

THE INCORPORATION OF UMBANDA BY SANTO DAIME

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ABSTRACT

In the generation that developed under the direction of Padrinho Sebastião, the Santo Daime witnessed significant and substantial transformations when considered in view of the religion founded some decades before by Mestre Irineu. In the context of this intense period of its expansion, among many symbolic changes and other inclusions, CEFLURIS welcomed Umbanda, which has gradually come to acquire a centrality in the whole ritual. This article recounts the historic events that prepared the way for the reception of Umbanda, and describes the process of the creation of diverse new types of *mediunic trabalhos* – mediumship works - for this line of Santo Daime. It proposes an interpretation of the reasons why Umbanda is suited to the cosmology of the Daimist Universe, exploring how it has come to satisfy latent needs within this context. Included among these are: the possibility to give voice to those on the margins of the power structure; a more cathartic alternative of religious expression, less repression of the body and its movement; and the possibility of more personal and direct contact with the Powers or Deities themselves.

In the course of the 20th Century in Brasil, starting from the first decades, encounters with ‘traditional use’ of *ayahuasca* - which extends from the Amazon Forest and its borders to practically every neighbouring country - resulted in the formation of new religions which represented developments and continuities of this source. Among these, one of the branches of the original ‘trunk’ of Santo Daime founded by Raimundo Irineu Serra, under the direction of Sebastião Mota de Melo, the Centro Ectico da Fluente Luz Raimundo Irineu Serra (Eclectic Centre of Flowing Universal Light Raimundo Irineu Serra) (CEFLURIS)² would spread the name of Santo Daime far and wide, expanding the practice way beyond the regions of its origin. In a few decades, it founded churches all over the national territories of

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² CEFLURIS, in this article, designates the strand created under the direction of Sebastião Mota de Melo

Brasil, and in different countries spanning five continents, developing a Daimist community that amounts to about four or five thousand affiliates, according to information from its Directors.³

In the generation that developed under the direction of Sebastião Mota de Melo, the Santo Daime witnessed significant and substantial transformations when considered in view of the religion founded some decades before by Mestre Irineu. A man of open, liberal personality, Padrinho Sebastião welcomed young travellers of the burgeoning global counter-culture to his community of Colônia Cinco Mil⁴, in Rio Branco, Acre, at the end of 1970's and in the following decade. It would be this relationship that resulted in the transformations that are a unique aspect of CEFLURIS, and that sent forth the expansion which created new churches all across the national territory and in various other countries. Within the context of this symbolic exchange resulting from its rapid expansion, CEFLURIS, among other approvals and inclusions, welcomed and began incorporating Umbanda⁵ within its rituals.

The object of this article is to recount the historic events that lead to the reception of Umbanda, which gradually acquired centrality within the whole ritual, and to suggest reasons why Umbanda is relevant and useful within the cosmology of the Daimist Universe.

³ According to Groisman (Goulart, 2004, pp.116-117) these countries are: Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, England, Wales, Belgium, France, Holland, Switzerland and Germany. Groisman does not utilize the concept of "centres" to define these groups, considering them to have a more fluid nature than the centres of CEFLURIS organized in Brasil. To this author, it is sufficient to refer to European "groups".

⁴ The name of this locale has its origin in the letting of land in the old rubber-boom days, sold at the time for 5,000 cruzeiros (old Brazilian currency) for each lot.

⁵ Recommended reading for a better understanding of Umbanda includes the following works, among others: Bastide, 1989; Brumana and Martinez, 1991; Concone, 1987; Negrão, 1996; Ortiz, 1988

Padrinho Sebastião, the expansion and the *hairies*

The departure from Alto Santo⁶ of a large group lead by Padrinho Sebastião⁷ soon after the passing of Mestre Irineu, marked the beginning of the independence of his Works in Colônia Cinco Mil. A new church rapidly developed, attracting a large number of participants. Soon enough, it began to attract graduates and the more affluent middle-class of Rio Branco, along with people from other regions of the country. By the end of the 1970's, it counted between 300 and 400 inhabitants, in a system of collective, shared work.⁸ Slowly, young backpackers, graduates from the affluent south-east and southern territories of Brasil, began to arrive in significant numbers; 'hippies', or would-be hippies – sometimes just university students on their holidays – such as were common all over Brasil in the decade called the decade of *desbunde*.⁹

The counterculture came late to Brasil, concurrent with the clashes against the military dictatorship by the guerrillas in Araguaia, and the tightening of repression in the Universities. Compared with similar regimes in Latin America, the Brazilian dictatorship was relatively tolerant to this behaviour. At the peak of political repression, the youth of the middle-classes toured the country brandishing their flags of free sex, spiritual search and the acid experience.¹⁰

⁶ Alto Santo is the modern day name of a region of Rio Branco, in Acre, where a church directed by Mestre Irineu was situated, today under the direction of his widow, Peregrina Gomes. Several dissidents from this original church set up their own churches in the same neighbourhood, mostly close to one another. Alto Santo has come to mean this group of churches.

⁷ Padrinho (the same with Madrinha), in Santo Daime, is a designation which typically refers to the director of a church. Goulart (1996) identifies the system of effective 'co-parenting', through Godparents, in rural Brasil, as one of the cultural roots of Santo Daime, and the origin of this name.

⁸ Cf. Edward MacRae, 1992, p.74

⁹ Translator's Note: There is no easy literal translation for this term. It refers to a period similar in essence to the 'flapper' days of the 1920's or the 'Summer of Love' in 1960's Europe and America, characterized by a sense of freedom and spiritual search.

¹⁰ Military dictatorships such as were seen in Argentina were far more concerned with suppressing behaviours designated as *alternative*, such as long hair and extravagant clothing, which were attacked as *subversive*. Episodes such as the pressure placed upon the *carioca* actress Leila Diniz indicate that in Brasil the times were very conservative, but *alternative* behaviour was not the focus of military repression.

They circulated throughout Brasil, moved by ideas of the counter-culture; a great number of travellers, a fair number originating from urban centres - usually the first to receive significant cultural waves of change. The emphasis was towards a search for new spiritual paradigms, for exotic and altered states of consciousness, and this was readily discovered in the practices of *ayahuasqueiros* in Acre, particularly in Santo Daime, a syncretic blend of elements agreeable to the religious expectations of the time. “*On the Road*” launched a generation of backpackers, along Brazilian roads, in search of themselves, on the routes identified as ‘mystical’. One of the main destinations was Machu Pichu, in Peru, and an alternative return route was through the port of entry to the Amazon, the way that passes through Cobija, in Bolivia, and on through Acre.

Sebastião, by this point, was already receiving *instructions* from his *mirações*¹¹ that people ‘from outside’ were going to arrive to help him in completing his mission. These first so-called *hairies* were welcomed by the community as the people ‘expected’ by the Padrinho. It would be some of these who later would return to their states of origin and go on to found the first churches of Santo Daime outside of the Amazon, initiating the expansion that has occurred and that has taken Santo Daime to almost every national territory and to many other countries across the World.

Padrinho Sebastião, therefore, distinguished himself, in relation to other local Daimista leaders, in this welcoming and reception of representatives of the counter-

¹¹ *Miração* comes from the Spanish expression *mirar*, to see. In Daimist terminology, it most likely has its origins in the eruption of dream-images and visions brought on by the effect of the Daime, but has broadened its meaning to include a wider field of alterations of consciousness, including deep emotions and clarifications in the form of insights and instructions.

culture, of children of the middle-classes from rich and educated parts of Brasil¹², which would lead to far-reaching consequences in the future direction of CEFLURIS.

The identification between Padrinho Sebastião and the *hippies* would not just be in the field of a general agreement and mingling of ideas. Increasing numbers of people were arriving in Colônia Cinco Mil from radically different social classes and backgrounds. In spite of the isolation of Rio Branco in relation to other cultural centres of the country, local children of the middle-classes, with good education, began circulating outside Acre in big cities, and returning with many of the concerns, ideals and habits that characterized the youth of the 60's and 70's. Among these was the use of *cannabis*, marijuana, popular among those identified with the counter-culture. Many of the visitors who began to arrive at Colônia Cinco Mil brought this attitude and practice with them. In the same way, in the other direction, the *hippies* became acquainted with the history of the church and with its mysterious, sacred drink. Waves of back-packers passed through, and some even remained.

The *macumbeiro*¹³ Ceará

While still in these inaugural times, the community at Colônia Cinco Mil had contact with a *macumbeiro* known as Ceará. For a period of five months this group of Daimistas, lead by Padrinho Sebastião, followed with fascination the spiritual works of this character.

Ceará arrived in February of 1977, presented by an influential member of the group of Padrinho Sebastião as an individual endowed with spiritual powers, capable of meeting the demands of the needy: helping a youth that suffered frequent fainting episodes, diagnosing the spiritual causes of sickness, attracting money, meeting the

¹² Cf. Goulart, 2004 pp. 100-101

¹³ Translator's Note: A sorcerer, literally one who practices *macumba* (see below)

need for healings, assisting and facilitating business concerns, etc. - as is the general environment of *macumba*.¹⁴

As described by the participants in these events, Cear was a *charismatic*¹⁵ man, often joyful and talkative. His typical behaviour, however, with those who sought a magical solution or defence for their afflictions, according to the reports of those who lived with him, was to use fear as a strategy. G., the central figure among the group – due to fainting and frequent *atuações*¹⁶ – who pioneered the first contact with Cear, relates the following experience: “I was pregnant with my second daughter. He had sworn that I would die in delivery, Cear. Then I said: Godfather, protect me, do not let anyone touch me! I focused, and he broke a few bottles...” reports Gecila Texeira de Souza. The warnings, or threats, would be repeated in other consultations, and this would be how, and in what manner, the relationship would arise with the *macumbeiro*, exaggerating and magnifying the coming difficulties, and subsequently presenting himself and his powers as the solution.

