



Civilisations

Revue internationale d'anthropologie et de sciences humaines

61-2 | 2013

Chamanismes en mouvement

New Perspectives of Shamanism in Brazil

Shamanisms and Neo-Shamanisms as Dialogical Categories

Esther Jean Langdon



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/civilisations/3227>

DOI: 10.4000/civilisations.3227

ISSN: 2032-0442

Publisher

Institut de sociologie de l'Université Libre de Bruxelles

Printed version

Date of publication: 28 June 2013

Number of pages: 19-35

ISSN: 0009-8140

Electronic reference

Esther Jean Langdon, « New Perspectives of Shamanism in Brazil », *Civilisations* [Online], 61-2 | 2013, Online since 24 June 2016, connection on 01 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/civilisations/3227> ; DOI : 10.4000/civilisations.3227

New Perspectives of Shamanism in Brazil

Shamanisms and Neo-Shamanisms as Dialogical Categories¹

Esther Jean LANGDON

Abstract: *Although shamanism has been treated in anthropology as specifically a primitive and indigenous phenomenon, the rise of shamanic rituals practiced by urbanites throughout the world forces us to review our analytical models. The spread of shamanism to non-indigenous cultures is part of a larger context of interchange between the local and the global that is at the center of current questions in anthropological inquiry regarding notions of culture, tradition, continuity, place and praxis. This article argues that shamanism is best viewed today as a dialogical phenomenon, rather than as an analytical category that directs the anthropological gaze. Through the comparison of two case studies from Colombia and Brazil, it demonstrates how shamanism is a dialogic practice emerging from the expectations of the various actors involved, be they Indigenous or not. Shamanism cannot be regarded as an isolated philosophy or logic without considering the social, political and historical contexts of its praxis.*

Keywords: contemporary shamanism, dialogic emergence of shamanisms, Siona Indians, Guaraní Indians, praxis.

Résumé : *Alors que le chamanisme a été considéré en anthropologie comme un phénomène spécifiquement primitif et indigène, l'augmentation des rituels chamaniques pratiqués dans les zones urbaines à travers le monde nous force à reconsidérer nos modèles analytiques. La diffusion du chamanisme parmi des cultures non indigènes fait partie d'un contexte plus large d'interaction entre le local et le global, qui est au centre des questionnements actuels de la recherche anthropologique sur les notions de culture, tradition, continuité, lieu et praxis. Cet article défend qu'il est préférable aujourd'hui de considérer le chamanisme comme un phénomène dialogique, plutôt que comme une catégorie analytique susceptible de diriger le regard anthropologique. À travers la comparaison de deux études de cas, l'une colombienne et l'autre brésilienne, cet article montre le chamanisme comme une pratique dialogique qui émerge des attentes des différents acteurs impliqués, qu'ils soient indigènes ou pas. Le chamanisme ne peut être considéré comme une philosophie isolée ou comme une logique séparée du contexte social, politique et historique qui accueille sa pratique.*

Mots-clés: chamanisme contemporain, émergence dialogique de chamanismes, Indiens Siona, Indiens Guaraní, praxis.

-
1. I thank Miguel Bartolome and Alicia Barabas for inviting me to reflect upon my research on shamanism in Colombia and Brazil in a seminar organized on shamanism at the Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia in 2008. I have worked closely with Isabel Santana de Rose, who conducted her doctoral research on the Medicine Alliance (2010) and wish to acknowledge her important contribution to the Guaraní data presented here. I also wish to acknowledge other students whose observations have helped construct the comparison presented here (Silveira 2011; Oliveira 2011; Ferreira Oliveira 2012).

What is a shaman? What is shamanism? These questions have been asked and answered over the last 500 years. They were first asked by travelers and missionaries in the 16th and 17th centuries when encountering the ambiguous performative figures of Siberia who practiced techniques of ecstasy for their magical flights. By the late 19th century, anthropologists were deeply involved in a discourse that sought to comprehend it as an indigenous phenomenon practiced by aboriginal groups sharing geographical and cultural histories. Since the 1950s, anthropological discourse has been joined by intellectuals from other disciplines as well as by seekers of alternative spiritual practices interested in psychoactive drugs, altered states of conscious and therapeutic potential. More recently, the “natives” have become important agents in the multiplicity of voices. Rather than serving as informants for anthropologists asking the questions, they perform shamanisms in a variety of contexts, and shamanism and shamans, “authentic” or not, emerge from this interchange of contemporary expectations and interactions.

As anthropologists, it is necessary to review our analytical models, which originally regarded the phenomenon as specific to primitive and indigenous cultures. The spread of shamanism to non-indigenous cultures as part of a larger context of contemporary political and spiritual movements and the interchange between the local and the global, leads us directly to the center of current questions in anthropological inquiry regarding notions of culture, tradition, continuity, place and praxis. Shamanism is best perceived as a dialogical phenomenon, rather than as an analytical category that directs the anthropological gaze to a concrete object. After examining the anthropological discussions that surround indigenous and “mixed blood” shamanisms, this article compares two case studies of revitalization of shamanic practices resulting from the entrance of two Indian communities into the global discourse of shamanism. The comparison of the Siona *taitas* of the Colombian Amazon and the Guarani *karai* along the coast of southern Brazil demonstrates how shamanisms emerge out of communicative processes in which a diversity of actors and interests are at play.

The comparison is a result of my experience with the Siona Indians in Southern Colombia beginning over forty years ago, and residence in southern Brazil for almost thirty years in which I have witnessed shamanism, as a performative mode, undergo profound changes in relation to the larger society. Contemporary shamanisms, be they indigenous or not, do not represent a homogeneous universal phenomenon. Networks and interethnic contacts have always been an important part of shamanic practices, and the social, political and historical contexts must be considered before identifying shamanism as indigenous knowledge, philosophy or thought and the shaman as a generalized Indian sage.

