

Psychoanalysis and (Auto)Biography

Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality. By Roger Willoughby. Foreword by Pearl King. London: Free Association Books, 2005, xxxii + 320 pp., \$55.00.

Peter Rudnytsky

Masud Khan might be called the third rail of psychoanalysis. Whereas most other instances of boundary violations in the history of our discipline are by now either too remote to be threatening or too obscure to be notorious, the case of Khan is both comparatively recent and, thanks to the furor aroused by the anti-Semitic outbursts in his last book, *When Spring Comes* (1988), compounded by Wynne Godley's exposé (2001) of his experiences as Khan's patient, a matter of public record. That Khan was conjoined with the widely revered figure of Winnicott as both his analysand and intellectual collaborator further raises the stakes of his Icarus-like catastrophe. Few would dispute the judgment of F. Robert Rodman (2003) that Khan has come to be "regarded as the most disgraceful individual ever associated with the British Society," or that his worst actions are "reprehensible to such a degree as to prompt questions about Winnicott's own ethical standing" (p. 205).

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The risks associated with tackling so controversial a subject are heightened by the difficulty of establishing the basic facts about Khan's life. Such central matters as the duration of his analysis with Winnicott, whether he ever formally applied for training at the British Society (or whether an inquiry he sent in 1946 from what was then still India seeking a referral for personal analysis was misunderstood by John Bowlby as such an application), or even the age of Khan's mother and the extent of his personal wealth, are all subject to dispute.¹ Given the manifold perils of the enterprise, to undertake a biographical study of Masud Khan is indeed a daunting and formidable project.

I am happy to report that Roger Willoughby has succeeded most impressively and produced a book that will be read with pleasure and profit by anyone seriously interested in the history of psychoanalysis. Whatever the points of controversy, Willoughby has been admirably thorough in trying to cross-check

Khan's often unreliable claims about all manner of things against the extant documentary records, thus enabling the reader to disentangle the "myth" from the "reality." Above all, however, Willoughby deserves praise for bringing Khan to life as a complex, tormented, and brilliant human being who repays attention not simply as an object lesson in what can go disastrously wrong in psychoanalysis but also for the enduring importance of his intellectual legacy and for the sheer force of his personality that made him one of the brightest stars in the firmament of postwar British psychoanalysis.

Willoughby is attuned to the sociological no less than the psychological dimension of Khan's story. As a swarthy Moslem whose native language was Punjabi, Khan was an anomaly in the Judeo-Christian

¹*I am indebted to Linda Hopkins, whose own biography of Khan is forthcoming from Other Press, for furnishing me a copy of her notes on Roger Willoughby's book. Among other points, Hopkins contests Willoughby's claim (pp. 51-52) that Khan's analysis with Winnicott lasted only four years, from 1951 to 1955, and ceased when Winnicott took Khan's first wife, Jane Shore, into treatment in Khan's place. According to Hopkins, who appeals not only to Khan's version of events but also to what she takes to be the corroborative testimony of Marion Milner, Khan's analysis was suspended for only one year, after which it was resumed by Winnicott and continued until 1966, for a span of fifteen years. Hopkins likewise objects to Willoughby's assertion that his documentation of Khan's affair with a patient in 1966 "pre-dates by some five or more years the previously accepted chronology of Khan's transgressive behavior as recorded by other commentators" (p. 129). As Hopkins notes, the passage cited by Willoughby (p. 278, n. 19) from one of her published papers refers only to "open sexual liaisons with female students and analysands" (emphasis added) starting in the 1970s, and thus should not be taken to imply that this was his first instance of "transgressive behavior" with a patient.*

milieu of the British Psycho-Analytical Society, and his fate repays contemplation from a cross-cultural standpoint. The basic dynamic is, in Willoughby's words, one of "overt attempts at compliant passing," which "may have bolstered Khan's self-esteem in a somewhat illusory manner and served to conceal a well of self-hatred and alienation from his Pakistani roots," even as they "also camouflaged Khan's hatred and resentment of the British as his repressors" (p. 43). Seen in this light, Khan emerges as a sort of psychoanalytic Othello, who, though not tormented by jealousy, shares with his Shakespearean prototype the "tendency to not only inflate but also to invent

himself through narrative” (p. 52). The underlying theme of race—understood in the sense not simply of skin color but also of religious identity, as a “Moor” in Shakespeare could be either a black person or a Moslem—in Khan's tragedy makes it seem uncannily fitting that his first biography, Judy Cooper's *Speak of Me as I Am* (1993), should take its title from Othello's suicide speech, which Cooper quotes as her epigraph, though neither she nor Willoughby makes explicit the comparison between Khan and Othello as I am doing here.

To take this line of thought one step further, there is also a sense in which Khan could be viewed as playing the role of Iago to Winnicott's Othello. Like Iago, whose outrage at being slighted by Othello for promotion to the rank of lieutenant leads him to protest, “’Tis the curse of service. / Preferment goes by letter and affection, / And not by old gradation” (1.1.34-36), so too Khan was embittered at being passed over for the position of editor of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, and vented his spleen in a letter to Marion Milner on January 13, 1968: “I am very hurt and desolate with it all. Evidently loyalty and service are not enough.... It does grieve me deeply that the two persons I have served with the utmost devotion and loyalty and effort, Winnicott and Jock [Sutherland], have both failed to endorse my identity in the British Society” (Willoughby, p. 139).

Like Iago, moreover, Khan exhibits extreme narcissistic pathology and sociopathic behavior. Willoughby documents acts of physical violence—including a 1962 assault on a member of his domestic staff, for which he was arrested, as well as the battery of his second wife, the ballerina Svetlana Beriosova (p. 105); of theft—an attempt in 1972 at stealing a watch in Switzerland, for which he was again arrested

(p. 189); and of incorrigible lying—most notably, in the 1965 “Gitelson affair,” when Khan was censured by the Executive Council of the

²*That Khan in 1976 received a mere slap on the wrist is in part explained by his having shortly before been diagnosed with lung cancer, from which he was expected to die rapidly.*

International Psychoanalytical Association for a letter he had written after the death of its president, Maxwell Gitelson, which greatly inflated the closeness of his ties with the distinguished man and that had offended Gitelson's widow when it was brought to her attention (pp. 119-122).

To cast Khan as Iago is to expose the sinister underside of his relationship with Winnicott—who, after Ismail Latif in Pakistan and Ella Sharpe and John Rickman in London, was actually Khan's fourth analyst—whose reputation the Godley revelations have posthumously blighted. After quoting some acerbic personal remarks made by Khan to Cooper, Willoughby notes: "The Winnicott Khan would so propound in much of his published work he can be here seen privately concretely belittling, the public lieutenancy offering him both a special place within the psychoanalytic establishment and a cover beneath which he could conceal his envy, rivalry and ambitiousness" (p. 78). (The notion of "lieutenancy" or "place-keeping" again takes on added resonance against the backdrop of *Othello*.) That Khan succeeded in wounding Winnicott in addition to destroying himself is a calamity of Shakespearean proportions. After being stripped of his status as a training analyst in December 1976 for a sexual affair with a patient—a candidate who was doing her training analysis with him and whose husband was a candidate at the same institute—Khan finally procured his expulsion from the British Society in July 1988, eleven months before his death, with the self-incriminating disclosure of his abusive practices as a clinician in *When Spring Comes*.² As Khan wrote in a 1964 letter to Robert and Sybil Stoller, the Shakespearean hero "is tragic because he is essentially suicidal: only his suicide is engineered as a murderous response from his environment"; and Willoughby aptly cites this comment "as a prediction of his own ultimate fate" (p. 113).

Willoughby is an astute psychobiographer, and he does a fine job of highlighting subterranean connections that deepen the reader's understanding of the figures he discusses. He notes, for instance, that Khan shared with Winnicott a "reluctance to settle fees he owed" to other analysts (p. 57); and Willoughby goes on to suggest that Winnicott's problems with financial delinquency may bear on his definition of transitional phenomena as involving a "primary unawareness of indebtedness

³A complete text of "The Tree," in which Winnicott's identification with Christ becomes even more pronounced than in the previously available extracts, is given by Rodman (2003, pp. 289-291). It is conceivable, though in my view far less likely, that Winnicott's poem was preceded and influenced by Khan's.

⁴See in particular Willoughby's affirmation that Rycroft's essay "could have been written about Khan himself," and his description of Khan's life as an accelerating vortex "marked by repeated ablations and concurrent mythopoesis" (pp. 124-125).

and the acknowledgment of indebtedness." He also draws attention to the dubious aspects of Winnicott's motivations for accepting Khan's first wife, the former Jane Shore (herself a dancer), into treatment at a time when Khan was having an affair with his future wife Svetlana Beriosova, "particularly in the light of [Winnicott's] own lengthy infidelity with Clare Britton during his marriage to [his first wife] Alice [née Taylor]. Was he perhaps supporting Khan as his equally unfaithful twin or was he attempting some displaced reparation to Alice?" (p. 72). Of great interest, too, is Willoughby's citation of Khan's previously unpublished poem, "I Cannot Hear," written in November 1963, about his "mad, inconsolable mother." Although Willoughby does not say so, this was the same month in which Winnicott wrote his poem "The Tree," about the "inward death" of *his* mother. Khan's imagery of "dead leaves" strongly suggests that his poem was inspired by that of Winnicott, who may well still have been his analyst at the time.³

Space does not permit me to trace the many other biographical and intersubjective threads that Willoughby weaves throughout his book. I cannot, however, help lamenting his obliviousness to the grammatical distinction between "who" and "whom," or between "like" and "as," and his use of dangling modifiers. Harold Blum on page 186 becomes "Bloom" on page 187. It likewise seems incongruous for Willoughby to claim that "Khan had a preponderance of the death instinct within his personality" (p. 77), when this concept is alien to the spirit of Khan's own thinking and Willoughby does not otherwise resort to such an antiquated Freud-Kleinian explanatory framework. I wish, finally, that Willoughby might have given his book a less pedestrian subtitle. Would it have deterred any potential readers had he replaced *The Myth and the Reality* with the more evocative antinomy of *Ablation and Mythopoesis*, especially given his reliance on Charles Rycroft's concept (1985) of the suppression of parental images and a desire for aggrandizing self-creation as a key to understanding Khan's characterological pathology?⁴

But these are quibbles. What I would like to emphasize in closing are two of the major lessons that I think ought to be derived from a reading of Willoughby's book. The first is that the psychoanalytic community should resist the temptation to scapegoat Khan, or even Khan and Winnicott. In her paper representing the official response of the British Society to the Godley article, Anne-Marie Sandler (2004) barely mentions the names of either Anna Freud or Melanie Klein. Yet we know that Anna Freud was analyzed by her own father, as Klein early on analyzed her own son Eric; and in the internal debates in 1976 over what to do about Khan's boundary violations with patients, Anna Freud

helped to forestall his expulsion from the British Society by arguing, “if we do not throw him out of the Society we have further trouble ahead, whereas if we do we deprive ourselves of one of our most gifted people” (Willoughby, p. 194). Klein, similarly, after entrusting Eric to Winnicott for treatment in 1941, wrote detailed letters trying to tell her deputy how he should conduct the analysis and praising him for concealing from Eric that there had been these contacts between them. In documenting this collusion between Klein and Winnicott, Rodman (2003) rightly terms it a “breakdown of integrity,” foreshadowing the “skeins of compromising relationships” (p. 122) in which Winnicott subsequently became embedded.

The point is that, while the personal responsibility of both Khan and Winnicott for their actions should not be minimized, it is all too easy for Kleinian and Contemporary Freudian analysts hostile to the Independent tradition to use the case of Khan as a club with which to beat Winnicott, while ignoring their own history of complicity in boundary violations no less egregious than those they are condemning in their ideological opponents. As so often happens, the bad object becomes the target of projective identification for one's own disavowed impulses. What if we were to look upon Masud Khan not as the perverse exception, but as a return of the repressed norm in psychoanalysis?

Second, it would be splendid if the appearance of Willoughby's book, as well as a forthcoming biography of Khan by Linda Hopkins, were to induce analysts and scholars to turn again to Khan's own collections—*The Privacy of the Self* (1974), *Alienation in Perversions* (1979), *Hidden Selves* (1983), and *When Spring Comes* (1988)—and consider anew his relevance to their concerns. There is only one Ferenczi, but Khan too may well be another major precursor of the

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present who awaits rediscovery. Thanks to Roger Willoughby, we can, as Pearl King remarks in her foreword, begin to “imagine what it was like to be Masud Khan living with himself” (p. x). Now that a foundation has been laid for understanding Khan's life and his place in the history of psychoanalysis, I hope many more people will be reading (or rereading) his works.

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Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality by Roger Willoughby.
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Dodi Goldman 

We are all worms. But I do believe I am a glow-worm. (Winston Churchill)

Within the psychoanalytic movement, Masud Khan's reputation hovers somewhere between inspiration, curiosity and blight. Khan, after all, made intriguing theoretical contributions, helped some patients, provided valuable editorial assistance to prominent analysts, inflicted irreparable damage on people who deserved better, and wreaked serious havoc on the integrity of his profession. He could be brutally honest and maddeningly mendacious. He vigorously fabricated for the sake of posterity and disdained those who, he said, 'have lost the verve of imaginative truth through escaping into tape-recorder-clinical realism'. When the idea of removing Khan from membership in the British Psycho-Analytical Society was first entertained, Anna Freud remarked: 'If we do not throw him out, we have further trouble ahead - whereas if we do, we deprive ourselves of one of our most gifted people.'

Roger Willoughby, in his biography of Khan, places his faith in the adjudicating power of facts to make sense of all this. For Willoughby, historical evidence serves a 'paternal function dissolving narcissistic and symbiotic illusions'. He tells us that he seeks to 'move beyond the preferred myths to trace, via a psychoanalytic textual archaeology, the sometimes tellingly banal, but often more complex and intriguing realities of Khan's biography and intellectual history'. Willoughby hopes that by assembling facts he can illuminate Khan's dissembling.

Part of Willoughby's method is straightforward enough. He has combed the records of the British Society, interviewed numerous people who had dealings and relationships with Khan, perused exchanges of letters between colleagues and friends, and drawn heavily upon Khan's own work-books. Willoughby has done, for the most part, the respectable job of any good

biographer and for this we owe him our gratitude. Indeed, in pursuing his stated goal of sifting through evidence so as to better distinguish 'myth' from 'reality', he brings to light information that, to my knowledge, has never before been part of the public domain.

We learn about the Khan family's allegiances to the British Raj and Masud's early tendencies to introversion and fantasizing, including years of retreat into elective mutism. Willoughby guides us through the details of Khan's rise within the British Society, the mentorship relationship he establishes with each of his analysts, and the numerous signs of what O'Shaughnessy refers to as analytic 'enclaves and excursions'. We witness Khan's life punctuated by periods of professional gravitas alternating with phases of outrageousness and revelry and ending in alcoholism and madness. Khan could be highly attuned; he could also be easily dislocated by the presence of another person. We see sparks of brilliance, impressive erudition, and how haughty Khan could be about treating others despicably. Khan had a certain talent for friendships and evoked protectiveness in a variety of people, men and women alike. At the same time, we glimpse how he violates basic ethical constraints, exploits patients for his own needs, and rips through the affections of those who cared about him most.

The trajectory of Willoughby's account of Khan's initial promise and eventual self-destructive demise is credible and illuminating. And he does a superb job of contextualizing Khan's intellectual contribution. With a steady hand, Willoughby guides us through the evolution of Khan's seminal ideas regarding perversions, cumulative trauma, and dream states, usefully linking them to the work of others. But excessive detail at times burdens the narrative flow. Dry renderings of the list of participants in psychoanalytic meetings and the specifics of the curriculum of the British Psycho-Analytical Society add little of value to the story being told. There are also some factual elements that future biographers may very well contradict. Willoughby claims, for example, that Khan's father, Fazaldad, was a Sunni Muslim, while he probably was, like Khan's mother, a Shia. More importantly, Willoughby asserts as established fact that Khan was in treatment with Winnicott for only five years, rather than the 15 or 10 years that Khan claimed at various times. This is certainly an intriguing possibility, but the evidence Willoughby provides is insufficient to elevate the claim into such a definitive assertion.

Willoughby obviously laboured long and hard to render the best account possible of Khan's early upbringing. He usefully registers Khan's observations that he had a 'gruelling and loving apprenticeship with his father' and

developed a 'manic expertise to drown [his mother's] voiceless chatter and muttering in my head'. We are told that he was a shy, phobic, 'weakly child, always ailing', with a 'minor deformity' of his ear. Unfortunately, the pieces provided by Willoughby don't quite add up to explain the degree of disturbance displayed by Khan throughout his lifetime. Perhaps we will never

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know, but I suspect far more significant trauma than Willoughby has unearthed.

Willoughby laces his historical reconstructions with psychoanalytically informed interpretations. While there are moments of penetrating insight - Willoughby draws, for example, on Charles Rycroft's formulation about parental ablation to highlight Khan's mythopoesis and denial of indebtedness - there are also too many instances of overreaching. To claim, for example, that Khan 'replaced Klein in Winnicott's psyche' or that Khan's and Winnicott's critique of Fairbairn was the result of 'displaced envy and hatred toward their respective fathers' strikes me as too much based on too little.

