

**Authors:****Sari Mattila, Ph.D, CP****Ajeet Mathur, Professor, Ph.D.****Shut In, Shut Out: unexamined ‘otherness’ in repressions, suppressions, oppressions and expressions**

Fear of systemic collapses is a pervasive emotion in circulation. There are numerous reminders of how politics of exclusion and hatred are being perpetrated against group identities in support of jingoistic nationalism with plenty of “wall-building” in various parts of Eastern Europe, South America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. The struggle over Brexit affecting UK and Europe, the gridlock over President Trump in the USA, China’s rejection of verdicts by international courts over territorial disputes in South East Asia, collapse of WTO’s Dispute Resolution Mechanism, unfinished talks over a new trade deal, climate change, biodiversity, food safety and food security, UN reform and the retreat from globalization reflected in sharp reductions in foreign investments worldwide are disturbing signs of various kinds of ‘shut in, shut out’ phenomena marked by collective despair and angst. Some of these are expressions of withdrawal; others unconsciously fueled repressions or outcomes of suppressions or reactions to oppressions triggered by complex sets of motives and powerbases. These need distinguishing to enable differentiate ‘walls’ by our proposed typology and the framework developed to distinguish walls from fences, hedges and other iconic demarcations of diversity and plurality.

Being the other and engaging or disengaging with otherness are both problematic. The Freud-Einstein and Freud-Girindrashekar correspondences dealt respectively with collective and individual aspects of identity formation. The Freud-Rolland correspondence prompted Freud to pen ‘Civilization and Its Discontents’ . Later work on ‘identities’ (Sabina Spielrein, Goffman, Campbell, Laing) drew attention to social defenses against anxiety transmitted as inter-generational traumas involving guilt and hurt, pride and disgust, anger and pain acted out across faultlines of divide such as religion, ethnicity, habitat, language, affluence, gender, nationality, skin colour and culture.

This paper explores currents and cross-currents lurking beneath the surface of formalized coagulations in four ways: (1) by examining dynamics of residues and flashpoints as enactments of unconscious group transferences and countertransferences; (2) by diving deeply beneath the rhetoric over ‘grievances’ for listening to the real conversations about untreated trauma, unmourned grief, unresolved envy, and splitting around two new basic assumptions baPurity and baBravado; (3) by exploring the dilemma of unity versus pluralistic harmony; and, (4) by examining how unconsciously held ‘pictures-in-the-mind’ about politics of relatedness by followers projecting these into their leadership fuels psychopathic behavior with gaps between what is wished and what is espoused, and also between what is espoused and what is enacted.

This paper will explore how unexamined ‘otherness’ involves social, cultural and political defenses against anxiety when thresholds for coping are exceeded and how ‘walls-in-the-mind’ influence patterns of repressions, suppressions, oppressions and expressions. Since ‘Shut In, Shut Out’ phenomena involves twin walls, the underpinning psychopathology renders formation of therapeutic contracts and helping relationships with commitment to aspired wellness improbable. Besides citing scholarly references around the phenomena being presented, the paper will also discuss how healing of group psyches has been attempted based on psychoanalytic insights about stigmatized identities and inter-generational trauma from recent initiatives in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. At the ISPSO AM, this paper will invite discussion around new ways of exploring defenses against ‘otherness’ that are presented.

**Keywords:** Systemic Fragility, Stigmatised Identities, Trauma and Unmourned Grief, Inter-generational Residues, Walls-in-the-Mind.

### **Sari Mattila**

Sari Mattila received her Ph.D. degree from Tampere University of Technology in the field of Management and OB/HR after an integrated Master's Degree in Philosophy from the University of Joensuu (now part of the University of Eastern Finland). She has been faculty member at IIM Bangalore (2014-2019) and the Area FPM Coordinator of the OB/HRM Area (2015-2018) and taught in IIM-B long duration and short duration programmes. She has also taught Master's and Doctoral Level courses and held Executive Education Programmes at different institutions ranging from IIM-A, IIM-T, IIM-V, Institute of Management, Nirma University, Flame School of Business, and CEPT in India besides Tampere University of Technology and University of Turku in Finland. Her topics in LDPs and EEPs have included Organisational Behaviour, Experiential Learning, Leadership, Cross-Cultural Management, Creativity, Innovation, Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility, Mentoring and Coaching, Socratic Dialogues. She has published in peer reviewed journals, chapters in edited books and co-authored a case registered in the IIMA casebank besides other publications. Her MOOCs on Managerial Ethics: Reflective practices for action designed and developed at IIMB was launched and delivered in 2019 on the edX Platform. She has herself been doing mindfulness practices as part of her interest in experiential learning, psychodrama, counselling and therapy, yoga, mindfulness and vipassana.

### **Ajeet N. Mathur**

Ajeet N. Mathur is an Affiliate Life Member of the Indian Psycho-analytic Society, Professor Emeritus, New Delhi Institute of Management and a Faculty Member at IIM Ahmedabad where he teaches courses on action research methodologies, strategy, international business and mysteries in management. He has held visiting academic appointments at K.U. Leuven, Belgium, University of Edinburgh, Cornell University, University of California at Berkeley, University of Bielefeld, Germany, Helsinki School of Economics, Aalto University, Tampere University, Turku School of Economics, Royal University of Bhutan, and Fresenius University, Cologne. He was the Founding Professor of International Business, University of Tampere and EU-TEMPUS Professor of European Integration and Internationalisation. He is a Director on the Board of the International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organisations (ISPSO) with responsibility for Inter-organisational collaborations. His publications include thirty books and over one hundred and sixty papers in scientific journals and anthologies. He is one of the authors of the International Encyclopaedia of Laws. He has a post-graduate diploma in counselling and family therapy. He received his Ph.D. degree from the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He has been a member of the Board of Directors with Corporates in India and Europe and is consulted by organisations, businesses, governments, international organisations and the policy research community. He served a term as the Director and CEO, Institute of Applied Manpower Research with the rank of Secretary to the Government of India in the Planning Commission. He has been a member of the Board, School of Inter-disciplinary studies, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). He is a 'Yoga Shikshak' and a 'Karma Sannyasin' of the Bihar School of Yoga. He is a member of the Governing Board of the Global Foundation for Integrating Spirituality and Organisational Leadership (ISOL). He has directed Group Relations Conferences in Europe and India and been on the Staff of GRCs since 1983. He is biographically cited in several international directories.