

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: MUSIC, TRANCE, AND TRANSMISSION IN THE SANTO DAIME, A BRAZILIAN AYAHUASCA RELIGION.

Benjamin Blocksom, Master of Arts, 2015

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This thesis illuminates the core values within Santo Daime communities and how these are transmitted and practiced during rituals. Santo Daime, a Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion originating in the western Amazon state of Acre, is practiced both inside and outside its urban Amazonian roots, including most Brazilian states and smaller communities in a handful of Western countries, such as the United States, Mexico, and the Netherlands. Adepts of the Santo Daime combine the sacramental use of Ayahuasca (a psychotropic tea with a long history of use in the Amazonian basin), collective shamanism, and music performance practices (singing, dancing, and playing instruments) to achieve a state of religious ecstasy. Using a multi-disciplinary approach with emphasis on ethnography, an expansion of Judith Becker's categorization of trance, and musical and phonological analysis I argue that the doctrine of the Santo Daime and the transmission of these teachings through music are inseparable elements of producing and navigating the altered states of consciousness collectively experienced in Santo Daime rituals.

MUSIC, TRANCE, AND TRANSMISSION IN THE SANTO DAIME, A  
BRAZILIAN AYAHUASCA RELIGION.

By

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## Foreword

A large number of terms in this study come from the variant of Brazilian Portuguese spoken in the state of Acre, located in the Northwest Amazon region that borders Peru and Bolivia. Some of these words are specific only to the Santo Daime, and not Brazilian Portuguese in general.

Simplifications were made when I could do so without losing meaning. For convenience, I have included all of these words in a glossary at the end. Where simplification was not possible, I have placed a foreign term or the non-canonical use of English in italics and defined its first use in parentheses.

Some terms used by adepts of this religious movement have multiple meanings. For example, the proper name Santo Daime can refer to the religious movement or to the sacramental drink known outside of this context as *ayahuasca*. When referring to the religious movement, the term Santo Daime is preferred, whereas when referring to the sacrament, Daime is used.

Unless otherwise noted, all foreign words are of Brazilian Portuguese origin as it is spoken by members of the Santo Daime. This practice makes use of words with Amazonian origin and also redefines certain more canonical words. The word for ritual—"trabalho" (work)—is a good example of Brazilian Portuguese Daime usage that might be different outside of the community use.

## On the Legal Status of Ayahuasca in the United States

The legal status of *ayahuasca* in the United States has a colorful history. On the one hand, dimethyltryptamine is a schedule-1 controlled substance, and there are severe federal penalties for its possession, use, or distribution. On the other hand, the religious use of *entheogens* (see Chapter 2 for discussion of this term) such as ayahuasca or peyote is protected under the so-called “peyote laws” of 1972, which granted the Native American Church a clean legal status to continue their sacramental use of peyote, whose active ingredient, mescaline, is also a schedule-1 narcotic.

The right to possess, store, and distribute ayahuasca, the sacrament of the Santo Daime, was tested under federal courts in *Church of the Holy Light of the Queen v. Michael M. Mukasey*, with a ruling in favor of the Oregonian church.<sup>1</sup>

Most Daimistas from the United States appropriately cite the first amendment as the legal basis for their use of ayahuasca. Still, given the history of the "war on drugs" and the challenges of importing and storing ayahuasca for a religious context, many American Daimistas prefer to keep a low profile. For this reason, pseudonyms have been used to refer to both the people who spoke with me and the names and places of the American Santo Daime centers. The names of all non-public figures have also been changed to pseudonyms. Brazilian proper names and the complete names of public figures have not been changed.

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<sup>1</sup> For a testimony on the Church of Oregon, the trial process, and the arguments presented in court, see Jackson and Cohoon (2009).

## Dedication

This here for Sara.

For Charles Costello, son of Annemarie Costello and Charllie da Silva Figueredo.

For Mom: I read to you, You read to me.

For Dad.

In the name of the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit.

## **Acknowledgements**

To the thesis committee that gathered to read this paper, thank you for this opportunity to learn.

To all of the churches of the Santo Daime, especially those that graciously opened their doors to me, I offer my most humble and sincere gratitude.

To my family, who loved and supported me in this endeavor, I give you the most abundant and joyful thanks.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis looks at (1) the role music plays in creating altered states of consciousness and transmitting cultural knowledge about these states, and (2) how people adapt this knowledge when it is removed from its cultural context via transnational movement.

To bring these issues to light, I focus on a multi-sited ethnography of one specific group, members of the Santo Daime, a Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion.<sup>2</sup> Founded in the wake of the collapse of the rubber-tapping industry in the 1930s in the western Amazonian area bordering Peru and Bolivia (see Figure 1), the religious movement adapted Amerindian shamanic traditions to Western cosmology, incorporating elements of Afro-Brazilian religions and popular Catholicism.

Santo Daime is known for its long rituals where adepts seek a state of collective religious ecstasy through dancing, singing hymns, and drinking an *entheogen* known as ayahuasca.<sup>3</sup> Daimistas, as adepts are called, gather together at regular intervals following the Catholic feast days in pavilion-like church centers concentrated throughout the western Amazon, in particular in the state of Acre, where it was founded.

Rituals are run with military precision. Daimistas dress in immaculately pressed distinctive uniforms—white or blue business suits for men and white long dresses with a sash and crown or long blue dresses, white shirts, and bow ties for

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<sup>2</sup> There are three main Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions: Santo Daime (including its two main branches, CEFLURIS and Alto Santo), Barquinha, and the União do Vegetal (UDV). The term "Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion" was first introduced by Labate and Araujo (2002).

<sup>3</sup> For discussion on the term "entheogen," see Chapter 2.

women—and neatly order themselves in rows circling a center altar. They begin their ceremonies with Catholic prayers—the “Our Father” and “Hail Mary” help make up this sequence—and then drink the sacrament. Over the next four to twelve hours they will collectively sing, dance, and enter into a state of religious trance.

Musical expression is a key element of all Santo Daime rituals, which lack long sermons or readings—doctrine is taught in large part through collective singing. Daime hymns have simple melodic structures and form, such as repeating paired couplets. They are accompanied by rattling a *maracá* (a metallic idiophone described in Chapter 5), an instrument with a largely symbolic role, but one which also has the function of time-keeper. If available, instrumental players may join in on acoustic guitars, accordion, and flute. Percussion—such as the *cajon*, *djembe*, or *pandeiro* (a Brazilian-style tambourine)—may also help support the three dance rhythms of Daime hymns: the march, the waltz, and the mazurka.

Over the past forty years Santo Daime has branched out from its working-class Amazonian roots and expanded to include middle- and upper middle-class members from urban centers, both in Brazil and abroad. More details on the origins and history of this expansion now follow.

### *Context: Origins and History of the Santo Daime*

#### **Origins of the Santo Daime**

The founding story of the Santo Daime begins with a migrational phenomenon that brought the rural, pastoral culture of Brazilian northeasterners, *nordestinos*, out of a drought-ridden climate and transplanted it to the ecologically rich and fertile area of the Amazon in the state of Acre. Lured by the economic

promise of the rubber boom, *nordestinos* brought their particular way of speaking, playing music, and worshipping God to the rubber-tree plantations (*seringais*) where they would spend up to several months at a time by themselves during harvest. These *nordestinos* adapted to their riverine and rainforest surroundings, adding to what is commonly refer to as *caboclo* culture (see Chernela and Pinho 2004: 84).

Some of these rubber-tappers—*seringueiros*—came into contact with the traditional Amerindian practices, including the use of forest medicines such as *ayahuasca*, a simple tea, made from the *jagube* vine (*baniesteriosis caapi*) and the leaf of the *chacrana* (*psychotria viridis*), that has potent visionary effects on those who drink it.

One *seringueiro*, Raimundo Irineu Serra—*Mestre Irineu* as called by Daimistas—immigrated from his native northeastern city of São Vicente Ferrer to the then territory of Acre. While working in the Brazilian Frontier guard demarcating the border region of Brazil, Peru, and Bolivia he came into contact with the *caboclo* and Amerindian practice of drinking *ayahuasca*.

During the subsequent collapse of the rubber industry in the 1930s, which left many *seringueiros* in urban centers like Rio Branco (AC) impoverished, Mestre Irineu founded a prayer cult that translated the Amerindian context of drinking *ayahuasca* to a Western context and ideology. This group re-baptized *ayahuasca* as *Santo Daime*, literally meaning the “Holy Give-me,” a name that came to refer not just to the entheogen, but to the new religious movement. He eventually moved the church center to the neighborhood of Alto Santo, where he remained its leader until his death on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1971.

### **Branching Out and Expansion**

Following Mestre Irineu's passing, the Santo Daime underwent another transformative process, splitting out into two main branches. The first branch, Alto Santo, physically remained at the center Mestre Irineu founded, but over time split into other centers that maintain similar ritualistic practices.

A breakaway group led by Sebastião Mota de Mello, which became known as CEFLURIS, founded a distinct branch of the Santo Daime. This group moved the site of their rituals down the road to a part of the suburbs of Rio Branco known as Colônia 5 Mil, moving eventually to Mapiá (AM), a remote site located nine hours by motor-powered canoe from the nearest city, Porto do Acre. Over time this group evolved to add ideological elements of Kardec spiritism, such as mediumship and the sacramental use of *cannabis sativa* in their rituals (MaCrae 1992: 72). More important for this study, they welcomed persons outside of the Rio Branco *caboclo* community, notably backpackers and counterculture revolutionaries from both Brazil and abroad.

These changes paved the way for the establishment of the first Santo Daime center outside of Acre, Céu do Mar in Rio de Janeiro (RJ). Foreign visitors with a "New Age" ethos, including United States citizens, visited this center in the mid-1980s, adopting this religion and establishing ties with this center and the CEFLURIS home base in Céu do Mapiá (AM). While CEFLURIS continued to expand throughout the Brazilian territory and abroad, it underwent a nuanced transnational process in a separate path from Alto Santo, which itself continued to evolve in its own way with less external influence.

At its heart, both branches of Santo Daime reflect the *nordestino* culture, including musical traditions, of its origins, and foster the same—or at least a similar— spiritual and social culture. More details were uncovered in the course of this study, whose underlying concerns and research questions are now presented.



Figure 1- Map of Acre, Brazil, © Wiki Commons



Figure 2 - Santo Daime Founder Mestre Irineu in White *Farda* © mestreirineu.org



## Methodology

### **Research Questions**

Despite the Amazonian origins of the doctrine, the initial impetus for this study came from experiences I had attending a couple of Daime rituals in suburban Washington, D.C. Time spent with the community had a profound impact on my own perception of spirituality, music, and healing. In light of these experiences, the following research questions were formulated:

- 1) Agreeing with Judith Becker's claim (2009: 41) that trancing—defined as the specific altered state of consciousness (ASC) associated with religious ecstasy—is culturally transmitted, how does this happen in the Santo Daime?
- 2) What role does the singing and playing of hymns have in producing these ASCs?
- 3) When a group of religious trancers expands to include a transnational community, how are modes of transmission and cultural memory changed?

### **Methodology**

To answer these questions, I present ethnographic observations, musical analysis, and testimony from semi-structured interviews as a data set that complements the findings of other anthropological and ethnomusicological studies that define the role of altered states of consciousness, trace their phenomenology when involving *ayahuasca* ingestion, and, finally, describe the value structures, rituals, and musical practices of the Santo Daime. For a broader ethnomusicological

framework to address the questions related to transnationalism, I apply Slobin's ideas of affinity cultures and micro-musics (1993), as well as Turino's definition of cosmopolitanism (2000).

### **Description of the Research Population**

This study focuses on self-identified participants of the Santo Daime. The requirement for selection in participation was based on self-identification and familiarity with the discourse of the Santo Daime doctrine. While no discrimination was made based on age, sex, ethnicity, nationality, or sexual preference, the groups can be organized into three categories, all of which are split evenly across gender lines.

The first includes members of the suburban Washington D.C. church known as the Church of the Holy Light, whose members number between 40 and 60 and include mostly English-speaking middle-class professionals from the United States.

The second group includes the 150-200 participants in the festival known as the *Encounter for a New Horizon (Encontro Para O Novo Horizonte)*, organized yearly by the church known as CEFLI in Capixaba (AC), Brazil. Most come from either the state of Acre or other urban centers in Brazil. This group is unique for also being a sample of the full mix of backgrounds within the Daime context, and includes members from the United States, Brazil, the Netherlands, Colombia, and Chile.

The third and final group included are the members of the greater Alto Santo community, a group of approximately 40-50 Daimista families who live around the area and are associated with the group of the founding members in the Raimundo Irineu Serra neighborhood on the outskirts of Rio Branco (AC).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Because of the history, described above, of the legality of ayahuasca, I have chosen in this study to attribute anonymity to the people and places described. The exception is for historical figures such as the late founder Mestre Irineu, or current public figures such as Sr. Luiz Mendes (founder of CEFLI) or Padrinho Alfredo Mota de Melo (acting leader of CEFLURIS).

All of the subjects that I interviewed granted oral or written consent to record interviews or take notes on conversations. I took great care when transcribing and coding these conversations to remove all personal references. After these interviews were transcribed I shared them with the informants and allowed them to make any revisions or requests for removal from the study.

### **Reflection on Role as Researcher and Participant**

Many, if not most, of the social science researchers investigating the Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions have analyzed the advantages and problems associated with maintaining objectivity and conducting research as a participant-observer. Bezerra de Oliveira (2008: 21-26) problematizes the role of the participant-observer in the realm of the sciences, noting that when studying religions that use psychoactives in their rituals (as is the case of Santo Daime) there are social and cultural points of view that will see these through the lens of legality, a point reiterated by Antunes (2012).

### **Data Collection Methods**

Data collection methods focused on observation-participation of ritual ceremonies, semi-structured interviews, and transcription and analysis of my own field recordings, studio recordings, and live recordings available from public sources.

### **Time Frame for Data Collection**

When I initially began this study in 2012, I was familiar with a group in suburban Washington, D.C. that held Santo Daime rituals. I had attended three previous ceremonies as a guest when I decided to focus on this area for thesis research. Since that initial time frame, I participated in all of the rituals of the Santo Daime calendar year from 2013 until the conclusion of the research phase of this study in August 2014.<sup>4</sup>

Beyond the calendrical rituals, I also participated in special rituals to commemorate visiting groups of church dignitaries, called *comitivas* (committees), healing ceremonies (*trabalhos de cura*), and a weekly prayer circle (*oração*) in suburban D.C. All told, I participated in and observed between 40 and 50 rituals in the context of the CEFLURIS group in the United States.

Outside of the United States, I attended four ceremonies in Mexico, one in Peru, and multiple rituals in Brazil. In this last case, I attended a half-dozen rituals in the South-Central Brazilian state of Minas Gerais at the CICLUMIG center in Santa Luzia (MG) and at Novo Horizonte Luz Divina in Divinópolis (MG). Both of these

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<sup>4</sup> The Santo Daime calendar year generally follows the Catholic feast days, but also adds important birthdays and anniversaries of the founders. The calendar itself is examined in Chapter 3.

centers follow the ritualistic practices of Alto Santo, under affiliation with the CEFLI center in Bujari (AC).

I attended another dozen ceremonies at this last center, CEFLI, during their end-of-the-year gathering known as the “Encontro Para o Novo Horizonte” (“Encounter for a New Horizon”). This gathering brings together adepts of the Santo Daime for a nine-day celebration at the end of their calendar year festivals, revolving around New Year’s Day, Epiphany, and the birthday of center founder Sr. Luiz Mendes. An informal period, called a *feitio*, follows the gathering involving the ritual making of the entheogen.

In July of 2014, I stayed in residence for one month at the *Ceu do Astral* center in Rio Branco, a very small healing center in the same neighborhood as the home, church, and tomb of founder Raimundo Irineu Serra. This neighborhood is an official APA (Federal Brazilian-sanctioned Environmental Protection Area) that also bears the founder's name, but is more popularly referred to as Alto Santo. During this period I attended another four official ceremonies at the Alto Santo centers (CEFLI and CEFLIMMAVI), two rituals at the Centro Espírita Príncipe Espadarte (Barquinha), and a series of healing ceremonies at Céu do Astral.

### **Transcription and Analysis**

A large body of recorded material from Santo Daime rituals is available online at aggregator sites like YouTube, Vimeo.com, and Soundcloud. The quality of these recordings range from the unusable to commercial productions. In addition, a number of affiliate sites—usually CEFLURIS oriented—have made tens of thousands of

recordings available; these sites include, but are by no means limited to, [nossairmandade.com](http://nossairmandade.com), [mestreirineu.org](http://mestreirineu.org), [santodaime.com](http://santodaime.com), and [mmce.fr](http://mmce.fr).

In addition to these materials, I made field recordings of many of the rituals I attended during fieldwork. The recording of rituals is a common practice among Daimistas for study and review of Daime hymns. Abramovitz suggests that this practice makes it unlikely that another recording device would alter the data collected (2003).

The habit within the Santo Daime is to place all recording devices at the center altar (*mesa de centro*), the most socially prestigious deixical point in the ritual space. Attempts to place recording devices in other locations, such as beyond the walls of the ritual space, were often met with suggestions that the recorder be moved to the *mesa de centro*. From a practical standpoint this makes audio capture difficult for two reasons. First, the overwhelming sonic presence of the *maracá* made data collection on vocal and instrumental subtleties difficult, as they are often drowned out in the mix. This aesthetic is heard on most live recordings, but more subdued on studio recordings made for studying. The second reason for recording from the vantage point of the *mesa de centro* is that a higher code of ritualistic behavior is involved with approaching the space. During the middle of a Santo Daime ritual, it is not socially practical to monitor devices left in this location. In one such instance, an outdoor *praise of nature work*.<sup>5</sup> I saw one recorder used in this study succumb to torrential rain which otherwise did not affect anything in the ritual

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<sup>5</sup> The emic term for ritual, as noted in the foreword, is *work*.

## Literature Review

The research presented here is primarily an ethnomusicological study supported by the anthropological methodology of fieldwork participant-observation and semi-structured interviews. The background necessary to support the claims comes from specialized accounts in the field of pharmacology and the ontological discipline known as *consciousness studies*. I shall proceed here by situating the material to be presented into the smaller subcategories of the larger academic disciplines, and then mention where it then falls in relation to the larger literature. When possible, I cite cross-disciplinary collaborations between fields of study.