Shamanism as Indigenous Cosmology

Anthropologists have been no exception to the fascination of Europeans with shamanic practices over the last 500 years (Narby and Huxley 2001). Early anthropologists, such as Tylor, Frazer, Mauss, and others, included shamanism in their discussions of analytical categories and oppositions such as primitive/civilized, magic/science/religion, and natural/supernatural. Shamans’ ecstatic and deviant behavior sparked debates as to the veracity and sanity of this exotic figure. Based on Siberian hunting and gathering groups, the term “shaman” became an anthropological category

for the ambiguous figures found throughout the Americas and elsewhere performing magical/priestly or sorcerer/healer roles (Métraux 1941; Hamayon 2001). Eliade's (1951) focus on ecstasy and essential traits became an important model for defining the phenomenon as an archaic religion. In the 1960s and 70s, popular interest in hallucinogens brought a renewed interest to the topic and a renovation of research, symposia and publications dedicated to examining forms of shamanism. Some researchers attempted to construct a definition of shamanism as an analytical category for comparative purposes; others were interested in examining the diversity of native cosmologies and shamanic practices. The investigation of the techniques of ecstasy as human potential, with specific focus on psychoactive substances, has been marked by interdisciplinary interests as well as a strong experimental ethos on the part of the researchers.

The rise of symbolic studies in the 1960s aided researchers to go beyond essential definitions or dichotomies that were part of the early discussions. Shamanic systems became recognized as serious social-cultural constructions of the world, and anthropologists endeavored to document these creative and dynamic forms in their indigenous settings. As noted by Viveiros de Castro (1996), the quantitative increase in research since the 1960s permitted the qualitative growth of theoretical-analytical models for understanding and comparing lowland South American cultures. Studies of the native conceptions of nature and the body, of social organization, sociality, gender, as well as those of mythology, cosmology, aesthetics and ritual, have contributed to the emergence of theoretical-analytical models for understanding and comparing these cultures. They, in turn, have contributed in major ways to the understanding of indigenous shamanism.

This scholarship on Amerindian cultures has allowed us to perceive both underlying characteristics of Amazonian shamanisms and the diversity of practices and practitioners. Shamanism is perceived as a collective institution, central to lowland indigenous cosmologies and societies, which expresses a culture's central themes, such as the principle of transformation, concern with the flow of vital energy, and the influence of occult forces on everyday life. As a cosmological vision, it provides the basis for the interpretation and understanding of daily events, as well as for mediation 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 (Langdon 1996). It embraces the supernatural, as well as the social and the ecological (Reichel-Dolmatoff 1976). 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.

In 1979, a seminal article was published proposing that the body and its fabrication should serve as the central organizing paradigm for understanding native cultures of lowland South America, rather than models of social organization borrowed from the study of African societies (Seeger *et al.* 1987). The impact of this proposal, that the cosmologies, mythologies, and rituals be reexamined in light of the fabrication of the body, is widely evidenced in contemporary ethnology. One of the important themes is that of consubstantiality, first suggested by Roberto DaMatta (1976). Among lowland groups, practices of sociality, such as the acts of eating together or co-participation in rituals, create a social body that shares substances. The shaman's body is fabricated

through painting and adornment, special diets and the ingestion of tobacco, *ayahuasca*, or other psychoactive substances. Knowledge, emotions, memory and consciousness cannot be separated from the corporal experience.

Perspectivism is another recent contribution to the anthropological view of shamanism. It is a complex notion that attempts to synthesize a philosophy common to lowland South American cultures and has developed out of discussions of symbolic ecology, the fabrication of the body, and the notion of transformation that is characteristic of Amazonian cosmologies (Viveiros de Castro 1998; Lima 1996). Perspectivism is a fruitful synthesis of what has been described by many as the Amazonian perception of nature and the multiplicity of animated beings in the visible and invisible realities of an intentioned universe. Brunelli (1996) expressed shamanic cosmology as a universe that is constituted by an inextricable interpenetration of the visible and invisible worlds and by a continual transit between the beings and powers of nature in different forms. Campbell interpreted shamanic quality as primarily having to do with knowing and seeing, with a whole other way of understanding, which allows one to see beyond everyday appearances. It is a way of looking at the world in which the other reality is thoroughly humanized and its beings appear as humans, "The heart of that shamanic reality reveals a human relation between us and the natural world" (Campbell 1995: 195).

Viveiros de Castro and his colleagues have stressed predation and cannibalism as key metaphors of Amazonian cosmologies, and these concepts are particularly useful when examining the dark side of indigenous shamanisms. In a comprehensive discussion of the cannibalism metaphor in lowland South American ethnography and its potential for comparative research, Fausto (2007) has suggested that shamanism as it relates to the processes of health and illness in lowland cultures is an expression of the predation metaphor. This is most evident in discourse about witchcraft, in which the victim is equivalent to the prey, the dark shaman is the hunter, and the metaphor of cannibalism applies to the withering of the body. Working with these metaphors, recent publications (Whitehead 2002; Whitehead and Wright 2004) vividly demonstrate that Amazonian shamanism is not a gentle shamanism. By focusing on the destructive aspects of shamanism, they also demonstrate that witchcraft takes on an important role in mediation with the colonial situation and modernity.

Given the heterogeneity of language and culture, it is impossible to characterize a single indigenous "shamanism" or "shaman" for South American lowland groups. A great variety of shamanic specialists perform rituals and administer substances for beneficial purposes; an equal number of individuals are recognized for their potential to send harm to others. The acquisition of knowledge and practices vary considerably between groups. In some, shamanic knowledge is acquired through dreams, without a formal apprenticeship, and all people share a bit of shamanic power. Others have formal apprenticeships with masters. In some cases, such as the Kulina and Cashinahua, the aggressor may be the same person who heals. Among the Arawakans of the Rio Negro and Guyana regions, there is a plurality of specialists who are classified by intention and by techniques. The poison owners cause harm by the use of plant knowledge. Anyone who knows the right chants can cause harm. There are a variety of healers, who are distinguished by their secret knowledge and the substances and therapeutic techniques they employ. Thus, indigenous terms for the anthropological category of shamans are culturally specific, and the characteristics of these specialists are so

varied, including the acquisition of knowledge and techniques, that it is impossible to identify a universal shamanic role in the face of this diversity. Historically it has been the anthropologists who identify certain figures as “shamans” or *pajés*, as they are called in the Portuguese literature, and not the natives. The use of a single gloss is an anthropological interpretation.²

Colombian Mestizo and Neo-Shamanic Networks

Anthropological shamanic studies have been guided by the principle that shamanism spread and diversified over time among groups that are culturally, temporally and geographically contiguous. Networks link the different ethnic and language groups and the circulation of shamans and their practices has resulted in a diversity of forms and practitioners varying by local contexts and histories. With the arrival of the Europeans, violence, disease and extractive industries, mixed-blood shamanisms emerged out the colonial encounter, and these shamanisms are understood as responses to colonialism and specific historical and economic forces (Salomon 1983; Gow 1994; Taussig 1987). The preoccupations associated with love, illness, bad luck, unemployment and other aspects of misfortune manifested in mixed-blood shamanisms are specific to urban and subaltern populations rather than to pre-contact indigenous cultures.

