

ID, EGO, AND SUPEREGO IN THE MOVIE JOHN WICK (2014): A CHARACTER ANALYSIS

***Hana Tasya Mei Marcelina¹, Juanda²**

Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Komputer Indonesia,
Jl. Dipati Ukur 112-116, Bandung, Indonesia
hana.63720049@mahasiswa.unikom.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the character of John Wick in the film "John Wick" (2014) by using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory which includes Id, Ego, and Superego. The method used is descriptive qualitative by collecting in-depth data on how these three personality elements influence Wick's actions and decisions. The results of the analysis show that John Wick's Id, which represents basic drives such as revenge and anger, triggers extreme actions after the death of his wife and the killing of his dog. Wick's ego acts as a mediator that considers the reality and consequences of his actions, seen in the systematic and planned way he carries out his revenge. Wick's Superego, which includes moral and ethical values, directs his actions to adhere to certain moral codes, such as respecting the rules of the Continental Hotel. Overall, the interaction between the Id, Ego, and Superego in John Wick shows that although his actions are driven by the desire for revenge, he is also guided by rational considerations and moral values. This research provides insight into how the main character's internal conflict can affect the behavior and plot development in the movie "John Wick" (2014).

Keywords: John Wick, Psychoanalysis, Id, Ego, Superego

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a medium used by authors to express their ideas. As a medium, literature becomes a bridge that connects the author's thoughts to the audience. Literary works allow authors to share ideas, feelings, and human experiences with readers, connecting the reader's perception with the author's imagination. They can be divided into two categories: non-fantasy, rooted in reality, and fantasy, which incorporates imaginative elements. Both offer unique ways to explore complex concepts and the human condition (Aritonang & Heriyati, 2022). In addition, a literary work is an artistic effort from the writer's imagination. It is born out of the ideas and thoughts of the writer who created it. The vitality and complexity of real societal conflicts give rise to literature, which is a powerful representation of the human struggle (Arifin, 2019).

Literary works result from an artist's imagination and ingenuity, expressing their ideas in a way that allows their sentiments and intuition to interpret them (Salsabila, Simanjuntak, & Sutrisno, 2022). One thing that is clearly visible and often found is the increasing number of literary works that are then lifted to the screen as a work of film. The phenomenon of turning literary works into films has been around for decades. Several successful films, especially in terms of audience numbers and public appreciation, are films based on literary works.

Films have a unique characterization element in supporting the story in literary works. Characters in film always change, both in terms of personality and conduct. Film is a potent mass medium that may be used for propaganda because of its popularity, emotional impact, and realism (Ghassani & Nugroho, 2019). This evolution has the potential to change the character's qualities in the film and provide new dynamics to the plot. When a character is growing, they undergo long-term changes in several areas, whether as a result of personal development or as they learn to navigate life and make pivotal decisions down the road (Fauzi & Yuwita, 2022). Internal conflict is especially linked to self-sabotage and emotional distress. This internal conflict keeps us unaware of the self-saboteurs who heedlessly foster personal sorrow and impede human development (Michaelson, 2020).

Topics discussed in literary works often stem from a variety of problems in real life, which usually result in conflicts that originate from a character's inner anguish (Rahmah, 2022). Every character has unique characteristics and personalities. These diverse personalities reveal a person's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors especially when it comes to character distinctions. One may determine a person's character type and personality by observing their behavior patterns, which often point to a dominating personality attribute. Individual character distinctions suggest that people vary from one another in terms of their personalities (Masnani, Aminah, & Bahri, 2023). In the characterization, there is a characterization of each character, so that each character has a different personality. When different personalities between characters arise a conflict in the course of the story makes the movie interesting

Numerous elements impact the basis of study in literary psychology. First, there is the idea that a writer's ideas and psychology are reflected in their creative works, which are first developed and conveyed in a semi-conscious or subconscious condition (Masnani, Aminah, & Bahri, 2023). Regarding personality, Sigmund Freud suggested that personality is influenced by three levels of consciousness, namely conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. Consciousness is the level that contains all the things we observe at any given time. Consciousness is only a small part of mental life. Examples of consciousness are thoughts, perceptions, feelings, and memories. Preconsciousness is ready memory or available memory. It is a level of consciousness that is a bridge between conscious and unconscious. It is a phase where something that was initially consciously noticed, slowly becomes unconscious. This is what is called the preconscious phase. The third phase is the unconscious phase. This level contains instincts, impulses, desires, and traumatic experiences. This stage is formed during the first six years of a person's life.

