

Table of Contents: Selected Papers on Science and Religion in Brazil

David J. Hess

These are all final drafts prior to typesetting.

- Page 2. 1987. "Religion, Heterodox Science, and Brazilian Culture." *Social Studies of Science* 17: 465-77.
- Page 9. 1989 "Disobsessing Disobsession: Religion, Ritual, and Social Science in Brazil." *Cultural Anthropology* 4(2): 182-193. This paper argued that positions among social scientists about Spiritism, Umbanda, and their relations had homologies with positions in the religious field.
- Page 19. 1990 "Ghosts and Domestic Politics in Brazil: Some Parallels between Spirit Infestation and Spirit Possession." *Ethos: Journal of the Society for Psychological Anthropology* 18(4): 407-38. This was the first paper to link "poltergeists" and related forms of "spirit attack" to domestic violence.
- Page 40. 1991. *Spirits and Scientists: Ideology, Spiritism, and Brazilian Culture*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press. Introduction.
- Page 49. 1991 "On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Reading Spiritist Otherworldly Ethnographies." In Roberto Reis (ed.), *Toward Socio-Criticism: Selected Proceedings of the Conference "Luso-Brazilian Literatures, A Socio-Critical Approach."* Arizona State University at Tempe, Center for Latin American Studies. This paper showed how Spiritist and American descriptions of the spirit world showed important cultural differences related to this-worldly Brazil and the U.S.
- Page 57. 1992 "Umbanda and Quimbanda Magic in Brazil: Rethinking Aspects of Bastide's Work." *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions*. 79: 139-53. A structuralist analysis of Umbanda and Quimbanda rituals with the theoretical argument that Bastide over-estimated "religious degredation" of African religion in his studies of Umbanda.
- Page 74. 1992 "New Sciences, New Gods: Spiritism and Questions of Religious Pluralism in Latin America." *Occasional Papers of the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, "Conference on Competing Gods: Religious Pluralism in Latin America."* Brown University. A paper that questioned the current view of some scholars that Latin American was becoming Protestant by discussing the continued vitality of spirit mediumship religions.
- Page 84. 1995 "Hierarchy, Hegemony, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies" *The Brazilian Puzzle: Culture on the Borderlands of the Western World*. Ed by. David J. Hess and Roberto DaMatta. Columbia University Press. Theoretically, an attempt to bridge hierarchy and hegemony (culturalist and social structural approaches) in the study of the religious system in Brazil.
- Page 104. 2000 "Medical Integration and Questions of Universalism." In Laura Graziela Gomes, ed. *Twentieth Anniversary Commemoration of Carnavais, Malandros, e Heróis*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Fundação Getúlio Vargas. This paper connects my work on Spiritism and religious therapies with the second project on complementary and alternative medicine.

1987. "Religion, Heterodox Science, and Brazilian Culture." *Social Studies of Science* 17: 465-77.

This was my first article publication, and I acknowledge the patient work of the editor David Edge, who was known for helping junior authors with their first publications.

Previous social studies of parapsychology have focused on the academic, secular parapsychology of North America and Western Europe; this paper brings a comparative perspective to this area of research by examining parapsychology in Brazil.¹ The principal argument of this paper is that parapsychology is significantly different in Brazil: it is characterized by the relative absence of the academic, secular parapsychology that is dominant in North America and Western Europe, and instead it is dominated by the rival schools of the Catholic Church and the Spiritist movement. One might argue that the religious parapsychology of Brazil should be compared with popular versions of parapsychology in North America or Western Europe, but this would miss the following points: first, there is no community of academic, secular parapsychology in Brazil like that of the northern hemisphere; second, Spiritist and Catholic parapsychologies represent, replace and reinterpret the academic, secular parapsychology of the northern hemisphere; and third, Spiritist and Catholic parapsychologies are considerably better organized and more sophisticated than the popular parapsychologies and occultist groups of the northern hemisphere. In short, the heterodox science of parapsychology (and probably other heterodox science, especially ufology) has developed differently in Brazil, with the result that social studies of heterodox science can benefit from consideration of the specific features of the Brazilian case.

Methodology and Background

This study is divided into two parts: a survey of Brazilian parapsychology and how it differs from that of North America and Western Europe; and an examination of the social, historical, and cultural factors behind these differences. The research is based on two field trips to Brazil, the first during the summer of 1983, and the second from September 1984 to March 1986. The results of this study are part of a doctoral dissertation project on the intellectual production of the Spiritist movement in Brazil.² Research methods involved extensive library research in all of the major Spiritist, government, and university libraries in São Paulo, Curitiba and Brasília; observation of sessions at representative Spiritist centers in several cities; attendance and participation in meetings and conferences of Spiritist intellectuals (especially those of the Spiritist Medical Association of São Paulo); teaching (participant-observation) at the Spiritist college in Curitiba; and interviews and informal conversations with both Spiritist intellectuals and other, non-Spiritist intellectuals, such as Catholic parapsychologists and intellectuals.

The term "Spiritism" will be used here to refer to the religious movement that adheres to the ideas of Allan Kardec, a nineteenth-century French pedagogue who developed a doctrine about spirit mediumship and spirit communication. Although the Spiritist movement is international in scope, it is strongest in Latin America and especially in Brazil. Spiritists believe that their doctrine provides a synthesis of science, philosophy, and Christian morality; their central beliefs are the ability of mediums to communicate with spirits of the dead, the existence of an astral body and vital fluids, and reincarnation. Spiritism is therefore a sibling of Anglo-Saxon Spiritualism; however, Spiritists tend to be more vociferous defenders of reincarnation, and in addition there is

an important group of Spiritist intellectuals who study and write about parapsychology, for which there is no exact parallel in the Spiritualist movements.

The largely white, middle-class Spiritist movement mediates between two strong religious traditions in Brazil: Christianity, which is dominated by Catholicism but has a rapidly growing Protestant sector, and the Afro-Brazilian religions (for example, Candomblé and Umbanda) which, like Spiritism, are spirit mediumship religions. Although about 90 percent of the Brazilian population is nominally Catholic, most Brazilians are also firm believers in the powers of spirits and mediums, and many Catholics do not hesitate to attend Spiritist, Candomblé or Umbanda sessions. This is true even for highly educated, white Brazilians. Spirits and mediums are not just the province of the lower classes; instead, they form an integral part of Brazilian culture and national identity.

Brazilian Parapsychology

The most salient feature of Brazilian parapsychology is the relative absence of a secular, academic community of researchers of the type associated with the Parapsychological Association, which is the principal organization of scientific parapsychologists from Western Europe, the United States, and a few other countries. Its members present papers at annual meetings and publish articles in refereed journals, and they have a strong bias in favor of rigorous laboratory studies with quantitative analysis. No association of this type exists in Brazil, and no journal is published. With the exception of one doctoral dissertation and a pair of articles on the psychoanalysis of telepathic dreams, the secular university environment has fostered no empirical research, either of the quantitative or "spontaneous case" genre, which is comparable to that of the Parapsychological Association.³ In my review of all of the major Brazilian psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis journals of the 1960s and 1970s, I found only a few articles that provided cursory reviews of northern hemisphere parapsychology, and two of the authors of this group of articles were a Catholic parapsychologist and a Spiritist psychiatrist.⁴ Although orthodox scientists and doctors probably regard parapsychology as slightly less heterodox in Brazil than in Western Europe and North America, parapsychology is still a heterodox science in Brazil. As psychiatry professor Darcy de Mendonça Uchôa summarized, "The Brazilian university environment has shown itself to be adverse to this material."⁵

The only other important case of secular parapsychology is the work of Dr. Osmard Andrade Faria.⁶ Faria is a somewhat anomalous figure because he is neither a Catholic nor a Spiritist; instead, he had a background in journalism and view himself as a kind of debunker. In his first book *Hipnose e letargia (Hypnosis and Lethargy)*, Faria debunked the Catholic therapist Irmão Vitricio, but he has not spared Spiritists either, and in the first edition of his widely read and translated textbook *Manual de hipnose médica e odontológica (Manual of Medical and Dental Hypnosis)*, he argued that the phenomena of spirit mediumship were fundamentally hypnotic, which caused an outcry in the Spiritist press.⁷ His position as a debunker therefore parallels that of the "vigilantes" or skeptics as discussed by Collins and Pinch, although Faria still believes that the phenomena studied by parapsychology are anomalous, and he looks for materialistic explanations of the type found in Soviet psychotronics.⁸

One might argue that the Brazilian Association of Parapsychology (ABRAP) of Rio de Janeiro represents an institutional setting for secular parapsychology. However, the founder and first president is a Spiritist, and although the current president does not call himself a Spiritist, the organization retains friendly informal ties with the Spiritist movement, and it reports having suffered a hostile attitude from representatives of the

Catholic Church. Furthermore, informal conversations with ABRAP members revealed that several (but not all) accepted basic Spiritist ideas, such as the reality of spirit intervention through healers and mediums. Thus, even an organization that might appear secular—especially to visiting scholars who do not speak Portuguese fluently—has a Spiritist “tilt.”

The main locus of production of Spiritist parapsychology is a series of institutes of “psychobiophysics,” of which the two most important are the Brazilian Institute of Psychobiophysics in São Paulo and the National Institute of Psychobiophysics in Curitiba. “Psychobiophysics” is the term coined by Hernani Guimarães Andrade for his holistic and Spiritist interpretation of parapsychology.⁹ One of the leading Spiritist intellectuals and the founder of the Brazilian Institute of Psychobiophysics, Andrade had gained some recognition among parapsychologists in the northern hemisphere for his detailed case studies of mediums, poltergeists, and anomalous childhood memories of past lives, and he is also known as the first person in the West to have used Kirlian photography.¹⁰ However, these research interests are influenced by Spiritist principles such as spirit intervention (in the case studies of mediums and poltergeists), reincarnation (in the case studies of anomalous childhood memories), and the “perispirit” or astral body (in the case of Kirlian photography).¹¹ In addition, Andrade has produced several theoretical studies that attempt to put all paranormal phenomena into a complicated framework that is rooted in Spiritist doctrine.¹²

The National Institute of Psychobiophysics is part of the Spiritist college in Curitiba, where there is a program of parapsychology that follows the psychobiophysics orientation of Andrade. Although this program has several research projects in the planning stage, they have as yet not completed and published any parapsychological research.

The third main center of Spiritist parapsychology is the Spiritist Medical Association of São Paulo (AMESP), which united medical doctors, psychologists, and other professionals who are either Spiritists or persons interested in similar topics. This group helped organize the First International Conference on Alternative Therapies (in São Paulo), and it has also initiated a journal called the Spiritist-Medical Bulletin. Members associated with this group have produced some studies of what they view as spiritual or paranormal medicine. They have also been vociferous critics of the Spiritist psychic surgeon Edson Queiroz, himself a medical doctor, who has attracted a widespread following among the popular elements of the Spiritist movement. Instead of supporting psychic surgery, the members of AMESP tend to support alternative psychotherapies, such of which—such as past-lives therapies—they have pioneered in Brazil.

On the Catholic side, the leading parapsychological institution was the Latin American Center (in São Paulo), led by Jesuit Padre Oscar Gonzalez Quevedo. In addition to doing research and education, the center maintained a clinic and public the *Revista de parapsicologia*. However, Quevedo has recently encountered criticism from the Church hierarchy for his view that diabolic possession is always a psychological or parapsychological process, and he is currently prohibited from giving lectures or speaking with members of the public.¹³

Nevertheless, he has educated a generation of priests and laity in Brazil and throughout Latin America, and his ideas (except for those on demonic possession) are highly influential within the Catholic Church. When I spoke with Quevedo’s superior after his censorship, he informed me that the Church will continue disseminating Quevedo’s line of parapsychology, presumably with a more orthodox interpretation of diabolic intervention.

In addition to Quevedo, two other intellectuals have contributed to defining the Catholic interpretation of parapsychology in Brazil. The Franciscan Bishop in Bahia, Boaventura Kloppenburg, has published several books of pastoral orientation that discuss parapsychology. Although Kloppenburg was less involved in these issues after Vatican II, when he lived outside Brazil, he is now preparing a new edition of his book about (against) Spiritism, and his ideas are likely to become more influential in the future.¹⁴ In addition to Kloppenburg, Frei Albino Aresi runs a series of clinics in which he practices therapies of a “spiritual” natural. His assistants also give lecture courses on parapsychology and semi-occult topics, and although Aresi has divorced himself somewhat from Catholic parapsychology and has become a popularizer, he still maintains a broadly Catholic orientation.

In addition to Catholic and Spiritist parapsychology, there is a wide variety of occultist and spiritual groups that occasionally use the name “parapsychology” and some of the ideas associated with the field. A list of some of the more “alternative” or occultist topics that occurred at a conference on parapsychology and natural medicine in Brasília (held in June 1985) gives a flavor of the popular parapsychologies and occultist groups and their ideas: self-development through oriental arts, mediumistic painting, Amazonian plants with paranormal effects, iridology, pyramid therapy, acupuncture, yoga, Kirlian photography, paranormal music, interstellar biocommunication, astrological alchemy, radiesthesia, ufology, the power of the mind, interplanetary hierarchies, cosmobiology, and the relationship between ufology and the *orixás* (the African deities of Candomblé). Both Catholic and Spiritist parapsychologists look down on these popular groups and idea, and in what appeared to be a reply to this popular conference, AMESP Spiritists organized a more academic conference and Parapsychology, Medicine, and Spiritism in October of the same year.

Most Brazilians who have heard of parapsychology associate the term with Catholic parapsychology. Although no statistics are available on the topic, my impression (based on numerous conversations over an eighteen-month period) is that awareness of parapsychology among the middle classes is greater than in the United States, and many Brazilians have attended or know someone who attended one of the huge public lecture courses held by Quevedo, Aresi, or one of their protégés. In these courses, they learn an interpretation of parapsychology that leaves miracles and other Catholic dogmas in the domain of the theologian, but assigns mediumship, poltergeists, reincarnation, spiritual healing, and other practices and beliefs of Spiritism, Umbanda, and Candomblé to the realm of parapsychology. The parapsychological interpretations of these phenomena follows those of the school of J.B. Rhine, who advanced what has become known as the “super-psi” theory, in which any ostensible paranormal phenomena are assigned to the faculties of the living rather than to the intervention of spirits. However, Catholic parapsychology is not purely Rhinean; it also tends to borrow from the *métapsychique* school of Charles Richet, which differs from the Rhinean school on some of the points but agrees with it in not accepting a spiritistic interpretation of ostensibly paranormal phenomena. Because Catholic parapsychology is used to criticize spirit-related ideas, Catholic parapsychologists tend to apply Rhinean skepticism without his laboratory-based quantitative methodology. Instead, the approach tends to center on case studies, as in the older schools of *métapsychique* and psychical research.

Spiritist parapsychologists have not engaged in the large public lecture courses that are typical of Catholic parapsychology education; instead, one finds their ideas disseminated among elites via conferences that the Spiritist intellectuals hold. Among lay-persons, dissemination occurs through Spiritist bookstores and in some cases Spiritist centers. Although the centers tend to be evangelical in orientation, sometimes they sponsor groups that study the parapsychological texts produced by Spiritist

intellectuals. The orientation of these texts is generally closer to the older paradigm of British psychical research, which emphasized case studies rather than laboratory research and the question of survival rather than that of the processes of extra-sensory perception and psychokinesis.

Thus, divisions of theoretical orientation (psychical research/Rhinean parapsychology) which appear as theoretical disputes or rival paradigms within the Parapsychological Association of the northern hemisphere appear in Brazil as differences between two rival religious parapsychologies. Furthermore, because both Spiritist and Catholic parapsychologists are more interested in studying the philosophical or religious implications of parapsychology than the psychological mechanisms of ostensible paranormal phenomena, they both tend to adopt the case study method of *métapsychique* and psychical research rather than the laboratory method of Rhinean parapsychology. The polarized structure of Brazilian parapsychology tends to reproduce itself so that any new actor or discourse tends to become interpreted as either crypto-Catholic or crypto-Spiritist (or, as in the case of Faria, as a “materialist” or “positivist”). As a result, the absence of a secular, academic community tends to be self-fulfilling, and even an organization such as ABRAP, which is nominally secular and non-aligned, is drawn towards one side through a series of personal networks, personal convictions, and perceptions of these factors. But this does not explain why this peculiar structure of parapsychology exists in Brazil, and it does not account for its durability.

Explanatory Models

One type of explanatory model involves the concepts of boundary work, strains, and interests.¹⁵ In the northern hemisphere the labeling of parapsychology as a heterodox science allows mainstream scientists constitute their knowledge as orthodoxy.¹⁶ In Brazil, one way that the boundary between Catholicism and Spiritism is articulated is through the Catholic and Spiritist parapsychologists’ labelling of each other’s knowledge a pseudo-parapsychology (and this term has emerged in Spiritist/Catholic polemics). Both Catholics and Spiritists can legitimately call themselves parapsychologists because their own parapsychologies are drawn from the different theories and schools of North American and European parapsychology; in turn, the alternative Catholic/Spiritist parapsychologist not only mark religious boundaries but serve religious interests by clothing religious values in the mantle of scientific legitimacy.¹⁷

This general framework allows one to clarify the peculiar structure of parapsychology in Brazil, but it does not explain why this structure exists in the first place or why it seems so well adapted to Brazil. Such a level of explanation requires reference to the specifics of Brazilian history and culture. To enable a discussion of these specifics, one must first examine the three periods during which Spiritist were most actively interested in, and involved in promulgating, psychical research.

Spiritism emerged in Brazil by the 1870s, and it soon transformed the intellectual and philosophical doctrine of Kardec into a more evangelical and healing-oriented practice.¹⁸ The majority of Spiritists did not become interested in psychical research until the early 1890s—that is, during the first years of the Old Republic. The new penal code of the Old Republic included an article that banned *espiritismo* (Spiritism and other spirit mediumship religions), which Spiritists attributed to the influence of positivism that surrounded the birth of the Old Republic. In response, Spiritists at first attempted to change the law, but when this strategy failed, they began to redefine their movement as a scientific endeavor.¹⁹ During this period the Brazilian Spiritist Federation redefined its orientation as psychical research; likewise, in 1893, another leading Spiritist organization, the Spiritist Fraternity Society, renamed itself the Psychological Fraternity

Society.²⁰ By 1895, the climate of persecution surrounding *espiritismo* had already subsided, and most Spiritists began to return to a more evangelical orientation.

The second period of interest in psychical research was during the Vargas years (1930-1945). During this period, the Catholic press, *Vozes*, issues a number of publications against Spiritism, some of them using psychical research to debunk Spiritist beliefs. Further, the Vargas government, which was closely aligned with the Catholic Church, close down many Spiritist centers and temples of Umbanda and Candomblé.²¹ A 1934 law required Spiritists and other spirit mediumship religions to register with the police, and in Rio this mean the police division that handled alcohol, drugs, illegal gambling, and prostitution.²² Again, as part of their strategy of defense, Spiritists proclaimed their endeavor scientific in nature and translated several European psychical research texts that provided research and conclusions favorable to the spiritistic interpretation of mediumship and other Spiritist principles.

The third period of growth in Spiritist parapsychology has been largely a continuation of the structure of the Vargas years, but without the factor of explicit state intervention. IN 1953, the National Council of Bishops declared Spiritism (the term including in this case Umbanda) the most dangerous doctrinal deviation in Brazil.²³ It followed with a public education campaign, of which the books by Boaventura Kloppenburg and Alvaro Negromonte are perhaps the best known. This led to rebuttals from leading Spiritist intellectual such as Carlos Imbassahy and Deolindo Amorim, and a war of books and words between Spiritist and Catholic intellectuals ensued. Both side drew extensively and selectively on the different schools and traditions of parapsychology in the northern hemisphere. In the 1960s, these explicit polemics became somewhat more subdued in the parapsychology texts of Quevedo and Andrade, which tend to have a more didactic and expository orientation, and during the last twenty years the religious quarrel has become routinized as a structure of parallel schools of parapsychology.

Thus the underlying pattern of these three periods is that a religious movement with a rank-and-file oriented towards healing and evangelism has, under the leadership of the intellectuals, develop an interest in parapsychology largely in response to perceived or real external threats. During the 1890s, the threat came from the positivist milieu surrounding the birth of the Old Republic, but in this century the principal source has been the Catholic Church. For the Catholic Church, the term "Spiritism" generally includes Umbanda and frequently also includes Candomblé; thus, differences that are fundamental to Spiritists within the field of spirit mediumship religions are not as important to Catholic intellectuals. For them, the entire field of spirit mediumship religions represents not only an important heresy but a very real threat to Church authority, given that many lay Catholics believe and participate in both the Catholic Church and either Umbanda or Candomblé.

Spiritist parapsychologists therefore only represent the tip of the iceberg of the spirit mediumship field. This small but vocal minority does not pose a serious threat to the Catholic Church in and of itself, but it does pose a more general threat because it provides a scientific legitimation of popular beliefs in spirits, spirit mediums, spiritual healing, and other key elements shared by the entire field of spirit mediumship religions. Thus, Spiritist parapsychology has the paradoxical consequence of legitimizing several key beliefs of Umbanda and Candomblé, even while Spiritist parapsychologists generally see themselves as distinguishing Spiritism from these other, more popular religions.

The dual structure of Brazilian parapsychology is therefore rooted in the dual, Afro-Catholic structure of the Brazilian religious system. But if Spiritist parapsychologists legitimate with scientific studies and theories the widespread popular belief in spirits and spirit mediums, what makes spirits and spirit mediums such an integral part of Brazilian

culture? Some recent anthropological studies suggest that the discourse of spirits and spirit mediums is an expression of Brazilian values of personalism, patronage, and hierarchy.²⁴ Brazilians tend to rely heavily on personal relationships and patronage networks to accomplish their goals rather than on institutional, bureaucratic, and legal procedures. Spirits, like the saints of popular Catholicism, serve as patrons who provide personal linkages with the other world. Even in the Romanized or official segment of the Catholic Church, the same structure plays itself out through the hierarchical structure of the church and the intermediary role of the priest. In fact, as anthropologist Roberto DaMatta has argued (as Parsons before him), the traditional or particularistic values of personalism and hierarchy tend to encompass the modern or universalistic values of individualism and equality wherever they appear in Brazil, even in apparently “modern” institutions such as the secular state.²⁵

It is therefore questionable that one can reduce the dual structure of parapsychology in Brazil to an evolutionary scheme that makes of it a temporary phenomena related to questions of development and underdevelopment. Critics who adopt this perspective might argue that as the university system in Brazil expands, a secular, academic parapsychology will emerge that will displace the rival schools of Catholic and Spiritist parapsychology. However, this prognosis would have to explain why the already large university system in Brazil (and one that includes a federal university system, several state university systems, and private universities) has not yet nurtured a secular parapsychology, and also why those university professors who are interested in parapsychology tend to lean towards either a Spiritist or Catholic perspective. Instead, universalistic concerns of a secular, academic parapsychology, such as an allegiance to some broadly conceived standard of methodology, tend to become encompassed by the particularistic loyalties to either a Catholic or Spiritist orientation. Thus, it is equally likely that the structure of Brazilian parapsychology will continue to encompass and polarize emerged neutral voices.²⁶ Either prognosis is possible, and to attempt to decide between them only mean engaging in social science scrying.

Of more general interest than the possible outcome of the historical development of Brazilian parapsychology is the issue that the Brazilian case raises regarding the general process of encompassment of universalistic values by particularistic values. This conflict of values is probably part of the general cultural context of all science—both heterodox and orthodox—in Brazil. The question of whether or not a similar cultural context exists throughout Latin America and in non-Western countries awaits further research.

Acknowledgements. Research was funded by a Fulbright-Hayes Fellowship and an SSRC grant. I wish to thank Carlos Alvarado, James Boon, Patric Giesler, Thomas Holloway, and David Holmberg for their comments on an earlier version of the study, and numerous Spiritsits and anthropologist Roberto DaMatta for their help and cooperation in Brazil.

References

There are 26 footnotes. Please consult the original publication for the full notes and bibliography.

Disobsessing Disobsession: Religion, Ritual, and the Social Sciences in Brazil

Citation: Hess, David J. 1989 "Disobsessing Disobsession: Religion, Ritual, and Social Science in Brazil." *Cultural Anthropology* 4(2): 182-193.

This is a final version of the paper prior to publication. It is written in the "reflexive" mode of ethnography that was fashionable at the time.

1. A word while waiting outside

If it has become commonplace in some corners of anthropology to read rituals as texts, the inverse of this proposition, that anthropological texts are rituals of a sort, is perhaps less obvious and less well explored. To treat texts as rituals and rituals as texts is to collapse both categories under a broader realm of symbolic action and to explore how the structures of the anthropologist's text repeat those of the interpreted ritual. As a result, this kind of ethnographic writing and reading involves rethinking the hierarchy of observer and observed by looking for points where the discourse of the other affects one's own discourse.

This essay explores the relations between text and ritual, observing discourse and observed discourse, by articulating Geertz's position (1973: 448ff.) that culture and ritual can be interpreted as texts with Jonathon Culler's argument that "critical disputes about a text [read "ritual," "religious system"] can frequently be identified as a displaced reenactment of conflicts dramatized in the text [ritual, religious system]" (1982: 215). The case study adopted for analysis here involves "desobsessão" (disobsession), a type of exorcism ritual found among the Spiritists of Brazil, and the various mappings of the Brazilian religious system.

This essay examines critical disputes among sociologists and anthropologists regarding the disobsession ritual and the position of Spiritism in the Brazilian religious system, and it traces these disputes back to conflicts dramatized both within the ritual and among the different actors in the religious system (see section four). Within the ritual, Spiritist mediums receive errant spirits which represent non-Spiritist social categories and discourses; for example, Spiritists frequently "disobsess" spirits that represent the Catholic or Afro-Brazilian religions. Likewise, followers of Spiritism, Catholicism, or the Afro-Brazilian religions all have implicit maps of the Brazilian religious system, and these conflicting maps play themselves out in the conflicting interpretations of sociologists and anthropologists.

2. Preliminary preparations

I use the word "Spiritism" to mean the religious movement that adheres to the teachings of Allan Kardec, a nineteenth-century French pedagogue who developed a doctrine about spirit mediumship and the spirit world. Although the Spiritist movement is international in scope, it is strongest in Latin America and especially in Brazil (see Hess 1987a, 1988). Spiritists believe that their doctrine is a synthesis of science, philosophy, and Christian morality; their central beliefs are that mediums can communicate with spirits of the dead, that all human beings possess an astral body (called a "perispirit"), and that human beings pass through many reincarnations in a process of increasing spiritual purification. Spiritism is a sibling of Anglo-Saxon Spiritualism; however, the two movements differ on several features, of which the most frequently mentioned is Spiritualists' tendency not to make reincarnation one of its central tenants.

The largely white, middle-class Spiritist movement mediates between two strong religious traditions in Brazil: Christianity, which is dominated by Catholicism but has a

rapidly growing Protestant sector, and the Afro-Brazilian religions, of which the two most salient are Candomblé, a Yoruba religion brought to Brazil with the slaves, and Umbanda, a religion that emerged in Brazil during the twentieth century. Both Candomblé and Umbanda have spirit mediums, but their spirit pantheons differ. In Candomblé, mediums (called "mothers-of-the-saints") receive the Yoruba deities called orixás, and in Umbanda, the mediums receive Brazilian spirits of Indians, black slaves, and other social categories from popular culture.

In everyday language, the term "Spiritism" (espiritismo) may refer to any spirit mediumship belief and practice (including Candomblé, Umbanda, and Spiritism), only to Umbanda and Spiritism (as many Umbandists use the term), or only to Spiritism (as Spiritists use the term). These different definitions of the term mark different positions both within the religious system and the social sciences, a point which this essay will explore below in further detail.

Disobsession (desobsessão) might be defined as an important Spiritist "exorcism ritual." However, Spiritists reject both the word "exorcism," because they believe that demons are only misguided spirits of the dead, and the word "ritual," because to them the term connotes "primitiveness" and "superstition." Spiritists view themselves as much more enlightened than both of the two dominant religious traditions in Brazil, and furthermore they reject the orthodox science for its superstitious clinging to "materialistic" or "positivistic" philosophies. As a nineteenth-century doctrine, Spiritism situates other philosophies on a scale of unilineal cultural evolution that runs from "primitive superstition" through Christianity to materialist science to Spiritist doctrine.

Spirit obsession occurs when a person's impure thoughts attract errant spirits. At the minimum, spirit obsession can cause evil and impure urges, but at the other extreme it may cause illness and psychological disorders. (Spiritists also accept a category of possession, which they believe to be relatively rare.) The treatment for spirit obsession is complex. First, victims may go to a Spiritist center, where mediums drive out the evil forces and spirits by giving the victim spiritual passes, and the mediums also evangelize the errant spirits during the "disobsession session." However, these two solutions are just spiritual band-aids; Spiritists believe that the victim must study The Gospel According to Spiritism, that is, Kardec's interpretation of Christian morality. Only an inner change, which may involve conversion to Spiritist doctrine, can correct the root cause of the spirit obsession. Otherwise, the victim will attract more errant spirits and fall prey again to spirit obsession.

Despite Spiritists' denial that disobsession is the key to curing spirit obsession, anthropologists and sociologists have tended to focus on the disobsession session. During disobsession, a medium receives the obsessing spirit, while another member of the center, usually not in trance, "indoctrinates" the spirit. The spirit is usually lost and does not know that it is dead, but by the end of the indoctrination, it usually leaves in a much-enlightened state. The victim is a passive observer in some centers, but in other centers (often the more elite centers) the victim does not even attend the disobsession session, and instead s/he attends an evangelization session in another room.

This essay is not a study of the disobsession ritual itself; instead, it examines the interpretations of the ritual. This reading of readings assumes that these texts (like this one) are victims of "discursive obsessions." Just as spirits may obsess the thoughts of the living, so the discourses of religion (i.e., Catholicism, Candomblé, Umbanda, or Spiritism) may obsess those of sociology and anthropology. This reading will ask, "What are the discursive obsessions of these interpretations of disobsession?" In the process, this text itself becomes a kind of ritual of disobsession.

3. Interviewing the victims

I begin with three social science texts, all of them marked by date, profession, and location: the book *Kardecismo e Umbanda* (Kardecism and Umbanda), published in 1961 by the São Paulo sociologist, Cândido Procópio Ferreira de Camargo; "Le spiritisme au Brésil," published in 1967 by the French sociologist Roger Bastide, who is associated with the neo-Marxist São Paulo school of sociology and who is best known for his masterpiece, *The African Religions of Brazil*, for which his 1967 article serves as a postscript; and *O Mundo Invisível* (The Invisible World), published in 1983 by the Rio de Janeiro anthropologist Maria Laura Cavalcanti.

Each of these three texts provides a reading of the disobsession ritual, yet the three readings differ among themselves. To begin, São Paulo sociologist Camargo discusses disobsession as a therapy directed toward spiritual illnesses provoked by spirits and undeveloped mediumship (1961: 101). For Camargo, disobsession is one of four possible therapies in Umbanda and Spiritism; the others are releasing spells, developing one's mediumship, and achieving spiritual understanding (1961: 105). Camargo classifies Spiritist disobsession and Umbanda exorcism together.

The etiological importance of [spirit obsession] has already been stressed. The favored therapy in these cases consists of identifying the perturbing entity and freeing the victim of its influence. In Kardecism, the emphasis is on evangelizing and "enlightening" the entity, with the "spirits of light" assisting the task of persuasion (1961: 105).

Camargo therefore diagnoses disobsession as a practice that has psychotherapeutic effects for victims who are disturbed by spirits.

Although Roger Bastide continues to view disobsession through the prism of psychotherapy, he dissents slightly from Camargo's interpretation of disobsession. Instead of viewing the mediums as the providers of ethno-medicine and the victims as their patients, Bastide argues that disobsession is psychotherapeutic for the mediums themselves. He interprets Spiritist disobsession as a psychotherapy for the lower-middle class, which he describes as caught between the "veneer" of puritan morality and the lull of tropical sensuality. He argues that this conflict is displayed in the drama of the two major types of spirits who appear in disobsession meetings: the spirits of light, who correspond to the superego, and the errant or perturbing spirits, who correspond to the id. In the drama of disobsession, Spiritists and spirits of light work together to help the errant spirits mend their ways and evolve to a higher spiritual plane, and therefore the superego triumphs over the forces of the id. Bastide further argues that this drama plays out the psychological conflicts generated by a particular class situation. He writes,

Hence the Oedipal complex, where all the domestic conflicts are manifested, appears with an overwhelming monotony from one session to another, assuming the form of obsessing spirits....All these interior dramas demonstrate that the puritanism of the lower-middle class is but a superficial veneer, a symbolic expression of a certain social status, the exterior manifestation of a class behavior, but one which has not yet destroyed the polygamous tendencies of the Moslem, the castrating tendencies of the mother, or the incestuous dreams of childhood....We therefore find the mentality of the lower-middle class of Brazil attached to its puritanism as a defense, and all the more rigid as it is threatened by the sensual climate of the big tropical city or by the sexual liberty of the lower class, from which this lower-middle class is only with difficulty disengaging itself (1967: 15).

Like Camargo, Bastide argues that disobsession has a psychotherapeutic effect. This is because disobsession allows the mediums of the lower-middle class to discharge their sexual and aggressive fantasies, and at the same time the practice reinforces the class's puritan defense mechanisms that keep such fantasies in check.

Cavalcanti interprets disobsession not as a form of psychotherapy (either for the victim or for the medium) but instead as a display of basic values; her reading follows current interpretations of ritual as theater, text, or representation. Using Dumont's comparative sociology, Cavalcanti reads disobsession as an expression of Western values of individualism, free will, and equality, values to which Spiritists themselves consciously refer when discussing their own doctrine. Once Cavalcanti opens the Pandora's box of looking for the meaning of the ritual instead of its function, disobsession becomes enormously more complex than it appeared to Bastide or Camargo. Although it is true that Spiritists themselves will represent disobsession in terms of its therapeuticity, this is often a discourse that they reserve for non-Spiritists, and any attempt to understand the Spiritists' own interpretations of disobsession inevitably leads one into the world of multiple readings. In a sense, then, Cavalcanti's reading can, if opened up, encompass those of Bastide and Camargo by viewing therapeuticity as one aspect of the meaning of disobsession to Spiritists. But it does so on different terms, by examining the ritual in terms of social meaning instead of social function.

What is the meaning of the contrasting readings of disobsession? One is tempted to look at them through a prism of the oppositions of the historical context: São Paulo sociology of the 1960's versus Rio anthropology of the 1980's. The different interpretations appear to hinge on historically rooted methodologies: not only do these differences appear to be reflections of international fashion changes (functionalism/structuralism), but they also may reflect the transition from the early influence of psychiatric and forensic medicine in studies of spirit mediumship religions to the subsequent development of a vigorous and independent social science profession. But such an approach also disentangles a triangle of readings and makes of it a series of binary distinctions, a move that, according to anthropologist Roberto DaMatta (1982), represents a mistake that Anglo-Saxon anthropologists typically make when describing the Brazilian reality, which he insists is indivisibly triadic. So, let us try an alternative reading of the readings, this time by receiving some spirits of religious discourse that appear to be in the air.

4. A dialogue with three religious readings

The disobsession ritual dramatizes conflicts between Spiritists and errant spirits; the latter reflects categories and values outside the Spiritist movement. The errant spirit is often a victim of black magic, but sometimes it is a priest or an arrogant intellectual and less frequently a Protestant, sex maniac, gambler, etc. The dialogue with the spirit within the Spiritist center reproduces the dialogue that Spiritists have or would like to have with non-Spiritists outside the center. Thus the most private, inner part of Spiritism is also the point of dialogue with the outside; disobsession is a kind of dress-rehearsal for the theater of external discourse. But it is a dress rehearsal that portrays Spiritism as triumphant: Catholics discover that there is no hell, materialists are surprised to find that there is an afterlife, recalcitrant earthbound spirits learn Christian forgiveness and agree to study in celestial schools, and victims of black magic respond to spiritual shock treatments or offers to let the spirits of light ferry them away to spiritual hospitals. The disobsession session therefore gives voice to rival points of view in the religious system, but it does so in a way that lets Spiritism encompass these other discourses in an evolutionary scheme which poses Spiritist doctrine as the apex of human thought.

The alternative viewpoints dramatized within the disobsession ritual also provide a clue to some of the groups within the religious system with which Spiritists are in dialogue. This section will follow up the clues from the disobsession ritual and examine some disputes between Spiritists and other groups within the religious system. I begin with a leading Catholic critic of Spiritism, Boaventura Kloppenburg, a Franciscan who is

presently a bishop in Bahia. Kloppenburg has continued to irritate Spiritists by using the word "Spiritism" to include Umbanda. In his book *A Umbanda no Brasil* (Umbanda in Brazil), Kloppenburg devotes an entire chapter to the defense of "the Spiritist character of Umbanda" (1961: 60ff.). This chapter includes a rebuttal to a radio commentary of 1956, in which leading Spiritists criticized Kloppenburg's use of the term "Spiritism" as including Umbanda. In his rebuttal, Kloppenburg cites passages from the "codifier" of Spiritist doctrine, Allan Kardec, to defend the idea that Spiritism includes "all spiritualists who admit the practice of the evocation of spirits," which therefore includes both Umbandists and the North American Spiritualists, two groups from which Spiritists attempt to distinguish themselves (1961: 66). Kloppenburg continues to defend this position even today, as he stated to me in an interview in February, 1986.

In contrast to the conjunction of Spiritism and Umbanda that this Catholic intellectual proposes, Spiritists emphasize a disjunction. In the Introduction to Deolindo Amorim's *Africanismo e Espiritismo* (Africanism and Spiritism), Spiritist writer Lippman Tesch de Oliver makes this position clear.

When we speak of Spiritism, the reader should know that we refer to the scientific, philosophical, and moral codification of Allan Kardec--the only doctrine with the privilege of using this title--that the master propounded in a series of notable works, edited in France between 1857 and 1869, and not this conglomeration of witchcraft and fussy rituals, where one finds the fetishism of savages and the aberrations of bastardized mediumship; in short, the carnival of Umbanda...(Amorim 1949: 5-6).

To Oliver, Amorim, and Spiritists in general, Umbanda can be approached in terms of a continuum running between the African religions and Catholicism. In his study of Umbanda, Amorim argues that there are numerous similarities between Catholicism and Umbanda, including the use of altars, the belief in divinities and miracles, the use of "ritual," etc. (Amorim 1949: 46, 73-74). He argues that Spiritism, in contrast to Umbanda, is characterized by "an absence of rituals" and a "doctrinal base in natural laws" that "excludes miracles and the supernatural" (1949: 73-74). Just as Kloppenburg uses the term "Spiritism" to lump together both Umbanda and Spiritism as instances of the primitive and/or heretical, so Amorim's discussion of rituals, miracles, and the supernatural link Umbanda and Catholicism and distance them from the more scientific doctrine of Spiritism.

From the Afro-Brazilian perspective, Spiritism tends to get lumped together with the Catholic Church as religions of the white, middle class, as opposed to religions of the people. In an unusual moment of candor and polemic, one Candomblé diviner said to me that Spiritists think they are "know-it-alls" (donos de verdade). Bastide, who devoted the bulk of his research to the Afro-Brazilian religions, also noted that "the African priests are very set against Spiritism, more so than Catholicism" (1967: 11). In this case, Bastide probably used the word "Spiritism" to include Umbanda, and this usage accurately reflects the general feeling among the Candomblé adepts that their religion represents the "pure" African religion in contrast to Umbanda, which is relatively influenced by the white, middle class (see Brown, 1986; Negrão, 1979; and Ortiz, 1978). To summarize, from the Candomblé perspective, there is a conjunction between Catholicism and Spiritism on the grounds of their class and racial similarities, and Umbanda lies somewhere in an ambiguous middle ground between the white, middle class and the Candomblés of the people of color of the lower classes.

5. Tracing the obsessions

Carlos Rodrigues Brandão (1980) noted that in Brazil each religion tends to have a different map of the entire religious system, and the pattern of conjunctions and disjunctions discussed above confirms this finding. What perhaps is less obvious is that

each social scientist also appears to have a different map of the religious system and that these maps correspond not only to those of different religions but also to the different readings of the disobsession ritual.

In his book *Kardecism and Umbanda*--significantly not *Spiritism and Umbanda*--Camargo invented the term "mediumistic continuum" to refer to the mixture of Spiritist and Umbandist beliefs, spirits, and rituals as one goes from a pole of pure Spiritism to a pole of pure Umbanda. However, as a text, Camargo's book is itself structured around a disjunction, a division between his analysis of structure and function. Camargo argues that empirically there is a conjunction between Spiritism and Umbanda (which is why he uses the term "Spiritism" to refer to both and uses "Kardecism" in the sense that I am using Spiritism), but his first section, on structure, discusses Spiritism and Umbanda as ideal types and as a result brings out the disjunction between the two religious movements. Only in the second section of the book, which is devoted to functionalist analysis, does Camargo emphasize the conjunction of Spiritism and Umbanda. The functionalist methodology is therefore crucial to his map of the religious system that involves a conjunction between Spiritism and Umbanda.

