

## Manifesto of the Cultural Diversity of Ayahuasca (\*)

In contemporary Brazil we are the witnesses and agents of the diffusion of religious movements that have in common the centrality of the use in their ritual systems of the drink of Amazonian origin, ayahuasca. What we can call the field of ayahuasca overflowed from the Amazonian forest during the twentieth century, from its primordial origins implanting itself in the great centers of practically all the Brazilian states. We can nowadays count tens of thousands of ayahuasqueiros, composing the most diverse sources. The meeting of this Amazonian expression of Brazilian religiosity with the urban world of other regions has found resonance in expressive layer of adepts, creating fascinating gradients of fusion and resignification. These are the most diverse symbolic manifestations that, beyond their immediate cataloguing, express the Brazilian religious and cultural ethos, which has its cradle in roots descended from Africans, Orientals, Europeans, and, most outstandingly amongst all the central shadings that compose the ayahuasca field, the indigenous and mestizo (*caboclo*) contributions. On the other hand, the growth of its presence in countries of all continents has also represented a focus on valuing Brazilian cultural expressions. This happens in a moment when the image of Brazil is affirmed in the context of the important transformations that occur at the global level.

The first Meeting of the Cultural Diversity of Ayahuasca is the expression of the wealth of this movement, whose very breadth legitimizes the voices of a relevant segment of Brazilians. Through the initiative of practitioners and non-practitioners, representatives of diverse ayahuasca lines have come together with agents of the Brazilian State, public servants, and specialists in religion and culture and cultural heritage. It is emphasized that we at this meeting compose only one part of the totality that can be called the ayahuasca movement. Some important segments are not represented -- composed, for example, of the traditional churches of the Alto Santo headquartered in Acre, from where considerable part of this diffusion originates. This, our first step, presents a path of growing dialogue among all the communities. With representatives from diverse and numerous ayahuasqueiros and from the ample spectrum of groups involved, including researchers, jurists, academics, among others, we congregate to express and to debate the nature of the diversity of this genuinely Brazilian manifestation and to affirm this right of religious expression.

As such, looking ahead at the originality of cultural expression, we cannot do without affirmative actions, such as those the Ministry of Culture has developed with institutions and partners. For we understand the importance of actions that give visibility to the manifestations that originate in this reality, which more and more enters in contact with the deep diversity that thrives in our environment, and that results in rich elaboration in the fields of audiovisual arts, music, dance and the most varied artistic manifestations. Here, the affirmation of diversity establishes our shared commitment to a harmonious and plural society. With this intention, we want to show our willingness to participate and contribute with the process of registering ayahuasca/daime with IPHAN as immaterial cultural heritage in such a

way that this institution understands the importance of our participation. Equally, we inform our intention to make accessible our collections, documents, registries, and information about each of the expressions of the ayahuasqueiro universe and the communities that represent for us of the most diverse lineages and segments. The depth of the ayahuasca phenomenon, which has been distinguished in the academic field, still needs to be inventoried (by the IPHAN, the Brazilian National Historical and Artistic Heritage Institute), and recognized in its real dimension. We are sure that we reach important segments of the urban and rural social fabric that form opinions and export values. We believe that to defend the diversity that characterizes the “ayahuasca universe” is to defend the wealth of our religious and cultural expressions of tolerance that characterizes this period of democratic freedoms and culture of Peace.

### **Movement for the Cultural Diversity of Ayahuasca and the registry of Daime/Ayahuasca/Vegetal as Brazilian immaterial cultural heritage with IPHAN**

**Rio de Janeiro, 10 of October of 2011**

Place: Sitio das Pedras – Jacarepaguá - Rio de Janeiro /RJ

### **Groups, lineages, churches and ethnicities that participated in the I Meeting on the Cultural Diversity of Ayahuasca**

Luiz Mendes do Nascimento – Centro Eclético da Flor do Lótus Iluminado (CEFLI), Santo Daime, Acre

Alex Polari de Alverga – Igreja do Culto Eclético da Fluente Luz Universal Patrono Sebastião Mota de Melo (ICEFLU)/ Santo Daime, Amazonas

Daniel Arcelino Serra (*in memorian*) – Centro de Iluminação Cristã Estrela Brilhante/ Santo Daime, Maranhão

Gê Marques (Antonio Marques Alves Junior) - Reino do Sol/ Santo Daime e Umbanda, São Paulo

Ana Vitória Vieira Monteiro - Porta do Sol - Centro de Estudos Xamânicos de Expansão da Consciência, São Paulo

Prem Baba (Janderson Fernandes de Oliveira) - Caminho do Coração/ Linha do Oriente, São Paulo

Chandra Lacombe (Marcos Barroso Lacombe) - Linha Unificada/ Linha do Oriente, São Paulo

Philippe Bandeira de Mello - Arca da Montanha Azul, Rio de Janeiro

Paulo Roberto Souza e Silva – Céu do Mar/ Santo Daime, Rio de Janeiro

Nilton Caparelli – Jardim Praia da Beira Mar/ Santo Daime, Rio de Janeiro

Haru Kuntanawa, Acre

Paulo Luis Yawanawa, Acre

Ibã Huni Kuin, Acre

Xiti Nukini, Acre

(\* ) Translated by Gayle from the original in Portuguese, available here:

[http://www.bialabate.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/Manifesto\\_Diversidade\\_Cultural\\_Ayahuasqueira\\_RJ\\_2011.pdf](http://www.bialabate.net/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/Manifesto_Diversidade_Cultural_Ayahuasqueira_RJ_2011.pdf)