

Afterword

Psychoanalysis and Hinduism: Thinking Through Each Other

Jeffrey J. Kripal

In the world of cultural psychology transcendence and self-transformation are possible but only through a dialectical process of moving from one intentional world into the next, or by changing one intentional world into another. . . . 'Thinking through others' is, in its totality, an act of criticism and liberation, as well as of discovery.¹

Introduction: Towards an Ontological Polytheism

In an eloquent series of essays, anthropologist Richard Shweder has called for a 'cultural psychology' whose central task is that of 'thinking through others'. For Shweder, this 'thinking through others' is an essentially hermeneutical act that sets out to make sense of a postmodern world in which 'positivism and monotheism are dead' and 'polytheism is alive and well'.² By polytheism Shweder means 'ontological polytheism', that is, a radical philosophical stance in which 'realism and rationality are compatible with the idea of multiple worlds'.³ Such a polytheistic relativism makes possible the radical vocation of the anthropologist who is called to go 'to some far away place' where he can 'honor and "take literally" (as a matter of belief) those alien reality-positives in order to discover other realities hidden within the self, waiting to be drawn out into consciousness'.⁴ Thinking through others thus leads to a kind of postmodern religious experience in which transformation and

transcendence are discovered not within a particular tradition or culture but *between* at least two: 'For if there is no reality without metaphysics, and if each reality-testing metaphysics (that is, each culture or tradition) is but a partial representation of the multiplicity of the objective world, it becomes possible to transcend tradition by showing how each tradition lights some plane of reality but not all of it.'⁵ In such an act of transcendence, tradition (whether conceived as 'culture' or 'religion') is both denied and affirmed at the same time. As the exclusivistic bearer of truth and reality, it must be denied, for the postmodern anthropologist knows of many other worlds and many other truths that render any one tradition's claims at possessing *the* truth unlikely at best. But as one example of the ways human consciousness can be constructed, ordered and represented, each reality-posit must also be respected as a possible world of experience. Only by constantly moving from one such partial world to another can the stunning multiplicity of the world be gradually revealed to the human knower. Consequently, polytheism's 'doctrine is the relativistic idea of multiple objective worlds, and its commandment is participation in the never-ending process of overcoming partial views'.⁶

Except for a poetic essay on Gananath Obeyesekere,⁷ Shweder does not dwell at any length on psychoanalytic approaches to South Asia in this collection of essays. Nevertheless, his hermeneutical vision of 'thinking through others' and the almost Hindu 'ontological polytheism' that finds it can throw considerable light on the past history and, I hope, the future of psychoanalytic studies of Hinduism. Using Shweder's model of 'thinking through others', then, it is my dual desire here both to say something about the past of this discourse as it has been represented, however sketchily, by this historical reader and to call for a more dialogical future in which these two worlds can begin to 'think through each other' in the minds of culturally sophisticated psychoanalytic thinkers. Shweder envisions four stages in the process of thinking through an other: (1) thinking by means of the other; (2) getting the other straight; (3) deconstructing and going beyond the other; and (4) witnessing in the context of engagement with the other.⁸ I order my concluding reflections after this four-fold model.

Thinking by Means of the Other: Hinduism as Exemplum

Thinking by means of the other refers to that process of choosing to study a particular cultural tradition because it seems especially well-suited to answer the kinds of questions one's own existential and cultural places have asked of one. Here we recognize the other 'as a specialist or expert on some aspect of human experience, whose reflective consciousness and system of representations and discourse can be used to reveal hidden dimensions of our selves'.⁹ The more we are able to enter into such intentional worlds, the more these representations 'come to seem like sophisticated expressions of repressed, dormant, and potentially creative and transformative aspects of our own psyche pushed off by our intentional world to some mental fringe'.¹⁰ Thinking by means of the other, then, is a process animated by an often unspoken desire to bring to consciousness something which is vaguely sensed but underdeveloped due to the limitations imposed on consciousness by one's own cultural system of symbols and practices.

