

Self Psychology and the Humanities, by H. Kohut

a. Quotes:

b. General Notes:

▪ Chapter 1 - On Courage (pg. 5)

- "Courage can be defined as the ability to brave death and to tolerate destruction rather than to betray the nucleus of one's psychological being, that is, one's ideals." (pg. 6)
- "[S]ociety will choose irrational leaders to take the responsibility for carrying out purposes for which responsibility can then be again disowned after the leader has disappeared. We tend to judge the wish for survival as paramount in the normal individual, especially when his behavior serves no practical end and leads to death. But the typical representative of historical heroism and martyrdom is not to be judged as necessarily pathological when assessed from a depth-psychological point of view, even though there may be the temporary presence of some grossly abnormal features in his thoughts and behavior and despite the apparently unrealistic nature of his actions. One striking characteristic of unusually courageous individuals is that at certain critical moments or stages of their lives they create imagery concerning an all-powerful figure on whom to lean for support. This idealized figure may be a personified god or a prototypical historical figure or a charismatic person who is living in the present. The spectrum of such falsification of reality, employed in the service of establishing a courage-supporting relationship to an idealized figure, extends from (a) temporary delusions and hallucinations, via (b) grossly aggrandizing distortions in the evaluation of people who in reality have only ordinary and moderate endowment, to (c) an illusional, concretizing, vivid idealization of truly inspiring personages who are either temporally or spatially remote from the hero who, however, in his fantasy, will feel that he is deriving concrete support from leaning on them. To the first group of falsifications or courage-supporting mechanisms belong experiences such as hearing the voice of God or seeing visions in which God appears as the hero. Such messages that the courageous individual receives are delivered from the supernatural powers with the aid of supposedly meaningful but, in fact, accidental occurrences. Some of these experiences are tradition-bound and standardized, like "the call" from a personified god heard at a specific time and place by those embarking on a career as missionaries. A good example of the second type of falsification of reality engaged in by heroic people is the intense, unrealistic idealization of the physical, mental or moral powers of people who in reality possess only ordinary, moderate endowment. I call this phenomenon the "transference of creativity." A genius, frightened by the boldness of his pioneering discoveries and yearning to relieve his loneliness, creates for himself the figment of a vastly overestimated figure on whom he leans temporarily but whom he discards (i.e., from whom he withdraws his idealization) after his essential work has been achieved. During the transference of creativity itself, the genius projects his own mental powers onto someone else. He assigns his discoveries temporarily to that other person and feels humble toward and dependent upon this idealized protector, mentor and judge, who is in essence his own creation. In some of these examples (especially in those involving the relationship to hallucinated god figures) it may, on superficial scrutiny, seem difficult to draw a clear-cut line of demarcation with the psychoses. I will return to the topic of this differentiation later on when discussing certain individuals-specific examples of heroism and martyrdom—in whom such pseudo-psychotic features can indeed be found. But the third type of falsification of reality, in which courage is supported through a leaning on or a merger with inspiring prototypical figures, does not generally raise serious doubts about the sanity of those who cling to these bonds, even though with this group one may occasionally encounter experiences of hallucinatory vividness and temporary delusion-like distortions. It is not difficult to recognize that all these falsifications of reality, which are so dramatic at certain critical times in the lives of courageous individuals, are variations on the single theme of regression in the developmental line of a specific narcissistic configuration, that of the idealized, omnipotent selfobject." (pg. 6-8)
 - "As I will try to show, this motivation arises from the entire nuclear self of the individual and not from his values alone. The re-concretization of the ego ideal, however - that is, its (regressive) transformation into an omnipotent selfobject - becomes temporarily necessary as an auxiliary means by which the fulfillment of the nuclear self can be attained despite the most severe anxieties of dissolution to which man will expose himself voluntarily. The pseudo-delusions and pseudo-hallucinations of the hero are, therefore, created in response to a temporary great need; they occur as the outgrowth of conditions which resemble those of early childhood when, because of the psychological incompleteness which prevails at that stage, the young child's self-esteem regulation depends almost exclusively on the presence of selfobjects who admire the child or who allow the child to merge into their idealized perfection. Under certain anxiety-provoking conditions, then, the archaic need for support becomes so great that the omnipotent object will, regressively, arise out of the ego ideal and be, again, as it was once in early life, experienced as an archaic, prestructural, external power." (pg. 8-9)
- "It [the nuclear self] is that continuum in time, that cohesive configuration in depth, which we experience as the "I" of our perceptions, thoughts and actions." (pg. 9)
 - "I prefer to define the self as an abstraction derived from psychoanalytic clinical experience, not excluding psychoanalytically sophisticated observation outside the clinical setting. I consider the self as a potentially observable content of the mind. If we choose this approach we will recognize the simultaneous existence of different and even contradictory selves in the same person, of selves with various degrees of stability and of various degrees of importance. **There are conscious, preconscious, and unconscious selves; there are selves in the ego, the id, and the superego;** and we may discover in some of our patients incompatible selves, side by side, in the same psychic agency. **Among these selves, however, there exists one which is most centrally located in the psyche, one which is experienced by the individual as the basic one, and which is most resistant to change. I like to call this self the nuclear self.** It is composed of derivatives of the grandiose self (i.e., of the central self-assertive goals, purposes and ambitions) and of derivatives of the idealized parent imago (i.e., of the central idealized values). **The nuclear self is thus that unconscious, preconscious and conscious sector in id, ego and superego which contains not only the individual's most enduring values and ideals but also his most deeply anchored goals, purposes and ambitions.** The nuclear self, however, is not immutable. The task of modifying and even of transforming it is repeatedly imposed on us throughout life under the influence of new internal and external factors. The modifiability of the nuclear self - at certain developmental junctures like adolescence and old age or under the influence of crucial environmental changes—is not a sign of disease and must not, in and of itself, be evaluated as a psychological or moral defect. On the other hand, we may justifiably deplore some behavior as the manifestation of a psychological shortcoming and of moral infirmity - like the actions and attitudes of those who quickly and opportunistically adjust their convictions under the influence of external pressures. Such behavior does not involve an alteration of the nuclear self but represents merely an adaptation on the psychological surface. In such individuals the nuclear self ceases to participate in the overt attitudes and actions and becomes progressively isolated and is finally repressed or disavowed. The psychological outcome, which is unfortunately more or less characteristic of the psychological makeup of the majority of adults, is not an individual striving toward a creative solution of his conflicts concerning the redefinition of his basic ambitions and values but a person who, despite his smoothly adaptive surface behavior, experiences a sense of inner shallowness and who gives to others an impression of artificiality. The heroic individual's nuclear self is, therefore, not necessarily characterized by its immutability. As a matter of fact the hero's willingness to die sometimes comes about as a result of a creative change in his nuclear self, a change by virtue of which he gets out of step with the goals, ambitions and values of his environment. The capacity of the nuclear self to undergo changes, whether they take place slowly or occur abruptly

