

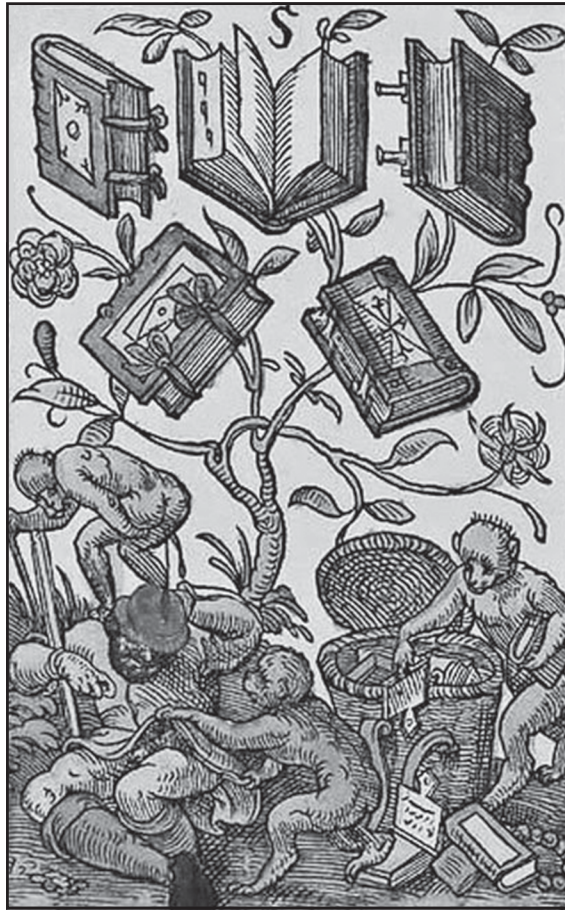
BUFO ALVARIUS

and the entheogenic experience

Dr. Gerardo Sandoval

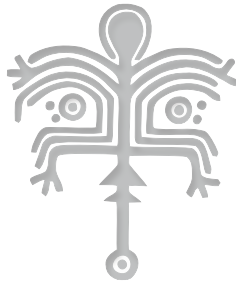
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and
the entheogenic experience

DR. GERARDO SANDOVAL



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This publication has no purpose to promote or discourage people from consuming any of the substances or plants mentioned throughout. However, if you are convinced of having a psychedelic or entheogenic experience and you are planning to consume any substance you should consider: have a sitter, create a safe space, plan your time, prepare an aesthetic and comfortable environment, think about medications, and investigate and know the possible effects.

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Foreword

5-MeO-DMT: THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL ENTHEOGEN, THE CROWN JEWEL, God's molecule; the tool that allows us to experience in full what we truly are – the divine light of God that is the source and substance of all reality, the revelation of that which truly is.

This is the story of one man's journey into the pure light of being. Like many who have experienced the grace and power of 5-MeO-DMT in the form of the secretions of the Sonoran Desert toad, Dr. Gerardo Ruben Sandoval Isaac has chosen to share his most profound experience with others, both through providing 5-MeO sessions with patients and through the present work.

His story begins with his search after the magical peyote cactus, initiating his journey into the world of entheogens at the young age of 13. A seeker of knowledge, the as-yet-to-be Dr. Gerry dives fully into the quest for experience of the mystical, magical, and inner-knowing made possible by entheogens, pursuing LSD, psilocybin mushrooms, and *Salvia divinorum*, while simultaneously earning a degree in medicine, ever seeking his place, his purpose, and the fullness of his being.

When events turn dark, he eventually turns to more destructive substances, even becoming addicted to crack. What turns his life around is his experience with 5-MeO-DMT, the most astounding entheogenic substance available to humanity. Now, he has embraced sharing its wonders with the world as his mission. As he expresses, now, more than ever, is the time in which humanity needs this medicine.