If the thinker possesses adequate imaginative, intellectual, and emotional powers, the 'awakenings' induced by such an adventure can produce sudden seismic shifts in consciousness that shake the stable world of the thinker and ultimately transform it into something more uncertain, dangerous, and fantastic. Thus the great French Islamicist, Louis Massignon, could claim that through 'a distortion . . . of Space and Time'¹¹ he had actually communed with the subject of his doctoral dissertation, the tenth-century Sufi mystic al-Hallaj;¹² the historian of religions, Mircea Eliade, could write about 'camouflaging' the mystical dimensions of his doctoral researches on yoga in a novella;¹³ and Gershom Scholem, the father of modern Kabbalah studies, could claim that 'true philology can have a genuine mystical function'¹⁴ and describe his life's researches as a continual search through that 'misty wall of history' for 'a true communication from the mountain, of that most invisible smallest fluctuation of history which causes truth to break forth from the illusion of development'.¹⁵ Each of these scholars used the other — as saint, as ritual, or as language — to awaken something sleeping in his own psycho-religious world.

Of course, none of our authors featured here venture this far

into that liminal realm where method has become experience and experience has become method, but many of them do indeed see India and Hinduism as ideal places to look for psychoanalytic *exempla*. Hence Bose can write that 'India's ancient learned men had a genius for introspective meditation',¹⁶ and that 'the desire to be a female is more easily unearthed in Indian male patients than in European';¹⁷ Doniger can marvel at the manner in which the latent becomes the manifest in Hindu mythology; Kurtz can note that Hindu society now stands 'second to none as a generative locus of scholarship in the field of psychological anthropology';¹⁸ Roland can write about the extraordinary sensuality of Indians; Collins and Desai can approach India as a culture with unusual experience in reflecting on the nature of the human self; and Masson can describe India as one of the best places to look for instructive combinations of sexuality, mysticism, and asceticism. Kakar employs the same approach when he uses the case of Pran as a way to highlight or even 'cartoon' the maternal enthrallment that he believes functions as both 'the hegemonic narrative of the Hindu family drama' and 'the cornerstone in the architecture of the male self'.¹⁹

But perhaps Kakar has best captured India as *exemplum* in the concluding lines of his now classic *Inner World*. There he both gently criticized Indian society for its psychic 'overdevelopments' and proposed to use those same over-developments as potent sources of insight and knowledge for a new, more holistic anthropology: 'Like many other cultures which have overdeveloped only a part of man's nature, Hindu culture too may be caught up in contradictions and dead ends. This would be a great loss since the many insights to be gleaned from the nature of traditional Hindu childhood and society are of vital importance for mankind's radical need for a holistic approach to man's nature.'²⁰

Of course, such an *exemplum*-approach is not restricted to Indological endeavours, and India is not the only great psychological case study. William James, for example, had something very similar in mind when he set out to study human nature with and through 'the scalpel and the microscope' of some of its most extreme *exempla*, the mystics and saints of Christianity. Such a path through the visions, psychological sufferings, and moral heights of the Christian saints isolated for James 'special factors of the mental life' in a dramatic way that enabled him 'to inspect

them unmasked by their more usual surroundings'.²¹ Here, as in India, were striking *exempla* of human consciousness that had not been pushed aside 'into some mental fringe', as Shweder might say.

Getting the Other Straight: The Place of Indology, Anthropology, and the History of Religions in the Psychoanalytic Study of Hinduism

Thinking through others also involves 'getting the other straight', that is, a disciplined effort both to understand the other world in terms of its own practices, languages, and symbols and to see its internal logic, rationality, and aesthetic beauty. Certainly, Freud, handicapped by what Hartnack has called his European hegemonic attitudes, failed here (although, as Parsons has shown, Freud was much more sympathetic to mystical forms of religious experience — that 'ultimate in superhuman understanding'²² — than we have previously imagined). So too did many of his early and later disciples, such as Owen Berkeley-Hill and Claud Dangar Daly, who tended to use psychoanalysis as a colonial instrument for 'retooling Indians into a prescribed version of the nineteenth-century European'.²³ But much has changed since the early part of this century, the colonial condition is now the post-colonial condition, and the disciplines of Indology, anthropology, and the history of religions have helped immeasurably in supplying psychoanalytic thinkers with a more solid base of information, cultural detail, and linguistic precision.