- (as in mystical experiences of illumination) is fully compatible with that firmness of attitude so characteristic of courage." (pg. 10-11)
- "...I will discuss three features of some heroic individuals which place them clearly outside the realm of psychosis. The three features are: the presence of a fine sense of humor; the ability to respond to others with subtle empathy; and, generally at the time when the ultimate heroic decision has been reached and the agonizing consequences have to be faced, the suffusion of the personality with a profound sense of inner peace and serenity—a mental state akin to wisdom. This is something which never fails to impress the observer, including even persecutors, torturers and executioners. Heroes, in other words, achieve a high order of development in the narcissistic sector of their personality, and this developmental achievement is maintained during the decisive heroic period of their lives." (pg. 15-16)
 - "The presence of a genuine sense of humor constitutes one reliable indication that there is no severe impairment in the narcissistic sector of the personality. It speaks in particular against the existence of, or even against the propensity for, a psychosis. Genuine humor can be achieved only when primitive forms of grandiosity have been relinquished - whether the grandiosity had previously been bound to the subject's grandiose self or had been focused on an idealized (aggrandized) selfobject. A paranoid's coldly arrogant superiority and the hostile certainty of his own conviction about the powerful persecutor's inimical intentions are the very antithesis of a healthy humorous attitude toward the realistic limitations of oneself and of those one admires. It bears repeating that to be humorous is not the same as to be self-belittling or to be lacking in enthusiasm. Humor is fully compatible with a secure sense of self-esteem or with a warm devotion to values and ideals. It is, of course, true that there are times, outside of mental illness, when the serious, non-humorous pursuit of the purposes of the self and a serious, non-humorous devotion to ideals may be demanded of us. But when an individual has earnestly resolved to live in accordance with the central purposes of the self and in harmony with the highest idealized value and still preserve a sense of modesty and proportion, then we will feel that he has achieved a high degree of healthy mastery in the narcissistic sector of his personality. We can be certain that the core of his personality is sane and that the inner forces which propelled him toward heroic activity were not based on delusions when his ability to respond with humor is preserved in the face of the utmost sacrifices that man can make as he remains faithful to his nuclear self." (pg. 16-17)
 - "In many of the martyr heroes, it is the set of central values and ideals, the heir to the archaic idealized object, which decisively defines the nuclear self. Thus, the ultimate state of narcissistic balance in such people blends the personality with the central values of the self. When such an identification has been achieved, the martyr hero has a sense of profound inner peace (narcissistic equilibrium) and even the experience of conscious pleasure that his ideals and his total personality have now become one. The general psychological setting in which these emotions occur is one of calmness and clarity. We see neither the fuzzy mysticism which characterizes certain regressive swings in narcissistic personality disturbances nor, of course, the anxious and bizarre mental state surrounding the delusional contacts with a bizarre god and with other distorted omnipotent figures which we encounter in the psychotic." (pg. 19-20)
 - "[I]f I should dare to offer a tentative definition of the nuclear self, I would say that it is the one which is derived from these two structures [the grandiose self and the idealized parent imago] and draws its strength from them. I would have to add, however, that this self, as it strives to realize its ambitions and to live up to its ideals, must have become integrated into the total personality. Specifically, it must have come under the domination of the ego, since it is the task of this agency of the mind to integrate a person's psychologically rooted strivings with biological givens, on the one hand, and with the exigencies of the social environment and of the historical moment, on the other. I will thus define the nuclear self as a specific psychic configuration available to introspection and empathy. Psychic configurations which we call self are, as we know, the representation of mind and body, of mental and physical functions. They are experienced as being continuous in time, unitary and cohesive, and as possessing stable spatial dimensions. **The nuclear self, however, is that specific self which fulfills two further conditions: (1) It is the self which is the carrier of the derivatives of the grandiose-exhibitionistic self** (i.e., the potential executor of the goals, purposes, and ambitions which are in genetic-dynamic contact with the original aspirations of the grandiose-exhibitionistic self); **and (2) it is the self which has set its sights on values and ideals which are the descendents of the idealized parent imago.**" (pg. 35)
 - "Traditionally we see our analysts—and those whom we scrutinize "beyond the bounds of the basic rule"—as beset by (structural) conflicts. Conflict solution is enhanced if the conflicts are raised into consciousness. The most important regulator of the psychological activities in the realm of conflicts is the pleasure principle (including, of course, its extension, the reality principle), and, on the whole, the most important processes in this realm are the internalized conflicts between the (oedipal) drive-wishes of the id-ego, on the one hand, and the drive-curbings prohibitions of the superego, on the other hand. The psychological understanding of man as seen within the conceptual framework of the drive-conflict approach of psychoanalysis is related to that traditional outlook on human problems which is evoked by such terms as guilt and restitution, sin and redemption, crime and punishment, and the like. I will, despite the great variety of phenomena that are involved, characterize this whole outlook on human psychology by saying that it focuses on guilty man. But there is another dimension of human existence which must be taken into account. It is the fateful matter of whether one's nuclear self is able to express its basic patterns within the span of a lifetime. We are dealing here with psychic functions that are not regulated by the pleasure / reality principle but which are subject to forces "beyond the pleasure principle." I will once more disregard the great variety of phenomena that are here involved and characterize this second outlook on human psychology by saying that it focuses on tragic man." (pg. 36-37)
 - "Analysts, beginning with Freud, have felt strongly attracted by the mystery of tragedy, which they have explained largely in terms of a psychology of passions (drives), inner conflicts concerning these passions (structural conflicts), and punishment for transgressions motivated by passions (the victory of the self-punitive forces in the superego and the ascendancy of the death instinct). In this view of tragedy, which sees man as striving for happiness through love and work, man comes to grief because he cannot master his unruly passions and must ultimately bow to the inevitable victory of the life-destructive forces as embodied in his aggressions, in his guilt, and in the inevitable end of his biological existence. A psychoanalytic psychology of the self is able to provide us with a fresh chance to comprehend tragedy. I will step directly in medias res and make my central assertion: **The art of the tragic - whether sung, told, or written as in the great epics; whether through music, on canvas, in stone, or on the stage - is concerned with man's attempt to live out the pattern of his nuclear self.** And the tragic hero who is the protagonist of the great tragedies, which must be counted as among the most precious cultural possessions of mankind, is a man who, despite the breakdown of his physical and mental powers (e.g., Oedipus) and even despite his biological death (e.g., Hamlet), is triumphant because his nuclear self achieved an ascendancy which never will, indeed which never can, be undone. Surrounded by the incessant flux of the human condition, confronted by the necessity of admitting the impermanence of all things dear to him, compelled finally to acknowledge the finiteness of individual existence not only in the abstract but also as it concerns his own beloved self, man comes closest to narcissistic fulfillment when he is able to realize the pattern of his most central self. The effacement or the death of the tragic hero is thus not an incidental occurrence. Its essential meaning is not to be seen as punishment for a code-transgressing deed, which sets in motion the pattern of guilt and retribution. It is instead a necessary component of the hero's achievement, for it is only in death that the hero's narcissistic fulfillment attains permanence. The survivors weep about the hero's fate, but the raised body of the hero as it is carried to the funeral pyre is not lamented as the remains of defeat would be. It is admired as the symbol of the hero's narcissistic triumph which, through his death, has now become absolute. Every individual has two courses open to him and every individual, in one way or another, follows both of them. In his ordinary day every man lives by the pleasure and reality principles: He is the man of work and love. But no man is excluded from participating in the tragic dimensions of life. No man, however apparently insignificant his self-fulfilling goals and the idealized aspirations of his nuclear self, is at all times fully absorbed by the toils of work and by the pursuit of time-limited pleasures. There will be periods, or at least moments, in the life of every man when he becomes aware, even if only dimly, of a yearning that does not relate to the attainment of the pleasurable discharge of drive-wishes but to

