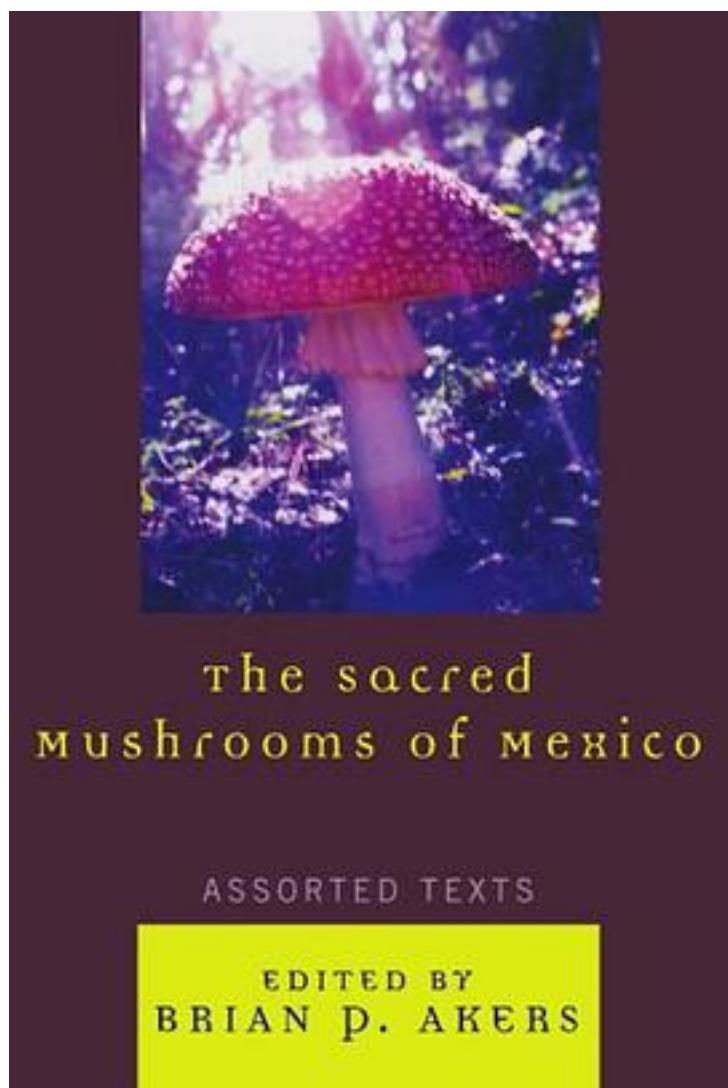


The Sacred Mushrooms of Mexico



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This work presents significant new readings in ethnomycology, a discipline that examines the role of fungi in human affairs. The greatest cultural and historical impact of mushrooms has resulted from psychoactive compounds found in certain species, and native interpretations of their mental effects in humans, as revealed through intensive multidisciplinary studies coordinated by the late R. Gordon Wasson, the father of ethnomycology. Wasson's research in the 1950s led to the elucidation of mushroom cultism in Mexico, a phenomenon dismissed as unfounded rumor by "experts" only a few decades earlier. Discoveries made by Wasson and his collaborators intersect a staggering number of disciplines, so much so that individual fields have had difficulty assimilating them. The Sacred Mushrooms of Mexico presents six texts concerning the mushrooms. Five of them are translations of relevant scholarly sources in Spanish previously unavailable in English. The sixth is a transcript of The Sacred Mushroom, a celebrated episode of the classic television series "One Step Beyond." This TV program may have been the only show in broadcast history in which the host ingested hallucinogenic mushrooms and endured their effects on camera for the viewing pleasure of the home audience.

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