

HEINZ KOHUT AND "THE TWO ANALYSES OF MR. Z": THE USE (AND ABUSE?) OF CASE MATERIAL IN PSYCHOANALYSIS

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Heinz Kohut was a man who seldom revealed much about himself. His own son stressed over and over to me in an interview how his father simply never discussed his childhood.¹ His closest colleagues knew next to nothing about the details of his early life.² Kohut told Susan Quinn, who interviewed him in 1980 in connection with the lengthy story she wrote about him for the *New York Times Magazine*, that "I'm not very revelatory about myself. Everybody has the right to privacy. And I know too much about myself to be honest."³ Somewhat earlier Kohut told his young friend, Tilmann Moser, of his own "disinclination to speak about certain chapters of my early life" and how that "sequestration" helps him preserve "one of the sources of my creativity" (letter of October 27, 1973, in Kohut, 1994, p. 292).⁴ Kohut also pointed out how problematic self-revelation can be. It does not matter if one's motivations are not "sensational" and one aims for "other, higher, motives for his revelations." There is also what one's revelations call forth in readers in the way of "a much lower sphere of emotions" than one ever intended (Kohut, 1978, 2: 728). A year later Kohut added: "I know there was no time in my life when it would have been possible to undertake something like it. I am far too protective of myself and with the impression I make on others to dare anything similar" (letter to Helmut Thoma, July 20, 1974, in Kohut, 1994, p. 311).

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But all of that, it seems, was smoke screen. In fact Kohut wrote an entire case about himself that is pure autobiography in disguised form. "The Two Analyses of Mr. Z," presented by Kohut as somber psychoanalytic case material and published in the field's most respected journal, in fact reveals his deepest psychological experience.

The story began when Kohut first heard a young analyst in training, Anita Eckstaedt, present her control case in Germany when he was there in December of 1970.⁵ Such cases are the patients whom analysts see, usually on a low-fee basis, under supervision as an important part of their training to become fully accredited psychoanalysts. The case captured Kohut's imagination, though he felt Eckstaedt "consistently misunderstood" the patient's personality (Kohut, 1996, pp. 308–311, especially p. 311, as well as pp. 55–57).⁶ The case was a conflicted young man who aspired to become a theologian. A dominating and doting mother had filled the boy with overt grandiosity. At the same time she had degraded the more passive father, a doctor, who basically fled the household. The boy was left with spotty sources of idealization that nevertheless lingered in his psyche and turned out to be crucial in his analytic healing. In this regard, Kohut particularly liked one of the student's early dreams/fantasies. He was driving his small car on the Autobahn. He ran out of gas. His gauge was on empty. He just managed to get to the side of road. But he was completely stranded. No one stopped to help. Then he thought: "Don't I have a reserve tank in my trunk?" And sure enough, there in the trunk, under much junk, was in fact a spare cannister of gasoline. He put it in the tank and drove off.⁷ That spare can of idealization linked to "enclaves" of the father was to prove decisive in the young man's healing.

Kohut seems to have asked Eckstaedt at the time he first heard her present for permission to write up the case on his own. She was tentative and wrote him, on July 8, 1971, asking for further clarification about how he wanted to use the case. He sent her his recently published book, *The Analysis of the Self*, though the copy of his actual letter in reply has not survived. In any event, her follow-up letter to him on August 9 was friendly, and she was pleased with his explanation. He now had general permission to use the case but was uncertain exactly how and when he intended

to make use of it. Things were left vague with Eckstaedt. In the next few years Kohut often referred to the case in seminars and meetings.⁸ In the summer of 1975, however, while on vacation in Carmel, California, he decided to write it up for his new book, *The Restoration of the Self* (1977). It was in that connection that he wrote Eckstaedt on August 8, 1975, formally asking for her permission to use the case. In that letter he told her his disguise was foolproof (he made the aspiring theologian an idealistic American who was rejected by the Peace Corps and sought treatment with a younger colleague) and urged her to tell no one so that the identity of the theologian would remain hidden.⁹