the compelling urge to realize the deep-rooted design of his nuclear self. Man is propelled by both of these forces, and human life lacking either of them is incomplete. Society, too, needs tragic man. The tragic man senses the destiny of a people and of his potential role as it relates to this destiny. Ordinarily, leaders will be of the "work and love" type. In extraordinary times, however, in times of deep crisis, it will be a tragic man who will rise to lead and inspire a group whose deepest group-self - the confluence of the nuclear selves, i.e., of the basic ambitions, goals and ideals of the individuals who make up the group - has been threatened and needs to assert itself. All art, including tragedy, is wish fulfillment. But our enjoyment of tragedy does not come from the pleasurable participation in the victory of a drive (the death instinct). That would be analogous to our enjoyment of the pleasurable participation in the wish-fulfilling world conjured up by the art of the happy ending. Simple comedies please us through the vicarious enjoyment of fulfilled libidinal wishes. Other branches of the art of the happy ending present us with artistically disguised denials of the reality of our limitations and frustrations. There is a great variety of ways by which the art of the happy ending, through more or less sophisticated means, is able to entertain the man of work and love. Our enjoyment of these art forms is derived from our temporary acceptance of the artistic assertion that a drive-wish has been fulfilled or from the functional analogue of this process, the artistic denial of the pains and frustrations of life. **Tragedy, however, has another function: It gives the spectator, reader, listener or beholder the opportunity to experience, in temporary identification with the tragic hero, the unfolding, expansion and triumph of his own nuclear self.** It is a significant (and largely unexplored) fact that civilized man feels timid vis-à-vis the profound strivings of his nuclear self and that his ego seems fragile when it is faced by its demands. Civilized man has learned to work, he tries to obey the restrictions necessitated by communal life and yet, despite work and restrictions, he manages, directly and indirectly, to obtain a modicum of fulfillment of his drive-wishes. But the fetters of communal living have curtailed his freedom to express his deepest self even more than they have interfered with the opportunity to discharge his drives. Indeed, I believe that there are forces at work in this realm which are even more restrictive than the inhibiting precepts of civilized society. From the beginning of our awareness these forces have made us fearful of developing our self-expressive initiative and our creativeness. Perhaps from infancy onward the unfolding of our central selves has evoked frightening envious anger, which is a manifestation of the wounded narcissism of those around us. The full assertion of our nuclear selves is thus for most of us beyond the scope of our courage. We withdraw from our innermost goals and ideals, and we falsify and dilute them. It is in this sphere then that the buffering of art allows us a tolerable experience of self-affirmation in the form of our participation in the self-expression of the tragic hero on the stage. Great tragedy, as exemplified most tangibly in the tragic drama, is a repeatable, and thus a dosed, experience. It allows us, therefore, to participate in the emotional development of the tragic hero from doubt to decision and from dejection to triumph as his nuclear self attains realization and is made permanent through death. Paradoxically, the spectator, participating in the ultimate self-realization of the tragic hero, experiences his own self as more vigorous and cohesive than he ever can in his real life. The primary function of tragedy is thus not to supply us with wish-fulfilling daydreams in the area of our drives. This function is fulfilled by other forms of art which, for simplicity's sake, I have called the art of the happy ending. It should go without saying that I intend no value judgment by this comparison. Not all tragedy is great art. As a matter of fact, in viewing tragedy one will often feel keenly the truth of the old statement that there is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Nor is wish-fulfilling art, that of the happy ending, by any mean necessarily second-rate in its formal execution and concerned with topics that are of no relevance to man. To use a specific example: work and love man is also moral man. Non-tragic art may, therefore, not only provide wish fulfillment to him through crudely direct drive satisfaction (such as is delivered by pulp magazines and peep-show movies) but also give him the narcissistic pleasure of identifying with the moral protagonist, of sharing in his victory over the forces of evil, and of feeling temporarily relieved of the tension between his own ego and superego. As he identifies with the personified superego of the work of art in which he immerses himself, his ego will feel calm and virtuous. In the narcissistic sphere work and love man gleams from the art of the happy ending wish fulfillments like the childlike aficionados of the grandiose deeds of Superman, which are the direct descendents of ubiquitous fantasies emanating from the grandiose self of childhood (their admixture of oedipal features and of simple morality places them in early latency) and he also, through the tales of gallantry, heroism and honesty, attains a vicarious narcissistic wish fulfillment in the realm of his ideals and values. The ego of work and love man, the man of drives and structural conflicts, is, after all, exposed not just to the pressure of his drives. He also suffers from being exposed to the demands of his superego and from having to bow to the fact that his control of the environment is incomplete. Thus wish fulfillment through the art of the happy ending can be achieved in a variety of ways and by appealing to diverse aspects of the personality. Neither sophisticated means, however, nor even the portrayal of higher goals make tragic art. Self-fulfillment is not necessarily moral, and true creativity—which, I believe, always requires the full participation of the nuclear self—is not necessarily a matter of conscientious work. The tragic hero may be moral in the usual sense of the word; our values and ideals may coincide with his. But he may also be a great sinner, a man who steps beyond the bounds of the morality of his times and his society. The question is not whether the hero is a sinner or saint; the question is whether, in that segment of his life curve that is portrayed in the tragic drama or novel, the innermost pattern of the hero's self is struggling for expression and ultimately reaches its goal. The heroes of the novels of Dostoevski, for example, are beset by unsolvable conflicts. They suffer, they fail. They may be sinners and cowards. Some are physically ill and many die. What then redeems them? In what way do they give us that pleasure of a self-enhancing participation in another's experience which I tried to describe? It is the very perfection of the portrayal of these personalities which gives us this pleasure. All of Dostoevski's figures, from Raskolnikov and Prince Myskin to Smerdyakov attain firmness and permanence as they live through their tortured lives. Each of them is a self that will endure as long as tragic man is responsive to art, as long as there are men whose nuclear selves cannot ever find full expression, as long as there are men who gladly suffer the pressure of unfulfilled drives, the frustration of their wishes, and even the suffering of being torn by guilt, if only they could feel themselves as a firmly coherent unit which is able to experience the joys and sufferings of life in the full reality and firm cohesion of the self. In the tragic art of antiquity, in the epics and tragedies of Greece, the protagonists' fate, their life and death, their triumph and downfall, is starkly presented to the participating audience-painted, as it were, in the primary colors of emotionality. It is a decisive element of the tragic art of the Greeks, reflecting the tragic quality of their conception of life, that each individual fate, as it unrolls before the spectator, the listener or the reader, appears to follow inexorably a predestined course. Even in death or in the total prostration of defeat we sense the fulfillment of the destiny of an innermost self. The outcries of the bereaved survivors are, therefore, at bottom the expression of profound admiration for the hero's achievement, and the moans of the defeated hero are unself-conscious and strong. The audience leaves the theater, the reader closes the tome containing the tragic epic, with a sense of (participating) prideful exaltation." (pg. 37-41)