To use the definition of Mortimer:

He was a one-man show. The people sat in ordered seats like an audience, and he, centre-stage, guaranteed a spectacular the whole night. Bottle after bottle of *cachaça* (rum) was spilled, poured away. It was part of his ritual – to pour rum on the heads of participants called to the stage...
(Mortimer, 2000, p.147)

The fascination he held and exercised over Padrinho Sebastião and his community was great, to the point of disrupting the ritual calendar of the Santo Daime, which, inside the religious *ethos* of the Daimista, is of profound significance.

¹⁴ Here simply referring to the client-based relationship between one soliciting aid and a magical agent within the environment of popular Brazilian religiosity, vaguely – though not necessarily – identified with the Afro-Brazilian environment. i.e., a broadly applied, generic term which has its origin in rituals from which Umbanda would also be drawn in the early decades of the 20th Century.

¹⁵ *Charismatic* here designates qualities of an individual capable of attracting the sympathies of a group, which often grant him/her their leadership, sometimes through attribution of supernatural powers; or even extraordinary gifts granted by God for the good of the community.

¹⁶ *Atuação* is one of the ways Daimistas describe ‘incorporation’ or ‘possession’ by spirits.

Compliance with the norms of the ritual, which includes the so-called ‘official calendar’, holds a prominent position in the religious scale of values, and this indicates the high level of control exercised by Cear: “At times, the Padrinho seemed to be like a little lamb; everything he (Cear) said, the Padrinho would do.”

In the following months, Padrinho Sebasto and his group accompanied Cear in Works that were offered, carried out and lead by him, understood by the broader community, the companions – that is, the people of Padrinho Sebasto – to be *macumba*. According to Mortimer, “the Works were carried out in two locations. Mr Manoel Moraes had built a shed next to his house in the town. In the Colnia, a wooden structure, a *tronqueira* was erected, a house in the forest.”

The Works were unplanned, did not comply with a calendar or timetable, indeed they were often not even pre-arranged. It was not uncommon for someone to send for the Padrinho at his house in the morning, and call him to a Work somewhere. “And there went the Padrinho with his group of 10, 15, 20 people...”

The interpretation, with *hindsight*, of the co-participants combined understanding, is that Padrinho Sebasto was subject to a fascination, a ‘glamour’ by the charms of a sorcerer whose story had to diligently follow its own trajectory, and could not be prevented. This last line of interpretation affirms that the Padrinho had been *instructed* to let Cear continue with his works for a term of 5 or 6 months.

Alex Polari de Alverga, in *O Guia da Floresta*, relates that, in the same days, the Padrinho received instruction from the *astral* to erect his temple and community:

“...he had several notices of this confrontation to come, approaching a spiritual line that he little understood. In the first vision, he walked a road when he saw a black knight that followed him from afar. The knight came closer and closer, until finally they met at the end of the road. The understanding of the Padrinho throughout this vision was that the black

messenger's arrival was a symbol of something very heavy that was about to happen...The warnings were thick in the air..." (Alverga, 2005, p.123-124)

The ritual 'language' of Ceará had recognisable elements from magical practices widely spread in the field of Brazilian religiosity: consultation with spiritual entities, possession, the diagnosis of affliction and receiving instructions for defence against such manifestations of spiritual activity. The magical elements used ritually in his Works were no different to those encountered in *macumba* – gunpowder, animal sacrifice, the use of rum and tests and proofs of power, like dancing on broken glass [without injury], among others. The categories of spirits with whom Ceará ritually worked were those belonging to the *Umbandista* pantheon. To the *Right*, are the *caboclos*, and the *Orixás*, such as Ogum Beira Mar, who will play a crucial role in the outcome of this narrative. To the *Left* are the Exus, Tranca Rua, Zé Pelintra, Exu Caveira, the 'other side' of the Umbanda pantheon. According to the modern leader of CEFLURIS, Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, son of Padrinho Sebastião:

"...he worked with various spirits. He demonstrated that he worked with Pena Verde, Pena Branca.¹⁷ Sure, he worked with everything, but he didn't like to. He liked to work in the line of Tranca Rua¹⁸, doing evil."¹⁹

The heterogeneity of Umbanda permits great flexibility and plasticity in the appearance of new entities, which will vary depending on the regional context and how they appear.²⁰ Thus, Galo Preto ["Black Cockerel"], for example, one of the Exus that Ceará incorporated, might assume a featured role in some regions and be unknown in others; or, eventually, manifest in just one territory, or exclusively in the *aparelho*²¹ of just one particular medium.

¹⁷ "Green Feather", "White Feather" - entities in the line of Caboclos in Umbanda.

¹⁸ Translator's Note: "Lock Road", considered in that context a king of the Exus.

¹⁹ The interviews contained in this article are part of the material collected in the research of Alves Jr., 2007.

²⁰ For a more detailed description of this, see Alves Jr., 2007 pp. 112-114.

²¹ Translator's Note: "Device", or "apparatus", referring to the 'fluidic body' combined with the physical body, by which mediumship is made possible.

Ceará also had clients outside the circle of Daimistas. The presence of the people of Padrinho Sebastião helped legitimise his power to the impressionable, however. There are a variety of descriptions of the *macumbas* that accompanied those in Colônia Cinco Mil.

“His Works were different, they were with cachaça, with chickens, he would make a Work to flabbergast and astound. There were times he would say ‘*look, I want this many bottles*’, then he would break all those bottles and stand there, miserable, feeling sick. The man was powerful, and part of that was him for sure, but this is what, thank God, gave us the understanding of many things. He presented to us what Satan is.”

Ceará was explicit in expressing his alliance with the entities on the *Left*. For him, this preference also meant he assigned no value whatsoever to the notion of doing good. He clearly demarcated two fields of activity and incorporation and indicated that he belonged to the unconstrained field.

“Alfredo, you want to know something? There are only two foremen to follow: one is your father, the other is me. Now, I only want to do evil, sure – I’m not in this to be nice.” And he’s working and saying: “I’m not fooling anyone here, if you’re not with the bearded one, you’re with me. Now, I won’t take you to Heaven, no way.”

The fall

From a given moment, however, Ceará transformed his discourse, reflecting a change in the interplay of forces, in what he presented as a clash between the ‘two foremen’: one, representing the phalanges of Light, which Padrinho Sebastião would be the vehicle for, and the other, expressed in Ceará, representing the phalanges of Evil, lead by the king of the Exus, Tranca Rua.

Ceará said that the entities of the Left which accompanied him had expressed the intention to take Daime. To Daimistas, who still today serve this sacred beverage to individuals who are possessed by dark spirits within the ceremonies to *illuminate*

*them or guide them*²², these Exus, in this moment, have expressed the desire to be *indoctrinated*.

Possessed by his Exus, Ceará took Daime for them. It is understood that the entities by which Ceará was possessed, took Daime using his body, that is to say, through him. In meeting with the Light that is represented by the Daime, the Exus – until then in the service of evil – abandoned these practices, and for this reason were no longer under the will and command of Ceará. Once Tranca Rua had decided to take Daime, it symbolised the beginning of the downfall of Ceará. For the *aparelho*, the battle had been lost.

In the words of Padrinho Alfredo:

The hour arrived that his own *aparelho*, Ceará, was demonstrating that my father was the ‘foreman’ of truth. When he saw that he was not going to win, then he did the opposite: he began to take Daime, the *aparelho*, for every type of Exu and suffering spirit. Exu, Exu Caveira, Exu-I-don’t-know-what, Galo Preto. He called them all ‘Exu’. One time Ceará said: “Ah, Alfredo, this is no good. Tranca Rua wants to take Daime. If Tranca Rua takes Daime, he’s finished”.

The next step in the final fall of Ceará would be for him to take Daime himself. This did not take long to occur.

I always visited Padrinho Wilson. I was there, at 6 or 7 o’clock, and that man showed up, he came there, half stumbling, like this, possessed. When he arrived at the house of Padrinho Wilson, he said: “Hi, Alfredo!”

Me: “Hi, Ceará, is that you?”

“It’s me. So you’re here.”

He said: “Mister Wilson, I came to take Daime”.

The Padrinho took a scare! “But didn’t you say you didn’t want to?”

“Well, I decided to take Daime”.

Just like that! He wanted it to be over, just finished.

Padrinho Wilson was in the Emergency Room - that was a place that Mestre Irineu had given to him. He opened it up, gave a dose to him, took a dose and gave me a dose also, for us to provide assistance to him. He stayed there for a

²² In fact, the notion of administering Daime for the negative spirits that manifest through incorporation in a session is among the teachings left by Ceará and integrated into the religious practices of the Santo Daime.

period of 10 minutes, then said he was already *seeing*. In 20 minutes: “I can see everything!” I really don’t think it was more than half an hour: “Mister Wilson, I saw everything! I’m going to leave.” Padrinho Wilson: “No! No! Mestre Irineu said that we must stay for two hours with a person!”. “No, No, Mister Wilson, I see it all, I am already going, goodbye!”

Presenting himself as a powerful sorcerer, followed by a period as unofficial leader of the spiritual works without any contest, fearless and charismatic, it had not been difficult for Ceará to exercise his powers of seduction over the women of the community. Thus was the ground laid for the scenario of his eventual downfall. In the words of Regina Pereira:

He had a charisma, you see? Friendly, you know, this delicate person. He was that way. And so the women ‘fell in the dance’. But also, afterwards, they explained that they fell for him because they were fascinated, charmed, there was no escape from it...he sweet-talked them, you know?