In the spring of 1977, however, just after the publication of *Restoration* and as the issue of its German translation came up, Anita Eckstaedt raised two contradictory concerns. On the one hand, she wanted more recognition for her role as the analyst in treating the young man than Kohut had provided in his heavily disguised published version of the case, while on the other she was worried that in German the young man might detect himself in the case and that it was not sufficiently disguised.¹⁰ Kohut was increasingly fed up with the dilemma. He saw no way to satisfy her mutually exclusive demands. His son, Thomas A. Kohut, remembers well the discussion back and forth about the case during the family vacation that summer in Carmel. Suddenly, one day Kohut disappeared into his study and came out a few days later with "The Two Analyses of Mr. Z." That case, duly translated (if not written originally in German), was substituted for "X" in the German version of *Restoration*, *Die Heilung des Selbst* (Kohut, 1979). Kohut (1991) published an English version in *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, after some careful editing by Natalie Altman, who had worked with him at International Universities Press on *The Restoration of the Self* and whom he hired on a freelance basis to go over this paper ("Interview," 1998). The actual format for the case may have drawn on the recently published paper "My Experience of Analysis with Fairbairn and Winnicott" by Harry Guntrip (1975), in which he describes his two analyses and how different and yet overlapping they were.

After Kohut returned to Chicago from Carmel, he began what became an elaborate process in the fall of 1977 to throw everyone off the trail of the true identity of Mr. Z. Unlike *everything*

else he wrote, Kohut did not read the case out loud to his wife and son to avoid confrontation with the obviously autobiographical details in the case. As a result, neither Thomas nor Elizabeth Kohut really read the case until after Kohut's death. They knew about Z in general but ignored it in particular. Kohut in turn dealt with it glancingly in the family. He never told his wife or his son that the material in Z was entirely autobiographical. It was left to Thomas to infer it after Kohut's death, but once he made his argument to his mother she was completely convinced (though we have to take his word on that, as she talked to no one and left no written record of her feelings on the subject before her death in 1992).¹¹ In retrospect, Thomas is also aware how differently Kohut dealt with the response to the case compared to his other writings. Normally, he was devastated by criticism and would talk for days and weeks about this or that unfair attack. When people attacked his paper on Z, however, he always chuckled and sloughed it off. Once Thomas was with Kohut when they met a man on the street to whom Thomas was introduced. Afterwards, Thomas asked if that was Z. Kohut laughed uproariously and said, "No, don't worry about it, that is not Mr. Z"; at the time, Thomas did not get the joke.¹²

With colleagues as well, beginning that fall of 1977, Kohut began to construct an elaborate ruse about the course of treatment of Z.¹³ The more he talked, it seems, the more real the case became. His son feels his father must have loved this giant prank, and that it was an extension of the many adolescent jokes he and his peers played on their teachers in the Döblinger Gymnasium in prewar Vienna, where he was a student between 1924 and 1932. "This was part of him being a trickster" Tom says. "He was very much like that."¹⁴ Kohut, for example, once took a phone call while in a conversation with Michael Franz Basch and said afterward it was Mr. Z.¹⁵ He talked often with his colleague, Arnold Goldberg, about the case.¹⁶ He discussed the case with some patients who had special status as therapists themselves.¹⁷ With supervisees he often referred to the case for teaching purposes.¹⁸ In his last, posthumously published book—*How Does Analysis Cure?* (1984)—Kohut goes on at length about the criticisms of his case of Mr. Z (especially that of Mortimer Ostow [1979] in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*) and how off-base everyone had

been. He eagerly sought out the views of colleagues on the case.¹⁹ Kohut even solemnly presented Mr. Z in seminars at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis. As a candidate myself at the time, I was in one such seminar taught by Paul Tolpin in the spring of 1978 at which Kohut was a guest. The paper was distributed ahead of time with all the hush-hush that would normally surround the presentation of a case. At the conclusion of the seminar all participants had to carefully return their numbered copies to protect the confidentiality of the patient. In all ways, Kohut created the illusion that this preeminent case in his professional life was a real person he had treated.

The concrete evidence that Mr. Z is Kohut is quite compelling. I certainly became convinced that the case is autobiographical as a result of the long interview I conducted with Thomas A. Kohut in early November, 1996, in which he detailed his reasons for believing his father wrote the case as oblique self-revelation. After that I looked again critically at my earlier interviews with people in Chicago who interacted closely with him in the late 1970s and did some further interviewing to test aspects of the evidence (especially whether anyone knew about Z before the fall of 1977). Everything pointed to the confirmation of Thomas Kohut's ideas.

