The Psychoanalysis (Id, Ego, And Superego) In X- Men: First Class Movie

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Abstract—Characters in literature are individuals portrayed in a story who possess moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities inferred from their dialogue and actions. They are the people within a narrative, each with their own distinct personalities and behaviors. Therefore, the characters hold an important role in a movie. The characters can be seen through the psychoanalysis approach. The researchers through this research aims to find out the Id, Ego, and Superego found in Erik Lehnsherr's character depicted in X-Men: First Class movie. The character of Erik Lehnsherr's as a mutant attracts the interest of the researchers to use the psychoanalysis theory proposed by Sigmund Freud. The researchers conduct the research using qualitative method. After collecting and analyzing the data, the researchers found 23 data of Erik Lehnsherr's id, ego and superego in the X-Men: First Class movie. There are 6 data of Id, 10 data of Ego, and 7 data of Superego. Based on the analysis, it is evident that Erik's Id manifests in urgent situations, particularly those related to his mother, whom he deeply cares for. On the other hand, Erik's Ego becomes apparent when he is in a calmer state, allowing him to approach situations more logically while still being influenced by his impulsive and aggressive tendencies. Furthermore, Erik's Superego emerges when he is confronted with situations that conflict with his personal moral code, which has been shaped by his traumatic past as a mutant.

Keywords— Psychoanalysis, X-Men: First Class, Erik Lehnsherr, Id, Ego, Superego.

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature, as Eagleton (1996) defines it, encompasses imaginative writing, particularly fiction, which is not factually true. This includes various forms such as poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama, and prose. In this context, the focus is on the cinematic form of literature, as described by Hornby (2006) as a series of moving pictures with sound that narrates a story, typically shown in cinemas. The elements of a movie, including setting, conflict, character, dialogue, theme, plot, and climax, are essential components, as highlighted by Hornby. These elements contribute to the immersive experience and identity work that movies can evoke, as discussed by (Gauld et al., 2019). Furthermore, the analysis of movies through the lens of postmodernism, as outlined by (Khan & Khan, 2019), provides a framework for understanding the intertextual elements and

features of movies like "Tangled" (2010). Additionally, the influence of a movie's quality on its performance, particularly in evoking emotional responses and fulfilling audience needs, has been studied by (Zhuang et al., 2014). The impact of movies on various aspects of society, such as smoking behavior among adolescents, has also been explored, as evidenced by Tickle (2001) and (Soneji et al., 2012).

One of the fundamental components of a film is the portrayal of characters. Characters are the individuals depicted in a dramatic or narrative piece, and are perceived by the audience as possessing specific moral, intellectual, and emotional attributes based on their dialogue and actions (Abrams & Harpham, 2009). Based on the definition of character mentioned by some experts beforehand, thus the researchers see the character holds an important role in a movie. Therefore, characters are one of the most important elements in a movie. They are the ones who tell the story, carry the plot from the beginning to the end, and make the movie more interesting with their various characteristics. This research talks about an analysis about a fictional character and his Id, Ego, and Superego shown in a the 'X-Men: First Class' movie. Id, Ego, and Superego is a set of psychoanalysis theory which was first introduced by Sigmund Freud in 1890. According to Freud, the id is the most primitive part of our being. It is the part of 'our nature which is impersonal, and, so to speak, subject to natural law'. The id works by pleasure principle. It is what makes humans have what 's called as libido. The id unconsciously makes one have a sexual desire and an instinct to survive. The ego develops out of the id: 'the ego cannot exist in the individual from the start; the ego has to be developed'. The ego is there to fulfill Id's desire in a way that can be accepted in the society. The super-ego originates from the internalization or absorption of the parental authority, particularly that of the father, during childhood. This initial authority is subsequently influenced by other sources of authority, giving rise to what is commonly referred to as 'conscience'. Freud's model of the psyche highlights two significant points. Firstly, the id is inherent from birth, while the ego evolves through interaction with society, ultimately giving rise to the super-ego. This implies that our innate tendencies are regulated, to varying degrees of success, by societal influences (Freud, 1991).

