

# The Nature of Man – a Psychological Anthropology

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## Introduction

A century of research into the experiential significance of prenatal, birth, and early postnatal experiences now allows us to understand the nature of man from a fundamentally new perspective. While religious tradition had viewed humans as a creation of gods or, ultimately, as a creation of a single God, the Enlightenment and the emerging scientific view of reality brought about a shift toward seeing humans, from an evolutionary biological perspective, as a distinct species of primate. As a result, the physical aspect of human beings was understood in great detail, enabling the development of all the possibilities of modern medicine, prevention, healthcare, etc. At the same time, the Enlightenment and the associated “mutation of consciousness” (Obrist 1988)—with its ability to distinguish between the inner and the outer opened up a new dimension of introspection, as it developed in 19th-century literature and philosophy and in 20th-century psychotherapies. In a novel way, the significance of childhood and early childhood experiences for later development could be understood and described; in prenatal psychology, this was also achieved for prenatal and birth experiences and their affective and emotional reflection (Rank 1924, Graber 1924, Janus 2024, Evertz, Janus, Linder 2014, 2026, et al.).

In recent years, the essential interrelationship between early childhood psychological development and brain maturation has also been understood. At birth, essentially only the brainstem is functional, enabling the control of basic vital functions; by the age of one and a half, the hippocampus matures, allowing for initial emotional and situational orientation; it is not until age five that the prefrontal cortex becomes functional, allowing for empathy with the perspective of others. The unique position of *Homo sapiens* is largely determined by the developmental consequences of immaturity at birth (Janus 2025).

*From an individual psychological perspective* this immaturity determines the brainstem-mediated magical experience during the first eighteen months of life, the midbrain-mediated

mythical-emotional experience from the second to the fourth year of life - the fairy-tale age -and finally the initially rational experience that emerges with the maturation of the prefrontal cortex, along with “theory of mind” and the capacity for mutual empathy.

*From a collective psychological perspective*, the immaturity common to all humans at birth means that early human history, at the level of tribal cultures, is shaped - in addition to primate instincts - by a magical experience as a continuation of the prenatal experience of oneness. This magical experience opens up a broad horizon of desires and fears, from which the potentials of the prefrontal cortex are activated to allow magical desires to become reality to some extent. This leads to the first Stone Age inventions:

- clothing, in which the desire for enveloping and protective security is fulfilled;
- the mastery of fire, which brings uterine warmth into the outside world;
- dwellings, which likewise fulfill the desire for enveloping and protective security;
- vessels, which allow food to be preserved and carried around, so that it is always available in a new way;
- ritual dances, which restore a mystical unity or resonance with the rhythm of the mother’s heartbeat and the movement caused by her walking;
- musical instruments, which, through their rhythm and melody, reenact the acoustic, pre-birth world (music, as a “virtual person,” represents the fetal mother (Parncutt, Kessler 2007, Oberhoff 2008). etc. .

All these human inventions and creations always revolve around two things: on the one hand, the fulfillment of desires stemming from magical experiences in the real world, and thereby simultaneously an expansion of the realm of perception and action beyond the limits dictated by primate instincts. The findings of neuroscience now allow us to view such psychosocial changes in interaction with changes in the coordination of different brain regions such as the cooperation between the right and left hemispheres (Jaynes 1993, Gilchrist 2017) and the cooperation between the brainstem, midbrain, and cerebrum (MacLean 1963). Human history is thus not merely a cultural history, but always also a cerebral reorganization or rebalancing of the functionalities of the various brain regions, while the physical basis has remained

constant since the time of Cro-Magnon humans. This has several fundamental consequences, which will be described and explained in the following sections.

