

THE WORK BOOKS  
OF MASUD KHAN  
1972-1975

# DIARY OF A FALLEN PSYCHOANALYST

*Edited by*  
**Linda Hopkins**  
*with*  
**Candace Orcutt**



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people were acknowledged in Volume I of the Work Books and they are all relevant to the success of Volume II. Volume II is built on the foundation of their generous support. I am not going to repeat those names here with one exception: the Stoller family. Sybil and Robert Stoller carefully preserved what was to become the only existing copy of the Work Books, the copy in use here. Sybil inherited publication rights when her husband died in 1991 and she is the person who granted them to me. Now, with Sybil's death in 2019, Jonathan holds the rights and he has been completely generous and supportive. He also provided a number of family photographs of Khan and these have been used by various writers on Khan, supported further by Jonathan's work on providing clear copies.

Volume I was produced with Steven Kuchuck as co-editor and certainly Volume II would not exist were it not for Steve's work on the first volume. Candace Orcutt has given me invaluable help with editing since Steve's departure to other ventures. Others who provided valuable support for Volume I that helped out for the current volume include Albert Banta, Jane Garbose, the organisers of the 2023 spring meeting of Division 39 of the American Psychological Association and Ashis Roy, an Indian psychoanalyst who invited Steve and me to give a podcast in May, 2024, for his series *New Books in Psychoanalysis*. Dany Nobus, Ana de Staal and Mahyar Alinaghi have provided invaluable support for the new volume. And I am of course deeply grateful to Kate Pearce who is the publisher at the new Karnac.

Three people are always with me: Jane Widseth, Michelle Kwintner and my wonderful husband Lawrence Levner. Larry made major editorial contributions along with his support in many other ways.

## ABOUT THE EDITORS

### **Chief editor**

**Linda Hopkins, PhD**, is a clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst. She works with clients in private practice in Washington DC and is a member of the teaching faculty at the International Psychotherapy Institute (IPI) and the International Institute for Psychoanalytic Training (IIPT). She is author of *False Self: The Life of Masud Khan*.

### **Assistant editor**

**Candace Orcutt, PhD**, holds a doctorate in Clinical Social Work and serves on the faculty of the New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis. She is a certified psychoanalyst and the author of *The Unanswered Self: The Masterson Approach to the Healing of Personality Disorders*.

## FOREWORD

by Candace Orcutt

*“I have the persistent sensation of existing in the stance of a tight-rope walker: precariously poised in alienated space.”*

(Masud Khan, Work Books, 16 July 1971)

In Volume II of his Work Books, Masud Khan records his growing accomplishment in the international field of psychoanalysis. His analytic knowledge and skill, however, must sustain him on a career that balances unsurely over an unpredictable emotional depth. This middle work documents the transition between the promise of Volume I and the disastrous outcome of Volume III of *Diary of a Fallen Psychoanalyst*. The publication of the complete *Diary* will crown a life’s-work undertaking of editor Linda Hopkins, serving as a companion piece to her masterful biography of Khan (2006). Taken together, the Work Books and biography will present a unique study of this problematic genius – both from his subjective point of view and positioned within the objective historical narrative.

Volume I (2022), seamlessly co-edited with relational psychoanalyst Steven Kuchuck, found Khan established in the psychoanalytic world of London. He had traveled from his feudal home in colonial India, with love of English literature as his only companion, to seek an analytic understanding of himself. Now he himself is becoming the analyst he sought, learning from the founders of the field and diarying these interactions with concise portraits and opinions. His professional legacy seems affirmed by his dedicated collaboration with his analyst and mentor, Donald Winnicott (“DWW”). His idealised search for love seems realised in his marriage to the elegant Svetlana Beriosova, a prima ballerina. Then, in “the terrible year” (1971), this security is lost with the death of

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Winnicott and separation from Svetlana. It remains to be seen how Khan will continue independently without the sustaining reassurance of the two people who were closest to him.

Volume II places Khan in an international setting. Professionally, he is reaching his zenith: publishing books and papers in English and French, and called upon as speaker, editor, and bridge between British and French analytical thought. Living independently seems to have freed him to establish himself in his own person. Paris becomes an additional home, and the flamboyance of French culture draws him out. French art nourishes his appreciation of the image, while the liveliness of French theoretical debate energises him.

But Khan's paradoxical nature asserts itself as personal distress accompanies professional accomplishment, and increases diametrically with growing achievement. A longing for love, unfulfilled in his childhood and still unreconcilable in present time, had been temporarily subdued through DWW's "care" and Svetlana's tempestuous but sincere passion. Now, overwork and buying books by the dozen do not offer their usual haven from the pain of renewed separation. Illusory love affairs and self-medication with alcohol fail to counteract Khan's deep sense of loneliness that intensifies with greater independence and recognition. Week after week, the Work Books record relentless insomnia and nights filled with a feeling of "meaningless terror", as stress, lack of sleep, and too much alcohol undermine his health and overwhelm his driving intelligence. His public behaviour becomes still more unpredictable and unmanageable.

