

Freud's 'Nile River' Metaphor in Relation to the Psycho-Dynamics of the Personality -- The Ego, The Id -- And Their Association-Dissociation With/ From Each Other

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Received: February 24, 2017; **Published:** April 20, 2017

Good day,

Imagine the Nile River in Africa. The Nile River has two major tributaries -- The White Nile and The Blue Nile, and each has its own respective source deep in the heartland of Africa.

Now, take this metaphor and imagine a much smaller model or map of the Nile 'internalized' within our 'mind-brain' or our psyche or our personality -- whichever word or set of words you choose to use.

Imagine darkness and chaos reigning in the heartland of Africa at the respective sources of The White and Blue Nile. Imagine what Freud called our 'id' functioning rather randomly and wildly and uncivilly in this land of darkness and chaos. Generally speaking, the id is usually comfortable and functions fairly well in areas of darkness and chaos, but within the birth and the evolution of the id which, for the most part, co-relates with our individual birth as newborn babies, although we can say that our id is 'alive' even before birth -- but regardless, within the birth of the id is an element of 'ego' to the extent, at the beginning of life, and perhaps for the first 3 to 6 years of life the id and the ego are largely undifferentiated as the 'ego-id'. (See Freud, 1938, Outline of Psychoanalysis). Freud doesn't specify how long he believe the ego-id is undifferentiated but, for my argument her in DGBNP, I am going to say that this process, this evolution of 'differentiation' between ego and id occurs mainly up to about 6 or 7 years old (the end of The Oedipal Period), and indeed, to a significant state remains a lifelong process -- just as our mind and brain is linked together throughout our life as our 'mind-brain'.

However, a distinction can still be made between the greater or lesser 'uncivil, primal, uncontrollable id', and the advancing, evolving, more 'civil, socialized, diplomatic ego' -- generally speaking, i.e., to a greater or lesser extent in more or less 'socialized' individuals.

So, in this regard, we can view the id in two different ways: 1. as the more 'uncivil' alter-ego of the ego that has both conscious and unconscious elements (this is a different assertion on my part to Freud's assertion or assumption or definition that the id is 'totally unconscious'. Freud then goes on to describe the 'vicissitudes of the id with its Freudian defined biological instincts' which can become 'conscious' -- and I am left asking: If there are 'conscious' vicissitudes of the id running amok or under the control of the compromising ego, as in the conflated or compromise-formation id-ego, well then, that would seem to imply that -- just like the ego and the superego -- the id has both conscious and unconscious elements as well as 'pre-conscious' (close to conscious) elements too? At least this is the way that I choose to look at one aspect of the relationship between the ego and the id.

The id-ego -- as the main part of the mind-brain-psyche -- we will get to the superego later -- is born usually with certain 'genetic capabilities' such as most, if not all of, the so-called 'defense mechanisms' which can also be viewed as 'learning functions'. However, within

the context of these generic and more or less universal defense mechanisms/learning functions -- socialization, coincidences, accidents, special events, trauma, positive and negative surprises, special meanings, etc. make up memories that we consciously remember (the still controversial issue of unconscious and/or repressed memories that we don't remember except maybe in an 'association and recovery' process, we will put to the side here) -- and the Pre-Oedipal and Oedipal relationships that we develop with our family members and sometimes friends or strangers within the first 7 years of life in early childhood are processed and given meaning to by our evolving id-ego -- and filed in what I will call our lifelong evolving 'Oedipal-Lifeline-Deathline' (OLD) Complex -- or more neurotically and/or pathologically speaking -- our 'COLD' Complex. Another name I also sometimes give this Complex is our 'Master-Oedipal-Lifestyle-Transference (MOLT) Complex which emphasizes my integration of Freudian and Adlerian thinking in the diagnosis of this Complex. All of these names are basically 'evolving mutations' of Freud's Oedipal Complex.

So, going back to the metaphor of The Nile River as being the 'Life and Death Blood River (LDBR) within our evolving and/or de-evolving mind-brain or personality, we can say that both the 'source' of the respective 'White' (life Energy) and 'Blue' (Death Energy) -- and their mixture together at the junction of the two tributaries flowing into the Main Nile River is also the junction of our 'OLD-COLD-MOLT' Complex which feeds all of the positive and negative energy that flows upwards and outwards from the unconscious to the conscious parts of the personality -- and then either released (abreacted) and/or 'suppressed' in our conscious mind, or maybe even further back in our unconscious (out of awareness) part of our mind-brain.

Any place in the personality and/or body that suppresses, represses, dissociates, disavows, alienates, isolates, locks up -- white or blue energy -- life and/or death energy -- is locked up in what I call a 'Superego-Id-Ego-Vault' -- or 'SIEV' that holds onto and controls -- but also releases -- in either a controlled and civilized or uncontrolled and psycho-dramatic, uncivilized fashion -- positive and/or negative, white and/or blue, life and/or death -- energy.

Topographically speaking, above our OLD Complex, is a rather large-unconscious-to-preconscious SIEV that metaphorically and meta-physically speaking sits at the border between our primary and primal unconscious id territory within which our OLD Complex resides -- and the more ego-dominated territory (usually speaking) within the different parts of the conscious personality. Psycho-dynamics is not only about the ego guarding and defending against 'disavowed' id elements and Oedipal Transference elements; because sometimes it is a case of the id guarding and defending against -- and causing an internal uproar sometimes -- against an over-controlling and/or conversely a 'weak' ego and/or superego.

So, let's look at the bottom end of the DGB model of the personality and see what we have:

15. The Genetic Potential Self (GPS);
14. Uncontrolled Chaos and The Abyss of 'Basic Life and Death Anxiety';
13. The Id and Differentiating Id-Ego;
12. The Cognitive-Emotional-Behavioral (CEB) and Oedipal-Lifeline-Deathline (OLD) Templates and SIEV 1;
11. SIEV 2; Immediacy (Here and Now) Relevant CEB and OLD Transference Complexes that have 'moved' or 'been moved' from SIEV 1 to SIEV 2;
10. 'Unbound' Id-Ego Formations and OLD Transference Formations;
9. The Anal-Rejecting Underdog or Under-Ego;
8. The Narcissistic-Hedonistic Underdog or Under-Ego;
7. The Oral-Accepting Underdog or Under-Ego;
6. The Private Ego;
5. The Central-Executive-Mediating Ego;
4. The Public-Social Ego;

3. The Oral-Encouraging Topdog Ego or Superego;
2. The Narcissistic-Hedonistic Topdog Ego or Superego;
1. The Anal-Rejecting Topdog Ego or Superego

All of these last 10 'ego states' have elements of ego, superego, and id energy within them although dominated by their most specific biological and psychological function -- and form of compensatory defense.

From here, the Main Nile River flows out into the 'Ocean' of 'Social Behavior' except for those parts of the flowing river that are 'held up', 'clogged up', and/or 'disavowed'.

That takes us through to the end of Lecture-Essay 2 here.

Have a great remainder of the day,
David Gordon Bain

Volume 3 Issue 3 April 2017

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