The case fits Kohut's life exactly. Both Kohut and Z were only children. The mother in the case is hauntingly like what Tom Kohut remembers about his grandmother, including her bearing and her interest in painting and poetry. And the stories from Z's childhood fit exactly with the few accounts Kohut gave of his own childhood to his son. As Z, Kohut's father was gone during the few years before he was five, just as the scene in the ski lodge with Z's father is exactly what Kohut used to talk about with his own father. Certain telling details carry over from the life directly into the case history (and such small things may be the most revealing evidence of all). Kohut, like Z, thus had an early and significant encounter with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a book he talked to his son about all his life. The camp counselor in the case is Kohut's childhood tutor, Ernst Morawetz, about whom he talked frequently as an adult. Kohut's parents, as with Z, were distant with each other. Sometimes, there are slight distortions. Z's father thus once joins a small band and sings on a impromptu basis,

rather than playing the piano at which he was in fact quite expert. But such disguises tend to prove the case more than dispute it. Finally, the first analyst who gets it all wrong is not the Freudian Kohut but Ruth Eissler, who was Kohut's training analyst in the 1940s.²⁰ (Kohut's analysis with August Aichhorn in Vienna was broken off "at a decisive moment" due to the *Anschluss* and his subsequent forced emigration [Strozier, in press].)

It is also highly unlikely that if Kohut had been treating a patient as relevant for his theory as Z he would have only thought of mentioning him, let alone writing him up, as relatively late as the summer of 1977. The case describes two analyses that each lasted four years with a break of five and a half years between them. That meant the treatment of Z stretched over thirteen and a half years. In the first analysis, before Kohut had come to his new ideas on narcissism and the self, he reports making some progress with Z but failed to reach the depths of his problems. Over five years elapse and the patient returns. There is then another four years of a second analysis. Dreams are reconsidered and the whole construct of the patient's self emerges with much greater clarity. He is healed. Furthermore, from one detail in the case this whole sequence can be calculated as having begun in 1954 or 1955 and ended in 1967 or 1968. (Mr. Z sends Kohut a postcard of congratulations on his election as President of the American Psychoanalytic Association in 1964 just prior to his second analysis.) And yet in all that time—and for the next ten years—through numerous papers and talks and through two entire books that include his most creative writings on narcissism and the self, we are to believe that the otherwise loquacious Kohut never once referred to what is clearly the archetypal case in self psychology nor mentioned its course of treatment to a single colleague. Most unlikely.

Geoffrey Cocks has made a somewhat tendentious but interesting argument for why Kohut chose the letter Z to designate the case. Kohut had long since established the principle of using in sequence the letters of the alphabet for his cases. His first book thus begins with Mr. A and his second opens with Mr. M. By 1977 he had the letters S and T still free, but he jumped to Z. Cocks thinks that the choice of the letter Z had to do with his fondness for the author Italo Svevo, whose real name was Ettore

Schmitz. Svevo was of German-Austrian-Italian-Jewish ancestry. His most famous novel was *Confessions of Zeno*, first published in 1923 in Italian. Kohut probably read some version of it in German in the late 1920s, or one of its post-World War II English translations. One chapter that Kohut told Thomas he particularly liked was "Psychoanalysis of the First Cigarette," which describes the hero's attempt to stop smoking, about which Kohut was himself concerned. Zeno goes to an analyst but gives up on him on May 3, 1915 (Kohut's birthday), and tries self-analysis (Cocks, 1994).²¹ My own theory is simpler. I think there is something quite evocative about ending the alphabet with oneself as its culmination.

Of course, it cannot be absolutely proven that Z never existed as such and that the case is pure autobiography. Perhaps some day a man will come forward with adequate documentation to prove his existence as the real Mr. Z. I know myself that I was skeptical for years about whether to believe the rumors about the identity of Z and then the formal, if cryptic, assertion of his true identity by the editor (quoting Thomas Kohut) of the selection of Kohut's letters that was published in 1994 (Kohut, 1994, pp. 4-5). I had always believed, from the moment I began this project in 1982, that the case was highly self-referential. Of that there is little doubt in anybody's mind (see Brothers, 1994). But I only fleetingly toyed with the idea that there had never existed a real case at all and the material was simply constructed out of Kohut's own experience. Besides, I had no proof for such an idea. For many years, there was also something of an unofficial taboo placed on even breathing the idea of Mr. Z as autobiography by those colleagues closest to him who continued his work and kept the flame alive.²² And there were some strong arguments against the idea of Kohut as Mr. Z. It would have been a surprisingly brash thing to do. It was also troubling, frankly, for me to believe that someone of Kohut's stature would falsely present case material as confirmation of his theory. I have few illusions left about the "science" of psychoanalysis, but I do cling to some remnant of faith in the integrity of the enterprise. Such concerns, however, may be ill-considered. Robert Stolorow, in what is perhaps an extreme view, told me in an interview that, "In the current climate of litigiousness, you're in trouble if you *don't* make up a case. It is now considered good practice in the field to give case presenta-

tions that are actually amalgamations of several patients. It is considered legally problematic if you use an actual patient for a case."²³