Many of the present essays bear out this 'getting the other straight', as most of the authors represented here are either South Asians themselves or have been trained in intellectual disciplines that make South Asia a special object of study. Beyond cultural identity or professional training, however, there is something deeper at work here, for what we see in so many of these essays — from Bose's early and pioneering reflections on the Indian oedipal wish to the work of Ramanujan, Obeyesekere, Roland, and Kurtz — is a desire to refashion psychoanalysis itself in the light of Indian culture.

Ramanujan's classic essay on 'the Indian Oedipus' posits different directions of desire and aggression in the Indian complex while preserving a universal structure and the basic psychoanalytic

insight that child-rearing practices and the 'family romance' set up predictable intrapsychic dynamics in the psyche. Obeyesekere extends and deepens this critique by demonstrating how the emotional relationships of the Indian family — defined by the two features of the erotic-nurturant bond of mother and son and the patripotestal authority of the father — work with the larger social and economic forces of the extended family, caste, and religious values to construct a very different oedipal drama and, consequently, a very different experience of self; hence an imaginary 'Freud in Delhi' encounters a different 'normal' resolution of the oedipal crisis in the son's identification with the mother and his submission to the father. In another context and discipline, Roland writes of a 'familial self', which differs considerably from the western individual in both its dependency needs and its capacity for intimacy, and artfully manoeuvres through analytic sessions with Shakuntala, constantly adjusting to the cultural and psychological differences that confront him along the way. Extending Roland's work, Kurtz criticizes earlier theorists with the conviction that traditional psychoanalytic theory has been too bound up with Western individualism to take seriously the centrality of the group in the construction of Hindu forms of consciousness and self; in short, psychoanalysis must stop judging Indian culture by its own western developmental assumptions and admit that India possesses its own 'culturally distinctive psychological structures with their own pattern of normalcy and their own line of development'.²⁴

Deconstructing and Going Beyond the Other: Psychoanalysis as Hermeneutics of Suspicion

But any 'thinking through others' must at some point emphasize the 'through' of that phrase and think through and beyond the other. Shweder explains:

It is the sense of thinking one's way out of or beyond the other. It is the sense of passing through the other or intellectually transforming him or her or it into something else — perhaps its negation — by revealing what the life and intentional world of the other has dogmatically hidden away, namely, its own incompleteness.²⁵

Here is where psychoanalysis proper begins, and here is where

the potential for cross-cultural misunderstanding, rejection, and even scandal becomes the greatest. For, as Kakar makes clear in the Foreword to the present volume, psychoanalysis is the iconoclastic method *par excellence*. Its conclusions are often subversive to social standards and its passion for ignoring convention and speaking shocking truths often extreme. It is a radical 'hermeneutics of suspicion' that operates out of the assumption that dreams, myths, rituals, and visions contain meanings that are not readily available on the surface; consequently, it is a method that 'prevents us . . . from simply asking members of the culture what they think the symbol means'.²⁶

And how could it be any different? Freud, after all, believed that censorship, although rooted in the needs of civilization and society, was also something *internal* to the human psyche, that *the human mind censors itself*. It is the task of the analyst, then, to read mental phenomena as half-appearances whose full meanings must be deciphered and read out of the unconscious and the body from which they always arise. And this, of course, is an essentially subversive practice, for it sets for itself the task of denying the social censor that constructed the mind's language, values, and categories in the first place. Little wonder, then, that Hindus sometimes find the conclusions of psychoanalysis so offensive to their own self-perceptions and cultural understandings; given the psychoanalytic attempt to crack the codes of the social and intra-psychic censors and its explicit desire to reveal secrets and uncover hidden truths, it would be very surprising indeed if they reacted in any other way. In short, *psychoanalysis is a method that expects to be rejected*.

