

**To Be or Not to Be, That Is
Not the Question**

Death Experiences and Encounters with Spirits
on Ayahuasca



"We need books like this to remind us to offer something before we take, to inspire us to shed our skin, to teach us how to pray for a vision."
—Devendra Banhart, singer-songwriter and visual artist

Psychedelics and the Soul

A Mythic Guide to Psychedelic Healing, Depth Psychology, and Cultural Repair

Simon Yugler

SEAN LAWLOR

PSYCHEDELIC REVIVAL

Toward a New Paradigm of Healing

PSYCHEDELIC MEDICINE

The Healing Powers of LSD, MDMA, Psilocybin, and Ayahuasca

Dr. Richard Louis Miller

Dennis McKenna, PhD, Stanislav Grof, MD, PhD, James Fadiman, PhD, Rick Doblin, PhD, Julie Holland, MD, and others

"Psychedelics aren't just about kaleidoscopic rainbows and cosmic hugs. It turns out they may be the most revolutionary breakthrough in mental health in a century."
—MARK MANSON, author of *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck*

PSYCHEDELIC THERAPY

A Revolutionary Approach to Restoring Your Mental Health and Reclaiming Your Life

WILL VAN DERVEER, MD
KEITH KURLANDER, MA, LPC

Foreword by Gabor Maté, MD



PSYCHEDELIC HEALING

The Promise of Entheogens for Psychotherapy and Spiritual Development

NEAL M. GOLDSMITH, Ph.D.

Psychedelics

The revolutionary drugs that could change our life – a guide from the expert

Professor David Nutt

PSYCHEDELIC INTEGRATION

Psychotherapy for Non-Ordinary States of Consciousness

MARC B. AIXALÀ

Foreword by José Carlos Bouso, PhD

Michael Pollan

How To Change Your Mind

The New Science of Psychedelics

'Gripping and surprising... Makes losing your mind sound like the sanest thing a person could do'
THE NEW YORK TIMES



While, at least since their prohibition, psychedelics have usually been considered as hallucinogenic, how and under what conditions do health professionals come to regard their use as therapeutic today?

I was very sceptical and I had the wrong images about magic mushrooms.

These kids, you know? They want to have hallucinations!

But, when I took mushrooms, it was like the pandora box!
It opened my eyes !

I used to put everything under the carpet, and, when I took the mushrooms, all these feelings surfaced back.

ONTOLOGIZATION

The way actors define a being.

ONTOLOGIZATION CONFLICT



Spirits

Energy healing

Hallucinations

Placebo effect

ONTOLOGIZATION CONFLICT



Hallucinogenic



Psychedelic

It creates **hallucinations**

It reveals **your mind**



At the time it was clear that it was possession because Jacques is keen on this kind of interpretation. For him, the infestation is everywhere.

BEYOND
NATURE AND CULTURE

PHILIPPE DESCOLA

Translated by Janet Lloyd
Foreword by Marshall Sahlins

**Similarity of
interiority**

**Difference of
physicality**

Animism

**Similarity of
interiority**

**Similarity of
physicality**

Totemism

Naturalism

Analogism

**Difference of
interiority**

**Similarity of
physicality**

**Difference of
interiority**

**Difference of
physicality**

It was the right approach. During the ceremony, I can tell that the thing is here but that it's not a demon. It's a ball of rejected feelings from childhood that requires attention. And I distinguish anger, fear and sadness.



I start a dialogue: "OK, where does that come from?" and then images come to me, a succession that leads to: "OK, I've got this image of my father abusing my sister". And bang! everything makes sense!



I met spirits who appeared in the form of indigenous people, but green.

They left and came back, much taller, their skin had changed colour, they were wearing white and gold clothes. It was a celebration!

I went up to him and said: 'Come on! Relax! Fart!'

I turned into a clown, and then I started to die, decomposing, drying up on my feet. It was a death experience.

BEYOND
NATURE AND CULTURE

PHILIPPE DESCOLA

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Similarity of interiority

Difference of physicality

Animism

Totemism

Similarity of interiority

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Naturalism

Analogism

Difference of interiority

Similarity of physicality

Difference of interiority

Difference of physicality

Today, I no longer see things the same way.

It taught me to respect the sacred, and then to go through death and ridicule, which is the death of the ego in its most pathetic form.

When it happens, you don't say to yourself, "Oh, look! It's a symbolic death!"

It would have been terribly poor to remain stuck on: "I violated the sacred perimeter of plants by telling one of them to 'fart' and that's why the big mommy is punishing me".



I know it in my brain,
but I can't feel it in my heart.

No!

I can't die! I have a family, what would my mother think?

