





# PHARMACOPHILIA



**PHARMACOPHILIA**  
*OR*  
**THE NATURAL PARADISES**

*JONATHAN OTT*



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Dedicated to the memory of

**ROBERT <ROB> MONTGOMERY**

1957–2017

Ethnopharmacognosist, pioneering  
Distributor of shamanic plants, dear friend.

Sequel-Volume, PHARMACOMANIA

Dedicated to the memory of

**THOMAS PENSON DE QUINCEY**

1785–1859

Great Essayist, fellow Opiophile,  
he, who had opened the door, to  
PHARMACOMANIA and PHARMACOPHILIA.



**PHARMACOPHILIA**  
*OR*  
**THE NATURAL PARADISES**



PRÉLUDE  
*Phytomphalos*

The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the  
Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the  
way. Some See Nature all Ridicule & Deformity,  
& by these I shall not regulate my proportions; &  
Some Scarce see Nature at all. But to the Eyes of  
the Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination  
itself. As a man is, So he Sees. As the Eye is formed,  
such are its Powers.

William Blake

*Letter to Dr. Trusler* [23 August 1799]

Psychonauts or cosmonauts they came from beyond the Milky Way aboard *Anaconda-Canoe*, our primordial Parents—the Desana call her *GAHPÍ MAHSÓ*, or ‘*CAAPÍ-WOMAN*’—ascending the mighty rivers of the Upper Amazon, fecund serpents of the soil, even to the hoary Rock of Nyí on the Pira-paraná; there, on the Equator, so they say... there, to people the Planet. From beyond the Milky Way they came, *psychocosmonauts*, *Anaconda-Canoe*-borne on Ahpikondíá, the *River of Milk*, where their *House of the Waters* stood... there, to people the Planet. *Anaconda-Canoe* also bore a precious, verdant cargo... exotic plants, some say, from beyond the Milky Way, just three (*MANIOC*, *IPADÚ* & *CAAPÍ*): to sustain our bodies, minds and spirits.

Here is the real TRINITY, of this we can be certain; for our lives, like much life on this Planet, hang on threads of *plants*: green leafy lifelines ’twixt planetary dust and stellar fire—not on the whims of some wizened, graybeard god, thronenthralled. Phytalchemical wizards conjuring *LIFE* from streaming photons and dancing dust-devils, even out of thin air—such are our progenitors... how right the Tukanóan Indians were, to reduce the essentials of our Creation to those three *plants*—succor for body, mind and spirit... our PHYTOTRINITY, our **PHYTOMPHALOS**. **MANIOC**-root, succulent, starchy, to stoke the electron-fires that roil our blood and sweeten our brains... **IPADÚ**, toothsome **COCA**, energy-ensconcing, leafen love, to strengthen our bodies and nourish our minds... and **CAAPÍ** or **AYAHUASCA**, heavenhalm-helix, strand of spirits, genelike gyre of generations untold, guiding our hearts, here and now. This is our true TRINITY, of which is woven our warp of blood and bone and sinew, as surely as our weft of CULTURE, ART and HISTORY... of such leafy stuff are we made... there can be no doubt.

Some say that *River of Milk* was the Jordan, not the Pira-paraná, or the Ganga Yamuna, or Mississippi, for the Universe indeed is wider than our views of it,<sup>1</sup> but the milk is the same, wash shores it might; ’tis the milk of plantly kindness,

freely flowing from the roots of the *COSMIC TREE*, **PHYTOMPHALOS**, where the very heavens turn... Nyí or Delphi, doesn't matter; *Mimir's Well*, or *Fountain of Youth*, or *Water of Life*, or *Lake of Milk*... *Soma-Milk*, birch-maiden breast-borne... it's all the same: font of culture, *TREE OF LIFE*, **PHYTOMPHALOS**, our connection to Pangæa, without which, nor are we. **PHYTOMPHALOS** grows not in some geocircumscribed garden; not in Eden, nor on Parnassos, nor indeed, the shores of Saryanavat—not merely—but upon 'most every square millimetre of Our Lady Gæa's splendorous body, *all sacred ground*, our Paradises bound only by her vaporous breath—and just barely—by thin air; the cherubim-gate-guarding flaming swords, nought but egregious ego and pious prejudice... paltry humanstuff.