Psychoanalysis, then, goes well beyond the anthropologist's field study and the Sanskritist's text and the historian of religions' phenomenological study to answer questions that no interview, text, or phenomenological study is willing to ask, much less answer. Hence Bose can discuss how a male European patient's sexual impairment and his 'flight to homosexuality and spirituality'²⁷ are linked to his desire to be a woman; Carstairs can trace the ambivalent nature of the Mother-Goddess back to Indian mothering practices; Goldman can insist on the 'this-life' childhood origins of 'past-life' memories; Courtright can see castration themes in the decapitation of Ganesa and his broken tusk; Kurtz can trace Hindu spirituality's linking of detachment

and the attainment of unity back to the male child's renunciation of his exclusive possession of the mother for a sense of belonging and immersion in the larger group; Ramanujam can read a villager's vision of a *sadhu* as a psychic replacement for a lost father-figure; Roland can detect unconscious incestuous fantasies in the dreams of a Westernized urban woman; Nandy can read Rammohun Roy's paternal Brahmoism and its reforming concerns to deny traditional Indian notions of womanhood as an elaborate psycho-sociological process issuing, at least partly, out of the dynamics of his own nuclear family experience and his dual desire to overthrow the 'goddess' of his own mother and to install the 'god' of his father in her place; and Caldwell can isolate homosexual fellatio themes in the tongue of a goddess worn by a male ritual actor in Kerala.

This theoretical courage of psychoanalysis, this audacity bordering on *hubris*, is both the tradition's greatest strength and its greatest weakness: its greatest strength because, as a 'critical, subversive presence',²⁸ it has the potential to push the thinker into new, if sometimes terrifying, frontiers of human experience, political awareness, and consciousness; its greatest weakness because in its zeal to explore new regions and new questions the method inevitably makes mistakes, goes too far, and wanders into the dead-ends of its own reified categories. It is a tool, then, not an absolute truth, a road for the brave, not a destination for the certain.

Perhaps this dual nature of psychoanalysis as both promise and peril, as both radical insight and dangerous excess, can best be summed up by one of William Blake's 'Proverbs of Hell': 'The road of excess', he wrote in brilliant blue ink, 'leads to the palace of wisdom'.²⁹ Risk, it seems, even the risk of damnation, is an essential component of such a path.

Witnessing in the Context of Engagement with the Other: The Politics and Ontology of Psychoanalysis

After having chosen one's other as specialist, gotten the other straight in both detail and generality, and thought through — and beyond — the other's inevitably limited world, one finally arrives at that point where one must bend one's perspective back on itself and witness to that 'subjectivity in-between' that one

has become. The eye must now eye itself. This, according to Shweder, is 'a process of portraying one's own self as part of the process of representing the other, thereby encouraging an open-ended self-reflexive dialogic turn of mind'.³⁰

Many of our authors model this fourth step, if in very different ways. For example, Hartnack's piece on the colonial context of early psychoanalysis in India and Freud's failure to understand the 'Vishnu on his desk' demonstrate the political dimensions of psychological speculations and the inevitable misunderstandings that arise whenever one culture tries (or does not try) to understand another. By doing so, Hartnack witnesses to the politics of psychoanalysis and asks troubling questions about both the history of the discipline and its relationship to Hinduism.

As if answering Hartnack's critique and making up for the sins of the fathers, Roland models a hitherto rare self-reflexivity in his work with Shakuntala, continuously refashioning his categories in the process and concluding at the end of his sessions that certain psychoanalytic certitudes now need to be rejected: 'the pursuit of the spiritual self', for example, cannot be so easily relegated to 'some kind of psychopathology or regressive motive'.³¹ Finally, Kakar's experiences with Ramnath and Pran leads him to witness to a position in between relativism and universalism, in which certain kinds of westerners and certain kinds of Indians share a very similar 'psychological modernity' in the culturally specific ways they have learned to experience the world through an inner *psyche* or *mind*. For Kakar, there are certainly 'cultural particularities of the self', but they should not lead us to exaggerate differences and abandon the cross-cultural, normative claims of psychoanalysis that make it such a powerful hermeneutical tool.