While Willoughby admirably devoted years of study and research into Khan, he also keeps him curiously at bay. No biographer needs to like his subject, but what could be felt as tragedy is too readily portrayed as travesty. At many a turn, Willoughby casts a negative aspersion when a sympathetic take is equally plausible. He interprets the dispatching of Khan's university thesis from Lahore to London, for example, as a sign of Khan's grandiosity, disidentification with his own ethnicity, and over-identification with 'the world of the colonial Raj masters, the superior white British cultural intellectual establishment'. Missing, however, is any appreciation of the possible plight of an exceptionally bright young man needing to expand and exercise his untutored talent. What might also be understood as a search for self is seen by Willoughby only as a betrayal of self. In another language, Willoughby describes Khan more from the outside in than from the inside out. Trenchant interpretations can provide an understanding of what Khan's behaviour might mean; they do not necessarily help us feel what it was like to be Masud Khan.

'All fictions', Khan once wrote, 'are true for the person who fabricates them, since they reflect an inner necessity.' Khan went through life imposing a fabricated version of how he preferred to be seen. It is not surprising, therefore, that he could also write so eloquently about alienation and perversion. Khan was a virtual Geiger counter for the insincerity, phoniness, and half-truths concealed in the behaviour of others. The psychological terrain we know best, it seems, is the one we know from the inside out.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy for Khan was that he could never allow himself the opportunity to benefit more fully from what analysis had to offer. 'Persons like me', Khan once wrote, 'are too private to be analysed.' Despite being endowed with a precocious mind, supple imagination, and reflective capacities, he apparently could not bear to feel himself a patient. That is why Khan's marvellously astute insights about himself - each of which has the appearance of a turning point - invariably turn out to be culs-de-sac. Insights of the reflective self can never adequately compensate for impaired relationships involving the prereflective self. Khan knew this about himself. Winnicott had told him as much. As he wrote in a private diary entry:

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I have never been able to share my Self with others through language spoken. And yet language has enabled me to know others - and often beyond my own insight into them. D.W.W. often used to say: 'You speak wiser than you know'. And that is true. (May 5, 1971)

Instead of allowing himself an experience of dependence in analysis, Khan secured preferential patronage through cultivating luminaries. In Willoughby's words, 'Khan substituted editorial and intellectual lieutenancy for a true psychoanalytic relationship'. In the end, this only hurt him. It is tempting to entertain the ironic possibility that Khan's only hope would have been if he had never become an analyst himself. Then, perhaps, he might have been able to have a relationship in which he was a patient and only a patient, rather than a valuable and exploitable apprentice.

It is not surprising that towards the end of his life Khan grew increasingly disillusioned with the psychoanalytic enterprise. 'One never changes at the root,' he wrote privately to Robert Stoller, 'but one drastically rearranges oneself, given will, motivation and helpful circumstances from the outside (as analysts we grossly and grievously neglect or cussedly disregard that!) I would go so far as to say that, to recover from an ailment like mine, reality is destiny.'

Of all the questions posed by Masud Khan's life and legacy, perhaps the most salient is how complicated can we allow a person to be before we stop trusting them altogether? Roger Willoughby's earnest effort to disentangle fact from fiction provides us with a complex portrait of Khan's productive and distorted life. This account disturbingly confirms Randall Jarrell's observation that 'people are much more eccentric than they are supposed to be'.

Dodi Goldman

Lives of Khan

Speak of Me as I Am: The Life and Work of Masud Khan by Judy CooperKarnac, London, 1993; 140 pp; \$45.00False Self: The Life of Masud Khan by Linda HopkinsOther Press, New York, NY, 2006; 525 pp; \$35.00Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality by Roger WilloughbyFree Association Books, London, 2005; 320 pp; \$65.00

Lucy LaFarge

What do we know with certainty about the life of Masud Khan? Khan was born in 1924. in the Punjab, the second son of a marriage that united an elderly Shiite Muslim father who had acquired power and wealth in the service of the British and a bride who was still in her teens. Khan apparently suffered a depression during his adolescence and was treated by a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. In 1946, he immigrated to London, where he became a candidate at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis of the British Psycho-Analytical Society. He entered analysis first with Ella Freeman Sharpe, then with John Rickman — these first two analyses were cut off prematurely by the death of each analyst — and then, famously, with Donald Woods Winnicott. After several unsuccessful attempts, Khan was named a training analyst at the Institute in 1959. He published influential papers on schizoid states, perversion, and the role of regression in the analytic setting, among many subjects. Many of these papers are collected in the three volumes, *The Privacy of the Self* (Khan, 1974), *Alienation in Perversions* (Khan, 1979a) and *Hidden Selves* (Khan, 1983). Khan also assumed, and performed with considerable success, important editorial roles in the international psychoanalytic community.

Khan's career spiraled downward, beginning with the incidental exposure, in 1965, of false claims he had made concerning his relationship with an important analyst. Subsequently, a growing awareness among his colleagues of Khan's longstanding boundary violations — these included affairs with woman patients, among them a woman candidate — led to Khan's forced resignation of his Training Analyst status in 1977. Finally, Khan's publication of a fourth volume, *When Spring Comes* (Khan, 1988), in which he depicts his interventions with patients as wild rants, infused with anti-Semitism and sexual slurs, led to his expulsion by the British Psycho-Analytical Society. Khan, who had survived a

diagnosis of terminal cancer in 1976, died of the effects of alcoholism in 1989, less than a year after his expulsion from the British Society.

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Certain aspects of Khan's life that have aroused considerable curiosity and speculation are unknown and probably ultimately unknowable. What were the important themes of his analysis with Winnicott, and what was Khan's actual role in the writing of Winnicott's papers? How close are the vivid descriptions of clinical work that Khan furnishes in his papers to the actual events of the consulting room? Are they exaggerated, fabricated, or some unknown blend of reality and fantasy?

What is startling to the reader of the biographical sketches and biographies of Khan that have appeared since Khan's death is that these works — even the two recent biographies by Roger Willoughby and Linda Hopkins, which are heavily annotated and apparently well researched — provide the reader with different versions of the very *facts* of Khan's history.¹ Who was Khan's mother, Khursheed, for example? JC (p. 5) tells us that she was a singing and dancing girl; LH (p. 5) describes her as a courtesan; and both these authors tell us that she bore an illegitimate son before she married Masud Khan's father, Fazaldad. RW, however, tells us (p. 4) that Khursheed was the first cousin of Fazaldad's third wife, Amer Jan, who stepped in to care for Amer Jan's children after Amer Jan's untimely death; Khursheed's son was not illegitimate, according to RW, but rather the product of an earlier marriage. And Fazaldad? LH (p. 4) tells us that he was born a peasant, acquiring his great holdings through his association with the British. JC (p. 5) and RW (p. 2) say that Fazaldad added the land granted to him by the British to acreage that he had apparently inherited.

That Khan's childhood in a distant place and long ago time remains shrouded in mystery should not entirely surprise us. However, as we continue to read, we find that Khan's biographers also provide us with conflicting versions of the facts of Khan's life *after* his arrival in London, when he lived and worked among a cast of characters who are familiar to us.

Concerning the duration of Khan's analysis with Winnicott, for example, LH (p. 40) and RW (p. 72) tell us that Khan interrupted his analysis after four years to give his five weekly hours to his first wife who had been thrown into crisis by the breakdown of their marriage. In lieu of analysis, Khan became Winnicott's editorial assistant, meeting regularly with Winnicott to shape Winnicott's works for publication. But did Khan ever resume his analysis? RW argues cogently that he did not. LH admits to her ultimate uncertainty in the matter, but tells us,

drawing upon Khan's own Work Books,² that Khan resumed his analysis after a year, and that the analysis endured in one form or another for 15 years (endnote to Chapter 5, p. 412). JC (p. 20), also relying upon Khan's own account, says nothing of a hiatus and simply tells us that the analysis was of 15 years' duration.

The story of Khan's enrollment as a candidate at the British Psycho-Analytic Institute exemplifies the Rashomon-like quality of these different accounts. LH, acknowledging in her endnotes that it is "difficult or impossible" (p. 405) to know the truth of the matter, again draws upon Khan's own account to tell us a striking story: Khan traveled to England planning to study Modern Greats at Oxford and

¹*For the sake of brevity, I will refer to the three biographies discussed in this essay by their authors' initials: JC for Judy Cooper's *Speak of Me As I Am: The Life and Works of Masud Khan*; LH for Linda Hopkins's *False Self: The Life of Masud Khan*; and RW for Roger Willoughby's *Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality*.*

²*A complete set of the 39 volumes of the Work Books, in which Khan recorded informal notes and musings, is held by the IPA and will not become available for study until 30 years after Khan's death. However, several copies were made, and Khan's biographers have had varying access to these.*

to pursue a therapeutic psychoanalysis. He wrote to Bowlby before he arrived, planning that Bowlby would refer him to an analyst for treatment. When Khan arrived at Bowlby's office, however, a misunderstanding had occurred: Bowlby thought that Khan was applying to be a candidate at the Institute — a course that had never occurred to Khan himself. In short order, Khan was accepted for training and referred to Sharpe; his career was launched!

RW, however, tells quite a different story (p. 21): in this version, Khan always intended to become a psychoanalyst and never planned on Oxford; he wrote to Bowlby from India to inquire about psychoanalytic training. Indeed, as RW points out, Khan's application to become a candidate is documented to have been received by the Institute of Psycho-Analysis on 2 September 1946, one month *before* Khan says that he arrived in England and had his fateful meeting with Bowlby.

The authors' accounts also diverge on the central issue of Khan's continuing relations with patients after his professional lapses had become known. Writing of the period between Khan's loss of training analyst status in 1977 and his

death in 1989, Eric Rayner tells us in his foreword to Cooper's book that "with his progressive illness, [Khan] was not treating patients" (JC, p. [xiii](#)). Hopkins, however, says, "even in his most disturbed periods, Khan still saw patients" (LH, p. 341), and presents an interview with a patient whose analysis with Khan ended as late as 1986.

What are we to make of these different versions of key events in Khan's life? At times each biographer provides his own version of an event with an air of complete confidence, as if unaware of the existence of other versions. More often, the three biographers confess to some uncertainty, telling us of the difficulty of sorting through various contradictory sources and accounts — many of them put forward by Khan himself — and the reason why they have selected one or another as more likely to be true. In the end the three biographers have constructed narratives of their subject that are more different from one another than biographies of the same individual ordinarily are. It is interesting to consider the figure of Khan that emerges from each narrative. Likely though, it tells us most about Khan that it has been possible for his biographers to construct three such different lives for him, each with a sense of narrative coherence and each contradicting the others in important ways.

Cooper's Khan

In *Speak of Me As I Am: The Life and Works of Masud Khan*, Judy Cooper (1993) presents us with a Khan who is a brilliant but tragic misfit, poorly understood by his contemporaries, a clinician who, while not entirely reliable, "gave too much of himself to his patients, to the detriment of himself" (p. [110](#)). Cooper tells us at the start that she was both Khan's analysand and his "disciple" (p. [xviii](#)). Khan asked her to write about him, summoning her to him nine months before his death (15 years after the conclusion of Cooper's analysis). In addition to the stories that Khan told her about his own life, Cooper draws for her account upon the first 15 volumes of Khan's Work Books, which Khan gave her as a wedding gift when she was in analysis with him, and supplements these first-person accounts and her own impressions with interviews with colleagues and friends of Khan's. Along with a biographical sketch, Cooper provides the reader with an excellent concise exposition of Khan's thought.

Cooper's Khan is a fatherly figure. Indeed she tells us explicitly:

He conveyed to me almost instantly that I had at last found the father I was searching for all my life: a father who could and would rescue me ... Throughout our analytic relationship ... until his death ... he was my father and I, a daughter.

(p. 90)

Cooper has in fact minimized Khan's sexual life as a child might do with a father: in her version, Khan's first marriage to the ballerina, Jane Shore, breaks up, and then 'some time later' he takes up with and marries Shore's rival, Svetlana Beriosova (rather than the adulterous affair with Beriosova precipitating the end of the first marriage, as described by RW and LH). In speaking of the boundary violations that led to Khan's loss of training analyst status, Cooper mentions only his "social relationships with many of his analysands" (pp. 27-8), omitting Khan's sexual transgressions.

As we imagine Khan, an impressive and magnetic figure, welcoming Cooper into his consulting room, it is easy for us to see how this kind of idealizing paternal transference might crystallize early on between the two of them, and how it might have been hard to resolve, blending as it did her deepest wishes and central aspects of Khan's own desires, as well as his outward persona. And it would be hard to counter Cooper's own assertion that she was greatly helped by Khan. Yet, at the same time, reading Cooper's book, one wonders at what cost this help occurred.

The story that Cooper tells and the way that she tells it bear the hallmarks of a significant constriction of thinking and feeling. It says little that she often passes on unquestioningly the myths that Khan promulgated about himself, or even elaborates a bit upon them, linking Khan's two marriages to ballerinas to his mother's history as a dancing girl (p. 16), for example. It is all too apparent that Khan evoked this kind of credulity in almost everyone he met.

It is more concerning that Cooper springs so strongly to Khan's defense even when he is so apparently in the wrong. Sometimes she seems simply to echo his complaints about the world, telling us, for example, that the work of Khan, who published widely and held key editorial positions in the analytic establishment, "has never been officially recognized by the analytic profession" (p. xviii). At times, Cooper seems to suspend her judgment entirely. What are we to make of a chapter on Khan's work in which an exegesis of his sophisticated *papers* on technique is followed without comment by a *separate* section entitled "Khan's technique in practice"?

Perhaps the most significant feature of Cooper's narrative is that she tells her story in an entirely uninfected style. She gives us the bad with the good: Khan was infuriating, dishonest, provocative, and contemptuous as well as brilliant, creative, caring, and misunderstood. Yet one feels as one reads Cooper's book that she has *seen* the bad but not *felt* it; there is no sense that she has come to terms with what she has learned or that anything she has learned has altered her initial impression of her subject. It seems likely that Khan's character as well as his manifest behavior made a demand upon Cooper that she not look beyond the persona that he presented to her — or, if she did look beyond, that she give less credence to whatever she saw than to the brightly lit reality that they had constructed together.

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Hopkins's Khan

Linda Hopkins's *False Self: The Life of Masud Khan* (2006) is the most inclusive of the biographies and presents the most vivid portrait of Khan. Hopkins has gathered an enormous amount of material, interviewing Khan's friends, colleagues, and ex-wives, and reading his voluminous correspondence. Through Sybil Stoller, she has had access to a complete set of the Work Books, which Khan had sent to his close friends, the Stollers, for reading and safekeeping. Hopkins has performed the large and important task of tracking down a significant number of Khan's analysands and supervisees and interviewing them.

The Khan we meet through Hopkins is a charismatic figure who was able to form intense connections with both men and women (the latter primarily in sexual relationships). He is glamorous and exciting, and we can see the qualities that engaged his colleagues and patients and led them, at least transiently, to overlook his faults. Through Hopkins, we see Khan not as a child might see a parent — as we saw Khan through Cooper — but as a seductive peer. Although Hopkins interviews patients with whom Khan did not cross boundaries as well as patients with whom he did, the Khan who comes alive in her version is the transgressive, seductive Khan. An intellectual and analytic Don Juan, Khan courted destruction, and Hopkins details the many debacles that marked his deteriorating course.

Hopkins's interviews with patients, from which she presents extended verbatim excerpts, demonstrate the many complex issues that arise with an analyst who violates boundaries. Khan did not cross boundaries with all his patients,

particularly early on, and some of the crossings that did occur were relatively minor — a piece of unnecessary self-disclosure on Khan's part, the loan of a book, or the offer of a room to rest in after a session. In a sense, Khan presented himself as more of a grand personage than analysts ordinarily do or should, impressing his patients with a staff to usher them about, capitalizing on glamorous and often well-known show-business connections, and operating throughout with a dramatic flourish. It is difficult to draw a line between this dramatic self-presentation and more definable transgressions. One senses, in fact, that Khan intended his persona to *be* transgressive — to say through his appearance and manners that he was above other analysts and the rules that they followed.

Not all the patients with whom Khan committed boundary violations, including those patients with whom he had affairs, felt harmed by him. Many of his patients, both those who received more conventional treatment and those whose analyses were dominated by seemingly catastrophic enactments, felt helped. Although from outside it seems evident that Khan's behavior often prevented his patients from *analyzing*, many of them say they felt helped by his 'realness', his larger than life involvement. For some patients, speaking to Hopkins seems to have provided an opportunity to reassess continuing transferences to Khan; and a few reflect at a second interview that they have become newly aware of how self-serving Khan was, and how angry and hurt they feel.

Hopkins's detailed depiction of the analytic community in which Khan rose and fell also gives a sense of the complex web of loyalties that made Khan's deviant behavior difficult to acknowledge or address. Khan's combined status as Winnicott's patient and protégé meant that criticism of Khan implied a criticism both of Winnicott's analytic work with him and of the extensive extra-analytic relationship

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that the two shared. Patients with whom Khan had had sexual relationships were subsequently treated by other analysts, who faced conflicts between protecting these patients' confidentiality and exposing Khan's misbehavior.

