CITTA

Psychoanalysis in India: An Ancient Path to the Mind

Long before Freud in the 1930s, India's ancient civilizational ethos had already mapped the depths of the *unconscious*. The Upanishads, Yoga Sutras, and Abhidhamma explored self-awareness, repressed desires (vasanas), and karmic imprints (samskaras), shaping human behavior much like modern psychoanalysis. Meditation, particularly in Buddhism, served as a method of deep introspection, uncovering hidden conflicts and attachments.

This ancient understanding of the psyche forms the foundation of *Chaithra*, the date of this issue which was delayed in order to align Citta with the seasons in India.

As we explore betrayal, unconscious desires, vulnerability, and leadership, we are not just engaging with psychology, we are continuing a tradition of self-inquiry that has existed in India for millennia.

CONTENTS

Dear Reader,

It is with great excitement that I present this edition to you.

After much thought and introspection, this special edition of *CITTA* is aptly titled Chaithra, representing the Spring season in India. Our cover features the majestic peacock, a symbol deeply woven into the fabric of Indian culture, embodying grace, beauty, and renewal. Its vibrant feathers usher in the arrival of spring, aligning perfectly with the themes of transformation and new beginnings that Chaithra so beautifully represents.

What are the hidden forces that shape our behavior and relationships? How do these ancient texts provide timeless wisdom for our modern psychological struggles? In this issue, we delve into the intricate psychological layers of deceit, betrayal, unconscious desires, and inner conflicts, drawing profound insights from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. These timeless epics not only illuminate human behavior but also offer reflections on struggles that mirror our own internal battles.

How do we redefine strength in a world that often associates it with invulnerability? This theme is explored in depth through the thought-provoking essays and poetry that challenge the notion of openness as weakness. Instead, we embrace vulnerability as a foundation for resilience and personal growth.

I have a reflective report of the ICC Winter Event 2024, held in Sinnar, Maharashtra, where a diverse group of individuals came together to explore themes of self-growth, vulnerability, and emotional healing. Through reflective activities, group discussions, and therapeutic exercises, participants were able to connect deeply with their inner worlds, uncovering valuable insights that fostered both personal transformation and collective healing

In addition, this edition features *a Listening Post written for OPUS,* which critically examines the socio-economic landscape and its profound impact on both individual and collective psychology, with a particular focus on the empowerment of women. It highlights the ways economic structures shape personal dynamics and societal narratives.

As always, I warmly invite you to submit material that you feel holds value. *CITTA* is dedicated to reviewing submissions from practitioner-scholars in psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy, especially those that draw from personal history and experience. Your reflections and thoughts are always welcomed, and we promise to publish them.

Good wishes for a safe and beautiful life.

Shreeranjini G N

You can request PDF copies of past issues of Citta:

Citta, Vol. 1; Summer 2023 on a variety of contents

Citta, Vol. 2; Winter 2023-24 on the theme of Adolescence

Citta, Vol. 3: Summer 2024 about remembering Sudhir Kakar

Echoes Within: Reflection unlocks the unconscious, helping us shape life's meaning on our own terms.

Image Credits: Grant Snider

THE DEPTHS OF VULNERABILITY: PSYCHOANALYTIC REFLECTIONS

By embracing vulnerability, individuals and communities can foster empathy and build trust—both of which are essential for healing and collective action. When we confront our fears and share our true selves, we unlock the courage to transform our most painful experiences into powerful narratives of resilience. These stories, rooted in vulnerability, become a beacon of hope, inspiring others to embrace their own journeys toward strength and acceptance.

*At the heart of this transformative perspective is **Brené Brown**, a researcher, storyteller, and author whose groundbreaking work on vulnerability, shame, and courage has reshaped the way we view human connection. Through her extensive research, Brown reveals that vulnerability is not a weakness, but rather a source of strength that enables us to build deeper relationships, foster empathy, and face our fears with courage. Her TED Talk **The Power of Vulnerability** has touched millions, and her books, such as Daring Greatly and Braving the Wilderness, offer a roadmap for embracing imperfection and cultivating authenticity. In this series, we'll explore how Brown's insights illuminate the delicate balance between vulnerability, fear, strength, and acceptance. Through reflective articles, artworks, poems, photographs, and more, we will examine how embracing our imperfections leads to profound personal and collective transformation.*

Brene Brown: *Vulnerability is not a weakness but a source of strength and connection.*

For a very long time, I was not in acceptance of the above statement, as I believed that vulnerability displays our weakness and losing control of our selves. I believed that reality was to mask vulnerability, and to put up a very brave front. My views started to change after attending the intersubjective studies and seminars, supported by group discussions. These discussions helped me look deep into myself and face my fears, and embrace my vulnerabilities.

One of my greatest fears was how I would be judged if I disclosed something which went against the norms of society.

Bommarillu, a Telugu movie, portrays a male dominated stereotypical Indian family, where parental control is considered to be love and caring, and for the welfare of the son. Due to the controls, the son growsup fearing persecution from authority. Though outwardly the son agrees to his father's conditions, inwardly the son resents his father, these inner conflicts manifesting as anxiety and frustration.

Discussions in my group helped me to be more genuine in my disclosures, as I also had theory to fall back on, I never felt guilty of sharing my genuine feelings, and also realized that there are many others too in my group with the same kind of struggle. Sharing raw feelings amongst various age groups has helped me look at control and care from various perspectives, and has healed me as well. I feel empowered and can understand that the choices I make are helpful for my individuation. This has helped me accept certain situations and handle them with care and compassion.

The journey of acceptance without masks has helped me better evolve as a person, and this journey continues. I truly believe in the statement **Vulnerability is not a weakness but a source of strength and connection**.

From **Divya Sriram***, who is a teacher with Parikrma Humanity Foundation in Bangalore and a trained psychoanalytical psychotherapist.*

Vulnerability is an intrinsic aspect of the human condition. It encompasses openness to harm, emotional exposure, and the capacity to experience both connection and rejection. Psychoanalytic theory, with its focus on unconscious desires, defences, and relational dynamics, provides a profound framework to explore the complexities of vulnerability. Through this lens, vulnerability becomes a double-edged phenomenon—both a source of growth and a potential site of psychic wounding.

Vulnerability and the Unconscious

Freudian psychoanalysis situates vulnerability in the interplay between conscious desires and unconscious conflicts. The unconscious mind harbours repressed fears, memories, and fantasies that influence how individuals navigate relationships and emotional exposure. The fear of rejection or failure, often rooted in early childhood experiences, shapes one's capacity to be vulnerable. Yet paradoxically, psychoanalysis suggests that confronting these fears and embracing vulnerability is key to psychological growth.

Freud's successors, including Carl Jung and Melanie Klein, also explored the complexities of vulnerability. Jung emphasized the importance of integrating the shadow self—the parts of ourselves we deny or hide. For Jung, vulnerability was essential for individuation, the process of becoming one's authentic self. Klein, on the other hand, focused on the internalized objects and how early relational experiences shaped our perception of vulnerability. Both perspectives underscore the transformative potential of embracing vulnerability in psychoanalytic work.

Relational Dynamics and Vulnerability

Psychoanalytic theories, particularly those rooted in object relations and attachment theory, emphasize that vulnerability is intricately linked to early relationships. Infants depend on caregivers for survival and emotional regulation, creating a profound sense of vulnerability. When caregivers are responsive and attuned, children develop a secure attachment, enabling them to tolerate vulnerability and seek emotional closeness. Conversely, inconsistent or neglectful caregiving fosters insecure attachments, making vulnerability a source of fear rather than a path to connection.

Melanie Klein's theory of internal objects illustrates how these early relational experiences are internalized, influencing how individuals perceive others and manage vulnerability. For instance, those with positive internalized objects and more good breast experience, may view relationships as sources of support and safety, while those with negative internalized objects i.e. more of bad breast experience, might find relationships as fraught with threat and rejection. The psychoanalytic exploration of these internal dynamics seeks to reframe the individual's relationship with vulnerability, enabling healthier relational patterns.

It's true that securely attached individuals are more likely to view vulnerability as a natural and tolerable aspect of relationships. They are better equipped to handle emotional exposure and seek support when needed. In contrast, those with insecure attachments may struggle with vulnerability, often resorting to avoidance or excessive dependency as a way to protect themselves from perceived threats.

The Transformative Power of Vulnerability

While vulnerability often conjures images of weakness, psychoanalytic thinkers recognize its transformative potential. Carl Jung, for example, viewed vulnerability as integral to individuation, the process of becoming one's authentic self. By confronting shadow aspects(those parts of the self, deemed unacceptable and hidden) - individuals embrace their full humanity. This journey requires vulnerability as individuals must confront uncomfortable truths about themselves and others.

The concept of the "therapeutic alliance" highlights the importance of vulnerability in the therapeutic process. A strong therapeutic alliance is built on trust, empathy, and mutual respect, allowing patients to explore their vulnerabilities without fear of rejection or harm. This alliance provides a secure base from which patients can confront and process their deepest fears and anxieties, ultimately leading to greater self-awareness and emotional well-being.

Vulnerability in Everyday Life

Beyond the therapeutic setting, vulnerability plays a crucial role in everyday life. It is essential for forming meaningful connections, fostering empathy, and promoting personal growth. In relationships, vulnerability allows individuals to share their true selves, deepening intimacy and trust. Without vulnerability, relationships may become superficial and disconnected, lacking the emotional depth needed for genuine connection.

In the workplace, vulnerability can lead to greater collaboration and innovation. When individuals feel safe to express their ideas and concerns, they are more likely to contribute creatively and take risks. Leaders who model vulnerability create a culture of openness, where employees feel valued and supported. This environment fosters a sense of belonging and empowers individuals to exploit their full potential.

Conclusion

The psychoanalytic exploration of vulnerability reveals it to be a multifaceted and deeply human experience. Though often associated with fear and exposure, vulnerability also holds the key to authenticity, connection, and psychological healing. By embracing rather than defending against it, individuals unlock the potential for profound self-awareness and transformation. In both life and therapy, the journey through the depths of vulnerability ultimately leads to personal growth.

