

Obsequies for the *Psychedelic Renaissance*

Non-Oblivious Semantics for the Psychoptic Resurgence

Our problem is to adapt a language which is not now suitable to describing *the continuum of mind and body, a Universe of complete continuity*. Somehow or other, we have to invent the means of talking about these problems in an artistically varied way, which shall make them accessible to the general public. Ideally, for example, we ought to be able to talk about a mystical experience simultaneously in terms of theology, of psychology and of biochemistry. This is a pretty tall order, but unless we can do something of the kind, it will remain extraordinarily difficult for people to think about *this continuous web of Life, to think about it as a continuum*, and not in terms of the old Platonic and Cartesian Dualism—which *so extraordinarily falsifies our picture of the World*. [...] As long ago, as the beginning of the XIX Century, Wordsworth, in his *Preface*, to the *Lyrical Ballads*, made the statement that the time would come, when *the remotest discovery of the physicist and the chemist would become a suitable subject for poetry*.

[**Aldous Huxley**—Lecture, in San Francisco: January, 1959. *Lyrical Ballads, with a few Other Poëms* was the joint work of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, that launched the *Romantic Movement* in English Literature, and included *The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere*. Published in [1798], Huxley refers to *Poetic Diction: a Preface to the Third Edition*, of 1802.]

In the first place, there is no need for any ‘*Psychedelic Renaissance*’ ... insofar as the so-called ‘*psychedelic*’ *never died*: hence, cannot be *reborn!* On the other hand, this term may be useful, by historical analogy to *the Renaissance*: a reawakening of science, after more than a millennium of obscurantism—a medical *Renaissance*. In the original case, it was *religious fanaticism* which obnubilated the spiritual and scientific legacy of the ancients. In our case, it is an *equally religious*, Puritanical zeal, masquerading as scientific rationality, that saddled us with Drugs-Prohibition, and its corollary of making visionary drugs a *tabu*-subject. The real problem, then, is calling this a ‘*Psychedelic*’ *Renaissance*. Our field ever has been dogged by a semiotic or

semantic confusion and obfuscation. What ‘began,’ back in 1953, as ‘hallucinogenic’ drugs, later were transmogrified to ‘psychedelics’: *per* obscene detours through *ersatz* ‘psychotomimetic’ or ‘psychosomimetic’ drugs. Yea, I was part of the group that coined the neologism *entheogen/ic* [Ruck *et al.* 1979], but this term *does not*, and *cannot* apply, to so-called ‘mainstreaming’ or ‘medicalization’ of visionary drugs. Let us examine the origins and contexts of most of these words (particularly, their *lexical definitions*)—with an eye to linguistic perspicuity, and in furtherance of what Wasson called: “a vocabulary to describe all the modalities of a Divine Inebriant” [Wasson 1961]. It happens that I wrote an entire book on this subject: *The Age of Entheogens & The Angels’ Dictionary* [Ott 1995]; rather, *three-fifths* of a book (*The Angels’ Dictionary* was obviously my riff on Ambrose Bierce’s [1906] *The Devil’s Dictionary*). Although I use principally *The Oxford English Dictionary* [Anon. 1864–1928], I shall cite definitions from the more recent *The Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary* [Anon. 1991]; although it was published more than a decade before *entheogen* and *entheogenic* had been added to the canon of the incomparable *OED*.¹ Not only has *The OED* definitions of above 600,000 words, but also their *etymologies*, all known *orthographies*, and proceeds “on historical principles”—that is, has 2.4 million *quotations* supporting each given sense of a word. *The Oxford Encyclopedic* has more than 200,000 defined words (which greatly exceeds the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española*, the standard in Castilian) and represents words more commonly in modern use.

Subjacent scientific foundation of *ethnopharmacognosy* was laid in 1806 by a young apprentice pharmacist of Paderborn, in northern Germany, Friedrich Sertürner: who then isolated *Morphium* (now called *morphine*) from opium (*Papaver somniferum* L.; Papaveraceae); making the key discovery that it was *alkaline*, or ‘a base’; to be called the prototypical *alkaloïde*, about one decade later. Nine decades passed, which saw the isolation of *alkaloids* from shamanic inebriants such as *Nicotin*, from tobacco (*Nicotiana tabacum* L.; Solanaceae) and *Harmin*, from Syrian rue (*Peganum harmala* L.; Zygophyllaceae) and, later, *ayahuasca* (*Banisteriopsis caapi* [Spruce ex Grisebach] Morton; Malpighiaceae); then *Cocain*, from *coca* (*Erythroxylum coca* Lamarck; Erythroxylaceae); before Arthur Heffter, also German, not merely *isolated*, but *ingested*, in ‘psychonautic bioassays,’² the major visionary principle of *péyotl* (*Lophophora williamsii*

[Lemaire] Coulter; Cactaceæ) which he named (in an obstinate, obtuse confusion, between two quite different plants) *Mezcalin* (today known as *mescaline*). It was 23 November 1897, when Heffter inaugurated this ‘Heffter-Technique’—by ingesting 150 mg of *Mezcalin* (having also sampled three other alkaloids he, likewise, had isolated—as well as the entire *péyotl*-cactus) [Heffter 1896,1898]. Forty-one years later, *to the day*, a young Swiss chemist in Basel, Albert Hofmann, first synthesized LSD-25 (*LysergSäure-Diäthylamid*, being the 25th compound in a series of synthetic derivatives of *ergonovine*:³ being the *propanolamide* of *lysergic acid*) [Stoll & Hofmann 1943]; which, 4.4 years later (on the 16th of April 1943), was to inebriate him most “strangely,” while he *re*-synthesized it, leading to his own psychonautic bioassay with 250 µg of LSD-25, on 19 April: the original ‘Bicycle-Day’ [Hofmann 1979,1980]. Four years later, in 1947, the psychiatrist Werner Stoll (the son of Hofmann’s boss, Arthur Stoll) introduced LSD-25 to the world, trade-named as *Delysid*,TM in the first clinical-psychiatric study—calling LSD in his title “ein *Phantasticum*” [Stoll 1947]—using a neologism coined by Louis Lewin, for a then novel class of drugs, *Phantastica* [Lewin 1924]—and our modern *Psychoptic Æra* had commenced!

In the four decades between the key chemical discoveries of Heffter and Hofmann, Ernst Späth [1919] had synthesized mescaline, proving its structure, and opening the portal to a widespread clinical experimentation with the drug (the source-cactus, *L. williamsii*, is endemic to the deserts of northern México and southernmost Texas-State; it is tiny, painfully slow-growing, and *not* a viable source for any extensive use—apart from its being prohibited for trade, under the *CITES*-treaty).⁴ In the decade following Späth’s synthesis, *synthetic* mescaline rather widely came to be studied clinically in Germany, England and France, leading to publication of *three* books about this research: Kurt Beringer’s [1927] *Der Meskalinrausch*; Heinrich Klüver’s [1928] *Mescal*; and Alexandre Rouhier’s [1927] *le Peyotl* (as the title suggests, this last concentrated mainly on the pharmacology of *péyotl*-extracts, rather than on pure mescaline); besides many technical articles in the medical and scientific literature.

Lewin’s *phantasticant* has hung-fire—it has the disadvantage of being derived from *phantasm*, “an illusion, a phantom”; although *phantasmagoria* means “a shifting series of *real* or imaginary