If anything has the ability to help humanity turn the corner of its current misguided and destructive ways, it is 5-MeO-DMT. Nothing else has such radical and effective power to rip away the multi-layered masks of

illusion and false identity that humans have created for themselves; to starkly, lovingly, fiercely, and powerfully reveal the true divine nature of all reality. Underneath all the confusion, all the games, all the projections, the hate, the fear, the attachments, the judgments of self and other, there is only God – one eternal being of pure energy, light, awareness, and infinite love. It is the birthright of every human to experience this reality for him or herself, for this is what we truly are. 5-MeO-DMT is the ultimate tool for helping individuals to realize this. Such truth cannot be taught, cannot be simply believed – it is something that can only be genuinely appreciated through the vehicle of direct experience. 5-MeO-DMT makes this possible in a way that is incomparable to any other method in its efficiency and immediacy.

Entheogens have the power to turn a life around. 5-MeO-DMT just might have the power to turn the world around. As Dr. Gerry writes, there is nothing that is “unnatural” in the unified reality that is God. That 5-MeO-DMT so radically affects human self-awareness is something profound about reality: the key to understand the origins of everything, including the individual self, is right here, and every human who desires it should inherently have the right to experience it. Anyone who has had the opportunity to experience 5-MeO-DMT knows this is it. This is the reality of who and what we are. The big bang, the divine light of creation and all being is right here, right now, in this experience, and it lived in this very being in which each of us is found living through.

In the world of entheogenic literature there are only a handful of authors who have written at any length on 5-MeO-DMT, including myself, James Oroc, and Ralph Metzner. It is a pleasure to see that we can now add Dr. Gerry to the slowly growing list of those who share knowledge of the most profound molecule with the world. This work here is personal, tragic, ecstatic, reckless, and healing. The entheogenic path of self-knowl-

edge is always an unusual one, with many strange twists and turns along the way. For those committed to truth and genuine being, however, it is invaluable, and holds the greatest of gifts, as Dr. Gerry learned – the revelation of the divine nature of everything and the universal Self that is God. That such a gift can come from the secretions of a desert toad is perhaps one of the greatest cosmic curiosities of existence – who would have guessed that a toad might hold the key to the ultimate transformation of human life? As I wrote in my novel *Beyond Azara*: “no one suspects the toad”.

It is a pleasure to see Dr. Gerry sharing his light, life and insights with all of us through this book. The time is right for the world to know about 5-MeO-DMT. The perspective of a doctor, who has passed through his own journey and his insight through healing others, is an important addition to the records about entheogens. We are on the brink of a radical change in human culture in the modern world – a time when entheogenic medicine is accepted and given the legitimacy it so rightly deserves. Entheogens can assist in the healing of mental, emotional, and physical disorders. Most importantly, they can help individuals transcend the false realities and assist in the ultimate healing that comes from direct experience of the divine nature of being. There is no time to waste. This is the healing the world needs, and we can thank Dr. Gerry for doing his part as a vehicle for the infinite light that we truly are. Let there be light. The toad is happy.

Let there be light!

Martin W. Ball, Ph.D.

Author of *Being Infinite: An Entheogenic Odyssey into the Limitless Eternal*
– a Memoir from Ayahuasca to Zen

***BUFO ALVARIUS*, THE SONORAN DESERT TOAD**

THE *BUFO* TOAD BELONGS TO THE FAMILY OF THE *BATRACHIANS*, AN AMPHIBIOUS KIND composed of 485 species of *bufo* toads worldwide. However, it was not until 1965 that 5-MeO-DMT was discovered in the venom in its glands. While the venom of many toads contain traces of *bufotenine* (an alkaloid believed to have psychoactive properties), the *Bufo alvarius* toad is the only creature in the world whose venom can contain up to 15 percent 5-MeO-DMT per volume when dried.

The *Bufo alvarius* toad possesses a peculiar enzyme, O-methyltransferase, that by a process of methylation (adding a methyl or CH₃ group at the fifth carbon position in the indole ring) the common bufotenine changes into 5-MeO-DMT. This unique creature is the only known true entheogen producing animal on earth.