In conclusion, while vulnerability may be perceived as a source of weakness, it is, in fact, a powerful catalyst for growth and transformation. Psychoanalytic theory provides valuable insights into the complexities of vulnerability, highlighting its role in shaping our unconscious desires, relational dynamics, and personal development. By embracing vulnerability, we open ourselves up to deeper connections, greater resilience, and a more authentic and fulfilling life.

From **Anupam Das,** *who works full-time with PSU giant Hindustan Petroleum in Mumbai and is a trained psychoanalyst.*

Being vulnerable in a relationship means taking a risk. There's a chance of getting hurt, but there's also a chance for connection and growth.

There are some very specific moments and incidents of vulnerability I experienced.

Childhood:

When I was 8, I experienced a moment of vulnerability that left a lasting impact on me. I grew up in a boarding school where most students were Anglo-Indian. One Sunday afternoon, after some students were playing near the school office, the Principal—a nun—came out and shouted at us. She grabbed my arm and took me to the office, accusing me of taking three library books. I was shocked because I had no idea what she was talking about. When I denied it, she called me a liar and a cheat, which was humiliating. I cried but stood my ground, refusing to take the blame for something I didn't do. The situation lasted for two hours. Later, my sister confronted the Principal, and two days later, the real culprits were found. Despite the humiliation, the experience made me stronger and more resilient.

Adolescence:

Growing up in a liberal Anglo-Indian family, I never faced discrimination for being a girl, unlike some of my friends. However, I once faced judgment from my friend's aunt, who criticized my dress and background. Though her comments angered me, I controlled my emotions out of respect for my friend's mother, asking what was wrong with my dress. At the time, I didn't fully understand her transference of biases, but it made me feel vulnerable.

Adulthood:

Getting married at 17 to a man from an orthodox Hindu family was unusual in my community. From the beginning, I was rejected by his family, who viewed our marriage as shameful. Despite this, my husband supported me, and our relationship grew stronger because of the challenges we faced. We were honest and vulnerable with each other, building trust and understanding. Though my husband is no longer with me, he remains my best friend, and I miss him deeply.

Professional Growth:

Through workshops and conferences on self-exploration and psychotherapy training, especially through Sukrut, I've learned the importance of vulnerability in both personal and professional life. Opening up, particularly in professional settings, has boosted my confidence. It has taught me that vulnerability fosters growth, as facing our fears and desires makes us stronger. I now feel at peace with myself, more reflective, and a better listener.

Conclusion:

Vulnerability in relationships, though risky, can lead to deep connection and growth. It is essential for trust, intimacy, and closeness. I've learned that being vulnerable isn't about showing weakness but offering our true selves to foster meaningful connections.

Psychoanalytic Reflection:

The challenges I faced shaped my resilience and identity. My father's advice to stand firm in truth during childhood laid the foundation for my strength. In adolescence, confronting judgment directly helped me assert myself. As an adult, vulnerability in my relationship helped create a strong, mutual bond. My professional journey, through workshops, has connected personal growth with confidence. Ultimately, vulnerability is essential in building meaningful relationships.

*From **Merlyn Rao**, who is the Head of Next Step Centre for Learning (NIOS Board) with Parikrma Humanity Foundation. She is a psychoanalytical psychotherapist.*

Breaking the Silence: Finding My Voice Through Vulnerability

At a recent wedding, I observed a moment that left a deep impact on me. A four-year-old boy was being asked to come on stage for a photograph, but he refused. When his parents insisted, he asked with innocent defiance, "Why do they need my photo? What will they do with it?" He cried as they dragged him forward, but he resisted, eventually running away and sitting on a chair, tears streaming down his face.

I was amazed. This little child had the courage to voice his discomfort without hesitation. He expressed his feelings openly, something I had struggled with for most of my life. Watching him made me reflect on my own past—how I had internalized silence as a means of avoiding conflict, how I had learned that being quiet was the safest way to exist in certain spaces.

As a child, I was conditioned to believe that keeping my thoughts to myself was preferable, that silence was a virtue. Over time, this belief turned into a cognitive distortion—one that shaped me into someone who constantly aimed to accommodate others, to please, to go along with things as they were. My silence became a shield, but it also became a prison.

The consequences of my silence were profound. I suppressed my emotions, and in doing so, I accumulated anxiety and stress. The fear of judgment and the weight of

social expectations held me back. I felt shameful even at the thought of expressing my true feelings. Over time, this silence led to isolation. I disengaged from others, missing opportunities for connection and growth.

The burden of unspoken thoughts was overwhelming. My mind was constantly buzzing, but I rarely spoke up. I lived in my thoughts rather than in the present moment, always taking the role of the observer. Like a bottle filled to its brim, I kept storing emotions until they became too heavy to bear.

Watching Brené Brown's Youtube video was a turning point for me. She writes, in her book "Daring Greatly" that Vulnerability is about sharing our feelings and our experiences with people who have earned the right to hear them. Being vulnerable and open is mutual and an integral part of the trust-building process. Her words resonated deeply. I had always feared being vulnerable, but I began to see it as a path to healing rather than a sign of weakness.

At first, speaking up was incredibly difficult. I had spent years silencing myself, and undoing that habit required patience and courage. But as I took small steps—building trust, facing my fears, and allowing myself to be heard—I began to feel lighter. I felt valued. I realized that my voice mattered. With each conversation, I chipped away at my self-doubt.

Brené Brown also says, "Trust is a product of vulnerability that grows over time and requires work, attention, and full engagement." The more I allowed myself to engage, the more I freed myself from the weight of silence. Slowly, I started sharing my stories with more intensity and authenticity. And as she rightly points out, "Vulnerability begets vulnerability; courage is contagious." The more I spoke, the more I realized that others, too, were seeking a safe space to be heard.

Although asking for help still feels challenging, I have learned to do it. I have learned that being open doesn't mean being weak—it means allowing myself to rely on others when needed. It means embracing the connections that vulnerability fosters.

Relationships became meaningful and the conversations were seasoned with empathy as I gave and received. I felt unjudged and was excited to hear others' struggles to build deeper connections. This made me a keen listener drawn to the story of the storyteller, with myself fully present and lively as a sign of hope.

Today, I am proud to bring out the unspoken voices of others who struggle to acknowledge their voice and voice out their inner thoughts to make them their own.

Reflecting on that four-year-old at the wedding, I now see him as a symbol of the courage I strive for—the courage to voice my discomfort, to stand firm in my emotions, and to honor my truth. Silence no longer defines me. Instead, I choose to speak, to share, and to engage with the world in a way that feels authentic and free.

And so, I ask you: How often do you silence yourself out of fear? What might happen if you embraced vulnerability instead? Perhaps, like me, you will find that your voice was never meant to be hidden—it was meant to be heard.

*From **Gracy Jebastina**,   who is a psychoanalytical psychotherapist and Founder-Promoter of Unleash Schools, providing psychological services to K12 schools in Bangalore.*

From Reflective Photography

Addressing my Vulnerability

Tell me, I am wrong for looking at the way I do.

Tell me, I am wrong for looking at the world, the way I do.

Tell me, I am wrong for being so cool on the outside, but not so real on the inside!

Tell me, I am wrong for acting upon my desires of flesh.

Tell me, I am wrong for the actions that I take that leads me to harm, but not enough to make things right!

Tell me, I am wrong for containing all of it within, but not asking for any help!

Cause I am so confused about what's wrong here.

Now, just don't!

Don't do it for the sake, or I said so.

Because you too know how hard it is to be wrong,

Tell me how hard it is to be wrong.

May be that will make things right!

*From **Goldwins K Paul**, who is a psychoanalytically informed psychotherapist. He is a Photographer and a Photo Educator.*

Photograph by Goldwins Paul K

From Reflective Artwork

Artwork by Varalakshmi N

From Reflective Artwork

The Perceived

I am admired for how I am perceived.
But the roots deep down know it all.

The pink "crossed hands"
may perhaps make me feel rejected.
But, the hand in hand helped me embrace empathy to feel loved, cared and connected.

The blue walls are where I hid myself
out of fear.
But, the walls reminded me of the courage and opened its doors for me to explore and gear.

In the red caves was where I sat feeling abandoned,
But, the caves ignited the inner strength to persist and feel empowered.

Amidst all these is where my green roots grew deeper
And as it grew deeper , it helped me rise wiser, finer and stronger

From **Varalakshmi N***, who is a psychoanalytically informed psychotherapist with Unleash Schools LLP.*

From a Reflective Poem

The Power in Softness
When life's weight bears down heavy,
and facades begin to crack,
it's in those unguarded moments
we find the courage we lack.

Tears carve paths down weary cheeks,
each drop a testament to pain.
In the rawness of our grief,
we cleanse the soul's deepest stain.

Strength isn't in the armor worn,
but in hearts that dare to be exposed.
Embracing vulnerability,
our truest power is disclosed.

Through shared stories and open scars,
we find solace in the collective embrace.
In our shared humanity, we rise,
turning vulnerability into grace.

*From **Shreeranjini GN,** who is the Head of a Parikrma Humanity Foundation school in Bangalore. She is a psychoanalytically informed, art based psychotherapist.*

INTERSUBJECTIVE REFLECTIONS

From a Film

Psychoanalytic Review of "All We Imagine as Light"

"All We Imagine as Light," directed by Payal Kapadia, delves into the intricate psyches of three women—Prabha, Anu, and Parvaty—navigating life in Mumbai. The film explores themes of loneliness, desire, and displacement, reflecting the unconscious struggles of its protagonists.

Prabha, a nurse portrayed by Kani Kusruti, embodies the conflict between societal roles and personal longing. Her reserved demeanor masks a deep-seated yearning, highlighted by her emotional attachment to a rice cooker sent by her estranged husband. This act symbolizes her repressed desires and the internal turmoil of an unfulfilled marriage.