Concurrent with the gradual but progressive delivery of his Guides²³ to the light of the Daime, so did the cheating and sexual misconduct of Ceará himself come to the surface of the community. In the period that he had been a part of the community, Ceará had seduced virgin girls and wives alike, and this was being discovered. Other members of the group that had accompanied Padrinho Sebastião in the intense cycle of demands and spells Ceará had performed, in turn, appeared to tire and become gradually free of the fascination that he had held over them. When the Padrinho himself decided to undertake the removal of Ceará from the community, he was immediately followed by supportive disciples.

By this time, some of the wives who had been unfaithful had finally reported their indiscretions to their husbands, who were, predictably, deeply affected by strong indignation at what had transpired.

²³ I refer here to the process by which the Exus with whom Ceará *worked* asked to take Daime, and thus became aligned with the *Doctrine*, thereby leaving Ceará.

Dad gave advice and counsel: “Oh, if your woman has truly wronged you, then by all means, split up with her, but let’s not rush things.” But that’s not how it went, and they rushed all the same.” – relates Padrinho Alfredo.

The fears of Ceará, that if he himself were to consecrate the Daime then it would be the end of him, were confirmed. Only a few days after he appeared in the Emergency Room of Padrinho Wilson asking to take Daime, it was all over. In conversation with all the betrayed husbands, Padrinho Sebastião had managed to convince them to not adopt a more ‘drastic’ approach to their grievances. But this time, the luck of Ceará did not go in his favour. It came to pass that on the 2nd of August, 1977, he returned to the Emergency Room of Padrinho Wilson, and there he was encountered by an angry gathering of the people he had wronged.

The guy was saying that he had lost the battle, for real, you know? He was delivering everything, in as much as when he was taking the Daime, there, in that house, he said: “Now my misery is complete!” – the Daime showed him. In that house, the Emergency Room, for real. In the room he took Daime...the ‘act’ was in the kitchen.

The grisly murder of Ceará sent shockwaves through Rio Branco. His tormentors were brought before Padrinho Sebastião, and held to await the arrival of the police. They were tried by a jury of their peers twice, and both times unanimously acquitted, in a time and in a region where ‘defence of honour’ was easily utilized as an often successful defence of crimes such as this.

The duel in the astral between the foremen

For the *people of Juramidam* under the protection of Padrinho Sebastião, the war was not ended with the death of the *aparelho* of the Tranca Rua. There was still much agony waiting in battles which would now be moved to the spiritual plane, at the end of which the *king of the Exus*, Tranca Rua, would come to be *indoctrinated* and take part in the shaping of the battalion of the Queen of the Forest. The Exu

Tranca Rua was, by his own report, imprisoned in the body of Padrinho Sebastião, who fought a battle for its purification and subsequent indoctrination.

A few years passed before the community of Colônia Cinco Mil transferred to its promised New Jerusalem²⁴, the Rio do Ouro (River of Gold), enough time for the Colônia to live through a period of intense growth. At the end of the 1970's, it already counted more than 300 members.²⁵ The hippies had injected new dynamics, including the practice of communal living, which the Padrinho had adopted. In religious discourse, Padrinho Sebastião began to emphasise the need for a life more *sacred*, more *holy*, avoiding the deviations inevitable in the *world of illusion*. Also, his ongoing clash in the battle to indoctrinate Tranca Rua would justify the search for a locale *of strength* to sustain itself.²⁶

In this period Padrinho Sebastião gave the first signs of the agony with which he was going to live for the following years. Once again, in a Work of São João, he received an announcement of the fight that he was slowly battling. He was dancing during a strong *miração* when he was shaken by something that bolted among the rows. Alfredo, his son, was there to help him:

My Father said that it opened a cage inside of him, while a bat the size of a man was passing. This was in the church of Colônia Cinco Mil. An eagle flew over there, and grabbed hold of that whole business. It dragged the giant bat, and closed the cage, capturing it inside of him.

This day would be the beginning of the suffering of Padrinho Sebastião, which lasted about 3 years. Unable to fight it there in the Colônia, the Padrinho “hurried to move further into the depths of the jungle” – says Padrinho Alfredo.

²⁴ Once obliged to leave the Rio do Ouro, the project of the New Jerusalem moved to Mapiá.

²⁵ Cf. Mortimer, 2000, p.172

²⁶ “In 1978 he was already thinking that he would not stay any longer in Colônia Cinco Mil”, R.P.M interviewed by the author, audio recording, Ceu do Mapiá, Pauini, Amazonas, January 2007

Following this, on his initial visit to the Rio do Ouro, he suffered the first strong manifestations of the illness. According to Mortimer “it was his heart; that was the main thing that presented problems.” (2001, p.209)

In 1980 the community transferred to the Rio do Ouro, and in next to no time it was numbering about 200 people. Alfredo remained in Colônia Cinco Mil, charged with the administration there during the period of transition. The Rio do Ouro is remembered as a period of great difficulty. Apart from anything else, those who decided to accompany the Padrinho progressed very slowly. The first manioc fields of cassava were planted, the first clearings opened and the first constructions erected. With food strictly rationed at many times, often the residents had to go hungry. Communication with the city was precarious and long-winded.²⁷ Malaria attacked the group with force, with most of the community under its convulsive, most extreme effects. In this scenario, the Padrinho opened the Rio do Ouro to the first *Trabalhos de Estrela* [Star Works] – those requested by Tranca Rua while still in the *aparelho* of Ceará – in a clearing in the forest that he had ordered prepared. It was there, in Rio do Ouro, that he first instituted the use of a table in the shape of a six-pointed star, which today distinguishes the Works of CEFLURIS. The Star Temple would only be constructed a few years later, in Mapiá, where the change became definitive.

In Colônia Cinco Mil, Alfredo, who had stayed to organize the rearward exit, also underwent an intense time of personal purification, interpreted by his peers and by he himself as a spiritual passage from which was instituted the *Trabalho de Sao Miguel* – The Saint Michael Works – about which we will speak later.²⁸ On his recovery, Alfredo planned a visit to Rio do Ouro to present the new work to his father.

²⁷ Mortimer gives a vivid account of this in book *Bença, padrinho!*, 2000. The information in this paragraph is from him.

²⁸ For a description of the new rituals instituted during and after the direction of Padrinho Sebastião, see the Table “Types of Rituals performed in Santo Daime” at the end of this text.

The Rio do Ouro is recognised as the first locality of the *atuações* of Padrinho Sebastião. His experience with the strong passage of his son, recently made inheritor of his spiritual leadership of the community, coupled with the intense period in the company of Ceará, seemed to have opened the doors for Works of *incorporation*, even though Padrinho Sebastião was practically the only one to incorporate. He, throughout this time, became more and more ill, though it didn't prevent another move, this time to the shores of the igarapé Mapiá. In January of 1983, due to problems with land-rights, they left their manioc fields and buildings in the Rio do Ouro, and, once again, began an adventure to find another locality in the forest.

In Mapiá, the Star Temple was rapidly constructed, and there soon began sessions inside for the *indoctrination* of spirits that remained firmly imprinted in the collective memory of all in the community. There, many were able to witness the Padrinho doing works *atuado* [possessed], again. Curiously, however, it was neither with Exus, nor Caboclos, nor even his old Guides, that the Padrinho was incorporated.

As Regina Pereira relates:

...when it began, he was only possessed by things that perturbed and disturbed the community, such as jealousy, envy, ignorance. Virtually all of the first incorporations of the Padrinho were the Seven Deadly Sins! When he arrived in the Star Temple he became possessed, and stayed that way, and it was so ugly, he would speak in languages that nobody understood, and then he would say that it had been, for example, "Jealousy itself".

The alliance with Tranca Rua

Throughout this sequence of events, the health of Padrinho Sebastião deteriorated steadily. Often between life and death, many times unmistakably on the threshold, Padrinho Sebastião agonized in his room. His followers maintained a hawk-like vigil by his room, always looking for news. Many times, fearing the final hour, a candle was lit and placed in his hand. One day, however, consecrating *Santa*

Maria in the presence of his sons, Alfredo – who relates the story – and Waldete, all were surprised by a sudden change in the Padrinho. He had not manifested in this fashion for a long time. An entity presented itself as the being Ogum Beira Mar, and asked that Padrinho Sebastião be taken to another room, where Tranca Rua wanted to give an explanation. In the room, immediately, he once again became possessed:

Firstly, he cried unstoppably for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, he began to give an explanation, speaking well of this Doctrine, of the good healing he was receiving through that *aparelho*: that thanks to that *aparelho* he was receiving light and receiving a healing here. Then, he asked if the people there would accept him as a brother, for he had been healed inside here. Everyone accepted. “But, from now onward, I want more respect for these plants, because neither in Heaven nor on Earth does there exist remedy equal to the Daimé and to Santa Maria. Especially for the legions of spirits that need it.” Then there was much talking.