There is no scientific speculation on why *Bufo alvarius* carries in its venom such a high percentage of this entheogen, nor conclusive evidence to confirm the popular belief that Mesoamerican shamans knew it was possible to collect, dry, and smoke it. However, speculations about the shamanic use of the venom do exist. The *bufo* toad had an important role in the mythology of ancient Mesoamerican civilizations such as the Olmecs, the Mayans, and the Aztecs. It can be found represented in their art and imagery as far back as 2000 BCE. It has also been published in archeological studies that large quantities of *bufo* toad skeletons have been found at Olmec ceremonial sites.

Few anthropologists have even proposed that toads were utilized somehow as a source of entheogens, an assumption that comes from toad representations in Aztec art. Many of these depictions focus in detail on the toads' parotid glands, where the major supply of their venom is located. These include, for example, a sculpture in Mexico City's incredible Na-

tional Museum of Anthropology, and a glyph at the palace in Palenque. In both cases, three circles down the toad's back represent their venom-containing parotid glands.

Historically, the *Bufo marinus* toad has dwelled through the marshy regions of the Yucatan Peninsula – the original homeland of the Olmecs and Mayans – and is presumed to be the toad represented in Mesoamerican iconography. There is little evidence of ancient beverages among the Maya in which toads were steeped in fermented drinks to give them an additional effect. Unfortunately, licking a cane toad (as the *marinus* is commonly known because they have been used to exterminate plagues in the cane fields) does not get you high. Apparently, *Bufo marinus* venom does not contain any 5-MeO-DMT or even any *bufotenine*. In a magical and entheogen-rich country such as Mexico, with a long history of ritual use of psilocybin containing mushrooms, mescaline containing cacti, lysergic acid amide containing seeds, and *Salvia Divinorum*, it seems unlikely that someone there could develop an affinity for the exceptionally unpleasant and potentially lethal venom of the *Bufo marinus*.

On the other side, *Bufo alvarius* toad only resides in the Mexican-American desert, in an area that runs from western Sonora to northwestern Baja California, and up through southwestern Arizona and southeastern California, in the United States. It is North America's largest toad. It can grow up to eight inches in length and weight several pounds. Due to its large size, squat body, and flat broad head, the *alvarius* is reasonably easy to identify. It has smooth and leathery skin that can range from a dark brown to olive or grayish green. By far, however, its most distinguishing feature is the presence of the large parotid glands on its neck and limbs, the same glands that are so conspicuously represented in Mesoamerican art. This toad species is semi-aquatic and needs a dependable water source to survive (a requirement that would seem detrimental to the survival of

a species that resides in a such a dry place). *Bufo alvarius* has thrived, however, mostly within the drainage areas near permanent rivers and streams in the desert. These toads take advantage of a network of canals built by the ancient and mysterious Hohokan Indians over fifteen hundred years ago, which diverts water from the Gila River, irrigating more than 1.5 million acres. The toad lies dormant in the desert mud from September through April. Only then, with the first monsoon rains of the summer, usually in June, they come out in considerable numbers.

How can we even consider that the milking of toads, the invention of a sophisticated brew such as ayahuasca, which utilizes one plant to activate a totally different one, or to blow a bunch of ground bark or seeds up someone else's nose are events that occurred spontaneously? The shamans claim that plants have instructed them. They say that all can be known if you listen to the plants and to your dreams. This could be a mystery that will remain unsolved. Nevertheless, James Oroc has speculated that the archaic tribes of the Sonoran Desert first started the practice of smoking toad venom:

Modern Huichol Indians represent the toad colorfully in both their cosmology and in their psychedelic beaded art. I have been unable to locate anything indicating that the Huichol of old knew about smoking toad venom, although it would not be surprising if such a tradition had been kept secret due to relentless persecution of Amerindian cultures.

While there is no physical proof that the tribes of Mesoamerica knew that Bufo alvarius possesses venom that is psychoactive when smoked, there is some pertinent circumstantial speculation. From the wide diversity of entheogenic plants that these tribes used, it is clear that their shamans

actively searched for such things, curiously experimenting with numerous natural substances, often at the risk of their own injury. According to Davis and Weil:

Many Indians regarded smoke as sacred essence, a vehicle to the spiritual world. The use of tobacco established a pattern of consuming psychoactive drugs by smoking.

