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ETHNIC FOLKWAYS RECORDS FE 4346

Music of Pará, Brazil: Carimbó, Pajelança, Batuque & Umbanda



PAI ZE MARIA AND INITIATES OUTSIDE BATUQUE CULHOUSE, BELEM DO PARA

PHOTO BY M. MARKS

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE



SIDE 1

- Band 1. CARIMBO
- Band 2. PAJELANCA SONG
- Band 3. BATUQUE SONG
- Band 4. BATUQUE SONG FOR OGUM GENERAL
- Band 5. UMBANDA SONG FOR OGUM
- Band 6. ELE ATIROU, MAS NINGUEM

SIDE 2

- Band 7. OGUM BEIRA-MAR
- Band 8. OGUM E PAI DE TONDO, REI DO GONGA
- Band 9. CABOCLO NAO TINHA CAMINHO PARA CAMINHAR
- Band 10. LAMBRAI, O LEMBRAI
- Band 11. SONG FOR IEMANJA
- Band 12. UMBANDA POTOS AT THE IEMANJA FESTIVAL

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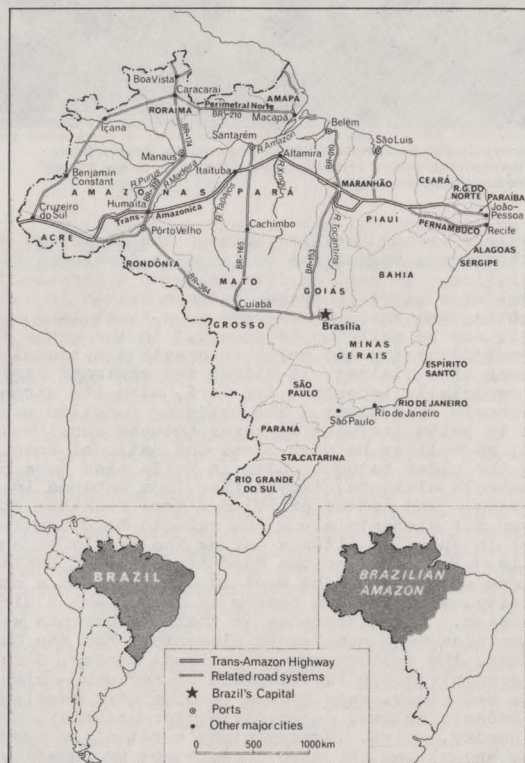
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The state of Pará is located in the north of Brazil, and is part of the vast geographical and culture area known as Amazônia. The Portuguese colonizers never established in Pará the plantations or mining operations that required the huge labor force eventually supplied by captive Africans and the slave system. These were located mostly in the northeast and south of the country. At first, Indian slaves were used in the extractive enterprises in the Pará forests, with African labor brought in as early as 1682 (Anaiza Vergolino e Silva, *Alguns Elementos para o Estudo do Negro na Amazônia*, 1968, p. 6). African slaves worked in domestic service in the capital, Belém do Pará, or else were concentrated to the east of the city in agricultural work. The slaves arriving in Pará "were either imported directly from Portuguese Guinea, Cape Verde, or from Cabinda and Angola, or indirectly through the ports of Maranhão, Bahia and other Brazilian ports; their total number was at least 53,072" (Anaiza Vergolino e Silva, *O Negro no Pará - A Notícia Histórica*, 1968, p. 33).

Blacks eventually merged with the rest of the population in a thoroughgoing *mestiçagem* or racial mixing, so that today the most common phenotype in Amazônia is the caboclo, or rural mestiço, of mixed Portuguese, Amerindian and African descent. In material culture, language, cooking and belief systems, the indigenous heritage persists in the culture of the Amazonian caboclo. In spite of this powerful presence of Amerindian elements in the culture of Pará, the contribution of blacks is strongly felt in the recreational music of the interior, as well as in the ritual systems of Amazonian cities, especially Belém do Pará, where the majority of these recordings was made.