- "Certain qualities and functions of the nuclear self, once this structure has been fully formed, cannot be comprehended unless the self is conceptualized as an independent, autonomous unit. There are other, broad areas of the personality outside the nuclear self. But once it has been laid down, **the nuclear self strives to fulfill itself. It moves, from the time of its consolidation, toward the realization of its ambitions and ideals, which are the ultimate descendents of the child's grandiosity and exhibitionism and of his strivings to emerge with an idealized selfobject. And if an individual succeeds in realizing the aims of his nuclear self, he can die without regret. He has achieved the fulfillment of the tragic hero**—not the painful death of guilty man who strives for pleasure - but a death which is "beyond the pleasure principle." Guilty man wants to achieve redemption and reform himself and society. **But an individual's deepest ambitions and ideals, once congealed to form the nucleus of his self, will drive and lead him with a force which, though hidden in most of us by conflict, fear and guilt, in its essence is independent of fear and guilt, of expiation and reform.** Tragic man's death is not caused by guilt. It is not suicide, nor is it self-destructive. It is more closely related to a "death-instinct" than is the striving toward death experienced by guilty man. **The death attained by tragic man** must not be conceived, in analogy to Freud's conception of a psychobiological

- antagonism between Eros and Thanatos, as being in opposition to life. It is an integral part of the life curve of the self." (pg. 49-50)
- Chapter 2 - On Leadership (pg. 51)
 - "Freud demonstrated (1921, pp. 67-143) that identification with the leader's ego-ideal creates group cohesiveness, mutual identification, and diminution of aggression between the members of the group. Such groups are, I believe, held together through a bond of idealizing love and are capable of constructive action. **The groups which are formed around the personality of a paranoid leader**, however, are not tied together by the convergence of their idealizing love, by an ego-ideal held in common. They are principally united by their sharing of an archaic narcissistic conception of the world that must destroy those who are different and by the identity of their grandiose fantasies embodied in their leader. They are held together by a common grandiose self." (pg. 54-55)
 - "What decides the cultural value of the group is not the predominance of one of the narcissistic structures over the other (based as it were on the biased value judgment that ideals are morally superior to ambitions) **but the relative archaism or maturity of these configurations and the relative degree of ego dominance over them**. It is nevertheless true that the most culture-destroying forms of mass behavior - e.g., of those masses under the sway of the dictatorships of our century - emanated from groups which were predominantly amalgamated by the identity with the archaic grandiose self. Even here there are undoubtedly exceptions. Individual members of these groups relate to the leader in mystical religious devotion, betraying the presence of archaic forms of the omnipotent object; others use overt idealization as a cover of their reactivated archaic power-grandiosity; and still others mobilize truly idealizing cathexes. Yet **the bulk of mass movements form themselves around shared archaic grandiosity after the previously existing aim-inhibited and ego-controlled shared form of self-confidence (national prestige) and the previously existing aim-inhibited and ego-controlled communal ego-ideal (religious values) have been destroyed or debased**. The overwhelming quality of the forces which have formed the destructive nationalistic movements of this century and the power and efficacy of their vengeful actions must thus, I believe, be understood as the result of the narcissistic bond established between the personality of the leader and the psychological tensions of the masses. **Certain charismatic leaders appear to have been exposed to narcissistic deprivations in early childhood that prevented the gradual modification of their grandiose self and its integration with the reality ego, thus depriving this structure of one of its most important constituents. Since it is through the reality ego that a person's relationships with others are mediated, the defectiveness of this structure - experienced as alternate states of grandiosity and inferiority - leads at first to severe degrees of social isolation**. One might say that the presence of the unmodified grandiose substructure interferes with the ability to acknowledge the existence of other individuals as independent centers of initiative and thus to perceive them as separate from himself and as distinguishable one from the other. What differentiates the leader, however, from others who suffer from interpersonally crippling personality disorders is the fact that, while his capacity to perceive and distinguish individuals and to relate to them as a friend and companion is impaired, the leader develops a heightened sensitivity to the anonymous group and its motivations and is able to relate to it intensely. The socially impoverishing tendency to perceive people as types and clichés rather than as individuals, which is found so frequently in the narcissistically fixated, is compensated for by a heightened grasp of the unconscious and preconscious tension states, of the fantasies, wishes, and fears of the group. It should not be forgotten, however, that this power of the gifted leader can be effectively engaged only in the area in which the fantasies and wishes of the masses are like his own. He is completely unable to understand groups that are different from his own, and he fails to understand even his own group when it begins to be motivated by strivings which do not spring from the grandiose fantasies that they hold in common with him. The leader's inability to perceive and to understand human reactions beyond a certain range is not recognized by him as a limitation, even though it is a serious shortcoming that often contributes to his ultimate downfall. He declares as contemptible motivations and attitudes which are not identical with his own. Thus he develops along with his great understanding of the masses a steadily increasing contempt for them. **Hitler identified intensely with the German people as long as they shared his ambitions but became contemptuous of them when they did not completely fall in line with him. The unconscious fantasies of the group's grandiose self, expressed in the transference upon the image of an appropriate leader figure, thus can play at times a crucial role in its cohesion. The leader of such a group is not primarily the focal point of shared values, as Freud suggested, but self-righteously expresses the group's ambitions and extols its greatness and power**. Along with the various political, social, and economic factors that account for the irresistible attractions which nationalistic movements are able to exert at certain historical junctures there is thus a psychological one. At certain historical moments there exists a widespread painful awareness of narcissistic imbalance in large segments of a country's population. Shame propensity and readiness for rage are ubiquitous. **Individuals seek to melt into the body of a powerful nation** (as symbolized by a grandiose leader) **to cure their shame and provide them with a feeling of enormous strength, to which they react with relief and triumph. Old fantasies of omnipotence seem suddenly to have become reality; all are proclaiming the invincible strength of the nation, and he who dares to question the omnipotence of the group and the omniscience of its leader is an outcast, an enemy, a traitor.**" (pg. 55-57)
 - Chapter 3 - Self Psychology and the Sciences of Man (pg. 73)
 - "The basic premise of the psychoanalytic psychology of the self is the defining position it assigns to empathy and introspection. This emphasis makes psychoanalysis, despite Freud's ambiguity with regard to the issue of empathy and introspection, what it has always been in its essence, the first scientific psychology of complex mental states. Self psychology is instrumental in ushering in a new phase in the history of psychoanalysis: the move from a preoccupation with the elaboration and refinement of the established theories to one of renewed emphasis on the gathering of primary data, a return to the empathic observation of inner experience." (pg. 73)
 - "Self psychology does not work with a framework of biological drives and a mental apparatus. It posits a primary self which, in a matrix of empathic selfobjects that is held to be as much a prerequisite of psychological existence as oxygen is for biological life, experiences selfobject greatness (assertiveness; ambitions), on the one hand, and selfobject perfection (idealization of one's goals; enthusiasm for one's ideals), on the other. **Drives are secondary phenomena**. They are disintegration products following the breakup of the primary complex psychological configurations in consequence of (empathy) failures in the selfobject matrix. Subsequent to serious and prolonged or repetitive failures from the side of the selfobjects, assertiveness becomes exhibitionism; enthusiasm becomes voyeurism; and joy changes into depression and lethargy. Zonal eroticism is pursued in an isolated fashion (oral, anal, phallic-genital) instead of being experienced as the various pleasure goals of a joyfully assertive total self. It aims either at consolation and soothing or has as its purpose the attempt to regain the lost sense of the aliveness that characterizes the active, healthy self. The shift from a drive psychology to one centered on the primacy of the ambitions and ideals of the cohesive self leads to a different understanding of time in psychoanalysis. The classical viewpoint of the time axis was implied in the reconstruction of the individual past, but the emphasis was more on process and structure - on the analytic process penetrating to the repressed and on the layers that resisted penetration - than on the time axis along which the events in the life history of a person evolved. Expressed aphoristically, classical analysis discovered the despair of the child in the depth of the adult, that is, it established the actuality of the past, while **self psychology has discovered the despair of the adult in the depth of the child** - the actuality of the future. The child whose self is stunted by the selfobjects failures is, in his depression, mourning an un-lived, unfulfilled future. Each moment of experience is decisive in determining whether some suffering and depression may be in essence a step toward ultimate fulfillment or sterile and thus part of a tragic failure. Experience can only be evaluated against the assessment of the total course of a creative and productive or noncreative, sterile life cycle. The value-laden terms - fulfillment, creative, productive, sterile, noncreative - employed in the foregoing, are in need of clarification in two directions. First, they do not refer primarily to the values of society, although they may, of course, be influenced by the current values; rather, they refer to an inner program, i.e., to the pattern of the nuclear self. Secondly, the evaluation does not rest on the retrospective historical assessment of an individual's life but on the mobility of inner potentialities and the readiness for achievement. The individual misfortune of a creative life accidentally cut short is psychologically not significant in our context-indeed its occurrence may bear out its potentialities by leading others to take up where the

