

Ayahuasca: Legalized Works in the Netherlands!



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AFTER my first experience with MDMA, which was overpowering in every regard, I finished three years of training in psycholytic psychotherapy at the Swiss Society for Psycholyse Therapy during 1989 to 1992. In 1989, by divine providence, as I believe, and after a series of “synchronicities,” I likewise came into contact with ayahuasca. I won friends in the Amazon, and in Brazil I learned about the work of Santo Daime. Santo Daime is a form of spiritual practice that utilizes ayahuasca, the ancient South American psychedelic brew. It counts as a true panacea, as the “teacher of all teachers” or “o professor dos professores,” as we sing in a “hino.” (Hinos are songs which are received by the “astral world.”)

At first, Paulo Roberto, one of the top leaders of the Santo Daime, invited me to join him on a trip through the U.S. In four weeks I experienced eight ceremonies—or “works”—from L.A. to New York. Then, to my great surprise, I received from Paulo three liters of the holy juice to start the first Santo Daime works in Germany.

So, since 1989, I began leading spiritual works with the Santo Daime. However, because it became unlawful to practice in Germany during the last few years, we now celebrate in the Netherlands. These ceremonies are permitted there because of the freedom of religion. These works are led as “marathons,” because the people there come from far away. We are together from Friday evening until Sunday or Monday. We celebrate two spiritual works each time, and in August we are together for six days and celebrate four “trabaljos.”

We prepare the works carefully, while we speak, and we talk about the fears and the wishes of the participants. After the works we spend a lot of time together in order to integrate our experiences.

I will give some examples of the curative effect of ayahuasca.

During the entire time that I was in Brazil, and took part in the works, I did not need to use my asthma medication, which is a kind of cortisone. I also experi-

enced a powerful healing from influenza in the middle of the rain forest. Within about five hours of the work, with a high dose of ayahuasca, I overcame the fever and the sinusitis completely. I vomited strongly, and with this purification came all the pus from my nose, maxillary sinuses and bronchi. I know from my many experiences with the Santo Daime that cortisone, as well as antibiotics, are not necessary at all.

However, the most important curative power of the Santo Daime lies in the following observation: if the work is well-guided, then the juice brings us into contact with an immense “forca” (power). We must surrender ourselves to this power. She leaves us, in the end, no choice. And exactly herein lies the unique remedial potential of this work. During contact with this “heavenly power” our (putative) problems and fears lose their power on us immediately. Our worries become trifling, and we can feel how much they controlled us absolutely needlessly. We (body and soul/mind) relax. This happens in two ways: on the one hand, by the physiological effect of the drink, and on the other hand, by its psychic strength in the well-led ritual. We can feel, in the end, secure and maybe even happy, although in the objective outside world nothing has changed.

Normally, we meet on a Friday evening in our house in Holland. First, everyone has the opportunity to discuss their questions, problems, conflicts or wishes. Then we meet to celebrate the ritual. At this time there are some proven rules that we follow, whose sense is often recognized only bit by bit. Everyone who participates wears white clothes, or at least light beige. Women wear clothes or skirts. Men and women sit facing each other at a table that is also decorated in white. The leader sits in the front and center. To confirm that we mean it seriously, and are ready to accept all of what may come, we pray at first. Even if the prayer sounds Christian, it still has nothing to do with the church-

-as through MDMA and the Santo Daime I have experienced a complete conversion, from Christianity to Jesus and to the real source of all being. -

Then we drink the first dose. Afterwards we sit down, upright in a meditative posture, and focus inwardly. Sometimes we sing “hinos” (sacred songs) in which we ask the higher forces—as well as the sun, moon, stars, the Earth, the wind, and the sea—for help with our work. We do not speak during the ritual at the table. After approximately an hour we drink the second dose. One of the major advantages of the Santo Daime is that we do not develop any tolerance to the ayahuasca, so we can drink as often and as much as is necessary or reasonable. I can adjust the dose as well, so that it seems optimum for everybody. After about two hours we have a “break” of about half an hour. Everyone can then lie down and dedicate themselves to their inward journey. Perhaps, we still drink a third time. The work is supported over and over again by “hinos,” which have the ability to canalize the energy and to steer the thoughts in a positive direction. Without this there would be a risk of the “energy” becoming very heavy, and then some could become entangled in dark thoughts. After the “break” the ritual continues for approximately two more hours. At the end we pray again together. To gradually “come down” a suitable music is played.

On the next day we meet at midday for a detailed integration conversation. At the same time we also prepare for the bigger work of Saturday evening. Then, in the evening, at about 7:00, we meet again in white. We drink the ayahuasca three or four times. In the last “round” we dance together, in a quite special, ritual dance, while we sing “hinos.” This type of dancing offers unprecedented opportunities, and equally important basic lessons to learn for our lives and our happiness. Singing is, of course, one’s free choice. Those who might find it too demanding can simply remain in their concentration. Then, on Sunday, we meet again about midday for the next integration. Afterwards is, again, a free time, which we can use for walks in a nice area. Then, early in the evening, we gather for an “open” meeting. In each case I decide spontaneously what we will do together (our method, etc.). This meeting serves to further strengthen and integrate that which we have learned or recognized.

One of the most important lessons that I learned during the works with the Santo Daime is not to react to the “negative” moods or actions from others. This is how I see the meaning of the phrase “If one gives you a blow on your right cheek, present the other also to him.” I’m still learning to live my life in this direction of love and forgiveness. During the works with ayahuasca we can learn

to steer our thoughts in a positive direction. The power of the plant spirits sometimes brings us completely to the border, and herein lies the special remedial potential of this “magic drink.” In the “Grenzsituation” nothing else is left to us than to completely surrender, no matter how we feel. This is the main goal—to surrender to the divine or the universe.

My Way

On account of my special education and long-standing experience I carry out the trabalhos in quite a special way. A very important aspect of my work is to show how we can handle situations when we are confronted with people who (at least for ourselves) are behaving “negatively.”

It is very important that we learn not to react to it in the same negative way. So not “an eye for an eye” but forgiveness. This depends substantially on the fact that the forgiving is not only theoretical but really from the heart. In this manner, we are able to master the difficult task of “integrating the shadow” as C.G. Jung called it.

Integration

To “integrate” the ayahuasca experience is at least as important as the work (ritual) itself. Only he, who practices the truth comes to the light. Another special point of my works is that we all stay together after the trabalhos. By staying

together we have a very special opportunity to integrate into our life that which we might have seen or recognized during the works. We can then immediately test this out together, or discuss other questions, problems or conflicts, and try to solve them with the power of love and forgiveness.

Dates

Our works take place every three months. The next work will take place from the 7th to the 10th of November, 2008.

Last, but not least, I want to mention that because of my first experience with MDMA there arose the big opportunity to meet Dr. Rick Doblin. As a member of the European College for the Study of Consciousness (Das Europäische Collegium für Bewußtseinsstudien), I helped to make connections between him and the “psychedelic society” in Europe. I am deeply grateful for the indescribably important work and success of Rick and MAPS.

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