Hopkins, unlike Cooper, never knew Khan personally. Nevertheless, as one reads her work, one has the sense that she has been somewhat seduced by him, too charmed and too willing to take him at his word. Perhaps her access to the Work Books promoted this; it is hard to resist belief in a firsthand account. In addition, the many interviews that Hopkins performed with colleagues and friends of Khan's must have produced numerous stories that, while told to her

by others, had initially been circulated by Khan himself. Indeed Hopkins acknowledges the problems she encountered in distinguishing the truth of Khan's life from the many contradictory falsehoods that he told.

There are moments in the book, when Hopkins's credulousness seems quite striking. Describing Khan's childhood, for example, Hopkins passes along two stories that were told to her by two of Khan's female friends. I will quote one in its entirety:

Masud used to suffer at school because the other boys would taunt him about his large ear. One day he confided to his father that he was being bullied. Soon after this, a group of his father's servants showed up at the school and they buggered [i.e. sexually assaulted] the other children as Masud watched.

(p. 10)

"Even if untrue ...", Hopkins says, introducing this story, and goes on to tell us that it illustrates the "emotional reality", showing us the harshness of Masud's father (pp. 9-10). 'Even if untrue!' It seemed, to me at least, that Hopkins felt drawn here to call a patently untrue story possible; that, even as a biographer, she had fallen under the sway of Khan's compelling demand for his audience's uncritical belief.

A similar constraint in exposing the dark side of Khan is evident, I think, in Hopkins's depictions of Khan's violent and destructive outbursts. Factually, Hopkins does not spare Khan; and she has amassed a huge dossier of the many terrible things that he did during his lifetime -striking his houseboy, telling malicious lies about his friends, shoplifting, driving his car into the building of a rejecting lover and throwing another to the ground and trying to strangle her. It is all there, but all strangely uninfected; through Hopkins's matter-of-fact descriptions, even those built upon the firsthand accounts that she has gathered, we cannot *imagine* these events as we can imagine, for example, Khan's mesmerizing sexual 'education' of his virgin patient, 'Caroline'.

It is a weakness of Hopkins's otherwise interesting book that she proposes overly simple diagnostic and psychoanalytic formulations to explain Khan's disastrous life trajectory. It seems likely, from the evidence that Hopkins has amassed, that Khan suffered from a bipolar disorder as well as from alcoholism, as Hopkins argues; but this does not go far enough to explain the rich, multifaceted figure that comes across in her depiction. Similarly, her tracing Khan's core pathology to a 'false self' structure seems possible but too reductive. Hopkins argues that Khan's analysis with Winnicott failed because

Khan was unable to achieve a regression to dependence, likely because Winnicott was intolerant of Khan's aggression. As we read the history that Hopkins details, however, it would be reasonable for us to question whether Khan could really have benefited from psychoanalysis in any case. Kernberg (1984) argues that patients suffering from narcissistic personality disorder with

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antisocial features (a diagnosis that Khan clearly merits in Hopkins's description) have a poor prognosis in psychoanalytic treatment. And Khan's precarious ego structure and alcoholism place him within the group of patients whom Wallerstein (1986) describes as presenting 'heroic' indications for psychoanalysis. Referred for analysis because it was felt that more superficial treatment would not be effective, patients in this group had the worst outcomes of any cohort in a long-term follow-up study of patients treated at the Menninger Clinic (Wallerstein, 1986).

Willoughby's Khan

If Cooper and Hopkins present us with experiences of Khan as we might find him if we met him, Roger Willoughby is on the trail of the private Khan, the man behind the compelling performance. Willoughby is a debunker. Although he has entitled his biography *Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality* (Willoughby, 2005), his chief interest is in the reality side of this equation; and his interest in the mythic, performing Khan tends to be in the concrete ways that Khan constructed his myth and put it across, and in the distance that specific myths stood from factual reality.

Willoughby has interviewed many of Khan's friends and colleagues, and, like Hopkins, has plowed through Khan's extensive correspondence. He has also directly and indirectly gathered the accounts of a number of Khan's patients, but these accounts do not make up a major portion of the book as they do in Hopkins's volume. Unlike Cooper and Hopkins, Willoughby has not had access to Khan's Work Books.

Willoughby's strength is in his persistence in discovering the paper trail that Khan left behind throughout his life. Thus from Willoughby's account of Khan's early years, we learn of Khan's actual mediocre record at school in India, which contrasts strongly with the brilliant claims he made for himself. From the early years in London, Willoughby documents the number of supervisory hours that Khan completed as an analytic candidate — the bare minimum — and his

resistance to paying fees, as well as *The Times's*, refusal to print the announcement of Khan's wedding to Jane Shore as it was initially submitted, because Khan could provide no supporting evidence for the spurious title of 'Khan Bahadur' that he had claimed for himself. And from Khan's last days, Willoughby furnishes the fantastical obituary that Khan composed for himself claiming that the editors of the *Financial Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and the *Daily Telegraph* had requested it.

The dossier Willoughby has compiled also gives us a sense of the operational side, the mechanics of Khan's presenting himself falsely. We hear from Jane Shore that Khan sometimes instructed her to pretend to be a maid who would usher patients into his home office. Willoughby traces in Khan's correspondence the way in which Khan concealed aspects of his life from his most intimate confidants; and he shows us how a similar process of the ablation of historical reality can be seen in Khan's scholarly work, where Khan first built upon Fairbairn's work and then, in successive papers, omitted Fairbairn from his references.

The Khan whom we meet through Willoughby is more persistently troubled and much less charismatic than the Khan we meet through Cooper and Hopkins. Reading Hopkins, we are most aware of Khan's ascent and fall, of the way he

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dominated his audience, making his way by force of intellect and personality, to the center of the analytic world and then actively destroyed himself. Reading Willoughby, we see Khan, the eternal outsider, who suffered from his sense of inferiority and attempted first to compensate with grandiosity and then to punish those who excluded him.

Willoughby's account emphasizes the meaning for Khan of having grown up in colonial India, and the double identification that Khan formed with the denigrated Indian subjects and the ruling British elite. Immigration to England reflected the choice of an identification with a ruling class who saw Khan as lesser. As a member of the British Psycho-Analytic Society, Khan continued to encounter unthinking racism, often in projected form. In making a referral to Khan, for example, Winnicott asked the patient if he had an "objection to seeing a Pakistani analyst" (Godley, 2001, pp. 4-5, quoted by RW, p. 87). Curiously, even the photographs that accompany Willoughby's biography portray a Khan who appears darker skinned, less glamorous, and less European than the Khan who figures in Hopkins's photographs. (This effect may result in part from Hopkins having selected a larger proportion of pictures from the zenith of Khan's career, when he was most European in dress.)

The accounts of Khan's clinical work that Willoughby has gathered from Khan's patients give the strong impression that Khan's work was marked by serious boundary violations from the very beginning. A control case, Mr A, who continued the analysis after Khan's graduation, recounts that Khan told him how to dress so that he would look better when he came to Khan's office, that Khan boasted to him about his family and his own accomplishments and introduced him to show-business friends; ultimately Khan terminated this analysis abruptly and unilaterally after eight years, to the patient's great distress (RW, pp. 47-8). By contrast, Hopkins tends to portray Khan as a "fairly traditional analyst" (LH, p. 52) early on, and as doing good work in some analyses even later when some of his analytic work was markedly deviant. It seems likely that Hopkins's free-form interviews with patients convey more of a sense of *what it felt like to be with Khan* — including the way patients felt pulled to exonerate or idealize him — while Willoughby's drier, more factual style has yielded a clearer sense of Khan's *actual behavior*.

Like Hopkins, Willoughby ventures psychodynamic explanations of his subject's behavior. Willoughby's orientation is predominantly Kleinian. Thus he speculates that Khan's confabulation reflected a "psychic retreat" (RW, p. 5) and links Khan's sense of personal incoherence to the incoherence of Khan's internalized representation of the parental couple (RW, p. 9). Although these formulations may be accurate, they seem too reductive, too general to tell us much about the complex figure whom Willoughby depicts. Like Hopkins's evocation of the false self, they add little to an otherwise well-researched volume. Likely this reflects a general problem with the use of psychoanalytic concepts in biographies: these constructs which so richly organize our understanding of analytic data often seem hollow when they are removed from their anchorage in the data of the clinical situation.

Many Khans

What can we make of the many chronicles of Khan? At the risk of adding yet another set of reductive hypotheses, I will add my own speculations to the mix. It

is common knowledge that each of us comes alive differently with each of the important others to whom we are tied. Analysts writing from many different perspectives³ have argued that this phenomenon reflects important qualities of the internal object world, where there reside many versions of the self, each felt

to exist in relation to a specific version of the object. As I have argued in a recent paper (LaFarge, 2008), the idea that the self exists in multiple versions may be extended to our private or solitary experience as well: we feel ourselves to be different when we are, in fantasy, apart from our objects from how we feel when we are with them. In some sense Khan may be seen as an extreme example of the multifaceted nature of self experience, someone for whom the selves that he presented to others were more different from one another — and much more distant from the self that he inhabited when he was alone — than is ordinarily the case.

Khan also differed from most of us in his extraordinary ability to influence his audience to believe in the often confabulated selves that he put forward. To read Cooper and Hopkins is to become aware of the magnetism that Khan exerted upon those who knew him, inducing them to notice and confirm his exciting self-presentation and to scotomize or discount evidence that contradicted it. Greenacre (1958) has described the impostor's ability to compel belief with a surprisingly unshaded performance, as well as the cruder and more psychopathic aspects of self that lie outside the impostor's dramatization. We are indebted to Willoughby for documenting both the thinness of Khan's performance and the less organized, bleaker aspects of Khan that lay outside it.

In his clinical writing, Khan often explored the way the object is used to bring aspects of the self to life. It seems likely that this interest stemmed in part from his wish to understand himself. One of Khan's most brilliant contributions was his exploration of the mother's usage of the child, and the role of the mother's specific psychology in the shaping of the child's developing self. In Khan's depiction, mother and child were interacting players with potentially different aims; the mother might sacrifice the child to her own needs, drawing the child into a collusive relationship where development was distorted or stopped (Khan, 1969a). Khan also extended the concept of object usage to encompass the idea that in perversion the object is used to bring alive parts of the self; in this transaction, the object's own unique nature is lost, as the child's may be with the mother (Khan, 1969b). Khan emphasized the way in which complex, early modes of object usage come alive in the clinical situation and may be reconstructed.

Reading Khan's papers with the advantage of hindsight, one imagines that Khan's understanding of the adult's use of the child may have reflected in part his own wishes and enacted experiences with his patients. Attention to variations in the structure and tone of Khan's papers supports this hypothesis, and gives us a sense of the different trajectories that Khan's usage of the object may have taken. In the papers compiled in his first book, *The Privacy of the Self*

(1974), Khan's descriptions of clinical work tend to be detailed. We have a sense of the process, of the transference and countertransference, and often of the way the evolving events of the treatment reflect the patient's early experience. In *Alienation in Perversions*

³*An incomplete list would include Klein (1946); Racker (1957); Sandler (1976); Kernberg (1978); Feldman (1993); Bromberg (1998).*

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(1979a), we catch glimpses of another aspect of Khan. The papers on perversion are original, often brilliant, but some elements of Khan's narrative give the impression that they are designed to excite rather than inform the reader. In Khan's 1969 paper, *Role of the 'collated internal object' in perversion formations*, this shift in narrative form is particularly marked: the sense of a detailed process recedes altogether, and the analysis becomes a kind of platform for exciting perverse stories that the patient gradually reveals to the analyst, and that the analyst in turn passes on to the reader.

Considering these papers as well as the accounts that have been gathered from his patients, it seems possible that, in his best mode, Khan used his patients, as he used Cooper, to bring to life his vision of himself as an analyst. This vision might have been idealized and distorted, but it involved some idea of using the analytic situation to be therapeutic. At other times, as we sense at certain moments in the papers on perversion, the balance shifted: Khan used his patients to bring alive different sexual and omnipotent aspects of himself; and the patients' own needs and the therapeutic nature of the treatment were lost. Finally, with Khan's last book, *When Spring Comes* (1988), the structure of analysis was lost altogether. Khan depicts his use of the analytic relationship to hurt his patients; and, in parallel with this, uses his writing primarily to inflict suffering upon the colleagues and friends who would read it.

Who was Khan, all in all? Toward the end of her book, Hopkins quotes André Green (1997) as saying, "In the end, Masud ... didn't realize that he was in England in the 20th century. He thought it was Pakistan and the 17th century". "If Green is right," Hopkins says, "and the True Self Khan experienced in Pakistan was based on a fantasized reality, it is of interest to question whether it is appropriate to call it a True Self" (LH, p. 388).

It seems inaccurate to say that Khan was finally the collection of historical facts that Willoughby has traced, for Khan was also the man whom people met, believed, and loved. If that self was false and impostrous, nevertheless Khan

lived partly within it, producing a body of written work that still has merit. It is also unclear how much of Khan's confabulated history he himself came to believe. How would Khan himself have regarded the problem of our knowing him? Ultimately, Khan felt, there are mad parts of each of us that cannot be known by another. As analysts we mistakenly, like Klein and Winnicott, "try to make sense of the *nonsense* of the analysand's spoken madness" (Khan, 1979b, p. 182). In the end, however, "each adult is mad in a very private way, and also alone" (1979b, p. 181).

In concluding, one might ask why so many biographies of Khan have appeared so soon after his death.⁴ Other analysts who have made important contributions to the field have received far less attention. And why is the attention that Khan receives so focused on his life rather than on the considerable body of his work? Although we might attribute the spate of Khan biographies to a wish to resolve our reactions to the considerable disturbance that he caused in the analytic world, impostors and other deceivers have in fact always received more than their fair share of biographical attention, and interest in their lives has always tended to overshadow interest in the works that these often gifted individuals have accomplished. Deceivers fascinate us. As Kris (2005) points out, their use of splitting stirs

⁴*I thank an anonymous reader at the IJP for raising this interesting question.*
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up something similar in ourselves. We wish alternately to believe them and to unmask them, and it is difficult for us to see them whole or to put them to rest.

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**Willoughby, Roger. Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality.
London: Free Association Books. 2005. Pp. ix + 307. Hbk. £25.00.**

Jean Thomson

Masud Khan, who became one of the many famous names in psychoanalysis, arrived in England from India/Pakistan in 1946 when he was 22. He had been accepted for training at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis (IPA) at a time when it was beginning its post-war innovative period, and he was one of its influential figures as training analyst and librarian/editor until his mental and physical health deteriorated from about 1975, following divorce from his second wife, Svetlana Beriosova. From then onwards until his death in June 1989 he became not so much famous as notorious and, sadly, this is how he is mostly remembered. In his latter years, he drank heavily, became behaviourally arrogant, lax and aggressive, eventually developed cancer of the larynx, and was finally forced by scandal to resign from the Institute two years before he died, aged 65. His personal history took place amidst the intellectual flowering in psychoanalytic thinking from the end of the Second World War and this subtly constructed biography shows how Masud Khan's (self-)destruction can be imagined to have evolved out of his experiences as an Asian in a British-dominated world.

Willoughby, an academic psychologist, has been able to talk with many of Masud Khan's contemporaries, including Pearl King who was Khan's sibling in training and

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who writes the foreword. Masud Khan was friendly with SAP (Society of Analytical Psychology) members Rosemary Gordon and Fred Plaut, who both reviewed his work. Of Plaut's 'favourable review of his *Collected Papers*', he says: 'What a pity that the (psycho)analysts are so defensively inhibited that they cannot allow themselves the joy of sharing new ideas and ways of exploring reality' (p. 96). This was 1960 and the seeds of his later unpopularity can be seen here as his openness to ideas ceased to correspond to the mood of the Institute. He respected Michael Fordham and spoke in tribute to him at his

memorial dinner in 1977; according to those who were there he was so fulsome in his praise that some colleagues were embarrassed for him.

The book gives an evolving picture of its subject's character. It reads like a mystery story. Who *was* this Prince Masud Khan? Pride, arrogance and fantasising are words which seem easily to spring to mind when he is remembered and there is a quote from Bion, who says: '... in the personality where life instincts predominate pride becomes self respect, where death instincts predominate, pride becomes arrogance' (p. 77). In his latter years, Khan was certainly preoccupied with death and was aware that destructive processes had taken him over. An example of an insight transformed into description of a clinical analysis is his description of a patient not being a victim but complicit in his own murder by suicide. In a 1975 paper, 'Murder, frenzy and madness', he says: 'One definition of some murders could be suicide by the Other... (the person) finds a victim to kill him or her and ends the agony of non-being...' (p. 228). He first gave this kind of thought in a letter to Robert Stoller in 1964: 'I get provoked to engineer some "happening" from sheer boredom...'. The author has cleverly picked out quotes which illustrate a thesis of self-destructiveness.

Most of the book is about Khan's life as an analyst but the first part gives a picture of his family history in India that is highly relevant to understanding his personality. The Khan family came from the Punjab and were Sunni Muslims. Khan's father began as a private in the British-led army, after 19 years was given a commission but when he was promoted again he was still 'subordinate to even the most junior British subalterns' (p. 2). In his long life he was able to become a general, then on retiring a magistrate, and to buy property. Eventually he was given the title of Raja, the non-hereditary version (which Khan later treated as hereditary, assuming for himself the title of 'Prince'). He married four times and was 67 when he married Khan's mother, Kurshid, his fourth wife, 40 years younger than her husband and already looking after his first 13 children. Khan's relationship with his mother was adoring but ambivalent. She lived in purda, was depressed, often ill, clinging, and she 'chattered', infuriating him. Much of his early schooling was by tutors, alone at home. He was mute from age 4 to 7 but there is no further information about this in the book, although Willoughby sees it as a theme in Khan's life. In 1952, he wrote a paper 'silence as communication' and, significantly, in his 50s he had to have a laryngectomy and could no longer speak. His father wrote to him every day until he died (aged 94) in 1943 when Khan was only 19. Writing and writing letters became Khan's way of communicating.