figures *as seen in a dream.*” *Phantasmagoria* had been a name for an early ‘magic lantern’-type of projector, still earlier called a “*psychoptic* looking-glass” (we shall return to this term). Up ’til the time of *mescaline*-research in the 1920s, and Lewin’s contemporaneous book, what we now call *psychoactive* or *psychotropic* drugs, had been known generically as *narcotic* drugs.⁵ But that word designates linguistically *somniferous* drugs, which Lewin called *Hypnotica*: the only one of his (five-category-) taxonomy⁶ for psychoactive drugs to have endured. However, another of his *genera* was *Euphorica*, in which he placed opioids and, incongruously, the decidedly-stimulating cocaine (as *narcotics*, this perdures in a *legal*, but not *scientific* sense: to designate *illicit* drugs). As many of us know full well, what some now call *psychedelics* generally are potent stimulants, while today *narcotic* imprecisely still is used for the opioids: which *are not* somniferous in such doses as commonly are used, for ludible or medicinal purposes. Although LSD all-but-solely was responsible for the ‘Psychedelic Sixties,’ and late-XX-century-interest in this category of drugs ineffable, and had been introduced to the world as a novel *phantasticant*, an incongruous term (a barbarism in fact) came to categorize these drugs: *hallucinogen/hallucinogenic*. For want of any better, I myself used it in the titles of my first two books, and it was canonized, *per* that modern classic from those great pioneers, Richard Evans Schultes and Albert Hofmann: *The Botany and Chemistry of Hallucinogens* [Schultes & Hofmann 1973; Enlarged *Second Edition* in 1980: with a *Foreword* by Heinrich Klüver]. *Hallucinogenic* first had appeared prominently in print, as title of D. Johnson’s [1953] pamphlet, *The Hallucinogenic Drugs*, but he had borrowed it from three psychiatrists—the Briton, J. Smythies, Canadian, A. Hoffer, and the Anglo-Canadian, Humphry Osmond. Three years later, in correspondence with Aldous Huxley in 1956, Osmond coined the neologism *psychedelic*, which was *mis*-read by Huxley, as *psychodetic*; while Huxley proposed instead *phanerothyme*. On 30 March, Osmond responded, with the following doggerel: “To fathom Hell or soar angelic, / Just take a pinch of *psychedelic*.” Huxley replied, in kind: “To make this trivial world sublime, / Take a half a gramme of *phanerothyme*.” Obviously, Huxley had mescaline in mind—judging by this dose—and indeed, three years earlier, on 6 May 1953, Osmond first introduced Huxley to *entheognosis* at his home in Los Angeles, when he had given 400 mg of mescaline-*sulfate* to the famous English writer: whereby his “doors of perception were cleansed” (from William Blake’s immortal *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, of 1793).

Huxley devoted the last decade of his life to research on visionary drugs, and published quite influential essays on their phenomenology: *The Doors of Perception* [Huxley 1954], and *Heaven and Hell* [Huxley 1956]. His final (fiction-) book, *Island* [Huxley 1962], was set upon an Asian island that practised a Buddhist/Hindu spirituality, which was based-on the **entheogenic** use of *cultivated* mushrooms—modeled on the *teonanácatl*, of María Sabina, V.P. and R.G. Wasson (*Psilocybe mexicana* Heim; Agaricaceæ—and other ‘psilocinic’ species). However (like me), Huxley was punctilious in linguistic matters—he objected to Osmond’s deformation of the *psycho-* root, to *psyche-*,⁷ and always used the proper orthography, **psychodelic** (Osmond, of course, had made this disfigurement, to evade the obloquy of *psychotic*: germane, insofar as many of his quondam colleagues considered such drugs to effect some ‘model psychosis,’ leading to the term **psychotomimetic**). **Psycho** was insinuated-into popular consciousness, to describe a deranged murderer, by the success of Alfred Hitchcock’s eponymous film of 1960.⁸ But *psychedelic* cannot elude the shadow of this **psycho-**stigma: in Castilian (as in several other languages), it is spelled *psicodélico*, **psychodelic**. Moreover, I have yet to see *psychology* written as *psychelogy*; neither *psychotherapy*, as *psychetherapy*; nor *psychoactive*, as *psycheactive*; *etc.*

Terence McKenna disdained *entheogen* as: “a clumsy word freighted with theological baggage” (inconsistently, in his book entitled *Food of the Gods!*), and many *atheistic* or *agnostic* (even say, an *acredist* like me: “who, with disdain, rejects belief and disbelief”) enthusiasts of **psychodelics** take comfort in assuming, *wrongly*, that *psychedelic* is free of “theological baggage.” In the first place, the “clumsy word” is not **entheogen** (from the Greek root **entheos**, ‘divine within,’ and the suffix, **-gen**, ‘becoming’:⁹ ‘becoming divine within’—as William Blake wrote: “Thus men forgot that *all deities reside in the human breast.*”), but that awkward **psychedelic**. Furthermore, while the prefix *psycho-*, deformed as *psyche-*, rather obliquely refers to what we call *the mind*; **-delic**, from **delos**, derives from the name for an obsolete “sky-god”! The island **Delos** was the mythical birthplace of Apollo and Artemis; **deus**/Zeus being a cognate word. *Entheogen* then is ‘becoming divine within’; whereas **psychedelic** means literally: ‘**god**-minded’! Curious, to be an *enthusiast* of ‘psychedelic drugs,’ whilst rejecting *entheogens*—insofar as **enthusiasm**, and **entheogen** share the same root! Moreover, **entheos** referred, literally, to states that were *imagined* as having been

inspired by some ‘deific force’: whether following ingestion of heavily ‘spiked’ *wines* (as in the case of the *Mænads*, or *Bacchantes*); in characterization of *poëtic inspiration* (*per six* of the *nine* Muses); even to certain *dreams*, pursuant to the ‘rite of incubation,’ in the temples of Asclepius [Hornblower & Spawforth 1996]. Note that the ancient Greeks *diluted* their *wines*—with *three*, up to *twenty* parts, of water—for these were not alcoholic *intoxicants*, but rather psychoactive *inebriants*: infused with potent, some being *visionary*, psychoactive plants—including poppy (*Papaver somniferum* L.; Papaveraceæ), *mandrake* (*Mandragora officinarum* L.; Solanaceæ) and *henbane* (*Hyoscyamus niger* L.; Solanaceæ). *The Old Testament* ‘scriptures’ refer not merely to regular vinous *wine* (*yayin*), as an *intoxicant*, but also to *inebriating* effects of *shekar*, or ‘strong drink’—most likely, a Palestinian version of those contemporaneous Greek vinous infusions of psychoactive plants. In I *Samuel* 1.14, Eli was rebuking Hannah—“How long wilt thou be **drunken**? Put away thy *yayin* from thee!”; to which, proudly, she rejoined: “I have **drunk** *neither yayin nor shekar*.” In the *Knyghtes’ Tale*, of *Tales of Caunterbury*, G. Chaucer [1392] wrote:

For he hadde yeve his gailler drynke so / Of a **clarree** maad of a certeyn **wyn** / With **nercotikes** and **opie** of Thebes fyn.

By *clarree*, Chaucer was not referring to *claret*, but to *clary-wine*: infused with psychoactive *Salvia sclarea* L. (Labiatae). *Clary-sage* was the *nercotike*, to which Palamon added opium, in order to stupefy his “gailler” (*gaoler* or *jailer*), so to make his escape.

Which brings me to the dichotomy *intoxicant* / *inebriant*—these *are not* synonyms! Not only have highly-stimulating, some-time-*entheogens*, like cocaine (unscientifically) been called *narcotics*, but *inebriants* obstreperously have been disparaged, as *intoxicants*! To be sure, *intoxicant* comes from *toxikon*, a **poison** (for arrowheads: *toxa* means *arrows*; *toxon*, *the bow*; which is why lovers of archery may be called *toxophilites*, practising *toxophily*; *per* Ascham’s 1545-book, *Toxophilus*): an *intoxicant* literally is **a poison**; withal, this may be appropriate for ethanol (*viz.*: *ethyl*-alcohol, CH₃CH₂OH)—which is *hepatotoxic*, *neurotoxic*, *cardiotoxic* and

carcinogenic. *Inebriation*, on the other hand, refers to “heavenly” alterations of consciousness. The first English-use (in 1526) is apposite: “This *inebriacyon* or *heuenly dronkennesse of the spiryte*”; and of *inebriate* (1497): “Peter is a man *inebryat in the loue of God*” [Anon. 1864–1928]. In German, it is a word with a distinct root, *Rausch*; and in French, it is *ivresse*. I was scouted and scorned, when first I referred to *shamanic inebriants*, due to this *mistaken synonymy*—in common parlance—of *inebriation* and *intoxication*. However, two decades of my obdurate insistence on the crucial distinction seem to have told, so now I find this in rather common use. The great writer, R. Gordon Wasson—as punctilious, as he was masterful in linguistic matters—always made this neat distinction: his plea for “a vocabulary to describe all the modalities of a Divine Inebriant” had been issued in 1960, during his lecture before the *Mycological Society of America*, in Stillwater, Oklahoma [Wasson 1961]. Others have not been so prim, nor so precise. In his precocious book, Philippe de Félice (in the title), obtusely had presaged Wasson: *Poisons sacrés, ivresses divines: essai sur quelques formes inférieures de la mystique (Sacred Poisons, Divine Inebriations: An Essay on Certain Inferior Forms of Mysticism)* [Félice 1936]. Here we have *divine inebriations*, well and good—but following (oxymoronic) *sacred poisons*, which we then are told are *certain inferior forms of mysticism*! Take my word for it, and *do* judge this book by its cover: de Félice most felicitously had taken-up this long-fumbled [d]rugby-ball... but with the depreciatory attitude he had made manifest in his title, he did not run with it, all too far down the field!¹⁰ It is true that—yielding to centuries of misuse—*The Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary* [Anon. 1991] defines *inebriation*, by its *de facto*-synonymy to *intoxication*. But these hardly are *de jure*-synonyms. *Inebriation* derives from the Latin word, *ebrius*, ‘drunk,’ but we have seen that the Classical wines—which were *imbibed*, yes—only *nominally* were alcoholic (alcohol was more of a *preservative*, than an *active principle*).