Anu, played by Divya Prabha, engages in a clandestine relationship with Shiaz, a Muslim man. This forbidden love reflects the tension between her conscious actions and unconscious desires, challenging societal norms and internalized beliefs. Her defiance against traditional expectations signifies a struggle between the id's desires and the superego's moral constraints.

Chhaya Kadam's Parvaty faces eviction from her longtime home, representing the trauma of displacement. Her forced relocation disrupts her sense of security, mirroring the psychological impact of losing one's grounding and the ensuing identity crisis.

Mumbai itself serves as a metaphor for the unconscious mind—a bustling city filled with hidden desires and repressed emotions. The film's atmospheric portrayal of the city, with its nocturnal insomniac mood sparked by distant colored lights, evokes a sense of collective unconsciousness, where individual experiences intertwine with the broader societal fabric.

Kapadia's narrative technique blurs the lines between reality and memory, reflecting the fluid nature of the unconscious. The film's structure, interweaving the characters' stories, mirrors the fragmented yet interconnected aspects of the human psyche.

In essence, "All We Imagine as Light" offers a raw and authentic portrayal of the subconscious forces shaping human behavior, inviting viewers to confront their own internal conflicts and societal influences.

• **Shreeranjini G N**

From Literature

In "Evil as Ordinary," Parimal Ghosh delves into the complex nature of evil, particularly from the perspective of Hindu philosophy. He challenges the notion of absolute evil, suggesting that morality is often contextual and shaped by one's role in society, as reflected in Hindu concepts like Dharma. Through examples from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, Ghosh illustrates how, good and evil are intertwined in human experience, urging introspection and awareness of the multifaceted nature of human character.

Evil as Ordinary

How do we understand betrayal? Is it evil? Is there unmitigated evil? If not, then how would we understand the very many human monsters that we encounter off and on in almost every walk of life?

In our sub-continent, in Hindu culture, the ruler of Hell, *Naraka*, is *Yama*, who is held to be one of the superior gods. *Yama* is also known as *Dharma* (Justice), that which sustains and secures the life of the community. *Dharma* is commonly translated as religion, but this only hides the important fact that the Semitic understanding of religion is very different from the Hindu conception. To put it simply, according to *Dharma*, every member of the community has a role to play in keeping with the station in life determined by the person's caste and stage of life. Roles and duties, therefore, are not the same for all. *Dharma*, thus, acknowledges that a community consists of dissimilar people, whose diversities are either sanctioned/imposed or is something organic, arising from some original differences which had over millennia taken the form of caste distinctions, and from there hierarchy. It follows what is approved of as the duty of one caste would be considered a taboo/evil for another. It is also understandable why the ancient Hindus did not think of absolute or unmitigated evil as a possibility. To them, it was all contextual.

Does it also mean that ancient Hindus could not distinguish between the good and the bad, as our ex-colonial masters would have Europe believe that our ancestors were devoid of morals? On the contrary, the Hindus had an understanding of what was called *Arishadvargas* or *Shadripu*, the six sins/evils which beset the mind and prevent salvation. These are – *Kama* (Desire/Lust), *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Greed), *Moha* (Attachment), *Mada* (Ego), and *Matsarya* (Jealousy). Additionally *Alasya* (Laziness) and *Hinsa* (Violence) are also mentioned. It is interesting to see how much these aspects are similar, if not identical, to the Biblical sins - Envy, Gluttony, Greed, Lust,

Pride, Sloth, and Wrath. Unlike the Hindus though, the Semitic faiths would not prescribe different codes of behaviour for people of different stations.

Instances can be drawn from the Hindu epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, to illustrate the multi-layered, variegated understanding of evil in Hindu mythology. But before that, a couple of thoughts on what is an epic. To my mind the first sign of a literary epic is its survival. Almost typically, it is over a thousands years, long enough for people to have become familiar with the main frame of the story, and to identify with it as reflective of past glory. An epic is usually supposed to have been authored/composed by some noted poet of the past, but at least in the case of these two epics, Valmiki and Vyas, the authors appear to be mythical. People's familiarity seems to suggest that its original source was perhaps some folk lore which could have got classicized through a written form. And further, especially in the case of the Hindu epics, over centuries accretions had gathered on them giving rise to regional variations as people travelled, carrying their stories with them (Ramanujan, AK. *Three Hundred Ramayanas: Five Examples and Three Thoughts on Translation*, in Paula Richman ed. Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia, University of California Press, 1991, pp. 22-49). Consider the remarkable similarity between the stories of Ramayana, and Iliad and Odyssey: the abduction/elopement of a Queen by/with a foreign Prince. Is it not, then, possible that these were variations of some common tale that the Eurasian tribes had carried with them wherever they went! The point that I am trying to make is that epics are really a community's literature. In a pervasive sense they reflect values that are ingrained in the people of a community. Stories of epics do not belong to any out-of-this-world universe. They can be read, and perhaps are distillation of the community's life experience. It is with this perspective that we shall examine the following instances drawn from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata.*

Ravana, as we know, was the iconic figure of evil in the dominant North Indian version of the epic. He abducted *Sita*, the queen of *Rama*, and in turn was defeated and killed in battle by *Rama*. Yet, *Ravana* was the son of a reputed sage, *Viswasraba*, and the grandson of *Pulastya*, and finally a great- grandson of *Brahma*, the ultimate creator of the universe. The great evil icon was thus created by the same creator of mankind. *Ravana* had become invincible and a terror even to the gods because he had won a boon from *Brahma* through penance that he would remain unconquered by all creatures except man and ape. Let us recall, *Rama* was an incarnation of *Vishnu* in human form, and his army consisted of monkeys whom he had befriended during his travels after banishment from his kingdom.

Let us now consider another facet of the *Ravana* story, which brings into greater focus the good-in-evil and vice-versa syndrome. *Ravana* had two brothers, *Kumbhakarna* and *Bibhisana*. *Kumbhakarna* was as evil as *Ravana*, but *Bibhisana* was the religious kind and disapproved of his brothers' evil ways. When Rama appeared at the door steps of the island fortress of Lanka, *Bibhisana* promptly switched sides and joined *Rama*. He thereby betrayed his kith and kin for the sake of righteousness. *Bibhisana's* perfidy is read, perhaps inspired by his righteousness, as his hatred for the evil ways of his brothers. Nonetheless, it was an act of treachery, and thus his name has become synonymous with betrayal in everyday Bengali parlance. A traitor is readily identified as G*harbhedi Bibhisan* – a *Bibhisan* who split home and family.

This contrariness - righteousness juxtaposed with treachery - is the theme of one of the finest works of Bengali literature, *Meghnadbadh Kavya* by Michael Madhusudan Dutta (1824-73). By subversion, *The loss of a traditional enemy becomes… a cause for lamentation.* The Good and the Evil are seen to stand hand in hand.

Any number of similar instances can be drawn from the other great Hindu epic, *Mahabharata*, to show the presence of evil-in-good and vice versa. *Drona* was more than a handful for the *Pandava* brothers on the battlefield, and to eliminate him they took recourse to a low trick. *Yudhisthira,* the eldest of the *Pandavas,* was reputed to have never told a lie. He was chosen to proclaim in a loud voice that *Asvathama* was killed in battle. Earlier that day, *Bhima,* the second of the five *Kaurava* brothers, had indeed killed an elephant, also called *Asvathama*. *Yudhisthira*, while declaring that *Asvathama* was no more, had admittedly added in sotto voce - iti *Gaja*, meaning, the elephant. *Drona* heard only the first part that *Yudhisthira* proclaimed over the din of the battle, believed him and laid down his bow. It was only then that *Arjuna* could kill him.

This, by no means, is to suggest that we therefore have to come to terms with that which is perceived as evil. On the contrary, while it is easy to point fingers, it is more important to introspect and recognize in us the evil that we condemn in others. Tagore had once reminded us – (*Balaka,* 1916, Poem # 37) : *Whom do you blame, my friend? Hang your head in shame.* This sin is mine and yours. Even while in our daily quotidian lives we function as integrated personalities, we are perhaps composite characters in which different facets co-exist. Awareness of that can only improve the quality of our lives, both at the personal and the social level.

*From **Parimal Ghosh** used to teach History in the Department of South & Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta. He is now retired, and presently lives in Santiniketan, West Bengal.*

Reflections from an Ancient Civilization by Manab Bose

Unlike our Western counterparts, the Indian Hindu psychoanalyst consciously faces and reflects on the conflict between an absorbing intellectual orientation embedded in Western Psychoanalysis and the workings of a historical legacy which has made the epic a distinctive leitmotif of the dominant Indian cultural tradition and thus the core of his communal identity. As a technique of rational mediation for the scientific era, psychoanalysis, among other things, is also a successor to the more ancient introspective techniques which have drawn their sustenance from epics. In fact, historians like Parimal Ghosh have proposed that psychoanalysis in India had its origin in the Hindu milieu and in its mythical traditions.

Sudhir Kakar emphasised that the implicit model of man that underlies psychoanalytic theory is certainly not universal; the psychoanalytic notion of the person as an autonomous, bounded, abstract individual is peculiarly Western. In contrast, the holistic model of man that underlies Indian approaches and propels their practices is rooted in the very ancient Indian cultural tradition which, in some ways, lies at an opposite civilizational pole. The concept of the person in India is not in terms of the individual, but what Kakar has called a much more divisible and fluid being, in constant interchange with the environment, and conceived of as channelling and transforming heterogeneous, ever-flowing, changing substances. Indians are neither inductive generalizations nor discoveries of individual perception but creations of collective imagination, metaphors by which people guide their lives. The hidden, unconscious vocabulary then is of primitive and modem, adept and inept, good and bad, adaptive vs maladaptive.

