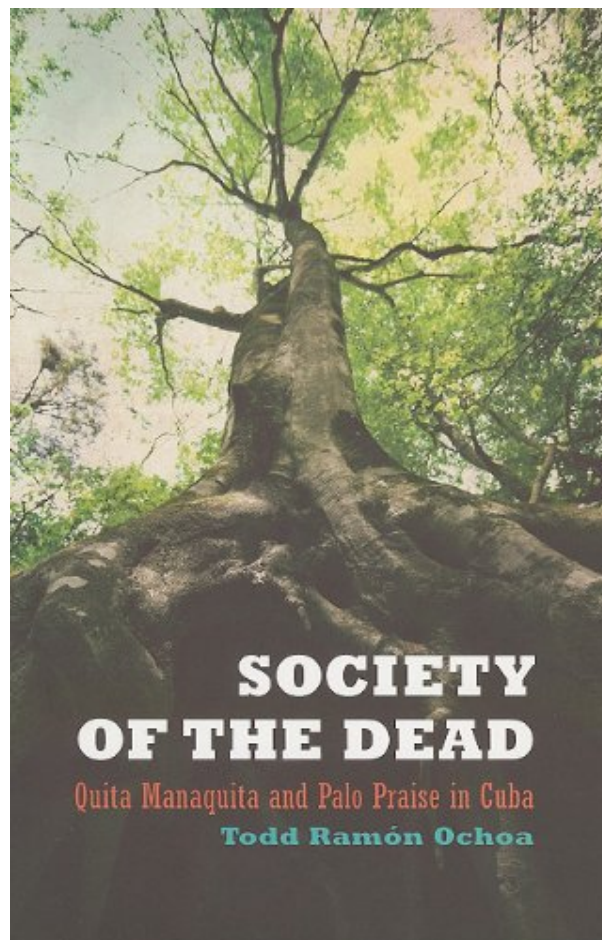
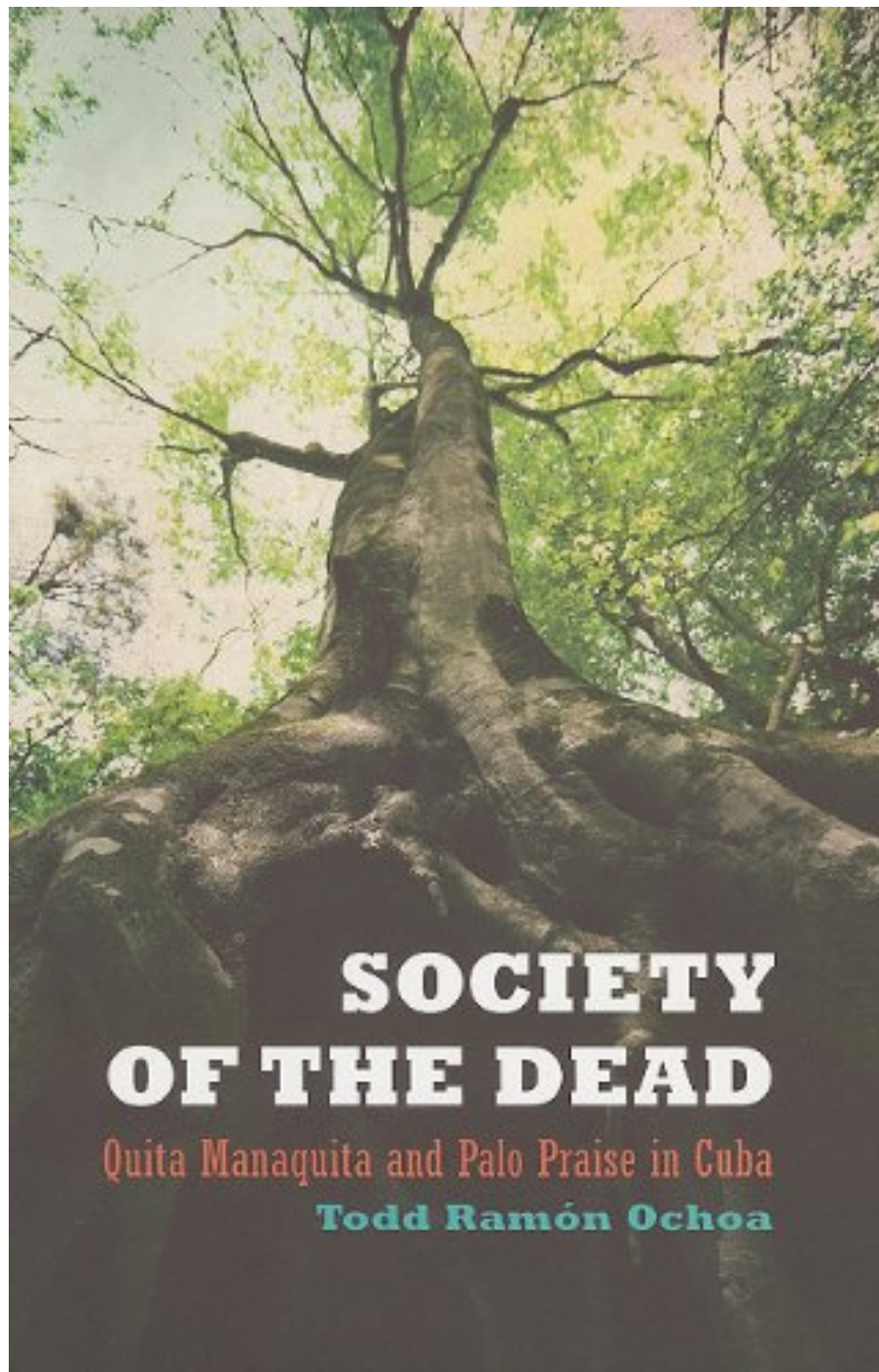


