Preface

The second volume in the series “Consciousness and Human Systems” that is devoted to the study of the human being in the broader psycho-bio-physical context focuses on cultural and therapeutic perspectives of consciousness. In recent years the study of consciousness has gained considerable impulse through inter-disciplinary approaches. Modulation and transformation of consciousness have been deployed for tens of thousands of years to obtain knowledge and to enhance wellbeing and health. In many societies, techniques based on non-ordinary states of consciousness have also been used to maintain ecological equilibrium.

The present volume deals with historic, social, linguistic, philosophical, psychological, biological, neurophysiological, aesthetic, and creative issues of consciousness research. According to the integrative endeavours of the authors a variety of methods have been applied and in most of the chapters not only etic but also emic perceptions have been considered. Thus, multi-disciplinarity can lead to a wider picture bringing together aspects that are usually separated by the boundaries between scientific disciplines.

The work of shamans, mediums, artists, psychotherapists, psychologists, and anthropologists constitute the main contents of this volume, exploring different techniques for the induction of altered states of consciousness and the benefits that can unfold through that.

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