Paraense culture may be seen as the result of several stages of culture contact and waves of migration. The influx of the caboclo into the cities (notably Belém) has influenced the development of popular urban culture, especially in the area of religion. The thousands of northeastern Brazilians who began arriving in the second half of the nineteenth century and increased during the rubber boom also deeply affected the cultural and economic life of the state. The successive levels of integration of Pará into the national culture of Brazil and the role of religious ritual as an instrument of national penetration are clearly reflected in the contents of this recording. With the exception of the carimbó, the major recreational dance of the Pará litoral, all of the music presented here is connected with religious ritual. Leaving aside the pajelança song collected near the city of Bragança in eastern Pará, the music is clearly Afro-Brazilian. Given the relatively weak impact of black culture in Amazônia,

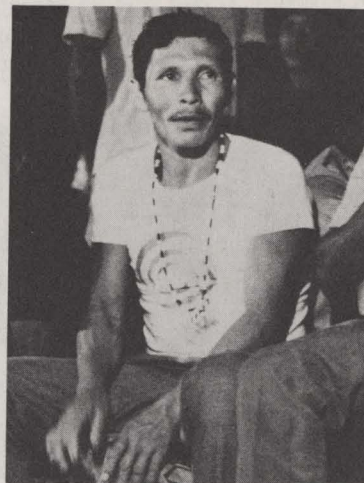
it is obvious that what is involved here is not a question of "African survivals," but rather one of the transmission of Afro-Brazilian musical and cultural elements and their subsequent adaptations to the Amazonian context.

I have arranged the music in a rural to urban sequence, as well as in a temporal order. The continuum runs from the combined European-Amerindian style of the pajelança song, to the use of ritual Nagô (Brazilian Yoruba) in the song to Iêman-já placed next to the last selection on this recording. Behind the pajelança song stands the shamanistic complex of pre-colonial Amerindian groups; behind the Nagô selection is the world of candomblé of Bahia, the center for Brazilian Yoruba culture. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this temporal ordering is the appearance of Nagô elements in the most recent strata. While Yoruba elements were introduced into Belém as early as 1900, it is the recent impact of the religion known as Umbanda that accounts for the Nagô song included here.

Pajelança, batuque and Umbanda are the three stages of popular religion in Belém do Pará. There is a mutual influence among all three of these in belief system and ritual practice. However, it is possible to distinguish among them in terms of musical style, cult organization, and local versus national affiliation.

Pajelança is essentially a curing ritual, a fusion of folk Catholicism and indigenous shamanism. It is typically found in the Amazonian interior among caboclo communities. "In order to relate to the spirit world, the caboclo employs either magical formularies (*rezas*) or goes to a shaman (*pajé*) for help. Shamanism (*pajelança*) is based on the Amerindian belief that the shaman possesses powers over supernatural entities and is thus able to break the spells generated by the various malevolent spirits that inhabit the world" (Emilio F. Moran, "The Adaptive System of the Amazonian Caboclo," 1974, p. 150). Besides the local traditions of pajelança native to Amazônia, the religion appears to have undergone influences brought in by immigrants from Brazil's northeast, the arigós. In a study carried out in the city of Bragança, Pará by Napoleão Figueiredo, such an influence has been established: "The mythological world of pajelança has its roots in indigenous beliefs and the very designations of the spirits is expressed by terms that are also of indigenous origin, although they have lost their original function. Indigenous beliefs were reformulated by the influence of Catholicism, of Afro-Brazilian cults as well as others, coming from contact between these populations with fronts of national penetration" (Napoleão Figueiredo, *Pajelança e Catimbó na Região Bragantina*, n.d., p. 4). The system of beliefs revolves around the *mestres de cura* or curing spirits, which are manipulated by the *pajés* in sessions known as *de mesa*, or "table." The ceremony revolves entirely around the *pajé*, who invokes the spirits with a small maracá, or rattle. He is aided by a member of his family who lights the ritual cigars, serves drinks or lights incense. This use of the rattle to invoke spiritual forces, coupled with the ritual use of smoke, establish a clear link with the shamanistic practices of Amerindian groups. The belief system of pajelança and the melodic structure of the *pajé*'s songs are influenced by non-indigenous elements.