Deeper than colonial politics or the art of the cross-cultural analytic session, however, there are ontological issues that must inevitably come to the fore as one begins to realize that psychoanalytic categories presume an all-encompassing metaphysical vision of things that tends to limit the range of human and religious possibilities to the hard boundaries of its own mechanical metaphors and positivistic assumptions. Hence Roland can stress the importance of the Hindu's 'magic-cosmic world',³² and Kakar can note that 'much of the mutual misunderstanding between psycho-analysis and the yogas can be attributed to their different "visions of reality"'.³³ In an entirely different context,

Greenberg and Mitchell addressed this same issue by discussing the fields, relations, and energies of Harry Stack Sullivan's interpersonal psychology in terms of a new physics:

Sullivan's concept of energy differs from Freud's as contemporary physics differs from Newtonian physics. For Newton, whose *weltanschauung* informed the vision of Freud and all other nineteenth-century scientists, the world is constituted by matter and force; energy acts upon matter, moving preexisting structures. Thus, for Freud the psychic apparatus is distinguishable from the energy (the drives) which propels it into motion. Within contemporary physics, on the other hand, matter and force are interchangeable: matter *is* energy. For Sullivan, as for Whitehead, the mind is a temporal phenomenon, energy transforming itself through time.³⁴

One does not have to accept Sullivan's system of categories to recognize that such an ontological critique could be easily applied to psychoanalysis from realms other than quantum physics, particularly from those various Hindu symbolic and philosophical systems in which, as Sullivan once put it referring to his own psychology, 'the ultimate reality in the universe is energy'.³⁵ Clearly, such a critique was a major component of Bose's work, which continuously returned to traditional Hindu ontological categories (*guna*-theory, *samādhi*, *ātmādarśana*, etc.) in an attempt to incorporate or encompass — in classical Hindu fashion — psychoanalytic categories within a Hindu worldview that was at once newly conceived and traditionally ancient.³⁶

Certainly there are all sorts of promising developments along similar lines in the comparative study of mysticism,³⁷ where numerous scholars are beginning to use psychoanalytic insights not as ontological clubs to beat the mystical traditions into reductionistic submission but as respectful exploratory probes into the psychological and phenomenological structures of these other worlds. Hence Elliot Wolfson can use the insights of the French feminist philosopher and psychoanalyst Luce Irigaray to peer through 'the speculum that shines' and ponder the homoerotic structure or 'phallic gaze' of medieval Jewish Kabbalah and its mystical *sefirot*,³⁸ Michel de Certeau can employ the 'strange similarities' between Christian mystical traditions and psychoanalysis to attempt his 'dual practice' of using Lacanian theoretical procedures to bring into play 'what the language of the mystics had already

articulated';³⁹ Richard Webb and Michael Sells can place Lacan⁴⁰ and Bion in 'critical dialogue' with Plotinus, John the Scot Erigena, Ibn 'Arabi, Marguerite Porete and Meister Eckhart and, by so doing, illuminate a shared practice of *apophysis* or 'unsaying' in psychoanalytic and mystical discourses;⁴¹ and my own work on Ramakrishna can employ psychoanalytic categories to explore the psycho-sexual complexities of Tantric experience and, at the same time, use Tantric thea-monistic ontology and its *cakra* symbolism to question the legitimacy and necessity of classical psychoanalytic reductionism.⁴²

In each of these cases, psychoanalysis has become dialogical, thinking *with* instead of *at* the other. Having chosen its other properly, gotten the other straight, and thought through and beyond the other, psychoanalysis can now bear witness to both a transcendence and a transformation that have taken place not in itself or even in the other but *in between the two*, in a continuous departure from sterile certainty that leads us, in the poetic language of de Certeau, to 'the city become sea'.⁴³ The profound critical and deconstructive powers of psychoanalysis have not been drowned or dissolved in such a sea, but they have become sufficiently aware of themselves and their own shore-like limitations to adopt what is perhaps in the end the single most striking characteristic of a mind on a dark beach: a profound sense of ontological wonder.