As Volume II closes, Khan struggles to maintain a positive resolve. He has overcome cultural bias and professional elitism to achieve eminence in his field, yet, as he warily observes, *'There is a ... strange perversity in me, in that I have sabotaged my own thriving all these many and various years'* (Work Books, 5 September 1975). Khan's own self, it would seem, would prove to be his greatest obstacle.



I "discovered" the writings of Masud Khan through my interest in therapeutic work with personality disorder and trauma. As early as 1960, Khan had foreseen the relevance of the alienated schizoid self to the depersonalised nature of modern society (1974). His concept of "cumulative trauma" (cited by Margaret Mahler and praised by Anna Freud)

brilliantly identified subtly traumatic influences throughout a child's upbringing as contributory to the shaping of personality disorder (1974). His editorship of and comprehensive introduction to *Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis* introduced me to the then-underacknowledged works of Winnicott (1958). There, the concept of transitional space led me in turn to Khan's own thoughts about the "dream-space" and the psychic shaping of the conscious self (1979, 1983). Here was a creative mind acutely sensitive to its times and even ahead of them. Curious to know more about the odd absence of such a fine mind from textbook indexes and class syllabi, I settled down to read *False Self*, the wonderfully comprehensive biography of Khan written by Linda Hopkins. I read with fascination of the spectacular rise and prodigious fall of a Punjabi psychoanalyst whose dramatic presence, superb intellect, and scandalous behaviour seemed to cast him as the centre of an epic work of fiction rather than as a participant in real life. I found myself drawn in – a frequent phenomenon with Khan – and published an article exploring Khan's effective but controversial clinical work with suicidally depressed patients (2019). I then summoned up enough self-assurance to contact Linda Hopkins.

Linda answered my email with openness and warmth. A correspondence began between us over our mutual interest in Khan – our shared enthusiasm leading to a collegiality and fast friendship that I deeply value. I learned that the rescue and publication of the Work Books had been a daunting project for Linda and her co-editor, Steven Kuchuck: a rite of passage lasting through two decades of legal, bureaucratic, and influential but unfounded opposition. The reader is encouraged to consult the editors' Preface to Volume I, which details the determination it has taken to bring the Work Books to print. The publication of Volume I, true to the paradoxes of the Khan drama, occurred nearly at the same time as the officially sanctioned destruction of the Khan archives. I became involved with the production of Volume II after Steven Kuchuck – his indispensable participation in Volume I complete – stepped aside to follow other interests. My input has been to contribute skills acquired as a one-time copyeditor for Oxford University Press, NY, along with my wholehearted support for a friend and colleague of unique editorial expertise and dedication. Above all, it has been a lasting pleasure to accompany Linda as she brings this phase of her major undertaking to fulfilment.

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My acquaintance with the abridging of the original Work Books (of more than 3,000 pages!) has given me a privileged look into the nature of creative editing. Good editing contributes no more nor less than a shaping influence that unobtrusively promotes the essential nature of a work. A good editor is in tune with the personality of a piece of writing, but must also maintain an almost brutal critical objectivity, so that the process of editing calls for a fine balance of stamina and heart.

As I have seen it in process, Linda Hopkins' creative editorship begins with her understanding of the intrinsic structure of the Work Books, and how this reflects the mind that composed them. The Work Books form an intermixture of impressions rather than a linear narrative. The Work Book entries – flashes of observation, insight, and opinion that seemingly stand by themselves – are more to be taken as free associations in Khan's self-analysis. They are parts of a shifting process, filled with contradictions as well as affirmations, that over time weaves a network of often paradoxical themes: tension between the wish for inclusion and the need for personal privacy; the closeness of pain to loyalty; the briefness of expansive joy; the endurance of friendship and the transitory course of love. Hopkins retains this nuanced structure that manifests Khan's sense of his own psyche, which he describes as "*like a cubist collage: Layers superimposed upon each other, in different transparencies and opacities, with varying labilities and fixities*" (Work Books, 21 March 1972). Khan, the expert in language, is also a visual thinker. One image catches a moment, but we must tour the whole gallery of images to experience the complexity of the overall encounter. Expert editing has preserved this cumulative nature of the Work Books.



Volume II of the Work Books decisively documents Masud Khan's place in the annals of psychoanalysis – not only as a brilliant theoretician and clinician, but also as an architect of the psychoanalytic movement. His editorship of major journals in both English and French (he was fluent in both languages), his creative interaction and often close friendship with originating minds in England, France and the United States, his evocative influence as a magnetic public speaker, all served to strengthen psychoanalysis as a living international phenomenon. *Diary of a Fallen*

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*Psychoanalyst* restores Khan in his complexity for our open-minded evaluation as he speaks to us directly:

*“I write neither to instruct nor to preach, simply to share that which to me is able to live in the written word, because the written-word simultaneously transcends words and death.”*

Masud Khan (1977)

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## PREFACE

*by Linda Hopkins*

*“(T)hese Work Books are my truest idiom of daily self actualization.”*

(Masud Khan, Work Books, 9 May 1975)

*“My life has certainly been ample and volcanic.”*

(Masud Khan, Work Books, 29 July 1975)

These Work Books are the middle third of a previously unpublished journal written by the London psychoanalyst Masud Khan (1924–1989). They are the personal account of his private and professional life in the years 1967–1980. Prior to the publication of this three-volume series, the Work Books had been read only by the psychoanalyst Robert Stoller and his wife Sybil (Khan’s intimate friends from California), by British psychoanalyst Adam Limentani, and by the editors of the published Work Books.