The researchers chose the movie X-Men: First Class as the object in this research. The X-Men movie series are adapted from the characters and stories in the X-Men Comics. X-Men takes several genres such as: action, superhero, science fiction, adventure, fantasy, drama, and thriller. X-Men: First Class is an American superhero movie which was released in 2011 and directed by Matthew Vaughn. While being the fifth installment in the X-Men series, this film delves into the origins of the X-Men. It incorporates fantastical elements that are not present in reality. Fantasy, also known as phantasy, refers to imaginative fiction that relies on the peculiarity of its setting (such as alternate worlds or time periods) and its characters (including supernatural or unnatural entities) (Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 2022).

X-Men: First Class talks about how the mutants who live among humans were exiled and taken as a threat to society so they have to hide their superpowers from the public. In the X-Men, mutants are superpowered humans that are born with a genetic mutation called an X-Gene. During the peak of the Cold War in the early 1960s, Charles Xavier, a mutant, encounters another mutant named Erik Lehnsherr. Despite their disparate upbringings - Charles hailing from a wealthy family, and Erik having lost his parents at Auschwitz - the two form a deep bond. As global tensions escalate towards a potential nuclear conflict, Charles, Erik, and other mutants unite to protect humanity. Nevertheless, a turn of events leads to a rift between the once-close friends.

The study centers on the character 'Erik Lehnsherr', also recognized as Magneto, a mutant with the ability to control and manipulate magnetism and magnetic fields. The selection of Erik Lehnsherr as the focal point of the research is attributed to his portrayal as an anti-hero in the film. An anti-hero is characterized as a narrative protagonist driven by self-interest, often experiencing societal rejection and embarking on a self-destructive trajectory leading to isolation or demise (Heckmann, 2020).

The researchers made this research based on the interest towards the psychoanalytic theory by Sigmund Freud and chose Erik Lehnsherr to be the object of the research because his actions in the 'X-Men: First Class' movie can be related and analyzed using Freud's psychoanalytic Id, Ego, and Superego theory.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a qualitative approach, which, according to Creswell, serves as a method for delving into and comprehending the significance that individuals or groups attribute to a social human issue (Creswell, 2012). Consequently, the researchers opt for a qualitative method as the research aims to scrutinize, investigate, and comprehend the personality of a character through a psychological lens.

The research uses 'X-Men: First Class' which was directed by Matthew Vaughn, the length of the movie is 2 hours and 12 minutes. The researchers watch the movie from the streaming platform Disney+ Hotstar as the source of the data which will be analyzed. The researchers also read some books and do internet research related to the topic of the research. The data used to be analyzed is the scenes and dialogues relevant to the topic.

The researchers do some steps in collecting the data, such as watching the movie "X-Men: First Class" in order to understand the story, then collecting screenshots and dialogues of the scenes that consist id, ego, and superego, and identifying screenshots and dialogues of the scenes which are related to Id, Ego, and Superego.

After collecting the data, the researchers also do some steps to analyze the data, such as classifying the data based on the psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud, analyzing the result in an analytical descriptive manner, and drawing conclusions from the analysis.

III. RESULT & DISCUSSION

The objective in this research is to find out the Id, Ego, and Superego found in Erik Lehnsherr's character depicted in X-Men: First Class movie. The data are analyzed using Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis theory. The researchers have tabulated the result on Table 1. There are 23 data found which consist of Id (6 data), Ego (10 data), Superego (7 data).

Table 1. Id, Ego, and Superego of Erik Lehnsherr from the X-Men: First Class Movie.

No.	Psychoanalysis	Result
1.	Id	6
2.	Ego	10
3.	Superego	7
	TOTAL	23

3.1. ID

Datum 1

Young Erik: "Mama!"

Erik's Mother: "My darling."

Erik's Mother: "How are you?"

Shaw: "Here's what we're going to do."

Shaw: "I'm going to count to three and you're going to move the coin. You don't move the coin; I pull the trigger. Understand?"

Shaw: "One"

Young Erik: "Mama."

Erik's Mother: "You can do it."