**SOCIETY OF THE DEAD: QUITA  
MANAQUITA AND PALO PRAISE IN CUBA  
BY TODD R. OCHOA**



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## Review

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## About the Author

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In a riveting first-person account, Todd Ramón Ochoa explores Palo, a Kongo-inspired "society of affliction" that is poorly understood at the margins of Cuban popular religion. Narrated as an encounter with two teachers of Palo, the book unfolds on the outskirts of Havana as it recounts Ochoa's attempts to assimilate Palo praise of the dead. As he comes to terms with a world in which everyday events and materials are composed of the dead, Ochoa discovers in Palo unexpected resources for understanding the relationship between matter and spirit, for rethinking anthropology's rendering of sorcery, and for representing the play of power in Cuban society. The first fully detailed treatment of the world of Palo, *Society of the Dead* draws upon recent critiques of Western metaphysics as it reveals what this little known practice can tell us about sensation, transformation, and redemption in the Black Atlantic.

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- Published on: 2010-10-28
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- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .88" w x 6.00" l, .92 pounds
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- 328 pages

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

9 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

Too bad it is hard to read quickly

By hurbisto

While I am interested in the subject matter as a practitioner and overall enthusiast into ethnographical studies of Afro-Caribbean religions, what I hate about these type of books is the hard to read language. Even as a college graduate and professional, I found myself re-reading sentences just to make sure I understood what was being said. Is it that you have to be purposely obtuse to be considered a worthy academic when documenting these studies? Well that might be but you lose out on a wider audience that might also be interested in your work.

I can't yet say what I think about the book as I am barely getting to page 35 (I will rate it properly later but so far I like the content and where it seems to be heading). The language does not make for an easy read. Also had to bone up on Hegelian Logic and Philosophy.

So far my favorite phrase is "...in favor of a multiplicity of tenebrous visceral apprehension." Really?

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Reveals more than any other book on Palo

By Mystical Understanding

The writing is at times overly complicated, as the author has made an academic project of his journey into Palo. Hegelian and Marxist concepts are used as means of interpreting the worldview of Palo. This conceptualizing can occasionally feel forced or irrelevant to the subject matter at hand, however there are some truly sublime insights here, on both Palo and life in general.

A worthwhile read if you would like to know more of the day to day life of a Palero in Cuba.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

From an outsider

By Domingo Hernandez

I found the book interesting and full of information regarding this religion. It gives an insider's view to those of us on the outside. I would recommend it to those persons interested in Afro Caribbean religions and culture.

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