This research will analyze the role of Id, Ego, and Superego on the main character, John Wick, in the movie "John Wick" (2014). "John Wick" is an action-thriller movie released in 2014. The movie tells the story of a former hitman who returns to the criminal world after the death of his wife and the killing of his dog by criminals. In this movie, the main character, John Wick, is shown as a figure who has a conflict with himself, which represents the fight between Id, Ego, and Superego.

METHODS

Using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of Id, Ego, and Superego, this study investigates John Wick's personality in the movie "John Wick" (2014). Psychoanalytic theory explains the unconscious drives that influence Wick's behavior. Qualitative research is mostly descriptive in nature and often uses an inductive method of analysis.

Sigmund Freud invented psychoanalysis itself; this theory is now known as Freudian psychoanalysis. The hypothesis was first presented by Freudians in the early 1900s in an attempt to treat a patient who was thought to have a psychological issue (Arnetta & Amelia, 2022).

To make sure that the study's focus is in line with actual observations, the research methodology and application of theoretical frameworks are emphasized. Theoretical frameworks also provide a summary of the context of the study and serve as a foundation for discussions of the results (Rukin, 2019). This study uses a qualitative descriptive technique to collect data by showing scenes that reveal how Wick's Id, Ego, and Superego compete for control.

The battle between Id, Ego, and Superego is evident in Wick's character, with the dominant Id producing traits of extreme courage, emotional trauma, deep compassion, and righteousness in his mission. Although the Ego and Superego play a role in maintaining balance, the basic drives of the Id become the primary drivers of his behavior. This psychoanalytic analysis shows how the complex interactions between these three elements of personality influence John Wick's behavior and decisions in the film "John Wick" (2014).

RESULTS

This research uses a literary work, namely a movie entitled "John Wick". The results of the research found the Id, Ego, and Superego of the Main Character, John Wick. In this structured character analysis, John Wick has Id, Ego, and Superego experiences in his life. The following are the results of the personality structure found in the analysis:

Table 1. The results of the Personality Structure analysis

No	Personality Structure	Finding
1.	Id	5
2.	Ego	2
3.	Superego	1

The results of the data analysis show that there is a balance between id, ego, and superego. But the Id dominates the main character, John Wick, in the movie John Wick 2014 so the results found have been calculated based on the analysis following Freud's theory.

DISCUSSION

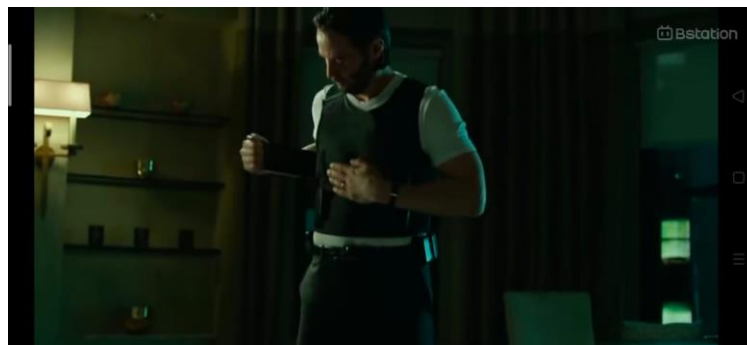


Figure 1. John Wick is preparing. (00.26.01)

In this scene, John Wick is shown wearing a bulletproof vest. Wearing a bulletproof vest is a very rational action. It shows that his ego is aware of the risks he will face and looks for ways to minimize the danger. He prioritizes his safety by using the right protection. Preparation with guns and bulletproof vests, the action is more likely to be **ego-controlled**. The reason is that John Wick is preparing himself rationally and realistically to face dangerous situations, not merely for instant gratification (id) or based on the rules of morality (superego).

