

The Holy Lords of Sinaloa

Screen print on textile, large format photography 5x4 inch, lambda prints variable size.

2011

The colonialism in Mexico began with the arrival of H. Cortez, who saw a civilization full of gods and barbarism and was chocked by the suspected human sacrifices. The reaction by the Spaniards to give themselves the task to evangelize the peoples in Mesoamerica was a logical reaction of people from a monotheistic culture.

The Mesoamerican peoples had a broader vision, within their cosmogony existed a variety of gods, which is a fundamental part of the syncretism that exists in Mexico today. The fact that the Mesoamerican peoples accepted new gods easier had as a result that the Spaniards were successful in their mission.

The result was a Mexico with mixed beliefs, pre-Columbian and Catholic. An example of that syncretism is the sanctification of the villain Anima Jesus Malverde and the cult of Santa Muerte ("Holy Death"). These two cults have great influence within the idiosyncrasies of the population of low social status, and by criminals.

The worship of La Santa Muerte began in the pre-Columbian times and continued during the colonial period. Until the middle of the 20th century it was a word to mouth cult. Nowadays it is so beloved and revered among the people that daily risk their lives in different clandestine activities, as well as among normal people that invoke this saint for protection, health or even if a family member has been kidnapped.

Jesus Malverde was a bandit in the state of Sinaloa at the time of the Mexican Revolution. He was kind of a Mexican Robin Hood, robbing the rich and helping the poor. Today's drug cartel leaders, in particular leaders within the Sinaloa cartel, also use these strategies. Support to isolated and poor regions is utilized to gain acceptance and often also to obtain a mysticism around the leaders of these criminal organizations.