It is perhaps surprising that a young man of 22 with a not very impressive academic record and no experience of psychiatry was accepted for training in 1946, though at that time the Institute of Psycho-Analysis did not have the complex organization it has today. Khan, himself, said that he only wrote to John Bowlby to ask for analysis but was offered a training place! He arrived on the scene just after the IPA had been riven by the rivalry between the Melanie Klein faction and the Anna Freud faction. It had succeeded in remaining one organization by having the three streams we know today. There was much manoeuvring still to come about the boundaries of the theory and the method, including the continuing controversy about medical and 'lay' analysts, but the names of Khan's contemporaries read as a psychoanalytic glitterati. Most of the ideas and the methods we are familiar with today were being carved out by Khan and his

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contemporaries and the book gives an idea of the pain as well as the pleasure of intellectual disagreements.

He had two analyses; both analysts died. In 1951 he went to Donald Winnicott, beginning a very long association and friendship. Khan had said that 'only one who feels himself a patient can be analysed beyond a certain point' (p. 31) and he never seems to have allowed himself to take the patient role completely. After his second analyst John Rickman had died he suggested that there was an equality in his relationship with his analyst which precluded his revealing much about himself. He wrote: 'It is impossible for anybody outside to relate to a person who is hiding himself'. So it seems that he required increasingly barrier-like defences to conceal his vulnerability and he hid himself in increasing fantasy and grandiosity. He was about 27 when he began analysis with Winnicott. Willoughby says that although 'Winnicott's analysis of Khan has become a highly controversial episode in psychoanalytic history, the known facts about it are extremely meagre, with no definitively identifiable case history available' (p. 51). Interestingly, after Winnicott died, Khan recorded in private that:

I did on three occasions sink into myself, be silent and related to him. All these three occasions were physical ... He was in his chair seated and I had got off the couch and buried my head into the side of his coat. I can still hear his heart and watch beating. All else was still ... and I was at peace. And D.W. never interpreted those three occasions. He had enabled me to reach that point.

(p. 75)

Khan was at first highly respected and became a training analyst, but increasingly he seemed to need to boast and make up stories about his grand life in India/ Pakistan. He had described what his early life in London was like in a letter to Robert Stoller:

I was a complete stranger, strange in my way of life and insufferably arrogant in my style of living, very rich and secure in my background and utterly unconvinced that the type of people I was with were the sort I would like to work with. My contemporaries treated me with a mixture of ridicule and amusement. I was isolated and flaunted my aloneness as a superior and elected way of being. A great deal of it was bluff and both exhausting and painful for me. It was hellishly annoying for everyone, but this being England, individuals are never extinguished; they are merely bullied through a persistent and cussed politeness and negation. Fortunately for me, my pride used that as a nutriment and healthy provocation.

(p. 38)

Willoughby suggests that the impact of being a sensitive person born under the British Raj meant that Khan had to face a tendency to see himself as coming from a different species, born to be ruled, and that no matter how distinguished he became he had to struggle against being patronized or treated as inferior. Charm and ambition carried him along, doors swung open for him but eventually—his pride leading not to the life-enhancing self respect of Bion's comparison but to arrogance 'where death instincts predominate'—what was essentially a 'false self' or in Jungian terms, persona, collapsed. He edited much of Winnicott's extensive written work but he became more and more dis-illusioned and withdrew into his travelling personal life, between Pakistan, France and London. His proud manner increasingly became what he himself would have called a manic defence, preserving himself against the encroachment of a world in which he felt alien and in the face of which he was silent. His shadow broke through in indiscreet criticism of fellow analysts and as a result from about 1965 his reputation began to shred.

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His last book *When Spring Comes: Awakenings in Clinical Psychoanalysis* contained papers which were 'self revelatory and provocative' (p. 233). Stoller wrote: 'reading it (was) a most interesting experience in the way it is interesting to watch a kamikaze pilot in his final plunge...'. Stoller thinks much of the case material is made up and later says he thinks Khan had 'been destroying himself for years: in a grandiose way earlier in life; but later with a bitter and sordid

vengeance' (p. 237). He was editor and librarian for publications and the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* for many years, became extremely cognizant of all the literature and set up an extensive archive. In the end, though, he is mainly remembered in casual psychoanalytic gossip, not for advocating 'modelling psychoanalysis on the humanities and hermeneutics instead of on medicine and the sciences' (p. 128) but for having 'had sex with patients'.

Masud Khan's last years were spent alone as he alienated the women who cared for him and the male friends who continued to try and understand what he was going through. He stayed in his room, mainly in bed, drinking alcohol, receiving treatment for cancer—the treatment for which included increasingly heavy doses of morphine. His early elective mutism was made inescapable by the operation on his larynx, so confirming the theme of being rendered silent which ran through his life. He finally died of liver poisoning. The name 'Masud Khan' eventually became a myth, rather as Sonu Shamdasani has suggested that 'Freud' and 'Jung' have become words which describe ideas rather than belong any more to one person. This biography gives a very good picture of how 'Masud Khan' became a rich Pakistani Prince of dubious repute, whose sexuality was questionable and whose behaviour broke conventional boundaries.

Throughout the book we not only hear the facts of Masud Khan's life related by people who remember him, but there is also his prolific correspondence particularly with Robert Stoller and Victor Smirnoff. This has been preserved and quotes from it give an insight into the character of a proud and brilliant man who was finally defeated by his own need to be destroyed.

Roger Willoughby has done some detailed research to create a picture not only of a psychoanalyst, but also of the cultural context in which he lived and practised.

**REVIEW OF MASUD KHAN:
THE MYTH AND THE REALITY,
BY ROGER WILLOUGHBY¹**

BY MANASI KUMAR

Roger Willoughby has presented us with a very well-researched work on one of the most intriguing characters in the psychoanalytic world, Masud Khan, a persona closely identified with another acclaimed yet slightly maverick psychoanalyst, Donald Winnicott.

The book runs to 320 pages, covering 18 chapters. An impressive synthesis of material is presented, including the history of pre-partitioned India, post-partition life in the Indian subcontinent,² the history and development of psychoanalysis in India, and the psychoanalytic saga in Britain from the pre-Second-World-War era until the late 1980s, when Khan died of cancer.

It is within these contours that Willoughby situates Khan's life and works. The book appears to be well annotated; Willoughby has included a commendable bibliography of Khan's published and unpublished works (pp. 301-307).

There is an interesting foreword by Pearl King (pp. x-xix), one of Khan's contemporary analysts, who endorses the arguments and merits of Willoughby's thesis on Khan, stressing the need to revisit the enigma surrounding Khan's life. King highlights a comment by Willoughby about his approach in thinking through this book as "one that emphasizes the epistemophilic instinct and an essen-

¹ Published in 2004 by Free Association Books, London.

² In August 1947, India was partitioned into the sovereign states of the Dominion of Pakistan (later the Islamic Republic of Pakistan) and the Union of India (later the Republic of India) upon the granting of independence to British India from Great Britain.

tialist notion of the psychoanalytic project" (p. xi). As she points out, it may have been this modernist approach that enabled Willoughby to excavate and reexamine Khan's life events, maintaining an alert eye to many different factors.

I wish to highlight two of the book's principal features here. First, there is a dominant theme of marked psychic trauma and ruptures in Khan's life and how these led to the development of a false self, in which self-aggrandizement and narcissism prevailed, ultimately contributing to a tragic life course. Second, in a bid to address concerns arising from Willoughby's narration of Khan's life, I offer a few observations about the ways in which rigorous and well-researched biographical accounts—particularly those about an "outsider" such as Khan—may still at times miss some central points.

EMPTY SPACES AND HIDDEN SELVES

A sizeable number of pages at the beginning of the book is devoted to a description of Khan's family background, his ancestral home, and the intricacies of life during the British *Raj* (rule) in pre-partitioned India. A selection of photos covering Khan's entire life span (pp. xxii-xxxii) allows the reader to develop an impressionistic montage of this enigmatic man and his strange, discordant life.

Masud Khan was born on July 21, 1924, in Punjab, to Fazal Dad Khan and his fourth wife, Khurshid Begum. There was a considerable age difference between these two (not uncommon in marriages of that time and place), and together they had four children. One died in infancy, leaving Masud Khan and two siblings: Tahir, a year older, and Mahmooda, two years younger. Descriptions of Khan's early relationship with his parents are not numerous, but indicate a great deal of ambivalence. His father's marriage is noted to have "caused dissent within the extended family as sources characterised her [Khan's mother] as a beautiful, young and illiterate girl," who was a "famous singer and courtesan" (p. 4).

Willoughby suggests in the first two chapters that Khan's inconsistency with object relations could be traced to his introjection of

a damaged maternal object. Apparently, his relationship with his mother was distant and disturbing. Two of Khan's close friends, Robert Stoller and Victor Smirnoff, whose incisive comments and portrayal of Khan's life and contributions are heavily utilized in the book, made similar observations (p. 9). Perhaps quite predictably, then, some of Khan's later papers highlight the significance of the holding function in psychoanalysis, as well as his interest in the "collated internal object" and the schizoid personality, the location of transitional experience in cultural spaces and in "religious experience," and his fascination with Winnicott's good-enough-mother-and-baby dyad as a functional psychoanalytic metaphor.

Khan's early education took place in Lyallpur. After matriculating in 1938, he entered Government College at the University of Punjab, Lyallpur, to pursue a Bachelor's degree, studying Urdu, political science, and history (p. 16). In the autumn of 1942, having completed his B.A., he underwent Masters studies in English literature, also at Government College, following in the footsteps of his brother, Tahir. It was during this time that Khan suffered two major emotional blows: the deaths first of his sister, Mahmooda, in 1942, of tuberculosis, and then of his father, aged ninety, in 1943 (p. 17).

In September 1946, Khan journeyed to London, where he interviewed with John Bowlby and Sylvia Payne and was subsequently accepted for training at the Institute of Psychoanalysis. There he sought supervision with Anna Freud and also with Melanie Klein.³ He began his training analysis with Ella Freeman Sharpe, who unfortunately died of a thrombosis and cardiac failure only seven months later, in June 1947. Khan was then referred for his training analysis to John Rickman, who apparently also had a history of coronary thrombosis (p. 29). Rickman became an influential figure in Khan's life in more than one way; in addition to Rickman's function as Khan's training analyst, the two developed a mentor

³ A "gentlemen's agreement" between the two well-known mademoiselles of the British Psychoanalytical Society resulted in the institute's support of three different psychoanalytic traditions, which is maintained today.

relationship (p. 30), in which a mutual interest in psychoanalytic discourse dominated their interactions. Khan's second training analysis was interrupted as well, however, when Rickman died of a massive coronary attack in 1951.

The year 1951 also marked the start of Khan's first analysis of a patient, "Mr. A." Another major event occurred in Khan's life that autumn when he approached Donald Winnicott for his third training analysis, and the latter consented. Willoughby writes: "While Winnicott's analysis of Khan has become a highly controversial episode in psychoanalytic history, the known facts about it are extremely meagre, with no definitively identifiable case history available" (p. 51).

Khan claimed in his private notebooks that his analysis with Winnicott spanned some fifteen years, from 1951 to 1966 (pp. 51-52), but other evidence cited in the book suggests that it lasted only four years, interrupting in 1955. Willoughby speculates that the analysis may have resumed in the early 1960s. The author notes that "with Winnicott, Khan seems to have sought to similarly substitute editorial and intellectual lieutenancy for a true psychoanalytic relationship, a substitution that Winnicott not only tolerated but also professionally benefited from" (p. 58). In describing this relationship, the book presents evidence of transgressions in the analytic space, boundary violations, misrecognition of destructive elements in the analytic encounter, and several other concerns—which must have somewhat compromised the facilitating environment, to say the least.

Although the collaboration between Khan and Winnicott was marked by ingenious accomplishments, Willoughby describes a destructive quality that the relationship had taken on (see chapter 6, "On and Off Winnicott's Couch"). Like other authors (Hopkins 1998; Kahr 1996), Willoughby imputes Winnicott (in his capacity as Khan's analyst) in Khan's eventual fate. Winnicott's legacy of permissiveness and playfulness was later acted out by Khan with his own patients, according to Willoughby.

Willoughby discusses three important areas that interested Khan: dreams, perversion, and trauma. In exploring these, Khan

became deeply convinced of the usefulness of Winnicott's ideas on holding, regression, the transitional object, and integration, but developed some of these themes according to his own tangent, aligning his ideas more closely with those of Freud, philosophy, and literature. In addition, his ability to intertwine his ideas with the important psychoanalytic writings of others—particularly Ferenczi, Fairbairn, Balint, and several Francophones—contributes to the appeal of his intellectual involvement with psychoanalysis.

Later chapters of the book, from “Alienation and Enactment” (chapter 10) through “Liaisons and Dreams” (chapter 13), are the most interesting, in my view, as they are steeped in the psychoanalytic ideas that gripped Khan, and they trace their simultaneous genealogy in his personal and professional experiences. His papers on the dream space and theorization on the capacity to have a “good dream” are still considered seminal in psychoanalytic dream theory.

In relation to Khan's work on perversions, Willoughby writes:

Arguing that maternal inconsistency produces distorted and precocious ego-development, together with body-ego eroticisation based on a lack of differentiation between the self and object, Khan saw these individuals continuing polymorph-perverse practices as a means of attempted self-cure utilizing libidinal defense mechanisms. [p. 104]

Khan's first marriage was to Jane Shore in early 1952. By 1955, he had obtained full membership in the British Psychoanalytical Society, where he looked after the library and archives. His private practice began to build up well. He later became editor of the International Psychoanalytic Library Series and assistant editor of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*—positions he occupied for nearly a decade, until 1978. This period was marked by the termination of his analysis with Winnicott, and subsequently by intense marital problems.

Khan's extramarital affair with ballerina Svetlana Berisova was discovered by his wife, precipitating the end of an already troubled

marriage. Khan then married Svetlana in 1959. Their relationship, marked by drinking problems, ended in separation in 1974. Meanwhile, both Khan's mother and Winnicott had died in 1971. Khan was diagnosed with throat cancer in 1976; chapters 15 and 16, entitled "Homeward Bound" and "Illusional, Delusional, and Alcoholic Yarns," recount the details of Khan's health and personal struggles during this period. Chapters 14 and 17, "The Beginning of the End" and "The Final Act," present the events leading to his death on June 7, 1989.

The book weaves in several anecdotes—recollections of friends, colleagues, students, and others around him who were critical of Khan and saw many sides of his flippant character. Stories of Khan's transgressions and indiscretions within psychoanalysis, involving both colleagues and analysands, infuriated the psychoanalytic community. Khan's exaggerations and outright lies became a matter of concern and caused serious trouble. Willoughby refers to the Gitelson affair (pp. 115-120), instances with analysands such as Godley and Shields, tempestuous affairs and liaisons on the couch, anti-Semitic remarks about patients and colleagues, and scandalous lies, fabrications, and ruminations. All of this obviously increased Khan's alienation from the psychoanalytic world (glaringly visible in his last written work, *When Spring Comes*, the publication of which led to the termination of his membership from the British Society in 1988) and contributed to his worsening alcoholism. His cancer exacerbated his feelings of anger and humiliation, and bereavement contributed to his persistent sense of personal loss. Willoughby aptly notes that Khan's self-destructive behavior both epitomized an evolving central preoccupation in his theorizing, and could be seen as a prediction of his own ultimate fate (p. 113)—similar to the situation of a Shakespearean hero.

While an important contribution, this book is also a particularly disturbing one. The detailed anecdotes and stories that Khan created and lived with, as well as those that were promulgated after his demise, leave the reader with a feeling that might best be described as chilling.

TOWARD A MORE CROSSCULTURAL PSYCHOANALYSIS

What is apparent in the book is that it cannot sustain a critical engagement with the institutional and cultural ethos of psychoanalysis, either then during Khan's lifetime or now. While the book describes his life story at length from many vistas, it does not succeed in developing a critical discussion of why the psychoanalytic community reacted with vengeance to Khan's misdemeanors and foolhardy threats, without any effort to understand with some sympathy either his symptoms or his plight. In my view, *Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality* also struggles to address the question of whether and how the psychoanalytic community has dealt with the issues that Khan's life and work lay bare before us. Just as there are split selves so glaringly visible in Khan, I contend that the psychoanalytic community reacted to him in a paranoid-schizoid way without addressing the larger sociopolitical origins of his character splits. The split within him was evident in his denigration of his own Asian culture (p. 14), accompanied by an equally compelling intellectual and emotional need and sense of pride in remaining faithful to cultural symbolism and ideas. And, paradoxically enough, Khan exhibited a concurrent deep identification with the West, based on its intellectual and material appeal, which was nevertheless marked at times by his tone of ridicule and sarcasm, and by despicable metaphors with which he alluded to the inferiority of Western cultures.