Conclusion: How to Look at a Lotus

Ideally, such a witnessing should go both ways, with psychoanalytic and Hindu intellectuals 'thinking through each other'. It is no exaggeration to say that this mutual thinking through each other has not yet happened, at least on any large scale. Indeed, misunderstanding and outright hostility have been much more common, on both sides.

For their part, Indologists have sometimes been guilty of too quick of a generalization or too easy of a reduction. Examples of such, from Franz Alexander's bizarre description of Buddhist meditation as an attempt to attain 'the pure narcissism of the sperm'⁴⁴ to some of Carstairs' theorizing, could be listed for some time. Here psychoanalysis has jumped too quickly to thinking through the other without at first getting it straight.

Little better, though, is Aurobindo's comment, 'on the other side' if you will, that psychoanalysis is 'inconsiderate, awkward, and rudimentary', and that 'one cannot discover the meaning of the lotus by analyzing the secrets of the mud in which it grows'.⁴⁵ Although we can certainly appreciate Aurobindo's privileging of the final *telos* of the flower and understand his negative assessment of psychoanalysis as a reaction to the early, grossly reductive stage of psychoanalytic thought (it is also no doubt important to keep in mind the colonial contexts of such an assessment), we must also admit that such a statement virtually deconstructs itself for us. Putting aside for a moment the fact that Indian poetic and religious traditions often see sexual meanings in the shape and nature of the lotus (it *is*, after all, the reproductive organ of the flower),⁴⁶ we might also reasonably ask how anyone could hope to understand something as biological as a lotus without first beginning with the larger ecosystem, that is, with 'the secrets of the mud in which it grows'. Put bluntly, there just is no such thing as a mudless lotus. We need not and should not *end* with the mud, but we certainly need to at least *begin* there.

If psychoanalytically inclined thinkers, then, can be accused of concentrating too much on the mud of pathology, the body, and the libidinal drives, mystics such as Aurobindo can be accused of concentrating too much on solipsistic, sexless lotuses growing out of nothing. Both perspectives are half perspectives, partial views that must be transcended by a constant tacking back and forth 'in between'. It is pointless to deny the muddiness of the mud, but it is equally silly to deny the beautiful blooming nature of the blossom. *Both* are aspects of the flower. Only by accepting both, in dialogue and debate, will we be able to see a fuller picture (if never the full picture) of that iconic image and begin to understand its many truths.

Shakuntala, then, had it right when she said: 'Dr Roland, meditation is better than psychoanalysis . . . but best of all is meditation and psychoanalysis!'⁴⁷

Notes

1. Richard Shweder, *Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991) p. 99.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
7. 'How to Look at Medusa without Turning to Stone: On Gananath Obeyesekere', in Shweder, 1991, pp. 332–52.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. Louis Massignon, 'The Transfer of Suffering Through Compassion', in Herbert Mason (ed. and trans.), *Testimonies and Reflections: Essays of Louis Massignon* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989) p. 162.
12. Massignon, 'Visitation of the Stranger: Response to an Inquiry about God', in Mason, *Testimonies and Reflections*.
13. Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth: Conversations with Claude-Henri Rocquet* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) p. 49.
14. Quoted in David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982) p. 31.
15. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 32.
16. Quoted in Ashis Nandy, 'The Savage Freud: The First Non-Western Psychoanalyst and the Politics of Secret Selves in Colonial India', in *The Savage Freud: And Other Essays on Possible and Retrievable Selves* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 143.
17. Quoted above, p. 99.
18. Quoted above, p. 186.
19. Quoted above, p. 228.
20. Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World: A Psycho-analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. 188.
21. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (New York: The Modern Library, 1936) p. 23.
22. Quoted above, p. 44.