In the rich context of his life, furthermore, fabrication was not alien to Kohut's self experience, though he wrapped it in some elaborate rationalizations. Sometimes, it was done innocently and simply part of his expansive grandiosity as he aged. He told Susan Quinn of the *New York Times*, for example, of reading the Federalist Papers when he arrived in this country as a way of quickly learning about American history. In fact, his roommate from that distant time forty years earlier recalls him reading only high school textbooks to fill in his gaps in knowledge.²⁴ In two of his books, Kohut has asides on lying that are strangely digressive and seem to reflect an inner voice that urgently sought to be heard (Kohut, 1971, 1984). There was, in fact, much to hide behind his genial mask of Old World courtliness, including his elaborate ruses about his Jewishness and the truly secret veil that shrouded his protean sexuality. He worked it all out, I think, in some rather original ways by convincing himself that he was above the normal ethical requirements that govern the lives of most ordinary mortals. In this regard, what he had to say about Beethoven is most instructive. In 1979 Kohut wrote his lifelong friend from childhood Siegmund Levarie (himself a distinguished musicologist) about Beethoven's extensive cheating in his commercial dealings. Beethoven was brazen and quite outrageous in the way he dealt with the commercial sale of his music, even as he was an obsessive stickler about the authenticity of the music he actually wrote. Kohut was taken with that discrepancy. He wrote Levarie that one has to interpret the cheating of someone like Beethoven in special ways, as things are different for a genius: "I would not be surprised if a thorough investigation of such acts would point up a higher morality, e.g., that, in order to protect and support his creative self, Beethoven considered the question of morality or immorality in the usual sense as irrelevant, just as a revolutionary might consider a murder in the service of his idealized cause as a moral act."²⁵ Self-reference leeches off the page in such comments on the way a genius is subject to a higher morality than that which governs ordinary mortals.

There were special circumstances Kohut faced regarding ex-

posure as he moved toward writing his autobiography. Self-disclosure is always risky and could well have seemed positively dangerous for a mainstream psychoanalyst in the late 1970s. He was freer then intellectually and emotionally and not surprisingly sought a means of telling his own story in a way that integrated it into his work. But there was no easy way to do that. To be honest about his own experience would have required that he write about some decidedly personal matters. Probably no one in the world of psychoanalysis was more controversial than Heinz Kohut at the time. A frank autobiographical account would have been used against him mercilessly and might well have damaged his reputation; in this regard, besides his own feelings, he had to calculate its impact on his patients. Not to write up his experience, however, left him a mysterious figure for future generations, leaving unrealized a corner of his own dreams of greatness, or what Robert Jay Lifton would call his "symbolic immortality." The compromise between these competing inclinations Kohut found was to write an autobiographical case but in heavy disguise. The case of Mr. Z, as vicarious autobiography, was written to explicate his theory but most of all, I think, to make available key facts of his childhood and self-discovery in analysis for future biographers (like me).

Kohut, in fact, wrote within a tradition, even if a disavowed one. Many psychoanalysts and psychologists have used disguised parts of their own experience as case material. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James (1936, pp. 156–158) talked about an anonymous Frenchman whom he later revealed was autobiographical.²⁶ Sigmund Freud, without disguise, drew heavily on his own nightly reveries for *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and it may be that his self-analysis is the hidden model for all autobiography in psychoanalysis. At the very least, Freud seldom followed his own rules of clinical decorum. In writings over three decades Freud established three basic principles for the practice of psychoanalysis— anonymity, neutrality, and confidentiality. In 100 percent of the forty-three cases that can be studied from historical sources, he was not the opaque mirror he recommended others to be; in 86 percent of these cases he deviated from his rule of neutrality, and in nearly half of his cases (twenty) he gossiped shamelessly with patients about other patients (Lynn & Vaillant, 1998). Furthermore, Freud created false covers for him-