- move was interrupted." (pg. 74-75)
- "Let us look upon **the German group self**, and on the matrix of the selfobjects who influenced its condition before and after the advent of Hitler's influence, as if we were dealing with the diseased (weakened, fragmented) state of the self of an individual and on its changing matrix of selfobjects. We will then say that this group self - **the sum total of those clusters of interconnected experiences of each individual that prevail in consequence of his temporary or continuous submersion into the group** - can be conceived of, like the self of the individual, as being laid down and formed in the energetic arc between mirrored selfobject greatness (ambitions) and admired selfobject perfection (ideals). The group self, like that of the individual, consists of three constituents, each of which, including the specific selfobjects that belong to it, manifests itself in the clinical situation as a selfobject transference and is thus open to detailed investigation. We know, from our clinical experience, not only that these **transferences occur in three forms (mirror transference, idealizing transference, alter-ego transference)** but also that each, apart from its concealment by transference resistance, may be activated, roughly speaking, in two different ways: via gross identifications (the revival of an archaic state), and via those fluid processes of alternating self-strength through empathic merger and renewed self-weakness subsequent to breaks in the empathic state, which we call working-through. Applying these findings to group psychology, we can first say that **group cohesion can be established and maintained via identification of the group members with the leader and with each other**. The processes that create and sustain the group may be of two types: on the one hand, sudden gross, archaic, essentially unstable identifications that, for example, require the presence of the leader in order to be maintained and disappear in toto when he disappears (or becomes unidealizable via a failure); and, on the other hand, slowly acquired, increasingly mature internal changes, corresponding to transmuted internalizations in analysis, that will ultimately remain, even when the leader disappears, physically or psychologically. There is an important difference between group processes in history and that of the individual in psychoanalysis. In the clinical situation it is mainly with regard to a single person—the analyst - that the transferences establish themselves and are worked through. In the arena of history, however, it is either the leader who mobilizes the transferences or a leading group that fills this role. Furthermore, archaic and unstable gross identifications in the historical field take place in relation to a single dominant figure who by his presence is able to give instant relief to the diseased group self, while the slow process of working-through that leads to a stable firming of a diseased group self requires the interpretative presence of many active and influential minds. **What moves society toward health is that of creative individuals in religion, philosophy, art, and in the sciences concerned with man (sociology, political science, history, psychology)**. These "leaders" are in empathic contact with the illness of the group self and, through their work and thought, mobilize the unfulfilled narcissistic needs and point the way toward vital internal change. It follows that **during crisis and periods of regressive identification of the group self with pathological leaders there is an absence of creativity in religion, philosophy, art, and the sciences of man**. The absence of creative experimental art during such periods is a striking phenomenon. **Creativity in all fields is choked off**. There is no one in empathic touch with the diseased group self. This points toward the increasingly worsening condition of the group self (corresponding to the disintegration threat of incipient psychosis in individual psychology) and leads to pathological ad hoc solutions." (pg. 82-84)
 - "Let me summarize my reflections at this point. In outlining the future psychohistorian's task as he embarks on a self psychologically oriented investigation of Nazi-Germany and its actions, I posited a chronic weakness of the German group self which, when deprived of sustaining selfobject responses during the period before Germany turned to Hitler, suffered a serious acute or subacute disorder, which took the form of serious fragmentation. This was experienced as a painful loss of vitality and cohesion and manifested itself in empty pleasure-hunting and rage-proneness, on the one side, and an increasingly frantic search for a selfobject that would provide the archaic needs with relief-providing responses. The blows suffered by the German group self during the pre-Hitler period not only shattered the pole of self-confidence—the pole of mirrored greatness—via the inability of the Kaiser's armies to achieve a military victory, the absence of a powerful army after Versailles, and the widespread unemployment and poverty of the '20s and early '30s, but also wiped out the pole of ideals—the pole that had been formerly sustained by the goals, inside and outside of religion, each German had shared with the leaders of a stable hierarchy in the defunct order of Imperial Germany." (pg. 87)
 - "A healthy group self, as is the case for the healthy self of the individual, is continuously sustained in its course throughout time - during its life one can say - by ongoing psychological work that provides the cohesion and vigor of its changing yet continuous structure within a matrix of selfobjects who are in empathic contact with its changing needs. The sum total of the results of this work that must affect all layers of a people or at least the great majority of them—those minorities who are excluded are the disenfranchized, the outsiders, the true pariahs of a nation—we call "culture."" (pg. 88)
 - "Nazi-supported art" - and that includes the architecture of Hitler, the stereotyped replica of the symbols of Roman imperial power—unlike the art that would have been needed at the time, was the symptom of a pseudo-cure for a selfobject. It helped deny the persisting self-defect via sudden and wholesale identifications with symbols of strength and failed to deal with the depressive, devitalized and fragmented state of Germany. Nazi art fostered regression to archaic symbols of power and unity." (pg. 90)
 - "Hitler's genius lay not in his psychological knowledge or political shrewdness or in his rhetorical gifts but in his total resonance with the disease of the German self. In his own experience, he worked out a cure for the devitalization and fragmentation of his nuclear self by a shift, first performed in early life and then repeated and entrenched in late adolescence and early adulthood, from a traumatically failing selfobject to the archaic grandiose self. This personality organization, while infrequent, is by no means unique. The core of the self, except for one nucleus of infantile grandiosity, is lost. Thus the personality, however extensive its growth in the many layers that are acquired around the archaic core, remains cold. Having severed its relationship with a traumatically frustrating selfobject, it never acquires the capacity for modulated empathy with others. Such a personality is characterized by a near-total absence of compassion, except where total identification is concerned, when the "other" is totally experienced as part of the self. Such people - and they may well be the majority of the charismatic and messianic leaders of all nations, whether in the historical and political arena, or in religion or health cults, or as the crystallization point for cultural fads - are no longer in need of selfobjects. They have acquired self-sufficiency. Whatever the details of their personality organization may be, such people become ideal targets for those who are in desperate need of selfobjects." (pg. 91-92)
 - "Like Hitler the Nationalists did not focus on the underlying depression, on the basic disease of fragmentation, acknowledging its presence, explaining that it was understandable and that it was human to feel and react that way. The Nationalists denied the presence of the depression, the devitalization, the fragmentation of the German self and failed to outline the difficult but exhilarating task of forming a new one out of the ruins of the old, followed by persistent support as the creative work moved on. The Hugenbergs and Schleichers tried, in other words, to do what Hitler later did, but they lacked Hitler's unique talents. Their personalities were uncharismatic. Their exhortations that a German self would be restored was in essence a replica of the old, lost one. Such atavism prevented the creation of a really new German self and could not do away with its fragmentation. Everyone failed miserably, except Hitler. But **it was the abysmal failure of constructive empathy in Germany and in its European surroundings that made Hitler possible**." (pg. 92-93)
 - Chapter 4 - Forms and Transformations of Narcissism (pg. 97)
 - "The general definition of narcissism as the investment of the self might still be compatible with a transactional approach; but the self in the psychoanalytic sense is variable and by no means coextensive with the limits of the personality as assessed by an observer of the social field. In certain psychological states the self may expand far beyond the borders of the individual, or it may shrink and become identical with a single one of his actions or aims (cf. 43, p. 226f.). The antithesis to narcissism is not the object relation but object love. An individual's profusion of object relations, in the sense of the observer of the social field, may conceal his narcissistic experience of the object world; and a person's seeming isolation and loneliness may be