The psychoanalytic vision of reality is primarily influenced by a mixture of the tragic and the ironic. It is tragic in so far as it sees human experience pervaded by ambiguities, uncertainties, and absurdities where man has little choice but to bear the burden of unanswerable questions, inescapable conflicts and incomprehensible afflictions of fate. Life in this vision is a linear movement in which the past cannot be undone, many wishes remain fated to be unfulfilled and desires ungratified. Fittingly enough, Oedipus, Hamlet and Lear are its heroes. The psychoanalytic vision is however also ironic in so far as it brings a detached perspective to bear on the tragic; the momentous aspects of tragedy are negated and so many gods are discovered to have clay feet. It tends to foster a reflective adaptation and deliberative acceptance. The tragic vision and its ironic amelioration are aptly condensed in Freud's offer to the sufferer to exchange his unbearable neurotic misery for ordinary unhappiness. On the other

hand, as Kakar has shown elsewhere, the Indian vision of reality is a combination of the tragic and the romantic. Man is still buffeted by fate's vagaries and tragedy is still the warp and woof of life. But instead of ironic acceptance, the Indian vision offers a romantic quest. The new journey is a search and the seeker, if he withstands all the perils of the road, will be rewarded by exaltation beyond normal human experience. The heroes of this vision are not the Oedipuses and the Hamlets but the Arjunas, and the Meeras, and perhaps Maan Singh and Veerappan.

Manab Bose, *is a psychoanalytical psychotherapist in private practice.*

From Poems on the ICC Psychotherapists / Facilitators.

Originally in Hindi by Imtiyaz Arshad, translated to English by Shabnam

ज़मीन रौंद चुके आसमान बाक़ी है	The earth is trampled, but the sky is still there
अभी कहीं न कहीं ये जहान बाक़ी है।	Somewhere or the other, this world is still there.
अक्सर वो लोग ख़ामोश रहते हैं, जमाने में जिनके हुनर बोलते हैं।	Often those people remain silent, Whose skills speak for themselves in the world.
मुख़तसर यह है हमारी दास्ताने ज़िंदगी, एक सुकुने दिल की ख़ातिर उम्र भर तड़पा किए।	In short, this is the story of our life, We have suffered all our life for a peaceful heart.
खंजर चले किसी पे, तड़पते हैं हम "अमीर" सारे जहां का दर्द हमारे जिगर में है।	If a dagger is used on someone, we "amir" suffer, The pain of the whole world is in our hearts.
इत्तेफ़ाक़ अपनी जगह, ख़ुश किस्मती अपनी जगह, अपनी मेहनत से बनाता है जहां में आदमी अपनी जगह।	Coincidence has its place, good luck has its place, A man makes his place in the world with his hard work.
मंज़िल मिले न मिले, यह ग़म नहीं मंज़िल की जुस्तजू में मेरा कारवाँ तो है। तू शाहीन है, परवाज़ काम है तेरा, तेरे सामने आसमां और भी हैं।	I don't care whether I reach my destination or not, My caravan is in search of the destination.
महफिल में चल रही थी हमारे कत्ल की तैयारी हम आए तो बोले बहुत लंबी उम्र है तुम्हारी।	Preparations were going on in the gathering for my murder When I came, they said you have lived a very long life.

बेनाम सा ये दर्द ठहर क्यूँ नहीं जाता,
जो बीत गया है वो गुज़र क्यों नहीं जाता।

दर्द हो दिल में तो दवा किजीऐ,
दिल ही जब दर्द हो तो क्या किजिए।

ग़म में कुछ ग़म का मशगला कीजिये,
दर्द की दर्द से दवा कीजिये।
रंज का खोगर हो इंसान तो मिट जाता है रंज,
मुश्किले इतनी पड़ी मुझ पे के आसां हो गईं।
धूप में निकलो, घटाओं में नहा कर देखो,
ज़िंदगी क्या है, किताबों को हटाकर देखो।

मेरे लफ्जों से ना कर मेरे किरदार का फैसला,
तेरा वजूद मिट जाएगा मुझे ढूंढते ढूंढते।

हयात ले के चला , कायनात ले के चला
चला तो सारे जमाने को साथ ले के चला।

शाखों से टूट जाएं वो पत्ते नहीं हैं हम
आंधी से कोई कह दे कि औक़ात में रहे।

Why doesn't this nameless pain stop,
Why doesn't what has passed go away.

If there is pain in the heart, then treat it,
What do you do when the heart itself is in pain?

If you are busy with some sorrow and pain,
Treat pain with pain.

If a person is a seeker of sorrow, then the sorrow vanishes,
So many difficulties fell on me that they became easy.

Go out in the sun, take a bath in the clouds and see,
What is life, remove the books and see.

Don't judge my character by my words,
Your existence will vanish while searching for me.

He took life with him, he took the universe with him,
When he went, he took the whole world with him.

We are not those leaves that break from the branches
Someone should tell the storm to stay within its .

Imtiyaz Arshad is a Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist. He is a Chief General Manager-HR at HPCL and currently a CEO and Secretary- Skill Development Institute, Visakh.

Shabnam is a Psychoanalytical Psychotherapist. She is a Senior Program Manager at Vishakha, an organization fighting against gender inequality.

Reflections from Sukrut's Inward Change Conference (ICC) in Winter 2024

Sukrut's ICC began in 2003, started by a small group of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists trained in India and overseas who addressed challenges in mental health by applications of the talking cure in group settings. Sukrut soon began to offer internship in psychoanalysis, supported with Intersubjective Study and Seminars. The training draws on depth psychoanalysis which emphasizes the real-time presentation of internal dynamics within the therapeutic relationship, and privileges authenticity. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists trained in Sukrut loathe separating transference from the actual professional relationship. They conceive transference and countertransference as features of all relationships. They comfortably connect with the inner world of feelings and thoughts to identify the toxicity of emotions that builds in the self and in systems.

The Winter Event 2024 was held in Sinnar, Maharashtra. Below are reflections by Facilitators/ Therapists who participated:

The session began with the Seeding activity, where each participant tilled the soil and sowed their seeds while engaging in a dialogue about the aspects of themselves they wished to nurture and grow. They were also encouraged to reflect on what they were leaving behind and how they felt as they stepped into the event.

As a community, we connected deeply by sharing our anxieties, worries, and fears. Together, we explored the vast universe of emotions at multiple levels. Through group discussions, participants unlocked experiences buried in pain and despair. Several recurring themes emerged, including:

- **Fear:** Unreal fear today. Residues of past abandonment and rejection shape the ability to build intimate connections today.

- **Shame:** Disconnections stemming from this feeling and its impact on relationships.

- **Repressed Emotions:** Anger, arising from raw feelings of helplessness, pain, hopelessness, loneliness.

- **Acceptance of Resourcefulness:** Am I good enough? Questioning self-worth. Navigating unrealistic expectations from oneself and others.

Ms Fakeera, a body movement therapist, facilitated the group to explore personal safety. We explored various forms of repressed grief through a powerful activity of writing letters of closure, and by writing messages to our future selves about personal aspirations and intentions helped release the grief.

During the *Marathon* Session, we collectively examined the prejudices we hold, explored the importance of expressing our needs through movement, and worked on building trust—both with ourselves and others. Folklore and storytelling played a crucial role in integrating our reflections into action, fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The session closed with the human Magic pot, to leave behind and take forward that I can implement at my life.

This journey of self-exploration and shared vulnerability provided a powerful space for growth, healing, and transformation.

- **Gracy Jebastina and Varalakshmi N**

Reflect- Realise- Rewrite: Mindfulness anchors us in the present, revealing clarity beneath chaos and letting us live with intention, not impulse.

NEWS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY for the PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY of ORGANIZATIONS (ISPSO)

ISPSO (www.ispso.org) was founded in 1983 in New York City by a group of like-minded people who organized the "First Cornell Symposium on the Psychodynamics of Organizational Behavior and Experience". They developed a format called "Annual Symposium" which have been held ever since.

The first international meeting took place in Montreal in 1990 and the first European meeting was held in London in 1995. Today our international membership consists of consultants, academics, clinicians, coaches, managers, leaders, students and others who are active in applying psycho- and socio-dynamic frameworks to inform their work and study.

By psychoanalytic we mean all approaches concerned with unconscious, subconscious or preconscious aspects of humans as individuals and when coming together in groups, teams, organizations and societies.

Reproduced below is a sample of reflective exchanges that take place between members:

Reflections on Citizenship, initiated by Pearl Tran, a Board Member. Pearl was Staff at Sukrut's International Group Relations Conference in 2021.

From members@ispso.org   On Behalf Of Pearl Tran
Sent: Sonntag, 23. März 2025 11:21
To: ISPSO Listserve <members@ispso.org>
Subject: ISPSO listserve: Reflection on Citizenship

Dear colleagues,

I have been informed of my new British citizenship, the result of an administrative process that began five and a half years ago when I left Vietnam for England, and of thirty years of marriage to an Englishman.

For a citizen of a less developed country to gain the citizenship of a more advanced one—those are the words we use—it is often seen as a cause for celebration.

Yet I do not feel the urge to celebrate, though I am relieved that the process of monitoring, recording and reporting my movements has come to an end. Instead, I am overwhelmed by a sense of loss, which puzzles me. I do not yet understand why.

I know that many of you have gone through the process of obtaining an additional citizenship, and living across ocean from home. Have you ever experienced this feeling of loss? Do you have a sense of what it might be about?

I would be grateful to hear your experiences, and reflections.

With my warmest welcome of your sharing. Pearl

Responses to Pearl were:

Dear Pearl,

Migrating to a different country and culture we try to adapt to new environment the best we can and along the way we lose partially our previous identity and build an new one as a mix of two national identities. In that process we mourn over our losses of motherland, culture and language because it is the only way to change and let go of old that is dear to us in order to embrace the new. The problem with adaptation of migrants is that it is a lifelong process so every time a new situation occurs to reminds us of who we were (and who we have become) it reminds us at the same time what we lost (and gained along the way) so every time we go through a small mourning and we become nostalgic and a bit sad.

