notion of culture as internally homogeneous with clear and well defined boundaries. We instead suggest that contemporary shamanisms are often the product of dialogue, a constantly emergent phenomenon that is created and recreated through interactions between various actors in a postcolonial and postmodern world.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> The term *ayahuasca* comes from the Quichua language and means vine of the soul, the dead, or the spirits. See Richard Evans Schultes and Robert F. Raffauf, *Vine of the Soul: Medicine Men, Their Plants and Rituals in the Colombian Amazonia* (Santa Fe, N.M.: Synergetic Press, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> For an earlier version of this text, see Isabel Santana de Rose and Esther Jean Langdon “Diálogos (neo)xamânicos: encontros entre os Guarani e a ayahuasca,” *Revista Tellus* 10:18 (2010): 84–113.

<sup>3</sup> See Jeremy Narby and Francis Huxley eds., *Shamans through Time: 500 years on the Path of Knowledge* (New York, N.Y.: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2001); Marcel Mauss, “Esboco de uma teoria geral da magia,” in *Sociologia e antropologia* V. I. (Sao Paulo, Brazil: EPU/EDUSP, 1974), 37–176; Alfred Métraux, “Religion and Shamanism,” in *Handbook of South American Indians* 5, ed. Julian Steward (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1949), 559–99.

<sup>4</sup> See Richard Noll, “Shamanism and Schizophrenia: A State-specific Approach to the Schizophrenia Metaphor of Shamanic States,” *American Ethnologist* 10:3 (1983): 443–459; Georges Devereux, “Shamans as Neurotics,” *American Anthropologist* 63 (1961): 1088–90; Georges Devereux, “Normal and Abnormal: The Key Problem of Psychiatric Anthropology,” in *Some Uses of Anthropology: Theoretical and Applied*, eds. J. B. Casagrande and T. Gladwin (Washington, D.C.: Anthropological Society of Washington, 1956), 23–48; and Julian Silverman, “Shamans and Acute Schizophrenia,” *American Anthropologist* 69 (1967): 21–31.

<sup>5</sup> See Jane Monnig Atkinson, "Shamanisms Today," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21 (1992): 307–330.

<sup>6</sup> Sherry B. Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties," in *Culture, Power, History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, eds. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner (Princeton, N.J.: University of Princeton Press, 1984), 124–166.

<sup>7</sup> Atkinson, "Shamanisms Today," 307–330.

<sup>8</sup> Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Images of Nature and Society in Amazonian Ethnology," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 25 (1996): 179–200.

<sup>9</sup> See Robin M. Wright, "The Wicked and the Wise Men: Witches and Prophets in the History of the Northwest Amazon," in *In Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault Sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazônia*, eds. Neil Whitehead and Robin Wright (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), 82–109.

<sup>10</sup> In Brazil, the term *pajé* encompasses a variety of practitioners that is used for various indigenous and non-indigenous practitioners. For discussions on *caboclo pajelança*, see Véronique Boyer, "O pajé e o caboclo: de homen a entidade," *Mana* 5:1 (1999): 29–56; Gustavo de Britto Freire Pacheco, "Brinquedo de cura. Um estudo sobre a pajelança maranhense" (Ph.D. diss., Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2004), 295p.

<sup>11</sup> For a more radical expression of the anthropologic category of shamanism see Michael Taussig, "The Nervous System, part 1: Dada and Homesickness," *Kroeber Journal of Anthropology* 69–70 (1989): 32–61.

<sup>12</sup> See Esther Jean Langdon, "Introduction" in *Xamanismo no Brasil: Novas perspectivas*, ed. Esther Jean Langdon (Florianópolis, Brazil: Editora da UFSC, 1996), 9–37.

<sup>13</sup> Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, "Cosmology as Ecological Analysis: A View from the Rain Forest," *Man* 11 (1976): 307–18.

<sup>14</sup> Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Os pronomes cosmológicos e o perspectivismo ameríndio," *Mana* 2:2 (1996): 145–162, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 4 (1998): 469–488.