Cavalcanti dissents with Camargo by arguing that the point of departure should be "the view of the groups about themselves" (1983: 15, 139). From this perspective, there is no continuum, because Spiritists--and note that she uses the term, even in the title of her book, in the restricted sense of not including Umbanda--emphasize their differences from Umbandists. She considers Camargo's formula to be "ethnocentric" (1983: 15) and concludes by emphasizing a disjunction between Spiritism and Umbanda. Again, this map of the religious system is related to a methodological position; the map is made possible by Cavalcanti's *verstehen* anthropology, which is opposed to the *erklären* method of Camargo's sociology.

What does Bastide's map look like? Like Cavalcanti, Bastide disputes Camargo's continuum, but he uses a different argument.

Camargo has clearly seen the opposition between Umbanda and Spiritism; he made them into two poles of an opposition. In a way, the idea of a continuum could appear to be correct, because one finds between Kardecism and Umbanda a whole series of transitions. However, in our opinion, the image is false, because this so-called continuum is composed of one true pole, Kardecism, and innumerable Umbanda tents that could not possibly make up an opposing pole. Without a doubt, Camargo proposes a second pole, that of pure African religion, such as the form that it takes in Bahia [Candomblé]....

We therefore have less a continuum than two concurrent groups, one well organized and the other in a welter of sects. And this concurrence--as well as the Kardecian seduction, which plays itself out in certain Umbanda sects and could be responsible for Camargo's illusion of a continuum--can be definitely explained by the struggle between two classes, the middle and the proletarian, that is hidden in Brazil under the cover of religious ideologies (1967: 11). Instead of a continuum between Umbanda and Spiritism, Bastide finds a "concurrence," which is to say a gap or even a confrontation. Between the lines, Bastide criticizes Camargo's map of the religious system as one that implicitly sides with white, bourgeois ideology, because it fails to recognize the importance of the pole of the poor and the people of color. But this does not make Camargo's reading a Spiritist reading; for Bastide, Spiritism is only a continuation of Catholic morality, in which "the virtues of charity, and not justice," triumph (1967: 14). Thus Bastide produces a map of the religious system that inscribes a conjunction between Spiritism and Catholicism, a disjunction between them and the Candomblés, and an ambiguous, mediating position

for Umbanda, but one leaning toward the experience of the urban workers of color (cf. Negrão, 1979, for a discussion and review).

Bastide therefore lines up a series of oppositions: the rich and the poor, the white and the black, the Catholic/Spiritist and the Candomblé. As with Camargo and Cavalcanti, his set of oppositions stems from a methodology, in this case a form of Marxism which he discusses explicitly in the Introduction to *The African Religions of Brazil*. Here he lumps together all of the previous studies of Afro-Brazilian religions--from Nina Rodrigues to Artur Ramos and even Melville Herskovits--under the rubric of "psychologism and ethnology" (1978: 19-22). In their place, he argues for a psychiatry and an ethnology that are embedded in sociology, meaning a sociology that takes race and class as the fundamental divisions, and not a "consular" sociology that applies European or North American categories to the Brazilian reality. This methodological opposition--psychologism and ethnology versus sociology--lines up with the other oppositions of race and class, and it implies that Camargo and Cavalcanti are more similar to each other than they are to Bastide.

The three social scientists therefore form both a triad of paired methodological oppositions and a triad of maps of the religious system. From Bastide's point of view, both Cavalcanti's *verstehen* perspective (ethnology?) and Camargo's functionalism (psychologism?) fail to situate the Brazilian religious system in terms of race and class oppositions. From Cavalcanti's point of view, both Camargo and Bastide fail to adopt "the view of the groups about themselves." And from Camargo's point of view, both Bastide and Cavalcanti have failed to identify the reality of the mediumistic continuum.

It is neither new nor surprising that three social scientists have different methodological stances, contrasting readings of the disobsession ritual, and variant maps of the religious system; that these differences correspond to the different religious perspectives described above is perhaps less common-sensical. Camargo's emphasis on the continuum between Spiritism and Umbanda, the commonalities of Spiritist disobsession and Umbanda exorcism, together with his definition of the term "Spiritism" to include Umbanda, is similar to the Catholic position, which emphasizes the conjunction between Spiritism and Umbanda. Likewise, Cavalcanti's emphasis on disjunction, her reading of disobsession in terms of Western values, together with her use of the term "Spiritist" to exclude Umbanda, parallels the Spiritist position. And Bastide's conjunction of Spiritism and Catholicism in opposition to Candomblé, together with his use of the term "Spiritism" to include Umbanda (and therefore to stress its difference from Candomblé), represents the Candomblé perspective on the religious system.

In other words, the debates among sociologists and anthropologists--their different uses of the word "Spiritism" and their different maps of the religious system--now appear less as products of methodological disputes within the field of the social sciences and more as readings that are overdetermined by, or obsessed by, disputes within the field of religious discourse. Of the three social scientists, Bastide is probably the most aware of this obsession, for at the end of the Introduction to *The African Religions of Brazil*, he writes the following:

I can therefore say at the threshold of this book: *Africanus sum*, inasmuch as I have been accepted by one of those religious sects, which regards me as a brother in the faith, having the same obligations and the same privileges as the other members of the same degree (1978: 28).

Could Cavalcanti have just as easily have said "*Spiritus sum*"? And Camargo "*Catholicus sum*"?_

The idea of discursive obsession becomes even more credible--and more Brazilian--when one considers the personal relationships among the writers considered

here. For example, Camargo, who was a professor of the Catholic University of São Paulo, also published a Spanish-language edition of his book *Kardecismo e Umbanda*, and the preface of this edition (but not the Portuguese-language edition) was written by Boaventura Kloppenburg. Furthermore, it was published by the International Federation of Catholic Institutes of Social and Socio-Religious Investigations, which the Portuguese edition acknowledges, but without the word "Catholic." Likewise, one of Cavalcanti's two field sites was the Institute for Brazilian Spiritist Culture, of which the President at the time of her research was Deolindo Amorim, whom she cites in her acknowledgements. These personal connections do not make Camargo and Cavalcanti into disciples of the Catholic and Spiritist intellectuals; one can easily find many divergences between the Camargo/Kloppenburg and Cavalcanti/Amorim texts. Such a simplistic view of discursive obsession is not necessary; it is enough to recognize that the differences among the social sciences positions are repeated, in Culler's phrase (again), "as a displaced reenactment of conflicts dramatized" among the religious positions (Culler 1982: 215). Methodological and definitional divergences within the social sciences have a slightly different meaning when they are placed in a comparative context that includes the discourse of the religious arena. But in addition to the elective affinities between the social scientific and religious perspectives (like those between humans and spirits), there appears to be a certain degree of permeability and interaction across these two fields of discourse.

It would not be difficult to find other perspectives on disobsession and the position of Spiritism in the religious system; far from disproving the concept of Camargo's mediumistic continuum, this session has merely discovered many others. Among the other perspectives is the Protestant viewpoint and readings inspired by comparison with the Protestant, North American culture. These readings focus on the Latin American values of personalism and hierarchy as seen in the relation between the mediums and the spirits of light, or between either of these and either the victim or the errant spirit (see DaMatta 1982, Greenfield 1987, and even some of my own writings, e.g., Hess 1987a, ch. 3). One might now discern that the work of discursive disobsession is far from over, but perhaps I should call this session to a close, before this text/ritual finds itself caught in dialogue with the spirit of yet another discourse.

This essay was first presented at the Cornell University Anthropology Department Colloquium during the spring of 1986 and also at the American Anthropological Association Conference of December, 1986. I would like to thank the participants of those sessions as well as James Boon, Patric Giesler, Roberto DaMatta, David Holmberg, and Thomas Holloway for their help and comments. This essay is based on doctoral field research done in Brazil from September, 1984, through March, 1986; the research was supported by Fulbright-Hayes and S.S.R.C. grants. As this essay was going to press, I was informed that Cândido Procópio Camargo died; this article is dedicated to his memory. It is perhaps worth noting that when I met with Camargo in July, 1983, shortly after Cavalcanti's book was published, he expressed his opinion that her book read like a Spiritist text, but he added that perhaps she would say much the same about his own work.

Note:

1. This disjunction between the social scientists' and Spiritists' emphases is related to the peculiar history of social studies of spirit mediumship religions in Brazil, which emerged out of a critique of the psychiatric and forensic medical studies of the first half

of this century. Many of the medical studies treated spirit mediumship religions as laboratories of insanity, and they focussed on the dramatic aspects of trance episodes (see Hess , 1987a, 1988). In criticizing the medical interpretations, social scientists inevitably maintained the emphasis on trance episodes.

References

Amorim, Deolindo

1949 *Africanismo e Espiritismo*. Rio: Gráfica Mundo Espírita.

Bastide, Roger

1978 *The African Religions of Brazil*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press (orig. 1960).

1967 *Le spiritisme au Brésil*. *Archives de Sociologie des Religions* 24:3-16.

Brandão, Carlos Rodrigues

1980 *Os Deuses do Povo*. São Paulo: Brasiliense.

Brown, Diana

1986 *Umbanda: Religions and Politics in Urban Brazil*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press.

Cavalcanti, Maria Laura

1983 *O Mundo Invisível: Cosmologia, Sistema Ritual, e Noção de Pessoa no Espiritismo*. Rio: Zahar.

Culler, Jonathan

1982 *On Deconstruction*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

DaMatta, Roberto

1982 *Dona Flor e seus dois Maridos: A Relational Novel*. *Social Science Information* 21.1: 19-46.

Geertz, Clifford

1973 *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Greenfield, Sidney

1987 *The Return of Dr. Fritz: Spiritist Healing and Patronage Networks in Urban, Industrial Brazil*. *Social Sciences and Medicine* 24(12): 1095-1108.

Hess, David

1987a *Spiritism and Science in Brazil: An Anthropological Interpretation of Religion and Ideology*. Ph.D. dissertation, Anthropology Department, Cornell University.

1987b *Religion, Heterodox Science, and Brazilian Culture*. *Social Studies of Science* 17: 465-77.

1988 *The Many Rooms of Brazilian Spiritism*. *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24(2): 15-34.

Kloppenbug, Boaventura

1961 A Umbanda no Brasil. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Negrão, Lísias

1979 A Umbanda com Expressão da Religiosidade Popular.
Religião e Sociedade 4: 171-191.

Ortiz, Renato

1978 A Morte Branca do Feiticeiro Negro. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Ghosts and Domestic Politics in Brazil:
Some Parallels Between Spirit Possession and Spirit Infestation

Citation: Hess, David J. 1990 "Ghosts and Domestic Politics in Brazil: Some Parallels between Spirit Infestation and Spirit Possession." *Ethos: Journal of the Society for Psychological Anthropology* 18(4): 407-38.

To date, the ethnological study of ghosts in Western societies has been dominated by folklorists (e.g., Davidson, Ellis, and Russell 1981; Jacob 1977; Jones 1983), most of whom have focused on recording ghost stories and the popular lore of techniques for laying ghosts rather than determining the extent to which ghostlore reflects lived experiences, social action, and practiced rituals.¹ This essay will argue that the theoretical frameworks which have been developed in anthropology for the study of non-ceremonial spirit possession will bring a new level of richness to the ethnological study of ghosts, and it will also argue that, at least in the Brazilian case, this important form of religious experience/popular illness shares several features in common with non-ceremonial spirit possession.

Although the word "ghosts" is more common, I have suggested elsewhere that the older term "spirit infestation" might be more appropriate because it encompasses a broader scope of beliefs and social action (Hess 1989a). "Spirit infestation" will be used here to describe both the belief that spirits or spiritual forces are upsetting the tranquility of a home or workplace and the social action that accompanies this belief. Spirit infestation does not itself include spirit possession, although both processes may occur simultaneously. Examples of spirit infestation include reports of recurrent apparitions and imitative noises typical of haunted houses, as well as reported physical disturbances (e.g., object movements and breakages, fires, raps and poundings), which are often described as the work of poltergeists ("noisy ghosts"). Although from the point of view of an outside scientific observer, reports of spirit infestation may have a variety of this-worldly explanations (e.g., pranks, dissociated behavior, imagination, hallucinations), from the point of the view of the afflicted they generally have a supernatural or paranormal cause: ghosts, demons and other non-human spirits, or the spiritual/psychic forces of the living.²

In order to explore the possible parallels between spirit infestation and non-ceremonial spirit possession, it is first necessary to specify the way the latter term is being used and which currents in the literature are relevant. The term "non-ceremonial spirit possession" will be understood here to mean episodes of apparently "spontaneous" or "uncontrolled" spirit possession, that is, cases outside of institutionalized "spirit mediumship" or "ceremonial spirit possession."³ In the past, the anthropological literature has approached non-ceremonial spirit possession either from a psychological viewpoint or a social-instrumentalist perspective. The former includes classifications of non-ceremonial spirit possession according to the DSM-III framework (e.g., Freed and Freed 1985: 205) or, more broadly, as "regression under the control of the environment" (Obeyesekere 1970), whereas the latter views this ailment as a device for persons of lower status, principally women, to accrue attention and material possessions (e.g., Lewis 1971, 1986).⁴

An alternative to these approaches emerged in Vincent Crapanzano's introduction to *Case Studies in Spirit Possession* (1977a), and several studies in this volume focused more on interpreting the meaning of the spirit possession episode to the persons involved rather than psychological or socio-instrumentalist questions. This newer, "interpretive" approach shows how spirit possession can help lead to a

redefinition of self (e.g., Boddy 1988; for multiple personality, Kenny 1986) or of the domestic unit (Crapanzano 1977b; Kessler 1977; Lambek 1980, 1981; Siegel 1978), and such an approach informs the interpretive framework of the present study.

This essay presents the results of three interviews, completed during a field trip to Brazil in June and July of 1988, with persons who were afflicted by spirit infestation. Although these interviews represent only a preliminary step in the study of spirit infestation, enough material was obtained to allow some discussion of the possible similarities between spirit infestation and spirit possession. Since reports by anthropologists on spirit infestation are almost non-existent--one exception is Wedenoja's report (1978) of a duppie case in Jamaica--it is hoped that the preliminary discussion provided here will stimulate further research and provide the beginnings of a theoretical framework for such research.

Two methodological caveats should be kept in mind. First, like Crapanzano's case study of spirit possession (1977b), the material presented here is biographical and based on the afflicted persons' memories of the events rather than on observation. Unless one has the good fortune, as did Wedenoja, to be doing fieldwork in a neighborhood where such a case takes place, this appears to be the only method for developing such case histories. Second, in writing up the much more limited, interview-based materials presented here, I have been influenced somewhat by the recent discussions of ethnographic experimentation (e.g., Clifford 1988). Hence, I attempt both to discuss, in a limited way appropriate to this type of article, my place in the stories and to give some room to the voices of the informants. Likewise, the recounting of the cases follows, in abbreviated and edited form, the order of the interviews and the order in which the informants presented the material in the interviews. Although this leads to a different format in the presentation of each case, it is hoped that the increased accuracy of such a method of presentation makes up for the lack of narrative consistency.

In all three cases, I have left the geographical location vague and used pseudonyms for the members of the afflicted families. In the first case, that of "Cristina," there was so much press coverage that it would not be hard to discover the real identity of the person, but the use of a pseudonym will make such identification possible only for a serious researcher. In all three cases, the persons interviewed gave me permission to report the results for scientific purposes.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

As part of the African diaspora, Brazil is characterized by a widespread belief in spirits, even among the middle classes of European descent. As a result, cases of spirit infestation are greeted with a degree of credibility that is often lacking in the United States: Brazilians tend to take spirit infestation seriously.

It is difficult to estimate the number of cases which occur each year in Brazil, but a Kardecian Spiritist intellectual, Hernani Guimarães Andrade, informed me that during the last couple of decades he has collected reports of over one hundred such cases, mainly journalistic accounts, and there are probably many more non-reported cases. A collection by a Jesuit priest (Friderichs 1980) includes over thirty cases culled from first-hand investigation and newspaper reports. Likewise, Wedenoja (1978: 411) estimates that in Jamaica, a much smaller country but like Brazil part of the African diaspora, there are probably about forty cases per year. Together, these sources suggest that spirit infestation is by no means a rare occurrence.

In Brazil, cases of spirit infestation often involve several sectors of the religious system, with their competing interpretations and remedies (see Hess 1987a, 1987b). As a first (but only rough) approximation, one can distinguish in the cases that follow four

major categories of religious actors and perspectives. Pentecostals and some Catholic healers outside the realm of the official Church interpret spirit infestation as the work of the devil, and as a result they provide exorcism rituals. In contrast, Catholic priests tend to follow the teachings of Jesuit intellectuals and view spirit infestation as the product of hallucinations and/or paranormal phenomena generated by the psychic powers of the living, and their remedy of choice is psychotherapy.

A third important category is Spiritism ("Kardecism"), the predominantly white, middle-class religious-philosophical movement associated with the doctrine of Allan Kardec (see Hess 1987c), who argued for the scientific reality of spirit mediumship, reincarnation, and the existence of the perispirit (roughly, an astral body). They view themselves as scientific and reject the existence of demons; instead, they interpret spirit infestation as the work of deceased human spirit(s) and they provide a kind of exorcism séance called "disobsession" (desobsessão, see Hess 1989b).

A fourth position is occupied by Umbanda, a Brazilian religion which emerged in Rio, São Paulo, and southern Brazil in the early twentieth century (see Brown 1986). Unlike Candomblé, which is more faithful to its Yoruba origins, Umbanda is influenced by both Bantu and Yoruba religions as well as European (Kardecian) Spiritism. Its mediums receive the spirits of Amerindians and old black slaves as well as Exús (Yoruba trickster spirits) and Pomba Giras (female Exús, noted for their promiscuity). Umbandists in one of the cases presented here interpreted spirit infestation as the work of trickster-like Exú spirits and/or sorcery, but they may also attribute it to deceased human spirits, and their remedies include counter-sorcery rituals, sacrifices, and exorcisms.

All of these groups also admit the possibility of alternative, "natural" explanations--such as fraud, hoaxes, tricks, animal infestations, faulty electric wiring, group hallucinations, malingering, or the dissociated behavior of one of the family members--and each group may choose these "natural" explanations over those of their rivals in the religious system. Although the different positions in the religious system are activated in the cases that follow, the primary focus of the analysis is to interpret the meaning that the spirit infestation has for the afflicted. Doing so will make possible some comparisons between spirit infestation and non-ceremonial spirit possession, which will take place after a discussion of the three cases.

CRISTINA

In April, 1988, a thirteen-year-old farmer's daughter from the interior of the southernmost Brazilian state began to receive nationwide media attention as the "paranormal girl": she was the focus of spirit infestation which included rappings on the walls, object movements, and mysterious apparitions. Several newspapers, not to mention the television program "Fantásticos," ran the story, and most of these accounts described the treatment Cristina was receiving from Padre Edvino Friderichs, S.J., a resident of the Colégio Anchieta of Porto Alegre.

Since Brazil works through personal relationships, I decided that it would be best to establish a tie with Padre Edvino first and then see if he might facilitate an introduction to Cristina's family. After calling him and arranging for an interview, I travelled to Porto Alegre, the capital city of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where the Colégio Anchieta (a Jesuit high school where Padre Edvino lived and worked) was located. On Tuesday, June 19, 1987, I met and talked with Padre Edvino, who informed me that Cristina's family was, by coincidence, travelling to Porto Alegre the next day for another treatment from him. As I later learned from Cristina's mother, their house had been quiet for over a month after the padre's first treatments in late April, but after little more than a month's

respite the family was now suffering from a new and more violent outbreak. As a result, the mayor of the town had dispatched a driver to take the family to Porto Alegre to have another session with Padre Edvino.

This development was a setback for the padre, and to a certain extent his reputation was on the line. Although he scoffed at the press and all the publicity it had given him, he was also concerned that a failure in such a highly publicized case would reflect poorly on his efforts to enlighten the people and turn them away from their superstitions. Like his teacher--Oscar González Quevedo--Padre Edvino was a Jesuit parapsychologist who believed that spirit infestation was not simply a product of hallucinations or active imaginations, but that instead it could be explained by "telergy," an unknown biological energy generated by the body of living persons, frequently adolescents (see Friderichs 1979, 1980). Basing his treatment on the telergic theory, Padre Edvino tried to help the afflicted person to be more relaxed so that the body would not emit this psychic energy. In general, he did this by providing his clients with one or more half-hour sessions of guided relaxation, during which he gave them suggestions that they would feel relaxed and happy, and, in the case of infestations, that their unconscious would no longer produce the phenomena.

The padre led me to his office, where he pulled out Cristina's record, which included her address, age (13), school (primary), telephone number (none), and religion (Protestant). Then he read a list of the events which had plagued the family during the last week: 1) chairs moved; 2) a bucket of water rose up, turned over, and spilled; 3) first a knife fell on her chest, then a pair of scissors flew and fell on her chest; 4) the following night, a table knife also fell, and there were also scratchings and blows on the wall; 5) the next night, a pair of scissors and a knife fell beside her on top of the mattress (to her left), making a cross shape; 6) the following night there were no events. Like a doctor discussing a patient's symptoms, the padre told me that the phenomena were considerably more violent this time than they had been before his successful session with Cristina in April.

I met Cristina and her parents on the next afternoon, Wednesday, June 20. Although she was only thirteen, her height, lipstick and nail polish, fashionable blue jeans and sandals, and somewhat bored, somewhat defiant eyes indicated that she saw herself not as a child but as a young woman. Cristina's appearance contrasted sharply with that of her parents, poverty-stricken farmers who had spent their whole lives on or near their farm near the Argentine border. My first impression was that there was more than a generation gap between them. By her clothing, Cristina appeared to identify with and to want to belong to the world of modern Brazil, a Brazil which she probably only dimly understood. In contrast, her parents belonged to a traditional rural world that had its roots in the peasant world of rural Germany, where their forebears came from, and they later told me they had never been to Porto Alegre before, nor had they ever seen a city of this size.

After our greetings, we went inside the Jesuit dormitory and sat at a table in the lobby. The family waited nervously for 1:30 p.m. to arrive, which was the time when the padre planned to begin his session. I asked the family what had been happening recently, and Cristina's mother was soon talking in an animated fashion about the same series of events that the Padre had described to me the day before. As her mother spoke, Cristina laughed somewhat uncontrollably, as if it were all very funny to her, and her mother laughed a little as well. The padre later told me he thought this indicated that the teen-age girl was somewhat hysterical.

At one-thirty, we all went to the padre's office, where he began the session by placing Cristina in a big arm chair and giving her a series of instructions: she should eat slowly, eat more fruits and vegetables, breathe deeply, do exercises to help the blood

flow, and ask for God's help. Cristina was smiling during these instructions, and he told her it was not funny, especially for her parents and the mayor of her town. He then continued with his instructions: he made Cristina promise that it would not happen again, he instructed her parents not to allow any exorcists or mediums to visit, nor to allow visitors who speak about Exús (Afro-Brazilian trickster spirits), and he told Cristina to help her mother at home, to cultivate positive thoughts, and to love God, "who will make the phenomena go away."

"After all," he said, "she's afraid."

"Yes," her mother said.

Padre Edvino then told Cristina to breathe deeply and relax, to feel herself in a pleasant place, on top of a mountain with flowers and a palm tree, the symbol of the nobility of the soul. After giving her more guided imagery, he told her that from now on she would be calmer, happier, and better. He told her to help her mother at home, to enjoy working. He then said, "The chairs will no longer move themselves," and so on for each of the events which had plagued the family, ending with the authoritative-sounding suggestion that "things will not repeat themselves."

Cristina's head was turned and she appeared to be asleep, but then she "woke up." The padre went on; he was not finished. He told her to close her eyes, and he gave her more suggestions. Then he counted back from ten, interspersing the counting with suggestions that everything will work better: circulation, digestion, respiration, etc. He then told her, "If you follow my instructions, you will be cured."

After the session, we learned that several reporters had managed to find their way to the dormitory, despite Padre Edvino's request that the porter not let any reporters pass through the main gate of the campus. I did not want to be interviewed, so I retired to the dormitory library, but later the padre told me that Cristina seemed to enjoy the press coverage and all of the attention.

After the interview, Cristina and her mother retired to their room on the top floor of the Jesuit dormitory, and I went for a walk with Cristina's father, whose confidence I felt was important to win first.⁵ I asked him what he thought of "the phenomena," and he told me that he had never heard of this sort of thing before, but now he realized that it was fairly common. He went on to say that his pastor and the local priest give a parapsychology class together (as a means of combatting espiritismo), and his pastor recommended that they see Padre Edvino. However, before seeking out Padre Edvino, Cristina's father first exhausted local resources. He tried a Kardecian Spiritist center in their own town, but the mediums said that the case was "too strong" for them, and upon their advice, the family visited a bigger center in a larger city. However, the trip was a long and very expensive, and the Spiritists' "disobsession" session (a kind of exorcism) did not provide any relief. Likewise, a pastor from the Assembly of God had also tried to exorcise the house, but this did not work either.

Cristina's father then decided that he "couldn't be a monkey going from branch to branch," so he decided to stick with his own pastor's advice and seek out Padre Edvino. "Really, only Padre Edvino was able to help," he told me. After the padre's visit, Cristina's father went on to say, everything was quiet for about a month, when three psychology students visited their town and asked if they could interview the family for a class project. Cristina's father consented, and during the night after the interview, the infestation began again.

Regarding the initial onset, Cristina's father told me that the infestation began in November, 1987, and it was constrained almost entirely to raps, object movements, and breakages inside their house. At this time, Cristina was in the fifth grade (quinta série), which she failed after her exams in November and was currently repeating. Her father said that she was not a good student, despite what she may say. She failed math the

year before, and he believed that the infestation, which began at the same time as her finals, distracted her from her studies. He also added that Cristina wanted to go to a middle school/high school in the town, farther away from home than her present school, but this would only be possible if she did well in school, which was not the case at present.

Cristina's father was convinced that his daughter could not have tricked him and his wife; he gave several examples to support his opinion and explained that he had other theories. His first theory was that the infestation was the ghost of his aunt (FBW), who had died before she told anyone where she had left her buried gold, so in December or January--shortly after the disturbances began--he asked Cristina to contact her. Cristina saw the ghost, but at first she was so frightened that she ran out of the room. When her father saw how frightened she was, he told her to stop, but she went back in. The ghost told her where the gold was buried, but when the father dug a two-meter hole at the location, he did not find any gold. After other unsuccessful attempts, he gave up completely.

Cristina's father believed that his daughter was healthy in all respects. She had had only two serious childhood illnesses and had begun menstruating at age eleven. He also believed that she had no sexual or romantic encounters, a point with which Cristina's mother later agreed. However, he had been thrown off center because of the spirit infestation, which he confessed to me made him feel powerless in his own home, especially when the journalists came. When I asked, he noted that Cristina liked the attention of the press. He added that she liked to watch television (the padre had noted to me earlier that Cristina "never misses the novelas," the prime-time soap operas that are the hallmark of Brazilian television), and the television was one of the few objects in the household that had not suffered any injuries during the infestation. We then discussed if threatening to sell the television might help quiet things down.

On the next morning, I interviewed Cristina's mother, who related to me in some detail the circumstances surrounding the initial events in November. She said Cristina first heard the sound of a piece of paper ripping under her bed, but when she got up to look, it was not there. The next night there was the same sound coming from under the bed, and then on a subsequent night the raps began, which Cristina's parents and neighbors all witnessed.

Cristina's mother then told how they attempted to communicate with the spirit and how they decided it was the father's aunt, who had died thirteen years earlier and left the buried gold. After this episode, "it started carrying things...it took the sink out of the bathroom, carried the broom, and broke china, glass cups, and plates. It broke everything in the house. Things flew from the table, but we never saw them leave their spot, only when they landed."

We returned to the subject of the gold, and I asked how Cristina felt. The mother answered: "I think she was fascinated and wanted to see if there was really gold, because she did not understand what kind of gold it was. She wanted to find out if it was medals or what. One said one thing; others said something else; so she wanted to know. And after everything, they [the neighbors] said that it wasn't gold, and then they [the spirits] grabbed her [Cristina's] feet, her hands, her head, and ripped the foam of her mattress, messed with her hair. So then she realized that it wasn't gold. So we took her to a Spiritist center."

The Spiritists in the larger city said that the ghost was not the spirit of the aunt, but instead of a man. "They said it was a different entity...a man with a beard who didn't say what he wanted." Neither the Spiritists nor the Protestant groups could help, and things grew worse and worse. "Things flew more and more and broke more and more. We couldn't even sit at the table and drink coffee or eat lunch. The table plates would

leave. The teapot with hot water fell below the stove. But nothing ever hurt anyone. Things always fell and never hurt anyone. As so it went, and in the end she couldn't even eat lunch any more. If she picked up something to eat with, it flew off and went away...."

"And how was Cristina at this time?"

"She was irritated [chateada] because she couldn't eat; she couldn't eat anything."

"Was she upset [nervosa]?"

"Yes, she was upset. In the end we wondered how we were going to enter in the house to do the housework. So we sent her to the neighbors to play with the children in order for me to do the housework....[The kitchen] was all dirty and all I could do was clean up, and when she was not there, I cooked. After everything I sat at the table, and she ate. We could eat, but only me with her...but if I took my eyes off her or turned around, then everything would start." This last comment, together with the father's comment that he did not yell at Cristina any more, suggest that the spirit infestation was related to a conflict between Cristina and her father, which was also the pattern in the other two cases.

The mother then explained to me the recent events had taken a violent turn, with knives and scissors appearing in menacing positions: a knife on Cristina's breast, a pair of scissors on her throat, two knives in the shape of a cross, etc. The change in the attack from disrupting the household to menacing Cristina may have in part reflected her and her parents' acceptance of Padre Edvino's theory that she was causing the attack, and as a result she may have felt guilty about it at some level. The night before they left for Porto Alegre, there were no disturbances, and the night before (while they stayed in the Jesuit dormitory), everything was quiet.

I interviewed Cristina next, but she was not very talkative. She appeared to be shy rather than intimidated, and she mumbled short answers in a tiny voice that made it very hard to understand her. It is possible that my association with the padre and my prior conversations with her parents identified me in her mind with their generation, and it is also likely that a woman might have had better rapport with her. Cristina's version of the infestation agreed in broad terms with those of her parents, but she seemed not to remember individual incidents or the chronology as clearly. She said that when the ghost first appeared, "I asked her what she wanted, and if she would leave me in peace, and she said no." After her father's prodding, she then asked it about the gold. Cristina now seemed to accept the interpretation that she was causing the object movements, and she said that sometimes she believed she could make an object move by willing it to do so, but "sometimes I don't even think about it and it happens."

I tried to get her to discuss how she felt about the infestation, but she was very reticent. In order to try to get a better understanding of what the ghost meant to her, I asked Cristina what her dream was, what she would be if she could be anything in the world, and she said she would like to be an artista, like the movie stars of the television novelas. We talked about what she would have to study to become a movie star (fortunately not math, which was her weak field and the one which accounted for her being held back in school).

Given Cristina's reticence to talk and the short time I had to interview her alone--her mother seemed somewhat suspicious of my being alone with her, and she interrupted the interview--an interpretation of the meaning of the spirit infestation to Cristina can only be highly preliminary. If Cristina dreamed of becoming a movie star, she was frustrated by living in a rural area outside a town which did not have a theater. The closest theater, as she told me, was in the bigger city where they had gone to the Spiritist center, a prohibitively long and expensive journey. Still, if she could not go to

the theater, she had, in a way, managed to bring the theater to her. The comments of both her father and the padre that Cristina seemed to enjoy all of the attention from the reporters began to take on a new meaning: maybe it was her way of making her dream come true. At the very minimum, the press coverage gave Cristina new prestige in school--it made her a star among her peers--since she told me that her classmates came up to her and wanted to know how they could do it, too.

Intended or not, Cristina's ghost opened up a bigger world and brought her in contact with it. Like the ghost, this bigger world--which included perhaps some of her teachers and classmates at school, certainly the television novelas from Rio and São Paulo and the dubbed movies from America and Europe, the Jesuit priests and psychology students from Porto Alegre, the buried gold left by a great aunt who had been born in Germany, and even now an anthropologist from New York--this world probably intimidated her as much as it intrigued her. Her nail polish, stylish leather sandals, and blue jeans indicated that she saw herself as, in some sense, already part of this world which she only dimly understood. Cristina may have belonged to the world of the German peasant farmers to which her parents belonged, but she also seemed to have had a dream of finding a way out of it.

Support for this interpretation comes from some of the statements her father made to me. As stated above, her father pointed out that the television set was one of the few objects in their home which was never broken or moved, and this fact takes on a new meaning in light of Cristina's admission of her dream to become a movie star. The television set was Cristina's one link with the world of movie stars, a fairy-tale world which her ghost managed to bring literally into her home. Likewise, as her father pointed out to me, Cristina hated to do housework, because, as Cristina told him, she believed that "one day I'm going to be famous." He admitted that he no longer yelled at her, because when he did, "the phenomena get worse."

Cristina's ghost therefore may have served, in a largely unconscious and highly tentative way, as an "idiom" through which she could discover and articulate a new part of herself, much as Michael Kenny (1986) argues that multiple personalities are means of creative identity reconstruction (see especially his discussion of the Mary Reynolds case). At the same time, the spirit infestation shifted domestic power, since in disputes with her parents over housework, Cristina was able to have her way more readily than before. Of course, to Cristina the infestation was not an "idiom" for personal identity reconstruction or domestic politics; it was some kind of power, first a ghost and then maybe a demon, and then finally, after Padre Edvino entered the scene, some kind of psychic power she had hidden within her. If this psychic power meant to her at some level that she was special and that she had a future, it was to some extent a tragedy that her parents and the padre asked her to renounce it, and indeed this might explain why she seemed to be resisting his treatment.

That afternoon, Cristina went through another session of therapy with the padre. She appeared to be cooperating, but in the middle of the session she failed his arm test for hypnotic depth. He said to me later a phrase he had constantly repeated: "This girl doesn't want to be cured." He told me and the family that he had done everything he could, and Cristina's father decided that they would return the next morning. There had been no disturbances while they were staying in the Jesuit dormitory, and Cristina's parents felt reassured. I said good-bye to the padre, Cristina, and her parents, and then I left.

One might argue that I should have followed the family back to their town, and it is true that it would have been interesting to interview Cristina's teachers, her fellow students, the family pastor, and the neighbors. However, it is also possible that, like the visit from the psychology students, my presence and attention might have provoked a

return of the infestation, and the presence of an American in a small town almost certainly would have generated more gossip and press coverage. Unfortunately, since the family did not have a telephone, I could not call them, and Cristina's parents were illiterate. I did call Padre Edvino a few times in July to attempt to follow-up the story, but he said he had not heard from the family again. "No news is good news," he said, "but then I also told them that if the phenomena return, I don't want to treat her any more."

For the purposes of this article, however, the information garnered from the interviews with Cristina, her parents, and the padre is sufficient to gain a rough sense of the some of the meanings which the spirit infestation served to dramatize and articulate: the hope of finding buried treasure, squabbles over domestic duties, and a fairy tale dream of becoming a movie star. Cristina's father no longer yelled at her when he wanted her to do housework, and Cristina had managed to become, at least temporarily, the movie star she had dreamed of being: a Brazilian Cinderella. These patterns already suggest a parallel with the literature on non-ceremonial spirit possession, in which young women frequently employ the idiom of possession to alter domestic power relations and to articulate alternative notions of selfhood. Although these patterns are only suggested in the Cristina case, in the next two cases they appear with much more clarity.

LOLA

Cristina might have enjoyed meeting Lola, about whose ghost I first heard while I was attending the wedding of a friend's brother. When the subject of my research came up, their cousin told me about a friend of hers who had lived with a ghost for nearly a year. "You will think she's crazy," the cousin told me, "but she's not. I believe her. I was there. I saw the curtains billowing."

Lola agreed to be interviewed, and on July 20, 1988, I arrived at her apartment in a fashionable neighborhood of a large city in southeastern Brazil. The interior decor of her apartment marked it as part of the urban counterculture: a pastiche of punk and sixties themes. Stenciled to the wall in the living room was a day-glow, spray-painted figure of Christ the Redeemer, the giant statue on top of Corcovado Mountain, a national and even international symbol of the land of the Southern Cross, the postcard-famous figure of the Redeemer with his arms outstretched, constantly pardoning the constantly sinning multitudes of the city below. Lola's stenciled wall-Christ was the same as the famous statue, with one exception: hanging from his shoulders was an electric guitar. She offered me a beer and we began the interview.

Like the Madonna of the American movie "Desperately Seeking Susan," which played successfully in Rio in 1985, Lola wore black: a black mini-skirt, black leotards, and black go-go booties. She was a free spirit, and, as she told me right away, both a left-hander and a Pisces. "I don't have any children--people know I'm a louca [crazy]--I don't keep regular hours...I work when I want." Among her métiers, which included working in a rock band, Lola was a sometime journalist--she showed me an article on "voodoo" which she had written for a Brazilian skin magazine--and as a result she was quite at ease with the tape recorder and very open in the interview situation. Articulate, dramatic, and in control (she gave me three pseudonyms to choose from--Lola, Pitty, and Elvira--complete with last names), I only had to listen as the charming haunted woman told her story. We were interrupted several times--a steady stream of friends dropped by--but she continued her story through all the interruptions. She began with her brother, Daniel, who was one year older than she and had left to live abroad in August of 1986, that is, roughly two years earlier.

Unlike Lola, who was always going out, Daniel was a homebody who did not approve of his sister's behavior. The two never got along, yet they continued to be

housemates: "I live here with my brother, and my brother is always getting mad at me. He doesn't like it that I go out with lots of people. He's a little jealous of my boyfriends. He doesn't like it when I come home with men. Ever since we were little, he picked on me. We never got along."⁶

A few days after Daniel left the country, "the figure began to show up. The figure lived in my brother's room. The room was closed, but he always lived there. My interpretation is that someone came in Daniel's place to take care of me, but there's another interpretation. There's a story in my family--my family came from Scotland--there was a relative who killed himself. I always had a connection with this story. Who was this boy? I looked at photos of him. I sometimes thought that it was this boy who came to take care of me."

"So when Daniel left, I heard things like doors banging--you know how it is when there's someone in the house? And his voice reminded me of some people. One time I was with a couple [of friends]. They were here at home in the house watching TV with me. It was the first time they were here. All of the sudden there was the biggest racket in the bathroom, but only the girl perceived it. She said to me, 'There's someone here in the house.' I heard it, too, and told her he was always here. Her boyfriend didn't hear anything and said, 'You're nuts, girls.'

"After this, I was here with two musician friends of mine. They were always here. I went to take a nap, and when I passed by this part of the room, the figure passed by: dark, tall, and with hair down to here.

"In December, [1986], I rented out Daniel's room to a friend of mine, João. Whenever he was here, the figure was quiet, because João is a very good friend of mine, and he takes care of me. When João was gone, the figure showed up. João knew about the story, but he never saw it. I think one time he saw it, but he didn't admit it.

"Then there was the time I was here with your friend's cousin. We were doing pirate television [an illegal broadcast from a truck that drives around the city]. We were watching the TV, but it was full of static, like in the movie 'Poltergeist.' Then he started in the bedroom, tapping. He started slamming the medicine cabinet in the bathroom. I saw him. He knocked all the silverware off the kitchen table. So we left. We went to her house. It was the only time. I came back pissed off at him. I came back swearing at [the ghost], saying, 'Don't you ever do this again!' Then João came to live with me, and things were calmer, but whenever João wasn't at home, he showed up. Then João left, my brother came back, and he disappeared.

"When did your brother come back?"

"In December of last year [1987]."

"And everything's been quiet since then?"

"Yes. But I know he's here. I know he's always with me."

We then turned to the subject of her family. She talked about the relative who had lived in Scotland and whom she had seen in photos. "He was very good looking--lindo, lindo--he looked like a prince. He fell in love with an older woman, around forty years old, and then he killed himself." Her father told her this story, and since she was young she had always looked at this picture.

At first, Lola lived in the apartment with her sister and brother, but then her sister left for Europe, so Lola remained alone with Daniel. The housing situation began a few years ago, when her father--the son of a British grandfather but born in Brazil--told the three of them that they were now adults and it was time for them to leave the house. Although this might not seem unusual from the point of view of Anglo-Saxon culture, it is a much harsher statement in Brazil, where unmarried children frequently live with their parents until they are well into their twenties. At this time, Lola was only nineteen or

twenty. Her father promised to pay the rent for six months, but after this they were on their own.

According to Lola, her father was very rigid and strict, and when she was a child, he failed to defend her against her brother. Whenever she complained to her father that Daniel had beaten her, her father beat both of them. Her mother, a strict Catholic but not very strong-willed, never intervened. She went on to tell me that one time when Daniel beat both her and her sister, together they were able to restrain him and beat him. Lola told me he was "completely crazy," but she added: "Now he's calmer. There was a time when the entire building heard, and they yelled, 'Come here, Lola. Come stay with me.'"