Our dual citizenship and national identities give us so much richness in looking at the world but it comes with a scar that never really goes away and makes itself known when the new reminds us suddenly of the old.

Enjoy your new citizenship and the goods it brings and find a space to grieve for the old in order to let go.

Hugs, Dragana
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Dear Pearl,

Firstly congratulations both on your new citizenship and your active participation in ISPSO.

Many nations have gone into regression when it comes to accepting new immigrants notwithstanding the reality that these nations have benefited greatly from the immigrant population. Recently, Australia, and the Netherlands have also put a brake in accepting foreign students in their universities. Naturally, the university authorities are upset because the foreign students contribute to the coffers of these universities.

If students are being restricted, then one can imagine how these governments will treat new immigrants. My hypothesis and I could be wrong (better to call fantasy then hypothesis) is that the colonial masters in Europe have hitherto been enjoying the fruits (or shall we crudely call plundering) of their colonies which over the decades have dwindled. So, they can't afford the good life any more. Therefore they have turned their anger (projection?) on to the hardworking immigrants.

When my ancestors came to Malaya (now Malaysia) around 1875 entry and exit was so relaxed. I am fortunate to be living in a country which is relatively well managed and has good natural resources. I don't think of emigrating.

But my empathy is for those who want to emigrate for various reasons. Unfortunately it's no longer going to be easy for citizens to move from one country to another given the political climate in most countries.

Vaseehar Hassan Abdul Razack
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Dear Pearl and colleagues,

Ambivalence, loss, emptiness, not causes for celebration. I hesitated to respond as I have a parallel experience. I regained my European heritage by weaving through endless bureaucracy and archived records. Now I have an Austrian passport. I am celebrating with complex feelings of gratitude and anger. Why did I have to reclaim something that was taken away? The rise of right wing politics, is hardly something I want to be connected to. And how do I feel about also being British sending Arms to the Middle East? However Pearl, with your sharing we have all reconnected to our complex identities. Thank you.

Angela Eden
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I have always felt a strong urge to return to my roots in India during extended stays in UK and USA, and have recognized the **joy** in my unconscious to return to the warmth and safety of a place called home. So, an overwhelming feeling of joy which I cherish.

Manab Bose
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Dear Pearl, Thank you for opening a personal discussion that is relatable to so many colleagues. For me, ISPSO is a sentient group that struggles together to give meaning via a loosely shared theoretical base. You inspire a trusting environment on the listserve that colleagues have strived for, but not always been able to achieve.

There are many ways one can feel alien to the country in which we reside. Until two months ago, I would not have believed my native land could alter its course, alienate its allies, betray age old values and leave half its citizens confused and bereft. There have been warnings that a democracy is a fragile construction that requires nurturance and care from its citizens. I always presumed US citizens made mistakes but we shared core values that were not disputable. Now we have let in a force that feels vengeful and indestructible. This force is not law abiding and threatens to destroy all voices of dissent. Whatever America's shortcomings, this audacious lawlessness was not number one.

My feeling is similar to how perplexed I am when a client does something significant that I failed to anticipate. What did I miss? How come I'm this surprised and off balance. I do a postmortem going over every detail to discover how I lost the thread. But now, when issues are this overwhelming and daily assault comes from unexpected directions, I'm stunned and struggle to keep my balance. I am indeed a foreigner in the land of my birth.

I want to share my concerns for the success of the next Annual Meeting. Among the treasures that are threatened is the capacity and motivation of members to make the journey from Europe, Australia and India to the US. I am angry and sad about this possibility.

Carole Eigen
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Interestingly, I have been reading a reflection on the colonial history of the British in India by an eminent Indian social historian. She draws parallels with the Indian diaspora becoming citizens overseas: *All over the world emigrants hold on passionately to the culture of their homeland. South Hall in London and Jackson Heights in New York are not aberrations. There the Bengalees celebrate Durga Puja, the North Indians their Diwali and the South Indians their Navratri with more zealous faithfulness than those who stay back in the homeland do. People carry their culture with them, and symbolically retain them. Otherwise, how would they survive in a foreign land, in an unaccustomed climate, among unfamiliar customs and unknown people? Bengal Club was a part of Britain in Calcutta (Roy, Bharati. 2024. The Bengal*

Club in History: Birth and Survival). Our collective unconscious plays out in many conscious ways in foreign lands.

Thanks, Pearl, for invoking both my personal and collective.

Manab Bose
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Pearl and others, thanks for sharing. All such transitions are full of emotion. I migrated to Australia as a child and didn't become an Australian citizen until later in life. At that time being British gave me practically everything Australian citizens had and I was somehow hanging on to my old identity. I still have many relatives in the UK and often have felt a kind of torn identity between there and here. It was only when I was invited onto the staff of a Leicester GR conference that I felt I had to go there as an Australian (when I first did Leicester back in 1979, I was called a colonial even though at that stage I had a British passport). Somehow having the position of trying to contain and work with projections onto an Australian was part of the job. So I took out citizenship.

For many years I felt a sense of loss, even though most of my life has been spent here, and I now strongly identify with this country - not necessarily the politics but with the landscape and its nature - the feeling is ancient out in the bush and full of deep and rich spirit although often harsh on my british skin and sensitivities. Yet Britain of the past seemed so much linked with childhood -and the transition to adulthood, itself holds many losses as well as gains. And taking Australian citizenship has been psychologically complex given the colonialism and treatment of indigenous peoples. Perhaps for me, it was a lost innocence as a child. The world as it is now has so much pain and horror.

Susan Long
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ISPSO will hold its Annual Meeting 2025 in June, in Philadelphia, USA. Sukrut has been invited to do a Professional Development Workshop (PDW) on 26 June 25, during the AM. Here is what it proposes to present:

This presentation for ISPSO, examines the integration of ancient Indian psychotherapy with Western psychoanalysis to enhance leadership and organization development in India. Sukrut India, a psychotherapy clinic in Bangalore, demonstrates how combining indigenous practices with Western methods can address organizational and individual challenges. The session highlights the effectiveness of this approach in fostering sustainable growth and healing within Indian businesses and non-profits.

LEADERSHIP and ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS in INDIA
Ancient Psychotherapy at the Intersection with Western Psychodynamic Practice

Sukrut appreciates that integration of psychotherapeutic practices from ancient civilizations with Western psychodynamic practice is increasingly necessary for sustained leadership and organization development in indigenous entities, now that pure Western psychodynamics is proving inadequate. Without such integration, we continue to project onto other people or collectives that we do not recognize in ourselves, with harmful consequences.

An Indian master taught how to practice observing the body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness helped resolve human suffering. He taught about the interdependent nature of all things and explained that meditating on interdependence was very important. He explained that all things depend on each other for their arising, development, and decline. Without dependent co-arising, nothing could exist. Within one thing exists all things. Meditation on dependent co-arising, he said, has the power to break through fixed and narrow views.

This was Buddha in 500 BCE.

Indian business and not-for-profit organizations have begun to realize the significance of interventions with foundations in its own psychodynamic roots balanced with appropriate psychoanalytic practices from the West.

Interventions from Buddhism are established as psychotherapy in science. Buddha promoted the practice of *nirvana*, meaning *the state beyond sorrows.* Freud referred to a nirvana principle many centuries later. The day-to-day evidence of the death instinct and its nirvana principle is in our desire for happiness. If we look carefully, we see that much of our suffering is caused by disturbances in our thoughts and feelings. These are the results of mental *afflictions, meaning that which afflicts from within.* Buddhism lists six primary afflictions – ignorance, attachment, anger, pride, afflicted views, and afflicted doubt. And, both Buddha (500 BCE) and Freud (1856-1939) theorized, we direct our afflictions away from ourselves in the form of greed, aggression, cruelty, and destructiveness.

According to Freud, the unconscious is the source of our motivations, whether they be simple desires for food or sex or neurotic compulsions. And yet, we are often driven to deny or resist becoming conscious of these motives, and they are often available to us only in disguised form. Jung (1875-1961) termed individuation as the unity of inner

opposites, or recognizing the many contradictions within ourselves. This self-knowledge would allow a sense of unity of purpose in our life and our personality to emerge. Jung recounted that as a boy, he realized that there were two basic aspects to a person's being, which he termed personality No. 1, *the Self,* and personality No. 2, *the Other.* His own No. 1 was the boy who did his homework and got into fights, but he also sensed a No. 2 that rested on a *timeless, imperishable* stone of wisdom. Jung went out of his way to listen to this part of himself because he felt it to be his most valuable, and his lifetime's work in exploring the various sides and dimensions of the Self means that today we are not afraid of talking about this   No. 2 personality, variously called the shadow, the *higher Self*, and the *true Self*. Girindrashekhar Bose, the father of Indian psychoanalysis, in his doctoral thesis on repression, instilled in many practitioners in India the need to explore personal and collective histories, through a lens which he defined as the three critical Ds of Indian psychoanalysis – deprivation, denial, discrimination. Bose wrote: *The field of repression in normal life is very much wider than usually believed. Our ideas of morality, crime, punishment, chastity, social duty etc. all owe their motive powers to this source.*

Sukrut intends to address two aims at the PDW:

First, borrowing from Buddhism as well as Western psychoanalysis, demonstrate practice in the larger relational system in which organization leadership in India crystallizes, and in which experience is continually and mutually shaped.

Second, showcase an alternative education and training model for psychoanalytic psychotherapists in India. Leadership and OD education & training has become increasingly intersubjective. Debates in the classroom are about interacting subjectivities, reciprocal mutual influence, colliding organizing principles, conjunctions and disjunctions, attunements and mal-attunements, a vocabulary attempting to capture the endlessly shifting, inter-subjective context of intra-psychic experience – in the clinical situation and in psychodynamic consulting to organizations in India.

OPUS's Listening Post 2025 - Report from India.