Such ambivalence was common among educated and elite Indians during the *Raj* (rule). In his book, Willoughby perceptively acknowledges the politics of the times and discusses how members of India's privileged class often remained conflicted and confused about their allegiances, but does not develop these themes sufficiently. Khan was no exception in this regard. For the most part, the psychoanalytic world has chosen to remain disengaged from many of the sociopolitical realities of late nineteenth-to-twentieth-century Western colonialism of the darker continents of

the world. Psychoanalysis may thus have failed to fully recognize the psychological impact of colonialism and the consequent struggle of the “non-Western,” “non-European” man (or woman) to define his or her identity. This struggle continues today.

Although psychoanalysis has been attracted to and curious about cultural diversities, its main contributions have all too often been restricted to Western (North American and European) cultural context and identity. Psychoanalysis has not adequately taken into account the diversities of cultural symbolisms (and whether such cultural symbolisms represent symptoms or sublimation is a perennial debate). In this context, our view of Khan’s acting out and his bouts of confusion, destructiveness, anger, and hatred—toward his own origins, as well as toward the culture he came to adopt and identify with—is symptomatic of the problem that culture has posed to psychoanalysis.

Furthermore, psychoanalysis has not projected itself as unbiased and redemptive in its promise of cure.⁴ Freud’s own thesis on culture and his descriptions of “savages,” “foreigners,” and “outsiders” attest to the problematics of culture within psychoanalysis. In their discussions on culture and cultural differences, therefore, analysts since Freud have often made only mild allusions to the unconscious ramifications of some of these sociopolitical dynamics. Ethnic, regional, and broader cultural differences, with their attendant psychosocial concerns, and debates on the origins and vicissitudes of ethnic and cultural clashes and violence, have in general not been a focus of sustained attention or a cause for concern to the larger psychoanalytic community. There is a surge of interest lately in the topic of terrorism; but the discussion and examination of cultural history and politics, and their relation to psychoanalysis as a necessary context and background to violence, have been taken up only in a marginal way. What is even more disturbing is the lack of critical engagement within psychoanalysis with the role the West has played in world history and in global

⁴ See Willoughby on the history of psychoanalysis in India (pp. 40–43). See also Kakar (1985, 1989), Nandy (1995), Hartnack (2001), and Akhtar (2005). See Said (2003) for more on the place of the “non-European” in psychoanalysis.

politics. And the discussions of subaltern history and postcolonial theory—though fashionable as topics of cultural study—have not resulted in a sustained interest or engagement within (mainstream or official) psychoanalytic thinking and organization.

Khan's life has today become a rather glitzy case study, providing fodder for all kinds of syrupy gossiping and pseudoethical concerns. It appears that this is an instance of varieties of otherness being launched onto one person, whose life is then read according to a chimera of images, in a way that both invents and damages the person at the same time. Also, at a time when the Muslim community around the world is facing an acute identity crisis—dealing with and being accused of perpetrating massive violence and aggression—what does it tell us about psychoanalysis when Masud Khan, a “cultural other,” becomes the subject of such intense inquiry and judgment? I know of no other case of a well-known analyst whose life draws such abiding interest as Khan's does. What is the significance of the psychoanalytic world's fascination with the perversity and arrogance of this ill-fitted (Muslim) analyst? Once a cultural other becomes the sole source of such extreme embarrassment and perversity—and, in Khan's case, is even targeted as responsible for a floundering of the spirit and ethics of psychoanalysis—we are faced with evidence of the failure of psychoanalysis to adequately address or metabolize cultural otherness in either its theory or practice.

While I believe that Khan committed serious professional violations and was not, by any means, the best example of a kind or good-hearted person, I wonder why we become so voyeuristic in our desire to open all the dusty trunks of his personal life and to set forth on a fault-finding mission. It seems we are not even sure what we are searching for as we bring several scattered facets of his life into the spotlight. Are we so keen to know of the specific moments, the exact junctures at which perversity and falsehood entered his life, or do we desire more disclosures from his personal analyses, intending to evaluate whether they actually contributed to his problems and pathologies, relishing these details?

What will such an extensive search lead us to—what do we expect to find, and what will we conclude from that?

Psychoanalysis has provided us with a revealing truth about the enigmatic nature of psychic reality; that is, that the precise location of a happening, its exact impact or effect—or, in other words, the accurate recapitulation of a real happening or sequence of events and its imprint on an individual's life—may not only be unimportant, but also impossible to determine. Trauma and psychic pain are amassed in a cumulative manner, becoming sharper and more enigmatic over time. It is interesting, then, that Khan wrote about cumulative trauma and highlighted its impact on the psyche. For him, “symptoms of illness (and health) emanate principally from the chronic experience of adversity. It is the cumulative trauma, cumulative seduction, and cumulative deprivation that play the mutative role in developmental arrest or its normal fructification” (Willoughby, p. 227). There were many discontinuities in Khan's life; some were engendered by his unreliable demeanor and false-self character, but others seem to have resulted from external losses.

The veracity of life events is not always affirmed by the joining together of several puzzles in a biographical format, and this is confirmed in the way Masud Khan and his case are presented. At this point, it would be interesting to take a step beyond the piecing together of fragments of Khan's life, and to instead address the deeper aspects of his character that were expressed in and highlighted by his stormy relationship with psychoanalysis. It is in this sense that something vital seemed to me to be missing from Willoughby's concluding section, called “Retrospective”—and, in fact, in the choice of the book's rather bland title, *Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality*. One does not expect such a dense and engaging book from this title. Overall, though, the book does not entirely succeed in bringing together the various critical forays it presents, and thus does not demystify Khan's persona, leaving the reader struggling to counterbalance his mythic and real selves. In this sense, the book's verdict on Khan's life and work is no different from that put forth before by others.

Perhaps a comprehensive study of Khan in all his struggles and transgressions should include a requiem of how psychoanalysis might have failed this man, as evidenced by the personal, cultural, and social trepidations and angularities that he brought to the fore. Issues emanating from major political events—namely, the last stages of the Indian freedom movement and the end of British colonial rule—were also highly influential in his life. At the time that he emigrated to England, the very traumatic partition of India and the creation of Pakistan must have also been prominent concerns in his mind; and, as he was well aware, subsequent socioeconomic dislocations and tensions between these two nations continued well into the next two to three decades.

And what of the new generation coming to the West from similar cultural locations to pursue psychoanalysis today? Do they encounter problems of the nature Masud Khan came to witness (and those he created and further complicated)? I think that Khan's life can be read as a metatext of a confused immigrant's life. Perhaps a renewed focus of inquiry into how people from diverse cultural backgrounds practice and fare in psychoanalytic work and thinking would be fruitful. How have cultures in the Asian and African continents—the underrepresented area within the psychoanalytic community—and in similar regions elsewhere met with and received psychoanalysis? Their encounters with Western psychotherapeutics have been further complicated by extremes of poverty, social inequalities, and economic hardships, within which these cultures must balance new-age practices with indigenous cultural norms and age-old traditions. And many such cultures have had to continue dealing with the long-term sociopolitical effects of the colonial years. *Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality* is best appreciated while bearing in mind some of these shortcomings on the part of psychoanalysis.

In the end, I do very much recommend this book, as it presents a rich body of material, is engaging, and well describes the thorny relationship between psychoanalysis and a unique, somewhat baffling psychoanalyst. But there is much to be read in between the lines, and the themes addressed must be expanded fur-

ther, in order for the critical reader to examine the reasons why Masud Khan's life and work took the shape that they did.

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**Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality by Roger Willoughby
with foreword by Pearl King (London: Free Association Books,
2005); reviewed by Sian Morgan**

Sian Morgan 

This book is well-researched, excellent reading as biography or for those interested in the history, psychology and politics of psychoanalysis. It analyses Khan's origins, locating him within a colonial and post-colonial context; Willoughby succeeds in creating both a critical and sympathetic portrait of a probably brilliant but blighted individual, who has had an enormous influence on contemporary psychoanalysis.

I found Khan's writing lucid and illuminating when I trained as a psychoanalytic therapist in the early 1980s and was recently disturbed by the revelations of his obvious misconduct as a practising analyst, so I felt compelled to read this illuminating account of his life. The book supplies substantial evidence of his arrogance, illusions of omnipotence, his cruelty and his descent into delusion. At the same time, it compassionately highlights his loneliness and alienation in a foreign culture. Willoughby emphasizes the acuity of the intelligence and challenge that Khan brought to bear on both the culture and practice of psychoanalysis, particularly his original thinking about the often obscure workings of perversion, in its guise both as a sickness and as a protest. Willoughby has investigated Khan's history including his analytic background in considerable depth, including a seemingly fair but critical account of his analysis with Winnicott. Willoughby might have become the sensitive and generous biographer of Khan's dreams, as described by Khan, a biographer who has to:

collate and decipher the verity from the myriad half-truths and self-representations ... in the case of persons who vigorously self-narrated themselves for posterity and saw themselves as 'prophets' in one guise or another. (p. 216)

However, Willoughby's academic rigour and integrity mean that he never falls into Khan's sanction of the resort to fiction in biography:

To make human fabric from such self-creations takes both generosity and a shrewd sense of the real, as opposed to the true. Because all fictions are true for the person who fabricates them, since they reflect an inner necessity. (p. 216)

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Willoughby painstakingly unravels the fabric of deceit that Khan wove around himself in an attempt to reach for a more authentic sense of his being. The risk is that Khan, as a consequence of his own self-destructive-ness, will become a fallen idol of British psychoanalysis; from his position of racial otherness he may become a container for the projections of the shadow of psychoanalysis. Willoughby's book goes some way to salvaging his reputation as a stimulating thinker, if not as a clinician. He is aware of the use that can be made of Khan's fall from grace within the psychoanalytic community and that myths now proliferate as a consequence of the exposure of the weaknesses in his character. He notes that in the psychoanalytic community:

... myths have been individually and communally perpetuated by subjective assertion as the favoured narrative, ignoring definitive historical material that, though perhaps difficult to access, is with a little effort possible to obtain. (p. 243)

This book challenges both the myth-making propensities of Masud Khan and those who unconsciously reactively collude with his perverse narratives. Willoughby questions the qualities and values that underpinned the Institute of Psychoanalysis. Khan was accepted as a trainee, in his twenties, and was prematurely promoted to the status of training analyst. Subsequently, he was allowed to get away with the flagrant sexual and verbal abuse of patients, as well as the subtle private spoken and unspoken transformational promises he extended.

Quoting Robin Cooper's critique of professional regulatory codes, Willoughby infers that the Institute has been blind to its own dynamics and that there had been a sustained pattern of organizational collusion with Khan's aberrant behaviour, in a collective narcissism:

... that opposed the creation and sustaining of a culture orientated towards truth, reality and the therapeutic. The psychosocial issues of unresolved transferences, idealization and hierarchical status, élitism

and arrogance within the profession and the organization attracted and meshed with Khan's own narcissistic and grandiose personality traits from the very beginnings of his contact with psychoanalysis and the society; a matrix which formed a blind-spot of unquestioning collusion. (p. 242)

Willoughby has meticulously researched the political, cultural and psychoanalytic context, in which Khan found himself after his arrival in England. It is worth reflecting on the nature of British society immediately after the Second World War. Britain was a colonial, racist, class-ridden society nourished by élitism and snobbery. Khan entered this culture aping the manners of his oppressors. We can only speculate, but it may be that the Institute of Psychoanalysis, a vehicle for enlightenment, with a mission to spread the word, may have been inclined to bend over backwards to help train this token of colonial exploitation. The psychological impact of the loss of India as part of the empire involved a narcissistic loss; Khan could be seen

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as having pandered to the narcissism of a colonizing class within psychoanalysis which wished to expand its territory. Khan, in his hysterical aspect, may have been extremely sensitive to unconscious tensions, conflicts and guilt within the psychoanalytic establishment, and out of a sense of grudge may have determined to wreak his revenge.

Willoughby believes that Khan's move to England involved a disavowal of his origins, involving the ablation of his internalized parents and the adoption of a delusion of self-creation. Khan was accepted for training in part for his imaginative capacity, which, while being a great gift, was also used by him in the fabrication of a plausible though false identity. Willoughby suggests that the Institute of Psychoanalysis offered him a stage upon which Khan's inauthentic character flourished.

Before writing this review I was puzzled by the contradictory nature of Masud Khan's personality and, in a private conversation with Peter Lomas, asked him for his personal impressions of Khan. He said that, on meeting Khan, he had found him arrogant, vain and narcissistic; that he behaved like an *enfant terrible*, with characteristics of a spoilt child. He was very charismatic, he was a socialite and he told lies. However, he had an encyclopaedic memory, was excellent in debate at psychoanalytic meetings and also seemed to really care about psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. He obviously loved his job as president of the IPA library, commissioned stimulating writing and was himself an intelligent and creative writer.

Willoughby is respectful of the creative contribution that Khan made to psychoanalysis. He summarizes Khan's ideas with economy and lucidity, noting that his best work developed in his exploration of early trauma, of regression and of the experience of dreaming. He was attuned to the limits of borderline patients in their capacity to deal with verbal interpretations, understanding the risk of inducing premature foreclosure in relation to that which is not yet understood: Khan aimed to create a therapeutic environment which did not impinge on the patient.

Willoughby gives a clear and coherent account of Khan's sometimes brilliant theoretical explorations, where relevant, making links to his psycho-pathology. In his work on the nature of the dream experience, Khan emphasized that the capacity to have a 'good dream' parallels the individual's ability to use the analytic situation. The borderline personality may be able to intellectually understand the content of the analysis but may be unable to surrender to the process because of a deficiency of experience of early satisfaction. Dreaming and fantasy may be abused to create the magical illusion of satisfaction without the need for dependence on external objects.

Writing on the subject of perversion, Khan argued that dissociated emotional states expressed through polymorph-perverse-body relations are a consequence of maternal inconsistency, resulting in feelings of shame; as a result there is precocious ego-development and body-ego eroticization based on a lack of differentiation between self and object. Regression to a

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state of benign oneness is addictively sought after. The fetish, founded on the dissociative and synthesizing capacities of the ego, is formed to omnipotently defend against unmanageable feelings and fear of breakdown:

Structured like a collage, the fetish serves to stabilize and partially encapsulate diverse affects, mental processes and part-object-relationships in an unintegrated state, which then allows the residual ego to function with a degree of Hartman-like secondary autonomy and for object relationships to occur. (p. 112)

Khan recommended harnessing the forms of 'acting out' which constitute a drive towards 'self-cure', with the analyst functioning as an auxiliary ego. However, given the various forms of abusive acting out that Khan appears to have indulged in, perhaps he should have paid heed to his own insight that acting out may threaten the viability of the self, by creating a withering enslavement to sexual impulses and to the object.

The problem of Winnicott's relationship with Khan has caused much consternation and is investigated in depth by Willoughby. It is ironic, to say the least, that Winnicott as Khan's analyst appears to have been taken in by his florid persona, given his therapeutic focus on the authenticity or otherwise of the self. Dodie Goldman (2003), in his article about 'the outrageous prince', reflects on how the exposure of Masud Khan's misconduct has brought about a necessary de-idealization of Winnicott. Willoughby seems to be fair in his assessment of Winnicott's role in Khan's life, reflecting on the mutual idealization that developed between the two men. Willoughby suggests that following Winnicott's split with Klein:

Khan seems to have fulfilled something of her dialectical function in Winnicott's psychical economy, albeit with more masculine or even homoerotic overtones. (p. 52)

Khan was a very seductive man, so it is difficult to judge who was a victim of whose narcissism. Highlighting Winnicott's narcissistic need for Khan, Willoughby comments with some humour:

Whereas previously Winnicott had struggled for recognition with Klein, now with new independence, he eschewed subordination and still wanting to be in a couple - the fount of creativity, he looked to Khan among others for supportive incremental mirroring; his others being assigned the role of second banana, as it were. (p. 53)

Willoughby suggests that Winnicott invited Khan into collusion, akin to a *folie à deux*, involving their envy and hatred of their respective fathers, thinly veiled by a display of filial piety towards Freud. He suggests that Winnicott used Khan as 'a dogsbody' (p. 55), exploiting his function as librarian to research his sources. Claiming that Winnicott had problems with acknowledging his indebtedness to others - displaying a characteristic, similar to Khan, that of a reluctance to settle his fees - Willoughby suggests that:

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... both men may be seen to suffer in varying degrees from difficulties in separation and acknowledging their true indebtedness to their actual predecessors, preferring instead their own supposedly self-generated narratives. (p. 57)

While possibly true, such passages make me feel uneasy: such public analysis is open to the projection of the writer/analyst, without any possibility of dialogue with the now dead analysands who can no longer answer their case. However,

Willoughby's researches reveal that there were serious boundary transgressions within the analysis. These transgressions may have reinforced a split in Khan which Willoughby suggests enabled him:

to inhabit the persona of the patient, while maintaining a split which served to conceal and preserve substantial parts of the self from the analysis. (p. 31)

Khan was linguistically gifted and seduced Winnicott with his powers of expression. He used language 'not as a vehicle for communication, but as a means of expropriation, colonization, dissembling, concealing, prevaricating and distance regulation' (p. 75). Khan had long lost his mother tongue, and in fact it was a source of pride to him that he had been precociously fluent in seven languages. He may have already been 'lost in translation'. It may be that Winnicott's apparent collusion with Khan's deceit may in part be a function of Khan's emotional elusiveness, in a language which was not his mother tongue. This raises the question as to the effectiveness of psychoanalysis in a foreign language, in which there may be dissociation from primitive experience. Khan's experience of the inadequacy of language in touching the self, and of how language can be used defensively in the service of the ego to maintain a private sanctuary for narcissism to flourish, equipped him well for the exploration of the territory of borderline states.