His **ego** organizes these preparations to ensure survival and success in his mission, taking into account the reality of the situation he will face. We see the dominance of the ego in his actions. His ego organizes these preparations rationally and realistically, ensuring that he is prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. While the id may push him to act with a quick revenge impulse and the superego may consider the moral aspects of his actions, his ego balances these two impulses practically and strategically. It is the ego that allows John Wick to act effectively in situations fraught with danger, ensuring that he has the best chance of succeeding in his mission.



Figure 2. Winston reminded the rules (00.42.24)

Seen in this scene Winston reminds of the rules that apply. Winston is the manager of the Continental Hotel. Hotel Continental is a sanctuary for hitmen, where they can rest and make transactions without fear of violence because there are strict rules that prohibit all forms of violence in the hotel. During the scene, Winston is talking to John Wick at the hotel and John Wick asks something related to his quest, so Winston reminds John Wick. This is because Winston, as the manager of the Continental Hotel, functions as a moral authority figure. When he reminds John Wick about the rules, he acts as a superego agent who enforces the rules and norms that all guests must follow. This shows that the Hotel Continental has a code of conduct that must be adhered to, regardless of the personal motivations or situations faced by the guests.

Thus, when Winston reminds John Wick about the rules of the Hotel Continental, we see the superego playing a dominant role. Winston and the Hotel Continental rules act as superego agents that enforce the values and moral standards that must be followed. John Wick has to balance his id's urge for revenge with the superego's demand to abide by the rules. His ego acts as a mediator trying to find the best way to act in the situation.

By abiding by the rules, John Wick shows respect for the moral values held by the hitman community at the Continental Hotel, even though his primal urges (id) might lead him to act differently. This is a clear example of how the **superego** works to control individual behavior by established moral standards.



Figure 3. John Wick kills in the toilet (00.47.54)

In this scene, John Wick is killing the second of three people who killed his dog and stole his car. John Wick's action of killing the people who harmed him can be seen as an **Id** response. The killing is an act of revenge-driven by anger and the primal urge for revenge. John Wick's Id wants to satisfy his wounded emotional needs most directly and destructively possible. So it can be concluded that John Wick's actions can be seen as dominated by the Id, with the Ego serving to ensure the action is carried out effectively.

The Superego in this case seems to play less of a role or is distorted by the unique norms and values of the world inhabited by hitmen. In other words, John Wick lets his Id's drive for revenge determine his actions, while the Ego helps plan and execute the actions, and the Superego is not strong enough to dissuade the actions based on conventional moral norms.



Figure 4. John walks after burning down the church (00.62.50)

In this scene, John Wick is seen walking, and behind there is a burning room. The situation that occurs is that John knows that Viggo Tarasov is the father of the child who killed his dog and stole his car is a mafia and has a large fortune stored in the church. So John Wick immediately took action neatly and precisely by entering the church and burning the safe containing Viggo's important treasures. The **Id** drive in this action is the desire for destruction and revenge. John Wick probably felt angry and wanted to inflict great harm on Viggo Tarasov by destroying his treasury. This is an action driven by the basic instinct to seek revenge and cause emotional as well as financial pain to his enemy. The desire for revenge in the most devastating way is a manifestation of a powerful Id.

John Wick's action of burning down the church is predominantly influenced by Ego and Id. The Id drives the desire for revenge and to destroy his enemy emotionally and financially. The Ego serves to plan and execute this action strategically and realistically, ensuring that the action delivers maximum harm to Viggo Tarasov. The superego seems to play less of a role or is distorted by the environment and norms of the criminal world in which John Wick lives. Overall, this act is a manifestation of the combination of the Id wanting revenge and the Ego ensuring that the act of revenge is carried out most effectively and strategically.