Shaw: "Two"

Erik's Mother: "Everything is all right."

Shaw: "Three."

Shaw: "Yes. Wonderful."

Shaw: "Excellent."

Young Erik: "Nein!"

Shaw: "Outstanding, Erik."

Shaw: "So, we unlock your gift with anger. Anger and pain."

The Id representation by Erik Lehnsherr is shown by the younger version of him. During the duration 00:06:30 – 00:08:30, the scene showed young Erik which had been captured and taken from his mother. The one who was in charge was Sebastian Shaw, he called Erik and asked him to move a coin with his mutant power. Shaw told the guard to bring Erik's mother into the room then he started counting to three and threatened Erik by saying he was going to shoot his mom if Erik could not move the coin given by Shaw. After he counted up to three, the coin had not moved yet, so Shaw shot Erik's mother in front of his eyes. After that, all of the metal-based items in Shaw's office flew around and Erik also managed to kill the two guards who were brought his mother. This scene classified as the Id because Erik let his aggressive decision win in this scene. His Id told him to kill and control all of the metal-based items and he did it.

Datum 2

Charles: "See that? Try turning it to face us."

Charles: "You know, I believe that true focus lies somewhere between rage and serenity."

Charles: "Would you mind if I..."

Erik: "What did you just do to me?"

Charles: "I accessed the brightest corner of your memory system. It's a very beautiful memory, Erik. Thank you."

Erik: "I didn't know I still had that."

Charles: "There is so much more to you than you know. Not just pain and anger. There is good, too. I felt it. When you can access all of that, you'll possess a power no one can match. Not even me."

The Id representation of Erik Lehnsherr is shown during the duration 01:20:08 – 01:21:45. In this scene, Erik had already become friends with Charles Xavier, his fellow mutant who was a telepath. He could read someone's mind and control them. Erik and Charles were in a training to strengthen their mutant powers. Charles told Erik to move an enormous satellite transmitter, but Erik could not do it. Charles gave an advice and tried to get into Erik's mind. There, he found a good memory which was hidden in Erik's deepest consciousness. This scene represents Id because essentially, the Id has a lot of hidden good and bad memories buried in there. Erik himself did not remember he had a good memory of him and his mother celebrating his birthday until Charles unlocked it.

3.2. Ego

Datum 3

Angel: "For that, daddy-o, you get a private dance."

Angel: "You cats know it's double for both, right?"

Charles: "Mmm. No, that won't be necessary. Although, I'm sure it'd be magical."

Erik: "We were thinking more, we'll show you ours, if you show us yours."

Angel: "Baby, that is not the way it works around here."

Erik: "More tea, vicar?"

Charles: "Don't mind if I do."

During the duration 00:46:00 – 00:46:25, the scene shows Erik Lehnsherr and Charles Xavier traveled to find some other fellow mutants to made a team to defeat Sebastian Shaw. In this scene, they were trying to recruit a female mutant named Angel. In a strip club, they paid Angel and took her into a private room, but they did not do anything to her. They explained to Angel about their intention to recruit her into their team. Here, Erik showed his magnetism manipulation ability to Angel to make her

believe that they were being honest and not going to do anything bad to her. This scene represents the Ego because Erik tried to fulfill his Id, which was to make Angel join his team, he did it by using a logically and socially acceptable way.

Datum 4

Erik: "I know we've had our differences."

Emma: "Where's your telepath friend?"

Erik: "Gone. Left a bit of a gap in my life, if I'm to be honest. I was rather hoping you would fill it. Join us."

Emma: "Erik, I believe."

Erik: "I prefer Magneto."

In this scene, Erik had separated his way from Charles because of their different take on humanity. This scene classified as a representation of Ego because Erik chose to talk nicely to Emma, who happened to be his nemesis in the past, he wanted to form a new team to stand with him, so he broke into Emma's prison and saved her. Erik's Ego told him to find new members in order to fulfill his desire in order to form a new team who has the same idea towards humanity like he did.