### **Reflection of the Mythical Worldview**

Looking back today, we can understand the mythical worldview as an emotional and pictorial grasp and shaping of the world - made possible by cultural and civilizational development -that resonates with prenatal world experience. The functionality of the prefrontal cortex is still limited to shaping this emotional visualization of prenatal primal experience into mythical images and narratives. Just as before birth and in the first year of life the mother, father, and other caregivers are experienced as divine beings upon whom one is completely dependent and controlled, so too is the real world experienced and shaped as a series of events determined by higher beings. The staging of religious content in processions and performances makes the inner experience become real and appear real, thereby conveying a sense of unity between the prenatal and postnatal worlds and thus a feeling of elemental security.

While Egyptian and Indian myths primarily bring to mind and make tangible the great unity of the earthly world and the otherworld, Greek myths also express the great tension inherent in the reconnection to the prenatal primordial world and the seed of a developing autonomy and human inner world, paradigmatically in the myth of Prometheus and his theft of fire from the world of the gods. The autonomy developed through the realization of prenatal qualities in the external world is simultaneously a kind of overwhelming burden due to the new responsibilities associated with it, but also through the loss of prenatal unity, which is experienced as a sacrilege or a guilt, symbolized in the unimaginable torment of being chained to the rock and the eagle's bloody tearing of the liver. Thus, a tormenting aspect of human individuation or psychobiological transformation is captured precisely in the mythical image and narrative, which today can be perceived and reflected upon as a sense of guilt and fear of individuation.

In Christian mythology, the Promethean theme corresponds to the Fall, the expulsion from the universal unity of Paradise through the budding will of the self or the budding independence. Ultimately, all human experience, action, and understanding revolves around a balancing act between the prenatal world of unity and the postnatal world of particularity - initially through the means of the magical experience of unity, subsequently through the means of the intimate

connection between the hereafter and the here-and-now mediated by the gods, and in modernity through the belief in world domination achieved through technical and scientific perfection.

The unleashing of the reflective possibilities of the Enlightenment made it possible, within the realm of poetry, to reflect on the content captured in myth on an emotional level at the level of one's own experience, as in Goethe's poem "Prometheus," which also deals with rebellion, self-discovery, and self-assertion - a development from dependence toward independence and autonomy, namely from a newly gained inner strength as self-development and self-creation, which shapes the spirit of the modern age. Conversely, this in turn makes it possible to use the emotional knowledge of myth for one's own understanding, as Freud did with the myths of Oedipus and Narcissus, in order to grasp and reflect on psychological connections that were already captured in myth on an emotional level. Due to the one-sided rationality immediately following the Enlightenment, this recourse to the knowledge of myth was not yet sufficiently possible. Freud's use of the knowledge contained in myth was an important first step toward overcoming the limitations of perception imposed by one-sided rationality. Now, over 100 years later, now that early pre-linguistic development has become accessible to perception and reflection within the framework of infant research and prenatal psychology, we can retrospectively reflect on the collective-psychological developmental knowledge contained in myth, as has been done above. The Fall of Man or the Torment of Prometheus capture, in a pictorial narrative, the drama of a loss of unity in the originary event of a birth into immaturity, as this repeats and manifests itself in later stages of life. What was previously reenacted concretely in sacrifices within the one-dimensionality of magical experience (Janus 2024, p. 191ff.) is now captured in the myth as a dramatic event involving mythical figures in a new way, which in turn can be reflected upon retrospectively today on the new level of expanded perception.

In this way, the development of mentality or the evolution of consciousness can be grasped directly today, as exemplified by Jung's students Erich Neumann in "The Origin of Consciousness" (1949) and Willy Obrist in "Mutation of Consciousness" (1988, 2014). This is further deepened and explained by prenatal psychology, which stems from Rank's psychoanalysis, particularly through a deeper understanding of the human primal potential for creativity in artistic creation, as Rank elaborated in detail in his book "Art and the Artist" (1932, see also Janus 2014). These remarks on the respective understanding of myth, as it is possible today, are supplemented by a deep understanding of the instinctive patterns derived

from our primate heritage, as elucidated by modern ethology in the mid-20th century by Nikolaas Tinbergen (1966) and Konrad Lorenz (1973).

