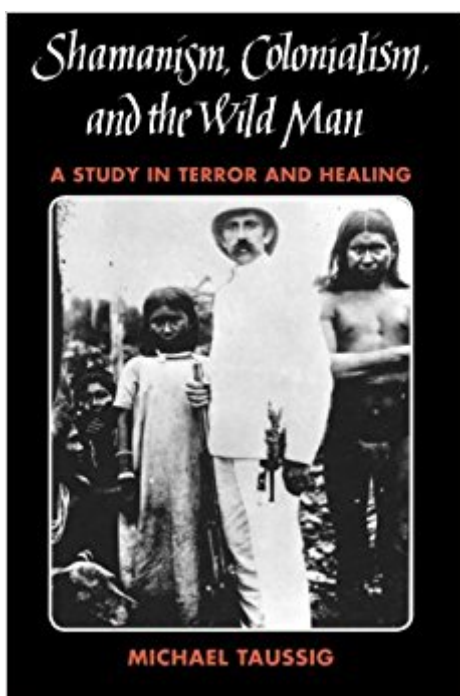


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# Shamanism, Colonialism, And The Wild Man: A Study In Terror And Healing



## Synopsis

Working with the image of the Indian shaman as Wild Man, Taussig reveals not the magic of the shaman but that of the politicizing fictions creating the effect of the real."This extraordinary book . . . will encourage ever more critical and creative explorations."âFernando Coronil, [I]American Journal of Sociology[I]"Taussig has brought a formidable collection of data from arcane literary, journalistic, and biographical sources to bear on . . . questions of evil, torture, and politically institutionalized hatred and terror. His intent is laudable, and much of the book is brilliant, both in its discovery of how particular people perpetrated evil and others interpreted it."âStephen G. Bunker, Social Science Quarterly

## Book Information

Paperback: 538 pages

Publisher: University Of Chicago Press; Reprint, 1997 edition (December 15, 1991)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0226790134

ISBN-13: 978-0226790138

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #761,130 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #66 in Books > History > Americas > South America > Colombia #405 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Colonialism & Post-Colonialism #429 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions, Practices & Sacred Texts > Tribal & Ethnic > Native American

## Customer Reviews

Both terror and shamanism thrive on the subversion of order and meaning. The shaman, like a dadaist painter or poet, uses the technique of montage to disrupt conventional meaning.

Michael Taussig is the Class of 1933 Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University.Â

Generally expressions of shamanism are associated with the lower classes of society who may be subject to great systematic oppression. This reality is exemplified in Michael Taussig's description of the colonization and slavery the Colombians. Taussig speaks of wildness as a "death space of signification", which implies that rather than expressing subservience to the will of the colonial

powers, shamans eliminate meaning as they turn away from civilization. The "death spaces of signification" - the consequences of a culture of oppression - are a means of negation of the oppression through accepting death. There are strong conceptual associations with the work of Dambudzo Marechera, especially his shamanistic outlook in *Black Sunlight* (Penguin Classics). One also notes that Georges Bataille's writing, for instance in *An Unfinished System Of Nonknowledge* upholds the value of seeking within a different mode of signification that has the appearance of being "nothing". Whereas death or "nothing" may seem to be the object of shamanistic seeking, one is advised to look much more deeply.

intense but well worth the read. I heard Terrence McKenna recommend it and it has put a lot of perspective in good light. Namaste

I chugged through bulk of it, I'm not an anthropologist.... Reading it with some other anthropology books that friends have suggested might fill a large void in my education.

Arguably one of the most accomplished anthropologists working today, Michael Taussig provides an intensely individualistic bricolage of literary, historical, and ethnological interpretations of his many years of fieldwork in the Upper . One of the most detailed and poignant accounts of shamanism in its cultural context - will very soon be regarded as a classic.

trip through the rubber boom of the 1800's in South America. From detailed historical survey to his first hand accounts of life around the , he never ceases to confront the reader with reality. His study is comprehensive in that he brings attention to all different aspects of the European, Indian and African people who live there. The study helps integrate the anthropological view of society to consider the religious, political, economic and moral as part of the collective consciousness of a community. Powerful book.

Michael Taussig takes a stance towards "terrorism" not common in today's world. By trying to trace the roots of this phenomenon, he brings to light many explanations and understandings many of us fail to realize, only because we have not come across them before. I give this book four stars instead of five simply because it is a difficult read, but if you are interested in what we, today, call "terrorism" and are willing to take the time to plunge into this book, then it will certainly be worth your while.

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