Modern physics is heading towards a non-mechanical reality. The thought that the material universe is derivative from consciousness is gaining ground. The greatest physicists of our century from Einstein and Max Planck to Schrödinger and Heisenberg have all been aware of the mystical nature of their concepts. In the fantastic world of modern quantum physics, the common-sense notions of space, time, matter, energy and causality do not apply. Heisenberg’s celebrated Principle of Indeterminacy will go down in history as putting an end to causal determinism. Gone are the days of materialising mind. Matter itself stands de-materialised. That the stuff of the world is mind-stuff is the belief of many theoretical physicists.  

After a long and eventful history devoted to the conquest of the external world, the times call for a conquest of the inner world. Of all the fields of human endeavour the inner nature of man has remained

the most inaccessible. It cannot be explored by mere metaphysical speculation or logical analysis. No external observation is of any help in this subtle investigation. It requires a new method, a new vision. Psychoanalysis is the new science for the new age. Modern physics has enlarged the scope of reality from the visible and palpable to a domain far beyond them. Psychoanalysis points to a vast realm of the unconscious, the unknown and invisible matrix of the conscious mind. The former unveils the face and figure of the reality of which man forms a part. The latter represents man's attempt to unmask himself.

An attempt is made in this thesis to study the philosophy of self developed mainly by Freud, Adler and Jung, the triumvirate of psychoanalytic movement. I have not entered into the technical intricacies of the systems. I have largely confined myself to their metapsychological reflections on the nature of the self. As my main interest is in Jung, I have devoted larger portion of the work to his ideas.

I have approached psychoanalysis with an open mind. I have differed from many interpreters. Nevertheless I have avoided many groundless controversies. That these are scarcely more than sound and fury
unsupported by an evidence in the original writings of Freud, Adler and Jung is shown in the exposition of each system. These great thinkers are concerned more with the suffering humanity than with system-building. Their intuitive glimpses are scattered. A dogmatic emphasis on one glimpse to the neglect of the other is not a sign of healthy approach. Unfortunately their followers and detractors speak with dogmatic tone. The whole idea of the thesis is to avoid dogmatism.

The thesis is divided into eleven chapters. A brief review of those aspects of psychoanalytic thought which concern us in this study is given below.

The Introductory chapter takes as its starting-point the problem of banishment of self from the field of psychology and looks upon psychoanalysis as true science of the psyche. Chapter II is a dispassionate presentation, and Chapter III, a careful evaluation, of Freud's concept of self. It is shown that Freud is not a determinist, not a positivist, not a materialist, but a mystic with full faith in the autonomy of the psyche. Freud's division of mind into id, ego and superego is shown to be initial and not final. The true self is not an integrated trinity but a transfigured id, a widened ego, a broadened consciousness. Limitations of
Freud are also pointed out. In Chapter IV Freud's idea of psychic freedom is understood in the light of philosophies of Plato, Spinoza, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Thus he is placed in the grand tradition of human thought and many prevailing prejudices against his views are shown to be distortions. Chapter V is concerned with Adler. In spite of his differences from Freud, his conclusions are not opposed to Freudian views. Adler is compared with Neo-Kantian Vaibinger and this throws a new light on his concept of self as a creative principle. The self creates its style of life and becomes a prisoner in a fictional prison of its own making.

In Chapter VI, Jung's concept of psychic energy is understood in the light of modern physics. Psychic functions and attitudes are discussed. His recognition of intuition as a function of the psyche is an answer to the positivists from the standpoint of empirical psychology itself. His concept of type as a prison is noted and its profound significance appreciated. Chapter VII is concerned with Jung's concept of the psyche. His relation to Plato, Carus and Von Hartmann is noted. The prevailing interpretation of archetypes is rejected on the strength of the evidence found in Jung's writings. It is shown in this connection that his oriental leanings are often ignored by Western interpreters. In Chapter VIII
Jung's concept of self is discussed. Academic debate cannot dispel lingering doubt about the reality of self. An inward journey alone can reveal to us the mysteries of our being. For Jung, the self has to be realized. The pilgrim comes across the terrifying shadow, the enticing anima (or the animus), the overpowering gods and goddesses in his progress to the goal. Finally, comes the mandala-experience – the experience of the Self or Deity. Here Jung far surpasses Freud and Adler. He comes very close to Yoga. Chapter IX is devoted to a comparative study of Yoga and Jung. Remarkable similarities are noticed, differences shown, certain confusions resolved. Chapter X gives a comparative account of existentialism and psychoanalysis. Striking similarities between Adlerian views and some ideas of the existentialists are noted. Freud is shown to be more thorough than the existentialists in his treatment of anxiety and death. Jung is compared with Jaspers and Heidegger. But Jung's concept of the autonomous psyche places him far above the existentialists, who, despite their notions of Being and of freedom, do not categorically assert that the existential self is spiritual.

The final chapter deals with the crisis brought about by the Neo-psychoanalysts and then refers to the existentialist approach to psychoanalysis made by
Frankl, Binswanger and Boss. In this connection the psychologies of self-actualization advocated by Allport, Goldstein and Maslow are also discussed. It is shown that the concept of self in contemporary psychologies is more or less Adlerian. As the unconscious is de-emphasised, the full picture of the multidimensional self is not found in them. Freud's importance in the history of thought is reasserted. Jung is shown as one step beyond Freud. They are not opposites, as it is generally understood. A suggestion is made that existentialism and psychoanalysis must combine in the exploration of the psyche. Further Jung has shown the path to Yoga which only can lead us to the goal. A fresh understanding of ancient wisdom is the need of the hour. In this connection I have referred to what I call Jung's conception of avatar. A cosmic individuation is suggested by Jung and avatar is an archetypal manifestation of it. Spiritual monism seems to be the central idea of Jung's philosophy.

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