

# The White Shaman

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winner society for american archaeology book award 2017 san antonio conservation society publication award 2019 the prehistoric hunter gatherers of the lower pecos canyonlands of texas and coahuila mexico created some of the most spectacularly complex colorful extensive and enduring rock art of the ancient world perhaps the greatest of these masterpieces is the white shaman mural an intricate painting that spans some twenty six feet in length and thirteen feet in height on the wall of a shallow cave overlooking the pecos river in the white shaman mural carolyn e boyd takes us on a journey of discovery as she builds a convincing case that the mural tells a story of the birth of the sun and the beginning of time making it possibly the oldest pictorial creation narrative in north america unlike previous scholars who have viewed pecos rock art as random and indecipherable boyd demonstrates that the white shaman mural was intentionally composed as a visual narrative using a graphic vocabulary of images to communicate multiple

levels of meaning and function drawing on twenty five years of archaeological research and analysis as well as insights from ethnohistory and art history boyd identifies patterns in the imagery that equate in stunning detail to the mythologies of uto aztec speaking peoples including the ancient aztec and the present day huichol this paradigm shifting identification of core mesoamerican beliefs in the pecos rock art reveals that a shared ideological universe was already firmly established among foragers living in the lower pecos region as long as four thousand years ago

the ancient heartland of shamanism is no longer forbidden territory to travelers or to the spirits but the spirits never left the vastnesses of siberia and central asia as these writings reveal russian and native experts and an american cultural anthropologist who has done fieldwork in the region introduce us to shamans as the poets therapists healers and even leaders of their communities among the special features of this collection are remarkable transcriptions of shamanic exhortations and a pathbreaking study of shamanic tales and rituals

in northern experience and the myths of canadian culture renée hulan disputes the notion that the north is a source of distinct collective identity for canadians through a synthesis of critical historical and theoretical approaches to northern subjects in literary studies she challenges the epistemology used to support this idea by investigating mutually dependent categories of identity in literature that depicts northern peoples and places hulan provides a descriptive account of representative genres in which the north figures as a central theme including autobiography adventure narrative ethnography fiction poetry and travel writing she considers each of these diverse genres in terms of the way it explains the cultural identity of a nation formed from the settlement of immigrant peoples on the lands of dispossessed indigenous peoples reading against the background of contemporary ethnographic literary and cultural theory hulan maintains that the collective canadian identity idealized in many works representing the north does not occur naturally but is artificially constructed in terms of characteristics inflected by historically contingent ideas of gender and race such as self sufficiency independence and endurance and that these characteristics are evoked to justify the nationhood of the canadian state

complex hermetic shamanistic and littered with vibrant references this poetry is vitally alive to the preoccupations of the age in which we live

the art of siberia is a fascinating subject and the artifacts discovered in the hidden archives of the russian museum of ethnography in st petersburg are nothing less than extraordinary artwork day to day subjects and photos dating from the turn of the century all represent the testimonies of the siberian people who refused to yield to the hegemony of a modern world

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shamanism is understood by some people to be a primitive form of religion or religio magic practised by the aborigines of northern asia as well as by all other aborigines in other parts of the world this opinion is held

by mikhailowski kharuzin and some other russian scientists others hold that shamanism was only one form of expression of the religious cult of northern asia practised in order to avert the evil spirits this opinion is found in the writings of jochelson and bogoras there is still another view put forward which it is well for us to consider this view we find expressed very clearly in the following extract from klementz one must not lose sight of the fact that in the various beliefs of the siberian tribes a very close connexion is noticeable and likewise there can be observed an uninterrupted identity in the foundations of their mythology and in their rites even extending as far as the nomenclature all of which gives one the right to suppose that these beliefs are the result of the joint work of the intellectual activity of the whole north of asia

selected repr ed by mihály hoppál

this book is to promote research in the fields of anthropology arts archeology ethnography linguistics physical anthropology religion and comparative methodology and their interrelations in order to unveil the basic cultural unity of humankind and through this to promote mutual understanding of the common purpose and enhance international cooperation

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