### **From instinctive space through magical space and mythical space to the cognitive space of perception and action**

While Freud had spoken of his theory of drives as a mythology, it was not until the middle of the last century that biological behavioral research truly grasped the functioning of instinctive processes. This is characterized by the fact that a drive tension, such as hunger, sets in motion an appetitive behavior controlled by genetic coordination, which then triggers the instinctive final act of eating via an innate trigger. Only in the final phase of appetitive behavior can orientational reactions occur that are associated with a state of alertness which, according to Lorenz's conjecture, approaches or is a precursor to what we later call consciousness. If one follows Rasmussen's observations on the magical experiences of the Eskimos (1921–1925), the Eskimos live in a world threatened by eerie spirits due to the fundamental uncertainty of their environment. Therefore, one can surmise that they live in a state of constant tension between the necessity of orientation and a corresponding consciousness-like alertness. Furthermore, one can surmise that this situation mobilizes the cognitive potential to constantly improve hunting tools, hunting behavior, and the necessities of survival in this extreme Arctic environment. This means that increasingly broader segments of behavior must be internally represented to enable the complex, self-determined control of behavior.

Similar processes can be assumed in the manufacture of hand axes, which requires sustained attention over many hours - a capacity not yet possessed by other primates (Stout, Kreisheh 2015). The impulse to make hand axes in the first place, in turn, stems from magical desires for power, such as those resulting from the transition from the prenatal state of omnipotence to the postnatal state of powerlessness experienced by the child in the early stages of life. The impulse and also the ability to use tools already exist in primates and are reinforced in humans by the intensity of the magical experience, making it possible to sustain efforts lasting hours, as required in the production of a hand axe. This, in turn, increases the selective pressure regarding the ability to engage in goal-directed behavior, which again corresponds to the ability to internally represent longer sequences of actions.

The cultural historian Yuval Harari (2013) has indeed suggested that linguistic expressive abilities, which initially developed only in terms of vocalizations related to desires for social responses - such as “go away” or “come here” - and so on, evolved around 40,000 years ago to convey inner states of mind, as expressed in Stone Age drawings and engravings and, as one might suppose, also in emotional mythological narratives or accounts of inner and indeed pre-linguistic events. These would then be accounts of paradisiacal prenatal states of mind or hellish prenatal states of mind, and indeed also accounts of archaic struggles with overwhelming forces from the birth experience. But all of this, of course, is projective from our present-day perspective, without a reflexive reference to one’s own experiences - that is, pre-personal - as is characteristic of mythical events (Janus 2026). Only today, since the development of a reflexive consciousness, can we, in relation to inner experience within the framework of psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy expanded to include the perception of the prenatal dimension, retrospectively reflect on and classify the mythical accounts as reports of real prenatal and postnatal events (Janus 2024, p. 159ff.).

To understand these connections, the findings of fairy tale research, particularly those of Vladimir Propp (1987), can be helpful: he was able to show that the inner developmental events of the puberty process were initially staged quite concretely in initiation rites and then, as part of a further step in the evolution of consciousness, became the content of narratives. And it was only in the last century that fairy tales could be interpreted as accounts of the transformative process of adolescence (Scherf 1972, Janus 2024, pp. 170ff.), and even then only within a small circle of experts.

With these remarks, the path announced in the title of this section “From the instinctive, through the magical and the mythical, to the cognitive space of perception and action” has been traversed and can therefore be internally represented as a psychological developmental path of the adolescent process and thus, in principle, conveyed to educators with explanatory notes to aid in understanding their students. Of course, it can also be used for the inner comprehension of one’s own developmental path.