Some dare call our Natural Paradises *artificial*, our one true spirituality an *inferior form of mysticism*—O, pitiable, foolish young men! Nothing could be farther from the truth, no lie bigger. What could be more *natural* than to sip culture direct from *Mimir's Well*, as our foremothers did and whence it first flowed, even as our fellow creatures do all 'round us; what could be more *artificial* than to forsake experience in dogma's favor—dogged, doggerel dogma, musty, fossilized humanstuff!—to fell **PHYTOMPHALOS** and erect a temple in its gardeny glen; yea, hew bare beams, and hack petty pews of that very living *umbilicus*—O, and ghastly coffins, too—then bury our dead in the sacred ground our foolish actions defiled, desecrating it? Talk of heaven! Ye disgrace Earth! William Blake called our Natural Paradise *The Garden of Love*, and wrote of its human despoilation:

And I saw it was filled with graves,  
And tomb-stones where flowers should be;  
And Priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
And binding with briars my joys & desires.

So the *artificial* became *natural*; the truly *natural*, *artificial*... the lie was consummated and our college of artificer-augurs solemnly proclaimed *black* to be *white*; and *white*, *black*—when humankind once trusted *its eyes*... and such lenses, as **PHYTOMPHALOS** provided. Shut-out from our *Natural* Paradises, the way even to the *Artificial* blocked by tolltakers and foolish dogmatists, humankind was bereft in a wilderness of its own making, burning or beatifying the few who still found their way back. A wise being called it *the end of LIFE and the beginning of SURVIVAL*... from *Natural Paradise* to *Artificial Hell*... falling into History, the Nightmare from which we *ALL* ever are struggling to awake.

But **PHYTOMPHALOS** had sunk its roots deep into Pangæa, far deeper than the rotting veneer of humanstuff, deeper even than we might dig, down into the human

brain, profounder than thought, even to the *strata* of instinct and desire. There it set its seeds, year after year... Generations passing like the Moons... *AGES* blowing in the winds... *ÆONS* adrift on a River of Time, whose thin current slides away, while Eternity remains, washed clean by the years... there, on the ever-shrinking frontiers of human habitation... here, in the very shadow of some church, in the biggest humanscape on the shining face of Pangæa. *WE* die, *our CULTURES* die... the very *WORDS* we weave Worlds of perish, but **PHYTOMPHALOS** persists, in many of its *PROTEAN* forms, for it is the very Texture of Eternity; woven, not of *WORDS*, but the *STUFF OF STARS*, the *DIVINE AFFLATUS* breathed-into it, by the solar wind: fiery starstuff made cool, green life, in the watery alembic of the bluest Planet in *this corner* of the Universe... We are indeed like Giants plunged into the years... *WE ARE* that roiling and sonorous, yet shallow, thin current that slides-away over the sandy bottom of Eternity, into which **PHYTOMPHALOS** has sunk its roots. Whether we choose to founder, or navigate this *Amazon of the ÆONS*, we cannot resist its fearsome course... no *Anaconda-Canoe* bears *US* upstream.

Phytalchemical, phyteternal, sepultered even beneath the slow, steady accretion of 1,600 annular rings of human folly, **PROTEAN PHYTOMPHALOS**, indifferent to History, loving even the shadows, *anartificial*, archaic, anarchic, yet nurtured its kine; set its seed, in subhistorical *strata* of Lady Gæa's lush loins, even in human History, faint fossilized frondprints on the strands of our *WORDS*, fabric of *our* reality, on that repertory of wood-notes wild. Could we but attune ourselves to the faint descant that rises from them, we could hear the ethereal echo of its *ICARO*... listen, yes, you can hear it still... a whisper on the night, sighing in the trees of *LANGUAGE*, leafy rustle of solar-wind-*AFFLATUS*... windsong, treesighs, whispering on the night... soothsighing, songsinging, windsighing whispery on the night eternal... *there* is the soothsinging music of *this* Gæan sphere... sensuous, sonorous, soothsong.