A congenital defect bedevils *hallucinogen/ic*. As I had mentioned, psychiatrists early-on were of the opinion that LSD, mescaline and psiloc[yb]ine elicited some ‘model psychosis’—*supplanted*, by some means *evoked*, an ‘endogenous *psychotoxin*’ (or *schizotoxin*)—and that primary use in psychiatry most likely would be for the *training* of psychotherapists...therewith, they might experience a controlled, ~8-hour-‘psychosis,’ and then, better be able to relate to their ‘psychotic’

or ‘schizophrenic’ patients... not such a *crazy* idea, but none of it panned-out. No ‘endogenous *schizotoxin*’ ever has been found, and those with a mind to self-experimentation soon realized that LSD-states *didn’t* mimic ‘psychoses.’ But the damage had been done: many denigrated LSD as a *psychotomimetic*, and the medical profession in general settled-on the term *hallucinogen* to describe such drugs. Now, an *hallucinogen* manifestly elicits *hallucinations*, or: “the apparent or alleged *perception of an object not actually present*”; whereupon *hallucinogen* so is defined: “**a drug causing hallucinations**” [Anon. 1991]. Well, experiencing such *hallucinations* is one primary symptom of so-called ‘schizophrenia-psychosis’: so the psychiatrists and physicians have stuck with a watered-down-version of their cockamamie ‘model psychosis.’ In several hundreds of ingestions, I *never* have experienced one single *hallucination*, so defined; and these are *extremely rare*, in experiences with LSD-type-drugs. When fellow users have described to me their personal LSD-‘hallucinations,’ as a rule, these *have not* entailed true *hallucinations*—*ergo*, *hallucinogen* is a misnomer... and it most definitely is a *pejorative one*, at that!

Unfortunately for proponents of *psychedelic* as an alternative term, outside of the echo-chamber of the ‘Psychedelic *Renaissance*-Scene,’ for physicians in general, and in the broader lay-world, *psychedelic* is a literal synonym of *hallucinogen*, even *is defined* by that: “—*adj.* 1 **a** expanding the mind’s awareness etc., **esp. through the use of hallucinogenic drugs.** **b** [of an experience] **hallucinatory, bizarre.** **c** [of a drug] **producing hallucinations.** —*n.* **a[n]** **hallucinogenic drug.**” [Anon. 1991]. Thus, for most folks outside of the cosy ‘Adytum of Psychedelia,’ a *psychedelic* is a drug “**producing hallucinations**”; aye, a drug evoking: “the apparent or alleged *perception of an object not actually present*” (that being *prima facie*-evidence, of ‘psychosis’)! Alas!, it may matter much more, what your neighbour, constable, or Justice *thinks* that it means (we have seen what they will find in their dictionaries), than what *you ‘know’* that it means! If those folks reside on *this* wild side of the Atlantic, they might more commonly consult *The Heritage Illustrated Dictionary*, and therein find *psychedelic* defined, as follows: “Of, pertaining to, or **generating hallucinations, distortions of perception, and, occasionally, states resembling psychosis.**” [Anon. 1979]. How much *worse* could this possibly be? Should one wish to describe Huxley’s “continuum of mind and body,” *psychedelic*, well... most definitely does not!

Besides being *literally* an **hallucinogen**, **psychedelic** is beset by distinct temporal, artistic; yea, even *therapeutic* associations, which militate against its broader use. For 'most everyone, it has a decided connotation of the 'Psychedelic Sixties,' hippie-use, and political opposition to the War in Vietnam. I lived-through those Sixties—*survived them*, perhaps is more apt—came of age, at their conclusion: *it was not* a pleasant time for me, and it inspires *not one whit* of nostalgia! Life, for me, was only allowed *to begin...* when those 'Psychedelic Sixties' finally *had ended!* I held myself fortunate *to escape*, both the demential slaughter in Vietnam, and the State-Penitentiary! Still, it put my future on-hold, for *four* long years: living on the street, as a vagabond-outcast. I suspect I am not alone in looking-back, scant fondly, on that *Æra*: but that is beside the point. As a word, **psychedelic** has a marked, temporal association to the 1960s; as, naturally, to so-called 'psychedelic art,' 'psychedelic music,' 'psychedelic culture' (I am neither an art-, nor a music-historian, or critic, but venture to suggest that any Dutch Masters, Impressionists, Baroque and Classical composers wo'n't suffer by the comparison: perhaps the best word for the 'psychedelic arts,' is *kitschig*). But that is a matter of taste, for which there can be no accounting. Given that the major thrust of the 'Psychedelic *Renaissance*' has been to 'mainstream' *some 'psychedelics'* into medical (and particularly psychotherapeutic) *praxis*, we would do well to investigate the terminology employed, when they were (however obliquely) a growing part of said therapy. There were two schools or variants of LSD-psychotherapy: *psycholytic* therapy, and **psychedelic** therapy. The differences revolved-'round frequencies of administration and dosage, but this need not distract us here. My point is, that there exists an extensive literature on **psychedelic** therapy, which has a very specific meaning, in medicine—this refers to *one drug* in particular: LSD (I hardly need mention that, had its psychoactivity then been known, MDMA *would not* have been considered, for *either* class of therapy).¹¹ **Psychedelic** therapy, moreover, implies distinctly the 1950s to early 1960s—with their (penal) State-Mental Institutions (a short step-up, from the 'Imbecile-Asylums' and 'Bedlams' of yore); vivisectional 'experiments' upon *non-convict*-inmates, as well as upon convicts in State-Penitentiaries; *electroshock*-'therapies'; *pre-frontal* lobotomies; and strait waistcoats—*that*, I'm afraid, is the context of **psychedelic** therapy. Does

anybody *really* wish to be associated with the (generally primitive, barbaric, *non-consensual*—not to say sexist) ‘Freudent’ psychiatry of some seven decades ago?

Yet there is a far graver problem attending this loose, casual use of *psychedelic*—of a *colonialist*, *cultural appropriation*. This article is based-on a lecture I delivered to *Breaking Convention VI* in Exeter, England, in April of 2023. I possess only two volumes of the *Breaking Convention*-book-series (and I contributed to that based-on *BC V*, in Greenwich, in 2019), but was dismayed and disturbed, to find *psychedelic* used rather too commonly, in the context of **shamanism**—of a **shaman** using a *psychedelic* [*sic*] **plant**.¹² Let us at least agree on one principle: **there is no ‘psychedelic shamanism,’** nor can any **shaman** employ ‘**psychedelic plants**’ (we created *entheogenic* precisely to describe *the context* of **shamanic** use—by derivation, of *sacramental* use, in a few primordial religions—of an agglomeration of organisms, encompassing chemical-structural-types, and pharmacological properties, *far too diverse* to admit of facile chemo-pharmacological classification)! Shamans—by definition—use **entheogenic plants**, which, synonymously, are **shamanic inebriants**. In my experience, of *psychedelics*, shamans know **nil**; thus, they *cannot* practise *psychedelic shamanism*, but rather what I call *entheognosis*. To write of any ‘*psychedelic* shaman’ ingesting a ‘*psychedelic* plant,’ is to suggest that s/he had done heirs [‘her or his’] apprenticeship in Haight-Ashbury-District of San Francisco in 1967, ‘The Summer of Love,’ and had been initiated into *entheognosis*, by some seedy hippie-*guru*, such as Charles Manson (alas!, here is another connotation, as *gruesome*, as *indelible*, of *psychedelic*)! *We* know full well, it is quite the contrary: hippie-*gurus* had been spawned by millennial shamanic use of a diversity of *entheogenic* plants. True, *we* came to *entheognosis* through LSD, which was, after all, a creation of western pharmaceutical industry. But Hofmann’s syntheses of *ergot-alkaloids* culminated some 60 years of phytochemical study of *ergot*, a traditional remedy for parturition; medical interest in which derived from information obtained from German *midwives* (shamans): originally, back in 1582; 1808 in the *Modern Era*, pursuant to John Stearns’ “An account of the *pulvis parturiens*, a remedy for quickening childbirth” (as was the case with Adam Lonitzer’s 1582 *Kräuterbuch*, John Stearns had been inspired to investigate *ergot*, by questioning a German *midwife*). This amounts to harnessing some objurgated Millennial Chariot before the horse: the

‘Psychedelic Sixties’ *came* and *went*, in but a blink of an eye; **shamanism** has existed for *decades*, possibly *centuries*, of *millennia*, and was in all likelihood the earliest, the primogenital human profession! Please, do us the favour of honouring our most distinguished cultural elders, and consign ‘*psychedelic* shamanism’ to the *oblivion* it, O!, so richly deserves! Note that we had warned, in the article coining this neologism: “However, not only is ‘psychedelic’ an incorrect verbal formation, but it has become so invested with connotations of the pop-culture of the 1960s that it is incongruous to speak of a shaman’s taking a ‘psychedelic’ drug.” [Ruck *et al.* 1979].