Of course, this always presupposes an openness to the fact that prenatal, birth-related, and early postnatal experiences and conditions are part of one’s own life story and initially manifest themselves in scenically concrete repetitions of actions or bodily sensations, and may then manifest in dreamlike sequences of action, which, however, at today’s level of consciousness, also enable a reflection on one’s own development. Furthermore, events still

depicted entirely within an artistically projective space - such as in *\*The Magic Flute\** - can then be understood and interpreted as psychological developmental processes (Remmler 1985) . The dramatically increased ability to perceive inner states and reflect on them—expressed in this work and in the literature, philosophy, and art (Evertz, Janus 2003, Janus, Evertz 2008) of the 19th and 20th centuries - a dramatically increased capacity for perceiving inner states and reflecting upon them, which can be understood as a strengthening of the ego function - has a long history, which I would like to outline and explain in the next section.

### **Psychoevolution of the ego function**

The expansion of the inner and outer spheres of action and perception described in the preceding section, as it unfolds in the course of human development, interacts with the formation of the ego function—a new phenomenon in evolutionary biology. Since the behavior of mammals and also other primates is largely instinct-driven, there is no need for separate control of perception and behavior, as would result from the immaturity at birth typical of *Homo sapiens* and also from the immaturity of the genetic coordination of instincts. The developing ego function, so to speak, takes over the missing instinctual control in order to bring about the necessary adaptations after birth. A crucial insight into the significance of this function and its emergence is Freud’s remark about “premature ego development” (Freud 1926, p. 186) as a consequence of immaturity at birth. He had recognized and articulated these connections in his debate with Otto Rank regarding the significance of the birth experience, though further discussion was precluded by their subsequent separation. In subsequent psychoanalysis, too, the topic faded into the background of Rank’s dissidence.

The development of prenatal psychology has enabled a new approach that can draw on recent research in evolutionary biology and cultural psychology. The key point here is the evolutionary biological confirmation of Freud’s insight into the significance of immaturity at birth in the concept of “physiological prematurity” (Portmann 1969, Gould 1992, Haeusler et al. 2021). Added to this is the finding from the neurosciences that the infant’s brain volume at birth is only 25% of its later volume, meaning that a large part of brain growth occurs postnatally in the field and under the conditions of environmental adaptations and their formative effects. This situation is the reason not only for what Freud termed “premature” ego development, but also for the evolutionary biological development of the ego function itself, which is so crucial for *Homo sapiens*. One could even say that this function is central to our

understanding of *Homo sapiens*, characterizes the species in a fundamental way, and distinguishes it from other primates in this regard. Ego evolution makes it possible, in a fundamental way, to compensate for the existential unpreparedness for the external world by enabling the child to constructively attune to its primary caregiver in ever-new ways, thereby reestablishing an inner relationship and unifying bond similar to that which existed before birth. Freud had remarked on this: “The psychic mother object replaces the fetal situation for the child” (Freud 1926, p. 169).

One element in this attunement between mother and child after birth, on a biological level, could be the “Kindchenschema (baby shema)” described by Konrad Lorenz (1943), as well as the unifying significance of eye contact and physical touch. This balancing effect is also effective in relation to the environment through the ego function, externally manifested in the child’s ever-renewed search for parental protection, whether by wanting to be picked up or physically shielded.

In collective psychological development, these connections - in relation to the early mother-child relationship - also influence the relationship with the outside world, in that the Stone Age inventions of clothing and dwellings create a maternally sheltering protective zone that makes it possible to use the environment, despite its inhospitability, as a substitute home for the womb world lost too soon. These primary inventions in the Stone Age still took place within the framework of tribal cultures, which replaced primate groups but similarly enabled an instinctively predetermined regulation of emotions and affect. In this sense, the Stone Age can be understood as a training ground for environmental adaptation, which made it possible to cope with the fundamental changes in life within large groups, as they developed through the inventions of plant breeding and later agriculture. Within the framework of the matriarchal cultures of 12500–3500 BCE and their relatively small size, emotional cohesion was made possible through ritual celebrations tied to the elementary, pre-personal feelings of the archaic maternal experience. People still lived in the immediate aftermath of the prenatal maternal relationship. From this experience, sacred weddings took on an immediate emotional and affective meaning in promoting plant growth. This “Great Mother” was already a symbolic further development of the magical All-Mother in the form of a dissociated world of good and evil spirits in animistic cultures, as still shaped the experience of the Eskimos (Rasmussen 1921–1925).