- the setting for a wealth of current object investments." (pg. 99)
- o "The balance of primary narcissism is disturbed by maturational pressures and painful psychic tensions which occur because the mother's ministrations are of necessity imperfect and traumatic delays cannot be prevented. The baby's psychic organization, however, attempts to deal with the disturbances by the building up of new systems of perfection. To one of them Freud (21, p. 136) referred as the "purified pleasure ego," a stage in development in which everything pleasant, good, and perfect is considered as part of a rudimentary self, while everything unpleasant, bad, and imperfect is considered as "outside." Or, in contrast to this at first attempted solution, the baby attempts to maintain the original perfection and omnipotence by imbuing the rudimentary you, the adult, with absolute perfection and power. The cathexis of the psychic representation of the idealized parent imago is neither adequately subsumed under the heading of narcissism nor of object love. **Idealization may of course be properly described as an aspect of narcissism, i.e., of the (still undifferentiated) original bliss, power, perfection, and goodness** which is projected on the parent figure during a phase when these qualities become gradually separated into perfection pertaining to pleasure, or power, or knowledge, or beauty, or morality. The intimate relationship between idealization and narcissism is attested to by the fact that homosexual libido is always predominantly involved even when the object is of the opposite sex. The ease, furthermore, with which the representation of the idealized object may at various stages of its development be taken back into the nexus of the self through identification is an additional piece of evidence for its narcissistic character, as Freud (23, p. 250), following Rank (46, p. 416), mentioned when he said that a "narcissistic type of object-choice" may lay the groundwork for the later pathogenic introjection of the depressed. Yet to subsume the idealized object imago under the heading of narcissism is telling only half the story. The narcissistic cathexis of the idealized object is not only amalgamated with features of true object love, the libido of the narcissistic cathexis itself has undergone a transformation, i.e., the appearance of idealizing libido may be regarded as a maturational step sui generis in the development of narcissistic libido and differentiated from the development of object love with its own transitional phases. Although the idealization of the parent imago is a direct continuation of the child's original narcissism, the cognitive image of the idealized parent changes with the maturation of the child's cognitive equipment. During an important transitional period when gratification and frustration are gradually recognized as coming from an external source, the object alternately emerges from and resurges into the self. When separated from the self, however, the child's experience of the object is total at each point of development, and the seemingly objective classification into "part" and "whole" objects rests on the adult observer's value judgment. Form and content of the psychic representation of the idealized parent thus vary with the maturational stage of the child's cognitive apparatus; they are also influenced by environmental factors that affect the choice of internalizations and their intensity. The idealized parent imago is partly invested with object-libidinal cathexis; and the idealized qualities are loved as a source of gratifications to which the child clings tenaciously. **If the psyche is deprived, however, of a source of instinctual gratification, it will not resign itself to the loss but will change the object imago into an introject, i.e., into a structure of the psychic apparatus which takes over functions previously performed by the object.** Internalization (although part of the autonomous equipment of the psyche and occurring spontaneously) is, therefore, enhanced by object loss. In the present metapsychological context, however, object loss should be conceived broadly, ranging from the death of a parent, or his absence, or his withdrawal of affection due to physical or mental disease, to the child's unavoidable disappointment in circumscribed aspects of the parental imago, or a parent's prohibitions of unmodified instinctual demands. I would not contradict anyone who feels that the term object loss should not be employed for the frustrations imposed by education or other demands of reality. In the context of the preconditions for the internalization of drive-regulating functions, however, the differences are only quantitative. The kindly rejection of a child's unmodified instinctual demand, even if enunciated in the form of a positive value, is still a frustration which connotes the impossibility of maintaining a specific object cathexis; it may, therefore, result in internalization, and the accretion of drive-regulating psychic structure. The unique position of the superego among the drive-regulating psychic structures is correlated to the fact that the child has to achieve a phase-specific decathexis of his infantile object representations at the very time when the cathexis had reached the peak of its intensity. If we apply these considerations to our specific topic, we may say that during the preoedipal period there normally occurs a gradual loss of the idealized parent imago and a concomitant accretion of the drive-regulating matrix of the ego, while the massive loss during the oedipal period contributes to the formation of the superego. **Every shortcoming detected in the idealized parent leads to a corresponding internal preservation of the externally lost quality of the object.** A child's lie remains undetected; and thus one aspect of the omniscient idealized object is lost; but omniscience is introjected as a minute aspect of the drive-controlling matrix and as a significant aspect of the all-seeing eye, the omniscience of the superego. It is due to the phase-specific massive introjection of the idealized qualities of the object that, as Freud states, the superego must be regarded as the "vehicle of the ego ideal." Or, expressed in another way: the ego ideal is that aspect of the superego which corresponds to the phase-specific, massive introjection of the idealized qualities of the object. The fact that the idealized parent was the carrier of the originally narcissistic perfection and omnipotence accounts now for the omnipotence, omniscience, and perfection of the superego, and it is due to these circumstances that the values and standards of the superego are experienced as absolute. The fact, however, that the original narcissism has passed through a cherished object before its reinternalization, and that the narcissistic investment itself had been raised to the new developmental level of idealization, accounts for the unique emotional importance of our standards, values, and ideals in so far as they are part of the superego. Psychologically such a value cannot be defined in terms of its content or form. A funny story ceases to be amusing when its content is told without regard to the specific psychological structure of jokes. Similarly, the unique position held by those of our values and ideals which belong to the realm of the superego is determined neither by their (variable) content (which may consist of demands for unselfish, altruistic behavior or of demands for prowess and success) nor by their (variable) form (i.e., whether they are prohibitions or positive values, even including demands for specific modes of drive discharge), but by their genesis and psychic location. It is not its form or content but the unique quality of arousing our love and admiration while imposing the task of drive control which characterizes the ego ideal. Our next task is the consideration of the narcissistic self. Its narcissistic cathexis, in contrast to that which is employed in the instinctual investment of the idealized parent imago and of the ego ideal, is retained within the nexus of the self and does not make that specific partial step toward object love which results in idealization. The ego ideal is predominantly related to drive control, while the narcissistic self is closely interwoven with the drives and their inexorable tensions. At the risk of sounding anthropomorphic, yet in reality only condensing a host of clinical impressions and genetic reconstructions, I am tempted to say that the ego experiences the influence of the ego ideal as coming from above and that of the narcissistic self as coming from below. Or I might illustrate my point by the use of imagery which pertains to the preconscious derivatives of the two structures and say that man is led by his ideals but pushed by his ambitions. And in contrast to the idealized parent imago which is gazed at in awe, admired, looked up to, and like which one wants to become, the narcissistic self wants to be looked at and admired. The establishment of the narcissistic self must be evaluated both as a maturationally and predetermined step and as a developmental achievement, and the grandiose fantasy which is its functional correlate is phase-appropriate and adaptive just as is the overestimation of the power and perfection of the idealized object. Premature interference with the narcissistic self leads to later narcissistic vulnerability because the grandiose fantasy becomes repressed and inaccessible to modifying influences. The narcissistic self and the ego ideal may also be distinguished by the relationship of the surface layers of the two structures to consciousness. Perception and consciousness are the psychological analogue of the sensory organs which scan the surroundings. The fact that the ego ideal has object qualities facilitates, therefore, its availability to consciousness. Even the surface aspects of the narcissistic self, however, are introspectively hard to perceive since this structure has no object qualities...As I mentioned before, the preconscious correlates of the narcissistic self and of the ego ideal are experienced by us as our ambitions and ideals. They are at times hard to distinguish, not only because ambitions are often disguised as ideals but also because there are indeed lucky moments in our lives, or lucky periods in the lives of the very fortunate, in which ambitions and ideals coincide. Adolescent types not infrequently disguise their ideals as ambitions and, finally, certain contents of the ego ideal (demands for achievement) may mislead the observer. If the metapsychological differences, however, are