The main focus of this study falls in the research area of anthropology that focuses on Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions, a term coined in part by two of the leading scholars in the field, Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Wladimir Sena Araújo, in *O uso ritual da ayahuasca* (2002). This collection of twenty-six articles by diverse authors is divided into four parts. Its second section focuses on the religions that began in the Brazilian Amazonian borderlands in the wake of the rubber-boom cycles of the pre- and post-WWII era. These religions made their way to cosmopolitan centers in south-central Brazil in the early 1970s.

Among the many other publications that the prolific Labate has had a hand in producing, *Ayahuasca Religions: A Comprehensive Bibliography & Critical Essays* (Labate, Santana de Rose, and Guimarães dos Santos 2008) is an excellent beginning reference book that systematically lists the available resources on Ayahuasca Religions in ten different languages.<sup>6</sup> While these sources are presented as

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<sup>6</sup> Of particular interest in *Ayahuasca Religions* is the observation that, outside of

bibliographical entries, there are also a number of important essays, including a comprehensive bibliographic overview of the Ayahuasca Religions from the first academic studies on Santo Daime in the 1980s (see Monteiro da Silva 1980; Froés Fernandes 1983; Couto 1989) through the growth period in Brazilian Studies that followed.

A number of ethnomusicological studies, both from Brazil and the United States, add to the literature on Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions. Rodrigo Sebastian Abramovitz's Master's thesis "Musica e Miração: uma análise etnomusicológica dos Daime hinos do Santo Daime" looks at the relationship between music, visions (*miração*) and trance, and community to validate the hypothesis of hymnals being biographies (2003).

Using the writings of Merriam (1964) and Anthony Seeger (1977) for his main conceptual frameworks, Abramovitz concludes that music in the Santo Daime functions to establish a flow of time outside the realm of ordinary, quotidian (linear) flows of time. Abramovitz notes in his literature review that his contribution is (that he knew of) the first ethnomusicological study on Santo Daime, suggesting that it took place alongside a general tendency in the anthropological literature to either find the historical roots of Santo Daime, or to suggest how its approaches to health and curing might be beneficial outside of the social context the religion sprang from.

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Brazil, there is an "enormous hole in English-language publications on Santo Daime" (Labate, Santana de Rose and Guimarães 2008: 44), and that in the United States the theme has "yet to attract the attention from anthropologists at prestigious universities," and has only been studied by anthropologists at universities that self-identify as being unconventional (ibid.: 44). By virtue of this research being affiliated with the University of Maryland, a historic land-grant school founded in 1856, this study marks a change in this academic landscape.



The practice of "receiving" hymns from the metaphysical plane—as opposed to composing them in the material one—is explained by Rehen (2007). Based on the work of Mauss, he argues that hymns are used in an elaborate system of gifting and social bond formation.

Marcelo Mercante, in his Ph.D. dissertation for Saybrook University (2006a), argues that it is imagination, combined with the physical spaces and ritual, that helps produce curing in the rituals of the Barquinha, another Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion.<sup>7</sup>

Moving from the plane of Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions to more generalized studies of ayahuasca, I note two particular studies, one phenomenological and another in the field of biopharmacology. Shannon (2002a) describes the role of music in *ayahuasca* ceremonies and introduces the term *homomorphism*, the unique ability of the sense of music to maintain its form in both ordinary and altered states of consciousness. Expanding upon this, he notes that a three-dimensional object may be moved through space and maintain its form—this is known as translocation—but in an altered state of consciousness this may not be the case. Music, however, is music in both states, a characterization that illuminates phenomenological experiences useful in describing the role of music in creating ASCs.

By far the largest contribution of ethnomusicology to the area of trance is supplied by Becker's (2004) cross-cultural study of trance, a term she re-baptizes as *deep listening*—also the book title. She expands on the work of Steven Katz (1978) by proposing that “cultural expectations always play a part in trance behavior, that the

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<sup>7</sup> Although this categorization was initially made by Labate (2003), Mercante (2006) considers *Barquinha* to fall within the continuum of the Santo Daime religion.

trance experience is never unmediated” (Becker 2004: 41). Another contribution from *Deep Listeners* is Becker’s argument, based on Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (1991: 172), that the development of the sense of self in Western culture has an inherent bias that complicates study of trancing; namely, it believes (1) that there is an objective world outside the material body which has defined properties and (2) that there is a single, unitary consciousness that observes this world (Becker 2004: 108).

The idea of bringing cultural relativism to the subject of trancing was approached in Gilbert Rouget’s classic *La Musique et la transe: Esquisse d’une theorie generale des relations de la musique et de la possession* (1980), which argues that types of trance are as varied as cultures and that there is no scientific basis for one instrument or another producing a state of trance. Erlman (1982) agrees with most of Rouget’s points but, dismayed with the lack of detail with what music actually does in a trance ceremony, still sets out to detail the specifics of a Hausa Boori spirit possession cult in Niger. In this context he argues that music is an initial trigger for spirit possession, but does not itself physiologically produce trance.

In other studies on the role of music in altered states consciousness, Bryan Rill argues that in the social context of Electronic Dance Music (EDM) culture participants “reconstitute the bodily self as an interaction rather than a corporeal body, radically altering the internal dialogue from which notions of the self originate” (2010), complementing Becker’s argument that Western notions of the self are challenged by collective notions of the body in trance states.

In addition to the ethnomusicological literature on trance states, a number of other studies provide important framework and methodology for this study. For an

overall guiding philosophy, I call upon Anthony Seeger's study of the Gê-speaking Suyá of the upper Xingu region of Brazil, a non-ayahuasca drinking group which, Seeger argues, did not consider music as an item in a container labeled "culture," but rather created and reinforced their whole cosmology through its performance (1987). The flip side of this framework, music *in* culture, part of Alan Merriam's model of the anthropology of music (1964), has informed other ethnomusicological works on Santo Daime, including McGown's comparative study of Santo Daime and Holotropic Breathing (2007) and Labate's study of music in the Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions (2009).

The musical practices that are examined in Chapter 5 have a number of features analogous to those discussed in other studies in the ethnomusicological literature. For one, the participatory performance practices can be logically explained by Turino's work (2008). Ornamentation of skeletal melodies is a subject taken up in both J. Lawrence Witzleben's examination of the string and bamboo flute traditions, *Jiangnan Sizhu*, of Shanghai (1995) and Erin Flynn's ethnography of the traditional Irish session scene in Washington, DC (2011). Witzleben's account argues that for the groups of amateurs—an affinity subculture, to borrow a term defined by Mark Slobin (1993) in his study of the micro-musics of the West—who gather together, drink tea, and make music, the ornamentation, or “flowers,” of skeletal melodies is what makes each performance unique. This study on Santo Daime employs a similar musicological analytical framework to examine musical ornaments (*suplementares* or *firulas*), and coincidentally also focuses on a group of people who also like to get together, play music, and drink tea.

While many scholars have argued that Santo Daime borrows its cosmology and ritual from Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian sources, the larger story of transnationalism, told through the lens of Brazilian and subsequently Latin American music, comes into play in an examination of the *bolero* groove that Samuel Araújo noted played an influential role in the development of Brazilian popular music (1999).

### Chapter Summary

This chapter has introduced the context of the Santo Daime and its music, presented the research questions and methodology, and reviewed the relevant literature from a cross-section of related disciplines. The rest of the study makes a gradual transition from the inner world of Santo Daime to a concrete description of the people, their music, and their rituals.

Chapter 2 establishes a baseline understanding of altered states of consciousness (ASC), introduces the idea of set/setting, and then moves to the universalities of *ayahuasca*: pharmacology and phenomenology. Chapter 3 builds on the understanding of these ASCs culturally specific to the Daime by examining a series of ideological components of the Daime worldview.

The next three chapters give an overview of the rituals (Chapter 4), a description of the musical practices and their transmission (Chapter 5), and, finally, the whole of the outer experience as put in motion in ethnographic descriptions of three rituals (Chapter 6).

Chapter 7 revisits the research questions with a summary of the larger concepts covered, where these explanations may fall short, and suggestions for further research.

## Chapter 2: The ASCs, and Ayahuasca

This chapter investigates the cognitive and biological processes of ayahuasca ingestion as background for understanding how these are affected when unique cultural elements, such as the songs and instrumental playing in the Santo Daime, are added. A brief ethnographic description of the Santo Daime mass—a ritual involving no ayahuasca consumption—begins the chapter to give the reader a greater sense of the Daimista culture before looking at the drier, but necessary topics which follow. Next follows points common to all ayahuasca experiences, divided into three topics. First, there is an overview of the study of altered states of consciousness and how research in psychoactives like ayahuasca fit into this. Next, the specific pharmacological traits of the beverage itself are explained in an attempt to describe what makes it unique. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief overview of the phenomenology of ayahuasca—that is, what it feels like after you drink it.

### *The Mass and Bailado in the Alto Santo Neighborhood of Rio Branco, Brazil*

In terms of volume, the municipal bus station for Rio Branco (AC)—population 308,500—could not possibly compare to the larger Brazilian cities like São Paulo or Rio de Janeiro. But what it lacks in terms of number of riders, it makes up for in bustle of ridership. It is July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and I am waiting for the bus that will take me to the Alto Santo neighborhood on the outskirts of town near the airport. Today is an important day in the calendar year for Daimistas, the celebration of the anniversary of Mestre Irineu's death. Later in the day a mass will be said at his tomb, and at night every Daime church will be holding a dance work and singing Mestre

Irineu's *hinário* "O Cruzeiro" in its entirety. In the meantime, I am waiting patiently for the bus, which apparently only comes once every 40-50 minutes.

While waiting, I take in the soundscape and sights of downtown Rio Branco. The bus station itself is adjacent to a number of markets and stores that each seem to have invested heavily in a sound system. Moving around produces a three-dimensional mix of Brazilian pop with snippets of the overproduced sentimental rock of São Paulo, the provocative *favela* rap sound of funk *carioca*, and the Brazilian country rock called *forró universitário*. The urban soundscape of urban Brazil, and Rio Branco is no different, evokes Rasmussen's characterization of the Javanese aesthetic called *ramai* (2010), a pro-noise aesthetic bolstered by amplification where the more overlapping sound sources, the better.

The bus arrives with an LED display labeling the route as "Raimundo Irineu Serra," the official name for the Alto Santo neighborhood and home to between 40 and 50 Daimista families, four Santo Daime larger church centers (CICLU, CICLUJUR, CEFLIMMAVI, and CRF), and the final resting place of Mestre Irineu. Despite the demographic numbers overwhelmingly showing that most practiced denominations in Acre are variants of evangelical Christianity (IBGE 2010), the Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions play an important part of the cultural heritage for the state of Acre and are officially recognized as such.

The remote location of Acre makes its mention in other parts of Brazil an opportunity for a popular tongue-and-cheek rhetorical question: "does Acre really

exist?”<sup>8</sup> The Santo Daime religion may be the its best-known export, thanks to media attention from major outlets like National Geographic (NatGeo), CNN and *O Globo*.

As the bus winds through the city neighborhoods, I notice that my abstract concepts of churches are challenged by a quirky formation typical throughout the city. Church centers splitting lots with individual homes and balancing them in size. Statues of saints and crosses stand at least a story-high in many locations. Whereas I think of a church as a non-individualized house that often has a parish house on the property for the religious leader, certain Acrean churches—and many Santo Daime centers fit this description—seem just to be houses that grew churches.

By the time the bus passes by the long cemetery at the edge of the Tancredo Neves neighborhood two miles from the final destination, most riders have already gotten off. As the bus passes by a long walled cemetery, the landscape quickly becomes dense with vegetation and forest, peppered by fewer and fewer houses. When we arrive at Alto Santo there is a fenced in church in front of a small pond on one side of the road. Up on the other side is the immaculate acre-wide site of Mestre Irineu’s tomb.

The physical site itself is immaculately landscaped and sits just in front of a *palafito* so picturesque it is almost a caricature. Using language proposed by Nora (1989), the site is a physical location for the performance of memory:

Lieux de mémoire originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally. The defense, by certain minorities, of a

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<sup>8</sup> At least one notable example of this cultural stereotype comes from comedian Fabio Porchat (Porchat 2014). Porchat is a relatively famous comedian in Brazil thanks to the viral success of his videos on YouTube.



privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves in this sense intensely illuminates the truth of lieux de mémoire—that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away. (Nora 1989: 10)

For members of all the Santo Daime branches, the final resting point serves as the physical site of memory what Connerton describes as a collective memory practice. It was declared part of the historic patrimony of the state of Acre in 2009 (Diária Oficial do Estado do Acre July 29, 2009) and is a site of vigilance, such as the ones mentioned by Nora (1989), where the Holy Mass is said each year on the date of the anniversary of his passing, July 6<sup>th</sup>.

The tomb itself is an understated and striking memorial resting under a hexagonal pavilion done in handsome wood and made with a subdued, but obvious, attention to detail that does not draw attention to itself. In the center of the pavilion is the tomb itself, and it is, frankly, quite large. It was obvious that Mestre Irineu was not only grand in spiritual presence, but also in physical height (reports say he was in excess of seven feet tall). A wooden double-beamed Caravaca cross sits on top of the marble tomb, which is flanked by lower rising tombs on both sides.

The Holy Mass is always a solemn occasion. Either no Daime is served or very little. As far as setting is considered, this makes for its most neutral observation, especially given that the Daime ASC called *force* is often noted. No instruments are played; gone is the rattle of the *maracá*. The mass begins with the rosary, recited in a rapid fashion with no pauses.

The prosodic harmony buzzes in deep unison and has a certain prosodic lilt I have only ever heard in Acre. The rosary ends without the normal final touch of making the sign of the cross, but rather leads into the succession of hymns chosen by

Mestre Irineu, known as the “Santa Missa.” This is a collection of six hymns received by Mestre Irineu, two by Germano Guilherme, one by João Pereira, and a final hymn received by Joaquim Português. In between each hymn a set of prayers is recited.

My impression of this particular mass was that the hymns were sung with a ritualistic efficiency and slightly faster tempi than I have heard at other centers. In D.C. I have heard the hymns sung at a slow enough pace to contemplate the contour of each syllable, particularly useful when not singing in your native language. The Daimistas here move through with little or no pause, revealing a deep memorization and intimacy with the hymns. At the eighth hymn, “Oh! Meu Pai Eterno,” four members stand up around the tomb, holding on to a lit candle.

The closing of the ceremony elicits none of the claps I have come to be accustomed to from other rituals, and the greetings that follow are solemn handshakes. The feeling and state of consciousness I experienced was of a deep calm, evocative of other Daime experiences, but not accompanied with the stronger visionary effects of *force* and *light* (see Chapter 3). Still, the palpable reflection on death itself falls into the shamanic praxis of journeying to other worlds to commune with spirits, if only from the grounded sense that thought and spiritual elevation can be considered a different plane.

The group that has gathered shuffles its way outside of the fence around the tomb site and down the main road, also named Raimundo Irineu Serra. The majority enter into the center on the other side of the street, a center known as CICLU and

official site of the doctrine since 1945.<sup>9</sup> The Alto Santo service starts soon after to the sound of fireworks and the two back-to-back hymns that typically begin the work:

“Sol, Lua, Estrela” and “Eu Devo Amar Aquela Luz.”

CICLU is one of four centers in the neighborhood that will be singing Mestre Irineu’s *hinário* tonight, which will include instrumental accompaniment and dancing. After heading off to a friend’s house for a quick visit, I make my way to the church center that in the neighborhood is sometimes simply referred to by its president’s nickname, “O Zé.”

The ritual that followed, described at length in Chapter 6, involved a greater dimension of ethnographic elements, most notably the sacramental use of ayahuasca and greater depths of Altered States of Consciousness (ASC). While the mass shows that the musical and religious values can be and are performed outside of the context of drinking ayahuasca, this sacrament and the ASCs it produces play a central role in understanding the religious doctrine and its core community—and subsequently musical—values. As such, the study now proceeds with a look at ASCs and ayahuasca.

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<sup>9</sup> The original site was in the neighborhood known as Vila Ivonete, a rural neighborhood on the outskirts of Rio Branco that experienced a large population growth at the end of the second rubber cycle which accompanied greater production during WWII and its subsequent halting at the end of the war. Mestre Irineu moved his home and the first Daime center, CICLU, there, thanks to negotiation on a homesteading project with the State Government.

*Altered States of Consciousness (ASC), The Term "Entheogen," and "Drug, Set, and Setting"*

**Altered States of Consciousness**

The term "altered state(s) of consciousness" (ASC) was originally introduced to the field of general psychology by Ludwig (1966) as a means of organizing a theretofore uncharted grouping of related phenomena including "daydreaming, sleep and dream states, hypnosis, [and] . . . pharmacologically induced mental aberrations" (1966:1). His proposed definition with regard to an ASC is:

any mental state(s), induced by various physiological, psychological, or pharmacological maneuvers or agents, which can be recognized subjectively by the individual [themselves] (or by an objective observer of the individual) as representing a sufficient deviation in subjective experience or psychological functioning from certain general norms for that individual during alert, waking consciousness.

Tart later popularized this definition in his collection of ASC articles, lauding Ludwig for his survey of ASCs and for including references to their positive functionality, a feature typically downplayed in Western culture. Although he speculated that the term would cause "philosophical and semantic difficulties in defining states of consciousness," he reasoned that when asking someone if he was awake (i.e., "in a 'normal' state of consciousness") he had yet to meet "anyone who had difficulty in making this distinction" (1969: 1).

**A Small Note on the Term "Entheogen"**

Tart further notes that Western culture exhibits a polarizing binary attitude towards states of consciousness (1969: 2); that is, a normal state of consciousness is considered good and "pathological changes in consciousness" deemed bad. Even

today, his plea for dropping judgmental labels on ASCs echoes beyond the benefits to science and could also have beneficial social impact.

It was in this vein of de-marking certain social practices such as the ritualistic use of psychoactive substances from the stigma carried by discursive terms such as "*hallucinogens*," "*drugs*," and "*psychedelics*" that a group of researchers proposed adaptation of the term "*entheogen*" (Ruck, Bigwood, Staples, Ott, and Wasson 1979). This is now a common practice in the anthropological field of consciousness studies, and one I feel well adapted to the overarching ethos of ethnomusicology.