This was the very day, as reported by those present, that the Padrinho began to get better. He had suffered years of illness, at the end of which his health was broken. But the agony which had put him at death’s door for so long ended there and then. It was that moment, brought by Ogum Beira Mar – the same that Ceará invoked when he made a uniform of Ogum Beira Mar for Padrinho Sebastião²⁹ – which marked an alliance from which was drawn the immediate cure of the Padrinho; and the Exu Tranca Rua was put to the service of the Doctrine. “I said: *OK! Welcome, then! You will be a Guardian of our territories, of our places.*”

The pact sealed with Tranca Rua opened the *Left* in the Daimist cosmology, and emerged as the founding of the presence of Umbanda in the Works. A popular, less literate Kardecism – in which the mediumship practices of Padrinho Sebastião were steeped – merged with the Brazilian taste for the practices of healing and praying-cures within the ubiquitous Catholic religiosity, and, particularly, with the

²⁹ Cf. Alves Jr., 2007 pp. 156-157. In the early days of the arrival of Ceará he provided clothes for Padrinho Sebastião, white and with the name Ogum Beira Mar written on them. When he tried them on, according to Padrinho Alfredo, he immediately incorporated, for the first time, an entity that called itself Ogum Beira Mar.

Amazonian nuance now trodden by Padrinho Sebastião, in recognition of this important Afro-Brasilian syncretism – Umbanda – where Exus and Pomba-Giras find their place in the pantheon.³⁰ Still, it was not spoken of as Umbanda, but this emphasis on trance possession was now a lived experience, in connection with the spirits, and now through its Powers and Deities, and the likely relationships which would be established with them – one of them through the *macumbeiro* Ceará: “But this is a study, for us to know how to fight that force, that we should not live only in one way. That [challenge] had to come so that people would unravel it, and leave the wickedness, and for us to enter into goodness” – says Julia Chagas.

After those events and their tragic end, we encounter, among the retrospective views of the people and testimonies of those days, a certain ambiguity in the judgment of the influences of Ceará. At the same time as he is considered an *aparelho* of Evil Incarnate, his teachings and contributions are also recognised. In the affirmation of the actual President of CEFLURIS, Padrinho Alfredo: “I say that the guy worked for the good, because he did not only practice *macumba*, no, he knew all sides, but he would say: *my line is this here, I just want to work evil!*”

It is important to highlight that the events resulting from the presence of Ceará together with the people of Padrinho Sebastião are in no small part related as an *internal narrative*, in the sense that, consciously or unconsciously, we are presented with an interpretation of the facts. Of more interest to our research than the undeniable objective facts is the subjective lens through which they are remembered,

³⁰ It is noteworthy that in the interpretation of the son and successor of Padrinho Sebastião, Alfredo, Osvaldo, born in the state of São Paulo and who was the first instructor of Sebastião in mediumship practices, in actual fact brought teachings “of Umbanda”, in as much as, in the eyes of Alfredo, this man “worked with several categories of beings”. Understood this way, the presence of a wider variety of entities than is admitted in Kardecist spiritism – restricted to familial spirits and some spirits of light, such as the doctor Bezerra de Menezes – indicates the presence of Umbanda. This interpretation, distinguishing itself from that of other researchers who see only the presence of Kardec, maintains the same logic of the popular framework, which interprets the presence of Umbanda from more generic features than just its actual manifest configuration. It is a fact that this approach extends the areas and reach of Umbanda beyond its physical and institutional presence as presently understood.

which we see flows from the religious zeal in which all were submerged. We have thus, in the episode of Ceará, two distinct moments: one, in which he was the protagonist of various events, and the other, after his death, when the story continues, but is transferred to the spiritual world, when the duel between good and evil, between light and shadow, between Padrinho Sebastião and Ceará, or between the Spirit of Truth and the King of Exus, which took place within the *mirações* produced by the Daime – which is to say, where the interpretive possibilities are accentuated, and perhaps where the interpreter, or narrator, is speaking their personal truth to us.

The aftermath of that period in which Ceará remained in Colônia Cinco Mil points out the variety of the entirety of the concepts within Umbanda that, through him, contributed to the religious notions of the group there: Exus, Caboclos, rituals involved in the demands of the environment, possession, sacrifice and demonstrations of strength. In the reports of the members who were there to interpret these events, the King of the Exus, Tranca Rua, surrendered to the superiority of the Light and allied himself to the Santo Daime, with whom he entered into a contract, starting from then, to defend the Doctrine against the forces of Evil. We must recognize, however, that Ceará contributed a series of understandings, until then non-existent, that were incorporated into the total Daimist cosmology.³¹

One of the flagship events, as considered by many of the participants during that period, was the participation of Ceará in the first contact between Padrinho Sebastião and the Umbanda entity Ogum Beira Mar.³² As we have already seen, it

³¹ Such as the Works of *tronqueira*, the practice of administering Daime to manifested suffering spirits, the Star Works and Temple, entities of the Umbanda pantheon, such as caboclos, Exus, and at least one Orixá. For deeper analysis of these contributions, see Alves Jr., (2007, pp.153-157)

³² Ogum is one of the Orixás of which the Afro-Brazilian pantheon is composed; in Umbanda He is a warrior and is syncretized, among others, with the Catholic Saint George. Ogum Beira Mar is an Umbandist entity, one of the Lesser Orixás which act as intermediaries between the Head Orixá and the phalanges of one of their seven respective lines. There exists, therefore, other Oguns, such as Ogum Iara and Ogum Megê, among others.

would be this entity, under the most dramatic of conditions, who would announce the submission of the King of Exus, Tranca Rua, to the mission of Padrinho Sebastião.

It is Padrinho Alfredo, in one of his *hinos*, who makes the first reference in an official Daimist *hinário* to the entities of the Umbanda pantheon. “Agradecendo ao Pai Eterno e à Rainha Iemanjá, agradecendo a todos seres da corrente Ogum Beira Mar.”³³ Here we see a citation to Ogum Beira Mar that comes accompanied by a citation to another Orixá, Iemanjá. From this point onwards, we find references to the Umbanda pantheon reproduced in many important *hinários* of the Santo Daime.

These are some examples of the concepts and ritual practices brought to the Santo Daime, beginning with the relationship with Ceará in Colônia Cinco Mil, which helped assist in the acceptance of Umbanda in the Doctrine when it arrived more explicitly – in large part due to the conversion of many members of a *carioca* (Rio-based) Umbanda terreiro, including its Mae-de-Santo.

The contributions of the passage of Ceará in Colônia Cinco Mil sometimes refers to practices or ritual spaces not used in the daily routines of typical churches, such as the *tronqueira*, but which nevertheless establish a continuity with Umbanda, and thus are available for re-interpretation and integration according to how close or distant individual pontos (churches) wish to be to this line. The same can take place with ritual activities, such as *firmar o ponto do Tranca Rua* [firming the point of Tranca Rua] before the beginning of the Works in any church³⁴: how can one ask for the protection of this controversial figure from Umbanda without implicitly affirming

³³ Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, *O Cruzeirinho*, hymn no. 131 *Ogum Beira Mar*, Ceu do Mapiá, Pauini

³⁴ Here we see a similarity with Umbanda, which has the procedure of *assentamentos* [“settlements”] as places which, through magical procedures, provide the protection of certain Orixás to the *terreiro*. Sometimes these are *casinhas*, little houses where ritually prepared objects are prepared to facilitate the communication with and intercession of certain Orixás. This is the case with the *tronqueira*, an area for the protection of (and from) Exu. There are *assentamentos* for Ogum, Oxalá, Oxossi, and more besides. In Santo Daime, there are ritually defined *pontos*, points: the *ponto* do Cruzeiro, “for the souls”, the *ponto* of Saint Michael and the *ponto* of Tranca Rua; these two, according to Padrinho Alfredo, could be only one. In these places are lit – *anchored* – candles, throughout the Works. Some churches, however, anchor the two *pontos* separately. The given explanation for this is that Saint Michael is charged with the protection of the interior of the church, while the Exu Tranca Rua, at the doorway, or gate, is charged with protection from external enemies.

the legitimacy of Umbanda as a source of entities, understanding and knowledge? Some of these contributions of Ceará, once inserted as neologisms in the daily ritual activities of the churches of CEFLURIS, brought with them encapsulated concepts that filtered through to the cosmological interpretations of the groups, according to their own inherent logic, and thus prepared the development of the incorporation of Umbanda into Santo Daime.

The scenario of expansion

The mid-1980's saw the birth of churches in Rio de Janeiro, in Visconde de Mauá and in Brasília. The church Céu do Mar, in Rio de Janeiro, grew very quickly and attracted many famous artists with influence in the media, ensuring a swift and wide dissemination of this religion newly arrived from the forests. In Visconde de Mauá, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the ex-guerrilla fighter, Alex Polari, founded the church of Céu da Montanha, which also, in very short time, would see official trabalhos attracting more than 400 participants.³⁵ Other smaller centres began to take their first steps – Sao Paulo, for example, would see the establishment of the churches Céu de Midam and Flor das Aguas. The intense interchange of this proliferation was due, in no small part, to the two churches cited above (Céu do Mar and Céu da Montanha), which would act as agents to bring in the first phase in which Umbanda would be more explicitly named.

With the birth of new churches in the South, particularly in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the flow of new converts to Céu do Mapiá, and the growth of new groups in the larger and more developed cities of Brasil intensified. Young representatives of the 'alternative' Universe – backpackers, and 'hairies' or 'long hairs' (*cabeludos*) as they came to be known – had already imported into Colônia Cinco Mil concepts and

³⁵ Confirmed in testimony collected in conversation with various participants in these events.

practices that clearly set apart CEFLURIS from all the other *ayahuasqueiro* religions.³⁶ The churches in the state of Rio de Janeiro – Céu do Mar in the capital, and Céu da Montanha in Visconde de Mauá – were testament to the attraction that Santo Daime had for members of the counter-culture. In a similar manner, Umbanda fit the mystical expectations of an emergent *new spiritual consciousness*³⁷, which subsequently revealed itself to be paradigmatic.