When I asked her if the ghost looked like Daniel, she said no, but he reminded her of an Englishman who had stayed in the apartment for a while: the ghost was thin, whereas Daniel was strong. I then raised the possibility that the ghost might be related to her conflict with her brother and her father. Daniel represented a continuation of the rigid, puritanical, Anglo-Saxon upbringing against which she was defining herself, and when he went away to the United States, the authority figure disappeared from her life.

She answered, "Yes, I might have even called him. I don't know, unconsciously."

If the ghost was a substitute for her brother (and her father), he was not identical to them. Physically, he looked like the Englishman who had been her housemate and substitute for her brother, and earlier in the interview she had suggested a connection between the ghost and the picture of the boy from Scotland, which links the ghost implicitly to her father. The ghost therefore appears to be a brother/father figure with a difference: unlike with Daniel and her father, Lola could order this ghost around, and she saw it as protective even if somewhat disruptive. She was not at all afraid of her ghost, and he behaved in a rather civilized manner: unlike Cristina's ghost, Lola's ghost did not break anything.

Our conversation then returned to Daniel. Lola said that she found out much later that her father arrived at the decision to put the children on their own after Daniel had beaten both of his parents. When he goes into his crises, Lola has to take refuge with her friends. One of the friends who had joined us told me that she had harbored Lola for five days. Lola added that Daniel has refused psychiatric treatment or any kind of medication. Once he went to a psychiatrist, but to no avail: "He's very smart, and the psychiatrist arrived at the conclusion that our parents were crazy and he was normal. The psychiatrist then called me and wanted to talk with me. He thought I was crazy! He's [Daniel's] very smart."

I asked the friend who had joined us if she thought Daniel was crazy. "Crazy, no," she answered. "But he's not very normal."

Lola never told her parents or her brother about the ghost. She said that if she did, her family might think she was crazy, even though she knows she's not. This was why it was important to her that some of her friends have also shared her ghostly experience; furthermore, she knew other friends who had had ghosts of their own. We chatted for a while longer about these other ghosts, and after a while her friends decided to leave. We opened another beer and talked for a while longer before I left.

Lola had said more than once that the ghost was there to take care of her, and yet he sometimes acted up and even once forced her out of her house. This was similar to the role that her father and brother played, who in theory were supposed to take care of her but in fact did not and even blocked her attempts to develop her persona as a modern, free spirit: a Lola. The ghost therefore appeared to be a substitute for these male figures who stood in the way of her becoming herself. At the same time, Lola was not afraid of the ghost and was sometimes even able to boss him around, so she had considerably more power over him than over her brother and father. In this sense, she

was able to dramatize her domestic conflicts in a way that empowered her, both in terms of her relations with male relatives and in terms of her attempts to develop the identity she wanted.

About a week after the interview, Lola called me to ask if she could interview me about my research for her magazine. I consented (ethnographic reciprocity in the big city) and also promised to put her in touch with another anthropologist who was researching astrology, but for some reason Lola never called back before I returned to New York.

THE THREE SISTERS

The theme of domestic violence appeared much more overtly in the third case, which involved a family of father, mother, and four daughters. I first heard of this case through André Percia de Carvalho, a psychology student and friend of the daughter of a friend of mine who is an Umbanda medium. André also works part time for the Institute for Applied Psychology, the president of which is the daughter of a man who was, when alive, a good friend of Padre Edvino. As a result, it is not surprising that André rejects the Spiritist interpretation of ghosts and instead follows that of the Jesuits and most American and European parapsychologists.

On Sunday, July 24, 1988, I visited the afflicted family at their home in a city roughly located in the destitute North Zone of suburban Rio de Janeiro. The neighborhood was certainly not a place for an American to wander about alone, and I was fortunate to be accompanied by André and his friend Roberto, both of whom interviewed members of the family with me. The mother (age 42) of the family was a maid, and the father (age 60) was a brick-layer. The oldest of the children, Romana (age 14), was the mother's daughter from a previous marriage, and the mother also had two sons from the previous marriage, neither of whom lived with the family. The other three daughters--Rozilda (age 13), Rachel (age 11), and Rosa (age 8)--were all children of the present marriage. For more than six months, the family had been plagued by stones and bricks which fell on the roof, cups and plates which flew and broke inside the house, and outbreaks of fires. They also claimed that two bicycles had been thrown on top of their roof.

According to a newspaper report published that week, on Wednesday a three-hour Umbanda ritual had been held at the house in order to cleanse it. The spirit guide of the pai-de-santo (an Umbanda priest), Gypsy Guarapari, manifested through the medium and told the family that obsessing spirits were operating through the mother, who was an incipient medium. To exorcise these spirits, one of the assisting Umbanda mediums touched the mother on her forehead and absorbed her obsessing spirit. The spirit was an "Exú das trevas" (Exú of the darkness), a trickster spirit from the Yoruba pantheon which in Brazil is sometimes identified with the Christian devil.

The medium who had incorporated the Exú was then tied to a tree in the yard, and through the medium the Exú said to the pai-de-santo, "The old lady who lived here owed me a debt." This referred to the father's mother, who had died of cancer in the house fourteen years previously. The pai-de-santo then convinced the Exú to leave the family in peace, and, in exchange for some rum, cigars, and seven white candles, the spirit agreed to leave the family in peace. The Exú also demanded a black chicken, and--again, according to the newspaper report, but by no means unheard of--the Exú then killed the chicken with its teeth and drank its blood. The pai-de-santo also explained that a neighbor had performed a work of black magic against the family.

The newspaper report added that a member of the Messianic Church had also come to the house on Tuesday to pray for the family. However, the mother told us that

neither the Messianic Church people nor the Umbandists managed to end the infestation. On Saturday, the family sent out an urgent request over an Umbandist radio station, calling for help. On the same day, the people from the Messianic Church came back, but their prayers did not help. On Sunday morning, a Protestant minister had come to exorcise the house, but his work did not seem to help either.

When I arrived with André and his friend on Sunday afternoon, the father was in the back lot chopping wood, and the mother and her children were gathered with some of the neighbors out on the front porch. Everyone talked at once about what had happened. Although the infestation had first started in November, they had not sought any help until that week, when a friend of theirs, a journalist, had sought out the pai-de-santo and written up the dramatic story about the exorcism ritual. The mother belonged to a Protestant denomination called the Universal Church, and she had expected to get help from her Church. However, she said, "They have abandoned us."

"They abandoned you?"

"Yes, since they don't come here any more. When they pray, then more things fall from above. And I'm the one who pays."

They then told us about the voice of a man they had heard, who said, "I don't want anyone here." It was hard to get a clear chronology of the events, but at one point the mother told us: "It started with fires. After the fires, it went to stones falling on top of the house. Then it started to knock on the doors and the windows, and the doors opened, the faucet turned on, and all of this confusion outside started. Then it started inside my house, and it's been going on like this for four months...."

"If I go to the market--I don't even go any more--I go to the market, me and Romana, and put things on the table. When I look--where's the chicken? The package disappears. It takes eggs and throws them at people who are here. It throws everything. It grabs tomatoes and throws them on the street. Everything disappears. It takes oranges and throws them in other people's houses. It's like this, you know. We live here without hope, not knowing what else to do....Before it hid our clothes....We found them outside, with different pieces in different places."

We chatted with the family and visitors for about a half hour and listened to their grievances, and then the three of us split up for different interviews. I interviewed Romana, the fourteen-year-old from the previous marriage; André interviewed Rozilda, the thirteen-year-old; and Roberto talked with the Rachel, the eleven-year-old. I also talked with the eight-year-old, Rosa, but she was very shy and reticent. Her mother said that Rosa seems to bear the brunt of the activities: "The little one always gets the blows...It beats her and socks her in the face." When I asked them if they ever had problems like this in school, they said they did not go to school.

I asked Romana if she had tried to communicate with her grandmother, and she answered, "In my opinion, no dead person's bothering anybody." When I asked about black magic, she said she suspected a neighbor, who was apparently jealous of the family because of their relative wealth. Because Spiritist intellectual Hernani Guimarães Andrade had told me that in Brazil outbreaks of fires in cases of spirit infestation are usually associated with sorcery or black magic, I asked Romana if they had found any packages of chicken feet or rosemary around the house, that is, packages indicative of black magic. She answered that she had found a package of rose petals on the roof, and she went on to say that her father believed that the spirit infestation was the result of black magic, but her mother disagreed.

However, Romana drew attention to herself, explaining that she "knows about the things before they happened," whereas her sister Rozilda does not. According to her mother, Romana does not like to do housework, and she fights with both of her parents. She also fights a lot with her sister Rozilda (age 13), and when they fight, "more things

fall." Furthermore, Romana told me that she fights with her nineteen-year-old boyfriend, whom she persuaded to stop drinking. However, she likes the animals in the yard, and she claims to have healed the dog once and even to have healed one of her sisters.

No one has yet told Romana that many people believe the powers she believes she has do not exist, so she calmly described her feats to me: "One day I was in a friend's house....I wanted my mother to be with me....because if the lamps broke, she would have to come get me. The lamps broke. They broke here, there, in the room, here inside. So she went running to get me."

"So you're doing it yourself?"

"You think? Maybe it's my sister."

"Which one?"

"Rachel."

"Why her?"

"Because she's very angry, like me."

"Why not both of you?"

"I think both of us."

Later, she told me that she does not hate her sisters and her mother. "It's only at times when I get irritated. Sometimes they want me to do something, and I don't want to do it."

After I finished interviewing Romana, I talked with André, who was convinced from his conversation with Rozilda that she, not Romana, was the focus of the poltergeist attack. Rozilda told André that she sometimes fights with her sister Romana, and when her mother tells them to stop arguing and one of them wants to continue, then the incidents occur. Rozilda also fights with her father: he tells Rozilda what to do, and she does not like to be bossed around. Sometimes she feels like hitting him, and according to the other sisters, Rozilda sometimes throws objects at her father but says she does not remember doing so. Rozilda admitted that she frequently faints, sometimes after she fights.

We then talked with the mother alone, who said that she did not think this was the work of a demon. "If it was, the pai-de-santo would have gotten rid of it." Instead, she said that the three daughters "form a very strong chain," of which Rozilda was the strongest link. She added that the incidents occur less when the three fight among themselves than when they fight with their father.

According to Rozilda, the infestation began in November, after a fight between her and her parents. She wanted to break up with her twenty-year-old boyfriend, and they did not want her to. "On this day," the mother said, "the fourteenth of November [1987], Rozilda had gone out with a friend. The friend disappeared and we didn't know where she was. Then Rozilda disappeared. We called out for her and only heard her voice, but when we got closer, she wasn't there....When her father got home, he was very angry, and the fight started. He beat you, didn't he, Rozilda?"

"Yes," Rozilda answered.

"He let her have it," her mother added. "Where did he beat you? I don't remember. She was very upset....On this day, the beating on the doors and windows started."

Rozilda also said that she heard a man's voice say, "I'm going to take away everyone." She felt a headache when the voice spoke, and according to her mother, Rozilda was born very small and she was not sure her daughter would live. She always told herself, "This child won't make it." Rozilda and Romana did not suffer from any major childhood diseases, but the eleven-year-old, Rachel, had suffered from pneumonia, and she also claimed that she felt a headache and dizziness after the outbreaks

During his interview with Rozilda, André asked her to draw a picture of their house and to describe it, and she said she did not like it. She also told him that the father sleeps in his own room and in the middle of the night he sometimes yells out "Mother! Mother!" Rozilda said that her father's mother was not very nice, and sometimes she sees her ghost. Rozilda was apparently never very happy in the home, and even as a child, she was prone to temper tantrums in which she broke things. Like Romana, Rozilda now believed she could cure plants and animals, and she also believed that when she was angry, plants dried up and died.

We also interviewed the father, who was very hard of hearing and seemed not to be able to understand our questions, nor were his responses easy to understand. He mentioned how the "daughter of anger [perhaps a Pomba Gira spirit, a female Exú] had caught their girl," but he mainly talked about how much they had lost and suffered. He pulled out a case with his glasses in it and said that his glasses had broken while they were in the case.

I had hoped to be able to return and do a follow-up interview, but illness prevented both me and André from making a second trip before I had to return to the United States. André made two other return trips to this town, but each time the family was not there, and of course they do not have a telephone. Again, despite the lack of follow-up, which would be a problem for other purposes, our interviews yielded enough information to be able to make some preliminary interpretive comments.

Again, the approach adopted here brackets the question of the mechanisms that could explain the various incidents: children's pranks, neighbors' attacks, dissociated behavior, exaggerated reporting, telergy, psychokinesis, spirits, etc. Whatever the mechanisms, the family members' discussion of the case reveals how in their minds it is linked up with domestic conflicts, and these conflicts are somewhat similar to the ones discussed in the other two cases. Despite the class and educational differences between this family and Lola, in both cases the spirit infestation is related to the violent treatment of younger women by more powerful men. In Cristina's case, I have no evidence that suggests her father beat her, but it is also true that it did not occur to me to ask Cristina, since this was the first of the three cases which I investigated and neither she nor her mother volunteered the information. However, it is also true that there was a conflict between the girl and her father, and he admitted that he did not yell at her any more because of the infestation. Thus the three cases share some possible common denominators which warrant the consideration of a few comments--albeit preliminary and tentative--of a more general nature.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The interviews discussed here raise several questions which only future research will be able to answer. One question involves the extent to which the cases presented here are representative of Brazilian spirit infestation in general or even spirit infestation in a wider, cross-cultural context. These were the only three cases for which I was able to acquire, during my summer visit in 1988, sufficiently detailed and first-hand information to allow a preliminary interpretation of the meaning of the spirit to the afflicted family members. It may be a coincidence that all three cases involved young women, but it is also true that Wedenoja's case study (1978) of a duppie attack in Jamaica also involved a young woman, and the two other detailed case studies of spirit infestation in Brazil (Andrade 1989) also involve young women (aged 13 and 21, respectively).

The preponderance of young women is also suggested by two sources of survey-like information for Brazil. Andrade (1989: 228-119) has collected information on 20

cases of spirit infestation, for which he found a central focus person or victim in 13 of the 20 cases. In two of the 13 cases, the focus person was male, whereas the remaining 11 were female, and of the females, six were under 20, five were aged 21 to 25, and one was 43 years old. Likewise, a collection of anecdotal case histories by Padre Edvino (Friderichs 1980) provides another source of survey-like information, although many of his case histories are based on newspaper accounts and lack key details. Tallying Friderichs' collection reveals that of the 36 cases which he reports for Brazil (some of which may overlap with Andrade's collection), 18 involved females as the central person, whereas only five involve males, four of whom were young boys. In 13 cases there was insufficient information or, in a few cases, a possibility that the infestation focussed on persons of both sexes. Similarly, for Gauld and Cornell's primarily European and North American data base (1979: 226; see Andrade 1989: 228), of 197 cases with an identified focus person, 27% were male and 73% female, and of the 194 cases with an identified age, 78% were less than twenty years old and 22% more than twenty years old. Although further research is necessary to confirm the cross-cultural variability or stability of these patterns, the three cases discussed here, two of which involved young or adolescent girls and the other a woman in her early twenties, are consistent with at least one aspect of what may be a broader pattern.

A second question that one might ask is why the idiom of spirit infestation is chosen or hit upon as opposed to other options. It is highly unlikely that all cases of spirit infestation can be reduced to a universal "etiology" or a core sequence of events. Nevertheless, one might conceptualize the problem in terms of ideal typical sequences or scenarios. The second and third of the three cases presented here suggest that one scenario might include domestic violence as a key factor. This connection appears most clearly in the third case, where the mother explicitly related the onset to a child-beating episode.

In this type of case, we might imagine the following scenario: an older and more powerful adult or older sibling beats or abuses a less powerful person or child, such as a father who abuses a daughter. For various reasons, other adults or authority figures cannot protect the victim, and in a country such as Brazil, turning to outside authority figures such as the police is not an option, since this has a completely unpredictable outcome which may involve even worse abuse. Likewise, direct violent retribution against their victimizer could have disastrous results, and taking on a sick role (which might include spirit possession), while representing one option, would not express the rage that a victim feels as well as a desire for direct, violent retribution. In contrast, if there is a belief in spirits and spirit attack, then spirit infestation has the double advantage not only of returning violence with violence but also of avoiding the blame and consequences of such violent retribution. On this point it is relevant to point out that in cases of poltergeists in the United States and Western Europe, there is frequently a missing generation in the families. The dull hearing and sight of members of an older generation may make them prime candidates for spirit tricksters, and in the third case presented here, the father's age and his hearing problems made it easier for the girls to stage their attacks--either consciously or in a state of dissociation--without being caught.

Of course, this remains only one scenario, what could be considered as one of the elementary forms of spirit infestation, a structure that includes some or all of the following elements: domestic violence, fear of police and absence of other authority figures to whom the victims might turn for help, a generation or values gap (which may also involve concerns with alternative notions of selfhood), possible hearing or sight impairment in the older generation, and belief in and fear of spirit infestation or sorcery. Some support for this scenario emerges when one considers the following: if one accepts that at least some of the events of spirit infestation episodes are the result of

dissociated behavior, as in the case of Rozilda, then one might recall that a similar illness/idiom of distress--multiple personality--has in many cases been linked to child abuse. On this point, Kenny notes, "Dissociation in response to such abuse is becoming the dominant paradigm in explaining the origin of multiple personality" (1986: 176). It is possible then that child-beating may provoke dissociation that in turn leads to action which, given the proper conjuncture of beliefs and circumstances described above, is interpreted as spirit infestation.

Nevertheless, one might also imagine other elementary forms of spirit infestation for which the other cases discussed here might provide alternative scenarios. For example, in the case of Lola, the spirit infestation episode did not have the direct compensatory quality that it had for the three sisters, since the ghost appeared after the violent men in her life had left. Instead, Lola's ghost appeared to dramatize and rehearse her relations with men, which were largely violent relations, and they provided her with an idiom in which she explores a new, more confident and assertive personality. Likewise, in Cristina's case, the motivations and causes appeared to be related to her dream of becoming a star as much as conflicts with her father over housework.

Only further research will be able to address the question of why some families hit upon spirit infestation as opposed to other idioms that could also express and alter intrapsychic and interpersonal meanings and conflicts. Given the likely variation of sequences and causes of spirit infestation, one must judiciously resist constructing a universal psychological "etiology," a danger which Kenny warns against for similar popular illnesses/idioms of distress, convincingly in the case of *latah* (1983), although less so for multiple personality (see Hess 1987d). The sequences of events and circumstances leading to a case of spirit infestation, as with non-ceremonial spirit possession, are likely to vary widely not only across cultures but also across cases within any given culture. Ultimately, the question of delineating necessary and sufficient factors for the occurrence of spirit infestation may not be answerable or only answerable in culture-specific terms, or, as I have suggested, best approached by typological formulas. More easily answered is the question with which this essay is concerned--when spirit infestation does occur, how does it dramatize domestic conflicts and personal meanings?--a problem which requires a case-by-case interpretation.

A third question that emerges from this discussion involves the extent to which one can draw a parallel between spirit infestation and non-ceremonial spirit possession. Spirit infestation and spirit possession appear to be similar enough that it makes sense to consider the cases of spirit infestation discussed here as part of the broader literature on non-ceremonial spirit possession, especially the new approaches developed in the wake of I. M. Lewis's (1971) work. Lewis emphasized how women can use spirit possession to accrue attention and goods as well as to enhance their status by joining peripheral possession cults. More recent interpretations (e.g., Lambek 1980; Kessler 1977) have shown how spirit possession can restructure the domestic unit and alter power relations within it, and the three case studies discussed here show a similar process at work. For Cristina and the three sisters, the supernatural power of the spirit infestation translated into domestic power with respect to the adult males in their lives (and to the extent that they were aligned with the men, the adult females as well). Likewise, Lola was able to act out control and independence with respect to her male ghost in ways that she was not able to with her father and brother, and this in turn may have helped her build her self-confidence with respect to them. In short, these cases show how supernatural power may be transformed into domestic power in ways that are potentially more permanent and less trivial than accruing attention, status, and wealth.

A second line of post-Lewis analyses--represented by the work of Boddy (1988), Kenny (1986), and Siegel (1978)--shows how multiple personality and spirit possession

serve as idioms for restructuring personal identity and questioning given cultural orders, particularly questions of gender. Although this possibility is more difficult to assess in the case of the three sisters, both Cristina's and Lola's ghosts appear to be linked to conflicts they had between the modern, cosmopolitan world to which they were drawn and the rigid, relatively traditional world of their parents, especially of their fathers. By becoming haunted women, they were able to establish themselves as different from their families, and this space of psychic power provided them with the power to carve out a new identity, or at least to explore its possibility: a starlet or a Lola. That these intrapsychic/cultural conflicts were closely aligned with the interpersonal/domestic political ones discussed in the previous paragraph shows how closely related these two strands of post-Lewis interpretations in fact are.

Not only does the framework of the anthropological literature on spirit possession help elucidate cases of spirit infestation, but the latter also add a dimension which is not discussed much in the anthropological literature on spirit possession, nor for that matter in the parapsychological case histories of poltergeists: the problem of domestic violence. It is puzzling that in the many case histories of poltergeists recorded by parapsychologists, the theme of "repressed hostility" and interpersonal conflicts appears frequently, but domestic violence is rarely if ever mentioned. One exception is Andrade (1989: 36), who notes in passing that the thirteen-year-old girl in his case from Suzano, São Paulo, had been "hit on several occasions by her father."⁷ Likewise, in the anthropological literature on spirit possession, this issue receives relatively scant attention. One exception is the earlier analysis of Harper (1963: 172), who notes that in India spirit possession provides one option--among which he rather dryly includes suicide attempts--of "stress reduction" for young married women, who are frequently harassed and sometimes beaten. Given the paucity of references to violence against women and children in both the poltergeist and spirit possession literature, together with the limited number of case studies presented here, it would be brash to make any claims here, and, again, universal claims on this issue are to be resisted. Nevertheless, the link suggested by the materials presented in this article (as well as in Andrade's Suzano case) may be more than a coincidence, and it may turn out to be rather commonplace in a large number of cases. At the minimum, the problem of domestic violence deserves to be flagged for the attention of future researchers of both non-ceremonial spirit possession and spirit infestation.

Many years ago, in response to criticism from Andrew Lang, the skeptic Frank Podmore dismissed the psychical researchers' work on poltergeists by arguing that this type of ghost was the merely the handiwork of "naughty little girls" (Podmore 1898-9: 135). Unlike both Lang and Podmore, I have bracketed the unresolved question of whether or not paranormal phenomena occur in cases of spirit infestation. For the purposes here, it is enough to say that to the people who live in haunted houses, the phenomena are indeed paranormal if not other-worldly. Nevertheless, like Lang I am troubled by Podmore's comment, although for a different reason: Podmore's formula appears to blame the victim. It may be time to take this formula, which increasingly appears to have been standing on its head, and put it rightside up: if spirits of the type discussed here are the work of "naughty little girls," the preliminary results of the interviews discussed here point the finger beyond them to the role of "naughty big boys."

Notes

1. The articles by Russell and Brown in Davidson (1981) are exceptions to this general pattern, but these studies both rely on historical documents rather than first-hand interviews.

2. Since some scientists accept the category of "psychic forces of the living" (i.e., "recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis") as a this-worldly, scientific explanation, my classification of it along with ghosts and demons may be problematic; however, since the paranormal is far from a universally accepted explanation among scientists, this paper will consider it an "emic" explanation.

3. These definitions are somewhat different from those of Lewis (1971: 55-65), but at least for the purposes of this essay they have the advantage of coming closer to the distinction in Brazilian culture between possession (possessão, a variant of which is obsession, or obsessão) and mediumship (mediunidade).

4. In distinguishing psychological and instrumentalist approaches from interpretive/cultural ones, I follow Holmberg (1983: 41). Also see the critical literature review by Csordas (1987).

5. I did not tape record this conversation, since I was not sure if the tape recorder would have inhibited him from talking. I took detailed notes as soon as I arrived in my hotel room that evening. The next day, when I interviewed Cristina and her mother, I used a tape recorder. This did not seem to inhibit the mother, but it may have contributed to Cristina's reticence. Anthropologist Neila Soares graciously helped me transcribe the two interviews.

6. In this interview and only this interview, I have not placed ellipses where I have cut material (including interruptions and my own questions) or where the tape was unintelligible. As a result, the quotations here should be interpreted as a summary rather than a transcription of the interview.

7. Along the same lines, Nasser Bandeira, a Pentecostalist minister whom I interviewed in Porto Alegre on June 20, also told me about a case of possession which he had "cured." He had attempted to exorcise a possessed girl in front of his congregation, but she continued to act possessed, so after the ceremony he took her to his office, switched to a day-to-day Portuguese, and told her he knew she was not possessed and that she could trust him and tell him what was really the problem. She then confessed that she was afraid she was pregnant, and if her father found out, he would kill her. The pastor then recommended that the girl go to a doctor, and if she was pregnant, have a friend go and talk to the parents. Fortunately, she turned out not to be pregnant.

REFERENCES

- ANDRADE, HERNANI GUIMARÃES. 1989. Poltergeist. Algumas das suas Occorências no Brasil. São Paulo: Pensamento.
- BODDY, JANICE. 1988. Spirits and Selves in Northern Sudan: the Cultural Therapeutics of Possession and Trance. American Ethnologist 15(1): 4-27.
- BROWN, DIANA. 1986. Umbanda: Religion and Politics in an Urban Religious Movement. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press.
- CLIFFORD, JAMES. 1988. On Ethnographic Authority. The Predicament of Culture (J. Clifford, ed.), pp. 21-54. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

- CRAPANZANO, VINCENT. 1977a. Introduction. Case Studies in Spirit Possession (V. Crapanzano and V. Garrison, eds.), pp. 1-40. New York: Wiley.
- _____. 1977b. Mohammed and Dawia: Possession in Morocco. Case Studies in Spirit Possession (V. Crapanzano and V. Garrison, eds.), pp. 141-176. New York: Wiley.
- CSORDAS, THOMAS. 1987. Health and the Holy in African and Afro-American Spirit Possession. Social Science and Medicine 24(1): 1-11.
- DAVIDSON, HILDA, R. ELLIS, and W. M. S. RUSSELL. 1981. The Folklore of Ghosts. Cambridge, U.K.: Folklore Society.
- FREED, STANLEY and RUTH S. FREED. 1985. The Psychomedical Case History of a Low-Caste Woman of North India. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 60(2): 101-228.
- FRIDERICHS, EDVINO A. 1979. Panorama da Parapsicologia ao Alcance de Todos. São Paulo: Loyola.
- _____. 1980. Casas Mal-Assombradas. Fenômenos de Telergia. São Paulo: Loyola.
- GAULD, ALAN, and A.D. CORNELL. 1979. Poltergeists. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- HARPER, EDWARD. 1963. Spirit Possession and Social Structure. Anthropology on the March (Bala Ratnam, ed.), pp. 165-177. Madras: The Book Center.
- HESS, DAVID J. 1987a. Religion, Heterodox Science, and Brazilian Culture. Social Studies of Science 17(3): 465-477.
- _____. 1987b. O Espiritismo e as Ciências. Religião e Sociedade 14(3): 40-54.
- _____. 1987c. The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil. Luso-Brazilian Review 24(2): 15-34.
- _____. 1987d. Review of Michael Kenny, The Passion of Ansel Bourne. Transcultural Psychiatric Research Review 24: 210-213.
- _____. 1989a. Spirit Infestation as an Idiom of Distress. Transcultural Psychiatric Research Review 26: 33-38.
- _____. 1989b. Disobsessing DisobSESSION: Religion, Ritual, and the Social Sciences in Brazil. Cultural Anthropology 4(2): 182-193.
- HOLMBERG, DAVID. 1983. Shamanic Soundings: Femaleness in the Tamang Ritual Structure. Signs 9(1): 40-58.
- JACOB, PAUL. 1977. Les revenants de la Beauce. Montréal: Boréal Express.
- JONES, L. C. 1983. Things that go Bump in the Night. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press (orig. 1959).
- KENNY, MICHAEL. 1986. The Passion of Ansel Bourne: Multiple Personality in American Culture. Washington, D.C.: The Smithsonian Institution Press.

- _____. 1983. Paradox Lost: The Latah Problem Revisited. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease 171: 159-167.
- KESSLER, CLIVE. 1977. Conflict and Sovereignty in Kelantanese Malay Spirit Séances. Case Studies in Spirit Possession (V. Crapanzano and V. Garrison, eds.), pp. 295-331. New York: Wiley.
- LAMBEK, MICHAEL. 1980. Spirits and Spouses: Possession as a System of Communication among the Malagasy Speakers of Mayotte. American Ethnologist 7(2): 318-331.
- _____. 1981. Human Spirits: A Cultural Account of Trance in Mayotte. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- LEWIS, I. M. 1971. Ecstatic Religion. An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism. New York: Penguin.
- _____. 1986. Religion in Context: Cults, and Charisma. Cambridge University Press.
- OBEYESEKERE, GANANATH. 1970. The Idiom of Demonic Possession. A Case Study. Social Science and Medicine 4: 97-111.
- PODMORE, FRANK. 1898-9. Review of Andrew Lang, The Making of Religion. Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research XIV: 128-138.
- SIEGEL, JAMES. 1978. Curing Rites, Dreams, and Domestic Politics in a Sumatran Society. Glyph 3: 18-31.
- WEDENOJA, WILLIAM. 1978. Religion and Adaptation in Rural Jamaica. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at San Diego, University Microfilms, No. DEL 79-09-831, San Diego, California.

Hess, David J. 1991. *Spirits and Scientists: Ideology, Spiritism, and Brazilian Culture*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press.

The following selection is the book's introduction.

In February, 1985, the elegant Maksoud Plaza in São Paulo hosted the First International Congress on Alternative Therapies. Its organizers announced the purpose of the meeting as follows:

To promote a meeting of researchers and professionals (such as doctors, psychologists, therapists, healers, etc.) from different parts of the world, whose work is directed toward a more comprehensive and integrated view of the human being and who take into consideration the relationship between body-mind-spirit and its implications in the prevention, maintenance, and/or recovery of health [from the brochure that announced the conference].

The conference was proclaimed as a positive response to a meeting in 1977 of the World Health Organization, which had called for the study of alternative treatments and therapies that take into consideration the social, cultural, and economic factors of each country. At the First International Congress on Alternative Therapies, Brazilians joined with invited guests from other countries to deliver papers on topics as diverse as the laying on of hands and spiritual passes, past lives therapy, disobsession and exorcism therapies, transpersonal psychology, acupuncture, chromotherapy, yoga therapy, iridology, psychotrance therapy, homeopathy, parapsychological cures, and psychic surgery.

If Brazil is known as one of the world's richest laboratories of religious syncretism--the meeting and mingling of Catholic saints and West African *orixás*--this conference involved another kind of syncretism, a "modern" or even "postmodern" syncretism that not only brought together different worldviews and healing traditions from Western and non-Western cultures, but also articulated these with Western science, biomedicine, and various contemporary political ideologies. Yet to describe the juxtaposition of ideas and actors under the rubric of "syncretism" might mean underplaying an implicit order,¹ and an eye and ear attuned to the world of alternative Brazilian religion, science, and medicine--a Brazilian New Age which makes that of California seem tame in comparison--could detect the order behind the apparent pastiche of alternative therapies. As a Spiritist psychiatrist pointed out to me during the conference, "This has ended up being a Spiritist congress," and although the official sponsors of the conference included a diverse group of alternative organizations from several countries, the most influential were the Spiritist leaders, doctors, and intellectuals from São Paulo.

Spiritists form a highly visible and numerically important social movement in Brazil, one that has already attracted the attention of historians, sociologists, and anthropologists.² Sometimes called "Kardecists" or "*kardecistas*," Spiritists define their doctrine as a synthesis of science, philosophy, and Christian

morality. Although their intellectual father, Allan Kardec, was a Frenchman rooted in both the rationalism and romanticism of nineteenth-century Europe, his synthesis of diverse religious and philosophical currents has won a wide following in contemporary Brazil, a nation known for its multi-cultural eclecticism. Kardec's doctrine includes beliefs that have historical origins in hermetic and esoteric traditions (the astral body, vital fluids, and spirit communication through mediums), Indic philosophy (reincarnation and karma), highly reformed Protestant theology (a unitarian doctrine and the interpretation of heaven and hell as psychological states), Catholicism (the emphasis on spiritual hierarchies and the mediating role of an extra-Biblical doctrine), social reformism (the emphasis on equality, progress, freedom of thought, and education), as well as modern science (what Kardec called the "experimental" side of Spiritism, which later became known as psychical research and still later as parapsychology).

The last aspect of Kardec's doctrine has especially interested the intellectuals of the Spiritist movement in Brazil; they have developed an elaborate system of science and medicine that is the topic of this study. Although the medical profession and the university scientists generally frown on Spiritist "pseudo-science," it plays a central role in mediating between elite science and medicine on one side and popular religion and healing on the other. The work of Brazilian Spiritist intellectuals therefore provides a good case study of what anthropologists encounter with greater and greater frequency: an international world in which the non-Western and traditional is entering into increasing dialogue with the Western or "modern," and a world in which local movements and communities have an increasingly sophisticated and even critical view of cosmopolitan science, medicine, religion, and political ideology. In a sense, this is the anthropology of the future. By using the work of Spiritist intellectuals as a case study, *Spirits and Scientists* will provide one way of challenging the walls that many sociological and anthropological studies build around local systems of religion, medicine, or science as distinct "fields" or "systems," and instead it will develop a methodology for their study as part of a broader, cosmopolitan ideological arena.

The French sociologist/ethnologist Roger Bastide has provided the most important sociological interpretation of Spiritist scientific thought, and his ideas continue to influence students of Brazilian religion today. Bastide (1967) situated Spiritist intellectuals' scientific thought in terms of a triadic scheme of class stratification among spirit mediumship religions: on the bottom he placed the working class (especially mulattoes and blacks), drawn to Umbanda;³ in the middle was the white, middle class, which formed the heart of the evangelical side of the Spiritist movement; and at the top were the professional groups of the upper class, who were more interested in psychical research (*metapsíquica*) or the scientific side of Spiritism.⁴ In *The African Religions of Brazil*, Roger Bastide described Spiritists' scientific thought as follows:

One type of [S]piritism is that of the intellectuals, doctors, engineers, civil servants, and even members of the teaching profession--the type that claims to be scientific. Yet behind their experimentation with parapsychology, one senses a predilection for the mysterious, the

restlessness of a soul in search of miracles, Saint Thomas wanting to reach out and touch the miracle (1978/1960: 314).

Bastide apparently liked this phrase enough to repeat it in a somewhat more refined statement on Spiritism written seven years later:

One finds the [S]piritism of the upper class among the groups of plantation owners or the high bourgeoisie, industrialists, merchants, and in the group of intellectuals, teachers, lawyers, and above all doctors. But one speaks less of [S]piritism than *métapsychie* [parapsychology or psychical research], which is to say that [S]piritism is only accepted to the extent that it transforms itself into science. Nevertheless, the success of certain mediums...shows that they do not make much of a distinction between charlatanism and controlled experiments, and behind the *métapsychie* one senses that a certain taste for the miraculous: an experimental miracle reveals itself (1967: 5).

It is worth considering for a moment the implicit sociological assumptions of these passages. Bastide's interpretation of Spiritist scientific thought represents a kind of Veblanesque "snob" theory: the upper segments of the social pyramid in Brazil may be as mystical as the rest of the population, but they like to clothe their mysticism in a scientific language. It is true that this theory has a certain amount of explanatory power: it tells us why an intellectual, scientific Spiritist discourse has emerged in the first place and which segments of society ensure its continued survival. However, it does not help very much when one comes to the question of understanding the meaning of the tremendous body of books, articles, speeches, and lectures that Spiritist intellectuals have produced.

To understand the meaning of Spiritist intellectual discourse, one needs context, and this context must be broader than the one Bastide supplies: the class and status divisions among spirit mediumship religions. In *The Gods of the People* (1980), Carlos Rodrigues Brandão adopts as his unit of analysis the Brazilian religious system as a whole, which he subdivides into three main "areas": the spirit mediumship religions, Protestantism, and Catholicism. Within each area, he distinguishes a "popular domain," a "domain of mediation," and an "erudite domain," the latter occupied by Spiritism, Presbyterianism and Baptism, and the Catholic Church (1980: 114ff.).⁵ Brandão's work has the advantage of adopting the entire religious system as the unit of analysis, and at one point he provides a brief discussion of the crucially important interactions between categories such as Catholicism and Spiritism (104-108); nevertheless, even the entire religious system is too limited a framework for understanding the thought of a group of intellectuals who are deeply involved in the currents of contemporary science, medicine, social science, and politics, and one must instead submerge the notion of "religion" in a broader arena of ideological dialogue, debate, and discourse.

By extending the scope of analysis to a broader framework of actors and ideologies, it becomes clear that the scientific and medical thought of Spiritist intellectuals is considerably more complicated than Bastide had envisioned. Rather than representing the upper end of a limited field of spirit mediumship

religions, Spiritist thought instead occupies a mediating position between the popular religions below it in the social pyramid and those ideologies and groups that have more prestige and/or power, such as official Catholicism, orthodox science, official state ideology, northern hemisphere heterodox science, and even the social sciences.

Much of the current research in Brazilian studies is beginning to examine religion in terms of this broader context, and what I say here only makes this tendency and theoretical position more explicit.⁶ I think of this broader confluence of social and cultural systems as a historically and culturally situated "ideological arena" that includes religion, science, medicine, social science, and political ideology, both at the national and international level. This framework combines the approaches of Geertz (1973) and Bourdieu (1982) and adds to them an emphasis on the relations among the various "ideologies" or discourses: despite their radical differences, both social theorists interpret religion, political ideology, science, etc., as relatively differentiated "cultural systems" or autonomous "fields of power." In contrast, the framework here is closer to what anthropologist James Boon described as the part of the functionalist monograph which ethnographers tended to leave out: "chapters on relations between a particular culture and others and on that culture's own sense of others" (1982: 15). In the condition that anthropologists George Marcus and Michael Fischer (1986) refer to as a world of "posts"--postcolonialism, postmodernism, etc.--what one might have previously viewed as relatively discrete or autonomous fields of discourse are instead seen here as dialogically related to each other in a broader ideological arena.⁷

An important aspect of the ideological arena is the relationship between the dominant institutions of society, those which represent the various kinds of orthodoxies (religious, scientific, medical, political, etc.), and the more popular groups which attempt to appropriate the orthodoxies' language, as occurs when popular religious, philosophical, and occult groups discuss their thought in a scientific idiom. Scientists and other representatives of orthodoxy may respond by engaging in what sociologist Thomas Gieryn (1983) calls "boundary-work," which often includes explaining why the claims of heterodox scientists are not, from their perspective, scientifically valid.⁸

Spirits and Scientists expands on Gieryn's concept of "boundary-work" by recognizing that they proceed in such a way that, for example, Umbandists look down on Macumba magicians, Spiritists on Umbandists, Spiritist intellectuals on other Spiritists, and so on in a hierarchical and recursive structure. Thus there are multiple boundaries that collapse and are redrawn according to context. In addition, as the case of Brazilian Spiritism shows, boundary-work involves more than just intellectual arguments which defend social interests and challenge or preserve social hierarchies; boundary-work is also a kind of cultural or social drama (Turner 1974) in which broader values and worldviews clash and articulate themselves (also see Hess 1990e and Downey 1988).

An intellectually honest discussion of these processes must eventually come to terms with the fact that the social sciences are also part of this same ongoing dialogue. In other words, we, too, are engaged in our own forms of

boundary-work. This level of complexity allows for a reflexive critical portrayal of the social sciences as part of the ideological arena. For example, if one looks again at Bastide's quote about Spiritist intellectuals, it is evident that he manages to describe Spiritist intellectuals as snobs in a way that can only be described as itself condescending. In other words, his description assumes that his own perspective, ostensibly that of a neutral social scientist (a neutrality which this study will question), is somehow superior to that of the Spiritist: Bastide inscribes one sort of hierarchy even as he describes another. *Spirits and Scientists* addresses this problem in more detail in the last chapter, which provides, in the phrase of Marcus and Fischer (1986), a "cultural critique" of the ideological dimension⁹ of the social scientists' theories about Brazilian religion.

The choice to write reflexively about the discourse of the social sciences is related to my methodological decision to violate one of the taboos of anthropological writing: the textual taboo. If I had chosen to focus on sex, for example, in a study of prostitutes or college undergraduates, it is unlikely that the anthropological community would even blink. In a similar way, in *Spirits and Scientists* I have chosen to emphasize Spiritists' texts or "public discourse," that is, their books, articles, pamphlets, conference speeches, lectures, tape-recorded interviews with me, and so on. However, as I have become painfully aware in the last few years, some anthropologists maintain a rather strong taboo on the use of texts--a kind of disciplinary boundary work that prohibits healthy exogamous relations with other fields, such as literary criticism--and consequently it is necessary to justify a choice which, in a world of interdisciplinary experiments and "blurred genres" (Geertz 1980), should not need justification at all.