### **Drug, Set, and Setting**

The components of the ASC reached through use of entheogens, or other psychoactives for that matter, can be divided into three constituent parts, according to Zinberg (1984: 6):

drug (the pharmacological action of the substance itself), set (the attitude of the person at the time, including his personality structure), and setting (the influence of the physical and social setting within which use occurs).

MaCrae (1992) adapted this conceptualization to his study of shamanism in Santo Daime, a strategy that will also be employed here. The bulk of this study depends on exploring the third characteristic of Zinberg's model—the social setting for entheogenic use of ayahuasca—but depends on a foundation of understanding the pharmacological properties of the tea itself, which we will now examine.

### *Ayahuasca: Pharmacology and Phenomenology*

#### **Pharmacology of Ayahuasca**

*Chamo cipó*

*Chamo a folha e chamo agua*  
*Para unir*  
*E vir me amostrar*

I call on the vine  
I call on the leaf and I call on water  
To unite  
And to come dazzle me

-Mestre Irineu #46 “Eu Balanço”

McKenna (2004) reports that the chemistry behind ayahuasca has been well characterized (see Rivier and Lindgren 1972; McKenna et al. 1984). Ayahuasca, as traditionally used in the Amazonian basin, is a tea made from boiling macerated *jagube* vine (*banisteriosis caapi*) with other admixture plants.<sup>10</sup> The Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions limit this to steeping the leaf of the *chacrana* tree (*psychotria viridis*) with the *caapi*. Other admixtures have been reported in other Amerindian contexts (see Dobkins de Rios 1972), and while preparation times and methods vary within the various lines of the cult, the ingredients never change.

The *chacrana* leaf contains a high concentration of N,N-dimethyltryptamine, also known simply as DMT. This substance is found in hundreds of plants and animals, including humans. When active in the bloodstream, DMT can produce a powerful altered state of consciousness, examined in the next subsection on phenomenology.

DMT is only orally activated when consumed with a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI). The main alkaloids in the *jagube* include harmine and harmaline,

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<sup>10</sup> *Jagube* also goes by the name *cipó* (vine) within the context of the Santo Daime. Similarly, *chacrana* is also referred to as *rainha* (queen) .

both MAOIs. This synergistic nature—it requires a cooperation of both ingredients for it to have effect—makes ayahuasca unique among pathogens (McKenna 2004).

The effects of ayahuasca have an onset of around 30-45 minutes and last around 4 hours (ibid.). Both personal observation and Callaway et al. (1999) note the occurrence of nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea among some users.

Despite clinical studies showing that ayahuasca use has profound effects on states of consciousness that can include intense closed-eye visions, emotions, and insight (Riba et al. 2003), researchers have determined that there are no long-term negative affects present in the communities that make regular use of ayahuasca. Buoso et al. claim that these groups showed higher scores on a battery of tests designed to measure spiritual well-being and “found no evidence of psychological maladjustment, mental health deterioration or cognitive impairment” (2012: 1).

### **Phenomenology of Ayahuasca**

Describing the inner cognitive process of drinking ayahuasca is not an easy task and is subject to the parameters listed above in the section on altered states of consciousness. This study does not involve examining the exhaustive possibilities of cognitive experiences with ayahuasca, but it does stand to benefit from an overview of the more pertinent and common experiences. To do so I look at a sample of the experiences and descriptions in the literature.

The first of these comes from Shannon, the cognitive psychologist whose robust examination of the phenomenology of ayahuasca attempts to compile a taxonomy of the experience. *Antipodes of the Mind*, based on a data set of more than two hundred users of ayahuasca and his own personal experience of hundreds of

ceremonies (2002a), gives the reader a feeling of great depth and breadth to the phenomenological experience. An example of this comes from his own first experience with ayahuasca in Colônia Cinco Mil, a Daimé community in Rio Branco, and he describes his experience in mainly visual terms:

When I tried ayahuasca for the first time, in summer of 1991, I didn't know anything about this drink and, in fact, anything about the cultures that used it. A series of coincidences took me to an Amazonian community in Brazil, where I stayed for a week. During this week, I drank ayahuasca four times—once during a ceremony, another during the preparation of the drink, and two times by myself (under supervision).

In these first sessions with ayahuasca I saw beautiful arabesques, menacing serpents and dragons, an enchanted forest filled with animals and birds, both natural and fantastical, a panorama of the history of humanity and a marvelous city made of gold and precious gems. I also felt deep religious sentiments and had many philosophical insights . . . Lastly, but not less important, I felt as though I had lived through the equivalent of a deep psychoanalytical exam. In general, these experiences generated a deep appreciation of the wonder of being, amalgamated to a euphoric gratitude and love for nature and my fellow human beings. (2002b: 691)

While there are plenty of points to choose from in his study, a few particular observations are relevant to the study of music within this altered state of consciousness, namely (1) perception of temporality and (2) specific mentions of playing music.

For the former, Shannon notes that the perception of the passing of time can become greatly altered. He notes that there are instances “in which it seems as though time has stopped. With this it feels as if you have gone into another dominion of existence. Within this dominion, normal temporality of human cognition does not apply” (ibid.: 704). As for the latter, he claims that musical performance is among the effects that can be “observed publicly” and that ayahuasca “always leads to singing



and you can note that people achieve levels of musical performance much greater than they normally exhibit” (ibid.: 686).

Barbosa, Giglio, and Dalgarrondo also attempted a mapping of the phenomenology of ayahuasca among first-time users, using semi-structured interviews that queried participants on various “dimensions of their ayahuasca experience—mood, thought contents and processes, sense of self, exteroception (sensitivity to stimuli from outside the body), interoception (the sense of the physiological condition of the body), volition/control, and sense of time and space” (2005: 195). Their findings suggest that among first-time users experiences rated high in categories of visual phenomena, peace, numinosness (a mixture of terror and fascination which results from the sense of a superior and powerful presence), alleged insights, and alterations in body image (including fusions with the environment) (ibid.: 198).

### **Examining the setting of the Santo Daime**

This chapter began with an ethnographic description of the Santo Daime community performing a ritual in which only the elements of set and setting were present. It then turned to an investigation of the ayahuasca universe by examining its pharmacological properties and the phenomenological experience of drinking it, as well as taking a moment to reflect on altered states of consciousness. Still, this leaves out many puzzle pieces that address the research questions. As noted previously, ayahuasca only becomes re-baptized as Daime when placed in the contextual rituals of the Daime community. The setting, therefore, is looked at over the course of the next three chapters.

## Chapter 3: Thematic Role of Agency and Shamanism

Following the previous discussion—a background on ASCs, pharmacology, and phenomenology—an examination of the setting will address what cultural elements are added to and guide the ASC that is unique to the Santo Daime. Before looking at outwardly observable elements of setting, this chapter turns inward to a pair of conceptual elements that help explain the Daimista ideology. For practical reasons, the whole range of Daimista ideology is not included in the scope of this study; for that information, the reader is referred back to the literature on Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions (reviewed in Chapter 1).

The first section of this chapter looks at the thematic role of agency, a conceptual framework derived from linguistics that can help explain certain linguistic re-significations of ideas present in the macro-culture (Slobin 1993) of Daimistas. A short theoretical context is provided, and this concept is then applied to settings involving the seemingly unlikely analogy between musical composition and vomiting.

The second section looks at shamanism, beginning with broad definitions and continuing to the specific practice of collective shamanism in the Santo Daime. The components of these definitions are then used to explain Daimista ideology of the ayahuasca intoxication and how adepts handle adverse side effects.

## *The Thematic Role of Agency*

### **Agency and Theme Orientation**

Anthropological linguistics associates the casting of new terms with cognitive shifts in the way an object of action is perceived by speakers. Since a number of commonly understood actions and objects are referred to in unique ways by members of the Santo Daime—including notions of physical work, being sick, and creating musical compositions—it would be useful to clarify what these shifts entail. Sara Blocksom showed that within the realm of anthropological linguistics, the cognitive grammar notions of agency and theme orientation as presented by Langacker (2008) and Dowty (1989) help explain these cognitive changes in adepts of the Santo Daime (2014).

Langacker argues that relationships between things and actions are coded in language and rarely symmetrical. He suggests that linguistic strategies called "agent orientation" and "theme orientation" explain the focal prominence of a structure (2008). Thus, the focal point—either active or passive—can sit at the beginning of an “action chain” which follows a “source-path-goal” configuration:

Agent orientation reflects our role as sentient, willful creatures forcefully acting on the world, expending energy to achieve and maintain control of our surroundings. Theme orientation reflects the fact that we operate in a world laid out in a certain way, where entities exhibit different properties and occupy distinct locations, so that they vary in degree of accessibility and susceptibility to our influence. Both strategies are manifested in every language. (2008: 366-367)

### **Vomiting vs. Cleansing**

Sara Blocksom (2014) used this framework to explain the cognitive process behind the discursive terms used by Daimistas to refer to the action of vomiting. She notes that across three linguistic groups—Spanish, Portuguese, and English—the term vomiting is equated with an "action chain" that conceives of this normal biological process as having a physical orientation of energy entering into the body through the mouth and passing through the body in a normative downward fashion. A rupture in this source-path-goal provokes a negative connotation in the mind of the speaker and thusly referred to by the speaker in negative terms: for example, "getting sick" or "feeling ill,"

As noted in the section on the pharmacology of ayahuasca in the previous chapter, part of the effects of its ingestion can include, among other things, bodily discharges such as vomiting or diarrhea. For Blocksom (2014) these are not seen as cognitive negative interruptions of a directional process, but are recast as separate positive action chains through terms such as "cleansing" or "*fazendo limpeza*" (making a cleanse).

### **Composing vs. Receiving hymns**

An analogous trajectory can be made when looking at the discursive elements used in attributing origin and authorship of Daime hymns. As noted by numerous authors (Abramovitz 2002; Rehen 2007; Labate 2009), Daimistas consider their hymns to have been received from the astral plane rather than composed. While there

are many ways to investigate this claim, using the notions of agent and thematic orientation has not been one of them.

The first step in applying this framework is to establish the source-agent-goal chain in normative thought—both Brazilian and American—on the nature of authorship and origin of music, termed “composing.” In the phrase “*Mozart composed his first symphony when he was 8,*” an individual is seen at the head of agent-oriented source-agent-goal chain (Mozart→compose→symphony).

Cognitively, the verb “compose” originates with an individual and can, in fact, confer a distinct status or social prestige depending on its reception.

Applying this same framework to the notion of authorship in Daime hymns is illustrated here by borrowing Luis Mendes’s description (via Goulart 1996) of the first hymn associated with the Santo Daime: “o primeiro hino recebido foi numa miração com a lua” (“the first Daime hymn was received in a vision [of] the moon”). Here the head of the source-goal-chain is what Dowty (1989) refers to as a *patient*: that is, the subject and source in the chain hold a passive thematic-orientation. Thus the chain looks like (Daime hymn→ received) and has the cognitive effect of removing the emphasis on the individual associated with its origin and special status conferred upon them for individual talent. For illustrative purposes, the reader might consider what happens to the first phrase in this discussion if we applied the Daimista notion: “Mozart received his first symphony when he was 8.”

Not all changes in meaning make subsequent linguistic shifts. In the cases where linguistic anthropology is not possible because no semantic shifts were made, the best recourse for explanation is anthropology. Turning now to that domain, the

next section looks at four ideological points of the doctrine which are best organized in the general category of shamanism, itself a subcategory of applied ASCs.

### Shamanism

In the anthropological and emic discourse of the ideology of Santo Daime, the community understanding of the term *shamanism* and the specific variety known as *collective shamanism* play a fundamental role in shaping the *Daimista* musical values. Academic definitions of the term *shamanism* and how it has been adopted to the anthropological studies of *ayahuasca* use in general and Santo Daime in particular are now discussed. In Chapter 5, these concepts shall be shown to translate into emic values and shape the role of music in Daime rituals.

Walsh (1989) paints a broad picture of the historical use and distribution of the term *shamanism* across multiple disciplines, arriving at the following definition:

Shamanism might be defined as a family of traditions whose practitioners focus on voluntarily entering altered states of consciousness in which they experience themselves, or their spirit(s), traveling to other realms at will and interacting with other entities in order to serve their community. (Walsh 1989: 5)

This definition takes into account the term's origins with the Siberian Tungus people (Shirokogoroff 1935), the more narrow proposal by Eliade (1964) that specifies what *kind* of altered state of consciousness is reached, and the ontological conundrum in the definition proposed by Harner (1982: 5).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> According to Walsh (1989: 4), for Eliade “shamanism = technique of ecstasy,” where “*ecstasy*” is defined as being removed from one’s normal state.

Working with this definition of *shamanism* that entails three characteristics—ASCs, spirit journey, and help oriented toward a community—the phenomenology discussed in Chapter 2 fills in the component of ASCs. As for the spirit journeys and serving the community, Couto (1989) adds more detail. He explored this idea and proposed that Santo Daime is a type of "collective shamanism":

. . . the shamanic institution has a specific form here which we call "collective shamanism." The members of this religious system are shaman apprentices or potential shamans. Even though there are the battalion leaders (more experienced shamans), the shamanic activity is not exclusive to certain initiates. The ritual practice is, in a certain way, the learning of this art of ecstasy and through participation, separate from the shamanic vocation, all may manifest this latent human quality. The group collective may, through the technique of concentration [meditation] and having access to the hymns (the main vehicle for ecstatic flight), "fly" through the astral plane as characteristic of the voyaging shaman, or become an *aparelho* [vehicle] for receiving beings, as characteristic of the possessed shaman. (1989: 222)

The techniques of *concentration* (meditation) are examined in general in the explanation of the rituals in Chapter 4, and a specific account is given in the ethnography of the Church of the Holy Light in Chapter 6. The "main vehicle for ecstatic flight" is examined in Chapter 5. Before moving on to these points, it is worth

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In simplified terms, looking at one's own state of mind may allow multiple interpretations depending largely on one's "philosophical leanings and worldview." (ibid.: 5)

For Harner, a shaman is one who "enters into a state of consciousness at will to contact and utilize an ordinarily hidden reality in order to acquire knowledge, power, and to help other persons." (1982: 4). Walsh notes that these two additional states (contacting a "hidden reality" and entering into "communication with spirits") make for "tricky philosophical ground." On the one hand this is what the shamans believe they are doing and that the phenomenological experience is real, whereas a Westerner with "no belief in other realms or entities [...] would likely be interpreted as subjective" (ibid: 5)

looking at a few key ideological components to the Daime cosmology to explain the musical and ritual aesthetics that follow.

### **Self-Correction**

*Corrigi meu pensamento  
Pedi perdão a meu Pai  
Para poder seguir  
A minha feliz viagem*

I corrected my thoughts  
Asked my Father for forgiveness  
So that I could continue on  
My happy journey

-Maria Damião #49 “A Despedida”

The above textual setting underscores an important ideological concept in the Santo Daime: self-correction. As Shannon noted, the phenomenology of ayahuasca tends to bring thoughts inward into an introspective state (2002a), facilitating each participant to reflect and magnify their own conscience.

Ideologically, valuing *self-correction* is taught through a number of mechanisms, such as the Daime hymns, including the example above that closes Maria Damião’s *hinário* (hymnal; collection of Daime hymns received by one individual).<sup>12</sup> Another such mechanism is direct communication to the congregation from the president or leader of a session. Before the *concentration works* at CEFLI during the *Encounter for a New Horizon*, participants were reminded that "working with" Daime involves multiple levels, the first layer of which is self-correction.

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<sup>12</sup> For musical setting, consult sound example 2



Just *what* should be corrected is left up to the individual, granting them full agency in the process. Reports have been made by multiple Daimistas that this self-correction often results in a physical change.<sup>13</sup>

Ritualistic correction, however, is not always in the hands of the individual. Small details are regulated through strict hierarchy. Within each row of the *battalions*—the term used to describe the rows, hexagonal or square depending on the branch, that flank the *mesa de centro* (main center altar)—the individual at the extreme right is responsible for maintaining the proper ritualistic posture within the line. This usually translates into correction of movement or posture, depending on the work. Posture corrections might include directing someone to unfold their arms or uncross their legs (crossed limbs are believed to hamper the flow of collective energy). Movement correction could include synchronizing dance steps or the space taken up by these steps.

### **Firmness**

*Ao meu Pai peço firmeza  
E não saio do meu lugar  
Dou ensino a quem não sabe  
Para eu poder trabalhar*

To my Father I ask for firmness  
And I don't leave my place  
I teach those who don't know  
So that I can do my work

-Padrinho Sebastião “Ao Meu Pai Peço Firmeza”

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<sup>13</sup> Abandoning the consumption of alcohol is often reported, as is recovery from narcotic dependency. Both Luis Mendes and Daniel Pereira de Matos, originally a member of the Daime and eventually a founder of the *Barquinha* religion, reported stopping drinking alcohol when they started going to Daime *works*.

When a Daimista undergoes an intense somatic experience through which they receive insight into how they should correct themselves, the episode is often referred to as *peia*. This can be defined as the difficult physical or mental experience while working with Daime, often resolved through cleansing (see above). However, sometimes the mental state is calm while the body experiences difficulties such as nausea or disorientation.

The suggested approach, again seen through textual settings and informal discourse, is to find *firmeza* (firmness or grounding). Abramovitz interprets this particular textual setting as a request for “the necessary firmness so that participants can direct their focused attention [during the meditation period that normally follows this hymn] and ‘quiet’ one’s thoughts and not let the mind wander in superficial thought” (2003: 134). *Firmness* requires a shift in mental state or a willingness to not let a state of calm be affected by certain thought patterns. During the semi-structured interviews, João, a Brazilian Daimista from Alto Santo, noted:

Sometimes in a work you feel like you don’t have a good voice or aren’t in synch with what is going on. Other times you are . . . firmado. Really right on within the hymns . . . and all that brilliance . . . [imitates sounds of bird flight describing being in the force of the Daime] . . . all strong and such. Really amazing.