The migration of caboclos into Belém brought pajelança into the city, and famous shamans with large clientes were known to be practicing there until about a generation ago. The first evidence in Belém of Afro-Brazilian cults (which were to absorb elements of pajelança) dates to around 1900. The generic name for these cults is *batuque*, and they range from Mina-Nagô (Dahomean-Yoruba) to others more heavily influenced by European spiritism. Evidence points to migration from the neighboring state of Maranhão as the probable source for this religion in Belém (see *Ladinos e Crioulos* by Edison Carneiro, 1964, pp. 126 and 137).



Carimbó musician, Vigia, Pará

"Cult members insist that the first terreiro [cult center] in Belém was founded only sixty or seventy years ago by the mãe de santo (female cult leader), Dona Doca, who moved to Belém from Maranhão, bringing her spirits with her. Before Dona Doca arrived, the older cult members state, Belém had only pajelança, the healing ceremonies that are based primarily on Indian shamanism and are still held today, both within and outside the batuque cult....It is unlikely that any religious cult that emphasized exclusively African traditions could have succeeded in Belém. But the cult, as it was introduced from Maranhão, was one in which Indian beliefs and Brazilian folk Catholicism had already been incorporated" (Seth and Ruth Leacock, Spirits of the Deep, 1972, p. 43).

The batuque may be seen as the result of two waves of migration, the first originating outside of Pará and bringing the basic organization of an Afro-Brazilian cult. The second wave was the migration of the caboclo into the city: "Most Amazonian batuque cults have introduced Amerindian and caboclo spirits. Alongside orixás and voduns and the saints, one finds encantados (enchanted spirits), supernatural guardians of caboclo shamans, and spirits of the forest and river, such as the bôto, cobra grande, curupira, and other Amerindian spirits.... Batuque is one instance which exemplifies what happens when there are extensive caboclo migrations to urban areas. This massive rural-urban migration has brought caboclo culture into contact with Brazilian lower-class urban culture. Ideologically, this contact has led to the merging of the various notions of personified supernatural powers found in the African and caboclo traditions. Batuque is not merely an ideology but an adaptive system evolving in the urban environment. The environment is no longer the deep forest but the sprawling city. Batuque is not merely supportive but is an integrating force within the growing lower-class neighborhoods and squatter settlements" (Moran, p. 153).

In 1975, the year most of these recordings were made, the Federação Espírita Umbandista e dos Cultos Afro-Brasileiros (the Federation of Umbanda Spiritualism and of Afro-Brazilian Cults) of Belém counted four hundred sixteen member cult houses, spread throughout the city. The three fundamental cult types include Jurema, also known as the "curing line" or pena e maracá; Nagô, also known as batuque or Mina, characterized by the presence of drums; and Umbanda, of southern Brazilian origin, where drums are often replaced by hand-claps, especially if the cult centers are located in neighborhoods near the center of the city.

Umbanda, the most recent and perhaps most pervasive level of popular religion in Belém, developed in southern Brazil in the 1920's. Although elements of Umbanda were introduced into the terreiros of Belém as far back as the 1930's, it is really only in the past ten or fifteen years that the full impact of that religion has reached the capital. Just as Christianity spread across the ancient world via the system of Roman roads, so has the penetration of Umbanda into areas of Brazil relatively remote from influences of the Brazilian south and northeast been assisted by the opening of the Belém-Brasília highway. "The fortunes of the state of Pará have been closely tied to the extraction of forest products....Probably the most significant event for the state since the collapse of the rubber market was the opening of the Belém-Brasília highway which provided, in the 1960's, the first overland link with the rest of Brazil. The road has been a major factor in the accelerated agricultural development and population growth of the areas it traverses and has contributed to the growth and industrialization of Belém" (Moran, p. 176). As is the case elsewhere in Brazil, the process of urbanization in Pará has been accompanied and assisted by the spread of Umbanda.