23. Nandy, 'The Savage Freud', p. 139.
24. Quoted above, p. 194.
25. Shweder, *Thinking Through Other Cultures*, p. 109.
26. Quoted above, p. 281.
27. Quoted above, p. 36.
28. Nandy, 'The Savage Freud', p. 112.
29. William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, with an Introduction and Commentary by Geoffrey Keynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) plate 7.
30. Shweder, *Thinking Through Other Cultures*, p. 110.
31. Quoted above, p. 421.
32. Quoted above, p. 413.
33. Kakar, *The Inner World*, p. 28.
34. Jay R. Greenberg and Stephen A. Mitchell, *Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) p. 91.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
36. See Nandy, 'The Savage Freud'.
37. Perhaps the combination of mysticism and psychoanalytic method among contemporary historians of religions is not accidental, as David Bakan has provocatively suggested the Jewish mystical roots of Freud's thought (*Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* [Boston: Beacon Press, 1958]; see Kirschner [cited below] pp. 26–7, for a balanced discussion of the weaknesses and merits of Bakan's thesis), and more recently Suzanne R. Kirschner has traced the 'cultural genealogy' of the psychoanalytic developmental perspective back to biblical understandings of linear history, Neoplatonic models of emanation and return, Christian mystical ideas of the divine *Urgrund* spiralling into the fully actualized Godhead through a series of dialectical contraries, and the 'naturalized supernaturalism' of Romantic thought (*The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis: Individuation and Integration in Post-Freudian Theory* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996]). Bose would certainly be open to such a suggestion, even if he would want to distance himself from the western locus of psychoanalytic religiosity. He, after all, believed that the Indian psychoanalyst was a modern-day version of the ancient Hindu sage, both of whom sought a knowledge of the self (*ātmajñāna*) through an introverted (*antarmukha*) psyche (Nandy, 'The Savage Freud', p. 128).

38. Elliot Wolfson, *Through the Speculum that Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
39. Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable: Volume One, the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) pp. 8-9.
40. The persistent presence of Lacan in this new kind of 'mystical psychoanalysis' witnesses again to the structurally homologous natures of psychoanalytic and mystical thought. Had Lacan not once claimed that his own *Ecrits* were 'of the same order' as the 'mystical ejaculations' of the mystics themselves? (see his 'God and the Jouissance of The Woman' in *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the école freudienne*, Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds), Jacqueline Rose (trans.) [New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982] p. 147).
41. Richard E. Webb and Michael A. Sells, 'Lacan and Bion: Psychoanalysis and the Mystical Language of "Unsayings"', *Theory and Psychology*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 195-215.
42. Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Kali's Child: The Mystical and the Erotic in the Life and Teachings of Ramakrishna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995 [second edition, 1998]).
43. De Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, p. 17.
44. Cited in Sudhir Kakar, 'Reflections on Psychoanalysis, Indian Culture and Mysticism', *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, vol. 10, 1982, p. 293.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 291.
46. Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis, Special Edition*, vol. xv, p. 158. 'Do not Forget', Freud writes, 'that blossoms are actually the genitals of plants'.
47. Quoted above, p. 420.

Appendix

Proceedings of the meeting of the Indian Psychoanalytical Society held at the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology, University College of Science, 92 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta, on the 6th May 1931, at 6 p.m. to celebrate the 75th birthday of Prof Sigmund Freud of Vienna.

Present Members

Dr G. Bose — President
 Mr G. Bora
 Mr H. Maiti
 Mr G. Pal
 Dr S. Mitra
 Dr Sarasilal Sarkar
 Lt. Col. Owen Berkeley Hill
 Prof J.K. Sarkar
 Prof Rangin Halder
 Mr M.N. Banerji — Secretary

Associates

Mr M. Ganguly
 Mr. M. Samanta
 Mr S. Bose
 Dr K.B. Mukherji
 Dr B.B. Chatterji
 Mr A.C. Chatterji
 Mr Suhrit Sinha
 Mr Amar Mukherji
 Mr Shamswarup Jalata

Visitors

Major Mallaya, Rai Bahadur Jaladhar Sen, Mrs Berkeley Hill, Mr T.P. Ghosh and Miss Shamsohagini Ghosh and others.

- Resolved (1) that a cable conveying the congratulations of the Society be sent to Prof Freud immediately: The cable was sent the same evening.
- (2) That a suitable Indian present be purchased out of the funds raised by the Society and be sent to Prof Freud and that the rest of the contributions be sent to the press of the International Psychoanalytical Association to which the Society is affiliated.

