Chapter 9
The Paradox of Self in the Imagination of Goa Trance: The Trancer

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ABSTRACT

This chapter deals with the first part of the investigation in regards to the experience of self in the Goa Trance dance-floor. The author analyzes the paradox of self in a phenomenological scope without going to deep into philosophic concepts but deep enough to give a sufficient basis to understand the arguments of the next chapter with same title and different subtitle. After dealing with the self, a notion of what is that we call real is then put forward within a framework from the Portuguese poet Teixeira de Pascoaes. This will also be in the context of an analyses of the Pythagorean tetractys in order to understand what can be said that is or is not existence in a conceptual stand point. This will set forward the necessary basis for understanding what is happening with the pure trancer in the Goa Trance dance-floor.

“γνθι σεαυτόν” (gnowthi seauton)
Know thy self
Phemonoe
The Paradox of Self in the Imagination of Goa Trance

INTRODUCTION

The Psychedelic Trance music and festival scene opens doors to quite a few philosophical problems, in the way the dance-floor experience makes us question and think about our notions of self and reality. Because this is always present in the Goa Trance Dance-Floor, before being able to properly analyse Goa Trance and its very particular Dance-Floor, we need a philosophical analyses on what the self is and how we dwell in its paradox so that everyone can understand the ways in which this is relatable to reality or what we have as a notion of real. This is the grounding basis from where a sound philosophical approach can explore that which is the very foundation of Trance and subsequently Psychedelic Trance. The Indian state of Goa is where it all started in the seventies with the Psychedelic Rock of the hippies progressively becoming Proto Goa Trance during the eighties, giving rise to Trance and Goa Trance in the late eighties and early nineties. The music used in the eighties was mainly electronica and synthpop which the DJs from that time cut extensively to remove the lyrics, extending the more psychedelic repetitive parts making for something resembling a ritual trance experience (Mothersole, 2010, April 14). Because they had inherited the psychedelic culture of the hippies which moved to Goa during the seventies, the psychedelic influence had to be present. Psychedelic Trance eventually became the world wide definition of the more specific designation of Goa Trance as a way to distinguish it from Trance. Today we have many genre subdivisions from what started by just being Goa Trance or the trance from Goa. To understand the role that Goa Trance plays in the paradox of self, we will first start by investigating the trancer.

THE PHENOMENA OF SELF

Persona

Vision is our main sense and the window to our innermost experience of self but we insist in hiding the object of our perception under extra perspectives and ideas that don’t actually add to the thing as it necessarily is. Be it an outer or inner object of our self-perception, this process of trying to find who we are blocks us from knowing it. The development of comfortable ideas and practice of defence behaviour mechanisms to protect and show to others that we know who we are creates our own delusions. We trick ourselves and adopt matching personas (Jung, 1989) to produce the empathic levels required for connecting with others in a conceptual standpoint, building up the minimal confidence which allows for the exchange of trust. This is done on emotion, taste and interest, coming from personal notions of self or from
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