

Drugs of the Dreaming: Oneirogens: *Salvia divinorum* and Other Dream-Enhancing Plants

By Gianluca Toro, Benjamin Thomas

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The first comprehensive guide to oneirogens--naturally occurring substances that induce and enhance dreaming

• Includes extensive monographs on dream-enhancing substances derived from plant, animal, and human sources

• Presents the results of scientific experiments on the effects of using oneirogens

• Shows how studies in this area of ethnobotany can yield a scientific understanding of the mysterious mechanism of dreams

Oneirogens are plant and animal substances that have long been used to facilitate powerful and productive dreaming. From the beginning of civilization, dreams have guided the inner and outer life of human beings both in relation to each other and to the divine. For centuries shamans have employed oneirogens in finding meaning and healing in their dreams.

Drugs of the Dreaming details the properties and actions of these dream allies, establishing ethnobotanical profiles for 35 oneirogens, including those extracted from organic sources--such as *Calea zacatechichi* (dream herb or “leaf of the god”), *Salvia divinorum*, and a variety of plants from North and South America and the Pacific used in shamanic practices--as well as synthetically derived oneirogens. They explain the historical use of each oneirogen, its method of action, and what light it sheds on the scientific mechanism of dreaming. They conclude that oneirogens enhance the comprehensibility and facility of the dream/dreamer relationship and hold a powerful key for discerning the psychological needs and destinies of dreamers in the modern world.

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Editorial Review

Review
“In the end this short, though neatly presented, book is a fantastic introduction into the oneirogenic realm. This little researched area has been consolidated by the authors and provides a great start point for anyone interested in looking deeper into the production of their dreams via external chemical means.” (*Psychedelic Press UK, January 2013*)

“Gianluca Toro and Benjamin Thomas have made an invaluable contribution to the literature on psychoactive substances by tackling the vast but hitherto neglected domain of the use of oneirogenic plants and drugs throughout history, around the world. Using a multidisciplinary approach that draws from ethnobotany, anthropology, medical research, chemistry, and the recorded experiences of “psychonauts” who have experimented with many of these compounds, they have compiled a rigorously researched, fascinating, exhaustive survey of the planet’s oneirogens, ranging all the way from recently popularized herbs such as *Salvia divinorum* and *Calea zacatechichi* to ancient Egyptian, Greek, Celtic, Amazonian, African and medieval potions; to vitamins and hormones; to dream-inducing cheeses and fish species!

“The extensive lists of the world’s known oneirogens and the generous bibliography are treasure troves in and of themselves. As the authors make clear, there is much we don’t know about many of these tantalizing substances and the states they induce. In fact, this is really a nascent field, but this book marks a giant step forward in an exciting new front in the exploration of humanity’s never-ending thirst for heightened states of consciousness. No one with a serious interest in the rich lore of psychotropic substances should be without this book.” (*J. P. Harpignies, editor of Visionary Plant Consciousness*)

"I recommend [this book] for anyone who wants to learn more about plants, entheogens, or the neurochemistry of the body." (*Taylor Ellwood, New Witch, No. 17, Summer 2008*)

From the Back Cover
VISIONARY PLANTS / DREAMS

“Gianluca Toro and Benjamin Thomas have made an invaluable contribution to the literature on psychoactive substances with their rigorously researched and fascinating survey of the planet’s oneirogens. This book marks a giant step forward in an exciting new front of humanity’s exploration of heightened states of consciousness. No one with a serious interest in the rich lore of psychotropic substances should be without this book.”
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relationship and hold a powerful key for discerning the psychological needs and destinies of dreamers today.

GIANLUCA TORO, an environmental chemist, is the author in Italian of *Animali Psicoattivi* [Psychoactive Animals] and numerous articles about naturally occurring and synthetic dream-enhancing agents. He lives in Italy. Benjamin Thomas is an independent researcher specializing in the effects of drugs and plant extracts on humans, particularly in Papua New Guinea. He lives in Australia.

About the Author
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