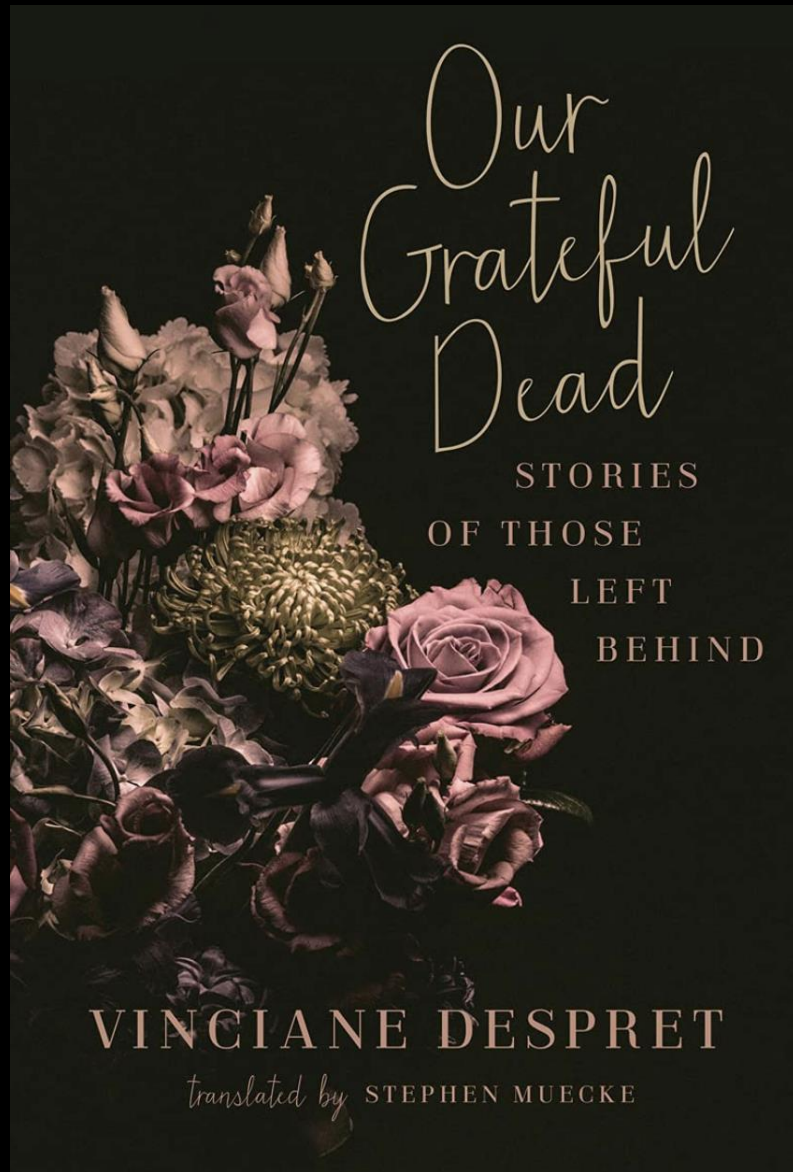
If you want to feel it, you have to die?

**It's a part of your ego
that needs to die,
like old habits.**

**We are dying all
the time, I have
died a million
times before.**

Someone who tells me: "Well, actually I'm possessed by a demon". I never reply: "That's nonsense, there's no such thing". I don't even smile or anything, because in the end I don't want to disqualify any model. I'll say: "OK, fine, we'll start with that: what is the manifestation? since when? what happened? what does it remind you of?"

The whole goal of psychedelic experience is to make progress in our lives. If it means: "Oh, it's not my fault! It's because there are some creatures out there", that's just another way of absolving ourselves of any responsibility.



Ontological tact

They don't let themselves be trapped by the question of whether the spirits are real or not.

They consider the effect of the experience more important than its ontology.



Conclusion

To Be or Not to Be, That Is Not the
Question

FANNY CHARRASSE

LE RETOUR DU MONDE MAGIQUE

Magnétisme

et paradoxes de la modernité



LES
EMPECHEURS
DE PENSER
EN ROND

Similarity of
interiority

Difference of
physicality

Animism

Similarity of
interiority

Similarity of
physicality

Totemism

**Strict
Naturalism
Naturalism
Reflexive
Naturalism**

Difference of
interiority

Similarity of
physicality

Analogism

Difference of
interiority

Difference of
physicality

Strict naturalism

A **doubly naturalist** approach: based on the distinction of Nature and Culture, it sees this distinction « **natural** » i.e neither historical nor constructed.

From this **dogmatic perspective** the other ontologies (animism, analogism, totemism) are **superstitions, inferior cultures**.

Perspective generally accompanied by a **conflict of ontologization**. Claiming that nothing exists apart from natural beings leads to the reduction of animistic and analogical experiences to hallucinations

Reflexive naturalism

A **naturalist and constructivist** approach: based on the distinction of Nature and Culture, it asserts that this distinction is constructed, i.e the product of Western history.

From this **pragmatic perspective** the other ontologies (animism, analogism, totemism) are interesting ways of **shaping the world, cultures as important as naturalism**.

Perspective generally accompanied by **ontological tact**. Claiming that everything is constructed leads to an openness toward animistic and analogical experiences.

**Thank you for your
attention!**

Featuring **Matthieu Fauré**
as the illustrator
mattfaur@krutt.org