But there are other times when you are saying "I just can’t sing." That’s when it is time to pray and look for a path, look for what is going on. If we really look we will see it is just weakness, our own weakness. We just can’t manage to get to that spot because we are not firmado. That’s when we have to pick it back up and ask the Lord. Have a conversation with God, right? Find him within concentration. And then you are back. (Interview, July 2014)

As seen in the informant’s comments, the ability to navigate ASCs and specifically find the state of firmness is a desirable one for coping and directing the

phenomenological effects of the Daime. Whereas self-correction could be seen as a long-term solution to unpleasant facets of the Daime ASC, firmness can be looked upon as an immediate remedy attainable through prayer and meditation. The emphasis on humility and serving others in the doctrine also helps create and navigate the Daime ASC.

### **Helping the *collective current***

*Esta força, este poder  
Eu devo amar no meu coração  
Trabalhar no mundo terra  
Ao benefício do meu irmão*

This force, this power  
I must love it within my heart  
Work here on earth  
For the benefit of my brother

Mestre Irineu #124 “Esta Força, Este Poder”

Textual analysis of Mestre Irineu’s hymn shows that it is one of many that mentions the third feature of Walsh’s definition of shamanism: that is, working for the benefit of a community. This is not an isolated reference, nor does it only apply to hymns. Discourse among Daimistas also reveals a heavy emphasis on helping out the community, whether by physically lending a hand or spiritually assisting the atmosphere of a work. This last concept is referred to as helping the *current* (*ajudar a corrente*), referring to the ineffable current of energy among participants.

Richard, a resident of Rio Branco in his mid-twenties who plays guitar during *works*, relates an instance where the *current* helped him through an episode where he lost perception of the sense of time:

I can't say it [complete loss of perception of time] never happened, but I learned how to dominate it. There was also the current and the maracá, you know? I had this hiccup, but they went "bam" and I fell back in. (Personal interview, 2014)

A long-time American Daimista (who wishes to remain anonymous) refers multiple times to helping the *current* in a short guide he wrote for musicians wishing to play at rituals. His references include keeping in mind the value of helping out the *current*:

one thing we need to remember: the instrument becomes a foundation for the singing and the current. If the instrument is played well, it supports the current. If not, it can be disruptive and suck the current's energy down into another place.

The above concepts—self-correction, maintaining firmness, and helping the collective *current*—all address personal and collective tools for handling potentially negative effects of drinking Daime and are converted into a positive value structure that applies even outside of their ritualistic application. Still, not all parts of the multi-faceted ASC of drinking Daime carry a negative connotation. A prime example now follows with a look at the concepts of *force* and *light*.

### **Force**

*A força chegou*  
*O mar balanceio*  
*A terra estremeceu*  
*Deus do Céu quem me mandou*

The force arrived  
The seas rocked  
The earth shock  
[For it was] God who sent it.

- Sr. Tufi Rachid Amim “A Força Chegou”

*Force (força)* is another key concept that again has a number of different, overlapping ideological definitions. The primary meaning of *force* refers to the power of God, while the secondary meaning can refer to the effects of the ayahuasca, specifically the portion associated with the *jagube* that is responsible for the non-visual elements of the phenomenology. The degree to which one feels intoxication may be expressed with notions of *force*, as seen in the discourse of testimony from informant Richard (see Chapter 5), who notes that he played with a number of musicians who had studied music outside of the context of the Daime rituals and still wondered if they knew how to handle the effects of the *force*: “but to play in the force?” (interview, January 2014).

## Light

*No Cruzeiro tem rosário  
Para quem quiser rezar  
Também tem a Santa Luz  
Para quem quer viajar*

On the cross there is a rosary  
For whomever wishes to pray  
There is also the Holy Light  
For those who wish to take a trip

-Mestre Irineu #93 “No Cruzeiro”

Just as *force* applies to a spiritual concept and its bodily manifestation while drinking Daime, so can the terms *light (luz)* or *Holy Light (Santa Luz)*. On the primary level of understanding, *light* refers to the clarity and spiritual grace of the Divine as it is understood in Christian dogma. It can also be used to refer to the added dimension of the visionary experience of ayahuasca, presumably provoked by the effect of DMT in the *chacrana*. This powerfully and potentially overwhelming effect makes up the bulk of Shannon’s taxonomy of ayahuasca.<sup>14</sup>

In the Daime, these light patterns are known as *miração* (n. vision; inner-vision) or seeing light. This type of “*seeing*” distinguishes itself from pure vision (*visão*) and is the source of the images of flight and spirit contact that fit into the second part of Walsh’s definition of shamanism. The contents of these visions are highly sacred and normally taboo as a topic of casual conversation. Certain famous visionary experiences—such as the founding stories of Mestre Irineu and his

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<sup>14</sup> His systematic typology of the structural types include: *bursts, puffs, and splashes; repetitive non-figurative elements; geometric designs and patterns; rapid figural transformations; designs with figures; kaleidoscopic images; presentations of single objects; serial images; snapshots; glimpses; full-fledged scenes; grand scenes; virtual reality; and visions of light* (2002a: 86-98).

companions—are well known by Daimistas. Discussion of these will surface again in the ethnographies found in Chapter 6.

### **Chapter Summary**

The past chapter looked at a number of aspects of the inner working of Daime ideology and mindset. Thematic change of agency (Dowty 1989) was called upon to help explain the Daime's distinct semiotic changes in the notions of cleansing/vomiting and composing/receiving. To provide background for setting ideology and additionally test Couto's assertion that the ASCs of Daime rituals are part of *collective shamanism*, Walsh's definition of shamanism was checked against the Santo Daime ideological concepts of (1) dealing with Daime intoxication through self-correction, maintaining *firmness*, and helping the *collective current*, and (2) experiencing the simultaneous reference to Divine power and non-visual effect of ayahuasca, known as *force*, and *light*, a dual understanding of Divine grace and the visionary portion of the Daime ASC.

Moving attention from the inner-world of cognition to how these values are played out in the material world, the next chapter looks at abstract understanding of the physical rituals of the Santo Daime.

## Chapter 4: Daime Rituals

### Overview of Rituals

Any time Daime is served it is part of a *work*, a generic term for a wide range of rituals. All who participate in a *work* are expected to take part in the sacrament. *Works* are held at regularly occurring intervals throughout the church calendar,<sup>15</sup> with an emphasis on festival works that correspond to the Catholic feast days of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Christmas, All King's Day, Saint Joseph, Saint Sebastian, and Saint John. Other ad hoc days are often added, usually birthdays or anniversaries of historical figures within the doctrine, such as Mestre Irineu and his group of companions whose *hinários* (hymnals) are sung on All Saint's Day.

The anthropological literature includes detailed descriptions of *works*, with the most in-depth being that of Cemin (2002). To familiarize the reader with these rituals, a description follows below.

### The *Concentration Work*

The bread-and-butter—if there is such a thing— of the Daime calendar is the *concentration work* (pt. n.—*trabalho de concentração*). The term "*concentration*" here refers to the act of collective concentrated meditation that occurs during the *work*. Meditation is done seated, with eyes closed and arms and legs uncrossed. Padrinho Saturnino Mendes cites this as the original work of the church founder,

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<sup>15</sup> For discussion on the creation of the calendar see Goulart (2002)



Mestre Irineu, who drank ayahuasca alone—often in the middle of the rainforest—in silence, many years before formally establishing the rituals of the church.

A sequence of prayers open the work, participants drink a single serving of Daime, and then they sit together for a period of meditation as just described, usually lasting an hour-and-a-half.

When the church was founded in Rio Branco, state capital of Acre, Mestre Irineu only held two types of *work*, a *concentration work* and a *healing work* (*trabalho de cura*). Originally held on Saturdays, the *concentration* would remain fundamentally unaltered for more than thirty years, whereupon Mestre Irineu added a cappella singing of the so-called New Hymns (Hinos Novos), known as the “Cruzeirinho” (“The Little Cross”). This section of singing was tacked on to the end of the *concentration* period, just before the closing hymns. The churches that follow the Alto Santo style of ritual—such as CEFLI, CEFLIMMAVI and CICLUMIG, where I did part of my field research—maintain this ritual as described here and often include in their discourse that this was the original sequence of a *concentration work*.

Abramovitz categorizes the *concentration work* as silence framed by music (2008), a characterization fitting for the way it is practiced in CEFLURIS. Field research in the United States confirms the same sequence Abramovitz described: an opening sequence of prayers, the first service of Daime, singing Padrinho Sebastião’s “Oração,” reading the *consagração do aposento* (consecration of the space) prayer (in the US this is done in English), meditating silently for a determined period (usually an hour, but this can be expanded to two), another service of Daime, singing the *concentration* hymns (a collection of hymns received by different Daimistas closely

related to Padrinho Sebastião), an optional period of further meditation, singing the “Cruzeirinho” (while standing), closing the hymns; finally, the Chefe da Sessão (the leader of the *work*, usually a Padrinho or the President of the center), reads the closing words.

In a nod to what Van Gennep (1909) might call aggregation, margin, and separation, Abramovitz’s study of the *concentration work* included the time before, during, and after the work. While his characterizations of the community at Céu do Mar might remain true to the concentration work as practiced by the CEFLURIS branch in the United States,<sup>16</sup> there are noticeable differences between this version and the *concentration work* in the Alto Santo branches.

The first major difference is the amount of Daime served. Two servings introduced a greater variability in charting phenomenological experience of the CEFLURIS *concentration work* in comparison to those at *Alto Santo*. When the former work was done at CEFLI during my field research it was called the “*trabalho de estrela do Sebastião*” (Sebastião’s star *work*), and was structured in the exact same manner as I have observed it at CEFLURIS centers in the US. Besides the serving amounts, the conclusion that Abramovitz reaches—i.e., the *concentration work* is silence framed by music—is limited in scope to how it is practiced at CEFLURIS.

### ***Feitio: Making Daime***

Although the ingredients for Daime are fairly simple, the ritualistic process behind its making is highly structured. The multiple phases of the *feitio* (making,

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<sup>16</sup> Abramovitz notes that the Daimistas from Rio often go for a coconut milk along the Rio shore after the ritual. This was replaced in the US with a potluck dinner.

fabrication) include gathering *chacrana* leaves and *jagube* vine, ritualistically pounding the *jagube*, and cooking the two ingredients with water in large cauldrons over fire for an extended period of time.

The labor of the preparatory phase is strictly divided by gender. Women take the responsibility for gathering, sorting, and washing the *chacrana*. Informal dress codes are maintained, with women wearing dresses. Daime may be served during this phase, although usually in small, symbolic amounts. Finding *jagube*, not always an easy task, and cutting it down is the task of a group of men from the community. The whole procedure is considered to be sacred and is perceived as a high-social-value activity by the participants.

Once all materials have been gathered, they are brought back to a *casa de feitio* (house for making Daime), an outdoor structure open on all sides with an area for the pounding (*bateção*),<sup>17</sup> fire pits for the large pans to sit in, and a large sluice for straining the Daime from the pans from the cooked leaves and vine.

#### **Prayer: *Oração***

The shortest of all *Daime works*, the *oração* (prayer), consists of a series of prayers to open and close the work, perhaps a modest amount of Daime, and then a series of thirteen to fourteen Daime hymns, depending on the branch.

The informal nature of *oração*—uniforms are not worn—and its shorter duration encourages more socialization afterwards. Often, hymns will continue to be sung after the work is closed, which gives them more of a character of group rehearsal than at other works. An *oração* in the United States might also see a potluck

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<sup>17</sup> The term *bateção* (also *batição*) makes an interesting play on words, sounding both like the words "pounding" and "baptization."

dinner arise, providing members a chance to discuss matters both within and outside of the church.

### **The Holy Mass**

The mass is celebrated once a month, traditionally on the first Monday. Cemin (2002) notes that uniforms are not worn, but the practice in the United States is for all who attend to wear the blue *farda*. Daime may be served, with symbolic amounts similar to *oração*, but just as often is not.

The mass is a solemn *work* and thought to be held for the charity of all souls, especially those who have passed on. Before beginning the mass, a rosary is said, followed by the customary prayers. A sequence of ten *Daime hymns* is sung, all *a cappella* and rendered much slower than at dancing *works* or concentration *works*. In between all of the *Daime hymns*, three "Our Fathers" and three "Hail Marys" are prayed. During the eighth hymn, "Oh! Meu Pai Amado," four members seated at the *mesa de centro* (the center altar) stand up and hold a burning candle until the end of the hymn.

### ***Dancing Works, Healing Works, and Praise Works***

Here follows another category of *works*, ones where Daime is taken multiple times over an extended period of time. On the surface, many of these *works* seem somewhat unrelated to each other. The *dancing work (bailado)*, for instance can take anywhere from five to thirteen hours depending on which *hinário* is being sung. In Brazil, these are often done with the service of the "open *Daime*"; that is, participants may drink as much as they deem necessary during most of the *work*.

The *dancing work* begins and ends with the ritual order of prayers that is now beginning to look familiar: "Our Father," "Hail Mary," *Chave de Harmonia*. Daime hymns for a *dancing work* are sung sequentially from one *hinário* at a time—collections are not used. During the *work*, Daimistas arrange themselves into orderly rows (hexagonal for CEFLURIS, rectangular in Alto Santo) and, armed with their voices and *maracás*, proceed to “open” the *hinário*. Dance steps accompany the singing and are addressed in Chapter 5.

Somewhere in the middle of a longer *hinário*, such as those of Mestre Irineu, Padrinho Sebastião, Tetéu, or Seu Luiz Mendes, a half-hour to hour break will take place. During this period—which really does feel like a pause, even if one is feeling the full force of the Daime—many people will break off to eat something, rest, or use a form of snuff made from tobacco, called “*rapé*” (HA-pay).<sup>18</sup> During this period of the *work* other *Daime hymns* are often sung—in particular a group of hymns called the “*diversões*”—often by everyone present. These Daime hymns have a different, lighter character about them than those in the middle of singing the *hinário* and can be an opportunity to present new Daime hymns or Daime hymns from other traditions or lines, such as Umbanda or the *Barquinha*. In many cases it lets musicians who might not otherwise play during the *work* do so.

### ***Healing Works***

By modifying Seeger’s concept of musical anthropology to be musical medical-anthropology, we cast a unique light on this particular multi-service setting, the *healing work*. As the name implies, the focus is on the therapeutic and medicinal

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<sup>18</sup> This term is referred to by Schultes as “*rapé dos índios*” (1984) and in some CEFLURIS circles is called *ruma* (Yanawaná n.—snuff)

properties of Daime. Just as the *works* can be thought of as collective shamanism (see discussion at the end of Chapter 3), the patients for a *healing work* include all of those participating, as well as souls present only in spirit.

There are many names for different types of *healing works*, including ones where incorporation of spirits (spirit possession) is common and those where this is not the focus. A musical curiosity, the presence of *ícaros*—short vocalese melodies used to call enchanted beings—is part of the CEFLI *healing work* known as “*Os Chamados*,” a musical example of which can be found in Chapter 5.

One unique feature of these *works* is that they always consist of collections of Daime hymns, as opposed to *hinários*, which are always received by one person and arranged chronologically in order. From a structuralist view point (Levi-Strauss) we can see that if a *work* provides a framework for incorporation then the *Daime hymns* sung will not be a focused celebration of a single *Daimista*, whether, as is said in the community, alive in the material world or only in the spirit.

Another feature of the *healing works* is the space provided to break with the flow of musical metrical time, usually either a *concentration* or an unmetred vocalization, such as “*Os Chamados*.” Going back to Becker (2003), who suggests that trancers are hypersensitive and aware of triggers and frames that help them enter into trance, the various metric elements that are heavily marked in singing *Daime hymns*—the *maracás*, footsteps, and (mostly) unsyncopated Daime hymns—are removed during this short phases of the *work*, framing a context for the Daime to move in a different direction.

In this case, what we have is bodily and moral preventative healing. Seeger argues that culture can be brought into being through ritual singing (1987), so is it really much of a stretch to think that a community can sing health into being through music? Whether successful or not, this is the way the Santo Daime approaches health. There are a number of biographic stories in the oral history, including the story of how Daime came to the United States, all of which have this central theme. Many Daimistas report improved health through exposure to the Daime, and I believe that much of this comes from practices such as these healing *works*, which treat health and our conscious notion of it with performative reverence.

A relatively new healing *work* has been incorporated into the spiritual practices at both Ceu do Mapiá and Fortaleza: the *praise of nature work*. This concentrates on praise, awareness, and healing of nature.<sup>19</sup> At CEFLI, this work is held at three separate *terreiros*, outdoor settings deep in the thick of Amazonian forest. During field research I was able to attend two separate nature *works*, one a longer affair consisting of singing a collection of hymns called “*Hinos em louvor a natureza*,” then followed by individual *hinários* received by members related to the center. The context of these works acts as a distinct ASC trigger from the more common *dancing* and *concentration works* and is underscored by the setting.

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<sup>19</sup> In response to the academic calls for greater ethnomusicological work that focuses on environmental issues (see Guy 2009), this application to Santo Daime shows a current of environmental consciousness which, like the *works*, is materialized through the nature works (*trabalhos em louvor à natureza*).

## **Chapter Summary**

The settings and types of Santo Daime rituals were organized and discussed as abstract ideals in this chapter. The universal components of ayahuasca trancing from Chapter 2 have now been colored by the religious ideology in Chapter 3 and their ritualistic setting in this chapter. In addition, some of the modes of transmission, or at least their context, have been described. The study now turns to look at the both the external features of Daime music and the role it plays as a vehicle for transmitting ideology and a tool for facilitating shamanic flights.



## Chapter 5: Music: Singing, Playing, and Dancing

### General Considerations of Daime Hymns

#### **Components of Daime Hymns**

A Daime hymn is made up of two parts: the text and its musical setting. The former is the essence of a hymn, without which it would only be considered music. Merriam (1964: 193) adroitly points out that what he refers to as “song texts” are afforded the ability to express group thoughts that might not be made in a different context, such as face-to-face speaking. Daime rituals make taboo the discussing of inner visions with others who did not participate in the *work*. In this way, the texts of the Daime hymns become an important vehicle both for transmitting the doctrine—often shrouded in multi-layered language—and for establishing the flow of times and triggers for the religious ecstasy of the Daime ASC.

Percília Matos da Silva (Dona Percília), *zeladora* (special role of one who “looks after” an *hinário*, making sure neither the melody nor hymn are forgotten) of Mestre Irineu’s *hinário*, makes a distinction between the “music” and the “hymn.” The former is considered the melody and the vehicle for the latter, which is the lyrical content (mestreirineu.org, accessed 2014). In practical considerations, most Daimistas refer to a hymn as having both components. Dona Percília’s testimony shows a concern on the part of Mestre Irineu to not repeat the music of any hymns.