<sup>15</sup> Perspectivism builds upon a classic article originally published in 1979 that proposes the body and the construction of the person as the central paradigm for the comprehension of South American lowland native cultures, rather than that of kinship, which oriented ethnographic studies of African societies. See Anthony Seeger, Roberto da Matta, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, "A construção da pessoa nas sociedades indígenas brasileiras," in *Sociedades indígenas e indigenismo no Brasil*, ed. João Pacheco de Oliveira Filho (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: UFRJ/Editora Marco Zero, 1987), 11–29.

<sup>16</sup> Viveiros de Castro, "Images of Nature," 179–200.

<sup>17</sup> For an interesting discussion analyzing perspectivism among *caboclo* cosmologies, see João Valentin Wawzyniak, "Engerar: uma categoria cosmológica sobre pessoa, saúde e corpo," *Ilha, Revista de Antropologia* 5:2 (2003): 33–55.

<sup>18</sup> Carlos Fausto suggests that the relation between shamanism and understandings of illness among Amazonian cultures is expressed as predation, in which the victim is equated with the prey and the aggressive shaman is the hunter, the predator. The notion of cannibalism refers to the body that withers

and decays through sickness and death. Among many groups, illness or death is expressed as a result of a pathological object that is “cannibalizing” or “eating” the patient. See Carlos Fausto, “Feasting on People: Cannibalism and Commensality in Amazonia,” *Current Anthropology* 28 (2007): 497–530.

<sup>19</sup> Neil L. Whitehead, *Dark Shamans: Kanaima and the Poetics of Violent Death* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002); and Neil L. Whitehead and Robin Wright eds., *In Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault Sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazonia* (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> See Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) for more on how shamanism provided an engagement with modernity.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Jocks, “Spirituality for Sale: Sacred Knowledge in the Consumer Age,” *American Indian Quarterly* 20:3 (1996): 415–431; Jaques Galinier and Antoinette Molinié, *Les neo índios: une religion du III millenaire* (Nanterre, Odile Jacob, 2006); Anne Marie Losonczy and Silvia Mesturini “La selva viajera. Rutas del chamaismo ayahuasquero entre Europa y America,” *Religião e Sociedade* 30:2 (2010): 163–183.

<sup>22</sup> See Peter Gow, “River People: Shamanism and History in Western Amazonia,” in: *Shamanism, History, and the State*, eds. Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey (Ann Arbor, MI.: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 90–114; and Laura Pérez Gil, “Chamanismo y modernidade: Fundamentos etnográficos de un processo histórico,” in *Paraíso abierto, jardines cerrados: pueblos indígenas, saberes y biodiversidad*, eds. Óscar Calavia Sáes, Marc Lenaerts, and Ana María Spadafora (Quito, Ecuador: ABYA-YALA, 2004), 179–99.

<sup>23</sup> Atkinson, “Shamanisms Today,” 307–08.

<sup>24</sup> Michael Winkelman, *Shamanism: The Neural Ecology of Consciousness and Healing* (Westport, CT.: Bergin and Garvy, 2000), 310p.

<sup>25</sup> Atkinson, “Shamanisms Today,” 308.

<sup>26</sup> For an example of an exchange between urban professionals and Indians, see Alhena Caicedo Fernández, “Neochamanismos y modernidad. Lecturas sobre la emancipación,” *Revista Nómadas* 26 (2007): 114–147.

<sup>27</sup> Atkinson, “Shamanisms today,” 309.

<sup>28</sup> Beth Conklin and Laura R. Graham, “The Shifting Middle Ground: Amazonian Indians and Eco-politics,” *American Anthropologist* 97:4 (1995): 695–710; and Beth Conklin, “Body Paint, Feathers, and Videos: Aesthetics and Authenticity in Amazonian Activism,” *American Ethnologist* 24:4 (1997): 711–737.

