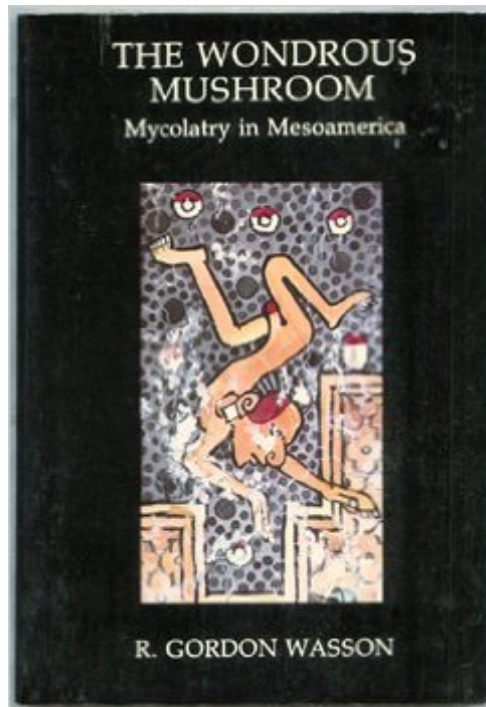


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The Wondrous Mushroom: Mycolatry In Mesoamerica



Synopsis

"From now on any comprehensive study of Ancient Mexican civilization must start from (and with) your discoveries."#151;Octavio Paz"The late Mr. Wasson is the Abraham of the reborn awareness in Western civilization of the presence of the shamanically empowering mushroom."#151;Terence McKennaIn 1957 Life magazine created a sensation by publishing an article about the experiences of a JP Morgan executive who took mind-altering mushrooms with a shaman woman in Mexico. The story captured the imagination of a generation, inspiring waves of intellectuals, artists, and seekers to travel in search of the mushrooms and the indigenous healer, Maria Sabina. Today, Gordon Wasson is credited with having triggered the psychedelic revolution and his influence lives on through the growing community of people who study indigenous spirituality, sacred plants, and their role in personal transformation. In celebration of Wasson's pioneering work, we present a reprint of his classic *The Wondrous Mushroom*, an in-depth study of shamanic realities, mushrooms, and traditions connecting contemporary practices to pre-Conquest art, architecture, and culture. The book begins with Wasson's first experiences taking mushrooms, going into a wealth of details about sacred indigenous ceremonies, culture, and practices. *The Wondrous Mushroom* reflects a lifetime of studies, personal experiences, and reflections on shamanism, culture, community well-being, healing, and spiritual strength. Long out of print, this new edition is a must-have for anyone interested in the history of psychedelics.Gordon R. Wasson (1898#150;1986) founded the field of "ethnomycology" and was considered the preeminent authority on the use of psychoactive mushrooms. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

The Wondrous Mushroom: Mycolatry in Mesoamerica, No. 7 in the Ethnomycological Studies series, by newspaper reporter and banker turned ethnomycologist, R. Gordon Wasson, is a fascinating account of the hallucinogenic mushroom cult and its use among shamans in Mesoamerica. Wasson along with his wife Valentina Pavlovna had written their first account of hallucinogenic mushrooms in _Mushrooms, Russia and History_. Later, they extended their research to include the presence of the hallucinogenic mushroom cult among the Indo-European peoples in _SOMA: Divine Mushroom of Immortality_. The author refers to the hallucinogenic drugs he discusses as entheogens, a neologism coined to mean "God-within-us" referring to the quasi-religious experiences invoked by these substances. Wasson's writings focus on the mushroom cult as well as revealing its role in the origins of primitive religious practice and among shamans. Nevertheless, Wasson was opposed to the crass usage of the mushroom by pleasure and thrill seekers as well as hippies. He expresses his disgust at the "hippies, self-styled psychiatrists, oddballs, even tour leaders with their docile flocks . . . upsetting and abusing the quiet tenor of life in what had been, superficially at least, an idyllic Indian village". For Wasson, the mushroom was a sacred substance and therefore merited treatment with the highest respect. The regions discussed in this book begin at Nicaragua and run north and west to a wavy line that runs across Mexico just north of Mexico City. The author begins by discussing his encounter with the mushrooms at a velada (a shamanic mushroom ceremony) in Huautla, Mexico. At this velada the author encounters Maria Sabina, a mushroom seeress who administers the mushrooms and undergoes a transformative rite.

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