Casting its Siren-song on the winds of *LANGUAGE*, setting its seed in subhistorical, subneural *strata*, **PHYTOMPHALOS** endured, plantpatient, strong; ever ready for that magic moment when some humanimal communicant, awestruck, headbowed, with trembling fingers should touch the tender petals of its fecund fragrant flower and bid them open... for long hours to inhale the aroma of its peculiar dreams into a marveling and bewildered being. Phytalchemical plantpatient pedagogue, *PROTEAN* stuff of star, font of *LANGUAGE*, *culture*, *art*, windwhispers sighing in its leafy branches, *AGES* wafting in the solar wind o'er the shallow stream of Time, *YEARS* washing Eternity to its Siren-song, dusty delicate danceprints on the windblown fabric of our *WORDWOVEN WORLDS*, *DIVINE AFFLATUS* lofting languid longing Lorelei-lovesongs, loinlush *LOGOS* lambent on leafy limbs of *LANGUAGE*, soothsighing soaring *ICARO*...

rotting veneer of foetid humanstuff so much fertilizer for Omnigæan roots, compost of *culture*. And all the while, *we die... we cultures die... WE WORDWOVEN WORLDWEFT WORDWEB WINDWHISPERS* wither and waste-away... way, awaste away, aw whence we came... windy dust, wafted-away along a milky river of Suns, down to a starry sea.

*Amazon of the ÆONS*, Torrent of Time... corporal canoes caroming chaötically in Chronos' current and cataract, colossal Giants plunged into its course, ceaseless current of *YEARS*... cascading cataracts of *CENTURIES*... sliding-over sandy shoals, sempiternal... down the Milky River of the Galaxy, its bottom pebbly with stars. Heavenhalm-helix, genelike, Generations gyring like Moons, *AGES* blowing, *ÆONS* adrift... *TREE OF LIFE*, roots sunk-deep in the astral bottom of Time, tendering its trenchant trunks to tether our timetossed *TRIEMES*... corporalcanoes, mindmasts flying spiritspinnakers... running ever downwind, reaching to that Milky Haven of Heaven, its bottom pebbled with stars... solarwindblown stardust, setting-sail on a swirling sea of Suns.

Stalwart phyteternal **PHYTOMPHALOS**, plantstrong, **PROTEAN**, puissant; laughing **LOGOS**lustral on its leafy limbs, tendering tendrils to timetossed timorous *TRIEMES*... wizened Oaxacan wisewoman, **LOGOS**leaping from ladylush loins, **LANGUAGE**loquacious on the loinlush ground... windwhispers soothsighing... treesong timbreternal tethery tendrils... leafy living **LOGOS** lurking latent... listenerlonging.

Listen... yes, you *can* hear it still... *ICAROS* echoing eternal on the solar wind... phytalchemical pedagogues, phyteternal... plantpatient starstuff... Heavenly Haven pebbly with Suns... starshine on aqueous alembic harboring heavenhalm-helix... stardust asail on a Milky River of Time... **PHYTOMPHALOS**, plantpersisting, fragrant fecund flowers opening to our tremulous touch, nectarneeding... tendering tendrils, tendering treesong silken on the nectary night... listen, O, listen... can't you hear its dulcet song? All you have to do is listen, and *dream*... **LOGOS** lofting on the solar breeze, listenerlonging... **LOGOS**leaping loquacious from the loinlush landscape... **LOGOS**lambent over *ÆONS'* Amazon, *Ahpikondiá*, Milky River of Stars... timetossed *TRIEMES* reaching for home, running downwind to a Heavenly Haven, starstriving.

O, listen, do... treesong windwhispers soothsighing, tendriltendering... solar wind lilting leafen **LOGOS**... nectar wafting on the starmilky night... treesighs stirring in the branches of **LANGUAGE**... *Ambrosia* welling-up from deepsunk roots, anchored in the starsandy substrate of Time, astral alembic of *ÆONS*, everflowing Milky River. Listen, yes, and *DREAM*... drink dreamdraughts of astral *AMRTA*... drink, *DREAM* to its insistent *ICARO*... rilling riparian reveries, starbottomed...

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