This last point hints at the common melodic base for many Daime hymns. In a personal interview with Seu Luis Mendes, founder of the CEFLI center and a sort of public spokesman for Mestre Irineu, he responded to questions about the originality

of many Daime hymns: “Some hymns are similar, yes. So similar, in fact, they could be considered to be the same. Indeed. Each *hino* is like a flower. And even though flowers may be of the same type, they all have their own distinct perfume” (interview, 2013).

### **Oral Tradition and Melodic Recall**

As mentioned previously, Daime hymns come from a largely oral tradition. This remains true when it comes to recalling melodies, as fieldwork showed almost no instances of musicians or singers relying on printed scores. Printed, bound *hinários* for mnemonic aid in recalling hymn texts appear more often the further one moves from Acre.

Faithful interpretations of the melody are highly prized aesthetically. Even tiny variations which might be interpreted as free variation in other media such as Brazilian pop are generally subject to correction by fellow Daimistas.

Daime hymns exhibit great amounts of similarity in terms of form, melody, harmony, and text settings. Even considering that the two branches have continued to grow and evolve over a relatively long span of time (at least thirty years) there are still remarkable similarities between modern hymns received from either branch. At their roots, both branches pull from a common heritage: the *hinários* received by Mestre Irineu and his companions (Germano Guilherme, Maria Damião, João Pereira, and Antônio Gomes). These *hinários* were received with a great deal of

intertextuality, both melodic and biographical, and continue to be sung at points on the ritual calendar for both branches.<sup>20</sup>

### **Melody and harmony of hymns**

Most Daime hymns are in strophic form, with verse-chorus form making an occasional appearance. Strophes are normally two eight-bar phrases, with each phrase repeated once before the strophe repeats. Other schemes are possible, such as repeating only the second phrase or repeating the whole strophe in its entirety. Speculation has been made that this specific repetition scheme facilitated memorization of hymns that were originally received from a largely illiterate population. Regardless of the origins of the practice, hymns that were introduced into the Daime since the inception of this project continue to exhibit this form.

The general harmonic movement has four identifiable components. First, a gesture is made to establish the key (or sometimes the dominant of the key); this is followed by a harmonic movement to another chord within the key. This will happen within the eight-bar phrase, which is then repeated. Another eight-bar phrase is sung; its melody will have another contour and then a final cadence. This gesture is then repeated. The greatest amount of recycled material is found in the repeating second phrase, particularly including a number of stock cadences.

Harmonic accompaniment for most non-modal Daime hymns begins with a gesture to establish the tonic, and then moves to the dominant, mediant, or

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<sup>20</sup> Since the splitting of Daime into two branches, the musical cultures have remained remarkably similar. The official CEFLURIS calendar calls for a greater number of *hinários* to be sung, most of which were received by family members of Padrinho Sebastião.

submediant. Alternatively, it may anticipate a harmonic movement to the subdominant or secondary dominant in the subsequent second phrase, which then continues the development and ends with a cadential figure. In simpler terms, there is constant oscillation between one repeated eight-bar phrase ascending to the dominant (or mediant) and another making a cadence back to the tonic.

The repetition of the first phrase frequently produces an unusual quirk of Daime hymns. Without repetitions, it can be seen that there is a tendency for melodic phrases to imply passing chords on the third and sixth degree in harmonic motion towards the sub-dominant or dominant for the beginning of the second melodic phrase. Since repetition of the phrase does not complete the harmonic motion, but rather returns to the tonic, the overall effect is one of a iii-I or vi-I cadence, resulting in what Abramovitz noted as a “certain modal flavor” (2003: 73).

Figure 3 shows Padrinho Sebastião’s hymn #111, “Relento,” recorded during a healing work. The first melodic gesture establishes the key with a dominant-tonic melodic gesture, makes an arpeggiated move to the subdominant, and subsequently rests temporarily on the dominant. The phrase is then repeated. The second portion of the melodic material, beginning on bar 10, starts with a descending line with the chord tones of the subdominant on the strong pulses of the measure, temporarily rests on the tonic, and ends with a perfect cadence.

Figure 3 Padrinho Sebastião #111, "Relento." For recording see Audio Example 1.

## #111 - Relento

received by Padrinho Sebastião

2:35

The musical score is arranged in a system with six staves. The top staff is for Voice, written in bass clef, with lyrics: "...Eu pe - ço aos meus ir - mãos va - mos pi - sar fir - me no". The second staff is for Guitar 1, in treble clef, showing a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The third staff is for Guitar 2, in treble clef, showing a bass line with eighth notes and rests. The bottom three staves are for percussion: Bowl (two vertical bars), Table (quarter notes), and Maracá (quarter notes with slash marks). A measure rest with the number 4 is present in the Maracá staff.

Voice

...Eu pe - ço aos meus ir - mãos va - mos pi - sar fir - me no

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

2

5

Voice

chão. Eu pe - ço aos meus ir - mãos va-mos pi -

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

8

Voice

sar fir - me no chão. Ro - gar ao Pai e - te - rno que é o

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

4

12

Voice

do - no da se - ssão Ro - gar ao Pai e - te - rno que é o

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

16

Voice

do-no da se - ssão

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

20

Voice

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

16

24

Voice

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

20



28

Voice

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

32

Voice

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bowl

Table

Maracá

"Haux"

A very similar melodic contour can be found in other Daime hymns, such as Mestre Irineu's hymn #67, "Eu Olhei o Firmamento," as seen in Figure 4.

## #67 - Olhei Para o Firmamento

received by Mestre Irineu

The image shows the musical notation for hymn #67, "Olhei Para o Firmamento." It consists of two staves of music in a single system. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written in a simple, stepwise fashion. Below the first staff, the lyrics are: "Ol - hei pa - ra o fir - ma - men - to - vi as es - tre - las - bri - lhar Ti - nha". The second staff begins with a measure rest marked with a "5", indicating a five-measure rest. The melody continues with a similar stepwise contour. Below the second staff, the lyrics are: "u - ma mais bo - ni - to de um tro - no im - pe - ri - al." The music ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Figure 4 Mestre Irineu's #67, "Olhei Para o Firmamento." For recording see Audio Example 2.

### Singing

#### **Collective Participation**

As seen earlier in the discussion on myths, the Daime practice of collective singing creates a rupture in the traditional, individual singing of the *mestiço* tradition of the *vegetalistas* (Goulart 2002). In addition to this break, I argued that the myth also placed a dichotomy between knowing and not knowing how to sing. As instruction to initiates, the myth reinforces the idea that the ritual of drinking Daime is itself the teacher, so there is no need for external learning in the physical plane. Thus, even those with no previous musical experience or with negative emotional baggage regarding their musical ability are encouraged and expected to participate.

### **The *Puxador/Puxadora***

A special role is afforded the singer who begins each *hino*, known as the *puxador(a)* (literally “the one who *pulls*”). This unique position carries with it the responsibility of singing the hymn with the correct melody and rhythm and exposes the *puxador*'s voice for the initial part of the first verse of each hymn.

In practice, this is hardly noticed at *Alto Santo* centers where the *collective current* joins in almost simultaneously at the beginning of each new *hino*. In the transnational context of suburban DC, however, the *current* (see Chapter 2) is tasked with singing hours upon hours in a non-native language, Brazilian Portuguese. Understandably, the average number of hymns memorized is much lower in terms of melody, rhythm and text. As such, the role of the *puxador(a)* is highly valued, especially when he or she is a native speakers of Portuguese.

### **Strident Vocal Attack**

Within the execution of the *Daime hymns*, a high social value is placed on the vocal practice described by Labate as being “strident” or “nasalized” (2009: 33). Characteristics of this vocal timbre are typical of the Acrean variant of Brazilian Portuguese and exhibit a slight pharyngelization and nasalization. Performance of the hymns known as “Os Chamados”, received by Padrinho Luis Mendes and which are sung a capella and in tempo rubato, exaggerate this vocal timbre as seen in Example #5.

### **Vocal ornamentation**

Despite the individual performance heard in this previous example, individualism is not prized in vocal styling as an emic value. In general, there is a notable absence of vibrato and melismatic singing. Despite the emic value of complete unison, in practice one specific ornament, for which there is no community term, does crop up to some degree.

The ornament is a deep-breathed *sforzando* exhalation and potential melodic reduction. In particular, this can be noted on the open vowel sounds beginning verses in Audio Example 2, a recording of a *healing work* held at CEFLI. Most often used as a melodic pickup phrase, it reduces the melody from its canonical form to a single note or sequence of notes perched on the fifth degree above the tonic. Typically, its resolution lands on what is canonically the tonic in the melody. Most often I have heard this ornament in the context of singing a rising dominant to tonic melodic gesture where it is executed as a simple register switch of the dominant, producing a falling, rather than rising, melodic contour.

This ornament is most often performed by the male *puxador*, although it has been used by many others, often without comment or even conscious awareness. When used by a *puxador* it can also be a conducting device to mark tempo or pitch. In some extreme cases, such as at the CICLU *works*, this ornament is sung not only on pickups, but also on the off-beat. The spontaneous, staccato nature of the ornament has a sonic effect not unlike popcorn popping.

## Instrumental Accompaniment

### **Symbolic Instruments: The *Maracá***

The use of the *maracá* plays a fundamental symbolic role warranting its separation from the above organological organization used in the Santo Daime. Other authors have commented on the possible link of the *maracá* to Amerindian traditions (Bezerra de Oliveira 2008: 197; Labate 2009: 36; Porto and Weizmann 2005; Rehen 2009: 4) as well as its symbolic association of being a shield (*escudo*) or sword (*espada*) in a spiritual battle (Labate 2009: 36-7; Porto and Weizmann 2005).

The *maracá* is most often made from a wooden handle attached to an aluminum can filled with seeds or ball-bearings. Labate (2009) notes that the construction of the instrument constitutes an area of boundary maintenance between the two main lines. Each strives for “authenticity” in the form of construction, with CEFLURIS opting for a more compact size—a can of Brazilian-manufactured Nestlé condensed milk is an oft-cited measurement.

Alto Santo lines prefer to maintain a gender distinction, with women using the smaller sized *maracá* and men opting for the size used in the manufacture of Nestlé Nescau™ chocolate drink powder or Leite Ninho™ powdered milk. The types of tin cans used have thus been so standardized that during field work in Alto Santo that replies to my mention of wanting to make my own *maracá* was most often stated that the informant knew someone that was nursing a baby—the connection here being that only mothers were likely to have spare empty cans of powdered milk laying around and that these were a requirement in the manufacture of a *maracá*. An example of the manufacture of a *maracá* is given in Figure 6.



Figure 5 Making a *maracá* from tin can, ball bearings, and wooden handle.

Porto and Weizmann (2005) theorize that the *maracá* occupies a liminal space between being a symbolic religious object and a musical instrument. Their argument is based on the observation of the 1997 CEFLURIS publication on the normative procedures of rituals entitled “Normas de Ritual” that during the ritual execution of any full *hinário*, the *maracá* is exempt from the customary exclusion of instruments during the first half of the *hinário*. This publication was not available for review at the time of this study and online documents of the CEFLURIS “Normas de Ritual” did not produce this citation. Still, the point is valid, seeing that within the CEFLURIS line, the first 30 *Daime hymns* of Mestre Irineu are always sung without instruments, but with *maracá*.

The *maracá* makes two types of sound, either a downward “tch” or strike played with one hand holding the handle and making a downward motion, or an upward motion trill/roll (*rufo*). The *maracá*’s musical role in performing *Daime* hymns is that of time-keeper, literally beating out the quarter notes. The downbeat is

always made with the downward strike and is preceded by an upbeat roll (marked in the example below with upstems).

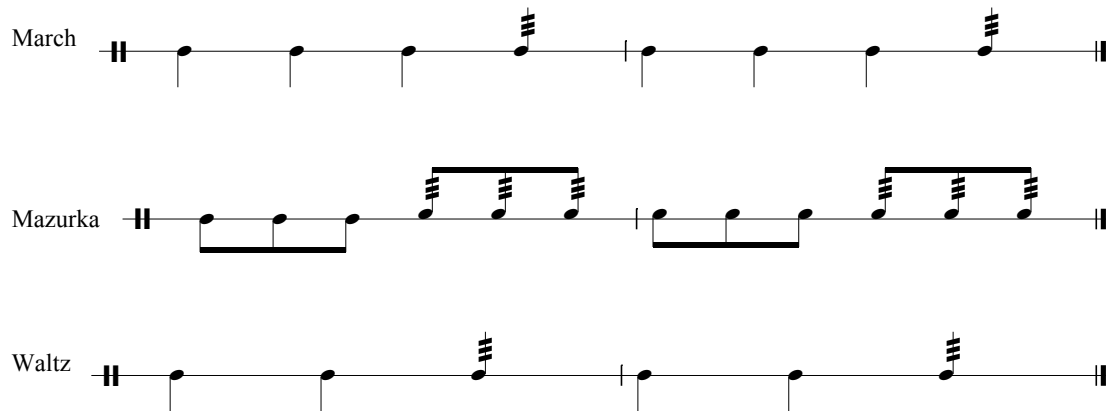


Figure 6 - *Maracá* patterns.

### Ornamentation with the *Maracá*

The simple procedure for playing the *maracá* and its basic role underscore the insight we gain into the Santo Daime communities by observing the practice of ornamentation with the *maracá*. In theory, the collective playing of the *maracá* should have no variations in the timing of its execution.

Given this aesthetic, I have noticed two distinct contexts that allow for greater variation in *maracá* playing: (1) during the ritual serving of Daime (*despacho*) with larger numbers of participants, or (2) by a *puxador* or *Chefe da Sessão* to mark the end of a section or hymn. Audio Example 3 shows the *maracá* breaking into more nuanced subdivisions than those normatively executed by a collective *current*.

### **Musical Instruments**

Instrumental accompaniment is a common, but not essential, part of Daime *works*. With the exception of the *maracá* and the *marrete* (wooden mallet used in *feitio work* and discussed further in Chapter 6), the musical instruments played are common to the heritage of popular Brazilian traditions, particularly those arising from the northeastern traditions that fed the Amazonian immigration waves. In theory, any instrument could be used to accompany a ritual, but in practice the subset is limited to a small family of instruments.

The most common instrument is the nylon-string guitar (pt. *violão*), but I have seen (and played) other chordophones as well: electric bass, seven-stringed nylon-string guitar, mandolin, *cavaco*, violin and electric guitar. Other instruments at *works* include accordion, flute, recorder, and melodica.

### **Amplification and Sound Reinforcement**

Although most of the above instruments are acoustic, there is a somewhat standard practice of amplifying the main nylon-string guitars. This is accomplished in a distinct way for the two branches, Alto Santo and CEFLURIS. As noted in Chapter 3, both branches center their ritual activities around a center table, with the former being arranged in a square formation and the latter a hexagonal one.

Four of the Alto Santo centers that I visited to attend *works* (CICLU, CEFLIMMAVI, CEFLI, CICLUMIG) had a similar setup, with musicians sitting in chairs—often straight-backed wooden chairs only used by musicians—facing the small end of the table in front of the unmarried men's rows. All amplification for the centers started from behind the musicians and was directed towards the table (see



Figure 7). At the centers in Rio Branco, the main instruments were run through a small mixing board before being run to an amplifier and PA speakers.



Figure 7 - Musicians set up facing center altar at CEFLI. © Lou Gold. Used with permission.

One musician, usually the group leader, was responsible for running the PA system and subsequently controlling the overall volume for each instrument.

Participation was encouraged for all who expressed interest, with more accomplished musicians sitting towards the front and being amplified, and beginners sitting behind playing acoustically. I witnessed no microphones being used on any instruments in either branch.

CEFLURIS centers also encourage all levels of participation, but amplification takes a separate track. Guitar players are expected to bring their own amplifiers if they do not wish to play acoustically. Volume level is determined primarily from a cautious consensus, with requests to turn up or down (usually down) going back and forth throughout a *work*. Most striking about the amplifiers, though, is not their volume, but their location. They are placed on the floor below the hexagonal center table facing upwards, literally towards the sky. The effect creates a heterogeneous three-dimensional sound with different layers present as one moves

about the *salão*. Symbolically, it maintains the sonic spirit of directing energy towards the center table, and goes one step further by projecting it upwards.

Sound reinforcement practices tipped the participatory status (Turino 2008) slightly more toward the spectrum of performative music at both the CICLU center in Alto Santo and for the touring group (*comitiva*) of Padrinho Alfredo, the leader of the CEFLURIS. At the former location, the musicians were placed on a raised platform about three steps high, marking a social distinction between them and the Daimistas in the main ritual space. Speakers were mounted facing toward the center table, *and going past it*, effectively creating a soundscape whose crest, consciously or not, goes past the ritual space and into the Alto Santo neighborhood. It is worth noting again that the CICLU center at Alto Santo has an important social status due to being the site of the memory and physical location of Mestre Irineu's original center. It is also the only Daime church I saw with an operating concession stand during the *works*.

In the CEFLURIS branch, a separate set of social values is attached to touring leader Padrinho Alfredo and the main *puxadora*—also from Mapiá (AC), Brazil. Both distinguished themselves from the *current* by wearing wireless, hands-free microphones. Both exceptions highlight a subtle perceived notion of class distinction, and they are curious if only for their tendency to go against the egalitarian, collective participation sought by other centers.

### **Orchestration: The Role of the *Solo* and its Accompaniment**

The texture of instrumental accompaniment is often quite sparse, due to an aesthetic preference for homophonic duplication of the melody in various registers. As discussed in Chapter 3, the ideology of the Santo Daime favors collective over

individual expression. Not only is this reflected in the instrumental accompaniment styles of both lines, but arguably this value is also actively re-created through sound.

The foundation for all accompaniment is the melodic duplication on the nylon-string or electric guitar, in the approximate tenor/baritone range of the instrument from E2-D4, often referred to as playing the “*solo*.” If only one guitar is present, the minimal competence required for this instrument to be used would be for the player to be able to play the *solo* for the given hymns to be sung in the *work*. At a number of *works* I attended early in this study musical accompaniment was expressly not included due to the difficulty for those players present to perform this task. Another requirement for playing is that the instrumentalist be a confirmed member of the church--a *fardado*—and was expressed to me explicitly by an informant (interview, 2013).