self. His "Screen Memories" paper of 1899 uses himself in disguise, as even his editor, James Strachey, acknowledges (see p. 309, in particular). Elizabeth Young-Bruehl (1988) argues cogently that one of the six cases Freud mentioned in his 1919 essay, "A Child Is Being Beaten," was his own daughter, Anna, whose analysis itself, while not kept from close associates, was a closely guarded secret in the psychoanalytic world at large for many decades (Menaker, 1989).²⁷ Secrets, one might say, abound in psychoanalysis. Anna Freud's first paper, "Beating Fantasies and Daydreams," was entirely autobiographical. The case described a patient in loving detail but was written six months before she saw her first client (Young-Bruehl, 1988, pp. 103–109). James Jackson Putnam (1951) in 1921 published the case of a man, a disguised version of himself, who was being nursed by his daughter whose rustling dress stirred masturbatory fantasies.²⁸ Marie Bonaparte once wrote a paper, under the pseudonym A. E. Narjani, that described what she considered the anatomical cause of female sexual frigidity in too great a distance between the clitoris and vagina. Besides hiding behind a pseudonym, Bonaparte failed to mention her three operations on her own clitoris to "correct" her own frigidity (Apignanesi & Forrester, 1992, pp. 337–338).²⁹ Helene Deutsch (1973) begins her autobiography, *Confrontations with Myself*, by noting that only after writing the book did she realize "it forms a supplement to the autobiography hidden in my general work *The Psychology of Women*." One can be more specific. Deutsch had several deeply troubling miscarriages. In *The Psychology of Women*, she used a disguised version of herself, a Mrs. Smith, to describe what she felt were the psychological factors in miscarriage and how an identification with another pregnant friend helped her compensate for and repair her own deficiencies in this area (Apignanesi & Forrester, 1992, pp. 315–317). Deutsch, it seems to me, may also have imbedded herself in her "Hysterical Fate-Neurosis" (1951), which described a hysterical young woman who was "beautiful, cultured, and of wealthy family" and who in all ways seems to me to refract the experience of Deutsch herself.³¹ Karen Horney, in turn, created her famous case of Clare out of the whole cloth of her own life (Paris, 1994, pp. 10–21, 127–134). Melanie Klein slyly describes herself and her children in several of her papers from the 1930s and early

1940s (Grosskurth, 1986), papers which Kohut incidentally knew in some detail (Strozier, in press). Eduardo Weiss, one of Kohut's teachers at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis in the 1940s, used himself in disguise in several of his papers on agoraphobia from the 1930s.³² One can only guess how many other somber cases in psychoanalysis from Sigmund Freud to Heinz Kohut (and beyond) are in fact autobiographies of the analyst and have little to do with their supposed patients. It is a slippery slope from science to sophism.

From quite a different perspective, however, the case of Z is a biographer's dream. I have always believed that people reveal themselves if you know how to read the tea leaves. But on the face of it, Kohut seemed opaque to many people and played his cards close to his chest. He was a private man, distinguished and polite but somewhat remote and hard to penetrate. He had a way of completely avoiding personal questions or inquiries about his past. When I began my work, for example, I was not at all sure I would find out much about his childhood or inner self experiences. Z fills in just those details. It gives a full picture of the mother, the father, his dreams, some crucial anecdotes as a child, and what he felt during his analysis with Ruth Eissler. In the process of reading the case, one also gains a marvelously complete account of the main themes in self psychology. To know that Kohut was Z opens all kinds of doors into his thickly forested interior.

To give one rather dramatic example of how useful the case has been for my work, my extensive attempts over the years to discover more about Kohut's childhood tutor between the ages of eleven and thirteen had led nowhere. I discovered his name, Ernest Morawetz, found that he was almost certainly a university student, and that he showed up most afternoons to stimulate young Heinz's mind. The young man and the boy would visit art museums, go to the opera, walk the Ring, and talk at length about culture, art, and history. It is clear they communed at a very deep level, and that the relationship filled a crucial void in Kohut's life as his parents basically went in separate emotional directions as they took on various lovers (though, in typical Viennese ways, the Kohuts formally stayed living together). What Mr. Z provides, however, is another dimension of Kohut's relationship with Mora-

wetz, namely, that it was sexualized. As Kohut says in the case in a long, dependent clause that included a digressive dash: "Although overt sexual contact between them occurred occasionally—at first mainly kissing and hugging, later also naked closeness with a degree of tenderly undertaken manual and labial mutual caressing of the genitalia" (Kohut, 1991, 4:404). If we take that out of its Latinate armor, what happened is that they began by kissing and hugging each other and moved to lying naked, tenderly fondling each other and sucking on each other's penises, apparently without ejaculation. Kohut also reports that the relationship ended when Z/Heinz reached sexual maturity and the counselor/tutor once tried unsuccessfully to enter him anally and came another time when Z was caressing him (1991, 4:404–405). I will not in this context develop all the subtleties of what I think this sexualization means, but suffice it to say it is not an unimportant aspect of his biography.