[They also quote the anthropologist Peter Furst:]

The area to which Bufo alvarius is presently native was once inhabited by archaic desert cultures; it is also the putative homeland of the Uto-Aztecs, from which they expanded southward into Mexico as early as 1500 BCE. Was it the shamans of the pre-agricultural desert cultures who discovered the potent psychotomimetic effects of toad poison and whose ecstatic trance experiences gave rise to the now widespread beliefs in the toad as a transforming shamaness...

(Oroc: 2009)

Published works by Davis and Weil point out that, like plant seeds, durable toad venom might have been easy to transport over the known, extensive trade routes that were well documented. The greater entheogenic power a substance provided, the greater its trade value would have been. Since it is only found in the Sonoran desert area, this could have also raised its worth. Perhaps the Indian tribes of the Sonoran desert could have identified the entheogen in the *Bufo alvarius*' venom and traded it to their southern neighbors. Maybe the possession of such a potent connection with the divine is what ultimately caused the Aztec nation to believe

in its own manifest destiny, sparking their subsequent conquest and invasion of much of what we now call Mexico.

Could this secretion, whose mythical properties they celebrated repeatedly in their art and mythology, even to pointedly represent the *alvarius* toad's parotid glands in their sculpture and pictography, have been a sacred treasure from their homeland? We will never know for sure. However, considering the description of Tlaltecuhltli, the Aztec toad guardian of Earth, the imagery did not just represent a toad, but an ideal image of the mediator. The toad was the link by which apparently disparate states are united: life and death, air and water, death and rebirth; analogy for the Earth as the Great Mother who is at once giver and taker of life.



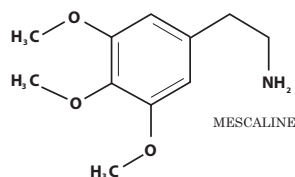
PSYCHOACTIVE PLANTS AND SUBSTANCES IN THE BOOK

Cacti — ♦ —————

Common name: Peyote, *hikuri*, God's light

Scientific name: *Lophophora williamsii*

Psychoactive substance: Mescaline



DESCRIPTION:

The peyote cactus is a flowering medicinal and sacramental plant of the family *cactaceae*, which is a group of fleshy, spiny plants native of the Chihuahuan Desert, specifically, portions of the Rio Grande Valley in Southern Texas, and south as far as the state of San Luis Potosi in Mexico. Peyote is a small round cactus (less than 12 cm in diameter) with fuzzy tufts instead of spines. It rarely rises more than an inch or so above the soil surface. The largest part of the cactus is actually underground in the long, carrot-like root. The above ground portion is the “button” which is cut and consumed either fresh or dried.

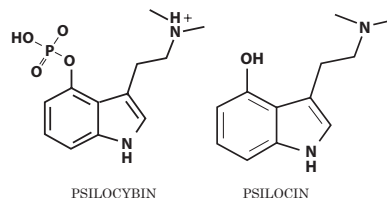
Peyote is something of an alkaloid factory, producing upwards of 50 chemically related compounds. The effects experienced after consumption range from a feeling of physical energy and well-being when taken in small amounts (though this is often preceded by a brief period of lethargy), to actual visionary experience when larger quantities are consumed. Often, individuals may experience stomach discomfort or nausea during the first few hours, though this is not always the case. Noticeable psychic effects usually last 10 hours or so after they begin. Experienced peyotists recognize and welcome the feeling of the medicine working with them as a spiritual and physical blessing (Erowid, 2014).

Mushrooms — ♦

Common name: *Teonenacatl*, *shrooms*,
niños santos, *champis*, magic mushrooms

Scientific name: *Psilocybe mexicana*

Psychoactive substances: Psilocybin and psilocin



DESCRIPTION:

Psilocybe mexicana is a small Central American member of the psilocybe genus. It has a cap measuring between three to five centimeters that is conical when young, expanding to a flatter convex at maturity. The color of the cap and stem can range from a dark green to dark brown when young, lightening to a rust or straw color at maturity. *Psilocybe mexicana* fruits between June and September, producing sepia to dark purple-brown spores. This species is found throughout forest regions of Mexico and Guatemala, where it grows near oak, alder, and plane trees.