OPUS (www.opus.org.uk)- An Organisation for Promoting Understanding Society, *was founded by Sir Charles Goodeve in 1975 with the object of promoting understanding of society and of organisations within society. He believed that, if we were better able to understand the processes operating in industry and society – particularly those causing conflict – then our decisions could become more rational, we would become more effective managers of ourselves and others and we would be able to act with greater authority and responsibility as citizens.*

In establishing OPUS as a non-political organisation with charitable status, Sir Charles was supported and encouraged by The Tavistock Institute and the Industrial Society. Its study and promotion of a better understanding of society – how it works and how the individual relates to it – was recognised as a distinctive field that was not addressed by other bodies.

OPUS aims to develop a deeper understanding of conscious and unconscious organisational and social dynamics; and to promote reflective citizenship – using this understanding to act authoritatively and responsibly as members of society and organisations within society.

Listening Posts are regular meetings that take a 'snapshot' of society at a particular moment in time. They explore the idea that a small group, when studying the behaviour of the wider social system that is society, will unconsciously express some of the characteristics of society and that these are discernible from the themes and patterns emerging from the discussion.

This method of exploring the underlying dynamics in society is without parallel as a piece of social science research, with data now available from over 30 countries around the world.

Since they originated in 1975, Listening Posts have been developed and standardised by OPUS. The current format was adopted in 2000.

The International Listening Post Project is convened on an annual basis to coincide with the London New Year Listening Post. The Project was first convened in fifteen countries in 2004. Now, in January of each year, Listening Posts are held in around thirty countries under the guidance and coordination of OPUS. These are all presented in a common format as a Global Report.

India joined this global initiative in 2009; a summary of its reports are available in the website of OPUS.

Presented below is a summary of the report for Jan 25. Fourteen (14) individuals volunteered pro bono in the development of this LP Project, including the two Convenors. The report was submitted in Feb 25.

The SHARING of EXPERIENCES

The submissions build on India's socio-economic status, both macro and micro, that impact 'the stuff of people's everyday lives': their 'socio' or 'external' world.

The *Macro* Socio-Economic Scenario

India's economy looks resilient, with a 6%-plus GDP growth rate despite a global slowdown of key economies. However, optimism increased among low-income groups amid price rises and a lack of adequate job opportunities. The informal sector shrank, and a dip in unemployment was mainly driven by a shift towards agriculture and self-employment.

Educational Mobility. Does a child growing up in India have a reasonable chance of making a greater income and achieving a higher social status than their parents? Is this equally true for poorer and richer children? Are the prospects brighter in some states or regions? How has economic growth factored into these calculations? The study of social mobility is concerned with these questions. The broad verdict, with some contestation, is that while absolute mobility has increased – younger people have gained more education and tend to have higher incomes than their parents – relative mobility has not increased and may even have fallen in recent years. A young person tends to be better-educated than his (or her) father (or mother), but the children of less-educated fathers and mothers still tend to be less well-educated than those of better-educated parents – and this gap may not have diminished over the years. Literacy and educational achievement have grown apace. Compared to their parents, who have less than six years of education, the average Indian of the generation currently 20–40 years old has more than 10 years of formal education. National data shows how the average young man has almost five more years of education than his father, and the average young woman has seven more years than her mother.

Occupational Mobility. The verdict on occupational mobility is clearer though still not unequivocal. Across generations, the sons and daughters of parents with lower-status and lower-paying occupations have gravitated towards low-status occupations. Another group of micro studies, based in different times or in other parts of the country, have uncovered a more fluid occupational structure and greater upward mobility. Such divergent findings, instead of being contradictory, are suggestive of a rich and

variegated tapestry, indicating how locally derived influences could make a big impact on social mobility. While outmigration and non-farm employment have attracted both the top and the bottom echelons of village society, these moves have tended to reinforce, rather than erode, social hierarchies.

Income Mobility. The least well-studied, income mobility is, and will remain, a relatively understudied aspect of mobility in India. In contexts characterised by widespread informality and large agrarian populations, where many have multiple, causal occupations, and where seasonality and volatility impose high variability from month-to-month, it is hard to pin down someone's average monthly income. The role played by families and communities in shaping individuals' aspirations and prospects is a related concern. The effects of policy changes and market opportunities are refracted through the lens of family norms, values, and practices. Mobility itself is an experiential process, one that is rarely linear, and is embedded within the context of family and community.

Social Status. Although the charge of historical rigidity is contested, later research overwhelmingly shows how ritually lower-ranked social groups have not made the same progress economically as other groups. There is some contestation in the case of tribals and minority communities, but these are commodious term that lump together diverse groups from disparate parts of the country. Studies that have examined these aspects show that Muslims experienced a downturn in relative mobility. Among Christians, one early study finds that converting to Christianity has been a mixed blessing without clearly visible or commonly shared gains in material status. Social status is a multifaceted construct, not signified uniquely by wealth, education or occupational position. Groups and individuals seek to raise their own self-esteem and win others' regard, for instance, by changing their consumption habits, fashion styles, and patterns of behaviour, and in these and other manners, engage in "anticipatory socialisation".

Opportunity. A large majority of studies classified under opportunity are in fact concerned narrowly with access to education and with educational mobility. Considering opportunity as equivalent to access to basic services, such as health, housing and electricity, we find a pattern of low and inequitable opportunity. The structure of opportunities facing some individual can be conceived in terms of ease of access and number and quality of accessible ladders.

Conclusions. Macro-economic reflections about India indicates that it is at a critical juncture. Rapid growth has gone together with rising joblessness, widespread informality, and growing inequality, dashing the hopes of millions of young people. What has been learned so far is both important and encouraging. Educational achievement has soared. Illiteracy is, by and large, a thing of the past. Poverty becomes easier to accept when it is assured that a child will have a better future. Better opportunities and social mobility engender peaceful and harmonious societies. Social mobility goes together with broad-based talent development. For all these reasons, it is essential to strengthen the knowledge base of economic policy.

The *Micro* Economy – Best of Plain Facts

The Flips of the Poll Year. Marred by complaints of lower voter turnouts in blistering heat, the big Lok Sabha elections of 2024 gave Narendra Modi his expected third term in power, but with a weaker mandate than before. This forced India into its first coalition government in a decade, upending exit poll predictions.

How India Spends. The year saw the first official release of a household consumption expenditure survey (HCES) in India since 2011-12, pointing out possible poor coverage of welfare schemes among the poorest Indians, and a disturbing picture of inequality: The top 10% of urban Indians spend USD 195.50 per head per month, more than thrice the median person. Free welfare goods and services were instrumental in bridging these inequalities.

Decoding Young Indians. As usual, surveys of millennial and Gen Z urban Indians told us that most (88%) urban Indians identify as middle-class. Even among those earning top-end salaries, the share exceeds 50% for over half of the respondents logging salaries of below USD 1175 a month per person.

Unhealthy Trend. The regional reports submitted every Quarter, when compiled, shows that rural India spends 47% of its monthly expenditure on food, of which nearly 9.8% is on processed food and beverages, way above fruits (3.9%), vegetables (6.03%), cereals (4.9%), and eggs/fish/meat (4.9%). The figure for urban India is 39% and of which 11% is on unhealthy eating. The survey was carried out in 1.54 lakh rural and 1.07 lakh urban households. Substitution of nutritious diets by ultra-processed food products and sugar sweetened beverages is an alarmingly rising trend in India, indicating increase in non-communicable diseases such as diabetes.

The Heat is On. Our Quarterly wrap of the global economy featured the growing climate crisis: so much of what we hopefully foresee for the world is increasingly coming under peril. In India alone, in just the first nine months of the year, 3,238 lives were lost to such events, compared to 2,923 in the same period in 2023.

Films reflect society. Women-led cinematic gems are now rubbing shoulders with men-centric commercial productions. When the Oscar nominations are announced in Jan 25, an India that makes few women-led films is pinning its hopes for glory on two independent features about women, helmed and headlined by women. Payal Kapadia's All We Imagine As Light, a France-India co-production, won the Grand Prix at Cannes Film Festival 2024. Read our report elsewhere in this edition of Chitta.

IDENTIFICATION of MAJOR THEMES

Theme 1: Economic Growth and Social Inequalities

India's economic landscape has witnessed rapid growth, yet the disparity between the privileged and the underprivileged persists. The narrative underscores the complex interplay between policy, social norms, and economic development.

Theme 2: Contradictions in Social Mobility

While absolute mobility (such as increased education levels) has improved, relative mobility remains stagnant or has declined. The urban-rural divide, caste and minority status, and gender disparities emerge as key barriers to upward mobility.

Theme 3: Health, Lifestyle, and Climate Concerns

Rising consumption of ultra-processed foods and the associated health risks point to shifting lifestyle patterns in both urban and rural India. Additionally, the intensifying climate crisis underscores the urgent need for sustainable practices and effective policy interventions.

Theme 4: Cultural Shifts and Representation, Emergence of Women Power

Indian cinema mirrors societal transitions, with women-led narratives gaining prominence, challenging traditional gender norms. The global recognition of such films signifies an evolving cultural landscape, celebrating diversity and progressive storytelling. Women in India are increasingly asserting their agency, breaking barriers in education, employment, and social leadership.

THE DYNAMICS and HYPOTHESIS FORMATION

The underlying dynamics and hypotheses that account for Theme 1: Economic Growth and Social Inequalities.

Economic growth deepens disparities by failing to include marginalized groups, exacerbating social alienation, especially for women.

Hypothesis: Rapid economic growth widens inequalities and increases loneliness, particularly among women, as migration and workplace integration disrupt traditional support systems.

The underlying dynamics and hypotheses that account for Theme 2: Contradictions in Social Mobility.

Absolute mobility masks the stagnation of relative mobility caused by structural inequalities and geographical disparities.

Hypothesis: Migration and education, while offering opportunities, contribute to a sense of displacement and isolation among individuals, particularly in urban settings.

The underlying dynamics and hypotheses that account for Theme 3: Health, Lifestyle, and Climate Concerns.