When all is said and done, I recognize the questions that must linger in one's mind about the case. The proof that Kohut is Z is all circumstantial. It is telling that he did not reveal his intentions to his wife and son and left nothing to be discovered later. He made Thomas swear he would destroy his patient records and that in fact happened.³³ But just because you cannot disprove something does not necessarily make it true. A biography is not a court of law. One has to take the evidence as it comes and make the best, most intelligent, and responsible use of it possible. In the case of Z, I think that means accepting, with caution, that the case is autobiographical. In my book, I always make clear when I am taking information from Z as opposed to other sources. That way the reader can distinguish levels of authority for various aspects of Kohut's story. It seems a fair compromise.

One deceptively small issue about the case that is, in fact, of some interest should be noted in this context. In order to maintain the autobiographical focus of Mr. Z, Kohut was forced to build in numerous disguises: It takes place in the United States, young Mr. Z goes to the theater and the movies with his mother rather than the opera, Morawetz becomes a camp counselor, and so on. First he focused on himself, then he diverted attention from his own subjectivity with small lies and cover-ups in a confusing dance with the truth. The nature of his project furthermore required

that he insert some altogether new material, or at least take it from another source. Mr. Z, for example, has a dream that opens his second analysis of

a dark-haired man in a rural landscape with hills, mountains, and lakes. Although the man was standing there in quiet relaxation, he seemed to be strong and confidence-inspiring. He was dressed in city clothes, in a complex but harmonious way—the patient saw that he was wearing a ring, that a handkerchief protruded from his breast pocket, and that he was holding something in each hand—perhaps an umbrella in one hand, and possible a pair of gloves in the other. The figure of the man was visually very plastic and prominent—as in some photographs in which the object is sharply in focus while the background is blurred. (Kohut, 1991, 4:413)

It turns out the figure is a condensation of the camp counselor, Z's father, and the analyst, and suggests to Kohut that Mr. Z has begun his second analysis with an idealizing transference (1991, 4:413). Now Kohut himself never had that second, self analysis (he only had the first, terrible Freudian one), so he could not have actually had that dream in such a context. Where does it come from? Did he simply make it up? Was it from one of his other patients about himself? One can only speculate on the answer.³⁴

There is no doubt, in the end, that Kohut's autobiographical case of Mr. Z raises questions for contemporary psychoanalysts and clinical psychologists. Can one trust what anyone says in a case? Frankly, I think the more radical answer to that question is the safest position to take: I do not trust anybody anymore. I have never liked the way psychoanalytic writers reduce years of analytic treatment to a few paragraphs or pages of text, and it would seem reasonable to find a full-length case even more problematic. Certainly, Kohut's Mr. Z forces one to revisit the scientific problems of psychotherapy, namely, that only two people really know what goes on in the consulting room and only one does the talking to the world. Controls, to say the least, are lacking. I do, however, believe in the efficacy of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. I do it myself and believe my patients get better; some, I daresay, are even healed. But I no longer believe for a moment what anybody says in writing about what happened with

a patient. It would seem that after a century of psychotherapy we face something of a crisis in the discourse.

There are, however, two things one can say *for* Kohut's Mr. Z. First, it is justifiably the preeminent case in self psychology. Nowhere else can one find a better introduction to Kohut's ideas on the selfobject transferences, on self-state dreams, and on the essential differences between self psychology and Freudian psychoanalysis. The concepts are clearly stated and presented in rich clinical context, which makes them more accessible than one finds elsewhere in Kohut's often inscrutable prose. Mr. Z himself is memorable and approachable. One can easily enter his experience and applaud his progress in the expert hands of his therapist. It is a model case for anyone in the field, and is especially useful for teaching purposes. Just forget for the moment that it is autobiography. One can learn much from it.

