

DGB Associative-Integrative Neo-Psychoanalysis: Building New Bridges Between Classical (Impulse-Drive), Object Relations, and DGB Ideas

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By the 1920s, Psychoanalysis had already begun to 'split' -- like the ego, in the course of evolution and for functional as well as defensive purposes -- also 'splits' -- and the issue of health vs. pathology becomes very much an issue of 'dissociation', 'association', and 'over-association'. Adler had gone his way in the process of creating his 'branch' of 'ego-psychoanalysis' which Adler probably wouldn't have wanted to view as such -- the idea being that Adlerian Psychology avoided all areas of Psychoanalytic 'depth' or 'id' psychology -- as well as 'conflict' psychology.

For me, as a neo-psychoanalytic thinker and theorist, 'Greater Classical' Psychoanalysis is my 'home base' which includes both 'Pre-Classical' and 'Classical' Psychoanalysis. Object Relations and Adlerian Psychology would be the next two pillars of influence on the evolution of DGB Neo-Psychoanalysis.

However, for Freud -- even though Freud was partly his own 'prodigal son' having more or less abandoned his pre-1897 'reality theory' in exchange his evolving post-1895 'fantasy' theory -- still, we have to say that 'Classical' Psychoanalysis was his 'home base' if you will -- his 'head of the octopus'. So, let us call 'Pre-Classical Reality Psychoanalysis' the first 'tentacle' of the octopus which Freud more or less 'chopped off' (suppressed, repressed, dissociated). Chopped off tentacle number two was Adler -- and Adlerian psychology; tentacle number three was Jung and Jungian Psychology. The fourth tentacle which we will call Object Relations, Sigmund Freud left attached to the Octopus of Psychoanalysis -- even though his daughter, Anna, would have loved to have 'cut it off' too. Visions of 'castration complex' come to mind -- if Melanie Klein and Object Relations had been a 'man'. well, Anna Freud would have been eagerly wielding the 'knife' if you will -- which metaphorically and rhetorically she certainly did in her many battles with Melanie Klein during the 1930s.

However, let us back up for a few minutes, to 1920 and Freud's 'Beyond The Pleasure Principle' in which he created the 'death instinct' which became the 'connecting point between Freudian Classical Psychoanalysis and Kleinian Object Relations. In 2017, DGB Associative-Integrative-Neo-psychoanalysis does something different which reworks both Freudian Classical Psychoanalysis as well as Kleinian Object Relations -- and I think -- brings them closer together.

Many psychoanalytic and non-psychoanalytic theorists alike did not like Freud's alleged 'death instinct' but Klein was not one of them -- and after years of internal debate -- I am not another -- if we assume a certain important modification.

For Freud, the 'death instinct' represented a 'biological instinct' -- given to us at birth. In the mind of Klein, the newborn infant works its 'evil magic' of 'death projections' and 'death introjections' that ended up as 'paranoia' and 'depression' -- the latter of which Klein believed -- I scratch my head here -- that 'depression' was a 'healthy' -- or at least the healthiest 'ego-position'. (Probably, because there was so much depression in Melanie Klein herself that -- through her 'sublimation' of her particular brand of Object Relations Theory -- she attempted to 'normalize' or at least 'semi-normalize' depression.

So, for Klein, she imagined the newborn infant 'projecting' his or her 'death instinct' onto the 'frustrating, rejecting mother's breast which wasn't giving milk' which then became 'introjected' back into the infant's psyche and became the infantile basis of both paranoia and depression. This may be a DGB over-simplified and/or partly misguided interpretation of Kleinian Object Relations so I encourage you to either read Klein herself or check out other introductory interpretations of Kleinian Object Relations and compare/contrast them with mine right here.

Before I come back to Kleinian Object Relations here in a minute with how I have come to treat Freud's death instinct concept differently than Klein did, let me just say that, in general, later Object Relations theorists have moved further and further away from Freudian Classical Psychoanalysis (Fairbairn, Guntrip) to the point of dropping the triadic model of the personality -- ego, superego, and id (mainly the id and the 'instincts') which also includes the exclusion of all libido theory and the 'sex and aggression impulse-drive' model of the more 'Classically-Oriented' Psychoanalysts -- as well as the often theoretically and clinically either loved or hated Oedipal Complex.

To me, there is some irony here in that the crux of the Oedipal Complex -- the issue of ambivalence and bipolarity (mainly love and hate but also sex and aggression and other bipolarities) -- and if we accept for the moment Jay Greenberg's definition of psychoanalysis as the study and communication of 'the disavowed' (1991, *Oedipus and Beyond*, p. 3, Harvard University Press) --well, then perhaps it should not surprise us that the Oedipal Complex itself remains a lightning rod of 'electrical bipolar love and hate energy (positive and negative transferences)' -- where many theorists take 'unilateral positions' either for or against its importance and meaningfulness as a psychoanalytic concept and a clinical phenomenon (as opposed to Greenberg's dialectical position which I take even further than Greenberg).

It has only really been the last few days that I have come to much more fully realize how complicated and sophisticated the evolution of the Oedipal Complex in psychoanalysis has become. I have to confess that over the last seven years -- since my Masson interview in 2010 -- that in developing my own rendition of 'the multi-bipolar, multi-integrative, quantum-entanglement, ambivalent Oedipal Complex', I had more or less set up Freud's initial 'anally stringent' definition of The Oedipus Complex as 'the straw house' to blow down.

Well, even Freud, over the course of his career, came to enlarge and customize his Oedipal Complex Theory in terms of the clinical client who was lying in front of him, but having said this, Freud didn't loosen up in terms of his libido theory which many have criticized as his 'pan-sexualism' -- or did he 'loosen up' in this regard too? Jung turned Freud's 'libido energy' into a 'life energy' as opposed to Freud's more reductionistic 'sexualized energy' -- and once Freud wrote *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* (1920) and created his dualistic 'life' and 'death' instincts -- well, his 'new' concept of 'the life instinct' came awfully close to the idea of Jung's 'life energy' -- not completely reducible to 'the sex drive' just as his concepts of 'narcissistic injury' and 'narcissistic over-inflation' (such as in 'megalomania') came awfully close to Adler's developing concepts of 'inferiority' and 'superiority' complex. Even though Freud objected to Adler's modifications in 1914, Freud's and Adler's respective ideas originated from the same source -- their meetings together in The Vienna Circle, their mutual agreement on the importance of Adler's presented ideas of 'organ inferiority' and 'compensation' and the fact that both theorists used the foundation of these idea to develop their respective ideas on narcissism (Freud) vs. inferiority feelings and superiority striving (Adler).

There is much more in Greenberg's work and his book that I would like to delve into -- having missed his book while I was working through my own thought process between 2010 and the present, there is much in his work that could have helped me out (it preceded mine by 25 plus years) -- but still, the difference in our respective personal and intellectual histories has created a still significantly different path in my own work that I will attempt to communicate in its skeleton form in the final paragraphs of this essay.

Greenberg's 1991 work was an attempt -- and I think a significant success -- to pull psychoanalysis out of 'Freud's shadow'. Writes Greenberg, 'A century of clinical observation warrants construction of a new Oedipus complex -- one built on our own experience, not simply out of a reflexive relation to the founder.' (1991, p. 15).

I am going to shut this essay down now and tomorrow I will focus on some of the main ideas coming out of Greenberg's 'Oedipus and Beyond' -- and then show how DGB Neo-Psychoanalysis moves beyond what Greenberg offered up in 1991, in terms of DGB-NP moving towards what many might consider a somewhat shocking integration of Classical Psychoanalysis and Object Relations.

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