<sup>29</sup> June Macklin, Victor A. Martinez, and Elizabeth Gonzalez Torres, “New Religious Movements and Ritual Transformations of the Modern Self,” *Scripta Ethnologica* 21 (1999): 35–58.

<sup>30</sup> The website of the group describes the nature of this healing ritual: “All that is unreal disappears when exposed to the ‘Fire of Truth.’ Through the search for your true nature, for who you really are, only the real remains, eternally.” <[www.fogosagrado.org.br](http://www.fogosagrado.org.br)> Accessed March 2011. Translation by the authors.

<sup>31</sup> The scholarship on ayahuasca is vast. Regarding its usage in Brazil, see Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Wladimir Araújo eds., *O uso ritual da ayahuasca* (Campinas, Brazil: Mercado de Letras, 2005); and Beatriz Caiuby Labate, Isabel S. de Rose,

and Rafael G. dos Santos, *Ayahuasca Religions: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Critical Essays* (Santa Cruz, CA.: MAPS, 2009), 160p.

<sup>32</sup> Edward MacRae, “The Ritual and Religious Use of Ayahuasca in Contemporary Brazil,” in: *DPF XII Policy Manual*, eds. Whitney A. Taylor, Rob Stewart, Kerry Hopkins, and Scott Ehlers (Washington, D.C.: The Drug Policy Foundation Press, 1999), 47–50.

<sup>33</sup> Beatriz Caiuby Labate, *A reinvenção do uso da ayahuasca nos centros urbanos* (Campinas, Brazil: Mercado de Letras, 2004), 535p.

<sup>34</sup> Beatriz Caiuby Labate, Edward MacRae, and Sandra Lucia Goulart, “As religiões ayahuasqueiras brasileiras em perspectiva,” in *Ayahuasca, Ritual and Religion in Brazil*, eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Edward MacRae (London, UK: Equinox, 2010), 1–20.

<sup>35</sup> Raquel Lima da Silva, “Natureza, Rainha da Floresta e indianidade: o caso da igreja do Santo Daime entre os índios Apurinã da aldeia Camicuã” (Undergraduate monograph, Universidade Federal do Acre, Rio Branco, Brazil, 2002), 43.

<sup>36</sup> Tiago Coutinho Cavalcante, “O Nixi Pae urbano. Uma possível interpretação junguiana do xamanismo amazônico” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 2011), 402.

<sup>37</sup> Valéria de Assis and Ivori José Garlet, “Análise sobre as populações guarani contemporâneas: demografia, espacialidade e questões fundiárias,” *Revista de Indias* 64:230 (2004): 35–54.

<sup>38</sup> Aldo Litaiff, *As divinas palavras: identidade étnica dos guarani-mbya* (Florianópolis, Brazil: Editora da UFSC, 2004), 159.

<sup>39</sup> Isabel Santana de Rose, “Tata endy rekoe—Fogo Sagrado: encontros entre os Guarani, a ayahuasca e o Caminho Vermelho.” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil, 2010), 435p.

<sup>40</sup> Hyral Moreira interview with Isabel Santana de Rose, 19 August 2008.

<sup>41</sup> Celita Antunes interview with Isabel Santana de Rose, 1 October 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Celita Antunes interview with Isabel Santana de Rose, 1 October 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Hyral Moreira interview with Isabel Santana de Rose, 19 August 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Esther Jean Langdon and Flávio Wiik, “Festa de inauguração do Centro de Turismo e Lazer: uma análise da performance identitária dos Laklânõ (Xokleng) de Santa Catarina,” *Ilha, Revista de Antropologia* 10 (2009): 171–199.

<sup>45</sup> Conklin and Graham, “The Shifting Middle Ground,” 695–710.

<sup>46</sup> Haroldo Evangelista Vargas, “Fortalecimento das lideranças espirituais da nação Guarani,” Project presented by the NGO Rondon Brazil to FUNASA, n.p., 2002, 08.

<sup>47</sup> Fundação Nacional de Saúde, *Política nacional de atenção à saúde dos povos indígenas*, 2nd ed. (Brasília, Brazil: Ministério da Saúde, 2002), 40p.