Mexicana holds the honor of being the species from which Albert Hofmann extracted the active tryptamines psilocin and psilocybin. He named the tryptamine psilocybin after the species' genus name, *psilocybe*, which means “bald head” in Latin. Typical samples of *Psilocybe mexicana* contain 0.25% psilocybin and 0.15% psilocin by weight when dried, with more psilocin in fresh samples. Today, different species of psychoactive mushrooms, including *Psilocybe mexicana*, are employed in religious and healing rituals by contemporary Mesoamerican indigenous groups in Oaxaca, such as the Mazatec, Zapotec, Mixtec, Chinantec, Mixe and Chatino, with the Mazatec preserving the epicenter of mushroom use in the region (Entheology, 2014).

Bufo alvarius
and
the entheogenic experience

DR. GERARDO SANDOVAL

The beginning

I WAS BORN IN THE CONSERVATIVE CITY OF GUADALAJARA, IN THE STATE OF JALISCO, Mexico, in 1979. It was a cold February night (the 15th) when I came early into this world. I was barely seven months and already wanted to see the world with my own eyes. My mother recalls the visit of Pope John Paul II to our city during her pregnancy. My mom lived very close to a monastery the Catholic leader planned to visit, so she decided to go out in the street to watch him up close. She recalls the Pope seeing her and making a stop to touch her belly (with me inside). He smiled her and gave her a slight slap on the cheek as he always did as a token of appreciation. My mom says I immediately started to kick, and she began to have contractions that would get worse. I gave my mom a premature delivery accentuated by two large benign tumors on her uterus that pressed against me.

My life began. I was born “too premature”, as they said, with severe jaundice. I spent my first three months in the pediatric ICU, where I was kept totally naked under direct UV light, a small bandage covering my eyes. I had to fight the liver insufficiency of my prematurity. My mom offered me her breast and I did not know what to do with it. I was too premature to have developed the instinct of sucking. I was so small, my mother told me I used to fit in a shoebox. “He is not going to make it” nurses would tell each other. But mom never lost faith and everyday brought me breast milk and passed it through a catheter in my belly through my mouth. She talked endlessly to me as if I understood everything. “Why do you talk to him?” a nurse asked her. “He is going to be very smart, I know it”, she replied. If only she had known. As if she knew of my purpose. But any true mother would do anything for her offspring.

Raised in an upper-class, and attending some of the best schools money could afford, I learned English along with Spanish, my mother’s tongue,

from the age 3 by private tutoring. I did my fifth year of elementary school in the United States, where I won the Optimus Award for best student out of three hundred and sixty alumni. I also got a dozen medals for being the most outstanding student at Oaklawn Academy, in Edgerton, Wisconsin, in the 1989-1990 class. I learned to speak, write and read some Japanese (both native alphabets Hiragana and Katakana, and very little kanji) at the age of twelve, and Italian at fifteen. I learned a bit of German while living in Bad Godesberg during my post-graduate studies, and also a bit of Nahuatl (the Aztec's tongue). Since I was born into a privileged social class I could travel around the world (over twenty five countries) and learn from different cultures. For a Mexican, I was indeed lucky... I am Lucky Gerry. Ever since I came into this world I've been surprised by the amount of suffering and dissatisfaction that humanity lives by. Even though I could have the best toys any Mexican boy could have, I wanted something different... something I could not get at home. Both my parents were workaholics and would come home only to eat and sleep, so my sisters and I pretty much learned stuff on our own, comparing and questioning what we learned at school. Their absence was felt and resented. I would have traded all my toys for quality time with my parents, but, as people say, "one never chooses his parents". Anyway, I was affected by sickness, pain, and unfairness, just like little Buddha, and I had to do something about it, no matter what. I was determined to "stop the world".

