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## Brazil's Sorcerers and Witches Stage Magic Ritual to Heal Mother Earth

Contributed by Elma Lia Nascimento  
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Mother Earth's Cure is the theme of Brazil's 7th Annual Sorcerers Meeting taking place in São Paulo this weekend. Sorcerers and witches from all over the country opened the encounter this Friday night, October 26, with an open-air magic ritual at Ibirapuera, São Paulo city's main park.

The Brazilian wizards will hold their discussions inside the São Paulo's Legislative Assembly, which is located on the park's fringe. Greenpeace, and Brazil's Ministry of Culture are some of the entities sponsoring and contributing to the sorcerers meeting.

The Mother Earth's Cure theme has to do with the group's interest in environment preservation. Rodrigo Smokovitz, a sorcerer himself and the meeting organizer, promised that some of the witchcraft to be performed will be to make the population and the politicians aware of the need to preserve nature.

About 800 people are being expected. Participants will get a chance to listen to lectures and debates on environment but will also hear about other pagan and new age religions such as shamanism and Druidism.

According to Smokovitz, Mother Earth is the sorcerers' goddess and he and his colleagues don't believe in the existence of a devil. "Witchcraft has nothing to do with pact with the devil," he explains adding:

"We also don't fly on brooms, we don't have a big nose and we don't sacrifice animals or little kids. We practice witchcraft using herbs and do it for the benefit of mankind." People who misuse sorcery, he assures, will get triple punishment for what they've done.

He confirmed however that tunics and cauldrons that are shown in movies on sorcerers are for real. The cauldron is needed for the mixing of herbs as well as the burning of written requests and money bills. Burning money helps people get rich, explains the wizard.

There's only so much that sorcerers can do though. They cure diseases as long as they are not terminal and can reunite separate couples as long as both involved are willing to do it. There is something called free will, which they cannot change, Smokovitz explains.

After Saturday's lectures participants of the sorcerers encounter will see a show of Hawaiian dance and then will take part in a Halloween Parade at Avenida Paulista, the location where Paulistas (São Paulo residents) do their main celebrations, mournings and protests.

Abrawicca, the association representing Brazil's sorcerers, was created in 1998, as a way to fight juridically and in the court of public opinion prejudice against wizards and witches. The sorcerer image seems to have improved a lot since then throughout Brazil.

The first encounter of Brazilian sorcerers happened also in 1998 at Hotel Danúbio, in São Paulo. Only since 2001, however, these meetings became an annual event.