A circulation of indigenous shamans from the lowlands of southern Colombia to the highland regions has been well documented by several authors (Ramírez and Pinzón 1992; Ramírez 1996/97; Urrea and Zapata 1995; Uribe 2002). The network has existed since pre-colonial times, when lowland shamans journeyed to the highlands to perform rituals with the psychoactive substance *yajé* (*Banisteriopsis* sp.) (Langdon 1981). Since the Conquest, this network has become an important popular healing resource in which both Indians and mestizos participate. Shamans are found in the highland markets offering their curing powers and magical charms; urban folk healers enhance their reputation by attributing an indigenous origin to their knowledge and practices (Press 1971). As argued by Colombian anthropologists and others, both indigenous and mestizo shamanic practices in popular medicine must be seen in relation to the colonial experience among the subaltern populations and an indigenous substratum to popular culture (Pinzón, Suárez and Garey 2005).

The Sibundoy Indians living in the highland valley on the route to the Andean cities have been principal mediators in this extensive network of popular medicine, originating in the lowlands and extending to the highland Andean cities. The lowland shamans of groups, such as the Siona and Kofan, trained the Sibundoy in the preparation of *yajé* and associated rituals. These, in turn, became itinerant *curacas* in the popular medicine markets of the highland urban areas healing *susto*, *mal aire*, witchcraft, bad luck or other misfortunes using *yajé* and other jungle substances. In addition, mestizos and the urban poor journeyed from other regions of the country to the Sibundoy Valley seeking cures for illnesses that failed to respond to other treatments.

Since the 1980s, a new network has developed linking lowland shamans with neo-shamanic groups in the highland cities. Different from that of popular medicine, this more recent one involves middle class and urban professionals with motivations

2. For a more radical criticism of the anthropological category of shamanism see Taussig (1989).

distinct from those of the clients seeking *curacas* in the popular medicine market. The *curacas* from the lowlands, now called *taitas*, have joined the Sibundoy in this network. Accorded great wisdom and knowledge, they participate in rituals, or “*tomas de yajé*”, organized by psychologists or others that address personal issues (Caicedo 2009). *Yajé* is taken for its therapeutic qualities (www.chamanicvision.com) and participants are healed by a return to equilibrium.

The growth of this network has contributed to the renewal of shamanic practices among the Siona that were in decline in the early 1970s (Langdon 1985, 1991). After the death of the Siona’s last shaman-leader (*cacique-curaca*) in the 1960s, there were no Siona master shamans (*curaca, yai*) capable of leading the collective *yajé* rituals, and the youths abandoned the rigors of shamanic apprenticeship. The 1970s, the period of my extended fieldwork, was a situation of shamanism without shamans (Brunelli 1996). However, in the 1980s two brothers, Luciano and Pacho Piaguaje resumed ritual practice with *yajé*. Conducting *yajé* sessions for mestizo neighbors and non-Indian visitors, they participated in the regional healing network with Indians and mestizos. Since Luciano’s death in the late 1980s, Pacho, along with his sons, became extremely visible and prestigious in contemporary shamanic networks linking the lowland shamans with urban professionals.

The new Siona *taitas* do not play the traditional leadership role known as *cacique-curaca*, one of political and religious power over residential groups. However, recent contact suggests that they are actively involved in a process of cultural revitalization that is part of the larger contemporary political context of indigenous movements in Colombia and the rest of Latin America promoting multiculturalism and minority rights. Their careers have been constructed in dialogue with indigenous and non-indigenous interests and actors. On the one hand, they are in dialogue with those who seek the ecstatic experience provided by *yajé* and are part of the heterogeneous global movement characterized as neo-shamanic (Caicedo 2007). On the other, they interact with governmental and non-governmental organizations designed to fortify indigenous rights, sustainability and indigenous medical knowledge (Portela 2003; UMIYAC 1999). The revitalization of Siona shamanic practices has received positive impulse from larger national and global interests.

In Colombia, *taita*, a Quechua term originally referring to wise man or elder, has replaced the former designation, *curaca*, for this ritual specialist. The adoption of the term *taita* for Indigenous shamans from lowland Ecuador and Colombia is not a simple case of choice of synonyms. It indexes new expectations and attributes imputed to the shaman’s role, as well as the integration of the figure of *taita* in an expanding network. *Taitas* are invited to events organized by contemporary shamanic groups in Peru, Chile and Brazil as well in North America and Europe. *Taita*, like *chaman*, is a contemporary category that has emerged in dialogue between lowland shamans and urban professionals in Latin America. This title is not associated with ambiguity expressed in the subaltern discourse on *curacas* in which sorcery is an important part of shamanic symbolic capital.

Brazilian Mixed-Blood Shamanisms

The term *pajé* is used throughout Brazil to reference an individual whose practices are associated with indigenous magic in a general and often vague way. *Pajé* is of Tupian origin, and in Tupian languages does not refer to a specific role but rather to a kind of energy or power. As Kracke (1987) comments for the Tupian Kagwahiv, everyone has a bit of *paye*, since everybody dreams. Among the Wayãpi, *paye* is an adjective, a specific quality that emerges in all sorts of places (Campbell 1995). It is not a noun designating a specific person or one role. As Campbell correctly observes, the use of *pajé* to refer to shaman reflects a problem of translation. While in the native language it is a key metaphor in a shamanic universe, the Portuguese term is a colonial concept that is applied to a wide variety of healing practitioners who may or may not fit the anthropological concept of the indigenous shaman.

Brazil's Amazonian population is composed of a diversity of ethnic groups, ideally envisioned as a mixture of Indians, Europeans and Afro-Brazilians. Designated as *caboclos*, the mixed-blood groups of the region, as well as their shamanic practices, are extremely heterogeneous (Galvão 1955). Their notions of the body and diet, their conceptions of the natural and spiritual world, as well as their healing traditions which center on inspirational healers known principally as *pajés*, *curadores*, *benzadores* or *rezadores* show affinities to indigenous traditions and worldview (Wawzyniak 2003). These specialists conduct healing rituals using plants, prayers and ecstatic techniques, including at times psychotropic substances. However, these different practitioners do not represent mutually exclusive categories and their rituals, referred to as *pajélança*, also have roots in popular Catholicism and Afro-Brazilian religious practices. Possession, rather than the shamanic flight, is an important mode of ecstasy, and African rhythms and animistic beings are present in many rituals, along with Catholic saints (Pacheco 2004). As a consequence, many investigators of *pajélança* consider it to be a result of the multifarious religious panorama of the region and not an indigenous tradition (Maués 2003; Boyer 1999).