One argument for using texts as the organizing device is that it becomes easier to juxtapose Spiritists' discourse with their others, especially social scientists: "textual equality" reinforces the idea that both are part of the same arena of ideological debate and dialogue, rather than related as observer/observed or subject/object. A more important justification comes from the Spiritists themselves: the primary activity of Spiritist intellectuals is, like most other intellectuals, to write, lecture, grant interviews, or, more generally, produce texts. Furthermore, because the "tribe" of Spiritist intellectuals is scattered across huge cities throughout one of the largest countries in the world, their sense of community derives largely from their textual relations: their exchanges of books, articles, newspapers, and so on. Even when their relations are not mediated by texts, such as when they get together at meetings and conferences, what they do is lecture and give talks, that is, produce a highly textualized form of public discourse. Finally, after I interviewed or talked informally with Spiritist intellectuals (and many of their critics), they often ended the dialogue by giving me books and telling me to go home and read them. "Study the doctrine," Spiritists admonished me, and in a sense this is what I do in *Spirits and Scientists*.

The choice to emphasize texts therefore does not indicate an underlying allegiance to the seamless semiotics of the "world as a text" (see the critique by Clifford 1983; Hess 1989c). Instead, the choice provides a way of getting at the issues of rhetoric, ideology, cultural values, and institutional legitimation that are involved in the boundary-work of the ideological arena. Just as Spiritist intellectuals themselves do not see the texts as an end in themselves, in *Spirits and Scientists* I use their texts as the windows on or gateways to the question of ideology, of how ideas are related to the diacritics and dialectics of social structures and cultural meanings.

To read the texts in terms of their social, cultural, and historical context inevitably leads to the society, culture, and history in which they are embedded. Consequently, the texts are discussed in terms of a great deal of ethnographic description and historical contextualization: rituals, conferences, legal conflicts, educational programs, interviews, conversations, gossip, and so on. Meetings and conferences of course provided an opportunity for participant-observation, but field research in this context meant not only conventional methods--spending time talking with Spiritists (and their critics), attending their conferences, observing the sessions of Spiritist centers, listening to lectures (even giving a few), interviewing them, and teaching a course in their college--it also meant studying their history in their libraries and reading and interpreting the many books and articles they gave me. My method and discourse are therefore syncretic and interdisciplinary, like the work of the Spiritist intellectuals themselves.¹⁰

Syncretic and interdisciplinary, but, I hope, comprehensible and well-organized as well. Part One provides frameworks for understanding the Spiritist movement and the role of the Spiritist intellectuals. The first chapter adopts some of the categories of the holistic ethnographic monograph and describes the position of Spiritism in the Brazilian religious system as well as Spiritist beliefs, practices, social organization, and representations of the other-world. The second chapter situates the Spiritist intellectuals in the broader ideological arena of contemporary Brazil, and it also examines the cultural context of Spiritist science and medicine.

Part Two presents contextualized case studies of Spiritist philosophical, scientific, medical, and sociological thought. The first two chapters of this section are historical: chapter three examines Kardec's doctrine in the context of nineteenth-century French ideology, and chapter four moves on to some of the social and cultural forces behind its Brazilianization in turn-of-the-century Brazil. The remaining chapters examine contemporary relations between Spiritism and the parasciences, official and alternative medicine, and the social sciences. Throughout Part Two, each chapter begins with a "reference text"¹¹ that serves as an organizing device and an example of a specific kind of discipline (Spiritist doctrine, parascience, medicine, social theory) or "genre" (see Appendix I) of Spiritist scientific and philosophical thought. Because the theoretical argument of this study is that the narrow class and status dynamics of the spirit mediumship religions cannot provide an adequate context for understanding Spiritist doctrine, medicine, and science, chapters begin with this context but then move out to the

broader religious, scientific/medical, and political contexts. These include other texts, historical events, overheard gossip, observed rituals, and whatever else is relevant for achieving the fullest possible understanding of Spiritist thought in the context of the ideological arena.

¹I refer here to sociological and anthropological formulations such as R. Bastide (1978/1960) on interpenetration and T. Kirsch (1977) on complexity. It is left up to the reader to determine whether or not recognizing an implicit order implies the label "modern" or "postmodern," a criterion that F. Jameson (1984) invokes in his distinction between pastiche and collage.

²See, for example, the studies of sociologists R. Bastide (1978/1960, 1967) and C. Camargo (1961, 1973); the articles of historian D. Warren (1968a, 1968b, 1984) on nineteenth-century Spiritism; sociologist J. P. Renshaw's dissertation (1969), which focused on the Spiritist movement in Campinas; anthropologist S. Greenfield's research (1986, 1987) on patronage relations and Spiritist healers; an article on the medium Francisco Cândido "Chico" Xavier by anthropologist L. E. Soares (1979); and anthropologist M. Cavalcanti's ethnography (1983) of a Spiritist center and institute in Rio. The latter noted the absence of work on the intellectual elite of the Spiritist movement, and she suggested that "[it] would be interesting to research the relationship between Spiritism and official science, the theories and currents of which the Spiritists discuss" (1983: 76).

³Umbanda is a spirit mediumship religion that emerged in twentieth-century, urban Brazil. Many terms such as "Umbanda" are defined in the glossary.

⁴M. Cavalcanti (1983: 26-29) has also discussed division between "evangelical" and "intellectual" Spiritists, which is parallel to the second and third of Bastide's categories. Spiritists reject the inclusion of Umbanda under the umbrella term "Spiritism," and this study will follow the Spiritists' usage of the term. Thus "Spiritist" will mean someone who follows the teachings of Allan Kardec and belongs to this movement (again, see the glossary).

⁵Brandão's division of the mediumistic area into three stratified domains corresponds in a rough way to Bastide's distinctions among Spiritism, Umbanda, and Macumba magic (1978/1960; 1967: 11; cf. Hess 1990a). Umbanda, however, is very difficult to characterize, and social scientists disagree among themselves regarding the relative importance of middle class participation and bourgeois ideology in Umbanda (e.g., Brown 1986, Ortiz 1978, Negrão 1978), but these differing positions share with Bastide and Brandão the assumption that Umbanda plays a mediating role in the religious system. On the whole, the evidence supports the argument that Umbanda mediates class and status conflicts and even articulates and dramatizes them, and because of this, many of the recent studies on Umbanda implicitly put this religion in an intermediary position at the "center" of the spirit mediumship field: an "Umbanda-centrism." While this framework is correct as far as it goes, in effect it diverts interest from Spiritism and blinds us to *its* mediating position in a broader field of ideologies.

⁶For example, recent studies on Umbanda by P. Birman (1985), D. Brown (1977, 1979, 1985, 1986), M. H. Concone and L. Negrão (1985), L. Negrão (1979), R. Ortiz (1978), and T. Pechman (1982) consider the relations between Umbanda and the Catholic Church, political parties, the state, and political ideologies. Another group of studies has examined Spiritist and Umbanda healing as a form of parallel or complementary medicine. For example, C. Milner's dissertation (1981) examines the healing practices of Umbanda and a Spiritist federation in Rio in the framework of complementary medical systems, and studies by M. Loyola (1984), P. Montero (1985), and R. Perelberg (1980) have examined the issue of parallel or complementary medical systems, even though they have not examined Spiritist medicine in detail. Also see the bachelor's thesis by D. Keefe (1976), which provides a case study of healing in an Umbanda center and a mixed Spiritist-Umbanda center in Rio, and the chapter in E. Brody's book (1973) that includes descriptions of his visits to Spiritist centers in Rio. Perhaps closest to the perspective of this study is the work of B. Dantas (1982) and Y. Maggie (1986, 1988), who consider the inter-relations of elite ideologies, the state, and Afro-Brazilian religion and magic.

⁷A similar point of reference is F. Jameson's (1984) discussion of the destruction of the "autonomy" of the "cultural sphere" or literary and artistic discourse; however, he seems to leave unquestioned the autonomy of scientific discourse.

⁸I adopt the terminology of "orthodoxy" and "heterodoxy" in order to emphasize that such categories are co-constituted and reproduce themselves on multiple levels. One might distinguish between "heterodoxy," which refers to the status of ideas, and "marginal," which refers to the social position of the actors. (I resist the term "deviant science" because Spiritists do not see themselves as deviant.) Heterodox ideas and groups are generally marginal, but this is not always the case. On the sociology of "marginal" or "deviant" science, see N. Ben-Yehuda (1985), R. G. A. Dolby (1979), E. Tiryakin (1974), M. Truzzi (1974/1971), R. Wallis (1979), and R. Wallis and P. Morley (1972). On the more specific topic of the social studies of parapsychology, see H. M. Collins and T. J. Pinch (1982), P. Allison (1979), and J. McClenon (1984). In the context of this literature, one might read *Spirits and Scientists* as an elaboration of the idea that Gieryn's concept of "boundary-work" can be viewed as cultural and social drama.

⁹I will not argue that one of these systems of thought is "ideology" as opposed to some other "true knowledge" represented by another system; instead, I will examine the ideological dimension of each system, including that of the social scientist. The phrase "ideological dimension" does not refer only to the narrow, instrumentalist aspect of an ideology, the aspect which C. Geertz describes as "whose ox gets gored" (1973); the term also includes the social meaning or the cultural values that the thought articulates, including the way each group's ideas marks itself diacritically with respect to other groups. As a result, the method here involves moving back and forth between the structural question of how ideology marks social differences and articulates cultural values and the instrumental question of how it serves social interests. My goal is therefore to

strike a balance between the symbolic approach (e.g., Durkheim and Mauss 1963; Lévi-Strauss 1966: ch. 2; Geertz 1973: ch. 8) and the instrumentalist approach (e.g., Bourdieu 1975, 1982; Giddens 1988). This goal provides a second reason for using the term "ideological arena" instead of ideology as a "cultural system" or a "field of power."

¹⁰My occasional use of word-play is also part of this strategy. With plays on the meaning of words such as "poltergeist" and "trance," I hope to signal how patterns at one level of discourse recur on other levels. For a more chronological view of the history of the Spiritist movement in Brazil, see D. Hess (1987c).

¹¹The term "reference text" intentionally invokes a loose comparison with the organization of *The Raw and the Cooked* (Lévi-Strauss 1975) around a "reference myth," but the adoption of shifting perspectives on the ideological system might also be compared to G. Bateson's approach to the Naven ritual (1958). J. Boon's (1982: 9-21) discussion of Frazer, Lévi-Strauss, Bateson, and the functionalist monograph was influential, as was M. Taussig's monumental, interdisciplinary synthesis of criticism, history, and ethnography (1987).

On Earth as it is in Heaven:

Spiritist Other-Worldly Ethnographies

Citation: Hess, David J. 1991 "On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Reading Spiritist Otherworldly Ethnographies." In Roberto Reis (ed.), *Toward Socio-Criticism: Selected Proceedings of the Conference "Luso-Brazilian Literatures, A Socio-Critical Approach."* Arizona State University at Tempe, Center for Latin American Studies.

This was part of a conference and volume that adopted a cultural studies approach to Brazil, with interactions from history, literary studies, and anthropology.

Decanonization strategies for Brazilian literature will inevitably encounter the huge corpus of Spiritist (kardecista) literature, much of which is in the form of "psychographed" texts written by spirits via spirit mediums. Quantitatively, the Spiritist literary output is impressive: most people familiar with Brazil have seen the Spiritist book stores and bancas of the major cities, and Spiritists like to point out that their leading medium-writer, Francisco Cândido "Chico" Xavier, is said to have sold as many books as Jorge Amado. Qualitatively, the Spiritist corpus encompasses a wide variety of genres--from scientific, political, and historical texts to novels, poetry, and devotional literature--as well as a wide range of spirit writers, including well-known literary and historical personages such as Victor Hugo, Humberto de Campos, Bezerra de Menezes, and Emmanuel (sometimes equated with Manoel de Nobrega).

Yet this mine of "popular" literature has attracted little attention from scholars; it seems to fall between the cracks of literary studies, for which the texts are too popular, and anthropology and folklore, for which they are too middle-class and elite. This essay begins the examination of the Spiritist literary production from a socio-critical perspective by focussing exclusively on one genre of Spiritist texts: those "psychographed" by Spiritist mediums that provide other-worldly travelogues or ethnographies. Because the other world is in so many ways similar to this-worldly Brazil, these texts provide a rich terrain for an interdisciplinary interpretation of the ways in which Brazilians represent their own culture. This essay focuses on the description of other-worldly politics in texts written by three Spiritist mediums in Brazil at three time periods: Chico Xavier's *Nosso Lar* (by the spirit of André Luiz), from the Estado Novo period; Hercílio Maes's *A Vida no Planeta Marte* (by the spirit of Ramatís), from the 1950's; and Zibia Gasparetto's *O Mundo em que eu Vivo* (by the spirit of Silveira Sampaio), from the early 1980's.

The method employed here reads these books as cultural texts, that is, as dramatizations of or discourse about the social world. The theoretical framework for reading these texts draws on the ferment in the sociology and anthropology of Brazilian religion which currently surrounds revisions of the influential work of Roger Bastide. In recent years, several scholars have developed critical readings of Bastidian sociology; they either challenge his ideas directly (e.g., Dantas 1982, Fry 1986, Maggie 1986) or develop alternative analyses of religions such as Umbanda (e.g., Brown 1986, DaMatta 1981, Hess in press). Most of these analyses have challenged Bastide's interpretation of Afro-Brazilian religions, but similar questions emerge regarding his interpretation of Kardecista Spiritism (see Hess 1987b, 1989). For example, in his analysis of the discourse of Spiritist sessions, Bastide argues that it represents "le puritanisme de la petite classe moyenne" and "une expression symbolique d'un certain 'statut social', la

manifestation extérieure d'un 'comportement de classe'" (1967: 15). He finds middle-class Spiritists bound "à son puritanisme comme à une défense, et d'autant plus rigide qu'il est plus menacé par le climat sensuel de la grande ville tropicale" (ibid). To a certain extent, Bastide's reading of Spiritism as a conservative, puritanical, middle-class discourse is credible; however, this perspective does not leave room for many of the ambiguities found in Spiritist texts, not to mention their critical voices. Therefore this essay complements Bastide's approach by showing how Spiritist texts can simultaneously legitimate and question, or reproduce and undermine, existing institutions.

The House and the Umbral

Of the other-worldly Spiritist travelogues, perhaps Xavier's *Nosso Lar* (1944) is the best known. Narrated by the spirit doctor André Luiz (sometimes said to be the spirit of Carlos Chagas), *Nosso Lar* is the first in a series of books bearing the same name, a series with which almost all Spiritists are familiar. One can therefore state with some assurance that the representations of the other world in *Nosso Lar* are characteristic of Brazilian Spiritism.

Nosso Lar is the name of the celestial colony reserved for Brazilians. It has been in existence since the sixteenth century, when the first Portuguese who died in Brazil founded it (Xavier 1984: 32, 69), but it is still "de trabalho e realização," a situation that many Brazilians would liken to their terrestrial homeland. *Nosso Lar*'s rather low position in the celestial hierarchy parallels Brazilians' perception of their country's position in the this-worldly, international hierarchy. Still, the celestial colony is located directly above Rio de Janeiro, and for Brazilians it is "our home." The analysis that follows will provide one interpretation of why this is the case.

Nosso Lar opens with André Luiz tossing in the umbral, a threshold zone between earth and heaven where he has spent eight years being chased about by one terrifying image after another. Luiz calls out, but no one answers him; he only hears silence or the voice of someone more isolated than he. Finally, after what seems like an eternity of suffering, the celestial powers send Clarêncio, a highly evolved spirit, to rescue Luiz and to become his patron. Luiz later learns that he was only rescued after his mother descended from higher planes to *Nosso Lar* in order to dar um jeitinho on her son's behalf (47). After her prodding, the celestial bureaucracy sent Clarêncio.

The double intervention--the mother in the bureaucracy and the bureaucracy in the threshold zone of umbral--has, in Roberto DaMatta's terms (1978, 1985), the underlying structure of the transformation of the outsider (indivíduo) into the insider (pessoa), or street into house. Umbral is literally a "threshold," or a space which divides house and street. Taken literally, if *Nosso Lar* is the home and umbral is the threshold, then Brazil must be the street, a not very flattering self-representation. However, umbral itself might also be interpreted as a social space like the street, where spirits are outsiders with respect to the personal ties of *Nosso Lar* and terrestrial Brazil, which are both spaces of "house" relative to the umbral. In either case, *Nosso Lar* is literally and structurally "our home," and its inhabitants are constantly preoccupied with maintaining the boundary between it and the outside zones, where other spirits lurk and threaten to invade.

A second major similarity between *Nosso Lar* and terrestrial Brazil lies in the political structure of the celestial colony. Anthropologist Luis Soares (1979: 139) argues that there is a close similarity between Xavier's thought and integralism, and the government of *Nosso Lar* does have an organic and hierarchical structure reminiscent of

Getúlio Vargas's *Estado Novo*, which dominated Brazil when the book was written. As André Luiz soon discovers, there are no elections in *Nosso Lar*; instead, the government is a dictatorship run by spirits from higher planes who descend to *Nosso Lar* to perform their functions as charity work (much as this-worldly Spiritists do charity work for *favelados*).

Another similarity of political structure involves the prominent role of bureaucracy. The social organization of *Nosso Lar* is based on six government ministries, and in this sense it reconstructs the Latin American political structure of bureaucracies that surround strong leaders. Luiz's colleague Lísias explains the social organization of *Nosso Lar* as follows:

Não tem visto, nos atos da prece, nosso governador Espiritual cercado de setenta e dois colaboradores? Pois são os Ministros de "Nosso Lar". A colônia, que é essencialmente de trabalho de realização, divide-se em seis Ministérios, orientados, cada qual, por doze Ministros. Temos os Ministérios da Regeneração, do Auxílio, da Comunicação, do Esclarecimento, da Elevação, e da União Divina. Os quatro primeiros nos aproximam das esferas terrestres, os dois últimos nos ligam ao plano superior, visto que a nossa cidade espiritual é zona de transição. Os serviços mais grosseiros localizam-se no Ministério da Regeneração, os mais sublimes no da União Divina. Clarêncio, o nosso chefe amigo, é um dos Ministros do Auxílio (1944: 51).

The government of *Nosso Lar* therefore appears to be an idealized version of the *Estado Novo*: it claims to be an effective and compassionate hierarchy, a giant and welcoming house. And when things do not work out in an ideal way, the inhabitants still have recourse to an institution which characterizes terrestrial Brazil--the *jeitinho* (see DaMatta 1986)--as in the case in which André Luiz's mother intervenes to rescue him from the umbral: on earth as it is in heaven.

Still, the spirit world of *Nosso Lar* is not a simple reflection of Brazilian society, not even the Brazilian society of the *Estado Novo*. Although both share a hierarchical and authoritarian political structure, in *Nosso Lar* the dictatorship is benevolent and the *jeitinho* works for common people such as André Luiz. Unlike in this-worldly Brazil, in *Nosso Lar* the governor does not need to use authoritarian police measures to deal with dissidence; instead, he merely explains to them their mistakes, which they readily see (55). If the governor of *Nosso Lar* is a Brazilian coronel, he does not need to call on his *jagunços* to resolve disputes. Furthermore, the substantive concerns of the ministries of *Nosso Lar* differ from those of the terrestrial Brazilian ministries; there is no Orwellian Ministry of Security among the list of government bureaucracies. Finally, some Spiritists would argue that *Nosso Lar* is part of a longstanding strand of socialism in Spiritist thought, and it is true that wages in *Nosso Lar* are paid in terms of the bonus-hour, which appears to be the same for all types of work, while most buildings are part of the "*patrimônia comum*" (115). Thus the possibility of reading *Nosso Lar* as a critique of the *Estado Novo* exists alongside the possibility of reading it as an integralist text: on earth as it is not in heaven.

Life on the Planet Brazil

I move now to the 1950's and to Curitiba, where the medium Hercílio Maes worked. Although Maes psychographed a book called *A Vida Além da Sepultura*, his *A Vida no Planeta Marte* has much richer ethnographic detail, and for this reason it is used here.

Both texts are written by the spirit Ramatís, an Asian sage who, according to the medium, last lived on Earth in tenth-century Indochina, where he founded and directed "um templo iniciático, que era freqüentado por dezenas de discípulos" (13).

The format of Maes's texts is quite different from *Nosso Lar*: whereas the latter is a first-person narrative, the former follows the interview format of Allan Kardec's books, in which an anonymous Spiritist asks questions of the spirit guide, who provides his enlightened answers. Likewise, *A Vida no Planeta Marte* is not organized as a narrative; its various chapters on family, education, schools, religions, etc. are reminiscent of the descriptive genre of ethnography known as the functionalist monograph (see Boon 1982). This analysis will examine only the twenty-third chapter, "Governo," and it will leave the rich ethnographic materials of the rest of the text unexplored.

The chapter opens with the question, "Há certa semelhança entre o sistema de governo, em Marte, com algum de nosso mundo terreno?" Ramatís answers that Mars has only one central government for the whole planet, and its power is absolute:

Não foi o indivíduo que criou o sistema para dirigir um todo orgânico, mas a exigência vital do conjunto é que estabeleceu a unidade diretora, conforme acontece aos órgãos do corpo humano, que para sobrevivam mutuamente, em equilíbrio, submetem-se à regência do cérebro, que os comanda de acordo com as funções de cada um. Tornar-se-ia ilógico que o fígado, por exemplo, resolvesse criar um sistema baseado em sua própria função hepática, pretendendo, como esse "hepatismo", governar as necessidades de todo o corpo (262).

The totalitarian images and the organic metaphors of this passage suggest that the planet Mars is not too different from the *Estado Novo*; however, there are some key divergences. First, the leaders of the celestial government are "acima de quaisquer interesses pessoais ou de parentela, prepondera sempre o objetivo moral." In other words, universalistic values, rather than particularistic ones, predominate. Along the same lines, all Martians are steeped in Christian values, and this spiritual difference, rather than an institutional one, seems to explain the more advanced status of the Martian government.

A second difference between the government of Mars and that of the *Estado Novo* lies in the composition of the government, and here one begins to perceive some changes which are perhaps parallel to the trend toward democratization in the 1950's. The single governor of *Nosso Lar* is replaced by a "cérebro diretor" composed of twelve ministers, both men and women, the latter a point which Ramatís emphasizes and a progressive statement for 1955 (265). These ministers select from their number a leader who serves on a rotating basis as the "chefe coordenador administrativo" (265). Ramatís points out, in a kind of proto-Brizolão statement, that unlike the leaders of terrestrial governments, who build "palácios, estátuas ou monumentos [or Brasília?], enquanto ainda faltam escolas, hospitais, ou orfanatos," the leaders of Mars act according to the interests of the people (266). And, as if this is not utopian enough, Ramatís notes that corruption is almost unheard of on Mars (267, 269).

How are such philosopher-kings selected? To clarify the type of people who might serve on this council, Ramatís gives a list of self-abnegating leaders on earth, not one of whom was a Brazilian: Francis of Assisi, Pasteur, Henry Ford, Gandhi, Plato, Marconi, Shaw, Nightengale, Keller, Huss, Father Damien, Rockefeller, Edison, and Mozart (268). Leaders such as these are "eleito entre os mais credenciados em Marte, independente da contagem das urnas; é mais a conseqüência de um amadurecimento biológico" (268). Although Ramatís is vague on the nature of the elections, this passage suggests that Mars has elections of some sort, although the phrase "independente da

contagem das urnas" suggests that democratization is far from complete and suffrage is far from universal.

Nevertheless, in comparison to *Nosso Lar*, the Martian political system has several features suggestive of democracy which the earlier utopia lacked: power is now dispersed in a ruling body of ministers instead of being centralized in one all-powerful governor; the ministers are elected (although these elections may only be the means by which a self-perpetuating body, like the cardinalate, reproduces itself and selects its leader; the people apparently do not elect their leaders directly); and women are an integral part of the ruling body. Yet despite these movements in the direction of a more democratic polity, the Martian government is still thoroughly paternalistic--the leaders still know what is best for the people--and democracy in the sense of genuine dissent and dialogue is absent from the system. Unlike the party politics of the Kubitshek era, the political system of Mars remains a one-party, totalitarian utopia.

Other Colonies, Other Polities

Moving now to São Paulo and the 1980's, a new medium has emerged--Zibia Gasparetto--and with her a new other-worldly politics: in anthropologist James Boon's phrase, "other tribes, other scribes" (1982). Known among Spiritists as "a mãe de Gasparetto," the famous "pictograph" medium who receives spirits of great artists and paints pictures in their style, Zibia Gasparetto is an important figure in her own right. As a Spiritist from contemporary São Paulo, her texts represent the relatively more progressive and scientific values of the Paulista Spiritists. Of her dozen psychographed books, I shall choose one story from the collection *O Mundo em que eu Vivo*, by the spirit Silveira Sampaio, a spirit journalist who interviews other spirits and then relays his findings to this world via the medium. The result is a collection of short slice-of-life pieces reminiscent of the *crônica* genre.

In "O Sufrágio," Sampaio encounters a political gathering in which a political leader is protesting the current process of reincarnation. "Não!" he says, "Enfrentar nova vida na Terra, não!!" (45). The leader, who was a political leader during his terrestrial days, pushes for a "reencarnação mais humana e por pais mais equilibrados" (45). He goes on to promise that he and his "correligionários est[ão] treinando assistentes para acompanhá-los" on the rough road of reincarnation (46).

Another leader has a radically different platform: he calls for, in the words of a bystander, "uma reencarnação mais realista onde se possa aprender mais" (46). This leader asks the people, "O que são alguns anos de dor na Terra se com eles alcançamos nosso objetivo com mais rapidez?" (46). Sampaio seems to side with this leader, since he comments that the leader who favors a more humane reincarnation is "prometendo coisa que não vai poder cumprir" (47). Nevertheless, the leader in favor of a more humane reincarnation is gaining a following. Sampaio asks the bystander if this worries the directors of the celestial colony, but the bystander points out that the process is good training for the leaders, who will learn by their mistakes and therefore be better leaders in their future lives on earth (48). Sampaio also learns that the diretores have not yet decided if there will be elections (48); however, if they do, "é um direito que nossos maiores reconhecem e não vão impedir" (48). The exact meaning of "nossos maiores" is not spelled out, but it implies a level of power above that of the directors of the spiritual colony.

This situation is reminiscent of the political context of terrestrial Brazil in the early 1980's, when the text was published. In Brazil of the 1980's, opposition parties appear openly, and elections take place, but the ultimate decisions still rest with the military. The

diretores/maiores opposition of celestial Brazil might therefore be mapped onto the civilian/military opposition, or it could be interpreted as an echo of the relationship between national and international ruling elites. In either case, heaven again seems very similar to earth.

In Gasparetto's text, utopian politics have evolved considerably from those of Mars of the 1950's and *Nosso Lar* of the 1940's. Democracy now implies dissent, opposition, and elections, which are accepted despite the danger that the people will blindly believe the promises the leaders make. Nevertheless, ultimate authority rests not with the people but with the directors and superiors who preside over the system as benevolent but all-powerful rulers. In short, Brazilian heaven is continues to be organized as a hierarchy. In this sense, the underlying structure remains unchanged across the three texts and generations of other-worldly politics, as, many believe, it does in terrestrial Brazilian politics: *plus c'est la même chose, plus c'est la même chose*.

Concluding Comments

The underlying consistency of the changing politics of the Brazilian other world comes into relief when the Brazilian versions confront an American sibling. One example of an American Spiritualist description of the other world is found in a text written by the spirit Arthur Ford (himself a famous medium) via the medium Ruth Montgomery. To interpret this text properly, one would have to situate it in the American Spiritualist history of other-worldly ethnographies, but the point here is merely to underscore through contrast the similarity among the Brazilian other worlds. Montgomery/Ford's American afterworld is a kind of post-scarcity anarchist utopia (the book was published in 1971): there are no benevolent dictators, directors, or maiores lording over the celestial world (which, incidentally, is international in scope, not one colony among many, a point which perhaps reflects an American conceit of universality). In place of the higher powers that rule the Brazilian heavens, the American heaven has only a celestial computer which, similar to the computerized dating services of the United States of this world, matches up potential parents with spirits who wish to reincarnate. The computer's power is limited to the realm of reincarnation, just as the state's power is strictly limited in the United States of American ideology, which itself is rooted in the clockwork metaphors of the eighteenth-century federalists. Whereas in Brazilian ideology, a state is only as good as the people in power, in American ideology the people in power are only as good as the institutional limitations of the state.

Thus from both a comparative and a historical perspective, there are many parallels between this-worldly and other-worldly politics. Still, one cannot reduce the latter to the former; as I suggested at the outset, Spiritist celestial politics may be one means by which a segment of the Brazilian middle class rethinks and transforms its political values. In some cases, celestial politics may coincide with terrestrial politics in a way that a simple "reflection" model of ideology can adequately describe, but in other cases celestial politics may help clarify and legitimate political values which are both ahead of their time and posed in opposition to terrestrial politics. The relationship between celestial and terrestrial ideology is therefore a complex one, a two-way street, as indeed Spiritists believe is the nature of the relationship between this world and the spirit world.

Notes

1. For a background on this movement, see Hess (1987a). I wish to thank Roberto DaMatta for generously giving me his copy of *A Vida no Planeta Marte* and first suggesting to me the possibility of reading it as an ethnographic text about Brazil. Spiritist Nora Colombo directed me to the Gasparetto text.

2. Soares's comment is merely an aside in his 1979 article. Although he promises to develop this interesting suggestion in another article, this piece was never published, as far as I was able to ascertain.

Works Cited

Bastide, Roger. "Le Spiritisme au Brésil." *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* 24 (1967): 3-16.

Boon, James A. *Other Tribes, Other Scribes*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982.

Brown, Diana. *Umbanda. Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Press, 1986.

DaMatta, Roberto. *Carnavais, Malandros e Heróis*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1978.
 --. "The Ethic of Umbanda and the Spirit of Messianism." *Authoritarian Capitalism: Brazil's Contemporary Economic and Political Development*. T. Bruneau and P. Faucher, eds. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1981.
 --. *A Casa e a Rua*. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1985.
 --. *O que faz brasil, Brasil?* Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1986.

Dantas, Beatriz Goís. "Repensando a Pureza Nago." *Religião e Sociedade* 8 (1982): 15-20.

Fry, Peter. "Gallus Africanus est, ou, como Roger Bastide se tornou africano no Brasil." *Revisitando a Terra de Contrastes: A Atualidade da Obra de Roger Bastide*. Olga R. de Moraes von Simson (org.). São Paulo: FFLCH/CERU, 1986.

Gasparetto, Zibia. *O Mundo em que eu Vivo*. São Paulo: Associação Cristã de Cultura Espírita "Os Caminheiros" (n.d., circa 1983).

Hess, David J. "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24.2 (1987a): 15-34.
 --. "O Espiritismo e as Ciências." *Religião e Sociedade* 14.3 (1987b):41-54.
 --. "Disobsessing Disobsession: Religion, Ritual, and the Social Sciences in Brazil." *Cultural Anthropology* 4.2 (1989): 182-193.
 --. "Umbanda and Quimbanda Magic in Brazil: Rethinking Aspects of Bastide's Work." *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions*, in press.

Maes, Hercílio. *A Vida no Planeta Marte*. [Pelo Espírito de Ramatís]. Rio: Livraria Freitas Bastos, 1965.
 --. *A Vida Além da Sepultura*. [Pelo Espírito de Ramatís]. Rio: Livraria Freitas Bastos, 1982.

Maggie, Yvonne. "O Medo do Feitiço." *Religião e Sociedade* 13.1 (1986): 72-86.

Montgomery, Ruth. *A World Beyond*. Greenwich, CT.: Fawcett Publications, 1972.

Soares, Luiz Eduardo. "O Autor e seu Duplo: A Psicografia e as Proezas do Simulacro." *Religião e Sociedade* 4 (1979): 121-140.

Xavier, Francisco Cândido. *Nosso Lar*. [Pelo Espírito de André Luiz]. Rio: Federação Espírita Brasileira, 1944.

--. *Cidade no Além*. Araras, São Paulo: Instituto de Difusão Espírita, 1984.

Umbanda and Quimbanda Magic in Brazil:

Rethinking Aspects of Bastide's Work

Citation. Hess, David J. 1992 "Umbanda and Quimbanda Magic in Brazil: Rethinking Aspects of Bastide's Work." *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions*. 79: 139-53.

Fifteen years have now passed since the death of Roger Bastide, and perhaps the strongest compliment to his memory as a scholar is that his ideas continue to be a source of controversy and debate in several fields, particularly in Brazilian religious studies. Scholars frequently return to his theories as a kind of standard against which they pose their own interpretations. For example, Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz (1977) set up her analysis of popular Catholicism in contrast to Bastide's work, and I have also used Bastide's interpretations (1967) of Kardecian Spiritism as a foil to my own analyses (1987, 1989, in press). By far the most important area of discussion of Bastide's work has been his controversial theory of Umbanda, a religion of southeastern Brazil whose mediums receive the spirits of Amerindians (*caboclos*), old black slaves (*pretos velhos*), and trickster spirits known as Exus and Pomba Giras. This essay will review Bastide's ideas on Umbanda and its siblings, Macumba and Quimbanda, and it will use these ideas as a springboard to a new interpretation of contemporary Umbanda and Quimbanda magic.

In *The African Religions of Brazil* (1978/1960), Bastide argued that in early twentieth-century Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, the Afro-Brazilian religion Macumba¹ was in a state of disarray due in part to the effects of industrialization. He argued that Macumba was subsequently displaced by Umbanda, which represented the ambivalence of the mulatto and black urban working class toward its African heritage. As an "upgrading of Macumba through [s]piritism" (317),² Umbanda retained the acceptable elements of Macumba, whereas the latter became known as Quimbanda, a repository of the rejected, the primitive, and the unacceptable in the African traditions (322).

Bastide's analysis rests on two major points: on the one hand, the continuity between Macumba and Quimbanda, and on the other hand, the division between Quimbanda and Umbanda. On the first point, Bastide writes:

Umbanda, instead of pointing out that Macumba is a religion, accepts this erroneous popular conception as a concrete fact. Thus Quimbanda, identified with Macumba, becomes a kind of inverted spiritism, a black magic working through disembodied savages, ghosts, and skeletons under the direction of two of the most formidable Negro deities, Exu, god of the lost crossroads, and Omolú, god of smallpox (324).

Likewise, he follows some Umbanda writers and emphasizes the difference between Quimbanda and Umbanda magic:

Hence the distinction between black magic (Quimbanda), which uses Exus to spread dissension among our enemies, and white magic (Umbanda) which uses only good forces. To be more precise, Umbanda may have recourse to Exus but only for the purpose of lifting spells or driving out these spirits prior to any ceremony in the tent (329-330).

Bastide does not analyze Quimbanda magic in detail, but since he argues in these passages that it is a continuation of Macumba magic, one can turn to his interpretation of Macumba magic, which appears in some detail in the chapter of *The African Religions of Brazil* titled "Two Forms of Religious Disintegration." Whereas he

believed that Candomblé, meaning here the orthodox Yoruba Candomblé of Bahia, "was and still is a means of social control, an instrument of solidarity and communion" (300), he argued that "Rio Macumba is becoming more and more debased, losing all its religious instincts and degenerating into a stage show or mere black magic" (298). He further argued that Macumba magic developed by adding haphazardly to the panoply of African rites "the techniques of [European] medieval witches and sorcerers, which were known to be effective against whites because they themselves made use of them" (400). This "accumulation" (400) of "very meager" magic rituals (300) led to the "jumble of objects and rites" (300) of Macumba magic. In turn, this disorganization, coupled with the participation of whites, unleashed criminal and "immoral tendencies that may range from rape to murder" (300). In short, Bastide condemned Macumba in terms reminiscent of those used by the medical profession and the police in the 1930's for all spirit mediumship religions, or, in other words, in terms similar to the racist and elitist paradigms that he dedicated much of his career to criticizing.

As might be expected, Bastide's interpretation of Macumba, Quimbanda, and Umbanda has been extremely controversial. To begin, Diana Brown (1986; cf. Negrão 1979) found a much higher level of white and middle-class participation in Umbanda than Bastide had suggested, and Bastide's student Renato Ortiz (1978) argued that Umbanda represented an expression of national ideology rather than one restricted to a specific race and class. Both of these studies seriously undermined Bastide's linkage of Umbanda ideology to the dilemmas of an urban proletariat of color.

In fairness to Bastide, one might counter-argue that in work finished shortly before his death in 1974, he was revising the framework that he had presented fourteen years earlier in *The African Religions of Brazil*. It is true that in these last writings, he recognized that whites and mulattoes of the middle class composed the "great majority" of the leaders of Umbanda centers (1974b: 23), although he did not discuss white participation in the rank-and-file. Furthermore, he now characterized Umbanda as "une création du peuple brésilien recherchant une spiritualité qui l'exprime dans sa totalité pluri-raciale, donc une religion plus authentique" (1974a: 18). These last comments might be taken as steps in the direction of the analyses later published by Brown and Ortiz.

Nevertheless, these were only steps, and one must be careful not to overestimate the extent of the revision in the "ultima scripta." For example, in "La communication au Colloque de Dakar", Bastide maintained that the Umbanda constituted a purification of Macumba (1974b: 23) and that this process represented a lower class, now viewed as racially more heterogeneous, that was still selectively affirming and rejecting the African heritage of many of its members (1974b: 27). As a result, even his "ultima scripta" did not revoke the analysis of Macumba, Umbanda, and Quimbanda presented in *The African Religions of Brazil*: to Bastide, Quimbanda still represented the unwanted aspects of Macumba, that part of the African heritage which was problematic for working-class blacks and mulattoes (and, since he used the phrase "racially heterogeneous," he apparently now included whites) in the modern, industrial city.

Another set of criticisms of Bastide's work, which provides the theoretical basis for this essay, comes from a group of scholars who have questioned more broadly Bastide's underlying biases (see Cavalcanti 1986; Dantas 1982; Fry 1986; Maggie 1986; Monteiro 1978). As they have pointed out, his interpretation of Macumba, Umbanda, and Quimbanda tells the story from the point of view of just one position in the ideological arena: Bastide tended to see all Afro-Brazilian religions from the point of view of the orthodox, Yoruba Candomblé of Bahia, compared to which Umbanda and Quimbanda/Macumba appeared respectively as "new African occultism" and "witchcraft"

(Bastide 1978: 399). The result of this is another paradox of Bastidean sociology, as Beatriz Dantas (1982: 19) points out, in which concerns with African purity can in themselves become a source of domination, either by the state as mediated through Afro-Brazilian federations or by more "pure" Afro-Brazilian religions over less "pure" ones. Consequently, Bastide's view of Umbanda and Macumba, particularly his dismissal of Macumba magic as a religious disintegration, needs reconsideration.

With these theoretical considerations in mind, this essay develops a new empirical analysis of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic that provides evidence against two of Bastide's major assumptions: the incoherence of Quimbanda or Macumba magic, and the discontinuity between Umbanda and Quimbanda magic. Unfortunately, there is almost no ethnographic research on the magic of Macumba, Umbanda, and Quimbanda, a fact which may in turn reflect Bastide's dismissal of its importance. There is, however, a large number of popular books by Umbanda/Quimbanda mediums that provide "how-to" formulas for their magic rituals. Although the books of Umbanda and Quimbanda mediums were in circulation in the 1940's and 1950's, and Bastide used some of them in his discussion of Umbanda, he did not analyze systematically the published recipes for magic rituals. Had he done so, he might have argued that his description of Macumba magic was not appropriate for the complicated magic rites described in these books, and he might have also reconsidered his entire approach to Macumba, Umbanda, and Quimbanda. As this essay will argue, when one examines Umbanda and Quimbanda magic as it is represented in the popular literature, it forms a unified system with a coherent grammar. In short, Umbanda/Quimbanda magic is far from being a "jumble of objects and rites."

Some Background on the Present Work

In the huge literary production of popular books by Umbandist and Quimbandist mediums (e.g., Molina, FPV: 9; Figueiro, TPV: 9),³ Umbanda magic is generally defined as "white magic" and Quimbanda magic as "black magic." Some Umbandists--those who might be classified as "Spiritist-line" or "white line" Umbandists⁴--reject any affiliation at all with Quimbanda magic; for example, one Umbandist refers to Quimbanda as "the terrible *black magic*" [emphasis original] (Figueiro TPV: 9). Other Umbandists, a larger number if publication quantity is any gauge, see Umbanda and Quimbanda magic as a unity. For example, medium Antônio Alves Teixeira Neto prefaces one of his books with the statement, "I know intimately Umbanda, Quimbanda, and much more" (Teixeira, PVSF 7), and in another book on "black magic," he simply states that "having passed through Kardecism, I penetrated Umbanda and Quimbanda" (Teixeira/Alva, TPMN 10). From these passages, one sees that for one of the leading "Umbandist" writers, Umbanda and Quimbanda go hand in hand (also see Molina, CFDTQ 10).