3.3. Superego

Datum 5

Man in black suit: "Hank turned that radar installation into a transmitter. It's designed to amplify brainwaves, so it could enhance your telepathic powers, help us find other mutants for our division."

Erik: "What if they don't want to be found by you?"

Charles: "Erik. You decided to stay."

Erik: "If a new species is being discovered, it should be by it's own kind. Charles and I find the mutants. No suits."

Man in black suit: "First of all, that's my machine out there. Second of all, and much more importantly, this is Charles' decision. Charles is fine with the CIA being involved. Isn't that, right?"

Charles: "No. I'm sorry, but I'm with Erik. We'll find them alone."

Man in black suit: "What if I say no?"

Charles: "Then good luck using your installation without me."

This scene shows Erik came back after decided to leave the night before, he showed up when Charles and the Man in Black Suit were talking about how they're going to find other fellow mutants using Charles's ability combined with the man's installation. There, Erik told the Man in Black Suit to not involve the CIA into this. The ones who found them should be their own kind---mutants. This scene represents the Superego because Erik thought about the fellow mutants' feelings. He knew that being a mutant itself is already threatening, let alone being found by the CIA. Because of his moral standard about mutants, he refused letting CIA gotten involved in the mutant recruitment.

Datum 6

Charles: "Cuba. Russia, America. It makes no difference. Shaw has declared war on mankind, on all of us. He has to be stopped."

Erik: "I'm not going to stop Shaw. I'm going to kill him."

Charles: "Do you have it in you to allow that?"

Erik: "You've known all along why I was here, Charles. But things have changed. What started as a covert mission, tomorrow, mankind will know that mutants exist. Shaw, us, they won't differentiate. They'll fear us. And that fear will turn to hatred."

Charles: "Not if we stop a war. Not if we can prevent Shaw. Not if we risk our lives doing so."

Erik: "Would they do the same for us?"

Charles: "We have it in us to be the better men."

Erik: "We already are. We're the next stage of human evolution. You said it yourself!"

Charles: "No..."

Erik: "Are you really so naïve as to think that they won't battle their own extinction? Or is it arrogance?"

Charles: "I'm sorry?"

Erik: "After tomorrow, they're going to turn on us. But you're blind to it, because you believe they're all like Moira."

Charles: "And you believe they're all like Shaw. Listen to me very carefully, my friend. Killing Shaw will not bring you peace."

Erik: "Peace was never an option."

The scene showed Erik and Charles debating about their plan after they found Shaw. At first, they have the same goal, to stop Shaw from flying a missile to Cuba. But in this scene, Erik seemed to have his own goal, which was to kill him. This happened because of Shaw gave him a lot of traumas since he was a child. Erik also stated his point of view towards humanity, that they will always be against the mutants. He had a completely different view from Charles. This scene classified as the Superego because of Erik's way of seeing the world is already ruined because of his dark childhood such as his own mother killed before his eyes and Erik being an experiment subject when he was only a child. So, it affected the way he understood the society. He only stands by the mutants and against the humanity. That was his ideal principle and causing his decision to kill Shaw, that was his moral standard.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research discussed about Erik Lehnsherr's psychoanalysis in X-Men: First Class movie. The researchers chose Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory to explain Erik Lehnsherr's character. Sigmund Freud divided the psychoanalysis into three functions, which are Id, Ego, and Superego.

From the result of the analysis, the researchers conclude that there are 6 Id, 10 Ego, and 8 Superego of Erik Lehnsherr. From the analysis, it can be seen that Erik's Id showed up when he's in an urgent situation and if the situation is related to his mom, which he loves. He was mostly controlled by his urge, impulsive, and aggressive thoughts. Erik's Ego showed up when he is calmer and can think of a more logical way to fulfill his Id, whereas his decision and thoughts frequently driven by his impulsive and aggressive way of thinking. So, when he is calmer, he can think clearer and take decision in a common logical way. His Superego showed up when he was faced to a situation that was not his ideal principle. Because of his dark past, Erik shaped his own moral standard and point of view towards the humanity. He was tortured as a mutant and he grew up wanting to protect his fellow mutants so that they will not experience what he had in the past.

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