As in Colombia and Peru, networks have historically linked urban mestizo *curadores* and *benzadores* with indigenous shamans (Chaumeil 1992: 104; Galvão 1955). However, caboclo culture remains regionally isolated from the rest of Brazil (Boyer 1999; Nugent 1993; Nugent and Harris 2004), and this is also true for *pajélança* healing networks. There is no evidence linking Amazonian *pajés* to the itineraries of popular medicine in urban centers outside the region. Furthermore, indigenous healing knowledge does not receive the high status in Brazilian popular medicine beyond the Amazon, as it does in Colombia.

An interesting example of the dialogue between native shamanic practices, caboclo populations and the greater Brazilian society has been the formation of the *ayahuasca* religions. *Ayahuasca*, like *yajé*, is based upon the preparation of *Banisteriopsis* with other additives; in Brazil, the Quechua designation for the bitter tea-like brew has been adopted. According to MacRae (1999), at least eight different religious groups use *ayahuasca*. The two largest, Santo Daime and União do Vegetal, are nationally and internationally known and have spread throughout the Americas and Europe. Although the characteristics of the groups vary considerably, they have common origins in the caboclo cultures of the Amazon. The son of an ex-slave who migrated to the Amazon during the rubber boom founded Santo Daime in Acre in 1930. An *ayahuasca* experience

resulted in a strong vision of the Virgin Mary that became the basis of his religious cult. Likewise, União do Vegetal was founded in the State of Rondônia in the 1960s following the *ayahuasca* experience of the leader of a local Afro-Brazilian possession cult. These inspirational religions are extremely eclectic, combining elements of various traditions coming from popular Catholicism, spiritualism and Afro-Brazilian cults. The use of *ayahuasca* is the primary technique for the ecstatic experience and it figures prominently as a sacred plant. Both groups have a founding mythology that attributes their origins to the Indian cultures, but their doctrines are more heavily influenced by non-indigenous ideologies. Araújo (ms.) relates the emergence of Santo Daime in Acre and the nature of its social organization to the economic collapse of rubber extraction, in which the smaller rubber patrons played the role of *padrinho* (godfather), the title given to the leader of Santo Daime communities.

In the 1980s Santo Daime began to experience an unprecedented growth as its cults spread outside the Amazon to urban centers throughout the country, attracting members of the educated middle classes and some political dissidents fascinated by the possibilities of *ayahuasca*. It is difficult to generalize about these cults, in part, because each one reflects the characteristics of its leader, or *padrinho*, and his version of the doctrine. Yet in all, *ayahuasca* is the unifying principle of their ritual practices and cosmological visions that differ greatly from those of Indigenous shamanism. Some researchers regard these *ayahuasca* religions as representing the true Brazilian religion, because of their roots in the three races that gave origin to the nation – the European, the Indian and the African.

Ayahuasca religions have been well studied by anthropologists since the 1980s (Labate *et al.* 2008), many of whom have become members of these cults. Some of these anthropologists, as well as other followers link *ayahuasca* metonymically to shamanism. These religions have been the focus of journalistic publicity and judicial discussions as to the legality of the substance. A number of anthropologists and other researchers have united to defend the legal use of *ayahuasca* (MacRae 2010).

Neo-Shamanisms in Brazil

Brazil has long been recognized as a fertile environment for unorthodox religious movements that combine Indian, Catholic, African and assorted esoteric elements (Greenfield 1989; MacRae 1999) and the *ayahuasca* religions are evidence of this. Their expansion played an important role in spread of the substance beyond the Amazonian region for spiritual, leisure and therapeutic purposes. Countless groups of friends and colleagues join regularly to ingest it, and psychologists and other counselors in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have adopted it as a therapeutic technique (Labate 2004). Recently Amazonian youth identified as shamans have begun to participate in these groups (Cavalcante 2011).

Ayahuasca use in this context is associated with urban shamanism that is part of a market of alternative religious and mystical practices that offer therapies and consultations for urban middle classes (Magnani 2000, 2005; Maluf 2003). These practices are less associated with *pajélança* of the Amazonian cities and more with the heterogeneous global circulation of emerging spiritual practices. The self-identification of these practices as shamanic and of its practitioners as shamans, not *pajés*, underscores their globalized origins.

Shamanic workshops, such as those founded by Michael Harner (Johnson 2003), can be found in all the larger cities in Brazil. Globalized ceremonies appropriated from North American Indians, such as the vision quest, *temazcal* sweat bath, sacred pipe, shamanic drumming, sun dance and others are held in a variety of locations. Shamans claiming indigenous origin from Mexico, Colombia, Peru and other countries have been circulating in the major cities for at least fifteen years, and non-Indians also promote themselves as shamans. In southern Brazil, Luis Luna, a pioneer investigator of Peruvian mestizo shamanism (*vegetalism*), has offered ceremonies for over fifteen years in his *ayahuasca* center in Santa Catarina, distant from the Amazonian origins of the substance's use and with primarily non-Brazilians who come for two to three week sessions. My yoga instructor left for Mexico fifteen years ago and returned five years later to offer courses on shamanic consciousness. In 2004, a "shaman" set up his "office" in the colonial plaza of my neighborhood on the Island of Florianópolis in Santa Catarina with sign listing his services: "shaman, numerology, tarot and I-Ching".

Also in Santa Catarina, a network known as the Medicine Alliance has emerged through the sharing of ritual practices between members of the international group Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan, the local Santo Daime center and a Guarani Indian community (Santana de Rose 2010). This alliance participates in a network that dialogues with Indigenous and non indigenous shamanisms far beyond the Brazilian borders. The Alliance is a particularly representative yet distinct example of shamanic itineraries and international circuits in which various actors participate in ritual practices but often with very different points of view.

Sacred Fire of Itzachilatlan is present in South America, the United States and Europe. Combining various symbols and rituals attributed to different shamanic traditions of the American continent (Macklin *et al.* 1999), its leaders identify themselves as "medicine men" and claim inspiration from the Native American Church and other indigenous practices, especially those of the Lakota. As it has grown in Brazil, indigenous shamans have increasingly circulated in their ritual activities. Labate (2004: 356) identifies it as an "essentialist pan-indigenous religion", which incorporates elements from diverse indigenous contexts in a search for the universal ancestral roots of humankind.