The dynamic further development consisted in the transition from plant cultivation to agriculture and livestock farming, causing the population to grow to some 10,000, who no longer knew one another and formed subgroups that then threatened and fought one another in a primate-like manner, as occurred in Mesopotamia in the fourth millennium. This development is already historically documented (Lerner 1995, among others). Marduk, the new patriarchal god of Babylon, ascended to heaven and dismembered there the “Great Goddess” Ianna. This reflects the dramatic shift in mentality from an orientation toward the “Great Mother” to an orientation toward the “Great Father” and the development of a warrior culture, as described in detail in the Iliad. This process was accompanied by a devaluation of women, who, in order to survive, had to align themselves with and submit to the stronger warrior. In the wake of this cultural shift, the monotheistic religions - from Zoroaster through Jehovah to Allah - developed, establishing the claim to power of male violence as a mental and cultural structural norm, as realized in the hierarchical structuring of society, and increasingly through written, codified regulations. This structuring follows the instinctive patterns of rivalry among male primates, which is what gives it its validity.

What is important in this shift in mentality is that the male usurpers took the place of the “Great Mother” and drew part of their power from her magical authority, as matriarchy researcher Carola Meier-Seethaler (1993) has detailed and explained. The complexity of patriarchal structures and their effectiveness stem from the fact that, as mentioned, part of these structures originates from the male primate heritage, and part from the archaic experience of the mother as a higher being before and after birth. Only by taking these different levels of instinct and their developmental psychological manifestations into account can a more complete understanding be achieved (Janus 2018). There is another aspect to this: the power of the “Great Mother” derives from the principles of mother-related instinct regulation (Thanner 1997), while the power of the “Great Father” derives from male instinct patterns. This gives the respective social structures their internal coherence and stability, which they could not possess as purely cultural inventions.

With regard to the ego function, these connections mean that the ego function in matriarchal cultures was characterized by the feminine-maternal. As Rank had already formulated, the ego is the successor to the prenatal self, which, precisely because of immaturity at birth, develops into the functionalities of a self as a holistic function and an ego as a representation of an adaptive function. This feminine-maternal ego of matriarchal cultures determines their social structure and makes the mother the central power center of the group, which is held

together by solidarity. The restructuring into a patriarchal structure now places the “Great Father” in the place of the “Great Mother,”

although the connection to her is preserved in the tonsure as a symbol of castration, the female garment, and celibacy. The earthly representative is the respective ruler, who represents the primary unity between the hereafter and the here and now in a new way.

In this form, the ego function first appears as the ruler’s self-determination, as with the Egyptian pharaoh Unas, who is said to have declared, “If he wills, he does.” (Clarus 1980, p. 32; see also Janus 2000, pp. 312ff.) . The pharaoh is the house in which all Egyptians have a place. Here, too, the matriarchal background is recognizable. In later times, he possessed the vast granaries that ensured sustenance, just as we still pray today to the hidden maternal aspect of God, who is to give us our daily bread.

The pharaonic system of the “Old Kingdom,” initially endowed with comprehensive cosmic-prenatal power in a wholly magical sense, lost its evident authority because its magical omnipotence was challenged by the emergence of local provincial princes. The “Middle Kingdom” stabilized its claim to power through more concrete administrative structures that gave earthly form to the pharaohs’ former magical omnipotence. This claim to omnipotence, too, was challenged by the emergence of the militarily formidable power of the Hyksos. This led to a further organizational concretization and personalization of the ego function in the already more personally recognizable personality of the pharaoh, culminating in the entirely personal claim to sovereignty of Akhenaten.