It was the approach of, and alignment between, an Umbanda *terreiro* – composed of ‘alternative’ youths directed by the Mae-de-Santo Baixinha – and Santo Daime that saw the rise of Umbanda, already clearly delineated, within the religious concepts of CEFLURIS.

Legitimacy was lent to this syncretism by the receptiveness of Padrinho Sebastião, a man whose personality was remarkably open to new ideas, and to whom notions about mediumship occupied a great central importance. Approaching the subject of mediums, he gradually and progressively opened a space for the mediumship practice of incorporation, and encouraged the development of Umbanda rituals in Céu do Mapiá. By the time of his passing, CEFLURIS was already strongly marked by the presence of Umbanda.

Without doubt, the open personality of Padrinho Sebastião, in the context of a religion – the line of CEFLURIS – and the charismatic bias which made him the uncontested leader³⁸, would have emblematic repercussions on what already was, in and of itself, eclectic and inclusive. There is a long list of things to corroborate this

³⁶ The use of *Cannabis sativa* and the notion of living in community, for example.

³⁷ To use a term coined by Luis Eduardo Soares, 1994

³⁸ Labate (2004) and Goulart (2004) have rendered an analysis of charismatic leadership, taking a lead from Weber’s *Economy and Society: fundamentals of comprehensive sociology*, identifying in the leaders of the Santo Daime many of the attributes related by the author, such as *hereditary charisma* and *the routine-established-from-charisma* among others. For a broader review of *charisma* and *charismatic leadership* see Labate (2004, pp.260-271) and Goulart (2004, pp. 83-85; 149; 162-164; 263)

claim: he was originally a spiritist medium, who sought his healing in the Santo Daime works of Mestre Irineu; he possessed that perspective so characteristic of *vegetalistas* of receptivity to the study of ‘power-plants’, among which his re-signification of *Cannabis Sativa* in the Daimist cosmology stands out [not uncontroversially]; he received and opened the space in his community to the arrival of the ‘*hairies*’, thus converting many of them; he enthusiastically allowed the study of a varied range of works of the ‘*New Age*’ brought to the forest by new converts; he accepted the presence and teachings of the *macumbeiro* Ceará; and he welcomed and sheltered, one by one, the mediums – whether graduates of Umbanda or not – and their share of knowledge, which could be aggregated to the Doctrine. It was in making his first voyage to the South of Brasil that he first met with a Mae-de-Santo and members of her group, which would be the final step in installing Umbanda once and for all in the body of legitimate experience within Santo Daime, a fact which is still unfolding today, and which is far from any predictable or foreseeable outcome.

The Work of Sao Miguel

The first years of the 1980’s were abundant with events of great significance to Santo Daime. In the South of Brasil, the first churches of the expansion began to sprout. In Colônia Cinco Mil, meanwhile, the events which transpired there are referred to – by those who were there to testify – as the *atuações* of Sao Miguel by Padrinho Alfredo. This refers to a time of deep atonement and suffering of the son of Padrinho Sebastião, in the circumstance of having newly been appointed to receive the spiritual leadership of the line inaugurated by Sebastião Mota.³⁹

Padrinho Alfredo had stayed behind in Colônia Cinco Mil as administrator, with the function of supporting the work of Rio do Ouro and the gradual move of all

³⁹ Cf. Mortimer, 2000, pp. 184-185

that temporarily remained behind. During this time, he was stricken with an overwhelming distress and affliction, which obliged him to be removed for weeks, drinking only water and Daime, and watched over by a few companions posted for this vigil. Chico Corrente and Lucio Mortimer were among them. To the latter was offered the long hymn “*Com o Poder do Ceu*”⁴⁰, that today opens the Work of Sao Miguel and the *chamados* (calls) to Sao Miguel in the Work of Mesa Branca, two new rituals introduced by Padrinho Alfredo, with important implications for the object of our study here.

Mortimer analyses:

Those days that followed were a huge tribulation for the new commander, who, more than just suffering from shaken health, also still waged a spiritual battle with the *macumbeiro*. That’s right, that old character was returned to upset again, in dreams and fevers and delusions. I can only comment on this detail: the tragic story of that man has never once left the unconscious of the people. (Mortimer, 2000, p.192)

It is no coincidence that the previous hymn⁴¹, also received in the middle of these arguments, that begins with the line “I am going to close my doors so that the enemy cannot enter”, is dedicated to Manoel Moraes, one of the victims of the traps of Ceará, and, at the end, one of his tormentors and killers.

Once again, the memory of Ceará justified the bitterness and spiritual challenges which the community was passing through. The suffering was interpreted as insufficient indoctrination, not so much of the King of Exus, but of the very soul of the sorcerer himself, and of the unholy phalanges that still accompanied him, preying in the shadows, and of the agents of wickedness affecting the group and to which they all remained, negatively, tied. The instructions which Padrinho Alfredo received in this present clash would mobilize Colônia Cinco Mil in a true joint effort of cleansing:

⁴⁰ Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, *O Cruzeirinho*, hymn no. 98, *Com o Poder do Ceu*, Ceu do Mapia, Pauini

⁴¹ Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, *O Cruzeirinho*, hymn no. 97, *Portas Fechadas*, Ceu do Mapia, Pauini

it was necessary to fight the impurities left hidden by poor ‘sterilization’, from the material plane to the spiritual. To paint the picture vividly, it was requested, for the sake of purification, that those hippies who wore their hair long had it cut; from then on, [male] long-hair became stigmatized by the community. Bonfires, at certain times required by Cear and called *despacho* [which can mean order, but also dismiss, or send away] were remembered; members of the community dedicated themselves, at the request of Padrinho Alfredo, to dig up the coals and ashes that Cear had asked to be buried in front of the church. These events explain the fashion by which they influenced the Work of Sao Miguel, in its origin, and the character of the work – the opportunity to enter into contact with the impurities of one’s own soul, or with the foul spirits that arise and thus proceed to eliminate the darkness and shadows from the soul. Note also how so many of the events surrounding Cear had entered into the local imagination, to the point of acquiring a mythic aura, and were now composed in the context of religious explanations of the world.

According to Mortimer (2000, p.194): “...it was in this time that we incorporated into the Doctrine the Work of Sao Miguel. I helped to arm the ritual with selected hymns and mediumistic prayers of spiritual cleansing...” In fact, the Work of Sao Miguel would be the first official ritual of *banca aberta*, that is, where incorporation of spirits is permitted, dedicated to the cleansing of spiritual impurities, the shadows, and the guidance and illumination of suffering spirits.⁴² It thus aligned itself with the concept of *trabalhos de misericordia*, [“works of mercy”] with the dark

⁴² That which would later come to be known as the Cura, the Work of Healing of Padrinho Sebastiao, formed progressively. It was a work of *banca aberta*, like the Star Works, depending on the direction of the commander of the session. Perhaps, in face of the still incipient institutionalization of CEFLURIS, it was not so rigorously defined and documented at the time, as the Works of Saint Michael and Mesa Branca later would be. With the creation of the Works of Saint Michael, the Works *de banca* were concentrated entirely within that structure. Following this, the Work of Mesa Branca, in large part based upon the structure of Saint Michael, also came to play that role. In both, emblematically, we can verify the collaborative role of agents *of the South*, with Padrinho Alfredo, playing a role in the institutionalization of these Works: Lucio Mortimer, in the works of Saint Michael, and Alex Polari de Alverga and Maria Alice Freire, among others, in the Works of Mesa Branca.

spirits in need of indoctrination and illumination, which can be achieved with the help of mediums engaged in the task. The long fight of Padrinho Sebastião with the Exus, beginning with the *macumbeiro* Ceará giving the sacred drink to his phalanges of the Left, and subsequently in his own body, while attempting the indoctrination of Tranca Rua, appeared to have opened another way of operating with mediumship, now inside the Santo Daime.

The Work of Sao Miguel, then, represented an outlet for a succession of ritual formats that accepted incorporation – possession – as a tool for spiritual work. We have, therefore, a progressive development of Works created under the command of Padrinho Sebastião which open the way – or even emphasise – *atuações*. The Star Works, as were oriented by the Exu Tranca Rua, were a development of the Works of healing with *banca aberta*. For a time, it was the ritual format of reference for works where possession was admitted, but eventually the time arrived where, according to Alex Polari de Alverga “...the use of *banca* in Cura [healing] Works was stopped, and was left only for Sao Miguel”.

The new fardados Baixinha’s terreiro

Meanwhile, in the South, in the year 1982, Céu do Mar was born, the church in Rio de Janeiro directed by the psychologist Paulo Roberto Souza de Silva, while Alex Polari de Alverga began his Works with a group that would soon become Céu da Montanha, in Visconde de Mauá. By 1984, Céu da Montanha had established a thriving and prosperous community. Thus, in 1985, when Padrinho Sebastião travelled for the first time to Rio de Janeiro, he was already able to encounter a large and new contingent of Daimistas.

Among the new contacts made by Padrinho Sebastião, the most significant, in terms of the object of this research, was with a small group of Umbandistas in the interior of the state of Rio de Janeiro. This small group of young *cariocas* – probably of the same profile that were called *cabeludos*, or ‘*hairies*’ in the Daimist community in Rio Branco – formed the initial core of the *terreiro* directed by Baixinha.