So what might this leave us? I’ve outlined my case for tossing *psychedelic* overboard: with those shabby-*ungenteel*, hippie-*gurus* such as Charles Manson; kinship to *kitschig*, condignly-forgotten art-forms; and its ineluctable connotations of 70-year-old psychiatry, as practised in State-Penal Institutions masquerading as hospitals—with their *electroshocks*, lobotomy and strait waistcoats. It is synonymous with *hallucinogenic*, and both suggest *psychopathology*. I sha’n’t *permit you* to broach some **Entheogenic Renaissance**, *qua* medicalization,¹³ and *did you*, most likely I should pen another such philippic jeremiad. Besides, we already *have* an **Entheogenic Reformation** [Ott 1995]! Surely, what we require is *another word*; a break from a past, which has seen *one-half*-century of obtuse stigmatization of visionary drugs, which has been all-too successful, alas! That was why, 46 long years ago, we had solved this problem, *vis-à-vis* both the anthropological and ethnobotanical (or *entheobotanical*) fields. At that time, it was not our bailiwick to address the medical field, and I see now this was rather a lamentable oversight, if not precisely an egregious error. As I had mentioned at the beginning, I had published *The Angels’ Dictionary* 30 years ago, which encompasses 318 words, from 30 languages (70, or 22%, from 29 *non-European* tongues—mainly Indigenous). As I explained, in its *Exordium* [Ott 1995]:

...it seemed to me prudent at least closely to examine the extant words in the English language, many of them obsolete, for shamanic inebriants, ecstatic states and allied topics. We are not bereft of words for the appropriate concepts, but we are certainly not accustomed to speaking of the ineffable. What words we have we no longer use, or have burdened with secondary meanings, and sometimes then depaupered by overuse—the word *ecstasy* itself is an obvious example.

Just as we oughtn't put the Millennial Chariot before the horse, mayhap we need not reinvent the wheel in this process. Many think I coined *pharmactheon*, as title for my 1993-book; but that is no neologism: my sedulous study of *The Oxford English Dictionary*, which led me to conceive of *The Angels' Dictionary*, revealed to me this obsolete word. 'Meeting' only by correspondence, an informal committee, convened by R. Gordon Wasson, and chaired by Professor of Classics, Carl A.P. Ruck, examined, considered numerous possible substitutes. I had proposed *pharmactheon*, which had the advantage of precedence, and might have obviated a three-decades-wait to see our eventual champion enter *The OED*. But that lent itself not gracefully to any adjectival form, and was rather a mouthful. One of Ruck's suggestions was *epoptic*—from those Eleusinian Mysteries (the initiates were called *mystes/mystai*, and once they had experienced the visionary *kykeon*, in the culminating rite within the Telesterion, became *epoptes/epoptai: those who had seen*). We all liked this for hoary antiquity and being apposite; but Wasson said it sounded like: "Pop! goes the weasel," and that pretty much shot-down *that* candidate! There were others, that didn't make the cut, but when Ruck later proposed *entheogenic*, all acceded with *enthusiasm*. Sharing the hoary antiquity of *epoptic*, this was of broader and more general scope: not confined to a specific, and (a *secondary*) *religious* context, it applied to shamanic and ludicrous uses, even poetic inspiration.

I propose we replace *psychedelic* with *psychoptic*. This already exists as (obsolescent) scientific term for "producing **vision** of the **mind** or **soul**," with a derivative in widespread use, *in this very context: entoptic*, to describe what commonly are called *phosphenes* or "the sensation of rings of light produced by pressure on the eyeball" (as *entoptic phenomena*; which, unlike *hallucinations*, are commonly experienced in LSD-type-states). Aye, *psychoptic* is very uncomfortably close to *psychotic*: my *Little Genius Spell-Checker*TM automatically assumes *that* is what I *had meant* to write, and instantly expunges that second 'P.' Yes, this opens the door to potentially-tergiversated typographical errors which will be hard to descry. Likewise, it cannot escape the *psycho*-stigma: but neither can *psychedelic/psychodelic*—which, once we've removed our Anglophonic cultural blinders, we shall find to be spelled both ways still—or *psychopharmacology*, *psychoactive*, and *psychotropic*; besides other *psycho*-words having *nothing to do* with *psychosis*. So *that*, after all, is no disqualifying obstacle: it encumbers a host of words. We merely must add *psychoptic* to the

lexicons of our *Spell-Checkers*. There's scarce any danger of its misconstruction as *psychoöptic* (a *sub-discipline* of *psychophysics*, which is concerned with our internal 'video-screens'—or the *mental constructions* of visual imagery), insofar as I *never* have heard that word used: save only, in listening to myself! I had pointed-out that *psychoptic* was used in 1744, to describe a 'magic lantern'-projector as a "*psychoptic* looking-glass," an instrument also known as *phantasmagoria*, which means: "a shifting series of *real* or imaginary figures *as seen in a dream*." So there exists nothing in its meaning nor well-circumscribed prior use to render it unfit. We ought to remember that LSD-type-drugs *usually do* elicit **visual** percepts, especially '*entoptic* phenomena,' and that such appear to be *primary*, in the experiences of the majority: I have known 5-methoxy-DMT to be disparaged, by comparison to DMT, because: "there were no colours." Convenience, and also semantic-linguistic economy, argue alike in favour of *psychoptic*. *Hallucinogenic*, has *fourteen* letters, with *six* syllables; *psychedelic*, *eleven* letters, with *four* syllables; *psychoptic*, merely *ten* letters and only *three* syllables! It occupies *less* space, is *easier* to pronounce: what's not to like? A *psychoptic drug*, then, is one evocative of **visions**... aye, of *mental visions*, of *soul-visions*...

Indeed (as I made the topic of my contribution to *Breaking Convention V* in Greenwich, and in the derivative volume [Ott 2022]), to me, the essence of the *psychoptic* state is, that it enables one to experience the Universe, more as **energy**, than as **matter**—as, in fact, *it really is!* I sha'n't recapitulate that argument, but merely shall note that all we *can* see, is electro-magnetic **energy** (vulgarly called 'light,' or, 'the visual portion of the electro-magnetic spectrum': being waves from 380–780 nm in wavelengths). Albert Hofmann, in his autobiographical *LSD: My Problem Child* [Hofmann 1979,2013], suggested that LSD alters a 'wavelength-setting,' for our visual 'receivers,' enabling us 'to see' *more* of the much broader range of electro-magnetic **energy** broadcasted by the 'transmitter': the Universe. That may well be: what is undeniable to me, is that it permits me to experience the Universe, the World, as *living, dancing energy*: not as *dead, lifeless matter*. For me, this has transformed my *Weltanschauung*, and my life... in an *anti-materialistic* sense. Human brains mainly are wired *visually*; our languages are *visually* centred: they equate *understanding*, with **vision**. "Don't you *see*?" My point is, that these drugs, in this figurative sense, *enable us 'to see,'* immersed in a colourful *phantasmagoria*, what hitherto had

been *eclipsed*. Any descriptive word ought to *reflect* that *visual dimension*. ‘**Psychedelic**’ manifestly *does not*: except, insofar as it is be synonymous with **hallucinogen**; and then, only in a *depreciatory, aye, psychopathological* sense! On the other hand, **psychoptic** *does reflect* the centrality of this *visual* aspect, and bears none of the pejorative overtones which beleaguer the word **psychedelic** (or **hallucinogen**). Neither need it offend other *anti-religious* folk, like me, as blissfully it is free of that *delos/theos*-root. **Psychedelic** is a *harsh* and *ugly*-sounding word, that rings-false etymologically... **psychoptic** is euphonious—“a suitable subject for poetry,” in Huxley’s words. In Lewin’s Latinized *schema*, most felicitously it becomes ‘**Psychoptica**.’ Its meaning is unambiguous; aye, crystal-clear: **psych-optic**... of **mental vision**. It took me nearly twenty years of concerted efforts—six or eight books, countless lectures, and not a few essays, particularly “Entheogens II” [Ott 1996], firmly to anchor **entheogen**, then obtrude it, into *The OED*. I expect to be among you for another thirty years, at the least, but currently am averse to so much foreign travel, for reasons of ecology (and indolence); but establishing **psychoptic** will require no such heavy lifting: forsooth, it *already is* in *The OED*! Is it not time that we insinuate it into other, lesser dictionaries, by adding it to our own vocabularies... thereby consigning that tainted and maladroit, so malaprop, **psychedelic**, to the dust-bin of History, which is where it belongs... together with its synonyms, **hallucinogenic** and **psychotomimetic**?