Second, I find Kohut's solution to the challenge of honest self-presentation, given the limitations under which he suffered, moving, appealing, and even noble. There is something compelling about revealing the truth of one's experience. As I have argued, furthermore, I cannot imagine him writing about his own experience in any other way except in disguised form in the late 1970s. There were not many available options for him, given his stature and responsibilities to his patients. Fame, ironically, boxed him in emotionally at just the point in his life when he was the most free to express himself creatively. There are obvious problems with faking a case, but it was also a clever way of getting around the dilemma of his own notoriety. Most of us who are known only to our families are much less courageous about honestly talking about our weaknesses. And that is an even deeper crisis in the field. I frankly detest the arrogance of false objectivity that prevails in so much of psychology. In the last analysis, the humanity that shines through the true history of "The Two Analyses of Mr. Z" more than offsets the important problems it raises about the scientific validity of psychoanalytic case material.

NOTES

1. Interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996.
2. Arnold Goldberg, for example, always stressed to me in conversations over some sixteen years how little he really knew about Heinz Kohut's personal

- life and especially the details of his childhood. He only knew the handful of familiar stories with which Kohut regaled many friends.
3. Susan Quinn interview with Heinz Kohut, March 29, 1980. Upon my request, Quinn provided me with the original—and invaluable—transcript of her interview. Nowhere else on the record was Kohut more open and expansive about himself and his past than in this interview.
 4. If not published in Kohut, 1994, copies of the correspondence (and much else) are available in the Kohut Archives of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis.
 5. Heinz Kohut to George D. Goldman, March 7, 1981.
 6. After much delay, Eckstaedt responded to some of my questions in a letter of February 17, 1999, but added nothing new to the contemporary archival record.
 7. This version of the dream, which is closest to the Eckstaedt original, was presented by Kohut in a workshop of the meeting of the International Psychoanalytical Association in Paris in 1973, and is preserved in the personal audiotape collection of Ernest Wolf. Kohut's more disguised version of the dream appeared in *The Restoration of the Self* (1977, pp. 203–204).
 8. Besides the record of the 1973 Paris workshop at the meetings of the International Psychoanalytical Association, I have talked with several of Kohut's colleagues (Arnold Goldberg, Marian Tolpin, and Ernest Wolf, among others) who recall Kohut's fondness for the case and the dream.
 9. Anita Eckstaedt to Kohut, July 8, 1971; Eckstaedt to Kohut, August 9, 1971; Kohut to Eckstaedt, August 8, 1975. The case appears in *The Restoration of the Self* (Kohut, 1977, pp. 199–219) as that of "X."
 10. Anita Eckstaedt to Kohut, March 3, 1977, and Kohut to Eckstaedt, March 29, 1973. Note as well interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996.
 11. This is an important issue. Marian Tolpin, who knew all the players, feels strongly that one must be skeptical of Thomas Kohut's motivations, given his ambivalence toward his father. Tolpin (who otherwise is quite convinced Mr. Z is pure autobiography) refuses to believe that Mrs. Kohut would say such a thing to her son, given how protective she was of Kohut's memory. Tolpin has insistently made this point to me twice in seminars when I presented at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis June 18, 1997, and June 20, 1998; see also n. 13. I am less certain that one can be so sure about anyone's motivations, probably most especially those of a widow pushed offstage all her adult life by a force of nature like Heinz Kohut. Thomas A. Kohut is also a distinguished historian who understands that his responsibility about his father's memory extends beyond his personal feelings. He sees the case as a good example of his father's creativity and cleverness, not a blot on his name. Besides being out of character, why would Thomas Kohut lie about what his mother told him?
 12. Interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996.
 13. The closer the colleague the more trouble Kohut took to cover his tracks. Arnold Goldberg, for example, can date exactly when he first talked with Kohut about the case—the fall of 1977—and recalls the many discussions they had after that about the case. Interview with Arnold Goldberg, January 14, 1997. Everybody in the group can recall conversations with Kohut about the case, which proves only the extent of his cover-up, not the reality of the case. The only significant figure who continues to dispute Kohut as Z is Paul Ornstein. He recounted to me the Eckstaedt story, though he confused the

dates, and his discussion with Kohut about the substitution of Z for X in the German translation of *Restoration*. But he had that talk after the fall of 1977, so it proves nothing. He also feels that since Kohut read all his papers to Elizabeth and Thomas he would not have been able to disguise an autobiography, but Ornstein does not realize this is the one item Kohut never read to his family. Finally, Ornstein signed a contract with Elizabeth Kohut in 1987 to do a book on Z. Neither at the time nor later did she say anything to him about Z as Kohut. This, I must say, is baffling, though not about Kohut but his widow, since she and Thomas came to the conclusion that Z was Kohut in 1983. Interview with Paul Ornstein, May 20, 1996.

14. Interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996.
15. Interview with Arnold Goldberg, January 14, 1997.
16. Personal communication, Arnold Goldberg, June 22, 1998.
17. For example, Gail Elden; see letter from Gail Elden, March 23, 1995.
18. Interview with Sheldon Myers, June 19, 1997.
19. Kohut to Leon L. Altman, April 18, 1978.
20. Interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996. Thomas Kohut says that he delayed making his conclusions about the case known until after the death of Ruth Eissler to avoid harming her reputation unnecessarily.
21. The "first cigarette" reference is to Kohut to Sydney J. Harris, July 5, 1960 (Kohut, 1994, p. 72). Cocks actually says Kohut had the letter K available as well, but he is wrong; see Kohut, 1971, pp. 137-140. Cocks also misses that Kohut had available the letters T and U.
22. Some of the stories in this regard border on gossip, but I know from personal experience that I presented once to a seminar in New York in 1989 and mentioned the possibility that Kohut was Mr. Z. There were many frantic long distance phone calls that followed and so much general angst (about Mr. Z and other issues) that Arnold Goldberg asked me to present to a small group in his home the following year. That all-day presentation, December 1, 1990, only partially cleared the air, though I have since found all members of the inside group have warmed to my work and have been extremely helpful in my research.
23. Interview with Robert Stolorow, October 21, 1995.
24. Kohut's interview with Susan Quinn, March 29, 1980, and my interview with Jay McCormick, November 2, 1982.
25. Kohut to Siegmund Levarie, August 11, 1979.
26. Note the letter from James E. Anderson to Kohut, July 7, 1978, detailing the case and seeking his help for his further work. Kohut sent Anderson to Ernest Wolf for consultation on the dissertation and wrote Anderson to congratulate him on finishing the work on June 11, 1980. Anderson brought this sequence to my attention in a personal communication, June 21, 1997, and I later located the relevant materials in the Kohut Archives. I am also indebted to Anderson in the same conversation for raising this general question of the tradition of autobiographical disguise in psychoanalysis and psychology, which put me on the track of other examples. In time, I was helped with leads to other examples of disguised autobiography by friends and colleagues who got interested in my project, including Tessa Philips, Douglas Kirsner, John Forrester, Peter Barglow, and Franco Paparo.
27. I had a number of private conversations with Menaker between 1996 and 1998. She was in analysis with Anna Freud in the early 1930s (and her husband with Helene Deutsch) and attended courses at the Institute. Menaker, astonishingly, only learned much later about Anna Freud's analysis

- with her father. Peter Gay (1988, p. 439) confirms that Freud "never alluded to this analysis [of Anna] in public and only rarely in private" and he adds that Anna Freud herself was "no less discreet," which is a protective way, if there ever was one, of not calling it a secret. Paul Roazen (1990, 1998) says he was the first, in 1969, to let out the "secret" of Anna Freud's analysis with Pappa in *Brother Animal*, for which he was to suffer personal and professional attacks. Even Kohut was appalled by Freud's analysis of his own daughter, which he said, "appears to me to have gone too far" (Kohut to Helmut Thoma, July 20, 1974, in Kohut, 1994, p. 312).
28. Ernest Jones wrote to Freud on September 13, 1913, that "[Putnam] sends me a dream of his own relating to incest with his daughter, thus confirming your surmise about the Griselda paper." Freud replied: "We are glad to let every man decide delicate questions to his own conscience and on his personal responsibility" (Freud & Jones, 1993, pp. 225-226).
 29. Bonaparte was obsessively interested in violations to female genitals. See, for example, Bonaparte, 1950, "Notes on Excision."
 30. Forrester kindly e-mailed me about the relevant passage in his book on September 18, 1998 and in the same communication brought to my attention the passage in Deutsch's autobiography.
 31. It is worth noting that Deutsch's biographer, Paul Roazen (1985), seems oblivious to these autobiographical themes in her writing.
 32. Franco Paparo to me, December 12, 1997.
 33. Interview with Thomas A. Kohut, November 1 and 2, 1996.
 34. I am indebted to a conversation with James Fosshage on November 16, 1997, who pointed out to me the issue of this dream. I have extended his point to other aspects of the case.

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