ABSTRACT

This thesis develops the concept of religious butinage in order to understand what form of religious mobility and pluralization occur in Brazil, especially in the mediumistic field, since so far the explanations for syncretism do not satisfactorily explain as it occurs. By examining how religious practitioners practice throughout history and culture I identify some kind of experience that escapes the established structure, tradition and culture. It clarifies the syncretic processes. Data have been collected from participant observation, interviews, newspapers, and biographies. I build up the concept of religious butinage by a metaphor based on “ayahuasca religions”. The religious practitioner, compared with a hummingbird, makes butinage from a religious denomination to another religious denomination producing syncretism. This doctoral thesis is in some way a continuation of my master's thesis entitled: “Between the rose and the hummingbird: An anthropological study of trajectories in the União do Vegetal (UDV) and the Santo Daime”.

Key-words: religious butinage, syncretism, religious pluralism.