End-Notes

1. Volumes 1 and 2 of *Oxford English Dictionary Additions Series* [Anon. 1993] added 6,000 words to supplement the *Second Edition* of 1989, and as foretaste of the *Third*. In Volume 2, seven words were added, derived from **ethnic**... which included **ethnomedicine**, and **ethnopharmacology** (latter defined as: “*pharmacognosy* as practised in different ethnic groups”). Dare I hope my more precise **ethnopharmacognosy** be incorporated? ‘Ethnic groups’ practise no *pharmacology*, with its ‘scientifically objective’ vivisection; but archaic **shamans** were *pre-literate* pharmacognosists! However, the only **psycho**-word to be added, was **psychographic**, in

Volume 1 (*psychedelic* had been incorporated-into the *Second Edition*). This equates to more than *four* neologisms daily, over four years—which is a dramatic linguistic dynamism!

2. To describe pharmacological explorers of the *Psychocosmos*, the noun *Psychonaut* was coined by German writer Ernst Jünger, in *Heliopolis* [Jünger 1949], and subsequently in his log-book of experimentation with numerous drugs, *Annäherungen (Approaches)* [Jünger 1970]. Some of his bioassays involved *Delysid*TM (LSD) and *Indocybin*TM (the *Sandoz* trade-name for psilocybine), conducted in the company of Albert Hofmann, who was his friend. In the novel, *Heliopolis: Rückblick auf eine Stadt (Retrospective on a City)*, Jünger stylized Albert Hofmann, as Antonio Peri. Jünger was wounded seven times in WW I, awarded the Iron-Cross, and became famous both as writer and military hero. He was a persistent critic of the NSDAP (*Nazi-Party*), and *twice* declined curules in the *Reichstag* (Parliament) for that *Party*, while refusing to render obeisance to Adolf Hitler—still, Hitler was quoted as saying: “Nothing happens to Jünger.” He served as a *Hauptmann* (Captain) in the occupation of France, and became friends there with Pablo Picasso and Jean Cocteau. Peripherally, he was involved-in the Stauffenberg-plot to assassinate Hitler, resulting in being cashiered from the *Wehrmacht*. Hitler, however, had his 18-year-old son sent to a penal battalion on the Italian front, where soon he was killed—either in action, or by the *SS* (the *SchutzStaffel*, or ‘Protection-Squadron’ under Heinrich Himmler). This would have been a unit of the *Waffen SS* (‘Armed,’ or ‘Combat’), which initiated the Holocaust in Eastern Europe. It was the *SS Totenkopfverbände* (‘Death’s Head Units’) which ran the concentration/death-camps. On the occasion of his 90th birthday (like Albert Hofmann, he lived 102 years), Ernst Jünger was decorated, both by French *Président* François Mitterrand, and the German *Kanzler* Helmut Kohl! Kohl offered Jünger funds for his library, but he asked, instead, for: “a few grammes of cocaine”! To honour his centenary, I dedicated *The Age of Entheogens & The Angels’ Dictionary* to Jünger.

3. *Ergonovine*, the specific uterotonic principle of *ergot* (*Claviceps purpurea* [Fr.] Tulasne; Clavicipitaceæ), was isolated simultaneously in four laboratories (one being in England), so received four different names (*Ergobasin*, *ergometrine*, *ergostetrine* and *Ergotocin*). As there was no clear priority, *ergonovine* was established as ‘official,’ by the *International Pharmacopœia*

Commission. In England, this initially had been called *ergometrine*; however, Hofmann's derivative *methyl-ergonovine* (*Methergine*TM) sometimes is called *methyl-ergometrine* there. Both *ergonovine* and *methyl-ergonovine* are psychoactive, in doses above 2.0 mg [Bigwood *et al.* 1979; Hofmann 1978; Ott & Neely 1980]. The chemists at *Sandoz* had named this alkaloid *Ergobasin* [Stoll & Burckhardt 1935]. Hofmann was the first to synthesize *ergonovine* in 1937 (being the first synthesis of any *ergot*-alkaloid) [Stoll & Hofmann 1943].

4. A. Ermakova [2022] details the endangered status of *péyotl* in the U.S.A., which marks the northernmost extremity of its range (in U.S.A. it grows only in the Río Bravo/Rio Grande Valley of southern Texas). Unfortunately, as regards commerce to the *Native American Church of North America*, Texas is the only *legal* source. Although it has a vast range in México, the *CITES*-treaty proscribes international traffic in *any* wild cactus-species. To my knowledge, there has been no such objective study of its Mexican ecology, which sorely is needed.

5. There were three books dealing with psychoactive plants and shamanic inebriants in the *mid*-XIX century: James F. Johnston's [1854/55] *The Chemistry of Common Life*; Ernst Freiherr von Bibra's [1855] *Die narkotischen Genußmittel und der Mensch (Narcotic Dainties and Humankind)*; then, lastly, Mordecai Cubitt Cooke's [1860] *The Seven Sisters of Sleep: Popular History of the Seven Prevailing Narcotics of the World*. Both von Bibra and Cooke called such drugs *narcotics* in their titles, while the second Volume of Johnston's pioneering treatise on 'biochemistry' largely was dedicated to: "The *Narcotics* We Indulge In." When Richard Spruce [1873] reported his pioneering research in Amazônia—which included *ñopo*-snuff, or *paricá* (*Anadenanthera peregrina* [L.] Speggolini; Leguminosæ) and *ayahuasca* (or, *caapilyaj[g]é*, which he was the first *scientist*, to ingest)—these were "remarkable *narcotics*," in *his* title. Carl Hartwich [1911], in his encyclopædic treatise of the new XX century, also used this term. His eclectic tome features much more extensive coverage than its triad of XIX-century-precursors.

6. Lewin's five categories, including his concise amplifications, were as follows: 1) *Euphorica*, *Seelenberühigungsmittel*; *Euphoriant*s or "anodynes for the mind": opioids and *coca*/cocaine; 2)