In addition to statements from mediums themselves which undermine the distinction between Umbanda and Quimbanda, a close examination of the rituals of white and black magic shows that there are no clear-cut divisions between these two forms of magic. In fact, almost the whole of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic occupies a middle ground: a kind of "grey" magic which is typical of Brazilian culture's penchant for mixed categories and mediation of oppositions, a point brought out most clearly in the studies of Roberto DaMatta (e.g., 1978). This can be seen by examining in detail some of the ritual formulas described by one of the more prolific of the Umbanda/Quimbanda authors, Antônio Alves Teixeira Neto.

Although it was not possible to interview Teixeira because he died shortly before the author arrived in 1988, he gives a capsule summary of his life history in his book *Impressive Cases of Black Magic* (ICMN), and it is worth pausing here to get a sense of the author of the texts which will be considered in this essay. Born in 1914 in the then

frontier state of Mato Grosso, Teixeira moved to the state of Rio de Janeiro when he was twelve, where he studied in a military school and became a teacher, later founding and directing a high school in the Rio area. In 1953, he worked in the Travelers of the Truth Spiritist Center, and he also began to publish Umbanda books. By the early seventies, he was sometimes appearing on the radio, where also he had a program on chiromancy.

In some cases, especially in his books on black magic, Teixeira used the pseudonym Antônio de Alva. However, it would not be accurate to say that the Teixeira/Alva distinction represents a clear-cut division between Umbanda and Quimbanda, since he also used other pseudonyms (Lucius, Alvarino Selva, and Antonio Pescador), and some of his books, such as *Old Blacks and their Spells* (PVSF), combine both black and white magic rituals. Because this text of "old black magic" occupies a mediating position in Teixeira's corpus, it allows one to see how Umbanda and Quimbanda magic form a complex whole or a "continuum," to borrow a phrase used in another context by Cândido Procópio Camargo (1961), rather than two distinct forms of magic. As a result, this essay will focus on the text *Old Blacks and their Spells*, although it will complement this text by using another by the same author, *Votives and Offerings of Umbanda* (DOU), as a comparative touchstone.

The relationship between the rituals listed in these books and the hundreds of magic rituals performed by Umbandists/Quimbandists throughout southeastern Brazil is difficult to assess, and since there is as yet no detailed ethnographic work on Umbanda and Quimbanda magic, the answer to this question will have to await future research (for related research, see Trindade 1982). However, at this point one can say with confidence that the elements of the magic formulas that appear in the books--candles, rum, cigars, flowers, etc.--correspond to those which one encounters with frequency on the beaches and street corners of Rio de Janeiro, not to mention in the rituals of Umbanda centers when mediums receive the spirits of Indians (*caboclos*), Old Blacks, Exus, and Pombas Giras. Another gauge of the relationship between the texts and practices is Teixeira's claim that he had a loyal following and readership across the country. This is supported by the fact that the "how-to" books by him and other Umbandists are readily available in many of the bookstores of Rio and São Paulo, and dealers with whom I talked in 1988 said they sold many copies of these books.

Since the source of Teixeira's ritual formulas is probably a mixture of oral tradition, individual creativity, and previously published Umbanda texts (e.g., those of N.A. Molina), it is perhaps best to think of his texts as belonging to a category of "popular written literature," which occupies a point mid-way between oral tradition and modern written literature. As a result one should not be surprised that structuralist analyses developed for Amerindian, ancient Greek, and traditional African myths and rituals would work well for this type of text. The similarity among ritual formulas across authors indicates that their writings are not just the creative productions of individuals but that instead they are individualized written variants of a popular tradition. That this tradition of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic is far from "meager" and hardly without an internal logic is the thesis which this essay will now demonstrate. In order to demonstrate the unity of these rituals and their coherence as a system, this essay will compare the different rituals by using a structuralist method similar to that of Marcel Detienne (1979), Luc de Heusch (1985), and Claude Lévi-Strauss (1973).

The Key of Quimbanda

I begin with a "reference ritual" which presents all the elements of a classic Quimbanda "*trabalho*," or work of black magic. It is dedicated to Ogum, the orixá of warfare and metal, and to Exu, the trickster *orixá* and lord of the crossroads.

Trabalho 1: "work of great force, under the protection of [Exu] Tranca Ruas das Almas (Lock-Streets-of-the-Souls), to eliminate an enemy." 1) Go to a crossroads of Exu on a Monday or Friday near midnight, if possible in the company of a member of the opposite sex; 2) greet Ogum with a bottle of light beer, a white or red candle, and a lighted cigar; 3) greet Exu Sir Lock-Streets-of-the-Souls by opening seven bottles of rum (*cachaça*) in the form of a circle, lighting seven red and black candles, and offering seven cigars; 4) put inside a vase (*alguidar*) and mix the following: manioc flour (*farinha da mesa*), palm oil (*azeite-de-dendê*), and peppers; 5) put on the ground in the middle of the circle the name of the person whom one wishes to hurt, and, using a knife, stab this with violence, asking Exu to attend to one's request (PVSF 144-146).⁵

This work has all of the elements of a classic Quimbanda ritual: the motive of harming another person, the dedication to Exu, the location of the crossroads, the metal or clay material (earthy) of the vase, and the "harsh" or "strong" drink (rum), scent (cigar), and food (the peppered flour-palm oil mixture, sometimes called an *miamiami* [p. 103]).

T1 is part of a whole series of rituals, and comparison reveals a common series of elements and relations among them. For example, in T2--a similar crossroads ritual dedicated to Exu, but this time performed "in order to open closed paths" (PVSF 57-59)--one finds the elements of rum, white candles, and cigars and smoke. Likewise, another crossroads ritual (T3) requests help from Exu in obtaining justice, and it uses rum, white candles, and a written request (PVSF 59). In both T2 and T3, the color of Exu's candles is white rather than red and black, which corresponds to the motive, which is no longer aggressive. T2 and T3 also drop out the *miamiami*; however, there is a clear continuity between T1, which according to Bastide's definition is a Quimbanda ritual, and T2 and T3, which would technically be Umbanda rituals since they employ Exu only to unblock paths or obtain justice. Nevertheless, in terms of their symbolism, T2 and T3 remain in the key of Quimbanda, and therefore the division between Umbanda and Quimbanda magic is already problematic.

Crossroads rituals do not necessarily have to involve offerings to Exu. Since the warrior *orixá* Ogum is the lord of the center of the crossroads, one alternative is for Ogum to take the place of Exu, as in T4, which is performed "in order to neutralize the forces of black magic" (PVSF 56-57), and T5, done "to counteract a spell (*demanda*)" (PVSF 109-110). T4 is a transformation of T2, without the rum, and T5 continues the basic logic of the reference ritual T1, with its offerings of candles, cigars, and alcoholic beverages. However, T5 substitutes the colors red or white for red and black, just as it substitutes Ogum's preferred drink, light beer, for the rum of Exu. Likewise, there is no peppered *miamiami*, but there are seven red carnations; in other words, T5 substitutes a harsh or spicy food with a sweet-smelling scent. The transformations of colors, drink, food/scent, and request (harming vs. helping) are all from the harsher key of Exu to a "gentler" key of Ogum. One might say provisionally that Ogum may represent a mediating figure between the aggressive Exu rituals and the unaggressive rituals of Umbanda.

Leaving the issue of mediation aside for the moment, let us return again to another series of transformations of T1. This involves introducing yet another group of figures from the Umbanda/Quimbanda pantheon, spirits who are not derived directly from the Yoruba *orixás*: the Pombas Giras, the female counterparts of Exu, and frequently described as the spirits of prostitutes. T6 is dedicated to Pomba-Gira Maria Mulambo, also known as Maria of the Trash (PVSF 141-144). Teixeira explains that a "*mulambo*" is someone wearing ragged clothing, and the term is also used to describe very unlucky people (PVSF 141). T6 is performed "in order to overturn or destroy someone, turning them into a *mulambo*," and therefore might be described as a female

variant of T1, but another group of Pomba-Gira *trabalhos* has as its goal the perhaps less aggressive motive of "obtaining a woman," as, for example, in the following work:

Trabalho 7: "to obtain a woman." 1) On a Monday or Friday night, go to a female crossroads (T-shaped rather than plus-shaped) and greet Pomba Gira by pouring a little rum, "or better yet, champagne or anisette (*aniz*)"; 2) place two pieces of cloth (*pano*) on the ground, one red and the other black, and on top of this put five or seven red roses in the shape of a horseshoe; 3) fill a cup of good quality with champagne or aniz; 4) put the name of the desired person in the cup or in the middle of the horseshoe; 5) sing a *ponto* (song) and thank Pomba Gira (PVSF 100-103).

Following this, Teixeira lists another Pomba Gira ritual for the same end (T8), which adds to the preceding ritual the following food, which is mixed with the left hand in a vase: manioc flour, palm oil, and honey. Combining T7 and T8, one can compare them with T1 (leaving out the Ogum component for the sake of simplicity), with the results presented in Table One.

Table One

| Code | T1 | | T7 and T8 |
|------------------|--------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|
| Spirit | Exu | --> | Pomba Gira |
| Drink | Rum | --> | (Rum) Champagne or anisette |
| Colors | Red and black | = | Red and black |
| Location | Male Crossroads | --> | Trashy place or female crossroads |
| Time | Midnight | = | Midnight |
| Day | Mon. or Fri. | = | Mon. or Fri. |
| Scent | Cigars | --> | Cigarillos or cigarettes |
| | Ø | --> | Red Roses |
| Food | Pepper | --> | Honey |
| | Flour, palm oil | = | Flour, palm oil |
| Container | Metal or clay vase | --> | Metal or clay vase |
| Imitative Action | Aggressive | --> | Song |

One can see that certain elements remain stable and therefore mark Pomba Gira as indeed the female counterpart of Exu: the colors, the location (male to female variant), the time of day, the day of the week, the scent (smokey), and the container for the food and the flour/palm oil mixture. Like the Ogum ritual (T5), in this ritual another set of elements marks a gentler or less harsh coding: from rum to champagne or anisette, from no flowers to red roses, from pepper in the flour/palm oil mixture to honey, and from a violent imitative action to a song, which is more befitting of the motive of a love ritual. This last set of elements begins a series of transformations that are completed in the Iemanjá and Oxalá rituals, which will be discussed momentarily. In short, once again a series of transformations of T1, a prototypical Quimbanda ritual, put us in an ambiguous zone which is clearly a transformation of Quimbanda magic but also takes us several steps in the direction of Umbanda magic.

Rather than move toward Umbanda magic at this point, it is better to backtrack for a moment and first examine some transformations which take us to the heart of Quimbanda magic. In a "*trabalho* made with the *exês* of a black cock (*piáu*)" (T9), Teixeira explains that the *exês* are the parts of the cock and that they are directly related to the person. In T9, one kills a black cock at a crossroads of Exu and puts into a vase the *exês* that correspond to the parts of the body of the person one wishes to harm (PVSF 128-130). An inversion of this *trabalho* is T10, performed "in order to obtain success in business," in which one takes a bound black cock to the crossroads of Exu and lets it go free (PVSF 78-79). Corresponding to this difference of goals, the *miamiami* food offering of T9 is replaced by the candle/rum/cigar complex of T10. This suggests that the food and drink/scent elements can be substituted one for another and that there is an underlying similarity between these codes. Provisionally, we might hypothesize that the harshness of the onion of the food complex is equivalent to the harshness of the cigar smoke and the rum drink. In contrast, honey may represent the opposite of these elements: a sweeter, gentler substance. Many, if not all of the *orixás*, like honey, but in the case of Exu, this sweet food cannot stand alone as an independent element; instead, it is generally accompanied by other elements that neutralize its sweetness, in this case blood.

Another group of rituals allows us to move from transformations of the food/drink/scent codes to those of space and time. As we have seen in the Pomba Gira trash heap ritual (T6), one finds quickly that the crossroads are not the only scene of Quimbanda magic. In her book *What is Umbanda*, anthropologist Patricia Birman (1983: 42) employs the house/street opposition of Roberto DaMatta (1978; cf. 1985) to argue that the place of rituals dedicated to Exus, the streets at night, is a marginal zone that Brazilians generally associate with rogues (*malandros*). She adds that cemeteries are equally marginal spaces, and in fact several of the *trabalhos* in Teixeira's book also take place in cemeteries.

One can see the metaphorical relationship between crossroads and cemeteries in T11 and T12. T11 (PVSF 63-65) asks the help of Exu, King of the Seven Crossroads, in "unbinding the life of someone," and it involves the usual offerings of rum, cigars, candles (white, not red and black, signaling the non-aggressive nature of the ritual), to which the imitative action of untying a red-feathered cock is added. The next *trabalho* (T12; 65-68) is labelled "the same work, but done in a cemetery," and it substitutes the cemetery for the street. However, rather than use this one for analysis, a variant of T12 that substitutes aggressive for non-aggressive imitative action gives a more complete version.

Trabalho 13: "work of high magic, under the protection of Exu Sete Cadeados, done in order to destroy a person who has done us a great deal of harm." 1) On a Friday or Monday at noon, 6 p.m., or midnight, go to a cemetery; 2) upon arrival, ask permission of Sir Porter Exu (Seu Exu Porteiro) to enter; also ask permission of Ogum Megê, lighting a red candle in his honor; and greet *Iansã*; 3) go to the cross of the souls and greet *Abaluaê* and *Omulú*, lighting a red and yellow candle and a black candle in their honor; 4) light a black and red candle for Sir Exu Sete Cadeados; 5) put some dirt from the cemetery into a miniature coffin (*caixãozinho de defunto*) and bury inside the dirt a piece of paper with the name of the person written on it; 6) ask Exu to "take care of" this person (PVSF 147-149).

Although the cemetery is a marginal space in comparison with, say, the house, one also sees how this ritual domesticates the cemetery by reinscribing aspects of the hierarchy of the Brazilian house into the marginal space of the cemetery. The details of this ritual seem very familiar to one acquainted with Brazilian society; the Quimbanda

graveyard is, in effect, a model of the Brazilian domestic unit. Omolú or Abaluaê may be the *dono* of the graveyard, but it is impossible for mere mortals to enter the great house of the dead without paying their respects to the other key figures in the domestic hierarchy: the porter, sergeant-at-arms, lady of the house, and secretary. In T13, Quimbandists must honor the porter (Exú Porter); Ogum Megê, the warrior *orixá* and therefore a sergeant-at-arms or guard; and Iansã, the lady of the house, who in T12 receives a gift of yellow roses, cigarillos, and champagne or anisette--in other words, elements that mark her as a potential substitute for Pomba Gira (PVSF 68). Likewise, variant T12 adds a step in honor of Master John Skull (João Caveira), who "is the secretary of Master Omolú" (also see Teixeira/Alva, TPMN 31-32).

Another space which Teixeira explicitly links with the marginal is the forest at night. For example, one ritual taken from the infamous *Book of St. Cyprian* (T14, see Molina LNSC) is presented as intended to benefit "marginals [or] outlaw elements who, sometimes pursued in an open field by the police, do not have a place where they can quickly hide and as a result flee from persecution which would bring them to Justice" (PVSF 134-135). This ritual involves putting a live cat into a cauldron of boiling water, and when daybreak arrives, pulling out the cat's bones while simultaneously looking into a mirror until one's image no longer appears in the mirror and one is rendered invisible. Of interest here is the place and time of the ritual: a forest, but only on Friday the thirteenth of an August of a leap year, when there is a full moon. This is probably the fullest expression of a conjunction of time elements--day, time of day, month, time of month, year--marked for Quimbanda. Since the forest is often the place of more benign offerings and of healing rituals, it is likely that the strong time marker is what makes the forest a suitable spot for Quimbanda magic of this degree. Hence we have seen several settings for the darkest of black magic: crossroads, trash heap, cemetery, and forest at midnight. In Umbanda and Quimbanda magic, there is evidently more than one way to skin a cat.

The Scene of Umbanda

I have already suggested that the street rituals of Ogum and Pomba Gira have some elements that mark a transition toward "Umbanda magic." Returning now to T2, T3, and T4, one finds that the next ritual prescription published in the text is merely listed as "another work, for the same end," that is, to neutralize the forces of black magic" (T15, PVSF 60). This *trabalho*, however, serves as a jumping off point from the cemetery/crossroads group to a second group, which involves the *orixá* Iemanjá, the goddess of the sea. Unlike the others in its group, T15 is dedicated to both Ogum, who receives a red candle and light beer, and Iemanjá, who receives a blue candle (PVSF 60). Ogum therefore appears in both T15, the "Umbanda" ritual, and the "Quimbanda" rituals, so provisionally one might conclude that this *orixá* of metal and warfare is a mediating figure between Exu and Iemanjá.

The meaning of T15 only becomes manifest when one considers a ritual dedicated entirely to the sea goddess Iemanjá, without Ogum, and therefore the first ritual discussed here which is clearly in the key of Umbanda.

Trabalho 16: "in order to obtain happiness for oneself or for another person and to attract everything good and well." 1) At the edge of the sea, on a Monday during the day, greet Iemanjá and light a blue candle in her honor; 2) put in "appropriate containers (they can be cups or small bowls)" the following: milk ("for happiness in life"), honey ("to take away evils and life's bitterness"), and white roses ("so that our souls are purified of all bad and black influences and things"); 3) launch these offerings in the sea (PVSF 76-77).

In the song which the petitioner sings to Iemanjá, the sea is called "*calunga*," whereas the cemetery is called "small *calunga*," indicating that the two spaces are part of the same system of transformations. Nevertheless, this seaside offering to Iemanjá inverts almost all of the terms of T1, and it completes many of the transformations begun in T15, as is represented in Table Two.

Table Two

| Code | T1 | | T15 | | T16 |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----|---------------|-----|---------------------------|
| Orixá | Ogum/Exu | --> | Ogum/Iemanjá | --> | Iemanjá |
| Drink | Light beer/rum | --> | Light beer/Ø | --> | Milk |
| Colors | Red or white/ Red and black | --> | Red/blue | --> | Blue |
| Location | Crossroads | --> | Beach | = | Beach |
| Time | Midnight | --> | Not specified | | Daylight |
| Day | Mon. or Fri. | --> | Not specified | | Monday |
| Scent | Cigars | --> | Ø | --> | White Roses |
| Food | Pepper, flour, palm oil | --> | Ø | --> | Honey |
| Container | Metal or clay - vase | -> | Ø | --> | Not spec. |
| Imitative Action | Aggressive | --> | Ø | --> | Liberated (set adrift) |

As a ritual clearly marked by the key of Umbanda, T16 is rather anomalous in the book *Old Blacks and their Spells*, but other close variants on it appear in another book by Teixeira, *Votives and Offerings in Umbanda* (DOU). Before considering these variants, it is important to underscore the continuity between these two books by considering how just as the former book contains T16, an echo of Umbanda magic, so the latter contains T17, an echo of Quimbanda magic:

Trabalho 17: purpose left vague--to pay a promise or make a request. 1) At a corner of a crossroads, put a piece of white paper on the ground with a clay bowl on top of it; 2) put honey mixed with rum in the bowl; 3) put a white candle wrapped in a red and white ribbon; 4) light seven cigars and leave them on top of seven matchboxes; 5) pour some rum on the ground for Exu, greet Exu, and leave the rest of the bottle on the spot; 6) do not light the candle, and the bottle of honey may be thrown away; 7) make the request (DOU 111-112).

Although this ritual formula has some significant differences from the reference ritual (T1), it is also clearly a variant of it. The elements of rum, cigars, the color red, and the crossroads all remain preserved; however, given the context of this ritual formula--a book of "white," or Umbanda, magic--these elements are to some extent neutralized by making the color of the candle white and by adding the sweet-tasting honey. One wonders why the ritual prescription asks not to light the candle and stipulates that the honey may be thrown out, but when one remembers that these elements do not properly belong to Exu, this action makes more sense.

Consideration of T17 leads back to the problem of the ambiguous grey area between Umbanda and Quimbanda magic. Even this second book (DOU), which sanitizes Umbanda by apparently foregoing any discussion of Quimbanda, preserves at least this one ritual which is more or less in the key of Quimbanda. This is significant,

because it shows that the two books are part of the same system of transformations, and as a result, the purer rituals of *Votives and Offerings of Umbanda* can be used to clarify the meaning of T16, the Iemanjá seaside ritual in *Old Blacks and their Spells*.

In chapter six of the former, Teixeira presents a more complete example of an "offering" to Iemanjá than T16. (Note that the term "offering" replaces the word "*trabalho*" in this Umbanda text, but to avoid confusion with the numbering, my own text will record this as T18). As in T15, one begins by lighting a candle (this time white, not red) in honor of Ogum Edge-of-Sea. After this, one covers a tray (not a clay vase) with blue paper (not red or black), and on top of this one places seven white coconut pastries (*cocadas*) with seven white roses that are without thorns (DOU 47). In another offering to Iemanjá (T19), we learn that jasmine may be combined with the white roses, which are tied with blue and white ribbons, and that the food is again honey (DOU 53). Furthermore, the drink offered is sparkling, white wine in a white, new cup, which is an example of what would qualify as an example of "appropriate containers," the vague phrase used in T16.

Yet another offering (T20) places on a wooden tray a perfume of good quality, a box of rice (a pure, white food), a mirror and a comb, and white flowers, and a final ritual in this group (T21) includes a white custard offering (DOU 54). The perfume confirms the interpretation of flowers as "sweet-smelling," and the theme of sweetness also seems to be the common denominator that links the custard and honey. In short, this group of rituals (T18 to T21) fleshes out aspects of the Iemanjá offering of T16.

Even more pure than Iemanjá is Oxalá, who is syncretized with Jesus Christ. One offering to Oxalá (T22) takes place in a forested area (*mata*), but unlike in T14 (the boiling cat *trabalho*), this ritual takes place at dawn on a sunny Sunday rather than after dark on Friday the thirteenth. Oxalá accepts lilies of the type known as "milk cups" (*copos de leite*), and these flowers are bound together with the written request by using white and rose ribbons (DOU 32-33). In another offering to Oxalá (T23), he accepts red roses, which Pomba Gira also accepted, but like the flowers of Iemanjá, these are without thorns (DOU 38). In yet another ritual (T24), Oxalá accepts a bouquet of violets (DOU 39).

No drinks are mentioned for Oxalá, but the name of the lilies (milkcups) suggests a linkage of milk with this most pure *orixá*. Recall that in T16 Iemanjá received milk, but in the context of the Oxalá rituals she received white, sparkling wine, so the displacement in the liquid code for Iemanjá may be related to the appearance of the milkcup lilies in the scent code for Oxalá, who receives neither food nor drink. As in T9 and T10, where the harsh or strong *miamiami* of the food code replaced the harsh or strong smoke and rum of the scent and drink codes, this may be a case of a cross-over effect among codes.

It is now possible to bring together some of the results achieved up to this point (see Table Three). Although I have placed these offerings in a sequence, it might be better to think of Ogum and Iansã/Pomba Gira as two alternative pathways between Exu and Iemanjá/Oxalá. The transformations are most clear in the codes of liquid, color, scent, and food.

Table Three

| Spirit/Orixá | Liquid | Color | Scent | Food |
|---------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Exu | Rum | Red/black | Cigar | <i>Miami</i> (pepper mixture) |
| Ogum | Light beer | Red/white | Cigar, red carnation | Ø |
| Iansã | Anisette, champagne | Yellow yellow roses | Cigarillo, | Ø |
| Pomba Gira | Anisette, champagne | Red/black | Cigarette, cigarillo, red roses with thorns | Honey |
| Iemanjá | Milk, sparkling white wine | Blue/white | white roses, jasmine | Honey, coconut pastries, white custard |
| Oxalá | (Milkcups) | White/rose | lilies, violets, or red roses without thorns | Ø |

Analyzing this table, one sees that offerings to Ogum and Pomba Gira mediate between the harsher offerings of Exu and the gentler offerings of Iemanjá and Oxalá. Pomba Gira and Ogum, for example, accept both the smokey offerings of Exu and the sweeter smelling flowers of Iemanjá and Oxalá. Likewise, Ogum's beer falls somewhere in between the harshness of Brazilian rum (admittedly a relatively sweet hard liquor, but harsh in this context) and the gentleness or sweetness of milk and sparkling, white wine, whereas Pomba Gira's anisette and champagne fall somewhat closer to the latter pole. Overall polar oppositions also exist in other codes, such as time and place (from night to day, street/cemetery to beach/forest), container (clay or metal vase to wooden tray or white cup), and certainly in the motivation and imitative actions involved in the rituals (from aggressive ends to non-aggressive ones).

There is now considerable evidence to support the thesis of the overall unity of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic. Although it is possible to make distinctions between the two forms of magic as ideal types, in practice they comprise a total system in which one side only makes sense when placed in dialogue with the other side. Furthermore, there are a series of mediating rituals and spirits which fall betwixt and between the two poles of the system, and these present a grey area where it is difficult to characterize rituals as either Quimbanda or Umbanda. The final section will consider two other mediating figures, Xangô and Oxóssi, and how rituals dedicated to them fit into this system of transformations.

Into the Forest

I return now to *Old Blacks and their Spells*, where one finds a few rituals dedicated to Xangô, known in Brazil as the *orixá* of thunder and justice, whose place is rocky areas and whose drink is dark beer. Where does Xangô fit into this system? Let us begin by examining two rituals:

Trabalho 25: "to unbind (*desamarrar*) one's life, done under the protection of the great *orixá* Xangô." 1) At the edge of the sea, light a blue candle for Iemanjá, and ask for her help; 2) at the foot of a quarry or stone pile (*pedreira*), light a

brown candle for Xangô; 3) break a bottle of bitter, dark beer on the rocks and ask Xangô to break all negative forces just as one has broken the bottle (PVSF 77-78).

Trabalho 26: "to overcome all obstacles." 1) On a Thursday during the day, go to a quarry or stone pile, preferably by the sea; 2) greet Xangô and pour a little of the bitter, dark beer over the rocks, then place the bottle on one of the rocks; 3) light a brown or white candle, sing a song (*ponto*) of Xangô, and ask him for his help (PVSF 97-98).

Like T15, the seaside ritual dedicated to Ogum and Iemanjá, T25 and T26 also appear to occupy a mediating position between the T1 and the rites of Iemanjá and Oxalá. Just as Ogum drinks light beer, so Xangô drinks dark beer. Xangô's beer is bitter to the taste, a fact which suggests again this beverage's intermediary position between the harsher drink of rum and the gentler or sweeter flavors of milk, honey, and sparkling, white wine. Likewise, the color brown occupies a point between the demonic red-and-black of Exu and the angelic blue and white of Iemanjá or rose of Oxalá, just as the colors red and white do for Ogum.

Turning now to the time and place codes, both T25 and T26 closely link Xangô's quarry or stone pile to the beach, and in T26 the time is specified as Thursday during the day. Recall that Friday at midnight is one time when some of the most aggressive of the black magic rituals occurs. Teixeira also tells us that Saturday is the day of Omulu (DOU 23-25), the lord of the graveyard, so in theory we can link this day to the graveyard rituals, although graveyard ritual T13 follows the logic of the crossroads rituals and indicates either Monday or Friday as the best day. Sunday morning, in contrast, is the time indicated for the Oxalá offering (T14), and it represents the strongest opposition to a Friday evening.

The other days are more complicated, and Monday is perhaps the most complicated of all. On the one hand, as is common knowledge in Rio, Monday is the "day of the souls" and, as Teixeira indicates, it is often an alternative day for Friday for the crossroads rituals. On the other hand, according to Teixeira, it is also the day of Iemanjá, although T16 specifies that her offering take place on a Monday during the day. Tuesday (Ogum's day) and Thursday (Xangô's day)⁶ appear to fall in between these two extremes, and hence the temporal code corresponds to the mediational scheme already derived from the color, scent, and liquid codes, as portrayed in Table Four.

Table Four

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>"Black" Magic</u> | <u>"White" Magic</u> |
| Friday night (and Saturday?) | Sunday dawn |
| Tuesday/Thursday | |
| (night) Monday<<----->>Monday (day) | |

The remaining day of the week is Wednesday, the day of Oxóssi, the orixá of the hunt and the forest. The position of Wednesday between Tuesday and Thursday calls for a prediction: Oxóssi's rituals will, like those of Ogum and Xangô, occupy a mediating position, perhaps even to a greater extent. Likewise, the special domain of Oxóssi, the forest, has already appeared twice, but with opposite meanings, first at night on a Friday the thirteenth in T14 (the boiling cat *trabalho*) and second at dawn on a sunny Sunday in T22, the offering to Oxalá. Unfortunately, no other offerings to Oxóssi are recorded in

Old Blacks and their Spells, so I will turn again to *Votives and Offerings of Umbanda*. Let us consider two offerings to Oxóssi:

Trabalho 27: offering to Oxóssi. After making an offering to Ossain, the *orixá* of leaves, 1) place on the ground two pieces of silk cloth, one green and one white; 2) leave seven unlit cigars with seven matchboxes; 3) pour a little red wine (*vinho tinto*) and leave the bottle beside the offering (DOU 70).

Trabalho 28: offering to Oxóssi. After making an offering to Ossain, the *orixá* of leaves, 1) place on the ground a green silk cloth and on top of it a clean, new, white cup with red wine, leaving the bottle to the side; 2) light three cigars and put them in the form of a triangle next to the cup; 3) surround all of this with olive branches; 4) pour honey around everything; 5) make one's request to Oxóssi (DOU 71).

The other offerings to Oxóssi included in this group do not add new elements in the relevant codes, so they can be left aside for the present purposes. T27 and T28 confirm the prediction that Oxóssi's offering fulfills a mediating role between T1 and the *lemanjá/Oxalá* group. First, the colors associated with Oxóssi are green and white or just green, which puts him out of the red/black group of Exu/Pomba Gira/Ogum but only partially (due to the color white) into the white/blue/rose group of *lemanjá/Oxalá*. This leaves the color green, which, like the brown of Xangô, belongs to neither group. Second, Oxóssi's drink--red wine--is, like that of *lemanjá*, a form of wine, but like that of Xangô, a dark drink which is not as strong as rum. Like *lemanjá*, Oxóssi accepts honey as a food, but with the honey he also eats olives, which are neither strong like the peppers of Exu nor sweet like the coconut pastries of *lemanjá*. Finally, he does not accept flowers but instead prefers cigars. In short, if Oxóssi is closer to *lemanjá* in the color code and midway between *lemanjá* and Exu in the drink and food codes, he is on Exu's side in the scent code: a mediating figure.

This constitutes a convenient stopping point, since once again we have found another pathway between the aggressive crossroads rites of Exu and the non-aggressive beach offerings of *lemanjá*. Like the day Monday, the forest of Oxóssi may participate in either the key of Quimbanda (T14) or of Umbanda (T22), and one learns from reading the chapters on Ogum and Xangô in *Votives and Offerings in Umbanda* that the forest is also a prime location for these other *orixás* of mediation. Thus the forest appears to be, perhaps even to a greater extent than the quarry or stone pile, the point in the symbolic landscape of Umbanda/Quimbanda magic where the two systems become most deeply intertwined. However, only further analysis of other *trabalhos* could determine if this hypothesis is indeed warranted.

Conclusions to this Work

The preceding analysis represents only a brief and introductory examination of the hundreds, if not thousands, of published ritual formulas of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic. This essay sketches out the "skeleton" of a system, but it leaves out many groups of rituals--among them, household, healing, and love rites--each of which would have to be examined first as a unit and then in terms of its relations to the system outlined here. Furthermore, a complete study of Umbanda/Quimbanda magic would have to integrate the analysis begun here with the ritual formulas published by other authors as well as with first-hand ethnographic observations of Umbanda and Quimbanda magic rituals, neither of which has been accomplished to date. Also awaiting further research are comparative studies that would examine the relationship between Umbanda/Quimbanda magic and orthodox Yoruba rituals, European magic, or even Amerindian thought. The latter may have a greater influence than one might first

imagine, and the honey/smoke elements of Umbanda/Quimbanda magic may prove to be adaptations and transformations of Amerindian shamanic symbolism of the type analyzed by Lévi-Strauss in *From Honey to Ashes*.

Despite the preliminary nature of this analysis, it points to two conclusions. First, whatever the ideological divisions which Bastide and some Umbandists may propose, Umbanda and Quimbanda magic appear to be aspects or tendencies of a single system. Although one can select exemplars of ideal-typical Umbanda or Quimbanda magic rituals from this system, one must keep in mind that such exemplars are only poles of single system which has many interstitial points. Second, this magical system is far from an incoherent concatenation of rites borrowed randomly from other cultural traditions; instead, it represents a coherent series of transformations which can be plotted out along a series of mutually related codes.

To some extent, the second point places in question Bastide's sociology of Macumba magic as meager rituals lacking in coherence. Certainly this description is inappropriate for Umbanda/Quimbanda magic. However, one must also keep in mind that since the analysis of Umbanda/Quimbanda texts is already one step away from Macumba magic, and since Bastide never formulated a clear sociology of Quimbanda magic, it is only possible at this point to say that Bastide's comments on Macumba magic do not apply to Quimbanda magic rituals as represented in Teixeira's texts. Nevertheless, it is also true that descriptions of Macumba magic rituals are now almost completely lost as unrecorded history, so Quimbanda magic is the closest one can come to testing Bastide's interpretation.

To conclude, this essay questions two of the assumptions of Bastide's analysis: the disorderliness of Macumba/Quimbanda magic and the discontinuity of Umbanda/Quimbanda. The alternative suggested here, that Macumba/Quimbanda/Umbanda magic represents a unified and coherent system, leads to a questioning of more general aspects of Bastide's theoretical framework. He wanted to see in Macumba the disintegrative effects of industrialization on traditional religion and, conversely, in Umbanda the potential for the development of a religious ideology which reflected the dilemmas of an urban proletariat of color in a society dominated by whites. Instead, Umbanda and Quimbanda make more sense when read from the point of view of Brazilian society rather than Afro-Brazilian acculturation. As Brown (1986) has argued, the rituals of Umbanda centers reproduce traditional patron-client relations and hierarchical social forms, even if to some extent they also undermine them (also see Brown et al. 1985; DaMatta 1981). One sees this same structure playing itself out in the magical formulas of Umbanda and Quimbanda, with their offerings to other-worldly patrons and particularly with their domestication of the urban landscape, such as the street and the cemetery, onto which the hierarchical world of the Brazilian household is projected.

Paying attention to the structures, logic, and symbolism of Umbanda/Quimbanda magic is more than an intellectual exercise. As Peter Fry has pointed out, adepts of Candomblé consult Bastide's ethnography on Bahian Candomblé, and the first edition was frequently sold out at bookstores. This in turn has an important influence on the religion:

The act of naming the "authenticity" of Yoruba Candomblé in contrast with the "degradation" of Macumba and Umbanda is in itself a way of reifying these differences which then become "Cartensianally" real. At the same time that Bastide is a *narrator* of Afro-Brazilian religions, he is also a *personality* in the history that he narrates... (Fry 1986: 43-44).

By "undoing"--or "*desmanchando*," as the magician-mediums say--elements of Bastide's work, this essay therefore inevitably supports Umbanda/Quimbanda and its own

syncretic dynamism in opposition to Candomblé orthodoxies. In turn, this interpretive position may at some point have implications in the ideological arena, to the extent that it legitimates Umbanda/Quimbanda magic as opposed to Candomblé religious rituals.

These comments should prevent a misreading of the present "work" as an attempt to overturn Roger Bastide's sociology in its most general terms, in which he stressed the link between religion and the conflicts of the broader society. Even if future researchers should reject most of Bastide's analysis of Macumba, Umbanda, and Quimbanda, the broader contours of his sociology of Afro-American religion--particularly his linkage of religious ideologies to issues of domination in the broader society--will probably remain untouched as the key elements of his work.

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Latin American Studies Colloquium, Cornell University. Revisions were made possible by a Major Faculty Grant from Colgate University, which supported a summer field trip to Brazil in 1988. Colgate Librarian David Hughes provided helpful bibliographic assistance.

Notes

1. More specifically, one can define Macumba as the syncretic urban religion of southern Brazil that emerged from Bantu slaves but drew on Yoruba religion, popular Catholicism, and Kardecian Spiritism (Bastide, 1978/1960: 295-6). Because of the paucity of documentation and the great variation from temple to temple, the history of the transformation from Macumba to Umbanda and Quimbanda is obscure and confusing (see Brown 1986, Ortiz 1986).
2. Bastide uses the term "spiritism" sometimes to refer to the Kardecist movement, which I term "Spiritism" (with a capital "S"), and sometimes to describe a broader category that includes both Umbanda and Spiritism. The latter usage appears to be appropriate in this citation.
3. Because many of the popular Umbanda and Quimbanda magic books lack publication dates, the reference will use the initials of the words of the title, hence "FPV" for Feitiços de Preto Velho.
4. See D. Brown (1986) regarding this division within Umbanda between these Spiritist-influenced Umbandists and those who lean more toward African ritual and cosmology, the "African-line Umbandists."
5. Unless passages are directly quoted, the formulas presented are abstracted from longer descriptions in the books. Prescribed ritual steps are sometimes collapsed, but none is omitted, except for final details on phrasing the request and exiting. The numbering and order of presentation of trabalhos is my own.
6. Note the coincidence with the days of the Norse gods: Tyr (after whom Tuesday is named) is, like Ogum, a war god, whereas Thor (Thursday), like Xangô, is a thunder god. Although the Portuguese language rejected the "pagan" associations of the weekdays--hence in Portuguese Monday is "Second Day," Tuesday is "Third Day," and so on to Friday, "Sixth Day"--Teixeira or others might have had the old correspondences in mind when setting up these new ones.

References

Bastide, Roger

1967 Le Spiritisme au Brésil. Archives de Sociologie des Religions 24: 3-16.

1974a Négritude et intégration nationale. La classe moyenne de couleur dans les religions afro-brésiliennes. Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions 38: 12-18.

1974b La communication au Colloque de Dakar. "La recontre des dieux africains et des esprits indiennes". Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions 38: 19-28.

1978 The African Religions of Brazil. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins (orig. 1960).

Birman, Patricia

1983 O que é Umbanda. São Paulo: Brasiliense.

Brown, Diana

1986 Umbanda. Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil. Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Press.

Brown, Diana, et al.

1985 Umbanda e Política. Rio de Janeiro: Marco Zero, Cadernos de ISER 18.

Camargo, Cândido Procópio Ferreira de

1961 Kardecismo e Umbanda. São Paulo: Pioneira.

Cavalcanti, Maria Laura

1986 Origens, para que as quero? Religião e Sociedade 13.2: 84-101.

DaMatta, Roberto

1978 Carnavais, Malandros, e Heróis. Rio: Zahar.

1981 The Ethic of Umbanda and the Spirit of Messianism. In T. Bruneau and P. Faucher (eds.), Authoritarian Capitalism: Brazil's Contemporary Economic and Political Development. Boulder, CO: Westview.

1985 A Casa e a Rua. São Paulo: Brasiliense.

Dantas, Beatriz Goís

1982 Repensando a Pureza Nago. Religião e Sociedade 8: 15-20.

Detienne, Marcel

1979 Dionysius Slain. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Figueiro, Luely

c. 1980 Trabalhos de Pretos-Velhos (TPV). Rio de Janeiro: Eco.

Fry, Peter

1986 Gallus Africanus est, ou, como Roger Bastide se tornou africano no Brasil. In Olga R. de Maraes von Simson (org.), Revisitando a Terra de Contrastes: A Atualidade da Obra de Roger Bastide. São Paulo: FFLCH/CERU.

Hess, David

1987 O Espiritismo e as Ciências. Religião e Sociedade 14/3: 41-54.

1989 Disobsessing Disobsession: Religion, Ritual, and the Social Sciences in Brazil. Cultural Anthropology 4(2): 182-193.

in press. On Earth as It is in Heaven: Spiritist Other-Worldly Ethnographies. Annals of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Minnesota.

- Heusch, Luc de
1985 Sacrifice in Africa. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude
1973 From Honey to Ashes. New York: Harper and Row (orig. 1966).
- Maggie, Yvonne
1986 O Medo do Feitiço. Religião e Sociedade 13.1: 72-86.
- Molina, N.A.
1970 O Livro Negro de São Cipriano (LNSC). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Espiritualista.
1972 Feitiços de Preto Velho (FPV). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Espiritualista.
n.d. Como Fazer e Desmanchar Trabalhos de Quimbanda (CFDTQ). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Espiritualista.
- Monteiro, Douglas Teixeira
1978 Roger Bastide: Religião e Ideologia. Religião e Sociedade 3: 11-24. (English-language version in Bastide, 1978.)
- Negrão, Lísias Nogueira
1979 A Umbanda com Expressão da Religiosidade Popular. Religião e Sociedade 4: 171-191.
- Ortiz, Renato
1978 A Morte Branca do Feiticeiro Negro. Petrópolis: Vozes.
1986 Breve Nota Sobre a Umbanda e Suas Origens. Religião e Sociedade 13.1: 134-137.
- Queiroz, Maria Isaura Pereira de
1977 Messiahs, Miracle Workers and "Catholic duality" in Brazil. International Social Science Journal 29.2: 298-312.
- Trindade, Liana
1982 Exu: Reinterpretações Individualizadas de um Mito. Religião e Sociedade 8: 29-36.
- Teixeira (Neto), Antonio Alves
n.d. Preto-Velho e Seus Feitiços (PVSF) Rio de Janeiro: Eco.
1973 Impressionantes Casos de Magia Negra (Quimbanda) (ICMN). Rio de Janeiro: Eco.
1974 Despachos e Oferendas na Umbanda (DOU). Rio de Janeiro: Eco.
- Teixeira (Neto), Antônio Alves (under pseudonym Antônio da Alva)
1981 Trabalhos Práticos de Magia-Negra (TPMN). Rio de Janeiro: A.C. Fernandes.