<sup>48</sup> See Esther Jean Langdon, “Uma avaliação crítica da atenção diferenciada e a colaboração entre antropologia e profissionais de saúde,” in *Saúde dos povos indígenas: Reflexões sobre antropologia participativa*, eds. Esther Jean Langdon and Luiza Garnelo (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: ContraCapa, 2004), 33–52.

<sup>49</sup> Vargas, “Fortalecimento das lideranças espirituais da nação Guarani,” 11.

<sup>50</sup> Marcelo França, “Relato da aldeia Yynn Morothi Wherá da Terra Indígena M’Biguaçu” (2008) <[http://www.neip.info/downloads/textos%20novos/relato\\_aldeia](http://www.neip.info/downloads/textos%20novos/relato_aldeia)>, accessed 17 November 2011.

<sup>51</sup> See Melissa Santana de Oliveira, “Kiringué i kuery Guarani. Infância, educação e religião entre os Guarani de M’Biguaçu, SC.” (M.A. thesis., Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil, 2004), 112, and Flávia Cristina de Mello, “Aetchá nhanderukuery karai retará: Entre deuses e animais. Xamanismo, parentesco e transformação entre os Chiripá e Mbyá Guarani.” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil, 2006), 295.

<sup>52</sup> See Valéria Mendonça de Macedo, “Nexos da diferença. Cultura e afecção em uma aldeia guarani na Serra do Mar” (PhD diss., Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil, 2010), 331.

<sup>53</sup> Luciane Ouriques Ferreira and Partícia Silva Osório, eds. *Medicina tradicional indígena em contextos: Anais da 1ª Reunião de Monitoramento*. (Brasília, Brasil, Ministério da Saúde/Fundação Nacional de Saúde. Projeto Vigisus II, 2007); Luciane Ouriques Ferreira “Entre discursos oficiais e vozes indígenas sobre gestação e parto no Alto Juruá: a emergência da medicina tradicional indígena no contexto de uma política pública” (Ph.D. diss., Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil, 2010), 256.

<sup>54</sup> Marshall Sahlins, “O ‘pessimismo sentimental’ e a experiência etnográfica: Por que a cultura não é um ‘objeto’ em via de extinção” (Part I), *Mana* 3:1 (1997): 41–73; and (Part II), *Mana* 3:2 (1997): 103–150.

<sup>55</sup> Sahlins, “O ‘pessimismo sentimental’ e a experiência etnográfica,” (Part I), 53.

<sup>56</sup> Sahlins, “O ‘pessimismo sentimental’ e a experiência etnográfica,” (Part I), 58.

<sup>57</sup> Sahlins, “O ‘pessimismo sentimental’ e a experiência etnográfica,” (Part I), 41–73, and (Part II), 103–150.

<sup>58</sup> Ortner, “Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties,” 144–157.

<sup>59</sup> See João Pacheco de Oliveira Filho, “A problemática dos ‘índios misturados’ e os limites dos estudos americanistas: um encontro entre antropologia e história,” in *Ensaio de antropologia histórica* (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Editora da UFRJ, 1999), 99–123.

<sup>60</sup> See Frederick Barth, “Os grupos étnicos e suas fronteiras,” in *O guru, o iniciador e outras variações antropológicas* (Rio de Janeiro: Brazil: Contra-Capa, 2000), 25–68.

<sup>61</sup> See Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, N.Y.: Harper Torchbooks, 1973), 13–34; Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance* (Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers Inc., 1977), 3–58; Bruce Mannheim and Dennis Tedlock, “Introduction,” in *The Dialogic Emergence of Culture*, eds. Dennis Tedlock and Bruce Mannheim (Urbana, IL.: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 1–32.

<sup>62</sup> Esther Jean Langdon, “Shamans and shamanisms: Reflections on anthropological dilemmas of modernity,” *Vibrant: Brazilian Virtual Anthropology* 4:2 (2007): 27.