In the Alto Santo tradition, if only the guitar playing *solo* is present, the performer will often embellish their playing with chordal accompaniment, occasionally even truncating the melody or simply playing guide tones. For the *feitio work* described in Chapter 6, only one accompanist was present (Audio Example 4)..

The guitar duo, with one playing *solo* and another *fazendo os acordes* (playing the chords), is by far the most common configuration for Daime instrumental accompaniment. The chordal player, as opposed to the soloist, has a great deal of liberty in both harmonic playing and insertion of leading lines or ornamentation, usually similar to what Samuel Araújo referred to as “elaborate lower strings (*bordões*)” that are characteristic of other popular Brazilian genres such as “samba and choro, and usually played during the main melody’s long sustained tones” (1999),

as in Audio Example 5. The same space for ornamentation played by the *solo* might consist of subdividing the sustained tone into repeating eighth notes or other non-syncopated rhythmic variations, but not elaborating so far as changing the pitch class of the sustained tone.

As other guitars or string instruments are added, they then double the melody line an octave or two above the principal soloist, or can take the role of the bass. At some point during this study I began bringing a mandolin (*bandolim*) to *works*, as the instrument often seems to be present on recordings.<sup>21</sup> Often, this functions as a third guitar doubling the melody an octave or two higher and using a tremolo picking technique. Following Samuel Araújo's argument that the Daime musical tradition follows the general pattern of adoption of certain elements of *bolero*, this third guitar can be seen as analogous to the role of the *requinto*.

Other instruments such as percussion, accordion, and flute are added ad hoc, depending on the presence of musicians with suitable competence. Gender distinctions are not made; I have seen both males and females playing guitar, percussion, accordion, and flute.

The accordion is a popular instrument in *nordestino* traditions like *farró* (see Loveless 2012), and as an evocative symbol of *nordetino* (Brazilian northwestern) its identity has a special sentimental link to Acrean identity, which follows suit with Santo Daime culture. Germano Granjeiro, son of Mestre Irineu's chief *feitor* (Daime

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<sup>21</sup> On a couple of occasions I was specifically asked by the accompaniment guitar to only play the *solo* line, inferring that the harmonic camp would be left to him. This, in effect, only limits horizontal harmonic interpretation as ornaments broken into arpeggios that coincide with the main melodic line are looked upon favorably as long as they are subtle.

maker) and a second generation Daimista who was baptized by Mestre Irineu, claims that he had the idea to get the first accordion for a Daime *work* after hearing it on the radio a friend had (interview, 2014). During this same interview, Granjeiro showed an impressive familiarity with the *bolero* tradition, playing and singing a number of Spanish language *boleros* he claims he learned as a child. In general, the accordion can be used as the only accompanying instrument or mimic the role of the accompanying guitar.

Performative style as it relates to body language follows the same code as all involved in the *work*. Dramatic emotive facial expressions, like those seen in pop music performances, are conspicuously absent in the posture of both Daime instrument players and those attending the *work* themselves. There is an unspoken taboo against staring at someone during a work, although I have seen eye contact made and the occasional nod. In particular, the *solo* guitar—often the leader of the instrumental section—will maintain visual contact with the *puxador* or leader of the session. This facilitates cues to begin or stop, as well as allows for getting their attention in special circumstances such as singing a new hymn or changing key.

This control of facial expression can be seen as both a symbol of group solidarity, as seen in the earlier discussion on *collective shamanism*, as well as practical sign that the *Daimista* in question is or is not in need of assistance. The times when a *fardado* has to leave the *salão* to take care of a physical necessity—often purging or simply laying out—is, in my experience, often preceded by an outward unconscious physical display such as going pale.

### **Improvised Ornamentation: Audio *Mirações***

Even though the dominant aesthetic for musical accompaniment is to follow the strict melody line, players will often play embellishing ornaments around it. The ASC of ayahuasca consumption has already been shown to include a wide range of visual phenomenon as characterized by Shannon (2002). These ornaments are their audio equivalent and often referred to by players as “*mirações*,” a term that describes the intense experience of rapidly reconfiguring visionary material. When a player is in the *force* and helping the *current*, these are seen as highly desirable supplements to the music, provided that they are not performed in a manner where the intention is to draw attention to their execution.

When a panorama of ornaments begins to overlap, it is a common reported experience to experience them as a synesthetic loss of individuality; that is, a player might experience a loss of their own sense of individual contribution to the larger wall of sound. Abramovitz notes that this happened at the rituals of Céu do Mar in Rio de Janeiro, a phenomenon he called being “*embolado*.” He notes that “it is not rare for instruments to get jumbled, that is, one cannot distinguish one instrument from another in the middle of all instruments” (Abramovitz 2003: 72). Sound example 5.1 provides a simple instance of this “*jumbling*,” this time coming from an informal *healing work* held in Alto Santo among Daimistas who had participated in both Alto Santo and CEFLURIS works.

### **Introductions and Codas**

When accompanied by instruments, *Daime hymns* are given an introduction and melodic recapitulation. Andrade (1981: 310) calls these “pedagogical preambles”

and claims that these moments have the function of instructing the congregation on singing the hymn:

Before beginning the hymn, the instruments will play a long and calm pedagogical preamble, stating the whole melody and taking all repeats so that [it might be shown how] the verses fit. Only afterwards is the hymn sung by the congregation. (Andrade 1981: 310)

For the most part, this practice continues in both branches, although some minute differences and special exceptions can be noted. These can be categorized as a contextual difference due to the lack of accompanying instruments, as the local custom of a given church or line, or as the wider-spread practice of singing two *Daime hymns* back-to-back (*emendados*) in a closed collection of *Daime hymns*.

An instrumental reprise of the melody will follow the last sung verse. Occasionally, the instrumental accompaniment will play the coda with a cadence landing on the downbeat and then quietly noodle out an unrelated chord. The resulting effect is one of continuation, even though these chords rarely are related to the following hymn.

When instrumental accompaniment is lacking and the *Daime hymns* are sung a cappella the prevailing custom is to let the *puxador(a)* begin singing before the rest join in. The *puxador(a)* may often accompany themselves for a bar or two of quarter notes on the *maracá*. The customary *maracá* ending for a hymn is to play one bar of time after the last sung phrase or resolution of the instrumental coda, ending with strike on the downbeat.

The local customs of a given center may also play a part in what is appropriate for an instrumental introduction. At two instances of observation of the singing of

Mestre Irineu's "O Cruzeiro" at the CICLU center in *Alto Santo*, arguably one of the more prestigious centers of the Santo Daime for being the physical site of memory of Mestre Irineu's home and church, the *Daime hymns* were sung one after another with no instrumental preamble, as well as no obvious *puxador(a)*. On a side note, all of the participants were singing from memory without the aid of a written *hinário*.

Stringing two *Daime hymns* together with neither the coda of the first nor the preamble of the second is a common practice for certain pairs of *Daime hymns*.<sup>22</sup>

These are executed in the same key and often present similar thematic or harmonic material. Although purely a subjective observation, I have noticed a change in the *current* of energy during these moments, almost as if they were a release of kinetic energy. Most likely this personal feeling is related to a large form of tension and release. If the expectation is that every hymn begins and ends with the same formula, variation from this will be noticed and produce a feeling of release from the formula. It is also plausible that the elision of two key ritual and temporal building blocks would produce a sensation of speeding up or greater energy.

### **Learning and Transmission**

Now that the musical features have been looked at, a few thoughts on transmission and learning the hymns are in order.

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<sup>22</sup> In Mestre Irineu's "Cruzeiro," for example, the following sets of *Daime hymns* are set back-to-back: #29 "Sol, Lua, Estrela" and #30 "Devo Amar Aquela Luz," #37 "Marizia" and #38 "Flor De Jagube," #45 "Eu Estava Em Pe Firmado" and #46 "Eu Balanço," #49 "A Minha Mãe É De Todos" and #50 "Salomão," #71 "Chamo O Tempo" and #72 "Silencioso," #86 "Eu Vim Da Minha Armada" and #87 "Deus, Divino Deus," #106 "Fortaleza" and #107 "Chamei Lá Nas Alturas," and, finally, #127 "Eu Pedi" and #128 "Eu Cheguei Nesta Casa."



One of my informants for this study, a middle-aged American female, noted that she no longer played the musical instrument in her home—a piano—and only used it to accompany herself on Daime hymns (personal interview, 2013). Sometime later I revisited her home for an informal study of the lesser-sung *hinário* of a visiting leader from *Céu do Mapiá* and recognized that for her, “playing music” was cognitively in a different group than studying and singing *Daime hymns*, an activity to which she dedicated a great amount of time.

Study of the hymns can be an individual process that takes part outside of the *works*, but ultimately it is the rituals that provide the deeper insight into their meaning and function. Casmerim, a lawyer from Belo Horizonte (MG), provides a testimony on her process of learning the hymns:

The first hymns I remember [sings Mestre Irineu’s #125 “Eu Tomo Essa Bebida”] “Subi, subi, subi.” After the work I threw it into Google with the keywords “Daime” and “musica” and I found it and downloaded it to my laptop. I saw there were other hymns there I wasn’t really interested in. At the time I thought the hymns were really tacky, really simple. Annoying to listen to, you know? At the time I liked listening to pop. I thought if I could hear pop at home, why would I listen to these songs?

Today it’s the complete opposite. I think why should I listen to pop if I can hear Daime hymns? Anyhow, I went to more works and noticed they would sing the same songs to close the work. I know now that it is Mestre’s “Cruzeirinho.” Since they were sung everytime they got stuck in my head too. So next I downloaded the “Cruzeirinho.” I’d listen to it in the car—I burned a CD of it and would listen to it on the way to school. So that’s how I learned “Cruzeirinho.”

So I’d go to the works, hear the hymns, get home, and then download them. But normally I would download it only after I had heard it. Nowadays it’s different. If I go to a work and they say beforehand that they are going to sing such-and-such and I don’t know it I will download it.

It changed because I know that you must prepare before going to a work, whereas at first my preparation would come after. It was more of a novelty to try and live the moment of harmony that I had during the work. Nowadays I prepare for that state that I know I will go into during the work. (Interview, May 2014)

Germano, a native of Alto Santo, also comments on the need to study hymns, stressing that studying them in sequential order is key:

I make a point of following the sequence. Always study in sequence, because the *hinário* needs it. It starts at one and goes up to 132. One-hundred and thirty-two flowers. We have to study them one-by-one, but in order. If a person jumps around then they end up not knowing which one comes next. They don't know. But if they study them in order they are going to know which one comes next. Some people study by selectively choosing, you know? "I want to sing this one, or that one. I like this one, I like that one." But Daime is so great that we don't need to select the order. Just take Daime and hand it over to God, and let Him operate in our lives. (Interview, July 2014)

The bulk of the competency required to perform the musical functions as outlined here can be learned through individual study at home, via recordings or from friends and elder Daimistas. Still, there is a small set of skills that must be learned by oneself while in the *force* of the Daime.

A number of instrumental musicians and Daimistas note that they learned how to play their *works* in the *force* of the Daime. In particular, learning to apply the ideological set outlined in Chapter 3—*firmeza*, *self-correction*, and helping the *collective current*—are extra-musical skills required for competency as an instrumental player. One informant specifically claimed that not only had they never taken a music lesson, but that everything they knew about guitar playing was received while drinking Daime. The thought was echoed by a number of visiting Brazilian musicians who visited the United States.

Richard from Rio Branco (AC) touched on the point of being able to find *firmeza* (see Chapter 3) when speaking about the altered state of consciousness wherein the perception of the flow of time is altered. The notion is a practical problem that I also encountered during the observation-participation phase of fieldwork: executing a task—like playing an instrumental accompaniment—that requires ability to manipulate fine motor coordination over a temporal canvas, for example, playing the guitar. He expanded his comments to include an observation of players who had not internalized the cultural knowledge of how to cope with negative bodily effects of the Daime:

You know the deal with theory? I don't really pay it any mind, because what is important is what is played in practice. I played with a few guys from São Paulo—they had like two degrees apiece in music. But then in the middle of the work the guys were like this [makes a face of being out of it]. I was all out of sorts because before playing they told me they had all these degrees. I got all nervous and apprehensive. But you know what, when it came time to play in the force? (Interview, 2014)

It becomes apparent from these two testimonies that both individually directed study and the experience of singing the hymns at rituals while “working with the Daime” are necessary components for competency. The notion of self-correction applies to the hymns for each individual in their own path of spiritual growth. In conclusion, this chapter examined the external details of the music as a vehicle that structures the Daime ASC, how the corpus of hymns acts as the oral history of the doctrine, and some of the methods and motivations of transmission.

## Chapter 6: Ethnography of Three Daime Rituals

### *Ethnographic Description of Selected Rituals*

Now that a static description of the *works* has been described, it suits this examination to put these concepts into motion through ethnographic description. What follows are three ethnographies of *works* at different sites, starting with an *oração* in suburban Washington, D.C. A *feitio work*, held in Capixaba (AC) during the festival known as *Encontro Para o Novo Horizonte*, is examined next as a liminal site between transnationalism and physical site of memory. The final *work* returns to the Alto Santo neighborhood of Rio Branco (AC) to examine contemporary Daime practices off of the transnational circuit.

#### **The *Concentration Work* in Suburban Washington, D.C.**

Outside of the Beltway, in a wooded suburban Washington, D.C. neighborhood, a small group of eight to ten people gather together to hold a weekly *oração*, a ritual described in Chapter 4 as a ritual prayer cycle accompanied by only a symbolic amount of Daime.

All of the participants are members of a larger Daime church, consisting of some forty to sixty members, mostly middle-class educated professionals older than thirty. Racial distribution at the church is mixed, and includes participants from Caucasian, African-American, American-Desi, Hispanic, and Asian backgrounds. As described earlier, many are health and alternative medicine practitioners, but there are professionals of other stripes as well.

Showing up five minutes before the appointed start time, I recognize that I am the first to arrive at this cottage home somewhat near College Park, MD. The owners of the house welcome me in, and we exchange hugs and pleasantries. We make our way past the foyer and take a seat at a large round wooden kitchen table that has been set with a small Caravaca Cross (a double-beamed cross used by Daimistas) and a few glasses of water. Even though it is the dead of winter and there is piled-up snow outside, the water glasses have lace doilies placed atop of the rims—a nod to the Amazonian tradition that keeps out bugs and mosquitos.

Other members—both confirmed Daimistas and casual frequenters—trickle in, leaving their shoes in the foyer, and bringing hugs and plates of food to the kitchen. Casual conversation weaves its way in and out of topics related to Daime. Part of the group talks about what they brought to eat, while others are busy discussing nuances of how the mazurka is currently being played on the *maracá* in "Mapiá" ("Is it two down and four up? Or two down one up, two down one up?").

"Did you know she received that hymn after 9/11?" begins a third conversation between a pregnant acupuncturist and a yoga instructor on the esoteric origins of the hymns of Madrinha Nonata, daughter of Padrinho Sebastião and somewhat of a folk hero among women in the transnational Daime scene. Selections of Nonata's *hinário* are being picked out to be sung after the short meditation that will follow tonight's *oração*.

Nonata's Amazonian roots and family ties—she is CEFLURIS leader Padrinho Alfredo's brother and wife of Padrinho Roberto Paulo—grant her a certain prestige tied to notions of authenticity and make her an ideal avatar for the

transnational ideals of Daime behavior. Yet her cosmopolitan residence and intense travelling schedule keeps her circulating in the transnational Daime cohorts.

The suburban D.C. Daime groups, like most US and International groups, include at least a half-dozen scheduled visits from visiting leaders—Padrinhos and Madrinhas—that often fall during the festival *works*. These are elaborate and often expensive affairs. The groups—called *comitivas*—will bring with them at bare minimum a pair of leaders, a *puxadora*, and a musician.

The group has been meeting regularly for a while and tonight is the first time that they will be holding the *oração work* without wearing the *blue farda*—a distinctive uniform described in Chapter 1 as a shirt and tie for men, skirt and bow tie for women (see Figure 2 on page 5).

Another musician, David, shows up and we step into the living room to tune the guitars and “apply *ruma*,” a snuff made from ashes of tobacco and other plants common in both *caboclo* and Amerindian use both in the Amazon. David has spent an extended period of time in Mapiá, center of the CEFLURIS branch, and enjoys sharing his stories about different prominent figures like Madrinha Rita. We casually pick out a few Padrinho Sebastião tunes to sing and are joined by a few others.

The casual conversation and atmosphere quiets down as the time to begin the *oração* approaches. Gathering some Kleenex to cleanse myself from the effects of the *ruma*—a runny nose is common—David and I make our way back into the kitchen where a hushed preparation to start is underway.

We take our places, five men seated on one side of the table and an equal number of women on the other. Seating and order are big deals in Santo Daime

rituals. The physical sense of space to *firm* oneself in is a key component of setting involved in Daime trance-states. Even though tonight we will only be drinking a symbolic amount of Daime, the ritual components of setting are rigorously followed.

When all are seated, the owner of the house, an artisan raised in a military household, stands to lead us in the opening prayers. He leads with the Daime versions of “Pai Nosso” and “Ave Maria,” once in Portuguese and then two more times in English. Reading from a small bound compilation called the *concentration hinário* we proceed to recite the “Prayer for Caritas,” a Kardec spiritist prayer that made its way into Daime rituals via Padrinho Sebastião’s former connection with spiritism.

The prayers said, we stand in a reserved, quiet manner to line up for the serving of Daime. The owner of the house has a small bottle of Daime in a mason jar on the kitchen counter, from which he pours 5-10ml for each participant into a small clear glass. We all accept the Daime while standing up, looking at the server in the eye. It is a solemn, serious ordeal and the conviviality and jocosity shown before the beginning of the ritual have given way to focused group energy. The used glasses are handed to someone for washing and we mannerly return to our seats.

When all have returned to the table, the owner of the house gives a quiet nod to David, who begins the introduction to the first hymn of the *oração*, “Examine a Conciência.” (For musical score and interpretation of the concentration hymns see Abramovitz 2003: 126-165.) We proceed through the sequence of hymns, most of which were received by Padrinho Sebastião, singing in Portuguese with a more noticeable accent than when in a larger group. Syllables tend to get clipped short at

the end of phrases, some phonemes are changed, and many nasalized sounds seem beyond reach.

