

The Psychanalytic Lens



Definition

Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism: A critical approach that uses concepts of psychoanalysis to interpret literature.

Focus: Analyzing texts through the lens of subconscious desires, motivations, and the psyche.

What do we explore?

Character Motivations: Uncovering deeper, often unconscious motivations of characters.

Symbolic Meanings: Interpreting symbols in literature through a psychoanalytic perspective.

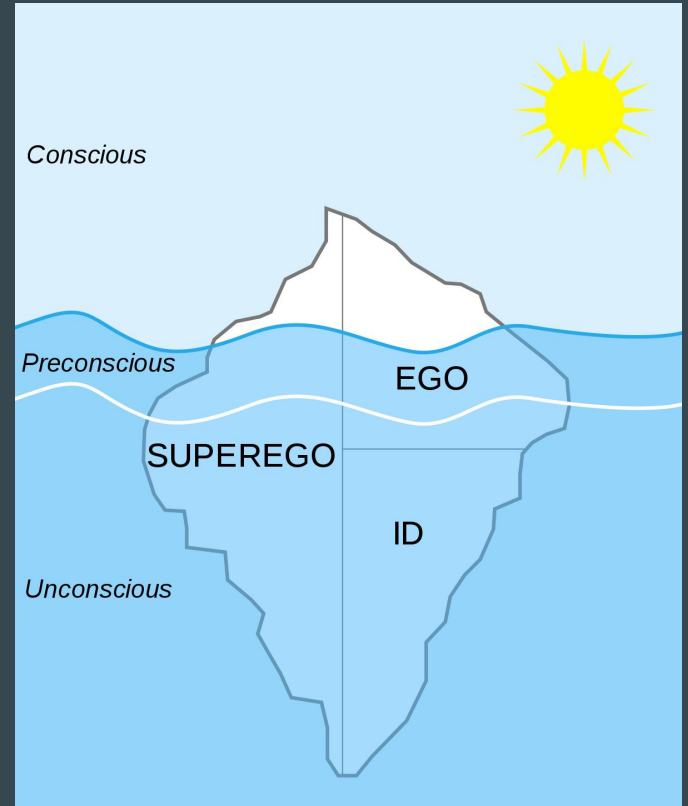
Author's Psychology: Understanding how an author's unconscious mind might influence their writing.



Id, Ego, Superego

Characters' Inner Conflict: Analyzing characters' struggles between their primal desires (Id), societal norms (Superego), and reality (Ego).

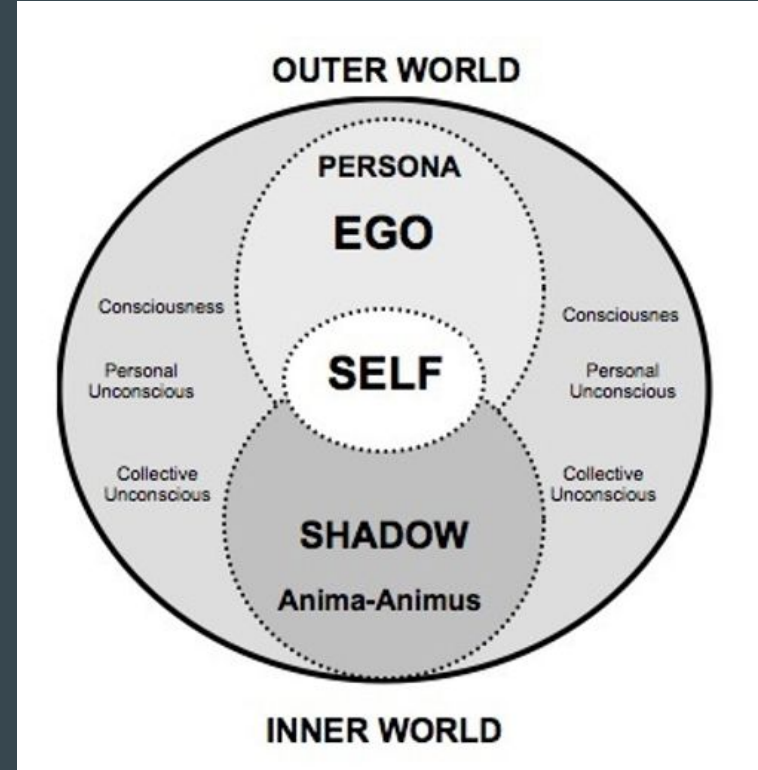
Narrative Tension: How the interplay of Id, Ego, and Superego influences plot and character development.



Individuation

Character Development: The journey of characters achieving self-awareness and a unified personality.

Symbolism: Use of specific symbols in literature to represent individuation.



Archetypes

- Developed by Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist.
- Fundamental, universal symbols in the human psyche.
- Represent innate human motivations and basic experiences.

Persona

- The social face the individual presents to the world.
- A mask to hide our real self.
- Adaptation to the external world, often at the expense of true individuality.

Ego

- Represents the conscious mind.
- Involved in perception, thinking, feeling, and memory.
- The center of consciousness, but not the totality of the psyche.

Self

- Represents unity, integration, and harmony of the total personality.
- The central archetype and mediator between the conscious and unconscious mind.

Shadow

- Represents the unconscious, darker side of personality.
- Often the source of creativity and insight.
- Contains repressed ideas, weaknesses, desires, instincts.

Anima / Animus

- Anima: the feminine part of a male's personality.
- Animus: the masculine part of a female's personality.

Conscious

- The conscious mind includes everything we are aware of at any given moment.
- Responsible for our thoughts, memories, feelings, and perceptions that we can easily recall and articulate.
- Acts as the center of our identity and rational decision-making.

Personal Unconscious

- Contains thoughts and feelings that are not currently in conscious awareness.
- Includes both memories that are easily brought to mind and repressed memories which are difficult to recall.
- Personal Unconscious is unique to each individual, shaped by personal experiences and memories.

Collective Unconscious

- A deeper level of unconscious shared among all humans.
- Contains archetypes and universal symbols that are innate and inherited.
- Influences our behaviors and experiences, often surfacing in dreams and myths.