kept in mind, the phenomenological distinction is greatly facilitated. **Our ideals are our internal leaders; we love them and are longing to reach them.** Ideals are capable of absorbing a great deal of transformed narcissistic libido and thus of diminishing narcissistic tensions and narcissistic vulnerability. If the ego's instinctual investment of the superego remains insufficiently desexualized (or becomes re-sexualized), moral masochism is the result, a condition in which the ego may wallow in a state of humiliation when it fails to live up to its ideals. In general, however, the ego does not specifically experience a feeling of being narcissistically wounded when it cannot reach the ideals; rather it experiences an emotion akin to longing. Our ambitions, too, although derived from a system of infantile grandiose fantasies may become optimally restrained, merge with the structure of the ego's goals, and achieve autonomy. Yet here too, a characteristic, genetically determined psychological flavor can be discerned. We are driven by our ambitions, we do not love them. And if we cannot realize them, narcissistic-exhibitionistic tensions remain undischarged, become dammed up, and the emotion of disappointment with the ego experiences always contains an admixture of shame. If the grandiosity of the narcissistic self, however, has been insufficiently modified because traumatic onslaughts on the child's self esteem have driven the grandiose fantasies into repression, then the adult ego will tend to vacillate between an irrational overestimation of the self and feelings of inferiority and will react with narcissistic mortification to the thwarting of its ambitions." (pg. 100-106)

- Chapter 5 - Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage (pg. 124)
 - See text
- Chapter 6 - The Self in History (pg. 161)
 - See text
- Chapter 7 - Creativeness, Charisma, Group Psychology (pg. 171)
 - "The essence of the perversion could be gleaned from childhood memories (such as the episode at the country fair) and was confirmed over and over again as the transference was being worked through. The patient's developing self had been badly deprived of cohesion-maintaining narcissistic cathexes because of the dearth of appropriate responses (mirroring) to his narcissistic (-exhibitionistic) needs. His craving to fill an inner void, to obtain a sense of aliveness, therefore became intense; furthermore, there is little doubt that - because of innate endowment and accidental circumstances (e.g., the fact that he was deprived of tactile contact) - these needs became concentrated in the visual sphere. Deprived as it was, and severe as his regression might be, his self would never permanently disintegrate; he never quite gave up the hope that he would ultimately obtain the needed confirming-approving-mirroring response from the narcissistic object. As he offered himself (visually) to his mother (e.g., in the country fair) so, did he within the context of the analysis in the transference." (pg. 184-185)
 - "During the normal phase of development that corresponds to the idealizing transference, the caretaking empathic adult is held to be omnipotent by the child, who obtains a sense of narcissistic well-being (of being whole and powerful, for example) when he is able to experience himself as part of the idealized selfobject. Under favorable conditions the adult's empathic response to the child sets up a situation in which the child's phase-appropriate need for a merger with an omnipotent object is sufficiently fulfilled to prevent traumatization. This basic fulfillment of the need, however, is the precondition for the subsequent developmental task, which involves the child's gradual recognition that the adult is not omnipotent and that he, the child, is not a part of him but a separate person. In consequence of this gradual and phase-appropriate disillusionment, the idealizing cathexes are withdrawn from the archaic object and set up within the psychic apparatus (e.g., idealizing the values of the superego). In other words, **an archaic selfobject imago has been transmuted into psychological structure.** If this developmental task is not completed, however, then the personality will be lacking in sufficiently idealized psychological structures. In consequence of this defect, the person is deprived of one major endopsychic method by which he could maintain his self-esteem: the self's merging into the idealized superego by living up to the values harbored by this psychic structure. Yearning to find a substitute for the missing (or insufficiently developed) psychic structure, such persons are forever seeking, with addiction-like intensity and often through sexual means (the clinical picture may be that of perversion), to establish a relationship to people who serve as stand-ins for the omnipotent idealized selfobject, i.e., to the archaic precursor of the missing inner structure. In everyday life and in the analytic transference the self-esteem of such persons is therefore upheld by their relations to archaic selfobjects." (pg. 188-189)
 - "Here, it is a current situation that is central, a situation in which an enfeebled self, drained of its cohesion-maintaining cathexis and engaged in the daring exploration of the moon landscapes of the unknown, will seek the temporary aid that comes to it from the relation with an archaic selfobject, particularly with an idealized parent imago. True enough, the transference of creativity repeats an archaic childhood situation: **it is a reversion to that phase of development in which the self in formation had not yet separated itself from the figures in its environment - had not separated itself, in other words, from the imagoes which for the social-psychological observer are the "objects" of the child.** But the child still experienced these figures in the early environment as belonging to the self, they were still "selfobjects."" (pg. 195-196)
 - "Certain types of narcissistically fixated persons (even bordering on the paranoid) they display an apparently unshakable self-confidence and voice their opinions with absolute certainty - are specifically suitable to be the objects of the idealizing needs of the creative person's temporarily enfeebled self during a creative spell. Those who fall into this psychological category are obviously not likely to offer themselves to the scrutiny of the psychoanalyst. They do not feel ill, and their self-esteem is high. What makes them specifically able to play the role of the idealized archaic object for those who are in need of it, and what makes them ready to fill it, is the fact that the maintenance of their self-esteem depends on the incessant use of certain mental functions: they are continually judging others—usually pointing up the moral flaws in other people's personalities and behavior - and, without shame or hesitation, they set themselves up as the guides and leaders and gods of those who are in need of guidance, of leadership, and of a target for their reverence. In many instances it appears that such charismatic and messianic personalities have fully identified themselves with either their grandiose self or their idealized superego. For most of us, the herd of common mortals, the ideals we harbor are direction-setting symbols of perfection. They provide us with narcissistic pleasure when we come near to the target they have set for us, and they deprive us of narcissistic sustenance when we fall short of it by too wide a margin. **The messianic leader figure, however, is done with the task of measuring himself against the ideals of his superego: his self and the idealized structure have become one.**" (pg. 197)
 - "In contrast to the endopsychic conditions prevailing in the messianic and charismatic personality, the ego of the average person, of the man who has attained that state we might refer to as average mental health, attempts to fulfill two tasks. On the one hand, it responds to the pressure of the grandiose self in the depth of the psyche; but, when it strives for the enhancement of self-esteem through activities that fulfill the ambitions nourished by the demands of the grandiose self, it does so in a realistic way. In particular, it takes into account the needs and feelings of others, of the fellow man with whom it is in empathic contact. On the other hand, as its second task, the normal ego attempts to exert its initiative and control in order to bring about behavior approaching that demanded by the idealized standards of the superego. In so doing, it will compare the performance of the actual self with that demanded by the idealized standards and will acknowledge the fact that perfection cannot become reality. In consequence of this recognition, however, its sense of narcissistic pleasure when the self comes close to living up to the ideals will be a limited one. And, in particular, there will again be empathic contact with others, which will prevent the development of a sense of absolute moral superiority over the fellow man. When comparing his own performance with the performance of others, the judgment of the non-messianic person will be influenced by his empathic understanding of the fact that the others, too, experience limited failures and successes in the moral sphere, and thus no unrealistic feeling develops that the self is perfect and that the selves of other people are in essence corrupt." (pg. 199-200)
 - "My clinical experience with such patients allows me to draw some tentative conclusions about the type of personality structure that may manifest charismatic and messianic features and especially about the genetic matrix that seems to favor the development of such personalities. These persons