Global inaction on climate protocols exacerbates environmental degradation, with disproportionate impacts on vulnerable communities.

Hypothesis: The worsening climate crisis is driven by neglect of international protocols, particularly by developed nations, leading to increased vulnerability in low-income and rural populations.

The underlying dynamics and hypotheses that account for Theme 4: Cultural Shifts and Representation, Emergence of Women Power.

Cultural narratives increasingly reflect shifts toward inclusivity but highlight the growing emotional toll of breaking traditional norms.

Hypothesis: While cultural and gender representation improves, the psychological burden of navigating change in rigid societies leads to increased feelings of isolation and resilience challenges.

Convenors: Shreeranjini G N and Manab Bose

Workshop on Teacher Sensitivity- Report 1

The Workshop on Teacher Sensitivity, conducted in collaboration with Parikrma Humanity Foundation and Sukrut, and led by Ven. Thubten Kalden, is thoughtfully designed to nurture essential qualities in educators, qualities that not only contribute to their personal growth but also empower them to positively shape the lives of their students. In a time when global interdependence is more evident than ever, the role of a teacher extends beyond instruction; it calls for deep sensitivity, self-awareness, and compassion. These attributes form the foundation of a supportive learning environment where students can grow both intellectually and emotionally.

The workshop encourages educators to cultivate mindfulness, build empathetic relationships, and serve as role models of compassion within their classrooms. The sessions established a meaningful context by highlighting the significance of recognizing our shared humanity and the necessity of compassion in addressing global and local challenges. By emphasizing inner transformation, the workshop aims to develop educators who inspire trust and emotional resilience in their students—laying the groundwork for a more thoughtful, connected generation.

The Importance of Compassionate Leadership in Education

A key takeaway from the session was the role of compassionate leadership in fostering inclusive and nurturing educational spaces. Teachers, especially those in leadership roles, have the ability to influence not just their students but the culture of the entire school community. When educators lead with empathy and understanding, they create classrooms where students feel seen, heard, and respected. Such environments are fertile ground for both academic success and emotional development. Participants were encouraged to embrace leadership that is grounded in wisdom, kindness, and a deep sense of responsibility toward the well-being of others.

The Power of Debate

As the workshop progresses, now having completed five sessions, one of the highlights has been an engaging exploration of the power of debate. Drawing inspiration from the Buddhist tradition—particularly Tibetan monastic education—debate is viewed not as confrontation, but as a method of inquiry and growth. It is used as a disciplined practice to refine thought, develop clarity, and approach complex questions with openness and humility. When integrated into teacher development, this approach allows educators to critically engage with ideas

while remaining grounded in compassion. It nurtures the ability to listen deeply, challenge respectfully, hold multiple perspectives and skills that are invaluable in today's diverse classrooms.

Moving forward, the workshop will continue to incorporate practices like debate to deepen sensitivity and equip teachers with the tools to foster thoughtful, inclusive, and transformative learning spaces.

Blogpost

This article by Jyoti M. Rao explores the ongoing suppression of student activism, particularly in response to protests regarding human rights violations in Gaza. It highlights the historical pattern of negative portrayals of activists, from the civil rights movement to present-day student protestors, which are rooted in "social transference." The author argues that these negative perceptions of activists are not only psychological but also reflect societal biases and power dynamics that facilitate repression. Ultimately, the article stresses the importance of critically examining these portrayals and recognizing the transormative potential of student activism for social justice.

Attacks on Student Activism: A Psychoanalytic Perspective by Jyoti M. Rao

International experts have concluded that recent crackdowns on campus protests have created "a widespread hostile environment for the exercise of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association" and recommended that universities find ways to respect and support their students. Still, student activists and their allies have seen escalating disciplinary actions taken against them for speaking out against the horrific human rights violations in Gaza as a result of military bombardment substantially underwritten by the U.S. government. These actions against students have included extensive surveillance, involvement of armed law enforcement, suspensions, threats to employment, and declarations of tenured faculty as *personae non gratae* for participating in protests. In the early months of 2025, escalation of this hostility has included withdrawal of federal funding from universities at which protests took place and an executive order targeting students and casting their political activity in propagandistic terms.

While narratives about contemporary student protestors portray them as uniquely suspect and deserving of punishment, activists and reformers have been maligned throughout U.S. history:

"How far do we go in tolerating these people and this trash under the excuse of academic freedom and freedom of expression?" (President Ronald Reagan, referring to Free Speech Movement student protestors in California, 1967)

"If anyone came into my store and tried to stop business I'd throw him out. [He] should behave himself and show he's a good citizen. Common sense and good will can solve this whole thing." (President Harry Truman, referring to Southern lunch-counter desegregation activists, 1960)

"They're the worst type of people that we harbor in America." (Governor James Rhodes of Ohio, referring to student antiwar protestors, 1970; Rhodes subsequently ordered the Ohio National Guard to suppress campus protests against the Vietnam War, resulting in the Kent State Massacre)

"It's an excess of free speech to use—to resort to some of the tactics these people use." (President George H. W. Bush, referring to ACT UP members seeking care for people with AIDS, 1991)

"They don't know very much at all…about history, in many areas of the world, including in our own country." (former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, referring to pro-Palestinian student protestors, 2024)

 "[They] cannot count forever on the kind of restraint that's thus far left [them] free to clog the streets, disrupt traffic, and interfere with other men's rights." (Senator Jesse Helms, referring to southern civil rights activists, 1963)

"So ridiculous. [She] must work on her Anger Management (sic) problem, then go to a good old-fashioned movie with a friend." (President Donald Trump, referring to climate activist Greta Thunberg, after she was named Person of the Year by *Time Magazine* at the age of 16, 2019).

"[He] is the most notorious liar in the country." (FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, referring to Martin Luther King, Jr., 1964)

This rhetoric is notably consistent in its condemnation of activists and activism across time, context, location, and issue. In these accounts, activists are repeatedly described as dishonest, contemptible, intrusive, ignorant, excessive, undesirable, dangerous, pathological, and punishable—the same devaluing terms in which student activists are described by many in power today. Yet almost all the quotes above refer to people and causes we now rightly credit for their efforts to win essential gains through their activism.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, negative portrayals of activists are rooted in a form of transference, a re-experiencing in the present of past affective and relational formations, broadly construed. Although clinical psychoanalysis has focused

intensively on the dynamics of the transference between the patient and the clinician, Freud theorized transference as a ubiquitous feature of interpersonal life, an aspect of all relational interactions. This has led to a proliferation of conceptualizations, including what is known as institutional transference: patterns from the past that shape one's perception of institutions and what transpires within them. Similarly, in psychoanalytic work in public health settings, some analysts have posited a bureaucratic transference: subjective perceptions in the present that have their origins "in prior experience with social agencies and social configurations."

Building on this work, I have proposed a concept that may assist in understanding stubborn antagonism towards student activists—what I've referred to elsewhere as "social transference," which is a particular form of transference emerging from the larger social context and directed at specific groups and at individuals understood to represent those groups. Social transferences may be positive and idealizing, as in white supremacy or adulation of the wealthy. Or they may be negative and devaluing, as in the case of attacks against people who are Palestinian, trans, poor, undocumented—or who are vocal in their defense, such as contemporary student activists. Ascribing qualities to others via projection in pre-scripted and repetitive ways is a hallmark of transferential process, as is the revivification in the present of relational patterns from the past. Sigmund Freud noted that we repeat in the transference what we refuse to remember; this may be especially salient in areas of longstanding trauma, such as social injustice.

Although all transferences begin as internal psychological processes, they may result in material actions taken against activists in the external world, including arrests and other disciplinary actions. Civil rights workers fighting for voting rights and desegregation faced physical violence, including lethal force, at the hands of both law enforcement and white supremacist gangs. Just days before the Ohio National Guard opened fire on Vietnam-era student antiwar protestors at Kent State University, killing four, student activists were maligned by President Nixon as "bums blowing up campuses" and squandering their opportunity to learn, and by Ohio's governor as "the worst type of people"—accusations similar to those directed at present-day students protesting the dire conditions in Gaza. In the aftermath of the murders, a local resident was quoted as saying: "I don't feel sorry for the kids, they asked for it." In early March 2025, the federal government took the extraordinary step of initiating proceedings to deport former Columbia University graduate student Mahmoud Khalil, a lawful permanent U.S. resident and green card holder, for his role in campus activism.

The open aggression and absence of empathy towards these student activists is, at least in part, the product of negative social transference, which leads to the vilification of activists as dangerous, lazy, overly entitled, irrational, undesirable, and disposable agitators. Abuses of power are facilitated by these transferences, in which negative attributes are assigned to activists and ostensibly reasonable action is taken against them as if these attributes were real.

Transferential dynamics may make our perceptions feel accurate despite their sometimes extreme distortions of reality. Thus it is crucial to view these negative portrayals critically—indeed, to consider them within a psychoanalytic "hermeneutics of suspicion." While valid disagreement and critiques of contemporary student activism exist, it is essential to distinguish them from the powerful transferential elements that have been used to justify over 3600 arrests in largely non-violent protests, to obscure widespread support for student protestors among students themselves, and to justify federal transgressions against lawful citizens. Anti-activism tactics capitalize on negative social transferences to polarize the public and undermine the integrity of civil society.

Transferences may be perniciously paired with structural forces, such as Jim Crow in the post-Civil War South and the nationwide Lavender Scare of the 1940s and 1950s—phenomena that helped set the stage for unchecked negative social transferences to converge with the political exclusion of Black and LGBTQ+ citizens who might have acted as reality-checking deterrents to what so often followed: state violence used with impunity against those who resisted oppression with social justice activism.

Similarly, the banning of affirmative action and current purges of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs have already led to steep declines in diversity on many college campuses, weakening the opportunities for learning and solidarity that such diversity provides. As the renowned scholar Robert Jay Lifton writes, scholarship and activism share important, mutually informing resonances. Weakening one results in the weakening of the other, a fact that is currently being used strategically to undermine both.