The adoption of these patriarchal structures by the Jewish tribe led, within the framework of this more manageable society, to a truly astonishing internal differentiation, in which Jehovah transformed from a violent weather god into the later moral God of the Ten Commandments and of Job, as the religious scholar Miles (1998) so vividly described in his “Biography of God.” In the figure of Jesus, the suffering human being himself then came to the center of perception, as Miles (2004) was able to illustrate under the theme of the “disarming of God.” Prenatal psychology can further reveal the deeper dimension that the godlike magic of Jesus is connected to the fact that, on a deeper level, he represents the suffering fetus before birth in an archaic perception, as first documented and described by the American psychohistorian Lloyd deMause (1996, see also deMause 2005, p. 47ff.) and also by the English prenatal psychologist David Wasdell (1993), who conceived the associated individual story as a construct (oral communication):

The prenatal child Jesus was conceived out of wedlock by a high priest, a fact that was denied by the claim that he was a child of God - a notion that did not seem as fantastical at the time as it does today. Similarly, Alexander the Great is said to have been told by his mother that his actual father was Zeus. The aim was then to win Joseph's consent as the social father in order to protect Mary from certain stoning as punishment for an illegitimate pregnancy. Mythologically and psychohistorically, it can be inferred that the cross is an abstraction of the Tree of Life, which in all mythologies symbolizes the primal experience of the placenta (Dowling, Leineweber 2001, Frenken 2016), through which the mother is originally experienced. The crucifixion thus repeats the prenatal experience of suffering of a deprived, devalued, and raped woman, which resonated with the collective condition of women at that time.

In the wake of more than a thousand years of patriarchal rule, these connections are still quite naturally perceived as completely foreign and are denied and brushed aside as trivial. However, today they can be grasped and described in smaller groups with personal connections and responsibilities, as has occurred in societies for prenatal psychology ([www.isppm.de](http://www.isppm.de), [www.birthpsychology.com](http://www.birthpsychology.com), among others) and psychohistory ([www.psychohistorie.de](http://www.psychohistorie.de), [www.psychohistory.com](http://www.psychohistory.com), among others). However, the suppression of these connections has the consequence that social events are, to a considerable extent, influenced in unrecognized ways by traumatic content originating from the early, pre-linguistic period (DeMause 2005, p. 47ff.). The crucial starting point for a turn for the better lies in a fundamental improvement of primary socialization conditions and the promotion of corresponding parental competence (Grille 2005, Axness 2012, Janus 2010, Volz-Boers 2026, among others). Reflection is also so important because, since the Enlightenment and its—in many areas of life—so constructive orientation toward the rationally comprehensible aspects of reality in science and technology, the underlying influence of archaic pre-natal, natal, and post-natal motivations has gone unrecognized. This will be outlined in a concluding section.

### **The archaic dimension of science, technology, and the monetary system**

If we can understand today's Stone Age inventions—such as clothing, shelter, the use of fire, and so on - as the fulfillment of descendants' prenatal needs, thereby compensating for the evolutionary biological deficiency of being born in a state of immaturity, then this naturally also applies to the inventions of modernity in the form of science, technology, and the

monetary system, which are intended to transform the real world into a lifeworld that compensates for the hiatus of maladjustment to the real world by creating a world of comprehensive security and need satisfaction that fulfills the corresponding persistent fetal needs.