New Sciences, New Gods:
Spiritism and Questions of Religious Pluralism
in Latin America

by David J. Hess

Citation: Hess, David J. 1992. "New Sciences, New Gods: Spiritism and Questions of Religious Pluralism in Latin America." *Occasional Papers of the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies*, Brown University

Based on a paper presented at the conference on "Competing Gods: Religious Pluralism in Latin America," Brown University Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and Center for Latin American Studies, March 6, 1992.

I confess some discomfort with recent studies on the apparent turn toward Protestantism in Latin America. True, evangelical Protestantism is growing rapidly, and there are now half a dozen Latin American countries where Protestants are said to number about one quarter of the population (Burnett 1992: 219). David Stoll has even asked the inevitable, and very provocative, question--"Is Latin America Turning Protestant?" (1990). In this essay, I wish to move in another direction--toward the various forms of spirit mediumship religions--and raise a few questions of my own that I hope will inform future discussions of religious diversity in Latin America.

I focus on Brazil not only because I have studied that country most closely, but also because Brazilian religion is arguably more diverse than that of any other Latin American country, and therefore Brazil deserves some special consideration in any discussion of religious pluralism and diversity in Latin America. Brazil has long been recognized as the home of some of the most "pure" and vibrant of the New World African religions, and it is also the heartland for a European form of spirit mediumship known as Spiritism. Furthermore, a look at statistics on the "evangelical population" in Latin America shows that of a total of thirty-seven million evangelical Protestants in Latin America, twenty-two million of them are Brazilian (Stoll 1990: 337-38). It is true that Brazil has neither the highest growth factor for evangelicals (a distinction granted to Guatemala) nor the largest percentage of the population (Chile occupies the number one position on that count), but Brazil nonetheless contributes approximately two out of every three evangelical Protestants for the whole of Latin America. Furthermore, the growth rate of evangelical Protestants in Brazil is indeed substantial: according to Stoll, their numbers grew from 4.4% of the population in 1960 to 15.95% in 1985, a growth factor of 3.6. If the same growth rates continue, by the year 2010 Brazil would have a Protestant majority (Stoll 1990: 337).

But will Brazil turn Protestant? Consider one answer that I received from an evangelical Brazilian Protestant. When I lived in Brazil during the mid 1980s and did fieldwork among the Spiritists, the growing presence of the evangelical Protestant religions attracted my attention. When I asked one of my Spiritist informants about the topic, he introduced me to his niece and nephew, who invited me to their Presbyterian church. I attended the (by American standards) extremely evangelical service, and I was impressed by both the huge attendance and my hosts' description of the church's rapid growth. I commented: "If this is going on everywhere, Brazil must be turning Protestant." The nephew replied, "No, the Spiritists would never let that happen."

The anecdote may be more telling than the statistics, but the statistics point to a similar conclusion. An article published in *Veja* draws on a Gallup poll to show that the number of Spiritists in Brazil has grown from 1.5 million in 1980 to 6.9 million in 1990, with another 13 million people listed as occasional attendants (April 10, 1991: 40). I suspect that the figures may be inflated by a change in data-gathering techniques, but if we are to take the statistics at face value, they suggest that for the 1980s alone, the growth rate for Spiritists was 460%. The figure may not quite achieve the levels of Protestant growth in Guatemala or perhaps even Brazil, but certainly the statistics suggest that in Brazil Spiritism may be giving Protestantism a run for its money (1990: 337). We might even ask, "Is Brazil turning Spiritist?"

I would not want to make any such claims or to defend the statistics we find in *Veja*. I have seen all sorts of statistics about Spiritism--my favorite is that the leading medium, Francisco Cândido "Chico" Xavier, outsells all Brazilian authors, including Jorge Amado--but I have seen few credible validations of the statistics. Nevertheless, it seems credible to argue that Spiritism in Brazil is robust and even growing at a rate greater than that of the general population. Furthermore, Spiritism, like Protestantism, is probably not be the only rapidly growing religion. Indeed, in the paper on the African-Brazilian religions of Candomblé presented for the Brown University conference on religious pluralism in Latin America, the ethnomusicologist Gerard Béhague (1992) documented the rapid growth of Candomblé-type religions in Salvador. Likewise, in a discussion of some other papers for the conference, the liberation theologian Father Edward L. Cleary noted that Catholic seminary enrollments were also rapidly growing. To anticipate my conclusion somewhat, I suspect that a general religious effervescence is going on in Latin America: perhaps all religions--evangelical sects, ecclesiastical base communities, Catholic charismatics, Spiritists, Umbandists, and so on--are growing in Brazil and perhaps in much of Latin America.

For such difficult and general questions, the focus of this essay--Spiritism in Brazil--may seem unduly narrow. However, I will use the ethnographic particulars of Spiritism in order to raise some general questions about the nature and status of religious pluralism in Latin America. By examining in some detail the case of Spiritism, we might learn certain lessons that could help us to be more careful and sophisticated when making statements about trends or tendencies in Latin American religious pluralism. Thus, this essay will begin with a general background on the Spiritist movement in Brazil and end with some more general issues having to do with frameworks for the study of religious pluralism in Latin America.

Spiritism and Spirit Mediumship Religions in Brazil

Brazil is a Catholic country, but its Catholicism is Iberian, with a strong emphasis on the cult of the saints and a strong belief in magic. Unlike in the United States, where the Protestants did not allow the slaves to practice their own religion, in Brazil the slaves found a more tolerant environment, especially in the cities. There, slaves and former slaves frequently disguised African rituals and gods as Catholic ones, and as a result they were able to preserve many of their African religious traditions. In the West African religions, which predominated among the African religions, the slaves practiced spirit mediumship (see Bastide 1978).

Spiritism (*espíritismo*) is therefore only one of several "spirit mediumship religions" (*religiões mediúnicas*). In Brazil, as in the rest of the African diaspora, a wide variety of religions maintain that human beings can serve as mediums and receive spirits of one type or another. Indeed, the type of spirit that is received is one of the key markers that distinguish one religion from another. For example, in the relatively African religions such as Candomblé, the mediums receive the African gods known as *orixás*. In

the Brazilian religion Umbanda, which is more prevalent in the south and southeast of Brazil, mediums receive spirits such as *pretos velhos* (spirits of slaves) or *caboclos* (spirits of Indians). Sometimes, Umbanda centers also hold Quimbanda sessions, in which they receive the more marginal spirits known as the *exu* (male) and *pomba gira* (female). There are a number of other related religions, some more or less African, some with non-Yoruba African influence, and some with a greater degree of Native American influences.

In Spiritism, the mediums tend to receive spirits of European savants, famous Brazilians, or Asian sages. Spiritists discourage their mediums from receiving the spirits characteristic of Umbanda or Candomblé, and generally Spiritists look down on Umbanda and Candomblé as a mixture of superstition, black magic, and genuine mediumship. Thus, as has been discussed in the literature, Spiritists inscribe racist and classist values in their construction of mediumship (e.g., Bastide 1978; Hess 1991a: 24-26, 82-85, 101). However, one should be careful about generalizations about the Spiritists' spirits; for example, the huge Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo (Spiritist Federation of the State of São Paulo) has a group of Native America spirits as guides, and local Spiritist centers sometimes shade imperceptibly into Umbanda.

Still, it would be safe to characterize Spiritism as the "upscale" option in a field of spirit mediumship religions that has its main strength at the lower ends of the social and ethnic pyramid: Spiritism is the "tip" of the iceberg. Middle-class Brazilians of predominantly European descent grow up in a culture where spirit-related beliefs are part of everyday life, particularly if their household includes a nanny or a maid of predominantly African descent. Thus, Spiritism is a respectable, sedate option for middle-class, "white" Brazilians who live in a cosmopolitan world of scientific ideas and modern business, but who at the same time inhabit the world of spirits, paranormal forces, and spiritual healing.

Unlike the other spirit mediumship religions, Spiritism is doctrine-oriented. The founder of the movement, Allan Kardec, was a French schoolteacher who in Paris in the 1850s began to study from teachers of his own: spirits who appeared through mediums. Kardec codified their teachings in a series of books published during the 1850s and 1860s, beginning with the *Book of the Spirits* (1944). His doctrine forms the "basis" of the movement, but there are a number of other key writers whose works are very important to Spiritists in Brazil today. They include Bezerra de Menezes (the Brazilian Kardec), and key mediums such as Chico Xavier, Hercílio Maes, Zibia Gasparetto, and Divaldo Franco (see Hess 1991a). In addition, there are a number of subdivisions among Spiritists, the most salient of which are the Roustaingists: people who follow the more Christian teachings of Jean-Baptiste Roustaing, a rival and contemporary of Kardec (for more background, see Hess 1991b).

Although many Spiritists consider Spiritism to be a religion, Kardec's doctrine defines Spiritism as a philosophy that is compatible with any number of religions. Clearly, the most important one was Christianity, and Kardec defended Christian morality. However, he did not go so far as to accept a number of key Christian doctrinal tenets, among them the belief in heaven and hell, the Trinity, or the existence of angels and demons. Kardec was very much a product of the Enlightenment, and he turned to Asia for philosophical and spiritual inspiration rather than to Rome.

According to Kardec's doctrine, all humans are in the process of an ongoing spiritual evolution that occurs over many lifetimes. Thus, reincarnation is crucial to his doctrine of eternal improvement, which can be glossed as a combination of nineteenth-century evolutionary progressivism and Hindu mysticism. The law of karma (or "cause and effect") governs how one is reborn and what obligations one has to work out in this life. When not on the terrestrial plane, spirits exist on a number of extraterrestrial

planes. Thus, there are no angels or demons, only more or less developed spirits. One's progress toward higher planes is determined in large part by one's charitable activities. As the Spiritist maxim goes, "Without charity, there is no salvation."

In Latin America, the context of the African spirit mediumship, Native American shamanism, and Iberian folk Catholicism provided a fertile ground for Kardec's Spiritism. In addition, the structure of dependency relations between the Spiritists and their guiding spirits resonated with the patron-client ties that are so characteristic of Latin American social relationships as well as most of the other religions in Latin America: in all the spirit mediumship religions, as well as in Pentecostalism and in popular Catholicism, one tends to find a structure of patron-client ties between the believer and the spirit, Jesus, or the saints. Finally, although Kardec envisioned the role of the medium as essentially an educational one in which the Spiritists would study under the guidance of a spirit of light, in Brazil the institution of mediumship became more oriented toward healing.

Kardec described a spiritual body known as the "perispirit" and roughly equivalent to what is called the "astral body" in English. Some mediums could see it in the form of auras, and they could also heal the sick by injecting healing energy into the astral body in a procedure known as *passes*, roughly equivalent to laying-on of hands. In addition, Kardec also argued that some earthbound spirits could remain on the terrestrial plane and cause the living to experience symptoms characteristic of mental illness such as thought obsessions. Mediums could then receive these earthbound spirits, and, with the help of spirits of light, they could get them to move on to higher planes. Thus, Kardec created the conditions for what in Brazil became the extremely popular exorcism ritual of "deobsession" or "disobsession" (*desobsessão*).

Spiritist Discourse and Practice in the Brazilian Ideological Arena

Spiritists meet in Spiritist centers and in their urban headquarters known as "federations." These centers and federations sponsor a variety of activities, including sessions dedicated to the development of mediumship and the study of Spiritist doctrine. Spiritists also practice numerous works of charity, and they sponsor orphanages, food and clothing distribution, clinics for the poor, mental hospitals, and a variety of alternative therapies. The alternative therapies include *passes*, disobsession sessions, and prayer sessions. In some cases, mediums may write homeopathic prescriptions for their clients, and some mediums also practice surgery. One form of surgery involves operations on the spiritual body; the mediums stand over the patient and perform pantomime-like operations above the body of the patient. Another form, much more controversial, involves breaking the skin of the patient, usually through a surgical scalpel.

Spiritists also include in their ranks a number of very well-educated intellectuals: doctors, engineers, lawyers, educators, and so on. In São Paulo, the doctors have formed their own Spiritist medical association. In general, the doctors in São Paulo are trained in the nation's medical schools, and they maintain medical practices of fairly standard allopathic medicine. These Spiritist doctors have supported conferences and classes on alternative therapies, and while they are very open-minded, they tend to support alternative therapies that do not involving any physical intrusion into the patient's body. Thus, they support the standard range of Spiritist therapeutic practices--*passes*, disobsession, prayers, and surgery on the spiritual body--and they also support the exploration of a number of alternative psychotherapies, such as neurolinguistic programming and past lives' hypnotherapies. However, they are adamantly opposed to mediums who perform surgery that involves physical intervention. For that matter, they oppose any kind of Spiritist medical practice that might pose a risk to the patient.

The intellectuals have a complex role as mediators. They try to educate the rank-and-file of the Spiritist movement so that Spiritists are not taken in by the maverick spirit mediums that practice dangerous forms of medicine. At the same time, the intellectuals attempt to reform the science and medicine of the state and universities so that there is more room for alternative therapies that have a spiritual orientation. As Spiritist intellectuals engage in the double process of educating their own rank-and-file and persuading intellectual and political elites to open doors to Spiritist thought and practice, they draw on parapsychology, transcultural psychiatry, anthropology, high energy physics, and other scientific disciplines that legitimate their world view. Holding conferences and writing books for the general public, the intellectuals refashion scientific discourses and rewrite them from a Spiritist perspective. At the same time, they attempt to reform some state regulations, such as the *curandeirismo* (faith healing) law or the teaching of parapsychology in the nation's medical schools, to create a better legal environment for their work.

However, Spiritist intellectuals face challenges, most vociferously from Jesuits who have used their own version of parapsychology to debunk the claims of the Spiritist mediums. Furthermore, some members of the medical profession have also questioned some of the claims of Spiritist mediums, particularly the troublesome surgery mediums, who discredit the intellectuals' efforts. In the process, Spiritist intellectuals find themselves fashioning new discourses that fuse political ideology, religious philosophy, spiritual healing, medical knowledge, and controversial sciences.

As I have argued in *Spirits and Scientists*, it is not possible to understand the work of Spiritist intellectuals in Brazil by remaining restricted to frameworks that focus on the already very complex religious system in that country. Instead, the analytical framework needs to be extended to a broader "ideological arena" of competing sciences, political ideologies, medical practices, judicial rulings, and so on. To talk about emerging tendencies or trends in this "religion" (and remember, the intellectuals are more likely to define Spiritism as a philosophy) immediately involves raising the question of what other kinds of movements, disciplines, practices, and ideologies are emerging in the broader society (and, as I show in *Spirits and Scientists*, internationally as well).

Implications for the Study of Religious Pluralism

From these specifics about Spiritism in Brazil, I would like to make a few more general remarks about discussions of religious pluralism and diversity in Latin America.

1. *Religious diversity and diversification occur along with ideological diversity and diversification.* Scholars have long explored the connection between religion and politics in Latin America, but we need to be prepared to think about religion as ideology in new ways. The question raised by Spiritism goes beyond the role that religious groups play in the political arena or the political/ideological implications of religious beliefs and practices. Instead, the case of Spiritism shows how new discourses and practices are emerging that to some extent supercede established boundaries between religion and, say, science, social science, medicine, or politics.

I have discussed here how Spiritist intellectuals are developing new scientific and medical discourses that to some extent deconstruct conventional discursive boundaries, but Spiritists are not unique. Another example is the theology of liberation, which brings together religious, social scientific, and politic discourse in novel ways that in itself constitutes a radical departure from previous configurations of theology. Furthermore, as I have discussed in my book *Science in the New Age*, the phenomenon of televangelism combines religion and entertainment in ways that might be likened to Frederic Jameson's discussions of postmodern aesthetics (1984). To give a final (and more potential) example, I am told that in Miami at least some santeros are heavily

involved in the drug trade, a possibility that mixes religion and politics in ways that most social scientists have not even considered. We can only speculate on the new forms of practice and discourse that will emerge when a world of drug highs meets that of spiritual trances.

In short, the question of "new gods" in Latin American religion needs to be situated in terms of a reconfiguration of the ideological landscape. Old divisions among "religion," "politics," and "science" may increasingly become called into question. It is not simply new gods or new religions that are emerging, nor is it even new sciences or new ideologies. Rather, what may be emerging may be hybrid discourses and practices, new forms of organizing old divisions.

2. *The new gods are in some ways variants of the old gods.* Although I have emphasized the "newness" of the complexity of religious-ideological pluralism in this essay, we should also keep in mind the connections with and continuities with the past. The semipolytheistic nature of the Catholic church, the centuries of coexistence with Islam, the longstanding colonial heritage of northern European and North American Protestantism, the tradition of Iberian folk Catholicism, and the heritage of African and indigenous religions are all part of a centuries-old pattern of religious diversity. Things are changing, but the changes draw on already existing traditions of religious and ideological diversity. Latin American religion provides a rich legacy of syncretism and synthesis, of cultural overlapping ranging from stone-age tribes to cosmopolitan cities: in a sense Latin America has always been postmodern.

Furthermore, we should not forget that Latin American history tends to oscillate between democracy and authoritarianism. In Brazil, periods of authoritarianism have usually coincided with repression of the spirit mediumship religions and a drying up of at least some forms of religious diversity (see Hess 1987, 1991b: appendix III, on this pattern). The dynamics have now changed in some places, such that Protestantism may flourish in periods of authoritarianism, as in Chile and Guatemala. However, in the early 1990s many Latin American countries could be characterized as being in a relatively democratic phase, and under these circumstances it would be no surprise to see religious diversification, particularly growth among indigenous, African, spirit mediumship religions. It would also not be surprising to find that such diversification will dry up during a new period of authoritarianism.

3. *The "modern" and the "progressive" are distributed unevenly across the religious arena.* It may be another aspect of the Latin American condition, and particularly the contemporary condition, that it is difficult to map political ideology onto religious groups in a straightforward way. We might associate the "theology of liberation" with progressive politics, but as Spiritists would be quick to point out, even this clearly progressive political ideology is restricted by the confines of a patriarchal and authoritarian institution that has the power to silence leaders such as Leonardo Boff and to exclude women from the priesthood and papacy.

However, other religious institutions may be no less authoritarian or patriarchal. For example, Spiritists--who value democracy deeply and trace their intellectual roots to Kardec's nineteenth-century liberal progressivism--are nonetheless split over the role of the Brazilian Spiritist Federation, which a reform group within the Spiritist movement even labelled (and pejoratively) "the Vatican." Furthermore, there are many women mediums in the Spiritist movement, but men occupy the bulk of the top positions in the organizational hierarchies that I have seen. At the other extreme, the most African of the Candomblés grant a position of great power and prestige to women, but often within a traditional system of patron-client relationships.

Likewise, political ties and affiliations are variable and conflicting. My observations of and meetings with Spiritists during the mid-1980s suggest that for the

most part Spiritist participation in the political process is directed toward specific projects such as educational and medical reform. In general, I encountered rather apolitical comments. For example, when I suggested to one Spiritist that their movement needed a theology of liberation as in the Catholic church, he replied to me, "Spiritism is already a liberation." (The phrase was not too different from that of the conservative Catholic bishop Boaventura Kloppenburg, who once said that in his theology liberation he wanted to liberate people from sin; see *Veja* 7/21/82: 72). On the Spiritist right, there is a connection with the military that dates back to the nineteenth century, but on the left there is an equally longstanding connection between Spiritism and socialism. Perhaps the most prominent Spiritist political leader in the 1980s was the late democratic socialist Freitas Nobre, and Spiritist youth groups have tended to be quite progressive politically.

Spiritism is not the exception but the rule when it comes to question of how religions map onto a left/right political spectrum. The conflict between the progressive and conservative wings of the Catholic church is now a matter of everyday knowledge. For Protestantism, there is evidence that suggests similar diversity. For example, David Martin notes, citing the research of Paul Freston of UNICAMP, that "Pentecostals are fairly middle of the road, while 'historical' Protestants are strongly left or strongly right in their attitudes" (1990: 259). In short, there are points of progressive politics and modernity, just as there are points of conservatism and traditionalism, distributed throughout the religious system.

4. *Things are not always what they seem: in some ways, Protestantism in Latin America may be "Spiritist," and Spiritism may be "Protestant."* First, how Protestant is Latin American Protestantism? One of my Puerto Rican students explained to me that he attends an evangelical Protestant church both at home and in the Albany area. The denomination is exactly the same, but on the mainland the pastor leaves him alone, whereas on the island the pastor "interferes" in every aspect of his everyday life. In the U.S., the pastor lets the student take care of his own conscience, whereas in Puerto Rico the pastor is constantly watching over him. Could classical distinctions such as internalized/externalized value orientations, or individualistic versus personalistic social systems (DaMatta 1991), apply to the same religion in the two different cultures? If so, the Puerto Rican version of the same Protestant religion is in some ways closer to traditional Latin American Catholicism and Spiritism than it is to its North American sibling (see also Martin 1990: 282).

At the same time, we might ask: how "Spiritist" is Latin American Spiritism? I have met "evangelical" Spiritists in Brazil who give long sermons on accepting Jesus into one's heart, and who speak of the *Gospel* in ways that make it unclear if they are talking about Kardec's work of the *Bible*. At another extreme, those who follow Kardec's doctrine closely enter into the world of a rationalist thinker whose intellectual roots lie in Protestant Switzerland. Thus, I have met Spiritists who had the intellectual severity, personal puritanism, and internalized values characteristic of Calvinist Protestantism. Indeed, the intellectual tradition of Calvinist Protestantism may be more alive in the Spiritist movement than in Protestantism, which in Brazil is often locked into structures of Pentecostalist trancing and the instrumentalism of spiritual healing.

Finally, consider the case of a Pentecostalist minister from Rio Grande do Sul whom I interviewed in 1988 (see Hess ms.). He emphasized how different his religion was from the spirit mediumship religions as well as from Catholicism. However, after listening to his stories on exorcism and faith healing, I realized that he was indeed inhabiting the same symbolic world as Catholic folk healers, Jesuit parapsychologists, Spiritist mediums, and Candomblé/Umbanda mothers- and fathers-of-the-saints. If the Protestant Reformation was coming to Brazil, it was a very different Protestantism from that of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Indeed, this

minister approached Jesus as an otherworldly patron much the same way that an Umbanda mother-of-the-saints would approach a spirit guide. Spiritists recognize the sibblingship by classifying themselves, Umbandists, and Pentecostalists together under the category of *religiões mediúnicas* ("mediumistic religions" or "spirit mediumship religions"). We might ask, "If Latin America is turning Protestant, what does it mean if the Protestantism is in some ways more 'Spiritist' than the Spiritists?"

5. *Even the social psychology of religion in Latin America may be changing.* Religion was once an ascribed status, but we can no longer be sure that all the people who call themselves Protestants or Spiritists today will do so next year. Changes in religious identity may still involve the rhetoric of the "conversion," but they may increasingly approximate the cosmopolitan notion of a "career change," which presupposes a more stable underlying identity. Furthermore, religious identities have always been somewhat flexible in Latin America. Whether one wishes to attribute this flexibility to the African influence, or the confluence of Africa with Iberian Catholicism and Native American bricolage, expressions of the sort "Catholic by day, Spiritist by night" should give us pause when considering statistics about tremendous numbers of "conversions" to any religion in Latin America.

Consider an alternative image to that of "conversion": in Latin America Protestantism or Spiritism may serve as a *conveyor belt* that lifts them out of Catholicism (or some other religion of upbringing) and eventually lands them in a vegetarian Zen Buddhist group (yes, there is one in São Paulo), a Workers' Party election, a Silva Mind Control group, or a university program in psychology. For example, I watched one young woman, a daughter of a Spiritist informant, move from Spiritism to Protestantism to the Worker's Party and, as of my most recent letter, back to Spiritism. In another case, I interviewed a man my age who drifted out of Spiritism into New Age-style Eastern philosophies and on to French anthropology and philosophy. Such biographical trajectories result in new syncretisms and new syntheses in the ideological arena: the woman is now a left-wing Spiritist, and the man's dissertation involved, from the committee's point of view, a precarious mixture of mysticism and the social sciences.

We might then raise the question: "Is Latin America becoming more secular?" The anthropologist Yvonne Maggie told me that from her observations the African Brazilians may be abandoning the *Candomblés* for dance parties and clubs, even as the intellectuals and media are appropriating the same religions in their projects of national identity construction. (She was writing up these ideas in an essay to be titled, "O que se cala quando se fala do negro no Brasil".) Thus, at both the top and the bottom of the social pyramid, there may be a growing "secular" population alongside the growing numbers of evangelicals and Spiritists. And remember that the populations are by no means mutually exclusive. For example, I watched a friend who had a strict Catholic upbringing, but had since become an unswerving materialist and leftist intellectual, turn to an Umbanda medium when a good friend became gravely ill. I can cite several other similar cases of what we might call "Marxist by day, Spiritist by night."

6. *What is Latin America becoming?* I have repeatedly avoided asking seriously the question of whether Latin America was becoming Protestant, Spiritist, secular, postmodern, or something else. However, I do wish to raise the question of caution for discussions about religious trends and religious pluralism in Latin America. There seems to be a paradox in the religious development of Latin America: it is becoming more Protestant, but it is also becoming more Catholic, more Spiritist, more indigenous, more African, more New Age, more cosmopolitan, more secular, and so on. We should certainly begin by regarding these diverse tendencies as not all mutually exclusive, but as multiple options that people embrace selectively over time and across social situations, options that people at times even bring together and create as new

syntheses. In doing so, we may be able to answer the question of "What is Latin America becoming?" Without ascribing to an essentialist view (a position that should be obvious by now), and without denying the importance of African and Native American civilizations covered over by the word "Latin," I would say that Latin America is becoming more Latin American.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks go to the organizers and moderators of the conference "Competing Gods: Religious Pluralism in Latin America," held at Brown University on March 6, 1992. They include Regina Cortina, Agnes Desu, Thomas Skidmore, and Nelson Vieira. I would also like to thank Anani Dzidzienyo for helpful suggestions and criticism raised as discussant, as well as the comments, questions, and suggestions of the other conference participants.

References

Bastide, Roger

1978 *The African Religions of Brazil*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press (orig. 1960).

Béhague, Gerard

1992 "Regional and National Trends in Afro-Brazilian Religious Musics: A Case of Cultural Pluralism." Paper presented at the conference on "Competing Gods: Religious Pluralism in Latin America," Center for Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and Center for Latin American Studies, Brown University, March 6.

Burnett, Virginia Garrard

1992 "Protestantism in Latin America." *Latin American Research Review* 27 (1): 218-30.

DaMatta, Roberto

1991 *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press.

Hess, David J.

1987 "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24(2): 15-34.

1991a "On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Reading Spiritist Otherworldly Ethnographies." In *Toward Socio-Criticism: "Luso-Brazilian Literatures"*. Roberto Reis, ed. pp. 219-228. Tempe, Ariz.: Center for Latin American Studies, Arizona State University.

1991b *Spirits and Scientists: Ideology, Spiritism, and Brazilian Culture*. University Park, Penn.: Penn State University Press.

1993 *Science in the New Age: The Paranormal, its Defenders and Debunkers, and American Culture*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press (under contract).

ms. "Hierarchy, Hegemony, and Brazilian Religion." In *Hierarchy and Personalism in Brazil: A Contribution to the Anthropology of National Societies*. David J. Hess and Roberto DaMatta, eds. In preparation.

Jameson, Frederic

1984 "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism." *New Left Review* 146: 53-93.

Kardec, Allan

1944 *O Livro dos Espíritos*. Rio de Janeiro: Federação Espírita Brasileira. Trans. by Anna Blackwell as *Spiritualist Philosophy: The Spirits' Book*. London: Trubner & Co., 1875. (orig. 1860; first edition 1857).

Martin, David

1990 *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Stoll, David

1990 *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Weber, Max

1958 *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Scribner's (orig. 1904-1905).

Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies

Citation: Hess, David J. 1995 "Hierarchy, Hegemony, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies" *The Brazilian Puzzle: Culture on the Borderlands of the Western World*. Ed. by David J Hess and Roberto DaMatta. Columbia University Press.

In most national societies, religion, medicine, science, politics, and other domains usually take the form of pluralistic systems in which a variety of groups compete with each other for legitimacy, resources, and followers. However, actors usually do not build their systems and attempt to attract followers on a level playing field, even if there are constitutional guarantees that would suggest otherwise. Some groups have a head start, and they may even get the state to sanction their practices as official or orthodox. Other groups start from disadvantaged positions; their practices have a nonorthodox or "heterodox" status. As a result, boundaries between orthodoxies and heterodoxies pervade what might at first seem to be a pluralistic field of open competition.

Brazil has long been recognized as a laboratory of religious complexity. The Brazilian constitution protects religious freedom, and in theory Brazilians may belong to the religion of their choice. However, the various religions are not by any means equal competitors. Rather, the religious arena in many parts of Brazil has two major poles--one represented by the Catholic church and the other by the popular religions of African origin--with a number of other positions in between. The two poles are the product of Brazil's colonial legacy of racism and slavery, and in this sense the religious playing field is already structured by a more general and historically rooted hegemony.¹ As I have argued in *Samba in the Night*, the general hegemony of a privileged class of predominantly European descent, crosscut by the gender hegemony that empowers heterosexual men, conditions the general structures of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the religious domain. In an almost textbook example of the distinction between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, the Catholic church was for many years the official religion in Brazil, and likewise for many years the African religions were banned and/or persecuted, as discussed in more detail in Silverstein's essay in this volume. Furthermore, as Silverstein also discusses, the Catholic/African polarities also align with another major dimension of social hierarchy: gender, given that the Catholic church orders and hierarchy are still limited to men, and many of the African religions grant a privileged place to the "mothers-of-the-saints."

In this essay, I will consider how boundaries between orthodoxy and heterodoxy are maintained even in today's situation of modern legal structures that sanction freedom of religion and religious pluralism. Although the various groups in the religious arena could be described as competing for a segment of an apparently modern religious marketplace, I will argue that even as they go about competing for a piece of the market the actors end up reconstructing relations of hegemony that are their cultural legacy. To make this argument, I will engage in a detailed analysis of the work of four prominent intellectuals from four of the main religious positions in southern and southeastern Brazil: a Jesuit priest and parapsychologist (as a representative of the Catholic church), a Pentecostalist minister, a Spiritist intellectual, and an Umbanda medium, writer, and intellectual. I will argue that the social position of the four religions is evident in the way the intellectuals represent their religion with respect to their competitors.²

More specifically, I argue that although all four intellectuals provide a map of the whole religious system in which their own religion "encompasses" the other ones, the strategy of encompassment varies in a way that corresponds to their social position. To

review the discussion in the introduction to this volume, the term "encompassment" refers to the way in which two categories may be constructed as opposites at one level, but at another level one of the terms stands for the opposition as a whole (Dumont 1980: 239). In the case of religion in Brazil, each group will attempt to draw a picture of the religious system that constructs itself in the encompassing position. That picture is what one would expect in a system of religious pluralism: each group markets itself as the best option with the one true way. However, I will show that something else is also going on: the ways of encompassing of the other groups proceeds differently in each of the four cases. In turn, the way in which the other groups are encompassed reflects, as I shall argue, the relationship to the social structure and broader structures of hegemony in society. In this way, I hope to show how a perspective that examines the construction of heterodoxy, hierarchy, and hegemony can lead to a deeper analysis of religious systems than one which assumes a level playing field and a competitive model.³

Methodological Background

In Brazil, relations among religious groups are often clearly articulated in debates over who has the best exorcism rituals or therapies for spirit attack and possession. Therefore, this essay focuses on an amalgam of medico-religious-scientific ideas which defies easy compartmentalization as medical anthropology, the anthropology of religion, or the social studies of knowledge (see Csordas 1987, also Hess 1991a). The four positions considered here emerge from a set of choices that Brazilians from the urban south and southeast often have available for "treatment" of cases of nonceremonial, domestic spirit possession and spirit "infestation" (i.e., ghost or poltergeist attacks).⁴ Of the religious specialists available, four of the most salient are Catholic priests, who generally shy away from exorcisms and often recommend the psychotherapeutic approach of Jesuit parapsychologists; Spiritist (Kardecist) mediums, who practice a kind of talking exorcism known as "disobsession," which is directed mainly at spirits of deceased humans; Pentecostalist ministers, who perform prayer-based exorcisms directed at the devil; and Umbandist mediums (sacerdotes of a spirit mediumship religion with Christian, African, and Native or Amerindian elements), who will tend to view cases of spirit attack as due to sorcery and therefore may, in these cases, perform antisorcery rituals.

The research presented here grows out of fieldwork among the Spiritist movement in Brazil from late 1984 to early 1986, and the materials presented here are based on interviews conducted during a summer trip to Brazil in 1988. Three leading representatives of the religions were interviewed--the Jesuit Father Edvino Friderichs, the Pentecostalist Reverend Nasser Bandeira, and the Spiritist Hernani Guimarães Andrade. The fourth--the Umbandist Antônio Alves Teixeira--died shortly before my visit, but because of the wide diffusion of his publications, I decided to base this section on his published books rather than substitute an interview with other, lesser known Umbandist mediums.⁵ The interpretation of his texts is complemented by an interview with a family who had recourse to an Umbandist healer in 1988, just as it is made possible by my own observations of Umbanda rituals and the general ethnographic literature on Umbanda.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the rhetoric of encompassment, I want to emphasize what is *not* being claimed or attempted in this essay. While the question of historical dynamics and development is an important one (and one which I have pursued elsewhere, e.g., 1987a), this essay is restricted to the narrower problem of describing a structure of representations at a given historical moment, specifically the mid-to-late 1980s. Furthermore, although the study is ethnographically based, I have not hesitated to use written texts. The level and type of problem being addressed here is more or less

constant between texts and interviews: my experience is that a Jesuit view of the religious system, for example, is not likely to change dramatically depending on whether one asks the Jesuit directly or reads it in a book which he gives to me at the end of the interview.

There is also the question of the representativeness of the four religious healers/intellectuals whom I discuss. Certainly in a country as large and divided as Brazil one would be foolish to deny the tremendous regional diversity. I could multiply the number of positions discussed here from four to forty and still not achieve "representativeness." There is likewise a tremendous variation within, for example, the Spiritist movement or among Catholic intellectuals, not to mention within the broader Catholic church itself. Although each of the four persons discussed occupy or occupied leadership positions, I do not claim that the ideas of, for example, Padre Friderichs are in some sense modal for the Jesuit community, nor that those of Teixeira are representative of Umbanda as a whole. Not only would the answer to such a question require an extremely expensive and time-consuming survey, but it would also be beside the point. Instead, by taking one exemplar of each of these positions and interrogating his discourse, I will show, for example, what is "Jesuit" about a given Jesuit's construction of exorcism, healing, spirit attacks, and the others with whom he is in dialogue, rather than assess how representative a given Jesuit's discourse is of Jesuit intellectuals in general or, even more problematic, of the Catholic church as a whole. My concern here is with delineating certain representative *differences* among these four religions rather than with assessing how *representative* the differences are for each of the four religions.

A Jesuit

Padre Edvino Friderichs, S. J., is officially retired, but he maintains a busy schedule at the dormitory where he lives in the Ancieta High School (Colégio Anchieta) in Porto Alegre, the capital city of the southernmost Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. Although he is known in the press as an exorcist, he describes himself as a parapsychologist--that is, a student of the controversial scientific discipline dedicated to the study of what are believed to be paranormal phenomena--and as a parapsychologist he attracts a steady stream of clients. His work with haunted houses and ghosts has won him fame, but the mainstay of his work is relaxation treatment for cases of depression. I visited him in June, 1988, and spent a few days with him while he treated a thirteen-year-old girl who was the focus of a poltergeist attack and a great deal of press coverage. During this time, I was able to talk with him at length and to watch him do his work as a healer.

Friderichs studied with Padre Oscar González Quevedo, S. J., a Spanish priest who lives in São Paulo and has taught his version of parapsychology to a generation of Latin American clergy members. In order to understand Friderich's theory and practice of healing, one must first examine some of Quevedo's key ideas. Quevedo believes that ghosts and haunted houses are not the work of spirits or demons; however, he deviates from official science by arguing that many of these cases cannot be reduced to naturalistic explanations such as fraud, hallucination, faulty wiring, childhood pranks, or overly active imaginations. Instead, he believes that haunted houses often involve "telergy," an unknown biological energy generated by the body of living persons, frequently adolescents. The Jesuits back up this claim with a strong endorsement: their interpretation follows more or less the accepted theory of most American and Western European parapsychologists, except that the latter call this energy "recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis" and implicitly believe that it comes from the mind rather than the body. As a result, Jesuits in Brazil adopt and transform--or to use Martha

Carvalho's term (this volume), "anthropophagize"--American and European parapsychology, a heterodox science with low prestige in the northern hemisphere. Because of the high prestige of almost anything North American or European in Latin America, parapsychology can paradoxically serve to legitimate the Catholic church with respect to Spiritism, Umbanda, Pentecostalism, and other religions and religious healing systems. Furthermore, the ways in which Jesuits have transformed international parapsychology suggests that the science has been encompassed by Catholic church dogmas. For example, Quevedo created a category of "supernormal" phenomena--Biblical prophecy, the miracles of Lourdes, the raising of the dead, and the cure of lepers--which are beyond the "extranormal" and "paranormal" phenomena of parapsychology and are instead the province of the theologian (1974: 100-103). As a result, the secular parapsychology of the northern hemisphere becomes part of a broader, Catholic framework.

At one point in Quevedo's scheme, however, northern hemisphere parapsychology encompasses Catholic dogma. The exception is important because it involves rejecting an alternative explanatory system, demonic infestation, which in Brazil has increasingly become the province of Pentecostals. Quevedo refuses to accept the possibility that the devil might be the cause of at least some cases of spirit infestation and possession. In place of this explanation, he advocates a psychological interpretation of possession. Quevedo's secular view of possession resulted in problems with the church hierarchy: during much of the 1980s, he was under prohibition to lecture or give interviews because he had published a book that questioned the reality of demonic infestation and that the church subsequently burned. Although officially sanctioned exorcism is now relatively rare within the Catholic church, the church hierarchy is apparently unwilling to give up its right to perform it. With this exception, Quevedo's parapsychology has nonetheless been extremely influential within the church. Even when he was under prohibition to lecture or give interviews, the church continued to advocate his type of parapsychology, altered, of course, with respect to the issue of demonic infestation.

Quevedo can be an extremely polemical writer, and as a debunker his rhetoric is somewhat akin to that of the American skeptical group, the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. However, there is an interesting difference: in the U. S. atheistic skeptics debunk parapsychology, whereas in Brazil Jesuit parapsychologists debunk Spiritism and Umbanda, a "cultural shift" that corresponds to Latin Americans' higher level of belief in things spiritual. An example of Quevedo's debunking is his book *Curandeirismo: An Evil or a Good?* (1978), in which he argues that a group of medical doctors to whom Spiritists turned for endorsements of their beliefs in spirit surgery are in fact already biased in favor of Spiritism. In general, Quevedo and the Jesuit parapsychologists view Spiritist and Umbandist healing mediums as *curandeiros*, which in Brazil is prohibited by law and subject to a fine and jail sentence.

Like Quevedo, Friderichs is more interested in the this-worldly telergic theory than the otherworldly demonic theory of ghosts, haunted houses, and poltergeists. "There are no haunted houses," he told me, "only haunted people." Basing his therapy on Quevedo's telergic theory, Friderichs focuses on helping the afflicted person to be more relaxed and therefore to stop emitting the energy that causes poltergeist attacks. In general, he provides his clients with one or more half-hour sessions of guided relaxation. When he judges that his clients have achieved a suitable level of relaxation and hypnotic susceptibility, he suggests that they feel relaxed and happy, and, in the case of infestations, that they no longer produce the phenomena.

Friderichs' book on the topic, *Haunted Houses* (1980), is written for a lay reader, and in it he surveys over fifty cases of haunted houses, some of which he was personally involved in as a healer. The case histories often begin with the interpretations of the press or the afflicted--a demon, an evil spirit, or a spell--and end with his own interpretation, in the process marking a discursive shift from the popular to the "scientific," the traditional to the modern. Friderichs is highly critical of these other interpretations and their associated therapies, as one can see in the following case history, titled "Demons in Ipiranga":

As I have already explained in other articles, the devil is not the cause of these alarming events [the Pentecostalist and popular Catholic explanations], nor is an *exú* [an Umbandist explanation] or the spirit of a dead person [the Spiritist explanation], but instead it is one or more of the residents of the house where these phenomena occurred....

