

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Great ONE

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It is a highly significant, though generally neglected, fact that those creations of the human mind which have borne preeminently the stamp of originality and greatness, have not come from within the region of consciousness. They have come from beyond consciousness, knocking at its door for admittance: they have flowed into it, sometimes slowly as if by seepage, but often with a burst of overwhelming power .¹

- G.N.M. TYRELL, *The Personality of Man*

Art is a Source of Original Knowledge

In the outline and 'orders' that will be presented in this chapter, I remain mainly concerned with creativity and sources of inspiration. In reviewing this outline it is imperative to understand that when we enter into the psychological and spiritual aspects of artistic work, the more important attitudes to recognize is that of creative risk, learning to rest in uncertainty and the unknown, and developing a welcoming acceptance and respect toward what might be called the "involuntary", or even what is apparently 'accidental'. That is, noticing things occurring in, or to consciousness without effort on our part, such as certain emotional states, dreams, epiphanies or visions, or in the execution, or 'flow' of the artwork itself. I do not mean that creative workers are simply being unaware of the content of their creative artifacts, but also giving up the power of will in the creative process and simply allowing what may come, to come.

Many people are so frightened by the involuntary and unknown that it interferes with their creative and spiritual capability and direction in all facets of life. In our culture, that is, in the West, we seem to be very nearly addicted to acts of the will; our emphasis is on mundane life, ambitions, keeping 'busy' with productive activities, hard work, and a sometimes blind ambition toward achievement; results, money and 'success'. However, to live this way is to live in one-dimension. If we can accept and include the involuntary, we may also be on our way to solving our individual (and therefore massive) problem of connecting with the Divine as well as our fellow sentient beings. My outline, or "orders" of creatuitive-consciousness, also underscores the importance of recognizing the involuntary universal creative forces, that is, those forces that may act upon us without 'excluding' them, editing and denying the 'possibility' and thereby becoming genuine *co-creators*.

In the psychological preview that will precede the 'orders', I propose a new area of psychology that I call, *Creatistic*. This is basically investigative in nature and lacks the benefit of a formal in-depth clinical and academic research and support, as in the historical baselines of the other categories in psychology that are listed. This addition is listed, primarily, to spark a deeper scientific investigation, particularly when such refined instrumentation may

possibly be developed to probe and document the subtle energies behind creative construction and the mechanisms associated to creative mind, process, inspiration and Spirit. The aforementioned term also embraces all the ancient texts on inspiration from Plato to Plotinus, from the Wisdom traditions to contemporary Metaphysics and Neuroscience that has evolved since the artistic aftermath of the *Graven Image* (see Chapter One).

In the experience of the 'no I' state in the creative process; although many people attain moments of no self, or no 'I', or being "lost in the present," an experience in which all sense of identity, momentarily disappears and unified consciousness arises; such events seem incomprehensible to those who haven't had them. For modern conventional scientists, creatures of rational thinking and, for the most part, still enveloped in the 17th century age of 'Enlightenment', claims of mystical awakenings and non-ordinary states of consciousness has long been addressed as self-deception, charlatanism, chemical occurrences in brain matter, mental disorder, gullibility, or all of the above. They would have us believe that all of our 'individual' experiences are simply atomistic, separate atoms of thought, like tiny ultimate units of matter unrelated and unconnected. William James² brings a truly enlightened view to the matter when he contended that our experience comes to us initially in the form of a continuous stream, the connecting links between one part and another being themselves valid parts of a whole experience:

"...the relations that connect experience," he wrote, "must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as real as anything else in the system."

An atomistic theory in philosophy in which experience is composed of distinct sensations between which the mind interposes connections is common to such English philosophers as Locke, Berkeley and Hume but denied by James and other pragmatists. William James retorted by asserting that experience comes to us as a continuous whole in which the mind interposes distinctions, not connective associations. Consciousness, in James's words, 'does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. On the contrary, it is a 'continuum,' in which the relations between the different elements are experienced just as truly and directly as the elements related.'³ Kant, as well, in his Principles of Understanding, and as an Objective Idealist insisted upon the fact that our experience is given to us not as a mosaic of little bits, but as a connected whole.

James H. Austin, neurologist, Zen practitioner and author of *Zen and the Brain* (1996, MIT Press), suspects that a better understanding of brain areas can contribute to the individual notion of self and will lead to insights about spiritual enlightenment. He scientifically studies the state of "no I". Eleanor Rosch, a psychologist at the University of California, Berkeley, states that people initially perceive the world through their sensory organs as a *seamless whole* with no separation of self and surroundings. Moreover, she contends that people form concepts over a background of nonconceptual thought. Nonconceptual thinking is often hard to describe in words. Still, it fires up a description, or subtle picture of intuition, artistic experiences, inspiration, and the indescribable feelings attached to phenomena such as doing complex mathematics, feeling love or grief, experiencing ecstatic visions and finding spiritual enlightenment.

In fact, Rosch says, if the brain indeed fashions a sense of self and of external objects from a seamless fabric of sensations, then the moments of 'no-I' that the aforementioned author, Austin, along with meditators, mystics and integral artists ascribe to non-ordinary states of consciousness, may signal the recovery of a larger reality as it's initially picked up by our senses. Indeed, the 'state of no "I"' and being 'lost in the present' has been experienced and described down through the centuries as a valid and powerful means of perceiving the wholeness of reality. This disinterested play of consciousness wherein one 'loses oneself' to the state of 'no I' is also the fertile ground of creativity and genius, as Schopenhauer states:

Thus genius is the faculty of continuing in the state of pure perception, of losing oneself in perception, and of enlisting in this service the knowledge which originally existed only for the service of the will; that is to say, genius is the power of