I have laid the foundations for such a reflection in three books, whose titles express the respective core ideas: “Homo foetalis et sapiens. The Interplay of Prenatal Experience with Primate Instincts and Reason as the Core of Human Nature” (2018), “Mundus foetalis. The Prenatal Dimension in History and Social Consciousness” (2021), and “Unfinished – Becoming – Creative. Fundamental Structures of Human Existence. Psychological Contributions to Ontology, Epistemology, and the Philosophy of Parmenides” (2020). The aim, therefore, is to recognize the fundamental characteristics of Homo sapiens as a “ever unfinished, ever becoming, and ever creative” natural being and to proceed from this in relation to oneself and the world. The danger for Homo sapiens lies in attributing the divine prenatal experience of omnipotence - the becoming of the self - to the creative achievement made possible precisely by this, thereby falling under the spell of self-overestimation. In this sense, it is important to recognize that neither science nor technology can fulfill all desires, but they can certainly contribute to helping us find a better or even more creative sense of belonging in the world and within ourselves. And Georg Simmel was right to describe money as the “god of our time.” A text of mine reflects on the prenatal background and could help readers step out of this prenataally conditioned exaltation or avoid falling under its spell (Janus 2022). In this sense, it is important to heed Rank’s insight that all earthly experience and action are only “partial,” that is, incomplete and temporally limited. The danger of human action and perception lies in a “totalization” oriented toward prenatal experience. Rank made this distinction in Volume III of his “Technik der Psychoanalyse” (Technique of Psychoanalysis), and I wish to quote him at length here, given its fundamental significance for the collective psychological level as well; specifically, another central aspect of Rank’s perspective is the distinction between the Total-Ego and the Partial-Ego. He views the neurotic as still attached to the wholeness of the prenatal level: “If there is a symbol for the state of wholeness, for totality, it is undoubtedly the embryonic state, in which the individual not only constitutes an indivisible whole in itself, but also appears inseparably connected to a greater whole. At birth, not only is this bond with the mother forcibly severed, but the child also experiences a second trauma, which is just as severe but has a much more lasting effect: this is the partialization to which it is forced through adaptation to the external world” (Rank 1931, p. 54).

Postnatal life is possible only “partially.” According to Rank, in our sense of self we regain “something akin to the original totality”: “The gradual development of one’s own wholeness in the sense of self is an individual substitute for the lost totality and protects the child from the primal fear, although this is replaced, once ego unity is achieved, by the fear of its possible loss (...) life demands constant partialization, and the well-adjusted person must be able to live through constant partial investment, without wanting to preserve or having to expend their entire ego undivided in every experience” (Rank 1931, p. 54). The neurotic individual fails at this task: “Either they throw their entire ego into every experience, no matter how insignificant, out of fear of otherwise losing it partially (fear of life); or they keep the entire ego away from life altogether (fear of death), since neither partialization nor totalization is possible” (Rank 1931, p. 55). The therapeutic solution to this part-whole problem is achieved by the patient gaining a kind of wholeness in the analytical situation as a playing field, which has a relieving and anxiety-reducing effect, thereby giving the volitional tendencies and feelings room to unfold. Rank further explains the prenatal fixation of the neurotic patient in the following manner: “The so-called normal person can compensate for the lost prenatal wholeness by integrating into a larger whole such as the family, the professional group, or the nation. The neurotic type, conversely, makes the reality surrounding him a part of his ego, which explains his painful relationship to it. For all external events, however insignificant they may be in themselves, ultimately concern him personally; they are changes in himself that he experiences as painful. (...) He is never able to feel whole and thus perceives not only the gulf between himself and the world as unbridgeable, but also the split within himself as a constant obstacle to integrating himself into the world as an entity. However, neither is the inner division the cause of his alienation from the world, nor is his detachment from reality the cause of the inner division; rather, both are consequences of his attempt to resolve the problem of individuation, which he can only accept in the total form dictated by anxiety. The neurotic’s separation from reality is thus only apparent; rather, in a kind of magical unity, he is more connected to the totality of life around him than the reality-adapted type, who can content himself with the role of a part within the whole” (Rank 1931, p. 67) .

These distinctions can be directly applied to the issues facing larger groups, thereby opening up a new and expanded understanding. There has always been - and continues to be - the danger of totalization in order to create a fictitious sense of security, whether through religious or ideological systems. What is new in our time is that we can reflect on these

connections within the framework of psychohistory, to which this article is intended to contribute.

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