People involved in such cases should not turn to Spiritism; that would be the worst of solutions. Nor should they turn to Umbanda or sorcerers. The exorcisms and blessings of the Protestant or Catholic church also will not resolve anything. Only a well-oriented parapsychology should intervene, because this is the speciality which studies and cures such pathologies (Friderichs 1980: 52).

Friderichs supports these assertions with claims of efficacy. For example, in one case of a haunted house, the family had already called in Spiritists and Umbandists seven or eight times, who "applied their magical rites, without doing anything" (72). Only when Friderichs applied his therapy of relaxation did the spirit attack recede.

In short, Friderich's approach is to dismiss the etiologies of other religious healing systems as "popular" and "unscientific." He also warns that the alternative religious healing systems can heighten the suggestibility of the family and even exacerbate the telergic outbreak. Thus, alternative healing systems are rejected not only as inefficacious but also as potentially counterproductive. Nevertheless, perhaps in deference to the church hierarchy, Friderichs does present a few cases in which exorcism by a priest was successful. Furthermore, he does combine relaxation therapy with the Lord's Prayer, Ave Maria, Gloria, and sometimes his blessing. Although he by no means denies the importance of divine intervention and help, he also believes prayers and his priest's blessing as sanctioned by the Catholic church can be useful for their power of suggestion over people who generally believe in spirits, sorcery, and demons. Friderichs' parapsychological therapy therefore leaves room for conventional religious healing as understood by the Catholic church, but he also suggests that at least in some cases it can be translated into a psychological idiom and understood as efficacious due to the power of suggestion.

Jesuit parapsychology therefore inscribes in several ways its position as a the discourse of an intellectual elite within a dominant religious institution. Despite the fact that parapsychology is considered a heterodox science, Jesuit parapsychology aligns itself with official science and modern psychotherapy against other religious healing systems, which are rejected as unscientific, popular, and at times even illegal and dangerous. Jesuit parapsychology also rejects the claims of efficacy of other religious healing systems and urges the afflicted not to have recourse to multiple healers. In turn, the elements of alternative religious healing systems--such as exorcism and prayer--are only accepted to the extent that they are encompassed within the framework of the parapsychological cure.

A Spiritist

Like Jesuit parapsychologists, Spiritists also believe that their religious healing system has a scientific basis, and no Spiritist in Brazil has been more important in

describing and defending the scientific nature of Spiritism than Hernani Guimarães Andrade. A retired engineer and a native of Minas Gerais, the interior state known for its clever political leaders and conservative Catholic traditions, Andrade has lived since the 1920s in the state of São Paulo, where he has gained a reputation as a leading figure among Spiritist intellectuals. I got to know him during my previous fieldwork among the Spiritist movement in Brazil, and in 1988 I met with him again and spent an afternoon discussing several topics, including his theory of poltergeists.

As a "Spiritist" (or "Kardecist," as outsiders call them), Andrade is a student of Allan Kardec, a nineteenth-century French educator who developed a systematized doctrine on spirit mediumship and the spirit world. As Spiritists describe it, Kardec's doctrine is a philosophy rooted in scientific knowledge that has moral implications; hence, for Spiritists it is a synthesis of philosophical principles, scientific research, and religious morality. Spiritists tend to be whites from the middle class, but there is a tremendous variation in ethnic and class membership among Spiritist centers, and frequently some overlap with Umbanda. Like Umbandists, Spiritists believe in the existence of a spiritual body (called the "perispirit"), communication with the dead via spirit mediums, and spiritual progression and purification according to the law of karma, which governs reincarnation.

Andrade--or "Doctor Hernani," as he is known within the Spiritist movement--is dedicated more to the research and scientific side of Spiritism than to its numerous charitable activities, and his work has set a standard of empirical psychical research which few of his colleagues have emulated. Among his projects Andrade has completed a book of case histories of anomalous childhood memories of past lives which he believes are suggestive of reincarnation (1988a), and he has also completed two detailed case studies of poltergeists (1982, 1984), recently published as a book (1988b). Examination of the two case studies of poltergeists provides an example of how a Spiritist intellectual encompasses Jesuit, Pentecostalist, and Umbandist frameworks within that of Spiritism.

Beginning with the Jesuit/Spiritist relationship, like the Jesuits Andrade finds support for his ideas in North American and European parapsychology. Just as Jesuit parapsychologists such as Padre Edvino select and cite North American and European parapsychologists as authorities to legitimate their position that the poltergeist is only an expression of the psychic energy of the living, so Andrade has found a few North American and European parapsychologists who believe that poltergeists may, in some cases, be explained not by the psychic energy of the living but by the intervention of a spirit. Andrade therefore embraces parapsychology and defends a heterodox position within this already heterodox science: the "survival theory," a position that holds there is empirical evidence in favor of postmortem survival. As a result, Andrade's ideas are placed on an equal footing with those of the Jesuit parapsychologists. In other words, his spirit-intervention theory and the Jesuits' psychic (telergic) energy theory represent two alternative explanations within parapsychology which may now be considered as two theories that are in principle equal and that will stand or fall depending on who has the best evidence.

One way in which Andrade's viewpoint appears as more scientific than that of the Jesuits has to do with the format of his texts. Whereas Padre Edvino's work is written at a popular level for a layperson, Andrade's research adopts the detailed, erudite, case-history approach similar to that of some North American and European parapsychologists. Unlike the Jesuit texts, Andrade's case histories are written for other well-educated laypersons and other researchers, both within the Spiritist movement and outside it. By assuming an erudite implied reader, Andrade's texts contrast with most Catholic parapsychology texts as well as with those of Umbanda, both of which assume

a popular reader. As a result, the Spiritist's discourse is in this sense more "scientific," even though his adoption of the survival hypothesis is considered less "scientific" by most parapsychologists.

In the Suzano case, Hernani describes how a Jesuit priest provided psychological counseling for a family afflicted by a poltergeist. Because I have already discussed the case in detail elsewhere (1991a), I will only summarize its relevant aspects here. In the Jesuit's account (Fitzpatrick 1983[1970]: 21), the family came to the priest and asked him to bless the house. After he refused they sought the aid of Protestant pastors and "some of the local Spiritist leaders, including a famous *macumbeiro*" (22). (The latter is a derogatory term that Spiritists sometimes use for an Umbandist medium, just as Catholics sometimes use the term "Spiritist" to refer to both Spiritists and Umbandists.) Later, the family approached the Jesuit again, and he persuaded them that a more appropriate action was a psychotherapeutic session between him and the family's oldest daughter, who was the focus of the ghostly attack. During a session of counseling, the Jesuit discovered that the girl harbored profound resentment toward her father, and he claims that he convinced her to adopt a more accepting attitude toward her father.

Fitzpatrick argues that his session of psychotherapeutic counseling ended the poltergeist attack, but Andrade claims that there is a discrepancy in the Jesuit's chronology. According to Andrade's interviews with the family, the therapy session probably occurred after the poltergeist had already ended, and it therefore could not have been responsible for ending the spiritic invasion. He claims that the extinction of the poltergeist instead corresponded to a Spiritist "*desobsessão*" (exorcism) ritual, the effectiveness of which confirms the Spiritist interpretation. In disobsession sessions mediums receive earthbound spirits that plague humans, and they convince these spirits to accept the help of "spirits of light," who then take the earthbound spirits onto higher planes (see Hess 1989c).

Andrade therefore concludes that the interpretation of the Jesuits and most North American and European parapsychologists fits the facts of the case less convincingly than his own, spirit-intervention interpretation. He places the Spiritist and Jesuit interpretations on equal ground as two opposing theories, one of which matches the empirical evidence better. In this sense, the Spiritist interpretation ends up encompassing the Jesuit explanatory system and therapy.

A more complicated example of encompassment is Andrade's treatment of the family's interpretation, which provides an encounter between the Spiritist framework and that of Umbanda. Although the family was Catholic, they believed that the spirit attack was probably caused by black magic performed by the father's exlover, who was also an Umbanda medium. According to the Spiritist mediums whose disobsession treatment was, in Andrade's view, the probable reason for the end of the spirit attack, the spirits involved were indeed "elementals," that is, "virgin entities, entities that were never incorporated in a human body" (1982: 77). Andrade's interpretation therefore appears to agree with the Umbandist interpretation to the extent that both perspectives recognize that evil spirits might have been sent to perturb the house. However, his interpretation also encompasses that of Umbanda by showing how the attack was resolved via a Spiritist ritual and not an Umbandist one.

The second case that Andrade discusses involves a comparison between Spiritism and Pentecostalism. In the Guarulhos case the Pentecostalist family believed that the devil had infested their house. Given their beliefs, the family only used prayer sessions and other techniques of remediation consistent with their religion. However, unlike the Suzano case, where the disobsession was successful, the Guarulhos case also dragged on for years and did not have a clear resolution. At times, members of the

family saw apparitions of the evil spirits which attacked them, but to the family, these represented manifestations of the demon. Andrade argues that these spirits were more likely "the metamorphosis of very backwards spirits, such as 'umuluns' or 'exús,'" both spirits recognized by Umbanda (Andrade 1984: 65).⁶

Unlike the Jesuit, who openly rejects other explanatory systems and therapies, Andrade is more suggestive and tentative. For example, he rarely dismisses Pentecostalist, Umbanda, or folk Catholic exorcism rituals as lacking in efficacy; instead, he notes how they may provide some relief to the victimized families. Although Andrade defends a Spiritist version of parapsychology in his published writings, in personal correspondence he has noted to me that Spiritist therapies do not always work, and in some cases the remediation techniques of other religions do work. For example, he has told me that in other cases he believes Umbanda or Candomblé rituals may have successfully extinguished the poltergeist, although not necessarily for the reasons given by the practitioners. Still, he believes that poltergeists generally involve a spirit of some sort. For example, in the Guarulhos case he translates the Pentecostalists' demon into a kind of spirit that is recognized in the Umbanda pantheon, although he does this in a way that transforms the Umbandists' *exú* from a playful trickster into something more nefarious. He even recognizes the important effects the psychic energy of the living has on poltergeists. Thus, he recognizes the role of a force akin to the Jesuits' *telergy*, which he believes the invading spirits draw on in order to have enough energy to accomplish their poltergeist antics. In short, opposing viewpoints are incorporated into his own framework as pieces of the puzzle rather than as unscientific superstitions.

Although Andrade's interpretations situate Spiritism as the discourse of encompassment, he avoids rash claims about the lack of efficacy or potential danger of other systems. He does not pretend to have any answers; he believes that different healing strategies work in different contexts, depending in part on the family's belief system. In his book Andrade lets readers draw their own conclusions on the question of whether the spirit-intervention or psychokinetic theory (roughly equivalent to the Jesuits' *telergic* theory)--or some combination--is the correct one (1988b: 225-227). Likewise, in a letter to me written in May 1989, he even stated that he thinks many poltergeists "extinguish themselves" of their own accord, with or without intervention. Nevertheless, his own viewpoint is clear: spirit infestation is due to spirits. Although to Andrade the Spiritist theory and healing strategy is just one approach among many, it is also first among the alternatives: "hegemonic" in the conventional sense of the term.

A Pentecostalist

Reverend Nasser Bandeira is a minister in the Four-Square Evangelical Church (Igreja Evangélica Quadrangular), a Pentecostalist denomination which originated in the United States. In addition to his work as a minister in Porto Alegre, Bandeira works for a radio station and is actively involved in local party politics. He is well-known as a preacher and exorcist both in his native state of Rio Grande do Sul and throughout southern Brazil, as his scrapbook of newspaper clippings attests. He travels throughout southern Brazil giving sermons and exorcizing demons, and his services have at times been so large that they have been held in a soccer stadium.

When he asked me how I had heard of him, I showed him a clipping from the Rio newspaper *Jornal do Brasil* (May 5, 1988). He explained how that case, as for many others, was an example of "sensationalism." In other words, people were faking poltergeist or demonic attacks for purposes of financial gain. However, he also believed that "negative forces" were involved even in cases of sensationalism. By "negative forces" he did not mean evil spirits; he believed only in manifestations of the devil. His source of authority was the scripture, and he described to me the story of the fallen

angel who became the devil, which he referred to as "the Spirit." He went on to say how the devil frequently preys on nonpracticing Catholics, who are legion in Brazil and frequently seek out Bandeira's services for exorcism rituals.

Bandeira explained his method of exorcism in a typical case. He generally likes to have two assistants anoint the house with oil, and frequently they put oil over the whole house, including the windows. He then tells the Spirit to leave "in the name of Jesus Christ." Nothing else is needed, he explained, just the word of the Lord. "If it is the Spirit," he said, "then it works. If it doesn't, then there's some other cause."

Although for him the only justification for this healing system is belief in the good book itself and faith in Jesus, Bandeira is quite conscious of opposing perspectives. In the stories that he told me about his experiences as an exorcist, the Pentecostalist minister proved not only to be a master story-teller (obviously one reason why he was able to build and maintain such a large following) but also the adept constructor of narratives in which the Pentecostalist framework encompasses the other religious healing systems.

Clearly, Bandeira is capable of recognizing alternative, secular approaches to spirit possession and infestation. Although sometimes his naturalistic explanation falls under the category of "sensationalism," sometimes when his exorcism does not work he then explores more psychological interpretations. In general, he is well aware of the ways in which the idiom of demonic infestation can sometimes serve as a way to express some of the social problems that currently plague Brazil, such as child abuse or poverty. By recognizing that in some cases his clients may express psychological or social problems in the spirit idiom, he carves out a place for a secular, psychosocial discourse within his own framework. A secular, psychotherapeutic or sociological perspective therefore is seen not as an opposing, alternative framework, but as a useful interpretive strategy on which he sometimes draws. It therefore has an important place within his own framework.

In other anecdotes, Bandeira recognized yet another perspective on spirit possession, that of the Jesuits. He told me how he had been planning to go to a town in the interior of the state of Rio Grande do Sul where there was a case of spirit infestation, but he decided not to go after a Padre Edvino Friderichs had gone there and apparently had healed the girl. Despite the Jesuit's success, Bandeira still believed that the cause of the infestation was the demon, not the paranormal forces of the girl. He knew about the Jesuit theories, but he did not accept them. The pastor explained that while he believed in "mind over matter," he did not think it could be a very significant force. He had once seen a film of a famous Russian psychic who exerted a tremendous effort just to make a ping-pong ball move around on a table top. Referring to the girl whom the Jesuit priest had successfully treated, he asked me, "If it took so much effort for a mind of a gifted psychic to move a ping-pong ball around on a table top, how could you expect the mind of a little girl to make her mattress fly up and to toss pots and pans around?"

While he rejected the opposing theory of the Jesuits, he still recognized that the Jesuit's treatment had been--from all accounts--successful. He explained Friderich's success as follows: the Jesuit's treatment worked not because his relaxation therapy had calmed the telergic energies of the girl's body, but because he had also appealed to God for help, and his prayers were answered. Likewise, he acknowledged that even the Spiritists, who also use prayer in their disobsession sessions, had helped a little in this case. Thus, just as Friderichs believes that other healers may be unwittingly successful due to the psychological power of suggestion, so Bandeira believes that other healers may be successful to the extent that they appeal to God for help and their prayers are answered.

Regarding the question of spirits as an explanatory system, however, Bandeira said that the only spirits he believed in were liquid ones, that is, alcohol-induced. However, he admitted that in other cases the devil might cause phenomena that people misinterpret as spirits. For example, a woman claimed to be able to communicate with the spirit of Getúlio Vargas, the famous dictator of Brazil during the World War II years and also a native of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, and her family called him in to help. According to the woman's mother, she had actually met Getúlio when, as a child, she had worked on his ranch for a few weeks. This fact made the Spiritist interpretation, that she was indeed communicating with the spirit of the famous dictator, all the more plausible to the family. However, Bandeira did not accept the Spiritist interpretation; instead, he told the woman that she saw only the devil in the form of Getúlio. They argued for a while about whether or not the spirit was really Getúlio, and then Bandeira commanded the Spirit to leave, and it left.

Thus, Bandeira encompasses opposing perspectives either by translating them as true demonic possession or as the result of some kind of naturalistic cause which in turn may also be the effect of indirect demonic influence. Like the Spiritist Doctor Hernani, Reverend Nasser accommodates other explanatory systems as elements in his own framework. For Bandeira, spirits are translated as one manifestation of the devil or as indications of social problems, and telergy or psychokinesis is accepted as a possibility but one not very relevant to cases of poltergeists, possession, and other forms of demonic attack. Also like the Spiritist, Bandeira acknowledges the potential efficacy of other religious healing techniques, as one saw in the case of the girl from the interior of the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

However, Bandeira also reserves a category of cases that are phenomenologically the most impressive and in which the devil also openly represents himself. This category of genuine, direct, undisguised demonic possession is at the heart of his framework; without these cases, his reinterpretations of the other cases would be much less convincing. Bandeira gave me two examples of his most impressive cases, the first of which he said was the most impressive of his career. It occurred when he was very young and was just at the beginning of his ministry. He had heard of the woman possessed by a thousand demons, but he had not volunteered his services, perhaps because he was somewhat afraid. Nevertheless, when he was called, he went. The woman's face was completely changed, and at one point the devil left her and entered her dog. After a long and strenuous battle that was nearly as dramatic as the movie *The Exorcist*, he eventually succeeded in exorcizing the woman (see Hess 1993 for more details).

Thus, some cases represent genuine, direct, and undisguised demonic possession. Presence of the demon is recognized by the signs of abnormality and even, to him, paranormality--the woman's changed physiognomy--whereas these signs are missing in the cases of ersatz infestation or possession. The signs add an empirical basis to Bandeira's framework which is similar to the empirical grounding which the Jesuit parapsychologist and Spiritist intellectual also give to their theories. When the signs of paranormality are present, the only healing technique that will work is faith in the Bible and an appeal to Jesus Christ, and to the extent that other religious healers may experience success with their techniques, it is because they, too, call on Jesus or God to help them. Thus, other systems may be successful, but only because they unwittingly incorporate the Pentecostalist approach. By explaining how its own discourse is unwittingly incorporated in the other, the Pentecostalist perspective encompasses the other frameworks of religious healing.

An Umbandist

Umbanda emerged in the early to mid-twentieth century in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and a few other cities, principally in southern Brazil (Brown 1986). Unlike Catholicism, Spiritism, and Pentecostalism--all of which originated in Europe or North America--Umbanda is an indigenous Brazilian religion. It is sometimes characterized as a Spiritist/Afro-Brazilian syncretism, but it also borrows from Amerindian, Catholic, and occultist doctrines and practices, and the exact mixture of religious traditions is a subject of both geographical variation and ideological controversy. Umbandists recognize the Yoruba *orixá* divinities, the Catholic saints, and the Spiritist spirit guides, but the mediums of a typical Umbanda temple will receive the spirits of *caboclos* (Amerindians), *pretos velhos* (old black slaves), *exús* (Yoruba trickster spirits sometimes syncretized with the devil), and *pomba giras* (female counterparts of the *exús*).

Umbanda is sometimes contrasted with Quimbanda, or black magic. This opposition is a slippery one because Umbandist mediums may practice "Quimbanda" magic to undo other Quimbanda spells (therefore, they consider their work to be "on the side of good"). Likewise, the term "session of Quimbanda" may be used to refer to ordinary Umbanda sessions where the mediums receive *exú* spirits and give consultations to their clients. Antônio Alves Teixeira is one example of an Umbandist who does not view Quimbanda negatively, although he uses a pseudonym (Antônio de Alva) for his books on Quimbanda. He was also a prolific author whose writings on Umbanda and Quimbanda could be found in bookstores throughout Rio and São Paulo, and whose text *Impressive Cases of Black Magic* will serve as the principle source of evidence for this section of the essay.

Teixeira was born in 1914 in what was then the frontier state of Mato Grosso. When he was twelve, he moved with his family to the state of Rio de Janeiro, where he studied in the military school in Rio, became a teacher, and later founded and directed a high school in the Rio area. In 1953, he worked in the Travelers of Truth Spiritist Center, where he founded and directed "the Xangô Phalanx, as well as experimental and transcendental study sessions" (8). Xangô is the Yoruba *orixá* of thunder, associated in Brazil with justice, and the term "phalanx" (*falange*) refers to a group or "line" of spirits organized in a hierarchy under one guiding spirit or *orixá*. At this time, Teixeira began to publish, and by the early seventies he was sometimes appearing on the radio, where he had a program on palmistry.

Like many Umbanda mediums, Teixeira is a kind of walking syncretism, and his self-description is a good example of the ecumenism of Umbanda, which is how I would also describe its style of encompassment. In a chapter on his personality, Teixeira writes the following:

Being, as I am, born under the sign of Capricorn, I have as the spiritual leader (*chefe*) of my head, Oxalá, who, as is known, is assimilated with Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Beyond Oxalá, I also have Xangô, Oxum, Iansã, Abaluaê, Caboclo Guaicuru (de Oxóssi), "Sir" Lucifer, and Old Black João Quizumba.

In Kardecism [Spiritism], at the table, I have Dr. Carlos Chagas (15).

Teixeira then describes how each of these entities is related to his personality. As a son of Oxalá, he is "in general, a creature of peace, although I have, to tell the truth, a very violent nature that, however, only comes out when, in fact, there is a good cause or reason" (16). Following Xangô he attempts to do justice; like Oxum he is very emotional and sensitive; like Iansã he is vain; from Abaluaê he derives his humility and resignation; and like "Exú, Lucifer, I am sometimes argumentative and stormy; however, I don't harbor anger or rancor against anything or anyone" (16).

From this self-description, one gets a sense of Teixeira's ecumenical outlook, which is typical of Umbanda mediums whom I have met. The same outlook is also expressed in his book *Impressive Cases of Black Magic*, an autobiographical account of his experiences of helping victims of sorcery which he describes in a short, case history format. Because of the similarity of this narrative format to the cases discussed by Friderichs, Andrade, and Bandeira, the text is a particularly appropriate one for purposes of comparison.

Teixeira's discourse differs from the other three figures in that he directs no explicit comments against the opposing religious healing systems; instead, he focuses on how he solved the problems of the people who came to him for help. Furthermore, unlike the other religiotherapeutic practices, his treats much more the syndromes of this world--lover's quarrels, impotent husbands, long strings of financial setbacks, and disease--in short, bad luck. His diagnosis is always the same--sorcery--and his rituals of countersorcery--at least the ones he chose to write about--are highly successful.

In one case history, "A Strange Case of Madness," some of the diacritics of the broader arena of conflicting and competing positions come out. A woman named Dona Elza came to Teixeira to seek help for her son, who had been placed in a mental hospital where, "despite everything that the attending doctors had tried, he had not gotten any better, and several days had already gone by" (37). Teixeira diagnosed the problem: "There was a disagreement between [Dona Elza] and a certain woman and, as vengeance, this woman had done some black magic [*trabalhado*] so that [Dona Elza's] son would go crazy" (37). Teixeira then took Dona Elza and her husband to a medium who "incorporated" (that is, let her body be taken over by) the evil spirit which in turn confessed to everything it had done. They were able to take the boy home from the hospital that same day.

This case history shows first the limitations of official medical discourse and the effectiveness of spiritual healing. One might argue that it also appears to legitimate Spiritism rather than Umbanda, because the healing ritual is closer to a typical Spiritist disobsession session than an Umbandist countersorcery ritual. However, Teixeira goes on to say that the mediumistic session was not enough to protect the boy; the family also had to return to their farm, where they followed the medium's instructions: "On arriving, they went to the entry gate of the farm and, truthfully, from there they removed (buried in the dirt, near the entry gate) the 'material' that had been put there, which is to say a cross and a doll with its legs cut off" (40).

Teixeira's case history therefore moves from the discourse and treatment of orthodox medicine to a version of Spiritist disobsession to the deepest level: sorcery and the countersorcery ritual of digging up the planted objects. The last level represents the system of etiology and practice that distinguishes Umbanda/Quimbanda from the other religious healing systems considered. Although Umbandists accept the spirit obsession theory of the Spiritists, they are distinguished by their discourse of sorcery and antisorcery rituals. The nature of the antisorcery ritual varies widely. In this case, it involved digging up the planted materials and destroying them. In another case that I investigated, an Umbanda medium received an *exú* spirit, who explained that a neighbor had performed a work of black magic against the family. The *exú* agreed to leave in exchange for some *cachaça* (Brazilian rum), cigars, and seven white candles. The *exú* also demanded a black chicken, and he then killed the chicken with its teeth and drank its blood.⁷

Although Umbandists accept a wide variety of natural and supernatural explanations and healing systems, they do tend to privilege sorcery and antisorcery, especially in cases of apparent spirit infestation or possession. Teixeira, for example, implicitly gives the sorcery explanation primacy by placing it last in his narrative of the

case. Still, he refrains from making bold negative statements about the other systems of healing, statements of the type made by Edvino Friderichs or Nasser Bandeira. In general, Umbanda mediums whom I have met have tended to be much more accepting of other religious healing systems than the others are of Umbanda. As religious healers of lower status than Spiritists, Jesuits, or Pentecostals, Umbandists are more aware of the oppressive arm of the state. They know that it is probably to their advantage not to incite other healers to criticize them, and their ecumenical position is therefore in part a plea for tolerance of their own practices.

One might therefore argue that the only way in which Umbanda encompasses the other healing systems is through a rhetoric of tolerance and ecumenism. On this point, it is relevant to note that some Umbandists claim that the term "Umbanda" means "all of us," and it is sometimes represented as a uniquely Brazilian religion that brings together and mediates the European, African, and Amerindian cultural traditions in a complex harmony that represents an ideal of contemporary Brazilian society.

However, there is another way in which Umbanda encompasses other religious healing traditions. This way does not involve explicit written or spoken discourse; instead, it occurs through the implicit symbolism of the rituals which Teixeira, like other Umbandists, sometimes employs to "undo" (*desmanchar*) black magic. These rituals are extremely complicated (see Hess 1992c), and this essay will therefore be restricted to a few comments on a part of a series of rituals which he performed to help a woman with marital problems. In a part of the ritual dedicated to the *orixá* Abaluaê, Teixeira began by going to a cemetery, where he arranged an offering of nine white dahlias in the form of a cross at the foot of a cross; a brand new, white, smooth cup of mineral water; and a cross of nine white candles. Then, in a low voice, he chanted (three times) the following song: "He runs crazy, crazy without end; he runs crazy, for his children to help!" He described his subsequent action as follows:

I put a small piece of paper on which I had written, in the form of a cross, the names of Dona Cecília and her husband, by the seventh gravestone to the left and toward the back side of the cemetery...burying it in the earth that surrounded it (35).

Finally, Dona Cecília made her request to Sir Abaluaê, namely "that her husband became the man she dreamed of," etc. The ritual was so effective that some time later Dona Cecília came to Teixeira to ask him "to make her husband a little more distant, so much had he changed, so much had he turned into what she wanted, in truth" (36).

The strong claim of efficacy helps legitimate the Umbanda ritual and reveals its strength in comparison to other systems, but this Umbanda ritual also encompasses alternative religious healing systems through its ritual symbolism. In other words, like the Umbandists' ecumenical discourse, the ritual itself is ecumenical. It borrows the cross from orthodox Christianity (including both Protestantism and Catholicism), the candles and the request from the votive offerings of popular Catholicism, the white cup of mineral water from Spiritism, and the sung *ponto* and the *orixá* of dedication from the African religions. The other positions appear as only pieces of a whole which only Umbanda brings together.

In addition to encompassment through ritual symbolism, there is a suggestion of a second kind of encompassment: Umbanda brings the elements of other religious and healing traditions together by translating an explicit, written or verbal language into a language of bodily ritual action. Spiritist disobsession, Jesuit relaxation treatment and counseling, and Pentecostalist exorcism and prayer are all techniques that emphasize speech and even dialogue, just as the three religions are anchored in a written doctrine (Kardec's writings, Catholic church doctrine, and the Bible). They are, in a sense,

religions of the book and the tongue(s), just as their intervention strategies render the bodily actions of ritual supplementary to the act of speaking.

In contrast, while there is a undoubtedly a role for speech in the antisorcery rituals of Umbanda, those rituals place a relatively greater emphasis on bodily action: sacrificing an animal, uncovering a buried work of black magic, placing objects in the proper location for an offering to one of the *orixás* or spirit guides. Even where speaking occurs in these antisorcery rituals, it tends to occur less in the form of dialogue, and more in the form of a formulaic language, as in Teixeira's sung chant and Dona Cecília's magical use of writing.⁸ Thus, the Umbanda antisorcery rituals, at least the ones discussed here, suggest an inversion of the hierarchy of the other three religions through the encompassment of the act of speaking and writing by another language: the language of ritual action.

An Anthropologist (Concluding Comments)

To summarize my argument, the Jesuit's pattern of encompassment of the other groups is the most exclusionary: Friderichs warns the Brazilian people about the harmful possibilities of using the intervention techniques of their religious rivals, and Quevedo actively debunks Spiritism and Umbanda. At the opposite extreme, the Umbandist's rhetoric is much more ecumenical: Teixeira is much too much the "cordial man" to engage in the blunt rhetoric that one finds in Friderichs and Quevedo. If one is to find encompassment in Teixeira's rhetoric, it is in the more implicit, "silent" forms of the rhetoric of ritual arrangements and the relationship between the bodily action of Umbanda ritual and the speech of talking therapies. Finally, the Pentecostalist and Spiritist are somewhere in between: Bandeira and Andrade see the other perspectives almost as alternative theories that they may accept as partial explanations or reject as erroneous patterns of reasoning rather than useless superstitions.

Thus, each of the four positions constructs a framework that encompasses the other three positions, but the structures and strategies of encompassment vary from one position to the next. Is this variety in the strategies and rhetoric of encompassment simply a random outcome of individual thinkers? I would argue instead that it is rooted in their positions in the social structure, and here is where I return to the general questions of hierarchy, hegemony, and heterodoxy. Friderichs, for example, is not just a Jesuit intellectual, but a Jesuit intellectual in Brazil, the largest Catholic country in the world, where in the 1980s eighty to ninety percent of the population was at least nominally Catholic. Although lay support is soft--as the well-known expression "Catholic by day, *espírita* [Umbandist, Kardecist, etc.] by night" indicates--the Catholic church is still the hegemonic religion in Brazilian society. Catholicism was the official religion until the end of the nineteenth century, and its hegemony in the religious arena has continued into this century. For example, in the 1930s under the dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas, the Catholic church joined with the state and medical profession in forcibly closing Spiritist and Umbanda centers (see Hess 1987a). Subsequently, the Jesuits have attacked the spirit mediumship religions less through the state, which now enshrines freedom of religion, than through science (their parapsychology courses and texts), which can still be used to show that their competitors are engaging in silly superstitions even if those practices are no longer illegal. Still, both through the strategy of state suppression and the more recent strategy of scientific debunking, the actions of the Jesuit debunkers continues the coalition between parts of the Catholic church and other leading groups in society: the medical profession, science, and the state apparatus, in turn controlled, for most of the 1960s through 1980s, by the alliance of the military and capitalist class. In other words, as the Jesuits go about constructing spirit infestations and techniques for

intervention, they are also reproducing the general hierarchies and hegemonies of Brazilian society.

The other religions are positioned in various levels of heterodoxy with respect to the Catholic church. Although today there is greater tolerance for spirit mediumship religions, old timers whom I met still remember the Vargas years as well as numerous cases of prosecution for illegal practice of medicine, and the more pessimistic see the recent return to "democracy" in the 1980s as just another phase in the cycle of oscillating periods of repression and tolerance. Because Spiritism is a predominantly white, working- to middle-class movement with its own highly educated and well-placed intellectual elite, Spiritists have been better able than Umbandists to defend themselves against state repression and to reply to Jesuit criticism. In fact, their scientific discourse plays a key role in positioning themselves above Umbanda and the Afro-Brazilian religions.

Pentecostals also position themselves above Umbanda and the Afro-Brazilian religions, but through their status as a Christian religion. Although Pentecostalism has a large following among the lower classes, that religion does not openly violate as many of the central dogmas of the Catholic church as do Spiritism and Umbanda, and as a result its relations with the Catholic church and state have been somewhat more harmonious. In recent years the Catholic church has even adapted to changing times by letting a Catholic Pentecostal movement develop within the church. Pentecostalism is, furthermore, a type of Protestantism, which is the religion of the English, Americans, German descendents, and other more or less privileged ethnic groups.

Although, as Brown (1986) has shown, middle-class participation is significant in Umbanda, the religion has a greater following among the working class and people of color, and it is often thought of as a poor people's Spiritism. Umbandists also suffered disproportionately more than Spiritists during the period of police repressions. Furthermore, Umbanda lacks the large numbers of intellectuals that characterize Spiritism, and the religion does not have an elaborate doctrine. Instead, Umbanda has often been described as a pragmatic religion, almost to the extent of being more magic than religion. People go to Umbanda centers for consultations with the spirit guides or for sorcery/antisorcery rituals, not to study written doctrine.

Umbanda's orientation toward action has sometimes been explained as an empty market niche that has wide appeal in the lower classes with their higher magical beliefs. However, given the nonhegemonic position of Umbanda in the religious system, it makes sense also to explore the way in which Umbanda discourse reflects its position as a "muted group." Women and underrepresented "ethnic" groups have sometimes been described as "muted groups" because they are often forced to speak the language of the dominant groups or else to fall silent (Ardner 1974; cf. Gal 1991). In this sense, Umbandists speak a doctrine of Christian humility and Spiritist principles because those are the languages of the higher status groups. However, by focusing on action--on the eclecticism of the spirit guides and ritual practices of sorcery and countersorcery--Umbandists also encompass the other religions by showing that what people say is less important than who they are or what they do. In this way, the muted quality of their religion as a nonbook religion is transformed from a negative to a positive attribute.

The various strategies of encompassment of all four groups make sense when one considers that the religious actors are not playing on a level field. If one is a Catholic intellectual, an exclusionary strategy can help preserve an increasingly fragile position of hegemony, much as do the exclusionary pronouncements of the American Medical Association in the United States against quack alternative cancer treatments. Likewise, if one is an Umbandist (for whom police persecution is still a living memory among old timers), ecumenism and eclecticism may be seen as strategies for winning

the tolerance of other groups. In between, Spiritists and Pentecostals operate in a more modern and pluralistic world in which they are less heterodox than Umbanda and the African religions, so their rhetoric corresponds to a more sectlike view of the religious arena--more like a North American-style religious marketplace--in which the other groups are relatively equal in a competitive field.

From this perspective, the Jesuit and Umbandist have something in common with each other in contrast to the Spiritist and Pentecostalist. The former live in a world of traditional Brazilian hierarchy and personalism. The Jesuit provides an interpretation that urges exclusion and hierarchy: do not try the other techniques of intervention because they will harm you. In a parallel but inverted way, the Umbandist urges inclusion and personalism: he is a walking syncretism who creates linkages among all groups through his stories and practices that suggest religious ecumenism or eclecticism. By urging ecumenism, the Umbandist mediates his position at the bottom of the hierarchy.

In contrast, the Spiritist and Pentecostalist have a much more empirical approach. They observe other practices and admit that they may work in some cases. They tell stories that show how other groups may achieve some success, but their stories incorporate the other theories and practices into their own, broader framework and sometimes claim that the other groups' techniques work for reasons that their practitioners do not understand. The Spiritist and Pentecostalist constructions of religious techniques neither reject nor embrace the other groups, but instead carefully sort out what they find acceptable and what they find unacceptable. In short, their logic is rooted in a more pluralistic and egalitarian rather than hierarchical vision of the religious arena. That makes some sense when one considers the historical roots of Spiritism and Pentecostalism as offshoots of the Protestant Reformation and the world of religious sects that it created.

The differing strategies of encompassment discussed here provide a way of elaborating the problem which DaMatta (1982, 1991) has made central to his anthropology of Brazilian society: the clash between the modern and traditional, individual and person, equality and hierarchy. From this perspective, I am inclined to see the Jesuit and Umbandist vision as traditional, and the Spiritist and Pentecostalist as modern. Yet, as DaMatta also emphasizes, this clash occurs on "many levels." To analyze the clash in any other way means falling into a very rigid sort of analysis that misses the complexities and contradictions of Brazilian culture. Thus, on another level it is possible to think of the Jesuit as the leading modernizing force in this religious dialogue. At least he is analyzing the cases in terms of secular psychology rooted in a concept of individual and interpersonal psychodynamics. In contrast, the other three intellectuals are all constructing the cases in terms of a hierarchical world of spirits that has long been recognized as a reproduction of the traditional social relations of patron-client ties.

Another, perhaps more complicated alternative is to see in Umbanda a democratizing and modernizing tendency because its mediums admit all spirits and magical practices as equals. Thus, on the one hand Umbanda reproduces a traditional world of hierarchy and personalism through its diagnoses of sorcery and countersorcery and its appeal to spirit guides as otherworldly patrons. On the other hand, Umbanda inscribes religious modernity through the pluralism of the types of spirit guides who are allowed in and the types of ritual actions that are acceptable. Many have recognized the democratic spirit of Umbanda in its recognition of African slave and Native Amerindian spirits, and in its openness to mediums regardless of class, gender, race, or sexual preference. Umbanda is, perhaps more than any other religion in Brazil, an equal opportunity employer, both for mediums and for spirits.

I would therefore hesitate to see any one religion as the modernizing force. Locating a democratizing, modernizing tendency is a complicated business because it cannot easily be operationalized through concepts such as sectarian pluralism, appeals to science, ethnic/gender equality, or ecumenical spirit. What seems clear is that as the various religious intellectuals go about constructing their world, they end up reproducing the deep tension in Brazilian culture that all the essays in this book explore in different ways. In this ideological arena that involves the meeting and mingling of secular and sacred, scientific and magical, and Christian and non-Western religions, the clash between the modern and the traditional constantly shifts both within and between religious perspectives. By sorting out the complexities, social scientists can help locate sites of democratization that extend well beyond new constitutions, parties, and elections.

Acknowledgements. The summer 1988 field trip to Brazil was made possible by a Faculty Major Grant from Colgate University. I wish to thank Roberto DaMatta, Alan Harwood, and Jeffrey Jarrad for comments on an earlier version of this essay, and James A. Boon and David Holmberg, who introduced me to theories of religious complexity.

Notes

1. Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony has been defined and refined in several ways (see, for example, Boccock 1986; Elling 1981: 92; Frankenberg 1988; Gramsci 1980: 87-91). One common thread is that hegemony involves the problem of how coalitions or networks of ruling groups and classes rule, not merely by controlling the state, but also by exerting ideological influence through the various institutions and cultural domains, including religion, the press, voluntary associations, and what we would today call the culture industry.

2. My study of comparative mappings builds on an analysis presented by Carlos Rodrigues Brandão (1980) by showing how the different mappings reconstruct hierarchy and hegemony. Likewise, this essay builds on other, related studies of hierarchy in Brazilian religion (for example, DaMatta 1982 and Greenfield 1987) on how Brazilian spirit mediumship religions articulate a hierarchical world view and social order, and my own discussions of how hierarchical and personalistic values often encompass those of individualism and equality in the thought of Spiritist intellectuals (1991a, 1989a).

3. Although I have framed this discussion by referring to the question of "religious pluralism" (see also Hess 1992a), the case materials discussed here involve healing rituals that are sometimes conceptualized in a scientific idiom. Consequently my framework for interpreting religious pluralism may also contribute in a specific way to discussions of heterodoxy in science (e.g., Hess 1992b) and in medicine. Most previous discussions of medical pluralism focus on the relations between "modern" biomedicine and "traditional" or alternative medical systems (e.g., Leslie 1980; for Brazil, see Montero 1985). The framework developed here suggests one way in which studies of medical pluralism could include not only the relations between official and alternative medicine but also the relations among alternative healing systems. These relations may be relatively harmonious, as Baer argues in the case of the American frontier in the nineteenth-century, where "folk systems often liberally borrowed from one another and to

some degree coalesced into a syncretic amalgam" (1989: 1104). However, in cases such as the arena of Brazilian religious therapies, class and status divisions may play themselves out as conflicts among the alternative healing systems. In this way I am extended discussions of medical hegemony from a focus on either internal divisions within professionalized medicine or between it and alternative medical systems.

4. A poltergeist, based on the German for "noisy ghost," is a kind of "haunted house" that is centered on one or more people and involves object movements, fires, water leakages, or other kinds of apparently anomalous physical disturbances. Sometimes poltergeists are distinguished from hauntings, which are place-centered, of longer duration, and with more visual and auditory effects rather than physical ones. I tend to refer to them both as "spirit infestation," in contrast to spirit possession, when spirits or demons are believed to take control of someone's body.

5. Although the religious system is gendered at the level of sacerdotess--from the men-only Catholic priesthood to the women-only priestesses of the most traditional Candomblés--the four persons in this study are men. As I have discussed elsewhere (1993), even though women have a much greater role as mediums in Spiritism and Umbanda, the intellectuals and leading mediums tend to be men. Still, the rhetorical strategy of the male Umbanda medium discussed here seems to have some parallels to discursive strategies of women as a "muted group," a topic which will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion.