For Belém do Pará, the tradition that allows for the adaptation to the Amazonian context of religious cult organization and belief systems from elsewhere is an old one. Umbanda is what I term a "creolized" religion, and is the result of the conscious bringing together and reconciliation within a single structure of such diverse elements of the Brazilian heritage as candomblé, macumba, Congo-Angola cults, European spiritualism and indigenous shamanism. The presence of "caboclo" or idealized Amerindian elements within Umbanda explains its easy "nativization" to the Amazonian environment. In one Umbanda center that I studied, the Tenda Espírita de Umbanda "Cabocla Yacira"; it is clear that this cult center is providing a link to rural pajelança, now practiced in an Afro-Brazilian context with recent infusions from Bahia and Rio.



Opening of batuque ceremony at Cabana Mineira de Mãe Iemanjá, Belém. To the rear is the "throne" of the drummers, at the bottom of their "throne" is the designation Mina-Nagô.

There is a strong parallel between the structure and function of Umbanda and approaches to language developed within sociolinguistics. In calling this religion a "creole," it is on the model of a mixed language that has arisen in a multilingual setting and that is now used as a first language; in function, it may be called a "standard," in the sense that it bridges local diversity and helps to create a national identity. In the manner of a dialect, it allows for regional variation, a feature especially important for Pará, with its strong presence of caboclo traditions. The bridging function provided by Umbanda in Belém includes linkages between rural and urban traditions, as well as between local and national ones.

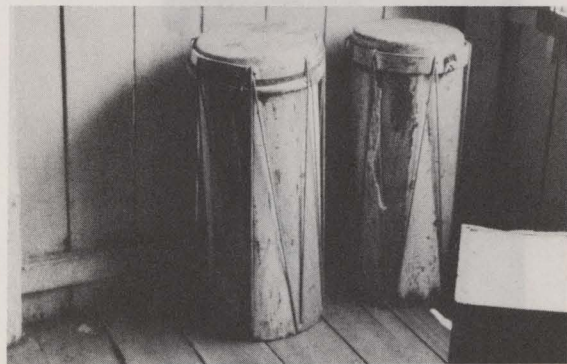
While the older batuque cults in Belém also have combined Nagô and caboclo elements, they differ from Umbanda in several important ways. The latter exhibits a more flexible structure, which allows for elements along the caboclo-Nagô continuum to be featured in specific rituals during the weekly or annual ritual cycle. Patterned on the Nagô terreiros of Bahia and Recife, where each day of the week is dedicated to a specific orixá or deity, many Umbanda houses in Belém make a similar ritual division. The difference is that the Umbanda weekly calendar includes many non-Yoruba elements. For the Cabocla Yacira center, the pattern was as follows: Monday, Gira de Exú; Tuesday, desenvolvimento (development of mediums - closed to the public; Wednesday, mesa branca (mediumistic sessions); Thursday, Oxóssi; Friday, desenvolvimento; Saturday, no activity; Sunday, orixá. Monday night's ritual is open to the public, and allows for mass cures based on pajelança to take place under the aegis of Exú, the Afro-Brazilian trickster figure. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday reveal the important role of spiritualism within Umbanda. The days devoted to the Nagô orixá, Thursday and Sunday, are often dedicated to caboclo deities in the same spirit "lines" as the orixás, with the latter rarely appearing.

On December 3, 1975, I was fortunate enough to be invited to the major public festival at this Umbanda center, the feita for Ogum Nika Befará, the personal orixá of Pai Ayrton, the pai-de-santo or priest. All the "mediums" or initiates were dressed in Bahian Yoruba style, in colors corresponding to their orixá. The Bahian or Nagô style adopted here marked the prestige of the event, and also showed the way Bahian styles were being diffused to Amazônia via Umbanda.