Phantastica, Sinnestäuschungsmittel; *Phantasticants* or “sensory illusion-agents,” being: *péyotl Cannabis indica* Lamarck (Cannabaceæ); *Amanita muscaria* [L. ex Fries] Persoon ex Gray (Agaricaceæ); *nightshades* like *Hyoscyamus* and *Datura* (Solanaceæ); and *Banisterialopsis caapi*; 3) *Inebriantia*, Berausungsmittel; *Inebriants* or “inebriating agents,” meaning: alcohol; chloroform; [diethyl-]ether; benzene; 4) *Hypnotica*, Schlafmittel; *Hypnotics* or “sleep-agents”: chloral hydrate; barbital; Polynesian *kava* (*Piper methysticum* Forster fil.; Piperaceæ), *und so weiter*; and 5) *Excitantia*, Erregungsmittel; *Excitants* or “stimulants”: camphor; *betel* (*Areca catechu* L.; Arecaceæ); *qat* (*Catha edulis* [Vahl] Forskal; Celastraceæ); several caffeine-plants, *coffee, tea, cola* (*Cola nitida* [Vent.] Schott et Endl.; Malvaceæ), *mate* (*Ilex paraguariensis* St.-Hilaire; Aquifoliaceæ); *cacao; tobaccos*; and *paricá* (snuffs, from seeds of *Anadenanthera peregrina*). Setting aside Lewin’s first category, *Euphorica* (which in fact prefigured those Prohibitionist *narcotics*), the remaining four are rational, and presently correspond to: 2) *Phantastica* : visionary drugs; 3) *Inebriantia* : general anæsthetics; 4) *Hypnotica* : hypnotics; and 5) *Excitantia* : stimulants; whereas Albert Hofmann suggested adding a *sixth* category, *Neuroleptica* or ‘neuroleptic sedatives’ like meprobamate and chlorpromazine (which did not exist in Lewin’s time), based on *Rauwolfia serpentina* Benth. ex Kurz. (Apocynaceæ)—from which Hofmann had been the first to isolate reserpine: although he did not get priority, as the genius-pharmacologists at *Sandoz* deemed it to be wanting in commercial viability; until their competitor launched it as a ‘blockbuster-drug’ a couple of years later! Nonetheless, Lewin had misclassified several, in his otherwise cogent scheme. *Euphorica* is an *obnoxious*, an *officious* category: and no toxicologists today would hesitate to include *coca/cocaine* in the stimulant-group (*Excitantia*); while I might argue opioids deserve a separate category, such does not yet exist, and these more aptly should be classified among other general anæsthetics (*Inebriantia*). Finally, *tobacco* and *paricá*-snuff, albeit decidedly stimulants (*Excitantia*), belong more appropriately among the visionary drugs (*Phantastica*). Although we misuse *narcotic*, to describe at once, *very specifically*, the class of opioids (the opiates: morphine and codeine; as well as many artificial, *semi*-synthetic derivatives, such as: 14-*hydroxy-dihydro*-codeinone [OxyContin™]; fully artificial congeners, including meperidine [Demerol™] and numerous derivatives of *Fentanyl*™—many being *ad hoc*-creations of the black market); and likewise, as a

legalistic catch-all for illicit drugs (Lewin's *Euphorica*, plus a great number of his *Phantastica*: *péyotl*; *Cannabis*-species and their active principles; LSD, DMT, and kindred tryptamines, originally isolated from *paricá*; and as long as sad an *et cetera*); it might be said that '*Narcotica*,' *sensu lato*, would embrace alike Lewin's opioid *Euphorica*, and encompass the entirety of his *Inebriantia* and *Hypnotica*—all are “sleep-agents,” at appropriate dosages. On the other hand, history and modern judgement—informed by steady advances in chemistry and pharmacology—have underwritten their separation into distinct categories. His obtuse class of *Euphorica* is as problematical for pharmacologists/chemists, as that to which we aspire, a catch-all for visionary drugs: insofar as, in either case, a wide spectrum of chemical-structural types, and also general psychopharmacology is needed, to embrace either drugs used to evoke *euphoria* (“bearing well”) or *vision*. *Euphorica* might be the opioids so classified, but also *Phantastica* like LSD and DMT (which did not exist in Lewin's time); *Inebriantia* (alcohol and ether); *Hypnotica* (*kava* and *Quaalude*TM: not then extant); and *Excitantia* (cathinone from *qat*, and the reclassified cocaine). The same applies to visionary drugs: opioids have been productive of *oneiric visions*, for such as Thomas De Quincey [1821]; we would accept *all* of Lewin's *Phantastica*, as being visionary (although only *péyotl* and *Banisteriopsis caapi* might be misnamed as '*psychedelics*'; albeit the latter, *by itself*, is decidedly an hypnotic, or a “sleep-agent”); ketamine is a general anæsthetic, which Lewin might have classified in the *Inebriantia*; and *kava* may be *visionary*, in a shamanic context. These *minutiæ* provide depth and context to this thorny problem of nomenclature for an ever-growing diversity of ‘mind-drugs’—particularly, in the present case, for visionary drugs. Although Lewin [1929] had published the first monograph on *ayahuasca*, likewise had isolated harmine (which he named *Banisterin*) [Lewin 1928], besides having been the pioneer, in the chemical study of *péyotl* [Lewin 1888], there is no indication he was a psychonaut, and it is interesting that he had chosen *Phantastica* for his title—surely the least-used and most obscure of his five categories.

7. Alas! *The OED* defines **psyche** as: “breath... to breathe, to blow, (later) to cool; hence, life.” It is true that the Classic Greeks considered *breath* to be “the animating principle... the *soul* or *spirit*, in distinction from its material vehicle”; and this might well be construed as ‘the *mind*.’

Psycho-, as a prefix, similarly is defined as: “breath, life, soul”; but: “since the 17th C., taken as a formative in the sense of ‘mind’.” There exist *many* **psycho-** ‘mind-words’—but *none* are given, for **psyche-**! The **-delic** suffix, is a variant of **deiw-** ‘to shine,’ derives from some “name of the sky god,” and is cognate with Latin **deus**, “god, deity.” So **psychedelic** means: ‘**deity** in the **psyche**’ [Anon. 1979; p. 1511]! Thus **psychedelic**, should we desire to be scrupulously and perspicuously literal, means ‘god-breathing.’ In French, is is **psychédélique**... but *psyché* means “cheval-glass”—a species of movable mirror. Neither French nor German employs **psyche-**, as a prefix, to compound any other ‘mind-words.’ Possibly, if we were to spell it ‘**psychædelic**,’ it might be somewhat less objectionable... Nay!... just *bin* it!

8. *The Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang* [Anon. 1992] defines **psycho**, as: “Abbreviation of ‘psychopath’”; but accords priority, by one year, to one C. Macinnes, 1959. Their definition, however, isn’t objectively precise—**psycho** is more an *apocope*, than an *abbreviation*. There is scarcely any doubt, that Alfred Hitchcock’s successful film inspired its widespread popular use.

9. The suffix **-gen** ever has meant ‘producing,’ in scientific nonce-words: since the day Antoine Lavoisier (who obviously lost his head in the French Revolution) named the elements *oxygène*, for ‘engendering acid,’ and *hydrogène*, for ‘engendering water.’ However, as *The OED* had stated clearly: “The fact that the suffix... [**-gen**] was not capable of meaning ‘that which produces’ was overlooked or disregarded [by Lavoisier].” It means *becoming*, as we had noted in “Entheogens.” These are elements of Atomic Number **8**, *oxygen* (O); and **1**, *hydrogen* (H). The Atomic Number refers to numbers of *protons* in the *atomic nucleus*, and defines elements. Variable quantities of *neutrons*, are called *isotopes* of an element. *Hydrogen*, for instance, has three isotopes: *protium* (1 proton/0 neutrons); *deuterium* (1 proton/1 neutron) and *tritium* (1 proton/2 neutrons). *Tritium* is radioactive; *protium* and *deuterium* stable. Originally, these had been *oxygine* and *hydrogine*.

10. The *First Part* is entitled: **Toxicomanies d’aujourd’hui** (**Toxicomanias of Today**); the *Second*, *Les intoxications religieuses chez les peuples primitifs* (*Religious Intoxications among Primitive Peoples*); the *Third*, *Les ivresses divines dans les religions des peuples Indo-Européens*

(*Divine Inebriations in Religions of Indo-European Peoples*). The *Bibliographie* is sparing—139 sources, mostly contemporaneous and secondary, only 13 of them being ethnographic studies or historical classics. De Félice did cite Lewin's *Phantastica* (rather the French-translation, of 1928, which stole the title of Baudelaire [1860], *Les paradis artificiels*; the original likewise was cited: the English-translation of 1931 had inspired Huxley [1932] during the composition of *Brave New World*), and Rouhier's *Le peyotl*; also De Quincey's [1821] classic, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*; as well as Jean Cocteau's [1930] *Opium: journal d'une désintoxication*. De Félice clearly confused *inebriation* and *intoxication*; had exaggerated "the problem of toxicomanias" (*opiomanie, cocaïnomanie*), but he did cover *kava, ayahuasca, tobacco, hashish, qat* and *péyotl*, amongst "primitive peoples"; regarding (the less "primitive"?) Indo-Europeans, he discussed *soma/haoma*; Dionysus-cults; the Mysteries of Eleusis; and Celtic and Germanic potions.