6. See Hess (1989a, 1991a: ch. 5) for a more detailed discussion of the Guarulhos and Suzano cases.

7. I did not witness the ritual, which was described in a local newspaper report, but I did interview the family after it took place (again, more details are in Hess 1993), and I have seen animal sacrifice on other occasions. Nor is animal sacrifice the only form of countering sorcery. For example, when I talked to another Umbandist medium when he was incorporating an *exú* during a Quimbanda session, he told me that the best way to rid a house of haunting spirits was to spread a certain kind of herb around the house. The point, again, is not to determine whether a given strategy is in some way modal for Umbanda practice, but instead to show how the elements of the discourse contrast with those of the other three positions.

8. Again, Umbanda is so varied that it is important not to overgeneralize. As discussed above in the case regarding the boy in the mental hospital, one of the Umbandist healing strategies involved something like Spiritist disobsession, although this had to be completed by finding the buried work of black magic. Certainly the more Spiritist-oriented side of Umbanda is likely to follow more the pattern of Spiritism and employ strategies akin to disobsession; however, Umbanda's difference from Spiritism and the other religions lies in its use of the antisorcery rituals, which is why I have focused on them here.

References

Andrade, Hernani Guimarães
1982 *O "Poltergeist" de Suzano*. São Paulo: Instituto Brasileiro de Pesquisas Psicobiofísicas.

- 1984 *O Poltergeist de Guarulhos*. São Paulo: Instituto Brasileiro de Pesquisas Psicobiofísicas.
- 1988a *Reencarnação no Brasil. Oito Casos que Sugerem Renascimento*. São Paulo: Pensamento.
- 1988b *Poltergeist. Algumas de suas Ocorrências no Brasil*. São Paulo: Pensamento.
- Ardner, Edward
- 1975 "Belief and the Problem of Women," and "The Problem Revisited." In Shirley Arnder, ed. *Perceiving Women*. London: Dent.
- Baer, Hans
- 1989 "The American Dominant Medical System as a Reflection of Social Relations in the Larger Society." *Social Science and Medicine* 28(11): 1103-1112.
- Bocock, Robert
- 1986 *Hegemony*. London and New York: Tavistock.
- Brandão, Carlos Rodrigues
- 1980 *Os Deuses do Povo*. São Paulo: Brasiliense.
- Brown, Diana
- 1986 *Umbanda: Religion and Politics in an Urban Religious Movement*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press.
- Csordas, Thomas
- 1987 "Health and the Holy in African and Afro-American Spirit Possession." *Social Science and Medicine* 24(1): 1-11.
- DaMatta, Roberto
- 1982 "The Ethic of Umbanda and the Spirit of Messianism." In *Authoritarian Capitalism: Brazil's Contemporary Economic and Political Development*. T. Bruneau and P. Faucher, eds. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- 1991 *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes*. Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press.
- Dumont, Louis
- 1980 [1966] "Postface: Toward a Theory of Hierarchy." In *Homo Hierarchicus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Elling, Ray
- 1981 "Political Economy, Cultural Hegemony, and Mixes of Traditional and Modern Medicine." *Social Science and Medicine* 15A: 89-100.
- Fitzpatrick, John, S.J.
- 1983 *O Poder de Fé*. São Paulo: Pensamento. (Earlier edition. São Paulo: Miesi Editora, 1970.)
- Frankenberg, Ronald
- 1988 "Gramsci, Culture, and Medical Anthropology: Kundry and Parsifal? or Rat's Tail to Sea Serpent." *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* 2(4): 324-337.
- Friderichs, Edvino A., S.J.
- 1980 *Casas Mal-Assombradas. Fenômenos de Telergia*. São Paulo: Loyola.
- Gal, Susan
- 1991 "Between Speech and Knowledge: the Problematics of Research on Language and Gender." In Micaela di Leonardo, *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Gramsci, Antonio
- 1980 *The Modern Prince and Other Writings*. New York: International Publishers.
- Greenfield, Sidney
- 1987 "The Return of Dr. Fritz: Spiritist Healing and Patronage Networks in Urban, Industrial Brazil." *Social Science and Medicine* 24(12): 1096-1108.
- Hess, David J.
- 1987a "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24(2): 15-34.

- 1987b "Religion, Heterodox Science, and Brazilian Culture." *Social Studies of Science* 17: 465-477.
- 1989a "Psychical Research and Cultural Values: A Comparison of Two Theories of the Poltergeist." *Newsletter for the History and Sociology of Marginal Science* 1(2): 1-4.
- 1991a. *Spirits and Scientists: Ideology, Spiritism, and Brazilian Culture*. University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- 1991b. "Ghosts and Domestic Politics in Brazil: Some Parallels between Spirit Infestation and Spirit Possession." *Ethos* 18(4): 407-38.
- 1992a "New Sciences, New Gods: Spiritism and Questions of Religious Pluralism in Latin America." *Occasional Papers of the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies*, "Conference on Competing Gods: Religious Pluralism in Latin America." Brown University.
- 1992b "Disciplining Heterodoxy, Circumventing Discipline: Parapsychology, Anthropologically." In David Hess and Linda Layne, eds. *Knowledge and Society Vol. 9: The Anthropology of Science and Technology*. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press.
- 1992c "Umbanda and Quimbanda Magic in Brazil: Rethinking Aspects of Bastide's Work." *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions*. 79: 139-53.
- 1993 *Samba in the Night: Spiritism in Brazil*. New York: Columbia University Press. Leslie, Charles (ed.)
- 1980 "Special Issue: Medical Pluralism." *Social Science and Medicine* 14B: 191-289ff. Montero, Paulo
- 1985 *Da Doença a Desordem. A Magia na Umbanda*. Rio de Janeiro: Edições Graal. Quevedo, Oscar Gonzalez, S.J.
- 1974 *O Que é a Parapsicologia?* São Paulo: Loyola.
- 1978 *Curandeirismo: Um Mal ou Um Bem?* São Paulo: Loyola. Teixeira (neto), Antônio Alves
- ca. 1970 *Impressionantes Casos de Magia Negra*. Rio: Eco.

Medical Integration and Questions of Universalism

Citation: 2000 "Medical Integration and Questions of Universalism." In Laura Graziela Gomes, ed. *Twentieth Anniversary Commemoration of Carnavais, Malandros, e Heróis*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Fundação Getúlio Vargas.

In the mid 1980s I attended the First International Conference on Alternative Medicine, held in São Paulo and sponsored, in part, by the Spiritists of São Paulo. One of the conference events included a visit to FEESP, the Spiritist Federation of the State of São Paulo. FEESP is probably the largest Spiritist organization in Brazil; at the time the organization and its affiliates gave more than 4,000 passes per day (laying-on of hands) and supervised more than 3,500 volunteers in their charitable work. As part of the conference activities and, given my role as unofficial translator, I was invited to attend a generally closed meeting with a select group of mediums who worked under the leadership of Dona Marta, the head of schools within the federation.

The purpose of the meeting was to deliberate on a stack of forms filled out by clients regarding their health problems. Each form included questions about the client's medical history, relationship to Spiritism, and symptoms. The mediums considered each form individually and made a recommendation: to study more doctrine, to study the gospels, to attend or not attend Spiritist sessions, to develop or not develop mediumship (*mediunidade*), and, for bodily ailments, to visit an allopath, homeopath, or doctor of one's choice. I had attended many Spiritist sessions as part of my fieldwork on the Spiritist movement, but this one was distinguished by the team of high-level spirits with whom the very select team of mediums entered into telepathic contact. The spirits were named Pasteur One, Pasteur Two, Pasteur Three, and so on. When there were disagreements among the mediums, Dona Marta went around the room to hear the various answers (such as the diagnosis or referral). In one case, she chastised a young male medium for not concentrating, and she settled on the advice of an older, trusted, woman medium.

The Spiritist meeting had a cultural richness that undoubtedly made it Brazilian in multiple ways. To use the framework developed by Roberto DaMatta (1978), who graciously served as my mentor and fieldwork advisor for this project, the Spiritist meeting (they do not like to have their work described as "ritual") undoubtedly encompassed several exported European cultural forms. The French scientist Louis Pasteur was appearing not only in spirit form, but as a group of spirits. (As DaMatta has said, one never does anything alone in Brazil.) Although I did not have time to inquire about the reason why Pasteur was appearing as a group, in other cases Spiritists informed me that highly developed spirits were able to split themselves up and appear as a *falange*. The ability resolved the apparent contradiction of, for example, the appearance of the ubiquitous Brazilian spirit Bezerra de Menezes, a doctor who played an important role as a founder of Brazilian Spiritism, at so many Spiritist centers across the country. Yet, the idea of the *falange* has other connections with the Brazilian context--perhaps military ones (for there is a long-standing but poorly explored relationship between Spiritism and the military), and perhaps also the idea of the fragmentation of the individual into the person through relationships with so many mediums.

A second type of encompassment was the role of the foreigners. We were able to observe, but our Spiritist hosts were aware that we were not Spiritists and might have other interpretations of the event. The session had an empirical quality in that some of the forms had previous diagnoses and recommendations stapled to them, so that Dona

Marta could verify the consistency of the mediums' work with their previous work, with each other, and with her own spirit guides. Failures of consistency could be attributed to age and perhaps gender, as appeared in the case of the male medium who was not concentrating. As Dona Marta later explained, the failures of consistency and concentration were also due to the interference with vibrations caused by the many foreigners in the room. We were not part of the house of Spiritism, but invited guests who were being reminded of our status. A hierarchical order was set up, with the older, established, women mediums at the helm, and the younger, less developed, and/or male mediums behind them, and us, the foreigners, who ambiguously could be either less-developed materialists or highly developed spiritualists.

The house/street relationship (DaMatta 1985) is gendered, not only in Brazil but in many countries, and the mothers of this house encompassed the largely masculine outside worlds of French scientist spirits, foreigner conference guests, and even Brazilian doctors. This was the third area of the encompassment of the outside. Spiritism itself is a French doctrine, anchored in the progressive universalism of the nineteenth-century French educator Allan Kardec, and imbued with educational and progressive values (Hess 1991). In Brazil those values mix with the pragmatism of competition for clients in a religious field that offers a variety of services, including healing for physical and spiritual ailments. Whereas Kardec's Spiritism was a kind of non-Christian unitarianism in which the teachings of Jesus were given a high honor but not seen as the gospel, in Brazil Spiritism developed its religious dimension, as in the mediums' recommendation to study not only the doctrine also the gospels. Likewise, whereas Kardec envisioned Spiritism as a kind of school for the living who wish to advance spiritually, in Brazil Spiritist centers and federations also became clinical and charitable facilities that offered services for the poor. The tensions between Spiritism as philosophy for students concerned with self-education and spiritual development, or Spiritism as popular religion and a system of healing, mark the many divisions in the history of the movement in Brazil (Hess 1987). FEESP represents the more "orthodox" or philosophical/educational/scientific branch of Spiritism, as compared with the Roustaingist (Christian) variants found in Rio and the Spiritist/Umbandist variants found in many cities. The fact that a healing-oriented form of Spiritism was taking place within the more scientific or Kardecist organization is suggestive of the complex ways in which French Spiritism had become Brazilian Spiritism. The recommendations that the Spiritist mediums made--to study the doctrine, study the gospels, develop mediumship (*mediunidade*), or visit a particular type of doctor--were markers of the definitional struggles within the Spiritist movement during its history in Brazil.

A fourth type of encompassment occurred with the recommendation for the client to visit an allopathic doctor, homeopathic doctor, or doctor of the client's choice. In the parlance of the insurance systems of the United States, the Spiritist mediums were serving as "gatekeepers" to a pluralistic medical system; they were controlling the switches that tracked patients to one or another part of a pluralistic medical system. Implicit in the mediums' recommendation was also the idea of choice--a very modern idea anchored in the principle of individual liberty and the idea that patients have a right to medical freedom as much as the faithful have a right to religious freedom. So it is not exactly accurate to think of Spiritism as the encompassment of the modern by the traditional; as DaMatta suggests in much of his work, the Brazilian reality consists more of a complex interaction, a dance, between the two. I have also found this basic insight helpful in understanding the dynamics of medical pluralism in the U.S.

Gatekeeping and Integration in the U.S.

I move now to the late 1990s and the United States, where similar issues of gatekeeping and encompassment emerge in a pluralistic medical system. Interest in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in the U.S. underwent an explosive growth during 1990s. The medical profession in the U.S. has slowly and grudgingly recognized the changing tide of thinking among patients. One of the key events in triggering recognition among the medical profession was the publication in 1993 of a survey by David Eisenberg and colleagues. Eisenberg's institutional home of Harvard University and the publication venue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* ensured a recognition that other surveys did not achieve. Other surveys confirmed the extent of patient interest, and a subsequent survey published by Eisenberg and colleagues in 1997 documented the growth of interest. It is now widely recognized that patients in the U.S. make more visits to CAM practitioners than to their medical doctors, and they pay more money for CAM services than they pay for out-of-pocket expenses for hospitals. In a sense, the U.S. has been catching up to Brazil and most of the rest of the world. By the late 1990s a number of significant policy shifts were in place: private insurance carriers were increasingly covering professionalized CAM providers (such as chiropractors, nutritionists, massage therapists, and acupuncturists); Congress had turned the tiny beach-head of the Office of Alternative Medicine within the National Institutes of Health into a more substantial National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, with its own budgetary authority; other institutes of the National Institutes of Health were opening their doors to the evaluation of CAM therapies; state governments had passed laws guaranteeing the rights of patients to CAM care; and leading charities, such as the American Cancer Society, were toning down their long-standing propaganda war against CAM therapies.

Why such a sea change? There is no single explanation. Probably the most important factor is the aging of the population and the transition to increased concern with chronic disease, for which biomedical treatments (such as cancer chemotherapy, coronary by-pass operations, or arthritis drugs) are increasingly viewed as invasive, toxic, symptom-masking, and/or ineffective. Another is the concern with health care costs that is plaguing every nation and spurring both government and private insurance carriers to search for less costly alternatives. A third factor is the explosion of information in part made available through the internet and the globalization of economies, so that patients can quickly find not only alternative views about conventional treatments but also information about treatments that are not available within the U.S. and not discussed by U.S. medical doctors. There is now a steady stream of U.S. and Canadian patients to alternative hospitals in Mexico, the Caribbean, and central Europe, where experimental treatments are offered that are not available in the highly regulated environment of the U.S. In this context, globalization implies deregulation, at least for the wealthy.

The American (*norteamericana*) medical profession has had to respond to the tidal shift by rethinking its older policy of suppression and quackbusting. In the past, the policy worked when it was directed at a more docile, doctor-knows-best patient population. The medical profession in the U.S. once had a tighter control over deviance within its own ranks (via licensing boards) and closer cooperation from the state for the prosecution of nonbiomedical competitors. In 1987 the chiropractors won a long-standing antitrust suit against the American Medical Association. Because chiropractors provide not only spinal manipulation for lower back pain, but also a variety of other alternative therapies including nutritional counseling, they have long been a source of a variety of CAM therapies, something akin to the position of homeopaths or orthomolecular physicians in Brazil. In addition, various nonbiomedical providers have

continually enhanced their legal status via licensing laws at the state level. By 1998 the *Journal of the American Medical Association* published a series of articles that expressed a more open-minded approach to CAM therapies and signaled a policy shift from quackbusting rhetoric to cautious evaluation. The strategy of the AMA has largely changed from the question of whether integration will occur to how it will occur and on whose terms. An editorial by Eisenberg (1997) suggested that the medical doctor serve as the “gatekeeper” who supervises a patient’s trajectory through the pluralistic medical system. The question of who is allowed officially to perform the gatekeeping role has a great weight in a social system where official regulations in the health care arena are enforced through insurance providers, regulatory agencies, and state governments. As professionalized CAM providers such as licensed acupuncturists and chiropractors argue for their right to serve as gatekeepers, the question is likely to become a hot political issue in American biomedical politics.

CAM Therapies and the Concept of Integration

The medical profession in the U.S. has increasingly adopted the term “integration” to describe its new strategy of encompassment of CAM therapies by the biomedical system. The term bears some resonances to the “race” problem in the U.S.¹ In the 1970s the courts ordered the integration of city schools by busing white students to predominantly black schools and vice-versa. The import of the policy needs to be understood in the context of the tradition of middle-class attendance at public schools, which is much higher in the U.S. than in Brazil. In much of the country, private schools historically have been either for the very rich or for religious minorities (usually Irish, Italian, and Polish Catholics). Busing did not cross city lines, so it tended to imply integration only in the urban centers. Because the upper middle classes mostly live in the suburbs, busing did not affect them directly. In fact, one result of the new busing policies was the “white flight to the suburbs” and the further polarization of central cities and suburbs along racial and class lines. Even today, it is not unusual to find parents with school-age children who move from their bohemian, ethnically integrated neighborhoods in the cities to the suburbs, where they can find very high-quality public schools with well-paid teachers, excellent sports facilities, and so on. There is little consternation today when African-Americans or other ethnic minority groups move into predominantly white suburbs (at least in my experience, which is based on living in northern and Californian cities and suburbs), because the minorities must be wealthy enough to purchase a home in the suburbs. Consequently, suburban ethnic minorities tend to come from the well-educated, professional strata and to share the same values as their middle-class, white neighbors. The suburban minorities, which themselves were made possible to some extent by the affirmative action policies for colleges and workplaces, have become symbols of a society that has made inroads against its racism through a functioning meritocratic universalism and a surviving, albeit increasingly secularized, Protestant work ethic. (“See?” the white suburbanites might say, “Anyone can make it to the suburban dream, where the *grama* is *bacana*, if only you work hard for it.”)

A second area of affirmative action--and more controversial to the white, middle classes--involved preferential policies for ethnic minorities for university admissions. The policies directly affected the interests of the white middle class because of the competitive nature of admissions to elite colleges. As a professor who has worked in several elite, higher education settings in the U.S., I can attest that white, male students will readily make frank pronouncements of resentment against affirmative action policies for college admissions and career hiring. Efforts to dismantle or challenge college-level affirmative action policies have continued into the 1990s, when some states reversed

affirmative action preferences for college admissions. Partly in response to the changes, in 1999 the U.S. Education Department's Office of Civil Rights circulated a memo that advised colleges not to rely on standardized tests as the primary basis for admissions, because "the use of any educational test which has a significant disparate impact on members of any particular race, national origin, or sex is discriminatory" (Healy 1999). Given the way that top universities brag about the high test scores of their students, the elite schools reacted negatively to the proposed policy.

As Robert Bellah and colleagues (1985) have explored, affirmative action policies both emerge out of and contradict deeply held values of universalism and individualism. By coincidence, two meanings of the word "race" (*raça, corrida*) are integrated uncomfortably in American English. In the U.S., the underlying good of universalism is not in question. The blind, universalism of a fair race (in the sense of a test or foot-race) to determine a position in any field of action (a suburban school system, a college, a job) is viewed as part of the egalitarian, individualistic values that Americans consider to be their birthright. Yet, because of the existence of racism, some applicants (the whites and upper classes) get a head start in the race. Likewise, the rules of the race (such as the content of college entrance exams) may include cultural biases that tend to favor the dominant ethnic groups and upper classes. Affirmative action attempts to ameliorate the particularism of racism by moving the disadvantaged up to the starting line (or even by giving them a "head start," as one famous social program was named) and by making sure that the rules of the race do not unfairly bias outcomes. However, because class and race do not correlate perfectly, middle-class minorities will achieve advantages over lower-class whites that appear to violate the goal of universalism. Indeed, racial politics become very complex, because Asian American and white college applicants find themselves displaced by preferences for African Americans and Latinos, and African American job applicants sometimes find themselves displaced by upper-class, white Puerto Ricans, who are legally minorities.

As a cultural system medical integration faces many of the complexities that occur with racial integration. Given the prospect of living more closely with CAM therapies--of biomedical busing--the medical profession has reacted with contradictions and ambivalences that are parallel to the reactions of the white middle class to racial integration via various affirmative action policies. Just as there were liberals among the middle class who supported integration, so there are liberals among the medical profession. There are also conservatives, even quackbusters, who are parallel to the racists, and there is the strong arm of the state, which in the U.S. has a long history of jailing medical dissidents that is parallel to the history of suppression of civil rights activists. Likewise, the CAM movement has its similarities to the civil rights movement, with its conservative Martins (the "complementary" medicine advocates) and its radical Malcolms (the "alternative" medicine advocates).

The parallel deepens when one examines the grounds on which medical integration is to occur. The medical profession calls for a "level playing field," a blind universalism based on the principle of evidence-based medicine. CAM therapies will be allowed to live in the neighborhood of conventional medicine if they pass the same stringent standard of evaluation as conventional medicine. New drugs are required to pass not only a safety test but an efficacy test; the latter involves several phases of testing that lead to a clinical trial. From the medical profession's perspective, a reasonable approach to medical integration is to require that new supplements, herbs, and other natural therapies also pass through the same efficacy tests.

However, passing the efficacy test requires investments of over \$100 million, and no private corporation will invest such money in a product that cannot be patented. As a result, nutritional supplements, dietary programs, and other nonproprietary therapies

generally do not receive the funding that allows them to attain the legal status of drugs, a kind of equal citizenship in the biomedical world. In other words, as the CAM advocates respond, the argument that they must play on a level playing field is disingenuous, for there is no private organization that would invest the funding in clinical trials that would allow them to play. Not only do natural products such as supplements fail to start the race at the same starting line, but they fail to have the funding to run in the race. The playing field may be level, but the natural products are locked out.

The 1994 Dietary Health, Supplements, and Education Act created a legal protection for supplements. The law classified them as foodlike substances that are outside the scope of regulatory requirements for drug approval. The category of the “supplement” constitutes a legal recognition of the burgeoning growth of interest in vitamins, minerals, herbs, hormones, and many other natural substances, and it also recognizes the failure of the universalistic standards of the drug approval process for nonpatentable substances. (A similar law provided exceptions for “orphaned drugs” that were not economically viable because they were used for rare diseases.) In a sense, the supplement has become a kind of affirmative action category among therapeutic substances. However, there is also a difference. An African-American graduate of Harvard can claim to have a certified Harvard education, but a supplement is only allowed into therapeutic practice if it is not accompanied by disease claims. If a manufacturer or retailer attaches a disease claim to the supplement, as a legal entity the supplement is transformed into a drug and the regulatory approval machinery kicks into action. Legally, supplements can only be associated with “structure and function” claims. The result is a convoluted language. For example, herbal packages used for prostate disease are marketed as promoting “prostate health,” which is a structure-function claim. If a claim were made that the herbal package can successfully treat prostate cancer or benign prostate hypertrophy, the substance would become a drug and would be required to pass through the regulatory process. However, elsewhere (in a separate, scientific literature) it is possible to make disease claims for supplements, as long as the claims are dissociated from marketing and sales.

As occurred with the white middle classes, the pharmaceutical industry and some leaders of the medical profession have viewed the legal loophole granted to supplements as unfair competition. The supplements industry is, in effect, able to market drugs without undergoing the expenses of research and regulatory approval, and the universalism of the drug approval process is violated. “We had to put our drugs through a stringent approval process,” the pharmaceutical industry and their allies in the medical profession might argue. “Why shouldn’t supplements be forced to undergo the same stringent process of certification?” As occurred with affirmative action, there has been a reaction. For example, in 1999 the Food and Drug Administration (a U.S. agency that has long been closely associated with the interests of the pharmaceutical industry) floated a new definition of “disease” as any modification of the body’s “normal” state of structure and function. In effect, as CAM advocates testified before Congress in March, 1999, the new definition of disease would erase the distinction between structure/function claims and disease claims, thus making all structure/function claims potentially identical with disease claims. Advocates from the supplements industry and the CAM movement claimed that the FDA should stick with its old definition of disease (an entity named and listed in a standardized classification of diseases), and not try to make supplements illegal through a definitional maneuver.

Another strategy for recapturing control from supplements has been the CODEX movement in Europe, which is supported strongly by the German pharmaceutical industry and is intended to bring about a global harmonization of drug and supplement policies. The proposed harmonization policy would end supplement availability at levels

above the required daily allowance (RDA) and in effect would end whole branches of CAM therapy, such as orthomolecular and naturopathic medicine. The proposals have been endorsed by Norway, Germany, and a few other countries, but so far the Netherlands and the Anglo-Saxon countries have favored a more libertarian policy.

Neither the redefinition of disease claims nor the CODEX movement seems likely to succeed in the face of opposition from a well-organized social movement in the U.S. and other countries. Instead, the global pharmaceutical industry's primary response now seems to be to buy out the supplements industry or to develop its own supplement product lines. The strategy of integration is reminiscent of the strategy that the corporate sector also adopted when faced with affirmative action policies for hiring. Women, African Americans, and other previously excluded social groups were brought into the corporate world and trained to act like everyone else (that is, the white man). Rather than fight affirmative action on the grounds of qualifications, or fight the unregulated status of supplements on the grounds of evidence-based medicine, the strategy instead has been to incorporate the outside groups and bring them into a system that the corporate sector defines and controls. Just as women and minorities remain second class citizens and have trouble breaking through the corporate glass ceiling, it is likely that supplements and dietary programs for chronic disease are also going to remain second-class therapeutic citizens and unable to break through the regulatory glass ceiling to achieve the status of drug.

The comparison between the status of minority groups and food supplements can be overstated, but it should also not be underplayed. The category of CAM therapies in the U.S. includes not only marginalized therapies rooted in Euro-American culture (such as chiropractic) but also a whole range of imported or foreign therapies: acupuncture, Ayurveda, Tibetan medicine, Reiki therapy, Shiatsu massage, macrobiotics, meditation, Native American shamanism, Mexican-American "curanderismo," Puerto Rican espiritismo, and so on (even a few Brazilian spirit mediums), with herbal products from cultural traditions all over the world attracting the most interest. Many of the CAM healers are women, and the relationship between CAM therapies and conventional therapies is gendered in multiple ways (Hess 1997a). The relationship between conventional medicine and CAM is therefore closely aligned with, even if it is not identical with, the cultural divide between the West (and male) and the rest. The problem of medical integration is therefore embedded in the globalization process, which for the medical field includes the globalization of both Western and non-Western medical systems.

Medical Pluralism and Methodological Pluralism

In a debate between two medical doctors--Andrew Weil, the grey-bearded guru of alternative medicine from the University of Arizona, and Arnold Relman, the clean-shaven editor-in-chief emeritus of *The New England Journal of Medicine* (one of the last holdouts of the quackbusting mode)--Relman linked CAM to the past. "Integrating alternative medicine with mainstream medicine," he argued, "as things stand now, would not be an advance, but a return to the past, an interruption of the remarkable progress achieved by science-based medicine over the past century....Most alternative systems of treatment are based on irrational or fanciful thinking, and false or unproven factual claims" (Bunk 1999: 1). Such broad brush strokes are case studies in political rhetoric that resonate with Western racist rhetoric of the Other: irrational, fanciful, the past. Relman argues for continued segregation, not integration.

However, the conservative strategy is increasingly recognized as a failure, and the dominant political question is how, not if, integration should proceed. Those who advocate integration on the basis of evidence-based medicine embrace the value of

universalism but miss the hidden particularisms in the complicated politics of methodology. The very concept of evaluation needs to be interrogated for its own lack of universalism. In the U.S. and Great Britain, and increasingly in other countries, evaluation has become synonymous with the “gold standard” of the randomized, clinical trial, often with placebo controls, double-blinds, and multi-site evaluation. The randomized, clinical trial is the crucial experiment that, in a sense, allows “nature” to serve as the gatekeeper in the manufacture of knowledge: the world as neutral court. If the drug is safe and effective, it will pass the trial. Otherwise, it will not.

Unfortunately, like college entrance exams the gold standard entails hidden biases that make it difficult for some CAM therapies to achieve fair evaluation; indeed, those biases become particularly evident in the context of the evaluation of CAM (Hess 1999a). For example, the concept of placebo controls has a built-in bias toward pills; it is difficult, but not impossible, to conceive of such a design feature for chiropractic or acupuncture, let alone the complicated juicing programs in the alternative cancer therapy movement. Likewise, double-blinds are hard to put into place when one is testing diet or a complex regimen. Yet, when one delves deeper into the issue, one finds that design features such as placebo controls and double blinds are often not even a part of standard therapeutic testing. For chronic diseases such as cancer it is considered unethical to offer placebo controls; therefore, the design feature is generally not even used in conventional evaluation, where the ethical principle of equivalent benefit guides the selection of, for example, two chemotherapy cocktails that are offered in the different arms of a trial. Again, with conventional cancer therapies, side effects are often so strong (such as the color of urine) that double-blinds are broken anyway. “If placebo controls and double-blinds are not even used for the evaluation of some conventional therapies, why should they be held up as a standard for CAM evaluation?” ask the CAM proponents. Is the gold standard in fact a double standard, a kind of literacy test for CAM therapies?

Furthermore, as members of the CAM community have often commented, the gold standard is well named because it takes a lot of gold to set the standard. Randomized, clinical trials, particularly when they are large in scale and cover multiple sites, require significant financial resources that are generally not available to CAM practitioners. Yet, who will provide those resources? Government agencies such as the National Institutes of Health are dominated by conventional practitioners who, with a few exceptions and until very recently, have not supported any funding for clinical trials of nonpatented agents. Consequently, even if the playing field of clinical trials could be made level methodologically, CAM therapies would still be left outside at the gate because they do not have the money to pay for admissions. Sure, say the CAM proponents, level the playing field, then keep us from playing!

Finally, the randomized, clinical trial in itself heralds from a view of science that is founded on the myth of the crucial experiment, the idea that one experiment can resolve a controversy. There are a few cases in the history of science where such a procedure seems to have worked, but in general the process of closing a controversy involves a much more complicated negotiation of research design and the interpretation of results in which the two sides of a controversy gradually negotiate a settlement or one side is simply ignored and marginalized (Collins 1985). The negotiation process is still built around evidence, but it cannot be reduced to evidence. To return to the metaphor of the standardized college admissions tests, it is necessary not only to interpret test scores against a context that includes disadvantage but also to add in many other types of evaluation criteria (letters of recommendation, grades, special talents, extracurricular activities, leadership abilities, etc.). Likewise, the evaluation of therapies needs to involve a much more complex assessment of a variety of types of evidence: clinical

trials, yes (if they are funded and if certain design biases are lifted), but also retrospective cohort studies, case studies, subclinical studies, and biochemical analyses. More fair evaluation therefore requires breaking down the simplistic universalism of the clinical trial and the crucial experiment to the more complex, socially rooted universalism akin to the application of legal standards in a court proceeding. Thus, the CAM revolution has profound implications for conventional medicine itself, because the evaluation of CAM therapies exposes the political economy of methodology and requires a more universalistic form of evaluation. Medical pluralism therefore drives a debate within the clinical community about the value and nature of methodological pluralism.

The Emergence of the Individualized Program

So far the problem of medical integration in the U.S. has focused on the institutional and methodological side. The problem also involves the level of the individual patient and the doctor-patient relationship. The key to understanding this level is the transition from the standardized medical therapy to the individualized, total program. The former is a modernist, almost assembly-line type of therapeutic regime in which a patient is transformed via a diagnosis into a disease, and a therapy is assigned for the disease. The therapy is relatively standardized, and only modified for such characteristics as dose in relationship to age, gender, size, allergies, or conflicts with other drugs. Standardized therapies work quite well in the field for which biomedicine is appropriately applauded: the treatment of infectious disease and traumatic injury. However, in the field of chronic disease, where CAM therapies have flourished, a different approach has emerged. Following patients and clinicians whom we interviewed (along with my graduate student Margaret Wooddell, see Wooddell and Hess 1998), I think of such practices as the individualized, total program. Under this framework, the quest for a magic bullet--a single drug or pill that will cure cancer or arthritis--is given up in favor of a complete lifestyle change that involves diet, supplements, psychotherapy, exercise, spiritual or life purpose shifts, sometimes complete changes in one's living and work arrangements, and a selection among conventional therapies. Clearly, the individualized, comprehensive program is an option most available to the privileged middle and upper classes, and aspects of the new therapeutic regime (such as changes in one's living and work arrangements) are often not possible for the less privileged. Yet, other aspects, such as dietary programs, may actually reduce costs when new diets point patients to budget-saving food substitutions.

The use of the term "program" instead of "therapy" is suggestive of the cultural politics of the new therapeutic regime. The programs are flexible (we are in the regime of flexible medical production, much like the global regimes of flexible product manufacturing, Harvey 1989), in that they change as the patient's needs and health changes. The programs involve constant monitoring of the patient to determining the patient's nutritional and other needs, and they involve constant adoption to the changing status of the patient. The programs are individualized, in that they are built around individual financial, social, dietary, and lifestyle preferences that are negotiated and balanced with medical knowledge and therapeutic availability.

The individualized, total program involves a partnership between the clinician and patient, and therefore the new flexible medical regime represents a modernization of the older, hierarchical relationship implied in the phrase "doctor's orders." Likewise, the unit of treatment has shifted from the disease to the patient; the modern individual is placed at the moral center of the therapeutic regime. A "program" is something that an individual selects--such as an exercise program--and that one stays with because of a certain commitment to what it means to one's identity. In contrast, a therapy is exterior to the individual, something that enters at the level of the body and is relatively absent of

a moral quality. Indeed, Parsons's old formulation of the sick role (1951)--which he carefully distinguished from other forms of deviance such as sin and crime--does not hold the individual morally responsible for disease, nor even for treatment other than the obligation to seek out and accept qualified medical care. The program is quite different from the sick role; it represents a moral commitment, something like an alcoholics' vow not to drink. Most of the dietary programs involve fairly stringent restrictions on alcohol, caffeine, sugar, saturated fats, and other "sinful" foods. While the major dietary programs in the U.S. generally have cultural roots other than Protestantism (e.g., macrobiotics from Japan or the diet of Max Gerson, an exiled German Jew), they call for a puritanical self-discipline, at least for the short-term.

In putting together a program, the patient makes decisions about therapeutic linkages that involve a shift of power from the medical profession to the patient. The same therapy may be "complementary" or "alternative" depending on its use and position. For example, a woman may select a lumpectomy for breast cancer instead of a mastectomy, but say no to chemotherapy, radiation, and axillary node dissection, and instead substitute a complementary program and alternative diagnostic procedures for metastases. The CAM program is complementary to the surgery but alternative to the officially indicated chemotherapy and radiation. In the process, the patient has decoupled or unlinked a therapeutic package put together by the medical profession, and to the extent that she can find clinicians who support her decision, the power of delinking has shifted from the profession to the patient. In a sense, the individual patient has encompassed the therapies rather than the other way around.

The individualized, total program with its à la carte therapeutic packaging entails access to a pluralistic medical team. In some cases this new breed of cancer patient assembles medical teams that include not only a surgeon, oncologist, and general practitioner, but also a massage therapist or chiropractor, nutritional counselor or naturopathic physician, specialist in alternative diagnostic procedures, yoga teacher, and so on. Finding M.D.'s who tolerate the team approach is sometimes a difficult task; it requires that they accept the concept of integration right in their own backyard with their own patients. Yet, dedicated patients can eventually find such liberal, pro-integration practitioners. In the process, the gatekeeping function has shifted to the patient, to the extent that the patient has the informational, financial, and physical energy resources to put together such teams.

Patients who put together total programs often have close personal relationships with their health-care providers. In fact, some of the allure of CAM therapists is that they are often more willing and able to spend time talking to the patient and getting to know the patient as a person. Among the two dozen women cancer patients whom we interviewed--all opinion leaders in the CAM movement--we frequently encountered expressions of nostalgia for an older form of medical care in which patients were not rushed through an office visit. Under pressure from insurance providers, many medical doctors in the U.S. have reduced office visits to five minutes or less, and often a portion of the visit or even the entire visit is handled by nurses or physician's assistants. Patients long for the personal interaction associated with the fabled, nineteenth-century country doctor, and they bemoan the assembly-line quality of much medical care in the United States today. Yet, the longing for personal interaction should not be confused with a desire for a personalistic value system; patients want to be treated as a "person" and as a "partner" (in Dumontian-DaMattian terms, as an individual and equal), not as an underling who merely follows doctor's orders.

Ironically, the integration of CAM providers into the insurance system creates financial pressures that are tending to drive their office visit interactions toward the assembly-line model of conventional medicine. Insurance providers prefer standardized

diagnoses and standardized therapies, and that preference is one of the guiding factors behind the triaging of CAM therapists, so that some will fall under the umbrella of insurance support and others will be marginalized. Thus, the whole process of medical integration is constantly changing, with contradictions produced even by its own successes.

Conclusions

My fieldwork in two social movements, Spiritism in Brazil during the 1980s and the CAM movement in the U.S. during the 1990s, does not permit any direct comparisons because they involved social locations and time periods that are not directly parallel. Yet both tell us something about the relationship between medicine and modernity. In the Spiritist case, modern biomedicine is encompassed by a traditional order characterized by the hierarchical relationship of the spirit world to this world, together with the personal relationships between and among the incarnate and disincarnate. From this perspective Spiritism draws on and reproduces a traditional or premodern value system. At the same time, Spiritism is a modernizing, transforming force that is not reducible to categories such as popular religion or popular healing, precisely because of its origins in nineteenth-century French progressivism. Kardec and Pasteur were, for a part of their lives, contemporaries. Spiritism is, as DaMatta argues for Brazil, neither this nor that: it is a modernizing social movement that teaches the values of education, personal development, and meritocratic achievement based on work and good deeds, but it is also swallowing other modernizing institutions such as science and biomedicine through its transformation of scientists into spirits and its support of questionable medical referrals under the banner of *obras de caridade*. Spiritism makes scientists of spirits and spirits of scientists. Such complexity is an indication of a complex relationship between modern and traditional value systems.

In a similar way, contradictions regarding modernity also characterize the problem of medical integration in the United States. The medical profession, like the white middle classes when faced with racial integration, has been divided over the issue, but has often reacted negatively. To many of the leaders of the medical profession, medical integration seems to fly in the face of a universalistic evaluation standard, namely, the clinical trial. However, when one explores both the funding and the methodologies of the apparently universalistic drug approval process, it is revealed to be much less universalistic than the rhetoric of the gold standard would suggest, just as in the case of racial integration there were deep biases in the so-called universalistic standards of scholastic achievement tests. Many conventional therapies for chronic diseases do not work, are based on a poor understanding of what causes the disease, have serious side effects, put profits before people, and have received no evaluation due to grandparenting loopholes in the law. Many CAM therapies also suffer from similar problems of efficacy, safety, conceptualization, and profiteering. The point is that the confrontation between conventional and CAM therapies punctures the complacent ideology of universalism that underlies the authority of conventional medicine for chronic disease. At the same time, the politics of evaluating CAM provides the groundwork for a reasonable, new system of evaluation for all of medicine. By going off the gold standard, one is not thrown into premodern irrationalism, as some leaders of conventional medicine warn. Rather, one moves forward into a world of more complex, multimethod evaluation systems that emerge from the recognition that scientific methods can obscure their biases under a mantle of universalism. Science itself, the model of universalism and modernity in Western societies, is, like the societies from which it emerges, undergoing its own process of continuing modernization.

Note

1 See also Hess (1999b), which develops some of the ideas presented here, including the comparison with integration.

References

- Bellah, Robert
1985 *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bunk, Steve
1999 "Is Integrative Medicine the Future?" *The Scientist* 13(10): 1, 10-11.
- Collins, Harry
1985 *Changing Order*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- DaMatta, Roberto
1978 *Carnavais, Malandros, e Heróis*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar.
1985 *A Casa e a Rua*. São Paulo: Brasiliense.
- Eisenberg, David
1997 "Advising Patients Who Seek Alternative Medical Therapies." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 127(1): 61-69.
- Eisenberg, David, Ronald Kessler, Cindy Foster, Frances Norlock, David Calkins, and Thomas Delbanco
1993 "Unconventional Medicine in the United States." *New England Journal of Medicine* 328(4): 246-52.
- Eisenberg, David, Roger Davis, Susan Ettner, Scott Appel, Sonja Wilkey, Maria Van Rompay, and Ronald Kessler
1998 "Trends in Alternative Medicine Use in the United States, 1990-1997." *Journal of the American Medical Association* 280(18): 1569-1575.
- Harvey, David
1989 *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Healy, Patrick. 1999. "Civil Rights Office Questions Legality of Colleges' Use of Standardized Tests." *Chronicle of Higher Education* May 28: A28-A29.
- Hess, David
1987 "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24(2): 15-34.
1991 *Spirits and Scientists*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press.
1997 *Can Bacteria Cause Cancer?* New York: NYU Press.
1999a *Evaluating Alternative Cancer Therapies*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
1999b "Technology, Medicine, and Modernity." Paper presented at the conference on Technology and Modernity, University of Twente, Netherlands.
- Parsons, Talcott
1951 *The Social System*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press.
- Wooddell, Margaret, and David Hess
1998 *Women Confront Cancer*. New York: NYU Press.