A few days later a public ceremony sponsored by the Belém Umbanda Federation was held in Icoaraci, a small community just outside the city. The festival was in honor of Iemanjá, one of the major candomblé and Umbanda orixás, and was modelled on the annual beach-front celebrations in Bahia. Many of the Umbanda terreiros carried out public ceremonies on the beach in honor of Iemanjá and other deities. Some of the ceremonies were sung in Nagô, the liturgical Yoruba of Bahia and Recife. It could thus be said that Umbanda is acting to diffuse candomblé elements outside of Brazil's northeast. Umbanda could thus be seen as another "national front of penetration," accompanying and assisting the urbanization process. It may almost be seen as an index of urbanization; when a city or town is pulled into a "national" economic and cultural orbit, the presence of Umbanda can be expected.

Amazônia should be of special interest to students of urbanization and social change. It is on the boundary between Indo- and Afro-Brazil, thanks to the roadways now crossing the region. The increasing introduction of Afro-Brazilian elements, including musical ones, is in direct proportion to the urbanization process.

The music on this record was made during three stays in Pará, the first in 1971 and the second and third in 1975. During the last I was associate researcher in the Department of Anthropology, Universidade Federal do Pará. My special thanks to Dr. Napoleão Figueiredo for his assistance in recording the pajelança song, to Dr. Miguel Scaff for his support, and to Pai Zé Maria and Pai Ayrton for permission to record. Thanks also to Santana Miranda of Vigia, Maria Helena Folha, Nelson Tembra, Janduari Simões, Lúcia van Veltham, and Elza de la Roque, all of Belém. Obrigado pela força.



Carimbó drums. Note onça, lower right. Vigia, Pará.



Umbanda musicians, Umbanda center, Cabocla Yacira, Belém. Note guias ("guides") worn around necks of mediums.

SELECTIONS

1. **Carimbó.** The first mention of the carimbó appears in legislation passed in the year 1880 in Belém, in a law forbidding the playing of drums and "carimbós" during the night. Originally the name of the drum used in this type of dance music, the term "carimbó" is now applied to a musical and dance form distributed in several areas of Amazônia, especially in the Salgado, the strip of Pará running just below the Atlantic coast. This dance has clearly Afro-Brazilian origins, and it is maintained by caboclos in areas that coincide with zones that were formerly worked by black slaves. Carimbó is a good example of an Afro-Brazilian or "black" musical tradition assimilated into a mestiço (caboclo) environment. The musicians in Vigia, the town where this recording was made, were quite aware that they were the carriers of a black tradition. To an outside observer it is clear that this music contains elements from European and caboclo (neo-Indian) sources. The instruments used include two or sometimes three carimbó drums, hollowed-out tree trunks with a deerskin stretched over one end. At times, as on this recording, an *onça* or friction drum supplies the bass line. It is tempting to see this as a derivation of Congo-Angolan musical style, especially since the presence of Africans from this area has been attested in Pará. The *onça* or friction drum on this recording is made from a wooden box, through which a piece of palmito has been passed. The musician wets his hand in a bowl of water kept nearby, reaches into the *onça* and pulls on the palmito. This playing style closely resembles those still found in the traditional music of Congo-Angolan groups. It also resembles the description of the Cuban *kinfúite* or friction drum, played in drum ensembles in 19th Century Cuba by slaves of Congo origin (See Lydia Cabrera's *Reglas de Congo - Palo Monte*, 1979, p. 77, and p. 220, note 60). Whatever the African origin of the carimbó, it is chiefly found today accompanying the recreational dances of the caboclo communities to the east of Belém. The form of the dance is usually a ring of male and female dancers, featuring solo work by each couple in turn. Dance styles exhibit a broad range of cultural influences, from the Iberian-derived snapping of fingers in castanet fashion, to imitative dances of indigenous origin. On this recording, the ensemble consists of the *onça*, three graded drums, played with the hands and with the musicians seated on the drums, cavaquinho, banjo, scraper, rattle, *ganzá*, and transverse flute. This is the only selection on this record that was arranged specifically for the purpose of the recording session. The name of the group is the Conjunto Tapayoara, led by Santana Miranda. Most of the musicians are fishermen, and they play for dances in the Salgado. The carimbó is especially popular in June (the *festas juninas*), and in November and December.