A sub-committee consisting of the President, the Secretary, Prof Rangin Halder and Dr Mitra was appointed to decide upon and purchase a suitable present for Prof Freud. The sub-committee secured a single piece ivory statuette of Vishnu Ananta Deva from Travancore, South

India. The statuette was prepared on the model of an ancient stone statue under the guidance of Prof Samiti Chatterji of Calcutta, a great authority on Philosophy and Iconography. The ornaments and decorations on the statuette were designed by the renowned artist Mr Jatindra Kumar Sen of Calcutta and executed by the foremost ivory worker of Murshidabad, Bengal, under the personal supervision of the famous Indian art connoisseur and collector Mr Bahadur Sing Singhi at Calcutta. The pedestal was also designed by Mr Jatindra Kumar Sen and carved under the directions of Mr Bahadur Sing Singhi by an Indian Carpenter. The inscription on the silver plate on the pedestal was done by Mr Tarak Nath Roy of Calcutta.

The ivory statuette has been sent to Prof Freud.

Dr Sarasilal Sarkar read his letters from Prof Freud stating that the great old man at the age of 75 took considerable interest in the contributions from workers from distant India.

Dr S. Mitra gave a sketch of the *life* of Prof Freud for the information of the visitors present.

Prof Rangin Chandra Halder paid a glorious tribute to Freud and described his contributions in the domain of Art.

Mr Maiti discussed certain bearings of Freud's work on academic psychology.

Lt. Col. Berkeley Hill spoke about his personal reminiscences of Prof Freud whom he had met at the meeting of the International Psycho-analytical Congress at Berlin.

President Dr G. Bose traced the evolution of Freudian thought from its beginning up to the present time.

Secretary Mr M.N. Banerji recited a Sanskrit poem, composed by Pandit Kalipada Tarkaoharja, Professor of Nyaya Philosophy in the Government Sanskrit College, Calcutta, conveying the Society's greetings to the venerable Professor. Mr Banerji also explained the stanzas and read their English translation prepared by him. (Original and translation are annexed hereto in the appendix).

Resolved that a copy of the poem and its translation be sent to Prof Freud.

Mr Banerji then briefly described the progress of psychoanalytic movement noting also the activities of the different members of the society for the information of the public.

Lastly, the President caused a pencil sketch of Prof Freud to be projected on the wall as a remarkable handiwork of the celebrated artist Mr Jatindra Kumar Sen who produced it as a guess work in 1922 having never seen a photograph of the great scientist. Prof Freud's letter containing his remarks on this sketch was also projected on the screen. This evoked considerable interest.

Translation of the Sanskrit verses addressed to Prof Sigmund Freud on his seventy-fifth birthday anniversary.

Om — Obeisance to the Absolute Self

Victory be to this Freud, the great experienced specialist (who is) the new effulgent light of the learned in the ways of the internal organ (mind) — the worthy man who has gradually attained his seventy-fifth year with good deeds (works).

You have discovered the mysteries [sic] of the mind conferring great benefits on the world. Proceeding on a novel route for the study of the behaviour of the mind, you have developed a new method of approach. You highly intelligent, have mastered the science of the mysteries [sic] of the moving forces in the mind which are inscrutable to the non-self (and) have beautifully thought out a new fixed method of treatment of mental diseases.

Some mental states exist which are unknown to the self of the being. They have been easily brought to the fore with the help of proofs. You have by your knowledge illuminated the highly complex obscure abysses of the mind, which are impenetrable by a needle. Who can attain equality with you? Devine [sic] favours have gone to their maximum limits in you. External diseases (of the body) are easy to treat but the cure of mental disorders is difficult; therefore you, having chalked out a new path, should live eternal years.

The society of the learned located in India, charmed by your extraordinary fame, praises your glory. May you, enjoying pleasures with son, wife and friends, extend your work (research).

* The Indian Psychoanalytical Society presents this to Prof Sigmund Freud, the foremost psychologist on the attainment of his seventy-fifth birthday on the sixth day of the fifth month of the Christian era one thousand nine hundred and thirty-one.