11. This points another fatal inadequacy of *psychedelic*: its haphazard scope; random inclusivity. *Psychedelic/hallucinogen* refers to LSD and mescaline, full stop (these were *the only* such drugs known in 1953–1956 when the words originated). By extension, it later was applied to DMT and psiloc[yb]ine: tryptamines closely related to LSD; still later, to DOM/DOI, and allied artificial congeners of mescaline; still other tryptamines, such as *5-methoxy-DMT*—as their effects were elucidated. It would be fair to say, it refers *specifically*, to β -phenethylamines and/or tryptamines with *psychoptic* effects. But what about *pariḥ/mukhomor*—*Amanita muscaria*, and another half-dozen mushrooms containing ibotenic acid—which, just as María Sabina's mushrooms, *are* used for shamanic divination, as *psychoptic* drugs? Ibotenic acid is an *isoxazolic* amino-acid, not at all related chemically to tryptamines and β -phenethylamines: it *is* a *psychoptic entheogen*... but nobody would call it a *psychedelic*! What of nicotine and related alkaloids from tobaccos? These tobaccos are the very central hub-*nexus* of shamanism all over the world, and no more renowned *entheogens* (*ayahuasca, ololiuhqui, péyotl, San Pedro, teonanácatl*) ever are used *shamanically, sans* tobacco in some form. Take it from me, who consumes about *one-third*-gramme of nicotine every day: nicotine *is not* a *psychedelic* (but it *is* *psychoptic* in higher doses)! An entire article in *Journal of Psychoactive [née Psychedelic] Drugs* was given to objecting that bufotenine *was not* a *psychedelic*, an *hallucinogenic* drug [Lyttle *et al.* 1996]! The same applies to *Salvia divinorum*

Epling *et Játiva* (Labiatae), and its active agent, salvinorin A—this is *the most potent* natural product-*psychoptic* drug known, used in shamanism, together with *teonanácatl* and *ololiuhqui*: but its effects have *nothing in common* with mescaline and LSD... it most assuredly *is not a psychedelic!* Moreover, what of *Cannabis*? But you get the idea, and I sha’n’t flog this dead horse any longer. This was our rationale behind seeking a novel term, to characterize shamanic inebriants. By the same token, such desperately is needed, for the ‘medicalization’ of visionary drugs. *Psychedelic* is too specific to encompass and embrace those already in therapeutic use, and more will be introduced—whereas *psychoptic* tidily fills this bill. *Vide* “Entheogens II” [Ott 1996]; quoting a few specialists *denying* that various *entheogens* were *psychedelics*. This article also reprinted our original “Entheogens” [Ruck *et al.* 1979], as an *Appendix*: owing to persistent confusion regarding it. I encountered a similar semiotic *Tower of Babel* (*Babble?*), in the 72-page-programme, for *Breaking Convention VI*, in Exeter, 2023. Of **141** talks scheduled for this “*Sixth International Conference on Psychedelic Consciousness*,” at least **12** (8.5%) in no way pertained to ‘*psychedelic*’ drugs (*e.g.*: *Cannabis*, MDMA, ibogaine, ketamine). Only **5** (3.5%) in some fashion involved *shamanism*, and/or *ethnopharmacognosy*; the while some **8** (5.6%) were more *religious*, than scientific! Of **76** biographies detailed, there were *none* (0%) of **shamans**; and of **5** “Headline Speakers,” **5** (100%) were *Old White Boys* (I include *myself* there amongst); **4** of us (80%), likewise... are Yanks! Is *this* your “*Psychedelic Renaissance*”? Are Psychedelic ‘*Renaissance-Men*’ latter-day ‘Jerry Crunchers’ (the grave-robber from Charles Dickens’ [1859] *A Tale of Two Cities*), or oblivious ‘Victor Frankensteins’ (to be sure, from Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin [Shelley]’s [1818] *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*)?

12. This is but one example of the considerable linguistic laxness evident, in the two *Breaking Convention*-events I attended (*BC V* in Greenwich, 2019; and *BC VI* in Exeter, 2023); as in the book based-on *BC V* [Tollan *et al.* 2022]. I do not criticise, *per se*, this withal worthy anthology: to which, after all, I am one, of 12 contributors; I refer merely to generally *loose* and *imprecise* semantics, which are not in keeping with the intellectual rigour of the essays. I have admitted to being *punctilious*, but *am not* being *pernickety*—words matter! In M. Albert’s [2022] interesting and timely essay, we read that: “Indigenous peoples” are “informed by *psychedelic shamanism*”;

are “carriers and protectors of *psychedelic plant*-based knowledge”; and that “the *psychedelic community* [is in] debt to indigenous communities and their shamanic traditions” (with which *last*, I agree heartily, and do here applaud). *En suite*, I shall state my reasons for opposing such nomenclature as *colonialist cultural appropriation*. In her insightful review of “Fentheogenic consciousness,” G. Tavini [2022] is much more precise (also, like her, I had chosen Charlotte Brontë’s [1853] *Villette*, which has a trip-scene, as exemplar, in a new book, *Pharmacomania*) and well refers to the “*entheogenic* wisdom” of María Sabina. But in the second paragraph, of the section immediately following, we read that: “...*entheogens* act as a mediator between the material world and the unconscious... This might explain why *hallucinogens* have the ability...” —once again, *entheogen* is *not* synonymous with *hallucinogen*! In her *Reflection*, *hallucinogens* overwhelms *entheogens* and *psychedelics* (these three are used *eight* times conjointly: with *four* being *hallucinogens*) as if they *all three* were synonyms. This is the case, for *psychedelics* and *hallucinogens*, but wrongly conjoins *entheogens*. In his exaggeratedly eulogistic essay about Patanjali (never mind, that the II–IV century author of *Yoga Sutras* had *never even heard of psychedelics*) P. Yates says: “I use the term ‘*psychedelic*’ rather than the current favourite ‘*entheogen*’” (again, mistakenly taking these *to be synonyms*); insofar as: “God isn’t guaranteed to turn up” (whereas “God” *never is expected* to appear [besides being a *fictional* character of many names—*YHWH*, and innumerable synonyms, in India]—one expects to: ‘become divine within’); in concluding: “‘*psychedelic*’ meaning ‘mind-manifesting’ serves my purposes, being both accurate and without onto-theological baggage.” It certainly *is not accurate*, to allege that *psychedelic* means “mind-manifesting”: no dictionary I have consulted gives that sense. Besides, ‘mind-manifesting’ *doesn’t mean anything coherent*, and nothing germane to this topic! ‘Mind’ refers to (*self*-)consciousness: if that *is not manifested*... there simply *is no* ‘mind’! While, at best, *psychedelic* means: “expanding the mind’s awareness etc.”; *that* would be: “through the use of *hallucinogenic* drugs.” At worst, it means: “**generating hallucinations, distortions of perception**, and, occasionally, *states resembling psychosis*”! As for *entheogen* (purportedly) being burdened with “onto-theological baggage” (I am at a loss to divine precisely what *that* signifies, but shall concentrate, instead, on “theological baggage”—which echoes *the very words* of T. McKenna), we have seen that *it is not*; or, at least, so *less* so, than *psychedelic*: the root of

which, *delos*, refers to an obsolete sky-‘god,’ and is cognate with the very Latin word *for* ‘god,’ *deus*. Yates, and others, firmly may be persuaded that *psychedelic* means “mind-manifesting”—but *that* is not congruent with lexicographers’ definitions of this word and, as I have written: “it may matter much more, what your neighbour, a constable or Justice *thinks* that it means (we have seen what they will find in their dictionaries), than what *you* ‘*know*’ that it means!” On another topic, in M. Clark’s [2022] cogent, interesting, and much-needed review of *Cannabis* in India (where I have resided, for roughly one year, over two), we find consistent and recursive misuse of *intoxicant*, for *inebriant*—which occurs at least *nine* times. This is most strange, inasmuch as one reference to the *AtharvaVeda* mentions the use of *Cannabis*: “as a protective device... against evil and **poison**”! How, then, could it *itself* be a **poison**, an *intoxicant*? Here again, we have another inappropriate/culturally-appropriative use of *psychedelic*: “*soma* (the **psychedelic**, ritual drink of the Brahmins of ancient India)”; only to be cautioned of: “*datura*, a dangerous and potent **hallucinogen**”! *Datura*-species in India and SE Asia are at least as ‘sacred’ as is *Cannabis*; indeed, they constitute *the most cosmopolitan, pre-Contact entheogen*! Finally, Clark’s hard saying: “cannabis for **spiritual intoxication**” is an oxymoron, recapitulating P. de Félice’s *Sacred Poisons, Divine Inebriations*! Setting aside an implied, spurious equivalence of *intoxication* and *inebriation*, any person sensitive, to the savour of words and their harmonious juxtaposition, readily can descry that there *can be no spiritual intoxication*! Do we presume to alter society’s denigrating attitudes towards ‘*psychedelics*,’ we would do well first to get our *linguistic* ‘ducks in a row’... lest these be ‘shot like ducks in a barrel’! These expressions may not be current in *genuine* English—I *am* a Yank, by birth! O, do heed my obdurate obsecration! Render not your obstinate, obsessive, obsequious obeisance to that obtrusive *psychedelic*: please condemn us not to objurgatory obloquy! This is for your own good! Not only had these papers by M. Clark and P. Yates more to do with *religion*, than *science*... I was stunned and amazed, that *Breaking Convention* (and *Psychedelic Press*) had published Clark’s edition of Timothy Leary’s *Eight Circuits of the Brain* [Leary 2019]! This *religious science-fiction*, ineptly masquerading as (teleological) ‘evolutionary theory,’ certainly *did not bear reprinting*, and better had been left in the oblivion it, O!, so richly earned! Moreover, the *second* talk presented, at *BC VI* in Exeter, was by Clark, pursuant to his: “Fifty-year retrospective on the **ideas** of Dr Timothy Leary” (I would