Secretiveness and lying were characteristic modes for Khan, who claimed that he was too private to be analysed. Kit Bollas (1987), an analyst of Khan's, writing about the psychopathology of the compulsive liar, suggests that implicit in the liar's lying is the assumption that the true self is unacceptable. In Khan's case it may be that his authentic being was perceived by him as unacceptable, because of the sense of racial and cultural inferiority, exacerbated by his entry into British high society. Bollas believes that the intention of lying is not just to fool the other but that it serves the function of bringing the self to life, in the face of an oppressive dehumanization. He locates this dehumanization in the primitive mother/baby relationship: such dehumanization may also be a function of racism and through an identification with the aggressor, the internalization of the annihilating other.

Khan, privately, acknowledged his self-concealment and implicitly his shame, when he said that it was impossible for anybody outside to relate to a person who chose to hide himself. This led me to consider how Winnicott's belief that the core of the self as permanently isolated and non-communicating might have reinforced Khan's defence against being known as an

ordinary fragile man. In *Schizoid Phenomena, Object Relations and the Self*, Guntrip (1980) comments:

I do not see how a core of the self that is an absolute isolate and incommunicado can be a self at all. A self can only experience itself in the act of experiencing something else. If it is totally empty of experience it cannot be a self ... The fear of being found, infinitely exploited, or eaten up, must derive from our not being strong enough to retain our full and proper individuality in relationship ... or decide when we wish to withdraw into our privacy, a privacy which would consist not in being an isolate and incommunicado ... (p. 238)

And later, again speaking about Winnicott, he says:

'The central core of the personality' must be the same as 'the uncontaminated female element that leads us to being' ... The 'core of the self does not communicate verbally in the male way or enter into active object relations, but it does communicate personally and preverbally, and enters into object relations in the female way. (p. 262)

The 'male way' privileges intellectual processes. The 'female way' emphasizes relating through identification, sharing in a core sense of being, knowing through feeling and intuition. It is when this way of relating breaks down, or is destructively broken down, that the core self is isolated and non-communicating, in terror of being found and of remaining unfound. Could it be that Winnicott, who has probably done more than anyone in British psychoanalysis to promote the importance of early mothering, also defended against the mother, against the female, through his belief in the essential isolation of the self? And that because of this defensive belief he was unable to challenge Khan's self-concealment and dissociation from the female, the mother and his consequent misogyny, in part cultural, in part idiosyncratic. Khan's eventual disintegration could be understood as a consequence of an essential emptiness, in which he was left floundering, because he denied himself and was denied the experience of loving primary identification.

Willoughby, alongside his criticisms, makes strenuous efforts to defend Khan. His book goes some way to salvaging his reputation as a stimulating thinker, if not as a clinician. However, in spite of my admiration for the lucidity of Khan's thought, I am left with a sense that the toleration, indeed the encouragement exhibited towards Khan's abusive and frankly seedy behaviour, reflects badly on psychoanalysis as a profession. What is the investment that psychoanalytic culture has in intellectual narcissism that permits such a person's high status?

Willoughby's book raises troubling questions about our inheritance as psychoanalytic therapists and psychoanalysts.

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(2005). *Psychoanal. Psychother.*, (19)(2):182-186

Review: Masud Khan: the Myth and the Reality by Roger Willoughby with Foreword by Pearl King (Free Association Books, London, 2005). 320 pp. Hardback, £25.

Judith Issroff ⓘ

The blotchy, blurry cover reflects the blotched, blurry life of Masud Khan, subject of this studious, thoughtful biography. Roger Willoughby unveils some truths from the posturings, confabulations and actual contributions to psychoanalysis of the multi-layered personalities of a mis-fit whose life, he once suggested to me, aspired only to the truths of literature — perhaps his only enduring love and legacy. Khan was quite frank about having no need for any other kind of truth, rationalizing, ‘all fictions are true for the person who fabricates them, since they reflect an inner necessity’ (p. 243).

One of the clearest things to emerge from this overview of one of the most troubled, troubling and disreputable of individuals in the history of psychoanalysis is just what a gifted whopper of a whopper-teller he was; and how this demeaned the genuinely important work that he did (Hanly 1971).

Anaïs Nin wrote: ‘My diary is a mirror telling the story of a dreamer who, a long long time ago went through life the way one reads a book’. Even Khan's Work Books [modelled on Anaïs Nin's Diaries, 1931-1974] although initially

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judged as magnificent, were in their latter period deemed invariably fiction by his loyal and gifted friend Robert Stoller.

Linda Hopkins' forthcoming 15 years of biographical labour draws on sources unavailable to Willoughby: Willoughby's decade of unflinching work is in no way the definitive biography. However, informative pithy background socio-historical contextualizations are important, and Willoughby is close to the mark in his perceptive psychoanalytic conjectures, despite important missing informants. After what he has uncovered Willoughby is working on the ‘biography’ of the British Psycho-Analytic Society, that, itself, displays features that meet the

criteria for the ICD-10 psychiatric appellation of DID/DDNOS [Dissociative Identity Disorder/Dissociative Disorder Not Otherwise Specified].

From quite shocking stories of Khan's childhood traumas not here reproduced, nor in Linda Hopkins' biography, probably Khan presented not an ordinary personality disorder, but a complex, less analysable kaleidoscope of problems. Perspicaciously Charles Rycroft suggested: 'He wrote a paper on collage, and, as I look back on it, that is what Masud himself was. He was a picker-up of other people's ideas, which he didn't properly integrate. The whole of his mind was a kind of muddle of all sorts of people' (Pearson 2004, p. 220, quoting Rudnytsky 2001). The problem is that no one will ever know for sure which bits of Khan's data are accurate and which conflation or mangled bits of information torn out of context, reassembled like the artistically crafty and pleasing coloured transparent paper collages he so carefully constructed.

Almost all of Khan's papers can be read as Khan on the subject of Khan stimulated by Khan's perceptions, pickings, or constructions as he encountered someone, real or imagined, in person or in fiction. 'We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are' (Anaïs Nin, quotations). In my opinion this does not detract from their merit and potential usefulness in a variety of situations.

The Bibliography usefully lists 119 of Khan's publications, acknowledging further lost papers. Khan's contribution cannot but be controversial. However, he did introduce some useful ideas of enduring significance, for example, concerning dream experience, cumulative trauma, the self and the dislocating impact of others — ideas we can understand better for understanding Khan better through the well-chosen quotations in this biography.

Like Khan's life itself, the biography swings wildly between reading like a self-indulgent, scandalous saga, a diligent, rather dry diarization of psychoanalytic meetings, some amazingly subtle, complex and profound psychoanalytic and literary insights of real significance, and the kinds of trivia beloved of paparazzi peppered with witty, discerning quotable quotes. For example, Robert Stoller commented on one of Khan's liaisons with a much younger patient: 'She certainly is the ultimate experiment in the measurement of the strength of the transference'.

With his usual staged, melodramatic fervour, the day Svetlana Berisosva left him, Khan remarked that he did not intend to let four bad years damage the memory of twelve good years. With these wise aspirations in mind, it would be foolish to the cumulative accretions of recorded psychoanalytic insights to

expunge Khan's contributions from our own heritage because of his ethically unacceptable and outrageous behaviour that has so discredited him and that bears but little relationship to responsible psychoanalytic practice. There is mute testimony on the shelves and in the archives of the Library of the British Psychoanalytic Society to the fact that this damaged and militantly unanalysable man, who managed to waste and disparage no less than five different analysts [perhaps six — if we consider the efforts of his friend Robert Stoller to stay his self-destructive alcoholism], none the less did render some service to psychoanalysis. There were periods when he approached his vocation with gravitas in-between his Rabelaisian revels and regressions. Not only his striking appearance, his brilliant wit, his psychoanalytic knowledge and literary productions engaged people and garnered their serious attention, there must have been something in him that evoked protectiveness in many good people from Anna Freud, Limentani, Granoff and Stoller to Winnicott, Marion Milner and Pearl King.

Khan attracted, then manipulated, alternately flattered and alienated mentors, colleagues and patients whom he insulted alike — with few exceptions. Yet Winnicott once suggested he didn't exist as a person. This would explain his episodic suicidality, autistic-like withdrawal, and at times perhaps not only alcoholically-induced paranoid psychotic episodes.

Willoughby refrains from cluttering his text with references to relevant literature on say, psychopathy, nor that generated by the publication of the Khan biography (Cooper 1994) concerning boundary violations (Gabbard 1994, 1996, Sandler 2004); nor about psychoanalytic enactments of incestuous erotic relationships (Guggenbuhl-Craig 1971, Coen 1994, Kernberg 1994, Simon and Bullock 1994). He tells a straightforward narrative without deviating into literature on such subjects as, for example, Anaïs Nin and the Remaking of Self (Richard-Allerdyce 1997), which could have been enriching and pertinent excursions.

Khan wrote because the written word 'simultaneously transcends words and death' (1977; Willoughby, p. 202, fn 93). How much did his personal search for symbolic immortality (Lifton 1987) reflect and parallel that of others? Why else did they pretend not to know or deal with what they all knew and suffered?

Khan did help some of his clients: hearing about a very ill man whom Khan saw for years until he achieved sanity and a good, productive life, I speculate whether Khan parked his own mad parts in this particular patient, in compulsive care-taker fashion dealing with them vicariously, projected into and

contained by the patient until the end of the treatment, which coincided with Khan's own breakdown.

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Congratulations to Roger Willoughby for this accomplished, fascinating portrayal. It is sufficiently tantalizing to whet one's curiosity about what is still to be revealed and discussed in Linda Hopkins' forthcoming biography.

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(2006). *Psychoanal. Rev.*, (93)(1):131-133

**Masud Khan: The Myth and the Reality. By Roger Willoughby;
foreword by Pearl King. London: Free Association Books, 2005,
xxxii + 320 pp.**

André Haynal MD 

This astonishing book is very meticulously and precisely researched. As Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, a former close friend of Khan, stated: "This outstanding work far outreaches a simple biography and helped me, personally, to better understand the particularly enigmatic and unsettling personality of Masud Khan." Furthermore, this text is a quest to understand the dimension of the "tragic" in the context of a twentiethcentury intellectual life in a well-defined psychoanalytic and literary context. This book is a scrupulous, day by day, detailed reconstruction of an *existence*; it is a real "inquiry," a work of ten years, a work of labor, written with the conviction that it should be possible to understand the motives and complications behind an exceptional and tragic life.

The author's background in psychology, psychoanalytic studies, and philosophy predestines him for this task. It enables him to present a thrilling narrative in interweaving plausibly Khan's hopes and vulnerabilities. This book is compassionate, well documented, and scientific. The foreword by Pearl King, eminent historian and outstanding member of the British Society of Psychoanalysis, sets the tone: It is friendly and reflects a profoundly critical attitude.

Masud Khan, a native of British India, presumably from a family of rich, landed proprietors and horse-breeders and son of a young dancer, *claimed* he had written a university master's thesis on James Joyce's *Ulysses*, "which...wassso brilliant that it had to be sent to someone in London to be assessed" (p. 19). However, should such a thesis exist, no copy of it survives. Khan moved to England to pursue his studies in literature and psychoanalysis. He continued to be perceived as a stranger, someone outside the conventional lifestyle, showing a penchant for aristocratic and extravagant behavior.

He became nevertheless an influential member of the British psychoanalytic establishment, based on his literary talents and his hard work in this domain as well as his extravagant, sometimes refreshing, unconventional views about psychoanalytic theory and practice. For

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these reasons he became for some young people a cult figure. He was analyzed successively by Ella Sharpe, John Rickman, and Donald Winnicott. With his psychotherapist in India, he cited four analysts: “a long odyssey and each of them helped me, without my being able to talk to any of them significantly about myself ever” (p. 75).

Starting in the 1970s, his abusive private contacts with his patients, a polygamous lifestyle, and a tendency to alcoholism brought him into disrepute. Some specific scandals, as, for example, the Gitelson affair (p. 115) and the abusive treatment in the case of Wynne Godley (pp. 87-96) are conscientiously examined in this book and were written about in later publications as well.

A “vicious circle” isolated Khan more and more from his environment. A divorce followed, and he became estranged from his colleagues, with the exception of Robert Stoller and Victor Smirnoff. We owe to the notes and correspondence with these two very close colleagues Willoughby's ability to reconstruct the *minutiae* of the final catastrophic events. Khan died in total isolation as victim of his alcoholism and of cancer in 1989; this followed a scandalized reaction to his last book because of the expressed cynical views and anti-Semitic remarks it contained.

Khan's isolation is reflected in the fact that Pontalis associated his friend, Khan, with his *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse* under the ambiguous title of “co-re ‘dacteur e’tranger” (co-editor from abroad). Expressing closeness (“co” = with) and distance in calling him a “stranger,” we can inquire concerning the reason for this description. Curiously, Pontalis attests that in his eyes their friendship could be maintained “so long— over twenty years—with some outbursts, but without breaking up nor mitigating, only because the *Channel* and the use of “you” could help us keep a certain distance” (*Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, issue no. 40, p. 338). Khan was obviously a difficult and confounding person.

This book terminates in a narration of the defeat of a man whose main scientific interest was the problem of “false self.” Khan himself realized in his existence a false self, through a *myth* constructed in opposition to the tragic reality of a struggle against emptiness. As he was sliding more and more into *grandiose* narrations which, in the last period of his life, altered even the report

of his analytic experiences, his descriptions became less and less credible. Feelings of grandiosity began very early with his description of his relationship with Winnicott: "I told him bluntly one reason why I had failed to use him creatively during all those years of analysis was because I was larger as a person than him and he could not stand that. He agreed" (p. 78). This evolution gave place to a final alcoholism, a complete failure of his life and

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career, which ends in a total solitude and cancer. It was a terrible spectacle of self-destruction of "an unusual man: gifted, beautiful, rich, intelligent," as Smirnoff describes him (p. 239), embedded in the lively atmosphere around the intellectual debates of post World War II psychoanalysis in London and in the world.

This volume gives more than it promises, not only about the selfconstructed *myth* of Khan, but also about the multiple *realities* around it.

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Brown Skin, Brown Mask: Reading Masud Khan

Sabah Siddiqui

*What outrage are you going to commit on me?
That depends of how much you are going to provoke me.
When Spring Comes (Khan, 1988)*

As I began to read of Mohammed MasudRaza Khan¹ (1924 – 1989), the Pakistani² psychoanalyst practicing in London, I was stumped by the enigma he presented. He came to Oxford to study English literature, but became an analyst instead, and finally a training psychoanalyst. He was supervised by the great analysts – Melanie Klein, Anna Freud, Donald Winnicott, Marion Milner, and Clifford Scott – and was deemed ready to practice, all at the young age of twenty-six! In turn, he supervised psychoanalysts like Christopher Bollas and Adam Phillips. On both sides, as a trainee and as a trainer, he seems to have been highly regarded. Here is a man who is part of the weave that makes the British Independent school what it is – a school of psychoanalysis that is characterized by the emphasis it places on ‘caring’, ‘holding’, and ‘relating’ to the patient. Could it be that this brilliant analyst became so caught up with the image of being brilliant that neither he, nor his analyst (Winnicott), could foresee what is reported as his downfall? Or did the death of Winnicott in 1971 affect Khan so much that he allowed himself to spiral down till he was cast out of the British Psycho-analytical Society as he battled alcoholism and cancer alone? It seemed to me that he lived his life hard; I imagine he rode his race horses hard as well. The question still remains - who was he?

A colonial subject born in pre-independence Pakistan who danced his way into the heart of London society?

A maverick who pushed the boundaries of psychoanalysis beyond what the stuffy British analytic scene could bear?

An arrogant émigré with aristocratic pretensions who cut an outrageous figure in an alien culture?

The editor and perhaps even co-author of some of the writings of his own analyst, Winnicott?

An insightful clinician who was reputed to take on cases that were considered untenable by the psychoanalytic establishment?

The persona, dramatic and seductive, that characterizes Khan has caught the imagination of the all his biographers (See Judy Cooper, 1993; Roger Willoughby, 2005; Linda Hopkins, 2006) as well as

¹ For the genesis of this paper, I must thank Dr. Anurag Mishra who introduced Masud Khan to me, a confusing move, but a necessary one to shake me out of psychoanalytic certainties.

