



# **Narco-Cults: Understanding the Use of Afro-Caribbean and Mexican Religious Cultures in the Drug Wars**

*Tony M. Kail*

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Those who know about how spirituality plays into the world of drug smuggling have likely heard of Santa Muerte, Jesus Malverde, and Santería, but the details of the more obscure African religions and Latin American folk saints and cults often remain a mystery. While the vast majority of these religions are practiced by law-abiding citizens with no connections to the drug trade, their religious beliefs and practices are often appropriated by drug cartels and used to psychologically empower members of these organizations. Therefore, knowledge about narco-cults and spirituality related to the drug trade can be incredibly useful to narcotics officers, military and intelligence agents, and even the average street cop.

Narco-Cults: Understanding the Use of Afro-Caribbean and Mexican Religious Cultures in the Drug Wars looks at the growing phenomenon of narco-cults and the use of indigenous spiritual traditions among drug trafficking organizations. Based on two decades of experience from one of the top consultants in the field, it provides investigative agencies with a means of identifying symbols, rituals, artifacts, and customs endemic to various drug trafficking organizations. The book features illustrations of altars, shrines, and tools along with detailed descriptions of their cultural significance and practical application in rituals and customs.

Derived from empirical research, this sourcebook provides reliable information taken from ethnographic fieldwork, police reports, and interviews with practitioners. The knowledge contained herein will help build cultural competency among the many agencies investigating drug crimes.

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