The dream

I AM VERY FOND OF THE MEXICAN PRE-HISPANIC CULTURES. I WAS AMAZED AT THEIR cosmovision and their religious aspects. It was fascinating stuff for me. I loved going to the pyramids. I knew there was a lost connection needed to be found. By the age of twelve I started having recurring dreams. I dreamt

Bufo Alvarius
The psychedelic toad
of the Sonoran Desert

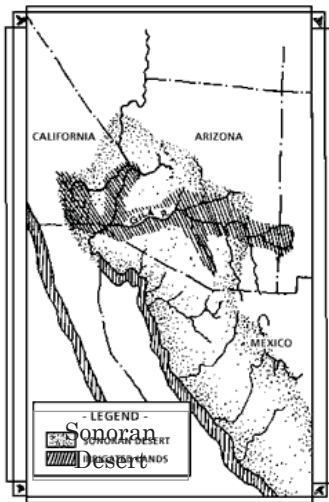
A L B E R T M O S T



Part one

The Sonoran Desert is a vast irregular-shaped area of some 120,000 square miles. It stretches from southeastern California across the southern half of Arizona and extends south into Sonora, Mexico. The desert rises from sea level to more than 5000 feet as arid lowlands of mesquite and creosote are cut by mountain canyons of oak and sycamore. It is a harsh zone where temperatures can reach 140 F. in the shade and rainfall amounts at as little as five inches per year.

One of the most unique inhabitants of the Sonoran Desert is the native toad, *Bufo alvarius*. Although the genus *bufo* includes more than two hundred species of toads, the *alvarius* is the only species that exists exclusively within the Sonoran Desert. Unlike most toads, *B. alvarius* is semi-aquatic and must remain in the vicinity of dependable water in order to survive. Consequently, the principle habitat of this species is within the drainage of permanent rivers and streams of the Sonoran Desert.



This delicate desert environment, like most places on earth, has not been overlooked by man in his constant compulsion to manipulate nature. But amazingly enough, the semi-aquatic lifestyle of *B. alvarius* has coincided quite well with the advance of civilized man. More than one thousand years ago, the Hohokam Indians began diverting water from the Gila River in order to irrigate the arid soil. Working with sticks and stones these primal people pioneered an extensive system of desert agriculture. Their

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Bufo alvarius and the entheogenic experience

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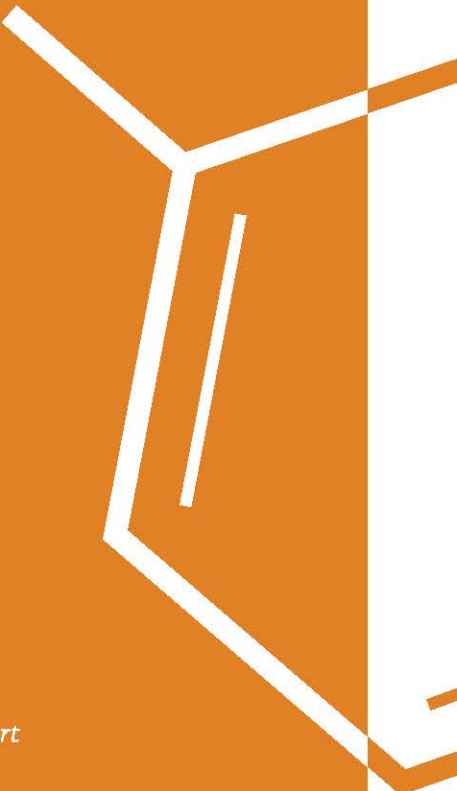
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H₃CO



This book unfolds Dr. Gerardo Sandoval's experience and the path he followed in the consumption of entheogenic substances until he found 5meoDMT. This tryptamine variety is the sacrament the author employs to celebrate clinic, spiritual and societal healing, a practice that eventually has turned him into a psychonautics promoter and a Bufo alvarius, the sonoran desert toad, activist and conservationist.

With a prologue by Martin W. Ball, as a complement to the main anecdote, this publication includes pieces of texts of different authors that support its reasoning. You will also find a description and clasification of each psychoactive substance mentioned throughout the contents; Sasha Shulgin's psychedelic substances classificatory chart; Albert Most's brochure, published in the 80's, one of the pivotal texts on the psychdelic toad; besides further recommended bibliography.