Social justice activism, including student activism, holds interpretive value that may contribute to a "working through" of the social transference. The transformation of negative social transferences is part of the potential for therapeutic action inherent in the interpretive action of social justice work. Other therapeutic actions offered by activists include the provision of direct emotional support and opportunities for

introjection, catharsis, insight, and identification. In psychoanalytic terms, repression of student activism is a violent acting out of the negative social transference and a resistance against the interpretations being offered by activists to those who will listen.

In the case of students protesting Palestinian suffering, campus activists are drawing attention to the violent deaths of upwards of 46,000 people, at least half of them women and children. Over 60,000 children in Gaza will need treatment for acute malnutrition this year, a condition which carries the risk of lifelong illness. Nearly all children in the area face dire mental health consequences from the trauma they are enduring. Student activists on campuses today, with their understanding of the present and their vision of a different future, are being punished to quash the interpretive potential of their activism as they persist in drawing attention to the nation's failure to safeguard basic human rights and to foster the capacity for love.

Upcoming Events

Group Relations India is pleased to announce its next Listening to the Unconscious in Self, Groups and Systems workshop, the 10th in this series, on the dates July 30-August 2, 2025 at the GCC Hotel and Club, Mumbai.

The workshop is for those who wish to learn through direct experience, how unconscious processes operate at the level of self, groups and systems. A familiarity with these dynamics opens up choices that may enable us to support the development of groups and systems we are part of.

The brochure, with more details of the workshop, will be available by the end of April. Till then, we thought those interested may like to save the date! Do also share with others who may be interested!

Vartika Jaini   Lokesh
Workshop Director   Workshop Administrator

www.grouprelationsinda.org

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Group Relations Conference on Being and Belonging – Explorations in Co-operation and Community

Hosted by OPUS and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust, this 3-day experiential Group Relations workshop will explore the dynamics of collaboration, leadership, and belonging through system-psychodynamic thinking and therapeutic community principles. With influences ranging from Wilfred Bion to Argentine Tango, the event offers a unique opportunity to reflect on our roles in groups, embrace nonverbal forms of connection, and discover new ways of being together.

The event will take place from August 28 to 30, 2025, at the Tavistock Centre in London, and more information can be found at www.beingandbelonginggrc.org.uk.

announces
The 29th. Inward Change Conference 2024 (ICC 25) Summer
from 23 to 29 April 2025
at Conoor, Tamil Nadu

Sukrut is an institution committed to the promotion of knowledge and practice in psychoanalysis. Starting in 2003, a small group of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists trained in India and overseas, began to address challenges in mental health by applications of the *talking cure*. Sukrut soon began to offer internship in psychoanalysis, supported with intersubjective study and seminars. The training draws on *relational psychoanalysis* which emphasizes the real-time presentation of internal dynamics within the therapeutic relationship, and distinguishes itself by emphasizing the effect of real interpersonal relationships on development. Sukrut psychotherapists privilege authenticity. They liberally self-disclose. They loathe separating transference from the actual professional relationship. They conceive transference and countertransference as features of all relationships.

Professionals trained in Sukrut comfortably connect with the inner world of *feelings* to identify the toxicity that builds in the self. In both personal and group relations, as well as in consulting with education, social entrepreneurship, government, and industry, Sukrut helps leaders identify the psychodynamics of systems that inhibit growth and development.

The INTERNSHIPS

Internships with Sukrut are informed by applied psychoanalysis and intersubjective study, thereby creating a containing, holding, protective environment, attuned to the needs of interns and providing them with high levels of close, careful listening and attention. They embrace Winnicott's oft-quoted phrase that it is a *joy to be hidden, but a disaster not to be found*.

ICC has morphed into immersions across three phases, offered annually in Winter and Summer.

Phase 1 offers exploration into the world of feelings as central to decision-making. This stand-alone phase seeks to help individuals become aware of, make sense of, regulate, accept, express, and transform emotional experiences. It is based on an evolutionary understanding of feelings as an innate and adaptive system which helped

us survive and thrive. Our feelings give us important information about the world, and about our wellbeing and the toxicity within; they inform us of our needs and guide our actions. Acquiring new perspectives, in an atmosphere of sharing without being judged, opens new insights into a world of being (the internal world) and of becoming (the external world). The immersion also helps explore and arrive at new meaning-making and choice-making for the actual decisions that we take.

Phase 2 is an exploration into current roles as they emerge from explorations into the formation of identity. This phase also offers exploration into the authorization of the self in systems, based on international practices in Group Relations (GR) and Sukrut's The India Conference (TIC).

Phase 3 is a continuation of *unpeeling* the unconscious in the self, and understand the links with key psychoanalytic theories. Interns will be required to explore repressed material in the personal unconscious.

If you are curious to learn more about ICC, please contact any of the following:

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Theme: CITTA – Volume 5

Understanding Power: A Psychoanalytic Perspective

Dear All,

It is with great enthusiasm that I announce the theme for *CITTA* Volume 5: *Understanding Power: A Psychoanalytic Perspective.* Power, in its various forms, shapes the very fabric of our social, political, and personal lives. From a psychoanalytic standpoint, power is not merely a tool of control or dominance but an intricate force that influences the psyche, often unconsciously, and impacts our relationships, identities, and collective structures.

In India, the dynamics of power are deeply rooted in history, from colonial rule to caste hierarchies. These systems of control are not just political but psychological, creating internalized feelings of inferiority and oppression. As Dr. Sudhir Kakar writes, "Power is often perceived as a way to affirm one's self-worth," rooted in unconscious insecurities. Colonialism and caste structures have left enduring psychological scars, influencing contemporary struggles for identity and equality.

Power is also a source of transformation and reformation. When harnessed with empathy, insight, and collective purpose, power can drive social change and healing. Throughout history, movements for freedom, equality, and justice have shown how power, when used for the common good, can dismantle systems of oppression and create a space for renewal and growth. In this light, power becomes a positive force that fosters resilience and enables the rebuilding of communities and identities.

The psychoanalytic exploration of power also brings to light the concept of *repression*—how society often represses the marginalized voices, creating a silence that prevents healing and progress. Power, when used to oppress, thrives on this silence, but it is in the act of speaking out and confronting this power that true liberation can begin. In India's ongoing struggle for social justice, the power of expression—whether through activism, art, or literature becomes a tool for reclaiming agency and dignity.

In the spirit of this exploration, I invite you to contribute to this volume with reflections, articles, artworks, poems, or any form of creative expression that delves into the psychoanalytic understanding of power. How do we internalize power, and how do we resist it? How do historical forces of domination continue to shape our psyches and identities today? Can we, through a psychoanalytic lens, understand how to reclaim

power in ways that heal rather than harm? How can we, individually and collectively, harness the power within us to create positive change and foster empathy, trust, and understanding?

Let us examine the ways power, both visible and invisible, operates within ourselves and our society. Together, we can explore the intersections of power, psychology, and history to deepen our understanding of the forces that shape our world.

Warm Regards,

Shreeranjini G N

Note to Contributors

A. Name:

Citta, a Pali and Sanskrit word, is derived from the root word cit, meaning to perceive. For our purpose, we have used Citta to capture feelings that arise both from the unconscious and the conscious in the human psyche, leading to perceptions.

B. Purpose:

Citta is a Sukrut India bi-annual response to the need to bring together various schools, practices and clinical experiences from across the world that have relevant applications in the context of India, thereby promoting psychoanalytic reflections in India.

Submissions demonstrating psychoanalytic reflections from actual experiences in personal and collective history will find priority. Intersubjective submissions that are a blend with history, geography, sociology, economics, politics and religion are also welcome.

Of special interest are submissions that reflect India's civilizational ethos, highlighting the tensions that surface between the lived reality in India, and primarily Western theory. Contributions that draw on personal experience of psychoanalysis and processes of identity development are welcome.

Citta hopes to foster dialogue among practitioner-scholars working with intersubjective perspectives and enhance the richness of the psychoanalytic process.

C. The Editorial Process:

Editorial support is sought from practicing non-academic psychoanalysts.

D. Guidelines for Contributors:

Citta and Sukrut India promise contributors that submissions will not be subject to the frustrations of technicalities imposed by screening agencies. However, Citta and Sukrut India will request data confidentiality and reserve the right to edit personal attacks.

After a submission is accepted, it will move towards legal and administrative formalities, and on to publication.

A manuscript must be presented in the following order: the title; an abstract (about 150 words); keywords (not more than 5); the main text (not more than 5000 words; a list of references; notes and appendices; tables with captions. Please include a word count. Submissions must be in Word format. Please do not submit a PDF. Figures should be saved separately from the text.

Please use English spelling style consistently throughout your manuscript.

Please use double quotation marks, except where "a quotation is 'within' a quotation". Make sure that all identifying information, including author names, and all citations that reveal the author's identity, are included in the **List of References**.

All contributors should include their full name and affiliation after the List of References.

If there is a data set associated with the contribution, please provide information about where the data supporting the results or analyses presented in the manuscript can be found. Where applicable, this should include the hyperlink, DOI or other identifiers associated with the data sets.

Please obtain the necessary permission to reuse third-party material in your contribution. The use of short extracts of text and some other types of material is usually permitted for criticism and review without securing formal permission. To include any material which does not hold copyright, and which is not covered by this informal agreement, a written permission from the copyright owner will be necessary before submission.

We recommend that you keep a copy of your manuscript. Find out more about sharing your work. Citta and Sukrut India will assume ownership of a published contribution. However, on publication, you will be able to view and download your contribution online, enabling you to share your work with friends and colleagues. We are committed to promoting and increasing the visibility of your contribution.

Contributors are encouraged to share or make open the data supporting the results or analyses presented in the contribution where this does not violate the protection of human subjects or other valid privacy or security concerns

Citta and Sukrut India have no submission fees, publication fees or page charges.

Photographs from a debate session at Sera Jay Monastery, Bylucuppe

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