Figure 5. John Wick threatened Viggo (01.13.33)

In this scene, Viggo is seen raising both hands while telling the location. This happens because John Wick threatens Viggo at gunpoint to find out the location of Viggo's son who is also John Wick's dog killer and John Wick's car thief. John Wick's **id** encourages the desire to avoid pain or immediate death caused by the threat of a weapon. The basic drive for survival makes Viggo more likely to comply with John Wick's request. John Wick's ego plays a big role in this decision-making, as it seeks to save Viggo's life most realistically and practically in a threatening situation. Ego considers the reality of the threat he faces and chooses to disclose the information as a way to defuse the situation. Overall, Viggo's decision is dominated by the Ego acting to protect itself in a very dangerous situation, with significant influence from the Id wanting to avoid immediate pain or death. The Superego, in this context, does not play a dominant role in the decision.



Figure 6. John Wick kills his target (01.16.13)

In this scene, John Wick kills while the victim is saying something to John Wick. This shows that the main target that John Wick was looking for was to accomplish what

he wanted. John Wick's **Id** is the urge for revenge from the beginning, so John Wick's action of killing Iosef is driven by the Id's urge for revenge. Iosef is the one responsible for killing John Wick's dog and stealing his car. In this case, John Wick's Id wants to immediately satisfy the urge for revenge and avoid the emotional pain caused by losing his dog. John Wick's primal instinct is a sense of anger and the desire for revenge is a very strong basic drive. The act of killing Iosef as revenge is a manifestation of the primal instinct to punish someone who is perceived to have hurt and threatened him.

John Wick's Ego is planning and execution, so John Wick's Ego plays a role in planning and executing the murder in an organized way. Although the Id's drive for revenge is strong, John Wick's Ego also considers how best to carry out the act effectively and according to the conditions at the time. John Wick's Realistic Judgment is that the Ego decides that killing Iosef will provide emotional satisfaction and reduce the pain caused by losing his dog. Ego ensures that this action is taken in a way that suits its purpose, which is to resolve the conflict with Viggo and get revenge.

Overall, John Wick's decision to kill Iosef is more influenced by the Id's strong urge for revenge and the Ego planning and effectively executing the action. The Superego, in this context, seems to play less of a role in the decision.



Figure 7. John Wick duels with Viggo (01.30.35)

In this scene, John Wick is seen stabbing Viggo with a knife, even though Viggo himself asked for a duel without weapons. But Viggo cheats and stabs John Wick, but John Wick turns the tables by winning the duel and sticking Viggo's knife. With the big rain and strong wind on the open top floor. The duel happened because John Wick knew that his friend had been killed by Viggo so John Wick's **Id** had an urge for revenge with John Wick's actions to duel with Viggo driven by the Id's urge to take revenge for the death of his friend. John Wick's Id desires emotional satisfaction and personal justice, which motivates his aggressive and destructive actions toward Viggo. In the duel, John Wick exhibits survival instincts and a desire to resolve long-held conflicts. This includes the desire to complete revenge head-on despite the risks and dangers involved.

John Wick's ego has planning and execution John Wick's ego plays a role in planning and executing the duel with Viggo. His ego assesses the situation and chooses to engage in the duel, organizing a strategy to overcome Viggo despite Viggo's attempts to cheat. John Wick's ego processes reality and makes realistic decisions to face Viggo in battle. And having tactics and adaptation, despite Viggo using underhanded tactics, John Wick's Ego adapts to the situation and organizes strategies to overcome the challenge.

His Ego ensures that the duel takes place in a way that allows John Wick to overcome his enemy and achieve victory. Overall, John Wick's decision to duel Viggo and win the

battle is dominated by the Id's drive for revenge and the Ego planning and effectively executing the duel, while the Superego may have limited influence or be distorted by the context of the criminal underworld.