Singing in Brazilian Portuguese is the norm for the practice of this group, although exceptions will be made for certain hymns in the sequence: “Peço que Vós me ouça,” “Eu não sou Deus,” and “Meu São João.” They are always sung twice, the first time in the language the hymn was received in and the second time in translation.

There is a high degree of similarity for much of the melodic material for *oração*. Combined with the fact that we are playing all of the hymns in the key of C is proving difficult for me to remember isolated notes in the sequence. Unlike pop or jazz idioms, this cannot be covered up by improvising ornaments around neighbor tones. The most valued aesthetic is a canonical non-syncopated unembellished rendition of the melody if possible.

Differing from the *concentration works* or *dancing works*, only one person is playing *maracá*. In this case it is the *puxadora*, who seems to be a bit uncertain of herself on the instrument. As she is the only one playing the *maracá*, her sense of uncertainty is palpable and bends the hymn into slight *decelerando*.

At this point in the work I can slightly feel a *force*, though it is unclear whether it is the Daime or a simple meditative state. Certain triggers (Becker 2004) and certain cues have put me into a different, non-quotidian headspace and brought about an emotional state of qualitatively different concentration. These triggers include the altar, the smell of the Daime, the faces of those I know from Daime, and, as is very apparent, the specific sequence of hymns that we are singing.



The particular *maracá* is quite beautiful and made of a small coconut shell and finished off in an artisanal manner. The marches go well for the player, but upon reaching the first waltz—“Peço que Vós me ouça”—she drops out. The slight *force* I felt recedes back into consciously directed inner-voice thought. Thinking about doubt, I too fumble on the guitar and direct more conscious thought toward the mechanical aspect of playing.

I *firm* myself over the next two hymns, as does the *maracá* player. The last hymn sung was added to the sequence in 2005, when Madrinha Nonata, mentioned above, received her hymn #9 “Meu São João” in Ashland, Oregon. The lyrical content of the hymn makes a number of intertextual references to the other hymns in the *oração* and has a particular upbeat manner of being performed.

David and I put away our guitars as the owner stands to read the “Consecration of the Space” hymn that follows the *oração* and is used as a preamble for the short collective meditation period referred to as *concentration*.<sup>23</sup>

It being a Tuesday night, and having only drunk a small amount of Daime, we had decided earlier to only hold a *concentration* period of fifteen minutes. Framed, as Abramovitz notes (2003), by silence, the meditation period keeps me in the ever-so-slight feeling of the *force* of the Daime, easily confused with deep meditation and

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<sup>23</sup> The auditive experience of quiet meditation is anything but silent. In the world of Western classical art music, one noteworthy prominent example demonstrating this is John Cage’s 4’33”. Still, reception of this piece to me depends entirely on an expectation of hearing *something* and then being surprised when this expectation is met with the ambient sounds foregrounding themselves, contrary to expectation. For a more approximate sonic picture of what deep listening entails, I direct the reader to Mathieu (1993: 9).

with none of the adverse nausea, bodily effects, or visions that come with longer works.

We come out of the concentration period to a hymn idiosyncratic to this particular group, “Holy, Holy, Holy” (see Figure 8). This hymn was received by an American Daimista and made its way to tonight’s *oração* via a spiritual connection some of the members have with the Ashland (OR) church. Unlike the English translations of Brazilian Daime hymns, the text to this hymn has a flowing quality and echoes the messages present in many Daime hymns. In particular, the text setting “we have entered this temple of love” can mirror the shamanic ideology of journeying defined by Walsh, as well as correspond to the visionary typology referenced in Shannon (2002a).

## Holy, Holy, Holy

Voice

Am Dm C

Ho - Ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, This Tem-ple of E - ter - nal love.

8

Dm Am E7 Am

E - very one Here is re - cei - ving The love of our fa - ther a - bove.

Holy, Holy, Holy,  
 We have entered the house of the Lord  
 Everyone here radiating  
 With the light of the celestial court

To be here in this house of the Lord  
 We must behave with respect and with love  
 Here in my heart is an altar  
 To the glory of heaven above

We have entered this temple of gold  
 Here in this sacred house of the Lord  
 All the angels are singing  
 Their praises with heavenly chords

**Figure 8 American Daime Hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy."**

Following this, we sing the hymn “Professor” (see Figure 10), received by a member of a Santo Daime church in São Paulo. This hymn was sung almost daily during the *Encounter for A New Horizon* festival described later in this chapter, and made its way into the transnational repertoire via both American Daimistas who had made the pilgrimage and visiting Daimista *puxadoras*. Often it is sung as a “serving hymn,” from a specific subset of hymns whose lyrical content speak mostly about the drink itself.

## Professor

received by Davison

Am Dm E7

Voice

O Dai-me é a mi-nha for-ma de vi da meu pro fe - ssor

7 1. Dm E7

Voice

que vem cu-rar as mi-nhas fe - ri - das O Dai - me

10 2. Dm Am G

Voice

que vem cu-rar as mi-nhas fe - ri-das O Meu Je - sus A I - a - gé

15 C E7 Am

Voice

é Ma - mãe O - xum me ensi na -ndo co mo é

Figure 9 “Professor.”

### Potluck after the *Oração*

The *work* closes with a sequence of prayers similar to that of many Daime *works*. The break from ritualistic time frame to a more quotidian flow is marked not

just by the closing sequence, but also by the collective clapping and greeting that follows it. Tonight's gathering and quiet setting brings out something more akin to a polite "golf clap" than the thundering moment of recognition of closing that can be seen to accompany more intense *works* like the *dancing work* on major festival days. A round of hugs and greetings follows, the atmosphere returns to something closer to the one described upon arrival, and motions are made to put together a dinner made from potluck offerings.

### **Transmission of Daime Culture in Transnational Settings**

Social values of the Santo Daime are often taught and performed as diasporic contact with Acre through regular visits from CEFULRIS leaders such as Padrinho Alfredo, Padrinho Roberto Paulo, and Padrinho Alex Polari. This is accompanied by another parallel process in which American Daimistas travel to Brazil, especially Acre or Mapiá (AM), to participate in the culture at a physical site of memory of Santo Daime. This pilgrimage confers both a high social value and a chance to put the ritualistic practices in perspective.

The presence of any Brazilian at an American Santo Daime *work* is also highly valued socially. Firstly, their presence makes practical matters such as translations or answering simple questions about ritualistic practices easier. Secondly, the presence of Brazilians ties the international community to the collective memory, as understood by Halbwachs (1992), of those who have geographical ties to the sites of memory. When the distribution is reversed and international Daimistas are this minority, but still present, we have a situation such as that for the *feitio work* described in the next section.

*The Feitio Work in Capixaba (AC), Brazil*

Capixaba (AC) is a small town about two hours south of Rio Branco, midway between the Peruvian border town of Brasiléia and Rio Branco. The drive in either direction shows the devastating effect of deforestation. Clearings about two kilometers wide on both sides of the highway have been cut into the formerly dense *seringais* to make way for cattle grazing, a prime economic activity popular and socially valued by the immigrant *nordestino* culture that was transplanted to Acre.

A series of dirt roads leads past these clearings and back into the thick rainforest that houses a small commune called Fortaleza, home to Sr. Luiz Mendes and his family and church, CEFLI. For the past thirteen years they have held a yearly festival called “Encontro Para o Novo Horizonte” that welcomes between 150 and 200 Daimistas from all branches and parts of Brazil, as well as about a dozen international Daimistas from the United States, Columbia, and the Netherlands.

The official website for the event calls it a “10 day encounter with the sacred rituals of the doctrine of the Santo Daime in accordance with the legacy that was by the founder Raimundo Irineu Serra” ([www.luizmendes.org](http://www.luizmendes.org), accessed December 15, 2013). Over the week-and-a-half period rituals are held almost daily and include the calendar *works* in celebration of the New Year and All King’s Day, as well as special *healing works*, *works in praise of nature*, and *dancing works*. After the festival, the handful (between 30 and 40 people) that stay will participate in a rare opportunity to participate in a four-day making of Daime, the *feitio work*.

Most of the visitors stay in the fifteen or so *palafitos*, wooden-slab dwellings sitting on raised columns that are typical constructions of the Amazon. There is one

larger dormitory construction with bunk beds, as well as the houses of Sr. Luiz Mendes's immediate family. Those who did not find lodging inside camp out in any of three or four designated clearings.



Figure 10 A *palafito* dwelling in Capixaba, AC

The vegetation is lush and verdant, an untouched virgin rainforest teeming with birds, monkeys, hummingbirds, bugs and butterflies of all types, snakes, and ants.<sup>24</sup> Around the houses trees have been cleared to make subsistence and flower gardens. Down the hill there is a small watering spot (*açude*) about the a half mile in circumference, which naturally splits the property in half. On the one side, slightly up a low incline sits a small-pavilion, no bigger than a basketball court, with a story-tall cross in front. This church is the site where the official works will be held during the festival. On the other side, past the houses, *palafitos*, and camping grounds, just before the Xipamano river which separates Brazil from Bolivia, sits another pavilion-like structure called the “*casa de feitio*.” It is here that over the next four days the *jagube* will be macerated in a part of the ritual called *bateção*.

The handful of international Daimistas there have never participated in this ritual in their home countries. Practical considerations involving logistics and

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<sup>24</sup> It would be a shame not to mention that the overwhelming presence of ants in every direction and of every type became a constant visual loop in my head (even before attending a single ceremony), one that did not subside for the entirety of the time I spent at the festival.

importation laws keep the circulation outside of Brazil to a controlled affair. It is currently more practical to import Daime already made than to produce it nationally. As a result, many—myself included—are eager to see how the ritual making is actually done.

Despite the hard physical labor involved, making Daime is looked upon as a privilege by those doing it. Peer-discourse and directions from those in charge of the *feitio* stress how the act must be done with the utmost reverence and love, for the energies that are present in the *work* go directly into the sacrament. Unlike the other *works* studied so far, the *feitio* allows the twelve participants to re-signify the direct and intense, forceful energy of pounding into an act of compassion and love. The ASC created by this directed physical labor is unlike any other in the doctrine, yet it still relies on the focused state of meditation, as well as *firmness* and helping the group effort.

The setup of the *casa de feitio* is unlike the *salão* of the church and was the result of a process of evolution, split into a general area set up with about forty plastic chairs and a three-foot-high cement-brick wall delineating an area for *bateção*, the ritualistic macerating of the *jagube* from arm-sized vine to fine hair-like strands.

Before the *work* begins, all have gathered in the chairs and carry on subdued casual conversation. Uniforms are not worn to the *feitio*, but dress remains modest. Topics don't seem differ too greatly from the D.C. *oração*. Food, hymns, and how Daime had an impact on each other's lives seems to be ongoing topics at these gatherings, only perhaps with a greater degree of delving into the more esoteric bits of the doctrine.

Two tables have been set up in front of the *bateção* area, holding the necessary elements for a makeshift Santo Daime altar: flowers, the three-beamed cross used only at CEFLI, candles, and a two-liter coke plastic PET coke bottle (with label still on it) containing Daime. Saturnino Mendes, the session leader and president of CEFLI, stands to open the work leading the group in a sequence of prayers. He takes a moment to talk to the participants about the development of the ritual, from the times where Mestre Irineu cooked Daime in a bean pot until its current configuration as received by Mestre Irineu's main Daime maker, Francisco Granjeiro.

The walled-in *bateção* area has a five-foot-wide entryway on two sides and a sunken white-tile floor. Six three-foot-high square wooden pounding blocks have been arranged on one side about three feet from the perimeter. Just behind them, closest to the wall, are smaller stumps for sitting. On the other side of the area are another six of these, making twelve in total. Saturnino comments on the numerical symbolism involved, noting that the twelve spots stand for the twelve biblical disciples of Jesus. Next to each pounding block sit a cord or so of *jagube* vine, about the length of the elbow to the hand and thick as softball.

Each *bateção* was attended by some thirty or more Daimistas and visiting guests from other Brazilian Ayahuasca Religions. For the *feitio* I participated in we sang the *hinários* of the four original companions to Mestre Irineu: Maria Damião, Antônio Gomes, Germano Guilherme, and João Pereira.

The service of the Daime took a separate form from what I was used to from other works. The president of the session asked who would like to pound the *jagube*, and those who volunteered lined up first to drink Daime. No uniforms were worn at



the session and women who were in their menstrual cycle were asked not to be present during the ritual. After twelve men had drunk Daime, they took off their shoes and entered an approximately 12' x 8' tiled area set up with two-and-a-half-foot-tall wooden stumps.

The idea of pounding is relatively simple. Take a piece of *jagube* and pound it until the strands have separated and it has a texture like brushed hair. When this is done, throw the resulting macerated vine into the middle of the floor and repeat until the entire vine has been pounded. The men synchronize the pounding, following the lead of the left-most stump. The mallet itself weighs somewhere between five to ten pounds and is lifted up high—usually at least to eye-level—before being dropped down onto the stump; this continues for a period of four to five hours with no stop in rhythm.

Once the pounding began, its pulse did not stop. So, the *puxador* and instrumentalist(s) had to adopt their tempo to match that of the *marretes*. With little exception, there are only three main rhythmic groupings of Daime hymns: march (4/4), waltz (3/4), and mazurka (6/8). The pulse of the *marrete* kept a half-note pulse on the downbeat and third beat of the march, as shown in Figure 10.

# Deus Aonde Está/Do Sol Vos Nasce a Luz

received by Germano Guilherme

04:13 "Deus Aonde Está"

Voice: ...com vo - sso bri - lho de for - mo - su -

Guitar

Maracá

Marrete

5 "Do Sol Vos Nasce a Luz"

Th. ra. Do sol Vos

A. Gtr.

Mrs.

Surdo

8

Th. na - - sce a Luz e de - sta...

A. Gtr.

Mrs.

Surdo

The image shows a musical score for two songs. The first system, labeled '04:13 "Deus Aonde Está"', includes staves for Voice, Guitar, Maracá, and Marrete. The voice part has lyrics: "...com vo - sso bri - lho de for - mo - su -". The second system, labeled '5 "Do Sol Vos Nasce a Luz"', includes staves for Th., A. Gtr., Mrs., and Surdo. The voice part has lyrics: "ra. Do sol Vos na - - sce a Luz e de - sta...". The Maracá and Surdo parts in both systems show a consistent half-note pattern.

Figure 11 *marrete* half-note pattern. Demonstration of back-to-back sequencing of "Deus Aonde Está" and "Do Sol Vos Nasce A Luz."

When waltzes and mazurkas popped up, the *marrete* half note role turned into a 2-against-3 polyrhythm, playing every other pulse in a two-bar metric pattern. In this way, the *marrete* sonically plays the unique role of being the only polyrhythm in the performance practice of Santo Daime. The task of pounding the *jagube* is said to

be an arduous one, and I agree. For those unaccustomed to the *marrete* it can produce calluses and physical exhaustion (Cemin, 2002). The task of keeping up with the rhythm, focusing attention on spirituality, and navigating the force of the Daime is no small feat. Cemin argues that the experience of the *feitio* is an “ecstatic, shamanic flight” which to some represents a conquest (2002).

Similar to the *maracá*, the *marrete* has a musical function tied to its practical function. As the most important instrument for this ritual, it sets the tempo through its half-note pounding. The optimum sound is the simultaneous thud of twelve *marretes* hitting the stump at the same time. The musicians and *puxador* accompanying the ritual will follow the pace set by the twelve men working away, rather than setting the pace themselves.

Once the *bateção* ended, the preparation of the Daime continued as layers of *jagube* and *chacrana* were laid in wreaths into three thirty-gallon caldrons, filled with water and placed over an open fire pit. The cooking was tended to by a select few that knew how to tend to the making, which required them to stay up all night and work in shifts throughout the process. Occasionally the caldrons needed to be lifted—a task that takes at least four persons—and moved. Usually this was to a six-foot sluice that was set up to aid in the bottling process, but occasionally this was just a shift to a different spot in the fire pit.

The long hours required for cooking the Daime open up plenty of opportunity for socializing and playing hymns, although as the crowd thinned to go to bed the hymns gave way to recordings. Over the course of the few days I noted that the

playlist included a long stretch of music from other Daime traditions such as Umbandaime and the Barquinha.

As a ritual it provides one of the more unique opportunities for transmission and learning. A musical instrument is always lying around, and participants are eager to fill in the space with sound. This was the best opportunity I noticed during fieldwork to hear the hymns others had received, in part due to the informal nature after the *bateção* was finished.

### ***The Dancing Work at CEFLIMMAVI***

Among the centers in Alto Santo, the Centro Ecletico Flor de Lótus Maria Marques Vieira (CEFLIMMAVI) has the most humble setting, sitting adjacent to the center leader's one-story home where you might expect to find another house or garage. The *salão*—the name given to the ritualistic area with an altar in the center and space surrounding it on all sides for dancing (or sitting during *concentration works*)—for this center is no bigger than a volleyball court. It is laid out in the same fashion as the churches at CICLUMIG and CEFLI, with a wall surrounding the *salão* and seating on the outside for guests (generally considered to be those not wearing the uniform). Behind the back wall is an area for serving Daime that holds a collection of bottles of Daime, as well as ritualistic objects like candles, crosses, and *hinários*.

Before beginning the *work* a number of Daimistas gather outside, some of whom I had met during the *Encounter for a New Horizon* festival earlier in the year. We exchange greetings and share comments on the sound coming from the neighborhood.

We can hear that CICLU is about twenty hymns into the “Cruzeiro.” Two other centers also within earshot a mile down the road—CRF (Centro Rainha da Floresta) and CICLUJUR—have also begun their *works*, and I can make out the strains of the Mestre Irineu’s third hymn, “Ripi.” The soundscape, especially for one who knows the *hinário* well, is functions like the one described at the bus station in downtown Rio Branco or the *ramai* of the Indonesian landscape (Rasmussen, 2009), but is made up of the sounds of the forest and naturally amplified sound of the chorus of Daimistas singing and playing their *maracás* to Daime hymns. However, the audio depth perception of each chorus coming from about a mile away in different directions paints a three-dimensional portrait unique to the Brazilian soundscape; other centers are located in far enough isolation from each other that this overlapping cannot occur.