In the late 1990s, a medical doctor established Sacred Fire in Santa Catarina upon returning from a spiritual journey throughout the Americas. He began conducting rituals for interested participants in the city of Florianópolis and founded a center on his family's land in the rural highlands of Santa Catarina, adding *ayahuasca* to the other sacred substances important to Sacred Fire. In this center, yearly ceremonials attract national and international participants to celebrate globalized shamanic practices such as the vision quest, sun dance and *temazcal* along with the ingestion of psychoactive substances. Stimulated by his personal interests in indigenous knowledge and by the Brazilian health policy for Indian peoples, the doctor helped create a health project designed to revitalize the traditional medical practices among the Guarani Indians through the promotion of the *temazcal* and use of *ayahuasca* in several villages as forms of ancestral practices. The Federal Government provided financial resources for the activities, and the local Santo Daime group collaborated with *ayahuasca*.³ Out of these

3. As part of this partnership, the Santo Daime *padrinho* journeyed to Mexico to meet with the leaders of Sacred Fire.

negotiations, the Medicine Alliance emerged with these three groups as the nucleus of a network that extends to actors and substances throughout and beyond Brazil.

The Guarani Indians found along the Brazilian coast are located in small extended family groups from the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul northward to Espirito Santo. Approximately 12,000 Guarani (Fausto 2005:407) are dispersed among the non-indigenous population and confined to marginal lands often situated near large urban centers. They are part of a larger and extremely mobile Guarani population that migrates freely between Paraguay, Bolivian, Argentina and Brazil.

Subject of extensive ethnographic and historical research, the Guarani are characterized by a spiritual ethos that justifies their way of life and their otherworldly search for the land without evil. Recent research has begun to yield a better understanding of their migration practices, often led by the *karai*, their shamanic ritual practitioner. Each small community consisting of extended families is led by a *karai*, an important sacred authority performing collective ceremonies based on chanting and tobacco. The *karai*'s wife also exhibits certain shamanic capacities, such as divining through dreams, and complements his role. Traditional communities have an *opy*, or prayer house, where collective prayer and chanting ceremonies are performed.

The Guarani present a certain paradox with reference to their interaction with the larger society. On the one hand, they are an example of cultural resistance (Ortner 1995), living in small extended family communities that maintain their native language, mythology and sacred rituals and reject the presence of non-Indians in their villages or ceremonies. Simultaneously, they are among the most impoverished Brazilian Indian groups suffering from high infant mortality rate, malnutrition and illnesses resulting from their marginal position, including alcohol abuse and its consequences, high suicide rates (in the case of the Guarani-Kaiowá of Mato Grosso do Sul) and sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS. Some of the communities appear to be in a process of social disorganization, while others continue to organize around their *karai* who conducts the collective rituals. In Brazil their marginal position is underscored by the fact that they are dispersed throughout the wealthiest states of Brazil. They can be seen along the highways and in city streets selling baskets and other objects and are subject to a number of discriminatory practices.

The use of *ayahuasca* is not a traditional Guarani practice, nor do all the communities accept it, but its introduction, along with the *temazcal* ritual, has been exceptionally successful in one village. *Ayahuasca* was incorporated into their *opy* ceremonies, along with a number of Sacred Fire's symbols, including the half-moon fire altar with depictions of the American eagle and South American condor and firewood arranged in an arrow motif. *Ayahuasca*, called "medicine" is considered a sacred substance. Its visions have revealed to the inhabitants of this village their forgotten ancestral knowledge, which justifies it as a Guarani tradition. Differing from other Guarani groups that prohibit outsiders in their collective rituals, interested non-Indians are welcomed. The health team members contracted by the Government to provide primary care are frequent participants, as well as students, anthropologists and others. At least one health team member is training to become a *karai*.

In turn, Guarani participate in a number of Medicine Alliance activities outside the community. During the summer months, they are present in the annual event held at Sacred Fire's mountain center, and several have undergone the vision quest, a graduated

sequence of periods of seclusion and fasting in the forests of the surrounding hills. In the winter, they participate in the Santo Daime annual medicine event celebrating indigenous knowledge through ritual ingestion of a variety of psychoactive substances. Other shamans, 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, also come to this event. Recently the Guarani held the first vision quest in their village for non-Indians, and they independently conduct *ayahuasca* and *temazcal* rituals in New Age spiritual centers and collaborate with students of an alternative medical practice known as “naturology”. These activities are a source of income for the group, which traditionally depends upon the sale of handicrafts.

Contemporary shamanisms in Brazil and Colombia

The shamanisms currently practiced by the Siona and the Guarani and their exchange of symbols, substances and ritual practices with middle class urbanites are certainly not unique. Similar exchanges are being documented globally, and *ayahuasca*, possibly the most popular psychoactive substance to be sought by alternative spiritual groups, therapists, curious experimenters and tourists in South America, has a strong metonymic association with shamanism. Although such practices in this global movement are often labeled as neo-shamanism, the two cases presented suggest that “contemporary shamanisms” is a more adequate designation for the diversity of practices and interests where frontiers are blurred. The term neo-shamanism is associated with negative connotations and ignores the dialogue that flows between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples and their practices. Benefits are to be had on all sides.

For Indian communities, this interchange has apparently strengthened their former ritual practices. During the 1970s, the Siona had no practicing shamans and they expressed nostalgia for the loss of traditional ritual practices. Low productivity in fishing and hunting, social conflicts, lack of collective ethos, and chronic and serious illnesses were seen as unresolvable problems due to the absence of *yajé* rituals led by powerful *curacas*. The emergence of *taitas* and their rituals has been accompanied by a number of other community projects, such as the introduction of bilingual professors in the schools, community projects stimulating Siona ethnic identity, and other activities that are in part motivated by governmental policies and interest in the preservation of minority cultural and civic rights.

Also for the Guarani, research suggests that the *karai*'s leadership and influence was positively influenced by the introduction of *ayahuasca*. Collective rituals began to be performed more regularly and community attendance increased. Guarani discourse supports these observations, indicating a revival of the traditional ways of Guarani life and renewed respect for the *karai* (Rose 2010, Langdon and Rose 2012). Like the Siona, the revitalization of ritual practices is occurring within a national and international context in which Indigenous rights and culture are recurrent themes in public policies. Bilingual schools, the promotion of a Guarani choir, and the implantation of agricultural and other projects for sustainability have been part of the history of this village in the last fifteen years. The activities should be seen as the result of dialogue with external actors in which the Guarani have responded positively by taking an active role (Macedo 2011).