2. **Pajelança song.** This was extracted from a curing session carried out by João Cego, a pajé from Bragança, Pará. It is one of the opening songs that precede the pajé's trance and the calling of the *encantados*, or spirit helpers. Although the melody is strongly European, the use of the rattle and the ritual significance of its sound is directly related to Amerindian shamanistic traditions.

3. **Batuque song, "Caçador na beira do caminho"** (Hunter at the edge of the road). Within the batuque, songs (known as *doutrinas*) play an important part in ritual. This one was recorded at the terreiro of Zé Maria, which calls itself "Mina-Nagô." While I did find some songs that apparently were borrowed in from Umbanda, this doutrina follows standard batuque practice, with the soloist singing the verses, then the chorus repeating them in the response. This song is for Oxóssi, the orixá of the hunt. This deity serves a linking function with Ogum, the orixá to whom he is most closely connected, and with the Amerindian elements within the batuque pantheon. No trances were manifested during the singing of this doutrina.

4. **Batuque song for Ogum General.** This is a special rhythm and melody that "calls" Ogum General, who then possesses the dancing pai-de-santo. One of the major differences between drumming in the batuques of Belém and that found in the more "African" houses of São Luis do Maranhão, Recife, or Bahia is the relatively low elaboration of cross rhythms and multiple parts in the batuque drum orchestras. Also missing is the role of the master drummer in manipulating the rhythms in order to bring on possession-trance. This *toque* or rhythm for Ogum General is part of a long sequence. Zé Maria was dancing with several initiates in a line; their eyes were on his feet, because they could tell from his movements when he was about to "receive" Ogum. When that moment came, the drumming stopped, as can be heard on this selection. Zé Maria was immediately given the red sash of Ogum, and was greeted by batuque members. He then started a new song as the orixá. This possession preceded the presentation of an initiate to the drummers.

5. **Umbanda song for Ogum.** This was recorded at an Umbanda center known as Santo Antônio de Angola. Borrowing from candomblé, Umbandistas refer to the song sequence in their rituals as *shiré*, a Nagô word meaning "play." Songs are known as *pontos cantados*, or "sung points." The *shiré* opens with *pontos de abertura*, or opening songs, usually commencing with a *defumação*, or ritual purification with incense. Songs for Exú and Ogum then follow. The latter is an especially popular orixá in Belém, as may be seen from the number of contexts in which he appears on this record. Appearing in the early part of the *shiré*, this *ponto* is meant to salute Ogum, not to invoke him.
6. **Ele atirou, mas ninguém viu** ("He shot it, but no one saw it") This *ponto* was recorded at the same Umbanda session as the preceding and following selections. The pai-de-santo was standing in the middle of a circle of mediums, women to his right, the men on the left. Several songs to the caboclos had already been sung, and the *pontos* were to invoke João Batão, a caboclo spirit specialized in curing. Immediately preceding this *ponto*, the medium had begun to dance around his spot, an X marked on the floor in the center of the circle of mediums. In beginning this song, the pai-de-santo sings it in the first person, *Eu atirei* ("I shot it"), and the chorus responds in the third person, "ele atirou," in which this *ponto* is normally sung. This signals the fact that this song is intended to manifest the caboclo spirit, already underway when this *ponto* begins. The pai-de-santo dances with an imaginary bow and arrow around his X, dropping to his knee and releasing an invisible arrow at the word "guia!" This exclamation breaks the rhythm, and in fact functions to bring on trance more quickly. Various types of rhythmic breaks or dramatic disruptions are known in Afro-American drumming traditions in ritual contexts, and I use the term *cassé* (meaning "break" in Haitian creole) to describe this phenomenon. Here, it is not the drummers playing *cassés* to induce trance, but the medium himself is the one producing it in his own vocal and dance step. After several of these breaks, he achieves trance, the music stops, and he is given the caboclo's artifacts, a necklace of red beads and shaman's cigar. The caboclo then circles the ring, greeting with a *saravá* (the ritual salute of Umbanda) and being greeted in turn. He then blesses in the name of Nzambi, the Angolan high god incorporated into Umbanda. The greeting behavior is apparently adopted from the Yoruba candomblés, where such ritual exchanges establish the change of identity that has taken place. We can thus see here a perfect integration within ritual of many elements of the Brazilian heritage - a medium has entered trance through a *cassé*, receives the spirit of a dead shaman, smokes a cigar and enters shamanistic trance within Afro-Brazilian possession-trance, greets Yoruba style and blesses in the name of an Angolan deity. All of this functions together as a system, so the historical derivations become almost meaningless as the ritual is being enacted.