Once inside, I introduce myself to the musicians—three guitar players and a percussion player—and ask permission to join them on the mandolin. They agree and are in fact somewhat surprised to see a mandolin.<sup>25</sup> We go through a sound check, plugging the instruments into an eight-channel mixing board with a slight reverb effect on all channels that feeds to speaker mounted to the wall behind us. We situate ourselves in a row of wooden chairs facing the center altar and play an instrumental preamble in what might be referred to as the *regional* style of *choro*, using only

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<sup>25</sup> The mandolin is an unusual instrument for Santo Daime—although not unheard of—which proved to open up playing opportunities during field research that might not otherwise have presented themselves. Most centers have more than enough capable guitar players, so the opportunities to play are often based on a system of the center’s own choosing, such as the seniority system. Daime recordings show a tendency for a division of roles which includes a doubling of the melody in the soprano voice using a tremolo picking-style well suited to the mandolin, but recently played on guitar (see Chapter 5).

Daime hymns rather than commercial *carioca* tunes. The instrumental preamble strays from the conventions of normal accompaniment and allows for all instrumentalists to weave a complex string of counterpoint lines around the theme. The three guitarists have split up the orchestration in a fashion similar to that described in Chapter 5, but since the *solo* (melody player) is playing an electric guitar, he has jumped the melody line into the next register.

The quiet hush before the beginning of the ritual comes again, by now a similar pattern to that seen in the previous descriptions of the *feitio work* and the *oração*. Someone rings a bell by the serving area and all gather to open the *work*. After the series of prayers are said, all line up to drink Daime.

There is a ritual pattern for moving about the *salão* when going to drink Daime which applies to everything except for getting up to cleanse oneself (see Chapter 3 for discussion). A participant moves to the head of the row in their *battalion* and raises their right hand looking at the leader of the row, who returns the salute with the left hand. The participant may then proceed to exit the *salão* on the opposite side of the serving area. If they are going to drink Daime they then proceed along the corridor that is separated from the salon by a wall, banister, or simple rope. Failure to move in this manner invites commentary from the *fiscal* (person in charge of the smooth flow of the ritual) and has the practical behavioral communication that one might be in need of assistance.

We line up to drink Daime—men served on the one side, women on the other—in order, with the uniformed confirmed Daimistas first and non-uniformed participants next. There are no specified rules for when someone should become a

*fardado*, and some participants may frequent Daime ceremonies for years and never decide to make that step. Reaching the serving window, I put up three fingers in a signal that I want to drink that amount of Daime, roughly 75 ml.

Many characterizations of ayahuasca in the popular literature claim that ayahuasca has a foul taste. While it certainly is *sui generis* and definitely not sweet, the Alto Santo variety is pleasantly earthy. I receive the Daime to the ritual words “May God accompany you in the path of the Holy Light” and return to my spot and mandolin. Once all have drunk the Daime and returned their places we all stand and begin the *hinário* with “Sol, Lua, Estrela.”

I notice that only one person is playing the *maracá*, a practice I later learned was due to the fact that the center was hoping to make a decent recording for studying.<sup>26</sup> To my ears nobody needed further practice, and all hymns were sung with spot-on intonation and entirely from memory. The resulting flow from one hymn to the next was understandably quicker than I had ever experienced in D.C., attributable to the sheer depth of intimacy this group had with singing this *hinário*, something many had done since birth.

By about the fortieth hymn, and definitely before the customary break at the sixty-sixth hymn “São João Era Menino,” the electric guitar and mandolin became out of tune to each other. Oddly enough, I have come to like this funky tuning and am perfectly content to do a whole *work* like that. For me, it affects the visual phenomenon during trancing in surprising ways that do not always happen otherwise.

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<sup>26</sup> Recording *works* can be a tricky affair, based on tension between the cultural expectancy to place the recorder in the highest point of prestige in the church, the center table, and the fact that fifty people playing a tin can filled with ball-bearings is not going to produce the recording aesthetic that Turino might label as *hi-fidelity*.

Still, the effect is noticeable and has the potential for bringing a participant out of his spiritual headspace and back into the realm of the material world.

At the same time I noticed this, the elevated level of the *current* and my experience of the Daime had placed me into the space that other musicians have categorized as “the instrument playing itself.” This is somewhat akin to flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) that characterizes the facility of performance when one is in a zone of optimal concentration. It slightly differs in that the concentration need not be directed at the instrument; in fact, for me the cognitive memory faculty that often accompanies performing music in the zone is largely absent or focused on another array of imaginative activity, such as any of the visual phenomena described by Shannon (2003).

Before stopping for the customary break in the middle of the *hinário*, we did take a minute to tune. The fact that I was not inclined to mention the tuning harkens back to the idea of *self-correction*, so present in the Daime ideology. Although I was relieved that we took the time to retune, it is an important cultural lesson to let others discover their own ways to correct themselves.

During the break I found myself in conversation with the center president and a federal police official. Among other things, we talked about the difficulties of following the religion outside of the Acrean context; for example, the fact that no donations are expected in the Alto Santo churches, while CEFLURIS churches have a practice akin to tithing based on donations. I noted that the donations expected are rather high for *works* with visiting Padrinhos, and joke that I pay more to see



someone like Padrinho Alfredo, head of CEFLURIS, than I do to see consecrated pop stars like Gilberto Gil.<sup>27</sup>

During the break it is customary to play a series of ten hymns known as the “Diversões,” hymns received by Mestre Irineu and others with a lighter spirit than other Daime hymns. One hymn in particular, “Aurora da Vida,” shows an interesting intersection between popular music and Daime hymns. It has a repeating verse/chorus structure with the chorus borrowed from a composition by Piracicaba (SP) native Erosthides de Campos and popularized by singer Augusto Calheiros in 1939. The original lyrical content was modified by Mestre Irineu and associated to the story of the relationship between original Daime member José das Neves and his wife, who left him to pursue an unrequited relationship. During its performance at the break it is common to hear the serving bell played in musical accompaniment to the words which echo “the bells that toll.” For some reason I could not manage to pull myself away from my conversation with an elder woman who insisted on telling me parrot jokes.

Death is considered by Daimistas to be a journey, specifically one where a passage is made. The overall tone of the day colored my experience and I found myself deep in trance during the hymns that were received by Mestre Irineu during the time surrounding the passage made by Daime members such as Antonio Gomes (#74 “So Eu Cantei Na Barra), Maria Damião (#91 “Choro Muito e Lamento”) and Daniel Pereira de Mattos (#107 “Chamei Lá Nas Alturas”).

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<sup>27</sup> Gilberto Gil is perhaps one of the best known figures on the Brazilian pop music scene. He founded the movement known as *Tropicalia* and acted as the Brazilian Minister of Culture for a number of years, visiting the CICLU center when it became an official landmark of cultural heritage.

By the time we reach the final hymns known as the “Cruzeirinho,” the serving of Daime has stopped and the social cue is to look for *firmeza* and return thoughts to the material plane. I notice a distinct Alto Santo tradition of playing one of the final hymns, #125 “Eu Tomo Essa Bebida,” with a mixed-modal melody different from the tradition in CEFLURIS, which approaches this hymn with the third degree always sung as a flatted third.

The final hymn, #129 “Pisei Na Terra Fria,” is sung for the second time today to a final reflection on death and spiritual presence. For me, this was accompanied by the feeling of the presence of Mestre Irineu and intense visual activity suggesting his very physical presence. Although there are many reports of this type of phenomenological activity, it was the first time I experienced it, and it was perhaps something I might not have felt without the cultural expectation of its possibility.

Before the end of the *work*, the president shared a few words about upcoming *works* and the need for help to clean the *salão*. He also took a moment to acknowledge and welcome visitors, noting that many of us had come from far away and live in places where it can take an effort of driving up to two hours and paying hundreds of dollars for the opportunity to drink Daime. His comments underline the fact that even though they are removed from the transnational performance of Santo Daime rituals, the centers at Alto Santo are in a dialogue with the greater tendencies of its movement.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Research

Now that the ethnographic accounts have filled in the final details and data on the ASCs specific to the Daime, this study is well equipped to address the research questions and pose new directions for study.

### Recapitulation

#### **Chapter Summaries**

In Chapter 1, I presented the current context of the prayer cult of the Santo Daime, in its multi-faceted environments that include a historical memory of the physical persons and places that founded the church, as well as mentioning the altered states of consciousness, emically seen as places in the astral plane, that these founders navigated through. A small ethnography detailed a recent curing session and illustrated some of the complications of field research, a subject I took up at length in the following section.

This chapter also handled the identification of the research population and the research questions. Paraphrased here, I asked (1) how do the members of Santo Daime transmit their learned states of altered consciousness, (2) what role does music—defined as singing and playing instruments—play in creating and navigating this state, (3) how are these states inscribed and remembered, and, finally (4) how is transmission and memory of these states affected by the effects of transnationalism? I ended this chapter with a review of what I considered to be the relevant literature, and hold myself responsible for errors and omissions.

Chapter 2 presented both an ethnographic introduction to a Santo Daime ritual which involves no use of ayahuasca as means for then studying the pharmacology and phenomenology of this brew made from the leaves of the *chacrana* (*psychotria viridis*) and the macerated vine called *jagube* (*banesteriosis caapi*). The main purpose of this section was to act as a warrant. It underscores the fact that the enthoegen ayahuasca, or Daime, as it is known in the prayer cult of the same name, is a powerful substance with unique properties. Ideology is explored through the ritualistic context described in Chapter 3.

The ritualistic expressions—the so-called *works*—are at the heart of the transmission and creation of the learned state of consciousness known within the doctrine as being in the force of the Daime. This state is not simply the passive effects and phenomenology of *ayahuasca*, but is rather the setting, both in the physical and mental sense, of the doctrine. The tools at the disposal to the Daimista are as varied as the visionary experiences, and include the introspective use of silence, charity, singing and dancing, playing instruments, and physically laboring. All of these thoughts are performed and somatically inscribed through the sung doctrine, framed by prayer.

The ideology and doctrinal values—usually ritualistic nuts and bolts, but just as often spiritual values—not transmitted through the literal word of the *hinários* are contained in the oral tradition of the community. These include concepts for handling the effects of drinking Daime, such as self-correction, helping out the collective *current* of energy, and *firmeza*, or physical and spiritual grounding. Terms for the states of religious ecstasy were described as being in the *force* of the Daime (i.e.,

feeling the effects of the combination of praise and *ayahuasca* inebriation) and receiving the *Santa Luz*, the Holy Light of the N,N Dimethyltryptamine visionary experience. Far from being purely pharmacological effects, these are mental and spiritual tools that heighten and make the body more sensitive to the trancing effects of the *Daime work*.

The framing and practical matters of the musical vehicle that transports *Santo Daime* hymns were dissected in Chapter 5. The abstract, static patterns of the melodic and harmonic motion of the hymns were examined, noting a tendency to exhibit tonal patterns—and little surprise here—common to the Western tonal tradition as practiced in the Northeast of Brazil, and more specifically, the diaspora of that group that settled in the Western Amazon.

Chapter 5 also added together the cultural values and ideology from Chapter 3 and fleshed out the audioscape of the rituals described in Chapter 4, as well as the role of internally learning to handle the extra-musical competency of dealing with distorted perceptions of time. Finally, Chapter 6 attempted to assemble the component parts from the previous chapters into three small ethnographic descriptions of Daime rituals played out in distinct places.

### *Addressing the Research Questions*

#### **Transmission of Learned Trancing and Altered States of Consciousness**

The first task in addressing this research question was to exactly situate the altered states of consciousness of religious trancing that are involved in Santo Daime rituals. The literature on altered states of consciousness and shamanism further narrow what exactly that means in the Daime context. The ideology defined in

Chapter 3 was seen played over and over again in the ethnographic account in Chapter 6. Firmness, self-correction, and helping the *current* are the values that shape the ayahuasca intoxication into the spiritual practice oriented towards the Divine that make up these states of religious ecstasy.

Transmission of the states is taught first and foremost through the lyrical content of the hymns, but also in study outside of the rituals. The music and singing, examined from the outside in Chapter 5, have the multi-layered role of being the corpus that teaches these values, the vehicle for their performance, and the lifeline and timeline that structures and helps daimistas navigate these states. When removed from the linguistic community that spawned these hymns, the transnational community relies on the work of translations into their native tongue as much as it depends on the visiting members who come from its cradle to teach the subtleties of meanings and correct ritual misunderstandings. In a way, these communities have more in common with the urban centers where Santo Daime spread, and where followers also depend on these roots and physical sites of memory.

### **Further Research Questions**

For every conclusion that was reached in this study, many more questions arose. In the international context of Santo Daime, many religious modes of thinking are negotiated, and the community ties become more precarious and affinity-bound. This study stayed away from ethnochoreographic description of the dancing and other movement, which—like the music—are described in the literature as simple. These types of descriptions belittle the deeper structures made of easily categorized building blocks. Movement in the rituals of Daime is as important as producing

sound. Unfortunately, I feel unequipped to make deeper observations on this aspect, but I welcome the opportunity to read any study done on this.

Memory, as it is inscribed in the physical sites of memory and in how it operates as a fluid construction, is another interesting framework to apply to this transnational phenomena that is neither so large as to defy categorization nor so small that it cannot produce meaningful data. The world of Santo Daime is far from static, and continues to work within a dialogue between various other worlds which also make religious use of ayahuasca, such as independent *caboclo* communities, the *Barquinha* religion—which to date has yet to be investigated from an ethnomusicological standpoint—and the native Amerindian groups like the Huni Kuim and Yanawana, who both maintain deep respect for and contact with the Santo Daime community.

#### *A Final Thought on Hood's Bi-musicality and My Own Role as Researcher*

In a final note and nod to Mantle Hood's advocating of bi-musicality (1960), which calls for learning the modes of playing the modes of the music a researcher studies, I note that I began this study at the same time as I started my spiritual path in the Santo Daime, becoming a confirmed member in August of 2013.

During the period preceding this and for many months after I was simply not prepared spiritually to participate as a musician in the rituals, despite years of experience as a performing musician. I saw that what was more important than learning hymns and musical styles—and the Santo Daime certainly has a specific instrumental musical idiom—was learning how to "work with the Daime." This involved an intense process of self-correction and introspection that continues today.

This is not to say I did not also study minute musical details as well. Most drives from my home in Virginia to campus involved a dedicated ear-training regime of Daime hymns (a practice which, by the way, is an excellent source for developing melodic transcription fundamentals). I also dedicated a fair amount of time to Daime hymns played on my laptop, which I would try to hear in lucid dreaming states—perhaps the best approximation to playing in a *work* one can get without drinking Daime.

One informant asked whether, through my research, I had learned to play music in the Daime. My response was a mixed “yes and no.” I say “yes” because I have examined the expressive style and the melodic and harmonic content of the Daime hymns. But the extra-musical portions—“working with the Daime,” correcting my faults, and helping out the *current* of energy—continue to challenge me. Every *work* is different and every *current* needs different support. To play in the Daime is to recognize that these values always take precedence. So, with wistful happy acknowledgement of this fact, I recognize that no, I do not know how to play music at Daime *works*. I learn it anew every time.



## Glossary

ASC n.—1. Altered state of consciousness. For discussion on origin and use of term see Chapter 2.

ayahuasca n.—1. A vision-inducing psychoactive drink used in the Amazon basin made from macerated *banisteriosis caapi*, a woody vine, and *psychotria viridis* leaves. Traditionally used in Amerindian and syncretic shamanic and healing rituals.

caboclo n.—1. A riverine *mestiço* from the Brazilian Amazon, often with a mixed cultural heritage coming from Brazilian *nordestino* (Northeasterner) culture and Amerindian roots. 2. Spiritual entities incorporated as Amerindians in mediumship rituals. 3. *adj.* of or pertaining to the *mestiço* Brazilian/Amerindian identity

cleanse v.—1. To discharge bodily fluids—such as vomit, spit, or diarrhea—while in the force of ayahuasca. This is held as a positive community value in the Santo Daime. (syn. to purge, to clean.)

concentration n.—1. Meditation. 2. Name of ritual in the Santo Daime which involves a period of collective meditation.

Daime n.—1. Abbreviation of the religious movement known as the Santo Daime 2. Rebaptised name for *ayahuasca* used by members of this religion during rituals.

Daimista n.—1. A practitioner of the Santo Daime religious movement. 2. *adj.* pertaining to the culture of the Santo Daime community.

entheogen n.—1. Term given to psychoactives used in religious, ritualistic contexts.

Firula n.—1. Any non-melodic ornamentation.

force n. (pt. *força*)—1. Divine power. 2. The bodily and spiritual effect of drinking ayahuasca, particularly the non-visual phenomena.

hino n.—1. Hymn of the Santo Daime deemed to be received from the spiritual plane (not composed) and sung during a ritual using ayahuasca.

hinário n.—1. A collection of hymns received by an individual member of the Santo Daime and arranged in chronological order of reception.

light n.—1. Divine grace. 2. Term used to describe the intense frontal cortex activity which stimulates visionary experiences during ayahuasca consumption. English speakers also call this phenomenon by the Brazilian Portuguese terms Luz or Santa Luz.

maracá n.—1. A metallic rattle idiophone made from a can attached to a handle and filled with ball-bearings or seeds.

puxador(a) n.—1. The role of leading a group in song, quite literally meaning to *pull* along the music.

puxe v.—1. To lead a hymn. Often conceptually conceived as *pushing* a hymn.  
Santo Daime n.—1. Name of the Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion which incorporates elements of folk Catholicism, afro-Brazilian traditions, and Amerindian use of the entheogen called ayahuasca. 2. Name given to the visionary drink ayahuasca by the prayer cult of the same name.

Santo Daime n.—1 A Brazilian Ayahuasca Religion associated with syncretic elements of folk Catholicism, Amazonian *caboclo* culture, and the ingestion of the entheogen ayahuasca. 2. Name given to the entheogen ayahuasca used by members of the religious movement of the same name

seringueiro n.—1. A Brazilian rubber-tapper

seringal n.—1. The rubber-tapping region of the Amazon populated with the rubber tree (*hevea brasiliensis*).

work n.—1. Any unspecified ritual of the Santo Daime

zelador(a) n.—1. The guardian or custodian of the oral tradition of an *hinário*. Said of the person who has the social role and responsibility for remembering the words and music of an *hinário*.

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