In the same way, it is possible to draw parallels in the expectations of the urban participants of the *tomas de yajé* and the Medicine Alliance. Both groups expect from Indigenous shamans the performance of ritual practices that evidence primordial knowledge and wisdom that are keys for survival in late modernity and are part of a larger globalized context in which indigenous peoples and practices are perceived as a source of well-being and spirituality. Both are representative of a diversity of groups recreating shamanic practices through common representations about the Indian. These contemporary shamanisms take on particular configurations according to their historical and cultural contexts. Nature, spirits, primordial knowledge, equilibrium, harmony, love and energy are key metaphors that circulate among individuals who seek indigenous techniques. Most research characterizes these groups as more psychological and tending to individual rather than collective ends. However, these practitioners should be taken seriously in their intent to acquire an alternative perspective and experience ignored in Western culture.

Ethnicity is important symbolic capital that enables the Indian, as the shaman, to circulate within these groups and receive special respect. The shaman is expected to perform archaic techniques of ecstasy that permit access to primordial knowledge world, and sacred plants are often considered essential to shamanic consciousness. *Ayahuasca* has become metonymic to shamanism, and some claim that they became shamans simply by drinking the substance. However, based on these two case studies, the substances circulate in a dialogue of exchange and diverse expectations. This is particularly evident in Sacred Fire events, in which elaborately orchestrated complex rituals are invented through the appropriation of symbols and practices that mimic Native American shamanisms.

Concluding thoughts

M. Carneiro da Cunha (1998) has suggested that shamanism should be thought of as translation. Although traditionally we have considered the shaman as the translator of other realities or as the mediator between the known and the occult, she poses another translation role, that of shaman as the translator of native knowledge, including that of ecology, for the non-Indian.⁴ This image of the shaman as translator can be misleading. It tends to reify the popular image of the shaman as sole possessor of native knowledge and ignores that cultural knowledge is distributed, often unevenly, among members of a group according to internal differentiation of gender and age. More importantly, translation implies a unidirectional mode of communication, not one based on interaction, context and dialogue.

However, if we agree with Hamayon that shamanism for Western society has long been an objectification of the other, a mirror in which we use to construct our image of the other (2001), the idea of translation does not capture adequately the interchange that is occurring between all the actors who take an active interest in shamanic revival – the anthropologists, journalists, environmental organizations, health workers, Indians and neo-shamans, among countless others. Shamanism is a performative mode that is best

4. Other researchers have argued that this is due to Western expectations of indigenous identity (Conklin 2002; Ulloa 2010).

understood as dialogue and as an emergent phenomenon resulting from specific actors and events that are engaged in its construction.

As first suggested by Atkinson (1992), the concept should be used in the plural, as “shamanisms”, in order to emphasize the impossibility of essentializing this phenomenon that anthropologists and others have considered to be an archaic expression of sacred knowledge and techniques. Studies of lowland South American Indians have shown that while sharing common features of a shamanic cosmology, the varied expressions of this cosmology through the praxis of shamanic figures are heterogeneous and dynamic. In a fractal universe in constant transformation, conceptions of alterity and mediation with otherness have an important role in this performative mode. Otherness is a source of ambiguity, predation and aggression.

Native shamanisms today must be regarded as the product of the colonial encounter, as many authors have argued (Taussig 1987; Thomas and Humphrey 1994) and not an archaic religion from the past. Specific focus on witchcraft has indicated that the dark, non-loving aspects of shamanism are important strategies in this encounter (Whitehead and Wright 2004) in which urban and mestizo shamanisms express the concerns of the subaltern classes in a capitalist economy (Pérez Gil 2004). Ramírez (1996/97) argues that mestizo shamanism must be understood as a dialogic relation of different discourses.

Some analyses place the origins of contemporary shamanic movements in late modernity and post-Enlightenment esoteric practices (Hammer 2001), rather than in indigenous logic and rituals. Vibetsky (2003) affirms that New Age shamanic practices have never been indigenous although they claim to revive ancient wisdom. Johnson (2003) views the Harner workshops as a unilateral appropriation that is structured by modern strategies. However, evidence from Colombia and Brazil indicate that such conclusions are not adequate to understand the dialogic encounter between native and contemporary groups.

There have always been shamanic networks and interchange of knowledge, and indigenous shamanisms have always been in dialogue with the other, be they Indians or not (Langdon 1981; Chaumeil 1991; Gonçalves da Rosa 2005; Pérez Gil 2004). As argued by Gow (1994), Pérez Gil (2004) and Ramírez (1996/97) for the “mixed blood shamanisms”, this dialogue is not unidirectional. The case studies of the Siona and Guaraní support these conclusions. Shamanisms today constantly emerge and recreate themselves in a dialogical relation between actors in a post-colonial and post-modern world.