Greeting Ogum General. Part of batuque ceremony.

7. Ogum Beira-mar. This ponto was recorded soon after the one described above. Now in trance or incorporado in Umbanda terms, the caboclo leads the singing. Many possessions begin to appear in the ring of mediums, who break the ring to dance in the center.
8. Ogum é pai de todo, rei do gongá (Ogum is father of everything, king of the altar). This ponto and the two following were recorded on a Sunday at the Umbanda center Cabocla Yacira, a day devoted to the orixá. Pai Ayrton's terreiro does not belong to the Umbanda Federation of Belém, but is instead allied to a federation in Rio. Much of the music found in Belém's Umbanda houses were diffused from the south of the country via recordings and song books, purchased at any of the stores specializing in Umbanda articles found in Belém. The drum style adopted here exhibits more cross rhythms than in the batuque houses, and is probably influenced by the Congo-Angolan traditions of hand drumming being diffused via Umbanda across Brazil. This ponto accompanies a ring dance around the dance floor, without any manifestations of trance.
9. Caboclo não tinha caminho para caminhar (Caboclo had no road to travel). This ponto was sung immediately after Pai Ayrton had received João da Mata, a spirit classified as an encantado and important in curing. As João da Mata, he had just berated the drummers for playing too fast and too flashily; he had earlier complained that a rival pai-de-santo had left a despacho, a malevolent offering. This ponto may thus be seen as a personal complaint by Pai Ayrton/João da Mata. It is started by the encantado, and then taken up by Zé Vodunsi, one of the mediums.
10. Lembraí, O lembraí (Remember, o remember). This ponto for Ogum Beira-mar was recorded at Pai Ayrton's center during the festival for Ogum mentioned in the introduction to these notes. It was in a long series of pontos for this orixá that preceded Pai Ayrton's possession by this deity. Only one other possession-trance occurred during this ritual, with one of the mediums receiving Oxóssi. The warrior-hunter relationship is deeply rooted in Yoruba mythology, and it appears here in an Umbanda context. The pontos for Ogum are all Umbanda songs, and no traditional toques from candomblé were played.
11. Song for Iêmanjá. This was recorded at the festa for Iêmanjá, orixá of salt water and patron of fishermen. It is sung in Nagô, and is the middle section of a song from the Ketu candomblé of Bahia. Here it is sung by Umbandistas at a beach-front public festival patterned on those of Bahia and Rio in honor of this orixá. The first such festival was in 1970, and each year since then has seen an increase in public participation. Umbanda has helped spread a "national" event into a small town on the outskirts of Belém.
12. Umbanda pontos at the Iêmanjá festival. This series of songs was performed by a group of Umbandistas on the beach at Icoaraci, Pará. Background sounds include drumming and singing from other groups. This is perhaps the most "national" style represented on this recording. The singing is accompanied by hand-claps, common to urban Umbanda centers, and many of the deities mentioned, especially preto velho, are rarely encountered in the Belém centers. Although this festival is meant to honor Iêmanjá, it also serves as a way of tying popular culture in Belém to urban Afro-Brazilian culture in the rest of the country.



João da Mata in curing ceremony (Gira de Exu) at Umbanda center. Cabocla Yacira. Note words in Nagô on blackboard.

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Umbanda mãe-de-santo and medium at Iêmanjá Festival, Icoaraci, Pará.