² Khan was born in Jhelum of the Punjab district in British India, that only in 1947 came to be known as Pakistan as an independent nation, by which time he had moved to England. His alignment to ‘Pakistan’ may have been tenuous, but this is not so of his ties to the cultures of what came to known as Pakistan.

the psychoanalytic reader or student. He becomes the case study of ‘what should not be done’. Nonetheless, the fantastic portrayal is of the figure, the persona, the mystery behind the man. Is that all that is there to him? Two controversies, in print, dog the figure of Khan, without which any portrayal of Khan would necessarily be highly selective. One is an account by one of his patients Wynne Godley, titled ‘*Saving Masud Khan*’ (2001). In detail, Godley narrates how from the beginning of his analysis Khan’s psychoanalytic practice was bizarre since it did not keep to any of the professional ethics or etiquette the psychoanalytic community has forged for itself. The greatest ‘sin’ a psychoanalyst can do is to damage his own client – and that is exactly what Godley accuses Khan of doing. In his slashing piece on Khan he ends by stating strongly “[...] the deep, irreparable and wanton damage he wrought, from a position of exceptional privilege and against every canon of professional and moral obligation, on distressed and vulnerable people who came to him for help and paid him large sums of money to get it” (Godley, 2001).

The other controversy is about Khan’s own last work titled ‘*When Spring Comes: Awakenings in Clinical Psychoanalysis*’ (1988), a collection of essays consisting of different case materials of Khan. In certain passages from the essay titled ‘*A Dismaying Homosexual*’ in *When Spring Comes*, Khan openly admits to being anti-Semitic: “Yes, I am anti-Semitic. You know why, Mr. Luis? Because I am an Aryan and had thought all of you Jews had perished when Jesus, from sheer dismay —and he was one of you — had flown up to Heaven, leaving you in the scorching care of Hitler, Himmler, and the crematoriums” (1988, p. 92-93). Reading such a statement fills me with not only revilement but also bewilderment since publishing such a passage is a bewildering move, almost suicidal in a professional and social sense (the book was published a year before his physical death).

While no one is sure what happened to Khan in the last twenty years of his life, it seems that at some time his mask became his skin. This is, as if, the epidermalization of a person, when the act becomes fact, the mask becomes the face. What is the underlying truth? Nothing but ‘the shameful livery put together by centuries of incomprehension’ (Fanon, 2008: p. 5). At this moment though, it is Khan’s writing that is incomprehensible. According to one of his biographers, Linda Hopkins, “Khan often referred to himself as a paradox and people who knew him well tend to agree. He was a living example of Winnicott’s theory that when we get access to the deeper parts of a person’s self, we find multiple selves which are incompatible with each other” (Hopkins, 2001). *When Spring Comes* (henceforth WSC)³, will shed light on the kind of psychoanalysis Khan was prepared to stand by. Not only was this publication destined to irreparably damage his reputation as a psychoanalyst but it was also completely different in tone and tenor from Khan’s earlier writings. What if he read WSC not to analyze what Khan should not have done but rather to analyze what he was trying to do? What is Khan attempting in his last and contentious work?

³ All references in the format (p. xxx) shall hereafter signify that these are references from *When Spring Comes* (Khan, 1988).

It would seem that Khan respected, and in fact, encouraged a sense of privacy in his patients by asking them to be private with themselves first⁴. In the case of Benjamin in the essay '*Thoughts*' in WSC, when the patient wants to come clean and confess to Khan the thoughts he could not share with anyone, Khan stops him from handing over his privacy. He says, "You are not coming to a Roman Catholic confessional and as I have already said, I dislike the intimacy of instant and compulsive telling about himself by anyone, be he an acquaintance or a patient. If it is a feature of his illness that he cannot stay private with himself, it is my bias that I must stay private with myself and keep my distance" (p. 150). Khan thus lived up to the Deleuzian critique of psychoanalysis as a Christian confessional by demonstrating the distinction between *talking* to the analyst and *confessing* to him/her. Khan believed in keeping the ego integrity of the patient intact; it is not for the analyst to invade this integrity for the purpose of cure. In the essay '*Prisons*', he said that his long clinical experience taught him "to respect the self-protective and self-curative value of a patient's psychosexual pathology, no matter how exhausting, threatening (to both patient and analyst) and boring for the listener" (p. 9). In the *Privacy of the Self*, an earlier (and saner) work, Khan states that "I very strongly believe that each patient has a right of privacy to their own experiences, and the fact that something happens to the patient does not give us the complementary right to intrude upon him with what we know clinically and theoretically to be the meaning of that behavior" (Khan, 1974). In fact, he spoke against the Father of Psychoanalysis, by accusing Freud's demands on his patients as bound to impinge upon the privacy of the individual, "Lie down, do not touch with me with your eyes, demanded Professor Doctor Sigmund Freud. Use only words to tell of yourself. Do not seek to know me. The game is played one-sidedly. So the spaces of waiting start to emerge, expand, and swallow up the patient. You must tell me everything, Freud demanded. You have surrendered all rights to privacy. And I shall goad you with interpretations" (p. 196).

In WSC, we see Khan not only talking about his patients; he was speaking for himself, in fact speaking up for himself. In the essay '*Empty Chairs, Vast Spaces*' he claimed to be "starting on a new style, and scope, of clinical work with a patient/person and his/her total environment as was appropriate to the patient's needs, I was freeing myself of the rigid Yiddish shackles of the so-called psychoanalysis." (p. 62) His contention was that traditionally psychoanalysis has constrained the analysts' relating to the other in the clinic even though the psychoanalytic enterprise is built on this very relationship (through the use of transference and counter-transference). However, Khan said that the relation between analyst and analysand is much simpler than what it appears to be in analytic discourse, that the two must "enter into a relationship of mutual sharing, in which analyst and patient gradually establish a rapport whereupon they can begin to learn from each other and thrive" (p. 199). Khan, notorious for not respecting boundaries and disconcerting his peers even more than his patients, redefines the ethics of the analytic relation as one where boundaries are determined by the 'needs of the patient'; the analyst's role is to recognize what is the appropriate discourse that should be maintained. In the process Khan questioned and redefined the very idea of the 'setting' itself – an idea in psychoanalysis that more often than not clings to dogma. In narrating

⁴ I am aware this is at odds with Godley's account of his experience of being Khan's patient.

the clinical case material of Lucia, Khan agreed to work through a different type of analytic relation – a '*commune of three*' with Lucia's gynecologist constituting one of the three and together they would look after Lucia during the time of her pregnancy. Khan writes that he felt 'it would be fun to explore the possibilities of such an open situation. It was my first venture for such an unprogrammed and non-bounded relating with a patient, clinically, to help her find her own true limits and boundaries' (p. 62).

Khan's ethics were uncluttered by the demands of the discipline; he makes a break with technique for the purpose of care. Khan believed that maintaining the 'proper' analytic distance is neither necessary nor desirable. He stated emphatically,

'I do not subscribe to the traditional school of thought which regards anonymity on the part of the analyst – not being known to the patient – as the prerequisite for a productive analysis. [...] It is my experience that letting myself be known to my patients, in a certain measure neutralizes the situation in a positive way; whereas the assumed anonymity of most analysts can provoke unnecessary infantile attachments and attitudes in the patient which analysts then interpret as the patient's transference' (1988, 200).

Khan treated this particular tenet of psychoanalysis with easy disregard, suggesting that donning the analytic mask of anonymity provokes 'unnecessary infantile attachments and attitudes in the patient which analysts then interpret as the patient's transference'. Apart from this departure, he also did not put high premium on the time allotted to sessions, was agreeable with travelling far to meet patients when the need arose, and was flexible with fees. There are numerous examples of this in his writings in WSC. Khan wrote on and for Bill, a patient who had at the time recently passed away, as an act of mourning for this man, from whom he acknowledged that he had learnt a lot. He narrated that the care and analysis of such patients succeeds only if we do not imprison them in the *huis clos* of the fifty minutes of analytic time and space (p. 5). In another instance, Khan easily agreed to fly to Spain to meet the dying partner (Dave) of his patient (Mr. Luis) and provided 'therapeutic coverage' to both, saying poignantly, "Dave, let us make the end sing for you. You deserve it" (p. 97). In '*Thoughts*', Khan recounts that to support Benjamin's bid for autonomy from his mother's over-care-taking maneuvers, Khan not only urged him to leave his house, but also did not charge him any fees in such a difficult situation; in the case of Aisha, in the essay '*The Long Wait*', Khan reassured her as she lay in the hospital, "Aisha, don't think of that now. My father has left me enough money for six generations of friends. I shall pay if your father won't" (p. 185). His compassion for his patients comes through in all these anecdotes that he has jotted down; indeed it goes beyond the expectations placed on the analyst.

It is apparent in his words that Khan was unafraid to venture beyond the apparent Judeo-Christian horizons of his profession. It may be his very status as an outsider that allowed him to question the boundaries of this world. Khan was not unaware of his 'brown skin' in white London, that is, it was he *who is Other*. Even Godley, his analysand who despised him, describes him as having: '[...]a formidable and quick-acting intelligence, astonishing powers of observation and an unrivalled

ability straightaway to see deeply below the surface. He was impossible to worst. He knew how to exploit and defy the conventions which govern social intercourse in England, taking full advantage of the fact that the English saw him instinctively as inferior – as ‘a native’ – and tried to patronize him’ (Godley, 2001). Khan recounts his conversational strike against Winnicott as, “These foreigners, D.W.W.? I am one too, and I don’t ape. The trouble is, you English, D.W.W., don’t like foreigners conforming to your ways”. Winnicott genially replied, “No! No! That is not very democratic”, to which Khan responded, “But you do encourage them to ape you” (1988, 40). Khan was aware of being foreign; in his most notorious essay (A Dismaying Homosexual) he comes down on the head of his patient with “I don’t desire or need your “I can afford it”. You can’t seduce me as you have seduced everyone else. Not because I am better or more than them, but because I am *different*. And this *difference* matters most for me” (p. 91, italics in original). After living and working in London for many years, Khan felt this difference from his British counterparts and wanted to act on it.

He writes in WSC that at the age of fifty he was learning to be his own person, which also meant embracing his Muslim roots since ‘the faith one is born to, one can rarely shed’ (p. iv). In his later years he took to donning the Djellaba at home, a purposeful action towards orient(aliz)ing himself to what he believed his true roots to be. His writing, especially WSC, reflects this moving away from Western psychoanalysis:

‘My endeavour to communicate with an invisible and non-present other frees me from using conceptual clichés from our meta-psychology, and allows me to employ language as near to its ordinary usage as possible. For me, the analytic *écriture* does not constitute a hermeneutic mystique, and belongs to a very different order from the oral mutuality of shared converse, which is both more and less than discourse. *None of us can ever shed his beginnings*. I was reared in a non-literate, oral culture, hence my bias for sharing experiences, speech-wise, rather than through predetermined and ordained conceptual *écriture*.’
(1988, 147, italics in original)

In the writings collected in WSC, the description of clinical material takes center-stage while the interpretative gesture is kept to a minimum. We are allowed to listen in on the drama for ourselves; we can almost hear the patients in their own words... needs, desires, and demands. However, at the end of the ride, there is a sense of confusion. This makes his writing, marked by a self-proclaimed cultural difference – of the “oral mutuality of shared converse” as against “predetermined and ordained conceptual *écriture*” – ordinary though he calls it, tough to decipher. There are two questions that the reader can take up: one is to decipher what he means as he speaks on psychoanalysis. The other is to decipher what he means as he speaks on cultures.

In the first case, Khan was making a claim on what the psychoanalytic clinical method was, cultural interloper though he felt he was. He was writing of a psychoanalysis that would blossom in another cultural landscape, seemingly unperturbed by the fact that this transplant would require uprooting

and replanting. Khan admitted that his way of writing may render the material less conceptual but justifies this move by saying that, 'I am intent upon stating candidly my role vis-à-vis a particular patient and my own experience of the clinical relationship, than in any of the histories narrated previously' (p. iii). Here, I feel, is the significance of the subtitle to the book: '*Awakenings in Clinical Psychoanalysis*'; it was his own awakening to the true self he was speaking of when he said that '[t]he primary task of any psychotherapeutic venture undertaken by two persons is to enable the one seeking help to awaken to the hidden or repressed forces in his or her nature, and their correlates in human conduct. Only through such an awakening, which can often be extremely painful, can a self become its own true person and function as such in the total matrix of his social environment' (p. iii). Khan's brutal honesty that he, in aristocratic style, casually flung onto his readers did come at a high personal cost to him and he paid it in homage to his 'true self'⁵. The word 'true' lends itself to imagine a self that is 'white'. 'Whiteness, Fanon asserts, has become a symbol of purity, of *Justice, Truth, Virginity*. It defines what it means to be civilized, modern and human' says Ziuddin Sarkar in the Foreword to *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon, 2008: p. xiii). However, that kind of truthful, virtuous, and just self would be bathed in 'the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind'⁶. Psychoanalysis reminds us that there is no spotless mind; always the shadow, always the stain. How could the true self be white then? Khan let it be known that his wasn't; his anger and hurt, his prejudices and complexes are on display in his writing. But Khan had grown into his mask with the passage of time and the man who had cut a dramatic figure in British psychoanalytic circles died as a lonely and pathetic figure in London – a brown man who was really brown at the end of it all; the world was caught by surprise! He was berated, not celebrated since after all, there was no emancipation from his condition and while he could be diagnosed with being mentally ill, he could also be diagnosed with being brown... brown skin and brown mask.

'Every colonized people — in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality — finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country.'
(Fanon, 2008 [1967]: 9)

In the second case, there is the question of what was Khan trying to say about cultures – the one he was born into and the one he died in? He claims he was speaking in a cultural idiom that is different from the mystical conceptual *écriture* that marks Western psychoanalysis. And if he is talking in another idiom, the question that follows is whether we have the resources at hand to read a culturally-marked text? It is not easy to decipher this message when one begins to speak a language

⁵ Linda Hopkins's detailed biography on Khan is titled "False Self: The Life of Masud Khan" (New York: Other Press, 2006), and is a symptomatic reading of his life.

⁶ The movie *The Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* was released in 2004, the title of which was taken from Alexander Pope's poem *Eloisa to Abelard* (1717). In Pope's poem, lines 207-211 go, "How happy is the blameless vestal's lot! / The world forgetting, by the world forgot. / Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind! / Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd"

unknown to the Christian West, which is bundled up in metaphysical assumptions about language via a Biblical notion of 'the Word of God'. That is the challenge of Masud Khan, even to one of his own kind⁷. His words turn out to be as enigmatic this side of the Mediterranean as it apparently was that side! And we, afraid as we are of owning up to our insoluble difference, do not have even the facility of a private language to communicate with one of our own, let alone one in which a culturally nuanced psychoanalysis can take root and flourish. His writing foretells the struggle of psychoanalysis to cross-over and pollinate the East. And the doubt remains in me if Khan should be read in his last work as speaking on psychoanalysis through the prism of culture or on culture through the angle of psychoanalysis.

POSTSCRIPT

At the end of the paper, I am haunted by what I have been unable to finish because there is one more set of questions that reading WSC throws up, which are beyond the ambit of this paper. Why does Khan want to be so very vehemently brown? WSC could have been read to open up two kinds of routes. What it would have been to inquire what he means - which has been the predominant tendency in the present paper. The other would have been to inquire what it means, to gesture towards a cultural-self-representation? What does Khan's retreat into a cultural idiom late in life signify? We must keep in mind that he is located in a specific time and space. What did such self-representation mean then, before post-colonial studies became a disciplinary location in its own right in the 1990s? Was Khan engaged in a process of decolonization? Was he participating in the rise of anti-coloniality as an epistemological position? Had he accessed an avowedly post-colonial scholarship? Or was WSC a one-off instance of almost post-colonial consciousness, without a strict consciousness of being so? What *if* it was conscious? What then is at stake in such cultural-self-representation made in English to an English-speaking audience? This is especially pertinent here, for by attributing post-coloniality too quickly to Khan, we make invisible the complicity of his position as a privileged British-trained psychoanalyst. Gayatri Spivak in a piece pertinently titled 'Who claims alterity?'⁸ inserts a moment of caution by insisting that we must be:

[...] attending to provisional resolutions of oppositions as between secular and nonsecular, national and subaltern, national and international, cultural and socio-political by teasing out their complicity. Such a strategy of strategies must speak "from within" the emancipatory master narratives even while taking a distance from them. It must resolutely hold back from offering phantasmic, hegemonic, nativist counter-narratives that implicitly honor the historical withholding of the "permission to narrate". The new culturalist alibi, working

⁷ Are we of one kind? Of course, I wonder about my identification with Khan. He is Pakistani, I am Indian and never may we get along, especially since it is fatal for an Indian Muslim to identify with a Pakistani! It, as if, betrays the Indian Muslim's lack of patriotism, reveals the secret desire for the real homeland *sarhadpaar*! However he is a mad brown man practicing white psychoanalysis; a red flag, and not a green one! Perhaps I too fear for my sanity in this field? But then fear has many shades and many colours, so who knows?

⁸ This work was brought to my notice by Dr. Anup Dhar to once again shake me out of cultural (un)certainities.

within a basically elitist culture industry, insisting in the continuity of a native tradition untouched by a Westernization whose failures it can help to cover, legitimizes the very thing it claims to combat.'
(Spivak, 2013: 66).

Therefore, a further reading of Khan's work is necessary, if the questions surrounding situating it in either psychoanalysis or cultural studies have to be done any justice. Now that his life has been scrubbed, scrutinized, and psychoanalysed, Masud Khan's writing is a text that has yet to be explored.