appear to have no dynamically effective guilt feelings and never suffer any pangs of conscience about what they are doing. They are sensitive to injustices done to them, quick to accuse others - and very persuasive in the expression of their accusations - and thus are able to evoke guilt feelings in others, who tend to respond by becoming submissive to them and by allowing themselves to be treated tyrannically by them. As far as I could discern, however, these persons do not primarily maintain the conviction of having already in childhood expiated their present evilness. The dynamic essence of their current behavior appears to me to lie in a stunting of their empathic capacity: they understand neither the wishes nor the frustrations and disappointments of other people. At the same time, their sense of the legitimacy of their own wishes and their sensitivity to their own frustrations are intense. Genetically important is the fact, as formulated in gross approximation, that **these persons suffered early severe narcissistic injuries mainly because of the unreliability and unpredictability of the empathic responses to them from the side of either the echoing-mirroring or idealized selfobject.** To be more specific: intense feelings of self-confidence obtained through echoing-mirroring responses (e.g., the empathic mother's proud smile) and intense feelings of security obtained through the merger with the omnipotent selfobject (e.g., being held and carried empathically by the adult) seem in the childhood of these persons to have been followed by abrupt and unpredictable frustrations. As the result of this trauma, **the developmental process of the gradual integration and neutralization of the archaic narcissistic structures was interrupted**, and the child, perhaps with the aid of certain unusually strong congenital abilities in the realm of the maintenance of self-esteem (we might here speak with Hartmann [1939] of the primary autonomy of these functions), took over prematurely and in toto the functions that the archaic selfobjects should still have performed for him. We are thus not dealing with persons who have escaped guilt by prior expiation. **These persons do not live in accordance with the standards of an inner world regulated by guilt feelings—rather, they live in an archaic world, which, as they experience it, has inflicted the ultimate narcissistic injury on them, i.e., in a world that has withdrawn its empathic content from them after having first, as if to tease them, given them a taste of its security and delights.** They responded to this injury by becoming super-empathic with themselves and with their own needs, and they have remained enraged about a world that has tried to take from them something they consider to be rightfully their own: the response of the selfobject, i.e., a part of the archaic self. Self-righteously, **they are themselves performing functions the selfobject was supposed to perform; they assert their own perfection, and they demand full control over the other person, whom they need as regulator of their self-esteem, without regard for his rights as an independent person.** In other words, the prior injustice they suffered was the abrupt withdrawal of narcissistic sustenance, and what the world judges to be their present misdeeds is to them the expression of justified narcissistic demands. Since mixed cases may well be encountered most frequently, I venture the opinion, at the risk of being overschematic, that those personalities who manifest charismatic strength and self-certainty (often coupled with self-righteously expressed self-pitying and hypochondriacal complaints) have suffered a traumatic withdrawal of empathy from the side of the selfobjects who were expected to respond to the child's mirroring needs, while those with messianic features have suffered analogous disappointments from the side of the archaic idealized object. Furthermore, if we consider the effect of these traumata from the developmental point of view of social psychology, we can say that in both instances the withdrawal of the selfobject led to a severe reduction of the educational power of the environment. If the needed narcissistic sustenance is self-righteously and angrily demanded, rather than having to be earned, then the object loses his leverage as an educational factor. It can no longer exert its influence in leading the child toward the gradual modification of its narcissistic demands in the spheres of both the grandiose self and the archaic precursor of the internalized ideals." (pg. 200-202)

- Chapter 8 - The Psychoanalyst and the Historian (pg. 215)

- **"A selfobject is an object**, at least in a sociological sense it is an object, and yet is **experienced by the person as performing functions that are normally performed by himself.**" (pg. 217)

- Chapter 9 - Idealization and Cultural SelfObjects (pg. 224)

- **"The baby is born in a way as a unit. He lacks a reflective self but he, plus his mother and father, constitute a self-selfobject matrix from the beginning.** Now this early self is assertive and loving towards those around him. These feelings are just not yet integrated." (pg. 230)

- Chapter 10 - On the Continuity of the Self and Cultural SelfObjects (pg. 232)

- "So much depends on how we conceive or what we discover and how we add to our understanding of the essence of that central experience of being a self. There are a number of things that define this experience. **The self is the center of initiative.** We experience ourselves as the center of initiative. We know we are influenced, we know we listen to other people's opinions, we consider choices. And yet somewhere there is a sense of comparative independence, of assertiveness, of initiative. That's one feature. Another feature is cohesion in space and continuity in time. There is also a sense of cohesion versus fragmentation; a sense of the harmony of oneself versus the sense of chaos of oneself; a sense of strength about the self versus a sense of weakness, lack of vitality; a sense of feeling alive. We must feel alive. Part of being less than self (as amusing as that sounds) is not to feel alive." (pg. 234)

c. Further Readings:

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