A series of connections led its members to encounter the *carioca* church of Santo Daime, Céu do Mar. For the Works of Santos Reis [Three Kings], an important ritual date in the Daimist calendar, the group drove to Rio de Janeiro. “We learned”, recalls Maria Alice Freire, “that some Padrinhos had arrived from the forest, and it was the strength of this that called us there...there was a story!...all of us, we were members of this little community of Umbanda, and we all decided to *fardar*.”⁴³

It was this group that Maria Alice Freire, an ex-guerrilla fighter, had joined on her return from exile. She was among the members who joined the Santo Daime, and began to frequent the churches in the city of Rio de Janeiro and in Visconde de Mauá, where a new community was thriving. Later, Maria Alice would play an important role in the reception of Umbanda, once living in Céu do Mapiá, where, under the auspices of Padrinho Sebastião, she spearheaded the effort to begin rituals between Umbanda and Santo Daime.

Already sick, in 1985, Padrinho Sebastião came to visit his new disciples in Rio de Janeiro for the first time. On this occasion, Baixinha expressed an interest to meet him, whereupon there was a spiritual Work in the church directed by Alex Polari and with the presence of both Baixinha and Padrinho Sebastião. From this point

⁴³ Translator’s Note: To join the Santo Daime, adopting its uniform and aligning with its precepts.

onwards there was a strong tie between the Umbanda group of Baixinha and the Céu da Montanha church, which is also where the group became *fardados*.⁴⁴

“When I came to know it”, relates Maria Alice Freire, “he [Chico Corrente] had planned, with Padrinho Sebastião, a Star Work there, in Mauá, along with Alex [Polari]...Chico Corrente put Alex in the middle, and Paulo [Roberto] was there also. Alex handled everything, facilitated everything...and Padrinho Wilson was involved; he’s a wonderful person, with an incredible heart. It was there that he really embraced Baixinha, became a guardian for Baixinha.”

It would be in this Star Work, according to the religious interpretation common among the participants, that the caboclo Tupinambá would present himself to Padrinho Sebastião, and firmly establish a spiritual alliance with him.

According to Alex Polari de Alverga:

“It was in Mauá that the caboclo Tupinambá came together with Padrinho Sebastião, and with Padrinho Alfredo there also. He wanted to ally with the Doctrine and to place Himself, and his whole *banca*, under the command of Juramidam, represented there. He expressed the intention, and in some way the Padrinho also opened up, for him (the caboclo) to be a help in refining and strengthening the mediumship of the people of the Padrinho”

This meeting produced developments that clearly marked Umbanda in this phase of its relationship with the Santo Daime. Taken under the wing of Padrinho Wilson Carneiro of Rio Branco, in Acre, an historic member of the Doctrine since the time of Mestre Irineu, Baixinha also made spiritual works in Céu do Mar. She developed a solid friendship with Alex Polari de Alverga: “Padrinho Sebastião went back and Alex stayed, being a huge reference for Baixinha”.

Thus began a time in which, together with Baixinha, Alex Polari de Alverga opened a succession of Works *de banca*, including *giras*, which even he ranks as ‘memorable’. It was an intermingling of two groups that, although coming from two

⁴⁴ For more details on the merging of Umbanda with Santo Daime in the *terreiro* of Baixinha see Guimarães, 1992.

quite distinct religions, shared a common base composed of the ‘underground’ culture that was a characteristic of the youth of that time. As is related:

Baixinha was an acculturated Mae-de-Santo, and had a ‘spacious’ Umbanda, open to novelty, with many young people...many of her people came to know the Daime in this time, principally in Mauá. It took her to have this curiosity, to make contact, to take Daime, to have this relationship with the caboclo, with the Padrinho, and so to begin this movement to be associated with the church there. From there, the people opened a *terreiro*, and she systematically came to make *giras* with us.

The church at Visconde de Mauá, as with Céu do Mar in Rio de Janeiro, served as a model for those newly arrived in the Santo Daime. Alex Polari was adding to his biography not just a past of political struggle, but production of much poetry, which certainly lent him a romantic, if not mythic, aura as the leader of a prospering community in the mountains. The news of Mediumship Works were circulating by word of mouth in the broad Daimist network, and the hymns received by him, sung in large official trabalhos at Céu da Montanha, helped to spread a positive perception with respect to the place of Umbanda within the Santo Daime cosmology. One of these expresses the alliance produced by this meeting: “Viva the King Ogum / He comes to announce / that the lines are open / that it is for us to align ourselves”.⁴⁵

The Mae-de-Santo Baixinha became a reference for the subject of mediumship for the Daimist contingent that was growing exponentially throughout the South-Eastern Brazilian States, by chance the same era in which a hymn received by Padrinho Alfredo, for the first time, explicitly saluted the entities of the Umbanda pantheon⁴⁶ - offered to the director of the Céu do Mar church, Paulo Roberto.⁴⁷ It was at this time that he received a hymn which says: “Hail the Line of Umbanda / of the

⁴⁵ Alex Polari de Alverga, *Nova Enunção*, hymn no. 53, *O Ponto de São Jorge*, Ceu do Mapia, Pauini

⁴⁶ Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, *O Cruzeirinho*, hymn no. 131, *Ogum Beira Mar*, Ceu do Mapia, Pauini

⁴⁷ Paulo Roberto, director of the largest Santo Daime church in Rio de Janeiro, is married to Nonata Gregorio de Melo, one of the daughters of Padrinho Sebastiao. Although not officially part of CEFLURIS, the Ceu do Mar church, due to familial ties with Padrinho Sebastiao, is still regarded an integral part of his spiritual legacy. The hinario of Paulo Roberto, “*Luz na Escuridão*” (Light in the Darkness) contains many hymns with references to the entities of Umbanda.

Queen Iemanjá”.⁴⁸ For the first time, the name of Umbanda was invoked in an official Daimist *hinário* - in this case, by its very own President.

A little time later, Baixinha presented Umbanda to the residents of Céu do Mapiá. Prior to this, Baixinha had been engaged in founding, for herself, a church of Santo Daime in the mountains of Rio de Janeiro. Goulart describes these first steps:

“The constant contact between the *terreiro* of Baixinha and the Daimist centre of Alex soon culminated in the creation of a new group, represented by the *terreiro* “Lua Branca” (White Moon), founded by that Mae-de-Santo in Lumiar, a municipality of Nova Friburgo, in Rio de Janeiro (Guimaraes, 1992). The *terreiro* was going to merge and fuse together elements of Umbanda and Santo Daime, creating a whole different aesthetic and ritual symbology, and reordering the cosmology of these two religions into a new system” (Goulart, 2004, p.113)

So it was that Baixinha gradually became a part of the Daimist circuit; Mae-de-Santo, healer, respected by the commanders of churches and accepted by the Padrinhos of the forest, including Padrinho Manoel Corrente, Padrinho Wilson, and, principally, Padrinho Sebastião; director of her own church, Baixinha came to be recognised as a worthy spiritual leader, and her caboclo Tupinambá as an entity which would be materialized within a diffuse body of references to caboclos in official *hinários*.

Umbanda goes to Mapiá

It is probable that in the years of agony of Padrinho Sebastião, which have been interpreted as a fight for the indoctrination of the Exu Tranca Rua, an emphasis was given to the need for Padrinho Sebastião to depend upon a body of mediums to support his spiritual battle. In any case, since before their contact with the Santo Daime, in the period of the Works of *mesa* (table) that were made in Colônia Cinco

⁴⁸ Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, *O Cruzeirinho*, hymn no. 147, *Sara*, Céu do Mapiá, Pauini, Amazonas

Mil, this perception was already expressed and demonstrated; it was there that his first companions had developed their mediumship.⁴⁹

The arrival of Padrinho Sebastião to the South promoted new relationships and invited these new converts to join with Céu do Mapiá. It was a period overflowing with events of this kind; in 1988 Clara Iura, a Japanese medium with experience of Candomblé, moved to Céu do Mapiá. Isabel Barsé, another ex-member of the community at Céu da Montanha, also moved to Mapiá.

At the beginning of 1989, Maria Alice made a definitive move to the forest. At the request of Padrinho Sebastião, she was instructed to open a small space in the forest. The opening of this space clearly, symbolically, signalled the inauguration of a format of spiritual works undeniably associated with Umbanda. Until then, the Works of *Tronqueira*, made at the recommendation of Ceará, although also originating from the Umbanda cosmology, had not been perceived as such. Entrusted to accompany her in this task was Manoel Corrente, who has since passed away, but is hailed for his hinário as Padrinho Corrente, a healer associated with Oxossi, the *Caboclo Guerreiro* (Caboclo Warrior).

Maria Alice Freire remembers:

“The Granddad, with a Rosary in his hand, him and I: he took his shirt off, bees flying all over him; he really sweated, the poor man! It was him who opened the first little *terreiro*, so tiny, there in the middle of the forest, us two. We began to bring people there, for treatments. We were calling a few people, folk that were already beginning as mediums, who had already sensed some things. Still, we had no drum; no one knew to sing a *ponto*.”

In this same year, 1989, Baixinha made a surprise visit to Mapiá. Her presence would widely open the eyes of all members of the community to the presence of Umbanda, the overwhelming majority of whom had never been to the South, and had

⁴⁹ Such was the case with Madrinha Cristina, his sister, now deceased, who developed her mediumship in the works *de banca* of Padrinho Sebastiao realized in Colonia Cinco Mil prior to entering the Santo Daime. A.G.M., Ceu do Mapia, Pauini, Amazonas, January 2007

no idea of the enthusiasm with which their Doctrine had been adopted, nor the rich boiling-pot of influences to which it had been subjected.