Fantasies about the unread content were so unsettling to some British analysts that it took a twenty-plus-year battle to get full permission for publication after I was given the copy for publication by Sybil Stoller in 1996. The original Work Books were held by the International Psychoanalytical Association and they were destroyed in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

Khan is by any account an interesting person. Analyst/historian Brett Kahr writes that he was “theatrical”, “captivating”, and “shocking” and refers to Khan as “arguably, the most engaging, wise, compelling, seductive and, also, *dangerous* figure in the entire profession”.<sup>2</sup>

This volume of the diary tells the story of Khan’s attempt to survive the losses of the two most important people in his Western life: his analyst/mentor/friend Donald Winnicott, who died in 1971, and his beloved wife, the ballerina Svetlana Beriosova, lost due to her alcoholism and

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their subsequent divorce. As he struggles to survive, Khan writes about contemporary world events, his continued success in the analytic world, and his intense relationships with major figures in that world, especially in France, and with many others, including several lovers. He also writes about enormous personal suffering in the form of loneliness, insomnia, physical ailments, and a sense of not belonging in his Western world or in his Eastern world, now Pakistan. And any reader will surely agree that the Work Books show that Khan was an extremely gifted writer. As his colleague Eric Rayner told me, “Masud’s writing came from the gods.”<sup>3</sup>

Volume II reveals the beginning of Khan’s major decline. He does not yet have terminal cancer, he is battling his own alcoholism, and he is putting enormous energy into the design and furnishing of a “Masudic village” that will be his new home after leaving the very large and prestigious flat he had shared with Svetlana. He interprets his dreams as meaning that he is afraid for his future: he has a “ghastly foreboding” filled with “menacing ghosts”. The reasons for this foreboding will become apparent in the as yet unpublished Volume III, which is very different from Volume II.<sup>4</sup>

In the years of the struggle for permission to publish the Work Books, my trusted companion was Steven Kuchuck, who was co-editor of Volume I.<sup>5</sup> When Steve left to pursue other interests, I was miraculously blessed to get a new person to help with the editing, the psychoanalyst Candace Orcutt. Candace is a gifted writer and editor who was already immersed in the study of Khan when we began our collaboration on Volume II. She has worked long hours on editing and, along the way, she has been an insightful and steady companion.

### *Notes to the Preface*

- <sup>1</sup> See Preface to the first third of the Work Books for an account of the troubled history of the Work Books prior to publication. (Hopkins, L., & Kuchuck, S. (Eds.) (2022). Preface. In: *Diary of a Fallen Psychoanalyst: The Work Books of Masud Khan, 1967–1972* (pp. xiii–xix). London: Karnac.
- <sup>2</sup> Kahr, B. (2024). Rajah on the couch: The magnificence and misery of Masud Khan (p. 179). In: *Hidden Histories of British Psychoanalysis: From Freud’s Death Bed to Laing’s Missing Tooth* (pp. 179–205). Bicester, UK: Phoenix.
- <sup>3</sup> Rayner added his opinion that Khan’s soul came “from the Devil”.
- <sup>4</sup> Planned publication with Karnac in the fall of 2026 or spring of 2027.
- <sup>5</sup> Hopkins, L., & Kuchuck, S. (Eds.) (2022). Preface. In: *Diary of a Fallen Psychoanalyst: The Work Books of Masud Khan, 1967–1972*. London: Karnac.

## NOTE TO THE READER

**M**asud Khan (1924–1989) wrote his Work Books in the years 1967–1980 with mixed feelings about publication. On the one hand, he wrote them as a personal diary where he could be totally honest since he did not have to worry about readers. On the other hand, he gave a complete copy, as he wrote, to the Californian analyst Robert Stoller and his wife Sybil. Even with these two readers, it is clear that Khan tells more about himself and his life in the Work Books than anywhere else—he is not out to impress and he is not false. He writes almost nothing about his patients, knowing that such information could not be published, if he decided on publication.

The Work Books printed here are edited from the Stoller copy, which is a complete copy, given to me by Sybil for scholarly use.

The first set of Work Books, 1967–1972, was published in 2022.<sup>1</sup> The current publication covers the years 1972–1975; and the third and final volume will cover the years 1975–1980. Each volume involves a unique period in Khan’s life.

### **Guide to names**

The reader should note that “Pnin”, who is referred to throughout, is a nickname for the French analyst Victor Smirnoff, one of Khan’s best friends. Some other people are referred to using pseudonyms: Roz, Eva, Megan and Dodo.

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<sup>1</sup> Hopkins, L. & Kuchuck, S. (Eds.) (2022). *Diary of a Fallen Psychoanalyst: The Work Books of Masud Khan 1967–1972*. London: Karnac.