References

- ARAÚJO, Roberto, ms. *Les orphelins du caoutchouc: Notes pour une étude sur le culte du Santo Daime*.
- ATKINSON, Jane Monnig, 1992. "Shamanisms Today", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 21: 307-330.
- BOYER, Véronique, 1999. "O Pajé e o Caboclo: De Homen a Entidade", *Mana*, 5(1): 29-56.
- BRUNELLI, Gilio, 1996. "Do Xamanismo aos Xamãs: Estratégias Tupi-Mondé frente à Sociedade Envolvente", in Esther Jean Langdon (ed.), *Xamanismo no Brasil: Novas Perspectivas*, 233-266. Florianópolis: Editora UFSC.
- CAICEDO FERNÁNDEZ, Alhena, 2007. "Neochamanismos y modernidad. Lecturas sobre la emancipación", *Revista Nómadas*, 26: 114-147.
- , 2009. "Nuevo chamanismos nueva era", *Universitas Humanística*, 68: 15-32.
- CAMPBELL, Alan T., 1995. *Getting to Know Wai Wai*. London: Routledge.
- CARNEIRO DA CUNHA, Manuela, 1998. "Pontos de Vista sobre a Floresta Amazônica: Xamanismo e Tradução", *Mana*, 4(1): 7-22.
- CAVALCANTE, Tiago Coutinho, 2011. *Xamanismo da Floresta em Rio de Janeiro: Um estudo de caso*. Doctoral dissertation, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Sociologia e Antropologia, Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro.
- CHAUMEIL, Jean-Pierre, 1991. "Réseaux chamaniques contemporains et relations interethniques dans le haut-Amazone (Pérou)", in Carlos Pinzón and Rosa Saúrez (eds), *Otra America en construcción: Medicinas tradicionales, religiones populares*, 9-21. Bogotá: Colcultura-Ican.
- , 1992. "Varieties of Amazonian Shamanism", *Diogenes*, 158: 101-113.
- CONKLIN, Beth A., 2002. "Shamans versus Pirates in the Amazonian Treasure Chest", *American Anthropologist*, 104(4): 1050-1061.
- DAMATTA, Roberto, 1976. *Um Mundo Divido: A estrutura social dos índios Apinayé*. Petropolis: Vozes.
- ELIADE, Mircea, 1951. *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press and the Bollingen Foundation.
- FAUSTO, Carlos, 2005. "Se Deus Fosse Jaguar: Canibalismo e Cristianismo entre os Guarani (Séculos XVI-XX)", *Mana*, 11(2): 385-418.
- , 2007. "Feasting on People: Cannibalism and Commensality in Amazonia", *Current Anthropology*, 48(4): 497-530.
- FERREIRA OLIVEIRA, Aline, 2012. *Yawa-Nawa: Alianças e Pajés nas Cidades*. Master's Dissertation in Anthropology. Florianópolis, Pós-Graduação em Antropologia. Universidade Federal de Antropologia.
- GALVÃO, Eduardo, 1955. *Santo e Visagens: Um Estudo da Vida Religiosa de Itá, Amazonas*. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional.
- GONÇALVES DA ROSA, Rogério Réus, 2005. "Os Kujà são Diferentes": *Um estudo etnológico do complexo xamânico dos Kaingang da terra indígena Vontouro*. Doctoral Dissertation in Anthropology. Porto Alegre: Universidade Federal de Rio Grande do Sul.
- GOW, Peter, 1994. "River People: Shamanism and History in Western Amazonia", in Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey (eds), *Shamanism, History, and the State*, 90-113. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press .
- GREENFIELD, Sidney M., 1989. *Pilgrimage, Therapy and the Relationship between Healing and Imagination*. Discussion Paper No. 82. Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Center for Latin America.

- HAMAYON, Roberte N., 2001. "Shamanism: Symbolic System, Human Capability and Western Ideology", in Henri-Paul Francfort, Roberte N. Hamayon and Paul G. Bahn (eds), *The Concept of Shamanism: Uses and Abuses*, 1-29. Budapest: Adadémiai Kiado.
- HAMMER, Olav, 2001. *Claiming Knowledge. Strategies of Epistemology from Theosophy to the New Age*. Brill: Leiden
- JOHNSON, Paul C., 2003. "Shamanism from Ecuador to Chicago. A Case Study in New Age Ritual Appropriation", in Graham Harvey (ed.), *Shamanism, A reader*, 334-354. London: Routledge.
- KRACKE, Waud 1987. "Everyone who dreams has a bit of shaman: Cultural and personal meanings of dreams - evidence from the Amazon", *Psychiatric Journal of the University of Ottawa*, 12(2): 66-72.
- LABATE, Beatriz Caiuby, 2004. *A Reinvenção do Uso da Ayahuasca nos Centros Urbanos*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras.
- LABATE, Beatriz Caiuby, Isabel SANTANA DE ROSE and Rafael GUIMARÃES DOS SANTOS (eds), 2008. *Religiões Ayahuasqueiras, Um Balanço Bibliográfico*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras/FAPESP.
- LANGDON, E. Jean, 1981. "Social Bases for Trading of Visions and Spiritual Knowledge in the Colombian and Ecuadorian Montaña", *Networks of the Past, Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Conference*, 101-116. Calgary: The Archaeological Association of the University of Calgary.
- , 1985. "Siona Political Process: Adaptation to External Control", in Jeffrey Ehrenreich (ed.), *Political Anthropology: Perspectives from Indigenous Cultures of Ecuador*, 129-156. Albany, New York: Society for Latin American Anthropology and the Center for the Caribbean and Latin America. State University of New York.
- , 1991. "Interethnic Processes Affecting the Survival of Shamans: A Comparative Analysis", in Carlos Pinzón and Rosa Saúrez (eds), *Otra America en construcción: Medicinas tradicionales, religiones populares*, 44-65. Bogotá: Colcultura-Ican.
- , (ed.), 1996. *Novas Perspectivas sobre Xamanismo no Brasil*. Florianópolis: Editora da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.
- , 2007. "Shamans and Shamanisms: Reflections on Anthropological Dilemmas of Modernity", *Vibrant*, 4(2): 27-48.
- LANGDON, Esther Jean and Isabel ROSE, 2012. "(Neo)Shamanic Dialogues: Encounters between the Guarani and Ayahuasca", *Nova Religio*, 15(4): 36-59. Special Issue on New Religious Movements in Brazil.
- LIMA, Tania S., 1996. "O Dois e seu Múltiplo: Reflexões sobre o Perspectivismo em uma Cosmologia Tupi", *Mana*, 2(2): 21-47.
- MACEDO, Valéria, 2011. "Tracking Guarani songs: between villages, cities and worlds", *Vibrant*, 8(1): 377-411.
- MACKLIN, June, VICTOR ACEVEDO MARTINEZ and Elizabeth GONZALEZ TORRES, 1999. "New Religious Movements and Ritual Transformations of the Modern Self", *Scripta Ethnologica*, 21: 35-58.
- MACRAE, Edward, 1999. "The Ritual and Religious Use of Ayahuasca in Contemporary Brazil", in W. Taylor, R. Stewart, K. Hopkins and S. Ehlers (eds), *DPF XII Policy Manual*, 47-50. Washington, D.C.: The Drug Policy Foundation Press.
- , 2010. "The Development of Brazilian Public Policies on the Religious Use of Ayahuasca", in B. C. Labate and E. MacRae (eds), *Ayahuasca, Ritual and Religion in Brazil*, 191-204. London: Equinox.
- MAGNANI, José Guilherme C., 2000. "O Xamanismo Urbano e a Religiosidade Contemporânea", *Religião & Sociedade*, 20(2): 113-140.
- , 2005. "Xamãs na Cidade", *Revista da USP*, 67: 218-227.
- MALUF, Sônia, 2003. "Os Filhos de Aquário no País dos Terreiros: Novas Vivências Espirituais no Sul do Brasil", *Ciências Sociais e Religião*, 5(5): 153-172.