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PSYCHOANALYTIC ETHICS AND PSYCHOANALYTIC COMPETENCE: LESSONS FROM THE BIOGRAPHIES OF MASUD KHAN

BY MARTIN A. SILVERMAN

Psychoanalysis, as Renik (2006) has recently emphasized, is not an intellectual exercise or an aesthetic indulgence pursuing insight for its own sake, but a form of *therapy*. It is a treatment modality that aims at helping unhappy, troubled, and at times emotionally damaged people to wrestle with their internal conflicts, overcome the deleterious effect of unfortunate life experiences, build the strengths they need to contend successfully with “the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” (Shakespeare 1603, III, I, 58), and become more capable of realizing their potential for enjoying life, personally and interpersonally. It is not carried out for the benefit of the analyst but for the benefit of the patient, who is willing to undergo the rigors of analytic treatment and to pay a good deal of money for it in the hope of obtaining benefits that will justify the effort and the expense the treatment entails.

Two biographies of Masud Khan by Roger Willoughby and Linda Hopkins, reviewed in the preceding pages of this issue of *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* by Manasi Kumar and Howard Levine, respectively, describe in distressing detail how easily the true purpose of psychoanalytic treatment can be lost sight of, with devastating effects for all concerned—the analysand, those with whom the analysand is interacting and will interact in the future, and the analyst. Salman Akhtar’s thoughtful introduction, as well, describes how an analyst “of towering stature” can “turn into a fallen angel of disgrace.”

Why am I putting all this in the present tense when the events involving Masud Khan occurred so long ago? And why have two such detailed, thoroughly researched, lengthy biographical books only recently appeared in print? I use the present tense because the kind of defects, deficiencies, loss of perspective, boundary violations and transgressions, and exploitative mismanagement of the analytic treatment process described in these two books do not belong only to a bygone era. These thorny issues are a proper focus of examination in the present—both within the profession of psychoanalysis and within the larger mental health field, of which psychoanalysis is a relatively small but highly influential component—as much as they are a part of history.

There is much to learn from Khan's story that is applicable to issues in present-day currents and ferments in the field of analysis. At the time that Khan arrived in England, seeking analytic treatment for himself, psychoanalysis was a young discipline encumbered by all the uncertainty and insecurity (compensated for by authoritarian arrogance) that not infrequently characterizes a novel, groundbreaking venture into scientific and intellectual inquiry. Psychoanalytic observations and revelations about human nature were creating enormous stir in the world, but were in some ways so unsettling or even disturbing that they elicited considerable hostility and derision. Since so many of the earliest psychoanalytic pioneers were Jewish, defensive antipathy toward this new discipline became swept up, furthermore, in the anti-Semitism that was rife in Europe and elsewhere. World War II had just ended, in fact, and a good number of the leading figures in the field in Great Britain had arrived there in flight from Nazi oppression.

There was also a considerable amount of competitive struggling between rival camps within British psychoanalysis. Such struggles were not limited to the well-known and heated rivalry between those who considered themselves loyal to Anna Freud and those who were favorably impressed by the observations and ideas of Melanie Klein. Additionally, the object relations investigations of Fairbairn, Guntrip, Balint, Bowlby, and others were being conducted by outspoken and/or charismatic luminaries who had their

own ambitious investment in becoming the leaders of an important psychoanalytic school of thought.

And is it so very different at the present time? Psychoanalysis is once again under attack. We live in an anxious age in which overpopulation, global warming, powerful economic and social threats presented by global geopolitical change, and the threat of nuclear annihilation are shaking the foundations of the sense of security and safety that were once extant in the Western world. It is an impatient era, in which quick and efficient, simple solutions tend to be sought; managed care holds sway; and skepticism tends to prevail about the value of treatments that are slow and steady, thorough-going, and unavoidably lengthy.

The pendulum tends to swing in a wide arc. In reaction to the authoritarian, seemingly omniscient approach of far too many analysts sixty years ago, the tendency within the field of psychoanalysis has been to move toward humanization and egalitarianism within the analytic frame, away from the expectation that the patient will submissively accept the analyst's presumed wisdom and authority. It is widely recognized at present that analytic treatment is a two-person rather than a one-person process. McLaughlin (2005), for example, presented a well-reasoned, albeit cautious argument in favor of viewing psychoanalysis as a two-person process in which both participants gain something personally.¹

There has been a growing tendency to shift the central focus in analytic work away from the acquisition of insight into the genetic and dynamic, unconscious roots of neurotic conflict, and toward the curative effects of the here-and-now relationship between analyst and analysand. As laudable as is the recognition of this dimension of analytic work, it would be unfortunate if we were to throw out the baby with the bath water. Each of our patients does have a unique set of past experiences that have influenced his or her emotional development. Each patient brings the shadow of her or his past relationships into the arena of analytic interaction. Our patients need us to appreciate the power of their past internalizations

¹ See also Chodorow 2007.

in shaping their inner worlds and to help them free themselves from the deleterious impact of certain aspects that those internalizations have had upon them. As Kumar emphasizes in her review essay, Khan's analysts' apparent lack of adequate appreciation of his cultural background contributed to the difficulty they seem to have had in understanding his problems and recognizing what he needed from them.

As we work with our patients, we are confronted with the task of resisting our own internal pull toward transcending the boundaries between a professional and a personal relationship. Analysis is a complex and demanding process that entails courage and is fraught with risk. Analysts at one time believed that they needed to maintain a distant stance from their analysands. They believed that they could and should limit themselves to doing no more than mirroring back to their patients what emanated from them. Menninger (1958) depicted this deftly when he cited "an untraced poem by one Tom Prideaux":

With half a laugh of hearty zest
I strip me off my coat and vest.

Then heeding not the frigid air
I fling away my underwear.

So having nothing else to doff
I rip my epidermis off.

More secrets to acquaint you with
I pare my bones to strips of pith.

And when the exposé is done
I hang a cobweb skeleton.

While you sit there, aloof, remote
And will not shed your overcoat. [p. 62]

We know now that it is impossible for us to remain as anonymous and personally uninvolved as early analysts thought was indicated. But all advances bring their own risks and hazards. At the time Khan entered the analytic scene, it was becoming evident that

more active interventions than merely “making the unconscious conscious” were needed by some or even many analysands. The way in which imperfect understanding of the pitfalls involved in this contributed to Khan’s post-analytic personal and professional problems is described vividly in Willoughby’s and Hopkins’s biographical works.

We have come a long way since then, but we have not entirely left behind the dangers faced by analysts sixty years ago. As we participate in the analytic task, we can all too easily carry self-disclosure so far as to blur the boundary between human interaction and professional restraint. We have learned a great deal about countertransference as a source of valuable information about our patients, but *everything* an analyst feels or thinks is not a direct and reliable message from the patient’s unconscious. It has also become evident that enactment of emotional conflicts is a more or less inevitable occurrence in every analysis, and that we need to vigilantly keep track of our own input as we involve ourselves in our patients’ lives. It is incumbent upon us to take care lest we use our patients to act out our own issues with them.

The definition of psychoanalysis has tended to be broadened so as to make it more palatable to its critics and to widen the patient pool (see, for example, Meadow 2003). We need to exercise caution, however, as we participate in this. When the analyst of a number of analysands simultaneously treats them in group therapy, treats them and their spouses in marital therapy, or provides supervision to them, this can lead to a variety of problems. Is it not similar to what took place between Winnicott and Khan?

When Khan—a brilliant, engaging, articulate, charismatic, as well as wealthy and aristocratic scholar from a distant and exotic corner of the British Empire—arrived in England in 1946, according to his biographers, he was looking for personal treatment rather than for training as a psychoanalyst. His various attributes must have greatly impressed his interviewers at the British Psychoanalytical Society, who “mistakenly” enrolled him as a student. Despite his history of having suffered painful losses of close family members, he was successively placed in analysis with two seriously

ill training analysts, each of whom died after a short period of time. After two additional attempts at obtaining analytic treatment failed to work out, Khan gravitated to Winnicott, who himself was brilliant, charismatic, and ambitious, and eager for fame and prominence. Winnicott was innovative, adventurous, and willing to undergo considerable risks (to himself as well as to others) as he undertook the treatment of seriously disturbed individuals (see Rodman 2003).

Winnicott made useful contributions through his at times heroic efforts in this regard, but as Levine (2006) explains in his review of Rodman's 2003 biography of Winnicott:

There is . . . a darker side to Winnicott's advocating the management of the manifestations of severe pathology by action rather than interpretation There is an uncertain delineation and a potentially slippery slope between Winnicott's proposals for "management," his sometime failure to maintain the treatment frame, and overt boundary crossings and even violations. [pp. 587-588]²

It becomes clear in reading the recent biographies by Willoughby and Hopkins that Khan both benefited and suffered from his treatment with Winnicott. He became able to mirror his analyst and mentor—with whom he developed an ongoing, complex relationship as analysand, collaborator, editor, champion, and friend—in making real contributions to the field as a writer, reviewer, and editor. Unfortunately, he also mirrored Winnicott's personal and professional deficiencies, even outdoing him in these respects. He went on to commit major transgressions in his work with patients, grossly violating boundaries and acting out his own neurotic issues in clinical interactions. It is no less important now than it was sixty years ago for analytic institutes to exercise caution in selecting training analysts.

Do personally ambitious, politically adept people necessarily make the best clinical analysts—or the best training analysts? Con-

² See also Sabbadini (2003) and Silverman (2006) for more on Winnicott's treatment of his colleagues—and their treatment of him.

siderable debate is taking place in our field about the whole idea of the *training analysis*. There are those who question the entire concept, others who press for personal analyses to largely precede or otherwise be divorced from the formal training process, and still others who advocate that the personal analyses of candidates be carried out elsewhere than at the institute at which the candidate trains (see, for example, Berman 2004; Reeder 2004). We also need to be knowledgeable and thoughtful if and when we provide guidance to a candidate who is in need of a personal analysis.

The phenomenon of the articulate and charismatic analyst who gathers a coterie of followers or even myrmidons while seeking to vault to prominence as a leading, influential force did not end in the early days of psychoanalysis as a field of endeavor. Adherents of various analytic schools vie loudly and vociferously with one another to declare themselves as the one, true, effective representative of psychoanalysis. Developmentalists, ego psychologists, interpersonalists, intersubjectivists, Kleinians, Lacanians, and self psychologists each proclaim to have the real story. True, there have been those who have sought to foster useful integration of what have been recognized as the various parts of the psychoanalytic elephant (see, for example, Schafer 1997a, 1997b, 2003; Smith 2005), but they have been minority voices.

Perhaps the time has come when psychoanalysts will be able to stop bickering rivalrously among themselves, learn from one another, and settle down to the pursuit of the proper occupation of treating suffering patients and training capable psychoanalysts and psychotherapists. The most salient feature of psychoanalytic ethics is psychoanalytic competence.

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Masud Khan: Icarus of Lucifer?

Bespreking van: Roger Willoughby (2005). *Masud Khan - the myth and the reality*. Londen: Free Association Books. ISBN: 1-85343-724-7, 320 pagina's, prijs: £ 25

Jos De Vogelaer 

Masud Khan - the myth and the reality is de uitbreiding van Roger Willoughby's doctoraatsthesis, die meer dan tien jaar in beslag nam. Het betreft een wetenschappelijke biografie, gebaseerd op onder andere brieven, interviews, archiefmateriaal, met een uitgebreide literatuurlijst en bronvermeldingen; ze is vergelijkbaar met de Klein-biografie door Phyllis Grosskurth.

Willoughby heeft filosofie, psychologie en psychoanalyse gestudeerd, en is psycholoog en Visiting Fellow bij het centrum voor psychoanalytische studies aan de universiteit van Essex. De publicatie in 2005 situeert zich ná het boek door Judy Cooper, een voormalig analysante, tevens psychoanalytisch psychotherapeute (1993) en de geruchtmakende lezersbrief in de *London Review of Books* door Wynne Godley, analysant van 1959 tot 1966.

Het voorwoord door Pearl King is origineel, leerrijk, ongewoon én moedig: King begon haar psychoanalytische opleiding in 1946 (de eerste generatie na het 'gentlemen's agreement') samen met Khan, en zetelde later in verschillende ad-hoc- en bestuurscommissies van de International Psychoanalytical Association (1965: het Gitelsonincident) en de British Psychoanalytical Society, die Khans gedrag en verdere lidmaatschap (1988) dienden te beoordelen.

Het onderwerp van deze biografie is dus niet een van de vernieuwende psychoanalytische coryfeeën, maar - zoals Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, een van Khans goede vrienden, het op het frontblad uitdrukt - 'Masud Khans bijzonder raadselachtige en verontrustende persoonlijkheid' (mijn vertaling), die de psychoanalytische beweging door elkaar schudde.

Door de minutieuze biografische gegevens krijgt men een gedetailleerde, maar ook nogal versplinterde kijk op Khans oeuvre; dit wordt samenhangender beschreven door Judy Cooper (1993). Willoughby's boek is een biografie, geen

psychoanalytische tekst. De biografische benadering maakt het echter wel mogelijk de splitsing in Khans persoonlijkheid beter te begrijpen. Het verband tussen Khans psychopathologie en zijn vroegkinderlijke ervaringen wordt duidelijk, evenals de onjuiste behandeling door Winnicott, wat uiteraard vergemakkelijkt wordt door het historische perspectief.

In bepaalde segmenten van de psychoanalytische beweging stond Khan aanvankelijk in hoog aanzien: een Brits onderdaan uit de Punjab, intelligent, zeer belezen, welbespraakt, een vlotte pen, productief, meertalig, gecultiveerd, verkerend in artistieke kringen, charmant; maar ook een 'mythopoietische' (dixit Willoughby) narcist.

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Khan zou zich, door zijn editoriale kwaliteiten, van meet af aan profileren als Winnicotts secondant, en fungeerde gedurende meer dan vijftientig jaar in analoge functies binnen de British Psychoanalytical Society en de International Psychoanalytical Association, alsook als buitenlands redacteur van de *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*. Hij publiceerde meer dan zestig artikelen en meerdere boeken, alsmede vele boekrecensies.

Anderzijds maakte Khan zich door zijn toenemend destructieve gedrag steeds meer onmogelijk: hij kon arrogant zijn, grof, ongevoelig en normloos. Toch hield hij tot het einde toe vrienden: onder anderen de Stellers, Smirnof, Rycroft, Cartier-Bresson. En sommige analysanten bleven hem achten vanwege zijn goede analytische werk, onder wie zeker Christopher Bollas en Judy Cooper, terwijl hij bijvoorbeeld Wynne Godley reeds vanaf de eerste sessie van diens analyse in 1959 niet gewoon hoffelijk, menselijk kon bejegenen, laat staan een correcte analytische relatie met hem kon onderhouden. Achteraf gezien lijkt de ontwikkeling van Khans narcistische pathologie, begeleid door alcoholisme en toenemend grensoverschrijdend gedrag ten opzichte van het psychoanalytisch kader, een aanvang te nemen in de late jaren vijftig, om gedurende de jaren zeventig, na het overlijden van Winnicott én van Khans moeder in 1971, verder te ontaarden in seksuele relaties met analysanten.

In 1976 werd Khan zijn status als leeranalyticus ontnomen, en, vlak voor zijn dood in 1989, uiteindelijk ook het lidmaatschap van de British Psychoanalytical Society, vanwege zijn zeer antisemitische boek *When Spring Comes* (na het overlijden van Anna Freud in 1982, van wie Khan altijd afhankelijk was geweest). Vanaf 1976 werd hij steeds minder actief, door de aantasting van zijn stembanden ten gevolge van kanker, door depressie, alcoholisme en zijn narcistische pathologie; maar hij bleef bij vlagen verder schrijven.

Deze biografie is lezenswaardig voor wie meer wil weten over de figuur en de betekenis van Masud Khan in het tijdsgewricht van de toenmalige, gespleten psychoanalytische beweging. Zijn persoonlijke bijdrage tot de psychoanalyse is beperkt. Het belang én de noodzaak van het kader, de verschillende componenten van de psychoanalytische opleiding, de geschiedenis en het functioneren als organisatie van psychoanalytische verenigingen, de (noodzaak tot) ontwikkeling van paradigma's uit de 'schaduwen'¹ van de belangrijkste psychoanalytische protagonisten, het veel meer dan louter historische én bewuste belang van personen en hun relaties, zijn boeiende neven thema's. Ik heb dus telkens met plezier verder gelezen in deze biografie en er tussendoor graag over nagedacht. Wat ik wel miste was een lijst met chronologisch belangrijke jaartallen en andere ankerpunten.

Voor wie verder geïnteresseerd is in de persoon van Masud Khan, en zijn theoretisch en klinisch belang, verdient een complementaire lezing van Judy Coopers zeer lezenswaardige *Speak of me as I am* zeker aanbeveling: Khan wordt hier niet afstandelijk k-biografisch, maar met warmte en accuratesse gesitueerd als mens en in de ontwikkeling van de psychoanalyse; door een ex-analysante die zich dankbaar blijft voelen.

Noot

Onder het jungiaanse begrip 'schaduw' wordt in dit verband verstaan: datgene wat vanuit de onbewuste eigenheid een persoon, en bijvoorbeeld zijn creaties, bepaalt, persoonlijke kleur geeft. In dit geval de persoonlijke bijdrage tot de psychoanalyse: waarom legden belangrijke psychoanalytische protagonisten precies die, en geen andere accenten in hun werk?

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