Baixinha would return a second time to Mapiá, about a year later, but on this occasion Padrinho Sebastião had already passed away – he died just a few months after her initial visit. In memory of her old friend, a *gira* was made, directed by Baixinha and her *caboclo* Tupinambá, and this was when many in Mapiá came to fully know Umbanda.⁵⁰

Throughout the period in which he was leading CEFLURIS, Padrinho Sebastião took the name of Santo Daime and carried it far and wide, to become known in many places and territories throughout Brasil and in numerous other countries also. His leadership enabled this religion to escape its limits within the borders of Acre, and to be engaged with across the World. Under the beacon of this leader, it greeted modernity in its cosmological frontiers, transforming itself inside a veritable test-tube of the most diverse inter-cultural exchange. In the era that would dictate the steps of the Daimist expansion, Padrinho Sebastião, a simple man from a tributary of the Amazon river, nonetheless wise to the point of being able to captivate and inspire illustrious representatives of the educated and affluent South-East of Brasil, created the conditions by which, from inside Santo Daime, Umbanda could find a legitimate form of expression.

The popular religiosity in which he was steeped was populated with spirits, from guardians to obsessive lost souls; with healing and sickness provoked by their interference in the affairs of the material world; with offerings by which their intercession could be solicited, either for good or for evil, and in which spirits could be contacted through mediumship, understood in many different ways. The spirits, the

⁵⁰ According to Julia C.S.: “Baixinha came here and made [a gira] with the Padrinho, but I knew nothing of these beings, you see? I came to know after there was that gira here. I had never made this work before, I came to know it through Baixinha.”

lingua franca of Brazilian religiosity, have occupied an immeasurable space within our cosmogony. Kardecist spiritism and Umbanda have disseminated through the interstices of Brazilian informality, in this case religious, which has permitted a huge diversity of interpretation and re-interpretation, growing from regional and local colours, and accentuated by the vast distances between isolated territories.

These arrived with strong tones of Kardecism at the rivers and streams of Alto Juruá, with Sebastião Mota de Melo, via the black man Osvaldo, from the state of São Paulo.⁵¹ His son, a witness of the earliest time, also recognises there the presence of Umbanda. Passages such as were experienced with the *macumbas* of Ceará are inscribed in the rustic vocabulary of that population, and represent neither something out of the ordinary nor surprising. The more literate may interpret such things as the presence of Quimbanda – as a departure from Umbanda.⁵² Studies of Umbanda, however, already demonstrate in its construction an unsuccessful mechanism, which has attempted to negate or deny the morally more ambiguous African heritage, displacing that which lies outside of the dominant point of view – white – with the creation of the field of the *Left*, typically demonized, or - more often - only apparently rejected. Thus is the case with Quimbanda, with its Exus and Pombas-Giras.⁵³ Quimbanda is the hidden face of this religious matrix, which was officially baptized with the name Umbanda. We can see that these are elements in suspension from a common, total view of the World of the indigenous parent religions, both African and of white people, that as they flow in new forms accentuate some aspects, then others, but which actually compose a unity. Perhaps this is the broader continuum explained by Camargo (1961) and which Brumana and Martinez (1991) identify as an

⁵¹ See note 30 on page 17

⁵² According to Alex Polari de Alverga, “I feel it was a contact with Quimbanda. By the way Ceará worked, it was this way, he was active on this side”.

⁵³ Cf. Ortiz, 1988; Negrão, 1996; Prandi, 2005

isomorphic structure existing in the vision of society of peripheral cults, common to four religious enquiries: Kardecist spiritism, Candomblé, Pentecostalism and Umbanda. i.e. religious expression within the margins of society which include in their design the necessity and possibilities of beginning from this subordinate, inferior position. Within Santo Daime, under the baton of the restless and charismatic spirit of Padrinho Sebastião, this led to the emergence of Umbanda.

The third generation

The third generation of Santo Daime corresponds to the ascension of his son, Alfredo Gregorio de Melo, to the command of CEFLURIS and to the contributions he has made in light of the official presence of Umbanda in the whole ritual, as we shall now discuss.

Although officially elevated to the position of director of the command of CEFLURIS with the death of his father, the process by which he assumed the spiritual presidency of the Doctrine was gradual, and measured out by the sickness which weakened and disabled Padrinho Sebastião from the more arduous tasks of command. Therefore the transition from second to third generation occurred progressively; the broader perspective brought by the passage of time increases the distinction between these generations, which become easier to distinguish, since they also intertwine chronologically.

This was a period in which the entire field of the experience of possessions, and of the malleable concept of mediumship of the people of Padrinho Sebastião could be viewed from within the patronage of Umbanda. The familiarity with which this was recognised and embraced, among other reasons, derived from the physiognomy of the overall Brazilian religious *ethos*, which is strongly present in the religiosity of the tributaries of the Amazon. The specific events experienced by the

Daimist community appear to be appropriate to the situation, in those *objective conditions*, to freely borrow from Marxist jargon. The encounter with Ceará, and its tragic denouement, is interpreted in religious terms by the group; this is the advent of its expansion, with consequences, for our interpretation, that constitute the moment of fertilization of Umbanda in this religious group; however, this is only materialized under the form of new rituals, and is expressed through the hymns – we remember where the Doctrine recognises its sacred texts – beginning with the initiative of Padrinho Alfredo. In fact, among his merits, he was able to recognize a given situation, and to channel it within the ritual limits, so that the Santo Daime could follow smoothly its many-tentacled and eclectic tendency to assimilate new components and use them in its own way.

The insertion of Umbanda did not occur, however, without the tensions inherent in such a birth. His ownership of the command of CEFLURIS had to be located within the deep and rapid transformations occurring within the religion he was directing.

The route being navigated was a complete mystery, within the context of so many changes taking place so rapidly; among them, Umbanda, with its peculiarities, which could easily ferment dangers to the manoeuvrability and cohesion of the institution, which then, more than ever, required a structure to guide its growth. At this time, Padrinho Alfredo decided to suspend the mediumistic Works altogether. These initial moments of establishing the official interaction of Umbanda within the Doctrinal limits of Santo Daime are fertile with interpretive possibilities, and shed light once again on the conflicts that emerge from the eruption of possession, in this

case through Umbanda, on religious systems undergoing a process of institutionalization.⁵⁴

A brief description of the period that followed the passing of Padrinho Sebastião, when his successor, Padrinho Alfredo, was still consolidating his leadership, illustrates these tensions.⁵⁵ In the community, they took the form, on the part of some, of a certain discomfort with the experiences of Umbanda. The opening of spiritual works which emphasized mediumship, and the encouragement of Padrinho Sebastião would endorse the nascent presence of Umbanda in Céu do Mapiá, under the guidance of Maria Alice. In the absence of his charismatic protection, in the course of his passage, opposition emerged from many sides, beginning with the leaders of the community. The first members “outside” the group of Padrinho Sebastião began to register their resistance to this novelty. Among others, this included Lucio Mortimer, Maurilio Reis, Daniel and Regina Pereira and various important local leaders.

An exemplary occurrence of these conflicts can be seen in an *assentamento* (settlement) that Maria Alice used. As we have seen, *terreiros* of Umbanda typically have a locale that guarantees magical protection of the spiritual works conducted within each *terreiro*, and Maria Alice had never been formally initiated in the rites of Umbanda. In Céu do Mapiá, she sought to make a joint ritual between Umbanda and Santo Daime in accord with the instructions she was receiving in *mirações*. Thus was a ritual realized where, for the protection of that *terreiro*, they buried some objects – seeds, a little Daime, and some Santa Maria. A group, led by Pedro Dario, was outraged, and interpreted this as a profanation of sacred plants; hiding, and unbeknownst to Maria Alice, they dug up and destroyed the *assentamento*. This ably

⁵⁴ For an exploration of this theme see Lewis, 1971.

⁵⁵ The story which follows is based on interviews with Marcos Vicente Trench.

demonstrates, according to our present interpretation, the power-relations which the arrival of Umbanda was re-arranging.

If the reception and acceptance of Umbanda resulted from an apparently irresistible pressure at the base inside of Santo Daime, this in itself demonstrates the importance of the role it came to play, for the fact remains, regardless, that it mobilized energies that needed to be framed (brought to light) at a time when the need for tight control under the reigns of command was less obvious.

Padrinho Alfredo, succeeding his father, was left with the task of interpreting and managing the deep transformations being experienced by CEFLURIS; by the time of these dizzy heights, the Daimist contingent had grown to a core of thousands. The Umbanda, in turn, was recruiting growing sympathy for its cause, which is most probably the reason for the formatting of new rituals with the objective of *study*. This was certainly the case with the Work of Mesa Branca, a Work with the original intention of contemplation of the diverse traditions that were included in some way in the Santo Daime, through the course of its growth and contact with the wider world. The Mesa Branca Work took the Work of Sao Miguel as a *prefix*, in the words of Alex Polari de Alverga, and in spite of its eclectic nature, it eventually became known almost exclusively as a Work of *banca* by virtue of its great interest to the core base of Daimistas.

The return of Works of *banca* to an official category re-established the place of Umbanda in the official calendar of ritual activities. The mediums, now united in a single group, established their *studies* framed by the Mesa Branca, which includes a place for calls to the *caboclos* and other entities of Umbanda. Reports soon verified a strong demand for Works with a ritual model which prioritized mediumistic manifestation, particularly the *phenomena* and *phenomenology* more associated with

Umbanda. Trance possession, with a place provided in the rituals, seems to meet, in the parlance of Umbanda, the structure that it requires to manifest. And so it is that, in Mapiá, the *giras* returned, as modelled by Maria Alice, in an approach combined with the Santo Daime.