call these *idiocies*): appropriately, *Leary's Eight* is Vol. 4, of *Mahabongo Weeny Introductions!* *The Oxford Encyclopedic English Dictionary* gives: “**weeny colloq.** tiny **weeny-bopper** a girl like a teeny-bopper but younger.”! Is *Breaking Convention* striving to strangle, in its pre-term-cradle, their (so-called) *Renaissance*? This *infantile* and *incoherent*, this **religious claptrap** is embarrassingly *naïve*, not to say *megalomaniacal*: it had been kinder to Leary’s memory, to leave it completely forgotten! By the same token, the *sixth* talk at *BC VI* had been devoted to Terence McKenna, as an: “Apocalyptic poet and raving **medium**” (more precisely I would say: “raving **crackpot**”... Arthur Conan Doyle’s ‘spiritualist-**mediums**’ were the only *fantasy* wanting, to cement a *religious* take-over of *BC*). Hawking *science-fiction* as *science*, Leary and McKenna both gave ‘psychedelics’ **a bad name**... McKenna and I were business-partners, for eight years (*Entheobotany Seminars*, principally at Palenque, here in SE México: 1993–2001)... thus, I am *painfully aware* of this! Lastly, the *final* talk, by Rick Doblin, of *MAPS* (or... is it *Lykos*?), was a 1.5-hour-‘infomercial’—as a *prélude*, I should imagine, to pan-handling some of the well-heeled attendees for their ‘spare change’—replete with ‘vapourware’-slides, of *non-existent* ‘treatment-centres’ of an indeterminate (and unlikely) future... assuming we all stump-up! This, doubtless, had been tailored for venture-capitalists... but was *completely out-of-place*, in an (ostensibly) scientific conference! Nonetheless, it afforded *a vision*, of the road fast being paved, to a Big Pharma (what *Lykos* hopes to become) Corporate/Monopolist future for *Psychedelia*. A. Tollan [2022] had dubbed this: “the big corporatisation boom” in her *Introduction* to the *BC V*-book.

13. An oblique danger of this *medicalization* is coming-into focus, and ought to have been expected as an *inevitable* concomitant. What *we* cherish in *psychoptic* drugs are their ‘mind-enhancing,’ their ‘mind-altering’ capacities—aye, *their very essence*—those which, both in *medical* and *scientific* opinion, are **hallucinations**... merely **undesired side-effects**! A recent article [Cao *et al.* 2022], highlighted by a news-item [Service 2022], had detailed work involving visualizing the structure of a serotonin-receptor, 5-HT_{2A}R (‘5-HT’ is 5-*Hydroxy*-Tryptamine—serotonin, a close homologue of bufotenine: 5-*HO*-DMT), after binding by serotonin, LSD, psilocine and lisuride (a *non*-psychoactive LSD-derivative). These Chinese scientists had been: “...aiming to make analogs that **retain medical usefulness but don’t cause hallucinations**.”

Based-on X-ray-crystallography, of *bound*-receptors, they determined that the “*psychedelic hallucinogens*” activated the main serotonine-receptor, but also what they called an “extended binding-pocket.” In short, based on some *rather dubious* bioassays (of mouse-behaviours: no psychonautic bioassays here!), these scientists alleged that they had: “teased apart the molecular interactions responsible for **psychedelics’ antidepressive** effects from those **that cause hallucinations**.” They synthesized two LSD-derivatives, IHCH-7079 and IHCH-7086 (without giving their structures: probably indicating a patent-application), which (according to their mice) acted as *anti-depressants* (no “freezing-responses”), while avoiding the *dread hallucinations* (no “head-twitches”)—“mouse behaviours strongly associated with *depression* and *hallucinations* in human[being]s, respectively”! I shall spare you most of my sardonic comments on the absurdity of assaying inscrutable effects, in *non-communicative* rodents, while noting that similar work has taken-place, in the United States: “a **nonhallucinogenic** analog of the **psychedelic** compound ibogaine, called tabernanthalog, showed *antidepressive* effects in rodents.” Please to notice here, that the words *psychedelic* and *hallucinogenic* (quite properly) are used *as synonyms* (and the fact, that *two* different articles use the word *nonhallucinogenic* for *psychedelic*-analogues); and the key fact that the (misnomered) *hallucinations* are treated as being so many **noisome side-effects to be eliminated**—as **militating against** therapeutic utility! A yet more recent article concerned 2,5-dimethoxy-4-iodo-amphetamine (DOI, a Shulgin-compound: *PIHKAL* No. 67 [Shulgin & Shulgin 1991]), as an *anxiolytic* [Muir *et al.* 2024]. This was pursuant to the same goal: “These results suggest that *the therapeutic and hallucinogenic effects of psychedelics can be dissociated, paving the way for the development of more specific drugs*.” Notice here again, that *hallucinogenic* and *psychedelic* are used correctly—*as synonyms*. These authors concluded: “...*it is possible to isolate the anxiolytic effects of a psychedelic drug from its hallucinogenic properties* through reactivation of a DOI-tagged network.” It is worth noting, that this article presented no fewer than 50 references (including that cited above), indicative that considerable work in this vein is proceeding. Indeed—as more than twenty years ago I had admonished Hattie Wells, Amanda Feilding, Rick Doblin, besides others—it remains improbable, that any medical authorities—either *official* or *scientific*—suddenly will welcome with open arms, drugs that for *one-half-century* have been disparaged and disdained as having “high potential for *abuse* and no

recognized medical *use*” (in spite of the fact that their medical *value* had been established long before they were proscribed!). Should you wish to treat depression, or PTSD, with ***psychoptic*** drugs, I am afraid the probability is that you will have to continue to do so, *on your own*... or through clandestine therapists, as *long* has been done. ‘Mainstream’ medicine, I fear, only will proffer you the ***psycho-***, without the ***-delic***: the **real** *side-effects*, without the *Main Event!* Please, do not mistake me, as *belittling* any PTSD-treatments, or therapies for anxiety or depression—I favour *’most anything* conducive to human health, happiness, aye, fulfillment—but we seem to be missing the *forest*, in minute examinations, of a few *trees*. What *had been* appraised, as a promising *beginning*, looks like it is being overlooked, as if it were a dead-end *cul-de-sac*. What of this ***hallucinogenic*** (so-called) ‘side-effect’? Let us not pitch-out *that* baby... with her bath-water! Early psychiatric interest in LSD focussed-on its potential in psychotherapy, to approach *the roots of human alienation* (if I may resurrect an obsolete term, for that badly called ‘mental illness’). What is needed, is marshaling our exquisitely-sensitive technology, in the study of how *one-tenth of a milligramme* of LSD—most of which is metabolized *within one hour*—catalyses such profound alterations in consciousness... which may last for 12 hours! It is estimated that, of a 100 µg dose of LSD, merely 0.02 µg (2×10^{-8} g)—or some 3.7 million molecules—*briefly* enters the brain, with some 13 billion neurons! We have at-hand *a scalpel*, to dissect *the very interface* between the *material* brain, and an *energetic* mind! This is the real conundrum that LSD presents us, but it only can be approached by melding ***psychonautic bioassays*** with ***scanners, neural electrode-implants*** and ***optogenetics***: head-twitching-rodents just will not do! Modern medicine, which (predictably) is dismissing *the primary*, as *an adverse side-effect*, not only will fail to realise the true potential of ***psychoptic*** drugs... quite obtusely and blindly, it *will* discard this ***psychoptic*** *baby* with her bath-water...

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