- MAUÉS, Raymundo Heraldo, 2005. “Um aspecto da diversidade cultural do caboclo amazônico: a religião”. *Estudos Avançados*, 19(53): 259-274.
- MÉTRAUX, Alfred, 1941. “Religion and Shamanism”, in Julian Steward (ed.), *Handbook of South American Indians*, 5: 559-599. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.
- NARBY, Jeremy and Francis HUXLEY (eds), 2001. *Shamans through Time: 500 Years on the Path of Knowledge*. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam.
- NUGENT, Stephen, 1993. *Amazonian Caboclo Society: An Essay on Invisibility and Peasant Economy*. Oxford: Berg Publishers.
- NUGENT, Stephen and Mark HARRIS, 2004. *Some other Amazonians*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press.
- OLIVEIRA, Diogo DE, 2011. *Arandu Nhembo'ea: Cosmologia, Agricultura e Xamanismo entre os Guarani-Chiripá no litoral de Santa Catarina*. Master's Thesis in Anthropology, Florianópolis: Pós-Graduação em Antropologia, UFSC.
- ORTNER, Sherry, 1995. “Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 37(1): 173-193.
- PACHECO DE BRITTO FREIRE, Gustavo, 2004. *Brincando de Cura. Um Estudo sobre a Pajelança Maranhense*. Doctoral Dissertation in Anthropology, Museu Nacional. Rio de Janeiro: Pós-Graduação em Antropologia, UFRJ.
- PÉREZ GIL, Laura, 2004. “Chamanismo y modernidade: fundamentos etnográficos de un processo histórico”, in Óscar Calavia Sáez, Marc Lenaerts and Ana María Spadafora (eds), *Paraíso abierto, jardines cerrados: Pueblos indígenas, saberes y biodiversidad*, 179-201. Quito: ABYA-YALA.
- PINZÓN, Carlos, Rosa SUÁREZ and Gloria GARAY, 2005. *Mundos en red. La cultura popular frente a los retos del siglo XXI*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- PORTELA GUARÍN, Hugo *et al.*, 2003. *Plan de Vida del Pueblo Siona: Ga'ntëya bain*. Popayán: Editorial Universidad del Cauca.
- PRESS, Irwin, 1971. “The Urban Curandero”, *American Anthropologist*, 73: 742-756.
- RAMÍREZ, María Clemencia, 1996/1997. “El chamanismo, un campo de articulación de colonizadores y colonizados en la región amazónica de Colombia”, *Revista Colombiana de Antropología*, 33: 165-184
- RAMÍREZ DE JARA, María Clemencia and Carlos PINZÓN, 1992. “Sibundoy Shamanism and Popular culture in Colombia”, in Esther Jean Langdon and Gerhard Baer (eds), *Portals of power Shamanism in South America*, 287-304. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- REICHEL-DOLMATOFF, “Gerardo 1976. Cosmology as Ecological Analysis: A View from the Rain Forest”, *Man*, (NS)11: 307-18.
- ROSE, Isabel SANTANA DE, 2010. *Tata endy rekoe - Fogo Sagrado: encontros entre os Guarani, a ayahuasca e o Caminho Vermelho*. Doctoral Dissertation in Anthropology, Florianópolis: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.
- ROSE, Isabel SANTANA DE and Esther Jean LANGDON, 2010. “Diálogos (neo)xamânicos: encontros entre os Guarani e a ayahuasca”, *Revista Tellus*, 10(18): 83-113.
- SALOMON, Frank, 1983. “Shamanism and Politics in Late/Colonial Ecuador”, *American Ethnologist*, 10(3): 413-28.
- SEEGER, Anthony, Roberto DA MATTA and Eduardo VIVEIROS DE CASTRO, 1987. “A Construção da Pessoa nas Sociedades Indígenas Brasileiras”, in João Pacheco de Oliveira Filho (ed.), *Sociedades Indígenas e Indigenismo no Brasil*, 11-30. Rio de Janeiro: UFRJ/Editora Marco Zero.
- SILVEIRA, Nadia Heusi, 2011. *Imagens de Abundância e Escassez: Comida Guarani e Transformações na Contemporaneidade*. Doctoral Dissertation, Florianópolis: Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina.

- TAUSSIG, Michael, 1987. *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- , 1989. “The Nervous System, part 1: Dada and Homesickness”, *Kroeber Journal of Anthropology*, 69-70: 32-61.
- THOMAS, Nicholas and Caroline HUMPHREY (eds), 1994. *Shamanism, History, and the State*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- ULLOA, Astrid, 2010. *The Ecological Native: Indigenous People's Movements and Eco-governmentality in Colombia*. London: Routledge.
- UMIYAC Unión de Medicos Indígenas Yageceros de Colombia, 1999. *Encuentro de Taitas en la Amazonía Colombiana*. Colombia: UMIYAC.
- URIBE, Carlos Alberto, 2002. El yajé como sistema emergente: discusiones y controversias. Documentos CESO #33. Centro de Estudios Socioculturales e Internacionales. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.
- URREA GIRALDO, Fernando and Diego ZAPATA ORTEGA, 1995. “Vegetalismo y Sistema de Representaciones en el Curanderismo Inga-Camentsa. (Pretexto para una discusión sobre las cosmovisiones prehispánicas en la sociedad contemporánea)”, in Isabel Lagarriga, Jacques Galinier and Michel Perin (eds), *Chamanismo en Latinoamérica, una revisión conceptual*, 39-68. Mexico: Plaza y Valdés Editores.
- VITEBSKY, Piers, 2003. “From Cosmology to Environmentalism: Shamanism as local knowledge in a global setting”, in Graham Harvey (ed.), *Shamanism, A reader*, 276-298. London: Routledge.
- VIVEIROS DE CASTRO, Eduardo B., 1996. “Images of Nature and Society in Amazonian Anthropology”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 25: 179-200.
- , 1998. “Cosmological Deixis and Amerindian Perspectivism”, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 4: 469-488.
- WAWZYNIAK, João Valentin, 2003. “‘Engerar’: uma categoria cosmológica sobre pessoa, saúde e corpo”, *Ilha. Revista de Antropologia*, 5(2): 33-55.
- WHITEHEAD, Neil, 2002. *Dark Shamans. Kanaima and the poetics of violent death*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- WHITEHEAD, Neil and Robin WRIGHT (eds), 2004. *Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazonia*. Durham, Duke University Press.