Figure 8. John Wick adopts a dog. (01.33.58)

In this scene, John Wick is seen talking to the dog, and it is the closing sentence for John Wick to adopt the dog as his pet. With this action, the three personality structures have their respective roles. The researcher considers John Wick's **Id** to be an emotional need although not directly related to the Id, the adoption of the dog can be seen as an attempt to satisfy John Wick's emotional needs after experiencing trauma and loss. The desire to have a friend and fill the emotional void may be influenced by the Id's drive for emotional satisfaction and the desire to reduce loneliness.

John Wick's ego plays a role in the process of recovery and adjustment after a traumatic experience. Adopting a dog as a new friend can be seen as a realistic and healthy step to overcome the loss of his previous dog and start a new chapter in his life. His ego judges that having a new dog is a positive way to fill the void and rebuild his social and emotional life. Having a social reality in the context of John Wick's world, getting a new dog can also be considered a realistic decision that helps in the emotional healing process and provides a new structure in his life. Ego ensures that the dog adoption is done in a way that is appropriate and personally rewarding.

The superego plays a role in judging John Wick's actions from the perspective of moral and ethical norms. Adopting a dog after losing a previous dog demonstrates the values of empathy, care, and responsibility. John Wick's Superego may serve to direct this action with good moral principles, which is to provide love and care to living beings after experiencing loss. Moral values or the superego direct John Wick to perform actions based on moral values such as compassion and responsibility towards animals. This shows that even though his life is full of violence and conflict, there are aspects of him that still value and follow positive moral norms.

It can be concluded that John Wick's **Ego** plays a large role in the decision to adopt a dog as a way to begin the process of emotional healing and adjustment after loss. Ego judges that getting a new dog is a realistic and healthy step in overcoming trauma and emotional emptiness. The superego also plays a role in directing this action by moral and ethical values. Adopting a dog reflects the values of empathy and responsibility and shows that John Wick has a moral side that values and cares for living beings.

Although the Id's drive for emotional gratification exists, this action is influenced more by healthy Ego decisions and moral Superego principles. Dog adoption is not only

about satisfying immediate emotional needs but also about fulfilling deeper moral values. Overall, John Wick's decision to adopt a dog is dominated by healthy emotional recovery processes (Ego) and moral values (Superego), with the Id drive acting as a supporting factor in the quest for emotional gratification.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the main character in the film John Wick in terms of psychoanalysis theory, the author concludes that John Wick's id is represented by his instinctual desires, such as his urge for revenge and anger. This is evident when his dog is killed and his car is stolen, triggering a primal anger and the desire for revenge without considering further consequences. The ego, which operates on the reality principle, serves as a mediator between the id and external reality. John Wick demonstrates this through his ability to plan and act rationally in pursuit of his revenge. He uses his skills as a hitman in a systematic and planned manner, showing that he still considers reality and the repercussions of his actions. The superego deals with moral and ethical considerations. Despite being a hitman, John Wick has his moral code and boundaries that he will not break, such as honoring the agreement at the Hotel Continental, a neutral zone for assassins.

The cause of his actions stems from trauma and loss. John Wick experienced deep loss after the death of his wife and his dog, which was his wife's last gift. The dog represents his late wife's last hope and love, making its killing the main trigger for his revenge. Additionally, as a former hitman trying to retire, violence and crime remain a significant part of his identity. His return to that world illustrates the difficulty he faces in letting go of his past.

John Wick's pursuit of revenge and closure highlights his wish fulfillment. He seeks justice for the death of his dog and aims to resolve his emotional wounds. His actions in pursuing and killing the perpetrators reflect his desire to gain satisfaction and closure from his pain. Moreover, by taking revenge, John Wick attempts to restore control over his life, which has been disrupted by violence and loss.

In conclusion, the psychoanalytic analysis of John Wick shows that while there is a balance between the id, ego, and superego, the more dominant id plays a significant role in motivating his actions. The underlying drive for revenge and the gratification of personal desires are the main drivers of his behavior, while the ego and superego ensure that his actions remain measured and not reckless.

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