The re-opening of mediumistic Works in Céu do Mapiá, in turn, eventually would clothe people such as Maria Alice, Clara Iura and Isabel Barsé with spiritual authority such that, in their visits to churches in the South, they arrive as authoritative teachers of the study of mediumship, which Padrinho Alfredo, in long lectures with these churches, affirmed as being required of a *soldier of the Queen of the Forest*.

In many churches, Daimistas spread across the national territories began to develop the study *dos caboclos*, stressing that not all spaces need to open up to this form of ritual, depending largely on their affinity with the practice of incorporation. In any case, Umbanda – needed by some and disliked by others – occupies a place in the Daimist cosmology that is difficult to camouflage or hide, even from the most un-amenable eyes. A strong resistance to it is evident and reproduced in many groups and churches, but there is undeniably something in Umbanda which speaks to the Daimist Universe, and what it says has a sound and an appeal that is difficult for others to resist.

Conclusions

We appear to have, in this overview of events, distinct moments that represent gradual steps of the insertion of Umbanda with the ritual practices and cosmological vision of Santo Daime:

- The events with Ceará, the beginning of the expansion and separation from Alto Santo, which brought a whole new set of principles to the original Doctrinal language. These embedded ways of interpreting

spirituality which, although not recognized as Umbanda and still formed from the body of the parent Doctrine, prepared the way for future reception and comprehension. They also brought, among other things, elements of the Umbanda pantheon to add to Santo Daime's particular Powers and Deities.

- The move of the first group to Rio do Ouro, and subsequently to the shores of the igarapé Mapiá, concomitant with the intensification of the national expansion and appearance of new churches in the South, which corresponds to a period in which mediumistic practices *flourished*.⁵⁶ This is the time of the first *atuações* of Padrinho Sebastião at the Rio do Ouro, and the constitution of the first official Works *de banca*, the Work of Sao Miguel, beginning with a strong crisis experienced by Padrinho Alfredo, later interpreted in religious and mediumistic terms. What we observe here is the eruption of possession, or incorporation, as acceptable behaviour in bringing to fruition its religious objectives, still here aligned with the Kardecist notion of mercy, guidance and indoctrination of suffering spirits.

- With the expansion and subsequent contact with the Umbanda *terreiro* of Baixinha, a relationship began between both religions, mediated through the church Céu da Montanha, in Visconde de Mauá, initially, that became paradigmatic, in the measure by which Umbanda penetrated so deeply into the Daimist imagination.

⁵⁶ Cf. Alverga, 1984, p.80

- The move of Maria Alice to Céu do Mapiá, and the result of this, which helped format the rituals for the insertion of Umbanda, and in this way contribute to the reception by the base congregation, and its acceptance by those in command. The visits by Baixinha to Mapiá, in turn, contributed to the understanding of the ritual practices of Umbanda by its residents in general.

- The creation of new rituals by Padrinho Alfredo, already witnessing and contemplating the powerful appeal of Umbanda experienced by Daimistas, recognising this demand and then shaping a ritual which meets in the middle, consistent with the huge capacity for absorption of novelty by CEFLURIS, amply demonstrated and verified by the trajectory of its total expansion.

To develop an analysis of the possible reasons for the great response to Umbanda amidst Daimistas, we must see that both religions are composed of the same matrices, recombined in quite distinct ways, but which share the profile of being highly inclusive. We can see in the matrices recognised for both religions, each for its own peculiar reasons, the marked characteristic of receptivity to new content, that here we have called inclusive, or porous. The *alternative* mind and thinking, historically important to both traditions, in the same way, marks an important point of contact with this *porosity*. The *alternative* culture that we refer to here is not an aspect

of these matrices, but it was an important link that approached both Santo Daime and Umbanda, and shared in this receptivity.⁵⁷

In Santo Daime, where there is a hierarchy, and a certain formality to the ritual from an institutional point of view, the role of the director of each church, the so-called padrinho, however, has a relative independence in terms of Doctrinal interpretation. The *corpus* of hymns received mediumistically – remember: the Santo Daime is a *sung* liturgical practice – are interpreting and re-interpreting their own explanations of the world, and the instance of *miração* leads to extremes of personal colouration and filtering.

The charismatic figure of the padrinho – as much as occurs with Pais-de-Santo in Umbanda – is a privileged interpreter of a constant re-drafting and re-elaboration, which demonstrates its receptivity and openness once again in the welcoming and acceptance of Umbandist practices.

The objections and oppositions that are encountered among members of the two religions help to shed light on the needs that Umbanda came to satisfy inside the Santo Daime. The ritual attitudes expected amongst Daimistas are those of containment, of composure and of a body posture impassive, profiled, martial, and of regulated behaviour, the separation of generations and genders, and dissolution in the whole, called the *corrente* (chain or current). There the body is regarded with some suspicion, as a source of sins, and of the deceptions of the world of illusion. Umbanda introduces a very different attitude to the body, clearly in support of the body as sacred, the separation of generations and genders is more relative and intermingling free to occur, and containment of the body is far less apparent in incorporation, trance possession and the dance.

⁵⁷ For more about this topic see Alves Jr., 2007, p.195

From the perspective of popular religiosity, and even of the Brazilian culture as a whole, the body is central as the support and vehicle of religious experience. The search for ecstasy, for mystical experience, for the trance of incorporation and possession, is seen in a good part of the matrices of both religions.⁵⁸

Cathartic and chaotic, without rules – from the Daimist perspective – its presence also seems to express the more integrated role of the body in the spiritual outlook of the youth of the 1970's and 1980's, beginning with the representatives of the counter-culture. Through Umbanda, many of the transformations of the 'alternative' world were introduced. Via this route, as in Lewis (1971) and his analysis of possession, the counter-culture was presented with a “non-radical” challenge to the *status quo*. In other words, possession offered an agreeable tool by which to contest, and therefore, was accepted by some parties (within the mainstream).

Thus Umbanda would also render, in Santo Daime, a tool of expression for those otherwise deemed *without voice* and who, through it, found the means by which to be heard: the disenfranchised of the lower social order, or without function or position within the religious structure – especially women, in a religion which is strongly marked by a male predominance.

In the environment of a new attitude facing religion, in which the Santo Daime and its teacher-drink thrived, those corners of the soul thirsty for bliss requested records identifiable in the cultural scenario in which they were sustained. The trait of the popular, rural Catholicism – regionally exported in the sense of leaving centuries of hegemony – was the presence of a religious agent in the form of its *benzadores* (those who give blessing) and *rezadores* (those who pray for healing). The

⁵⁸ We refer here to tribal medicine-men, the more classic characteristics of shamanism, to the Afro-Brazilian cults, to Kardecist Spiritism, and to Amazonian healing traditions, among others.

expectation of proximity to the sacred, the relationship with personal intermediaries, seems to deeply demarcate the Brazilian religious experience. When historic conditions obscured their function and presence, we see resurgence in Umbanda and in other faiths.⁵⁹ The mechanism is similar to that which we have identified in the insertion of Umbanda into Santo Daime: a reclamation and vindication of personal and direct contact with the Saints and Holy Powers that Umbanda appears to bring. Such personal and direct contact has to do with the very idea of personality, to converse with a Deity that has a face, who is in front of its disciple, with whom one can communicate directly. This contact does not necessarily occur with the *miração*, but did with the *benzedeira*. The latter, unlike what happens in Umbanda however, was not a god, but rather an agent of such, with whom it was possible to interact directly. Face to face with his or her Deities, the Daimist adept laid claim to attention, and the possibility of comfort provided now by consultation with the messengers of the Great Mother of all Daimistas, the Queen of the Forest.

Research of the deeper meaning of these new urban niches, and research which describe their unfolding in this still developing third generation of Santo Daime and Umbanda are objects of study which remain open, and which we must pursue. It is hoped that such research will be encouraged by this text.

⁵⁹ Cf. Da Matta, 1991, p.53 *Prefácio preliminar e profano para Fernando Brumana e Elda González* In: Brumana and Martinez, 1991, p.53

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Hinário *NOVA ENUNCIACÃO* – Alex Polari

TABLE: TYPES OF MEDIUMSHIP RITUALS PERFORMED IN SANTO DAIME

TRONQUEIRA

Inception: Still in Colônia Cinco Mil

Description: A space in the forest to care for dark spirits, which reside in the shadows

Date: 1977

STAR WORK

Inception: Throughout Rio do Ouro

Description: With similar objectives to the previous. It was requested by Exu Tranca Rua that a Star Temple be constructed, which would only be completed in Céu do Mapiá.

Date: 1980

CURA : HEALING WORK OF PADRINHO SEBASTIÃO

Inception: It was formed slowly, in the early days at Céu do Mapiá.

Description: It was considered a Star Work. At first, it was an open space for *atuações*. Later, this was transplanted to the Saint Michael Works.

Date: 1983

SAINT MICHAEL WORKS

Inception: In the time when part of the contingent were already in Rio do Ouro.

Description: It is identified as a work of *spiritual cleansing*.

Date: 1983

GIRA

Inception: The first gira performed in Céu do Mapiá was at the first visit of Baixinha

Description: Not an official ritual of CEFLURIS, it follows the fluid form of Giras from Umbanda. Pontos, also known as corimbas, are sung, derived from Umbanda. It is normally performed outside the church hall, and participants wear white clothes, not official *farda*.

Date: 1989

MESA BRANCA

Inception: Created at the initiative of Padrinho Alfredo, two or three years after the passing of Padrinho Sebastião.

Description: Taking the Saint Michael Work as its base, it is a work of mediumship development, and open to the study of diverse spiritual lines, in accordance with the direction of the leader of the Work.

Date: 1991

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