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Id, Ego, Superego: Driving Forces of Prof. Vikas Sharma's novel *Sana*

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Abstract: This paper examines the psychological complexities in Vikas Sharma's *Sana* through the lens of Freud's psychoanalytic theory, focusing on the interplay between the *Id*, *ego*, and *superego* as driving forces behind human behavior and conflict. By analyzing the protagonist, Sana, and key supporting characters—Pandit Brij Vrat, Revati Prasad, and Naveen Nishchal—the study explores how these Freudian constructs shape their decisions, relationships, and inner struggles. Sana's internal conflict, torn between primal desires, rationality, and moral considerations, serves as the central narrative thread, with each character embodying different aspects of the psychic apparatus. Drawing on insights from literary criticism and psychoanalysis, the paper also considers the novel's grounding in real-life experiences, as suggested by critics who claim that *Sana* is based on a real person close to the author. Through this psychoanalytic framework, *Sana* emerges as a rich exploration of the universal tension between desire, duty, and societal pressures, offering valuable insights into the human psyche and the contradictions that define human nature.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Freud, *Id*, *ego*, *superego*, human behavior, internal conflict, desire, morality, character analysis

Introduction:

The dualities and contradictions of human behavior are central themes in many literary works, and Vikas Sharma's *Sana* is no exception. Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which revolves around the tripartite structure of the mind—the *Id*, *ego*, and *superego*—provides a robust framework to dissect the psychological intricacies of its characters. By illustrating how primal instincts (*Id*), rationality (*ego*), and moral considerations (*superego*) interact, the novel *Sana* offers a vivid exploration of the forces driving human behavior, relationships, and conflict. Vikas Sharma, currently working at CCS University, Meerut, as a Professor, is a highly accomplished author with over ten published works, of which *Sana* is



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the most loved among critics. As even have been claimed by critics, that Sharma is often inspired by the characters surrounding his life, *Sana* is no exception, as claimed by Prof. Swati Chandorkar and Dr.Parag Nema in their paper:

"Sana is a real-life person who was once close to the novelist. Even the cover page of the novel displays the inspiration of Sana. It seems that the novelist closely observed real life in order to create Sana. The critics point out that Chandan, Sana's boyfriend, has also been a student of the writer in real life."

Sana, the protagonist, is a dynamic figure who embodies the tensions among these forces. Her story is shaped by the persistent pull of her Id, the calculated reasoning of her ego, and the intermittent influence of her superego. However, the supporting characters—Pandit Brij Vrat, Revati Prasad, Naveen Nishchal, and others—also serve as powerful exemplars of Freud's constructs. Together, they weave a narrative that highlights the interplay of desires, duties, and societal pressures. This paper explores these psychological undercurrents in *Sana*, focusing not only on Sana's struggles but also on the psychoanalytic dimensions of the key figures around her. The analysis illuminates how Freud's constructs shape the characters' lives and decisions, revealing the universal nature of the psychic conflicts they embody.

Freud's Psychoanalytic Framework

In Freud's model, the Id, ego, and superego represent distinct aspects of the human psyche:

1. The Id: The primitive, instinctual part of the mind driven by the pleasure principle. It seeks immediate gratification of desires, regardless of morality or practicality. Freud writes:

"The Id is the dark, inaccessible part of our personality... It is a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations."

2. The Ego: Governed by the reality principle, the ego serves as the rational mediator between the Id's desires and the superego's moralistic constraints. It ensures that actions are pragmatic and socially acceptable.



3. The Superego: The internalized moral conscience, representing societal norms, parental influence, and aspirational Ideals. It often generates guilt when its standards are not met. Freud emphasizes:

“The superego works in contradiction to the Id, striving to act in a socially appropriate manner.”

In *Sana*, these three forces are vividly manifested in the behaviors, decisions, and inner conflicts of the characters, driving the narrative forward.

The Id and Sana’s Pursuit of Pleasure:

Sana’s journey in Vikas Sharma’s novel is profoundly shaped by her Id—the primal and instinctual part of the psyche that seeks immediate gratification. According to Freud, the Id operates on the pleasure principle, driven by the pursuit of desires and the avoidance of pain, often disregarding social norms and morality. Sana’s Id dominates much of her behavior, manifesting through her pursuit of sensual pleasures, material indulgences, and emotional satisfaction. Her Id often overrides her superego’s moral voice and leaves her ego grappling with the consequences. This analysis explores multiple instances in the novel where Sana’s Id exerts its influence, driving her to act on her instincts and desires.

Sana’s affair with Revati Prasad is the most vivid expression of her Id. Her physical and emotional attraction to him disregards her marital vows and societal expectations. The following scene exemplifies how her Id drives her actions:

“She moved her right hand towards his thighs and kissed him, saying, ‘Don’t you feel hit with Cupid’s arrows now?’” (Sana, 13).

This moment underscores the raw, uninhibited nature of her Id, which prioritizes immediate satisfaction over long-term consequences. Sana’s seduction of Revati is impulsive and driven entirely by her instinctual desires, aligning with Freud’s description of the Id as “a cauldron of seething excitations.” Sana’s reliance on physical pleasure as an escape from her emotional dissatisfaction reflects her Id’s dominance. Her loneliness in a deserted sector and her unfulfilled marital life drive her to seek comfort in her affair. This longing for pleasure is vividly depicted in the following passage:



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“There was no limit to Sana’s pleasure now as she was flying in the air like fairies singing sweet songs” (Sana, 14).

Her Id transforms her dissatisfaction into a hedonistic pursuit, compelling her to indulge in momentary gratification without considering the moral or relational fallout. Sana’s Id is also evident in her indulgence in alcohol and her justification for it. Despite knowing that drinking may be frowned upon, she persuades Revati to join her by framing it as a harmless pleasure:

“It won’t harm you at all. On the contrary, it will energize you, and then you’ll love me like royal Indian kings and princes” (Sana, 14).

This statement reflects the Id’s influence in rationalizing pleasure-seeking behaviors. By linking alcohol consumption to the mythological indulgence of gods, Sana aligns her actions with her desire for sensuality and enjoyment. Sana’s Id also manifests in her materialistic desires, particularly her longing for expensive jewelry and lavish possessions. Her impulsive purchase of diamond sets during a shopping trip reflects her hedonistic tendencies:

“She felt no Deepawali joy with borrowed gold and diamond sets. Her heart demanded her own luxuries, bought and worn with pride” (Sana, 32).

The Id’s pleasure principle drives Sana to prioritize immediate gratification over financial prudence or social judgment. Freud’s assertion that the Id is “unorganized and unconscious” aligns with Sana’s instinctual pursuit of status and self-indulgence. For Sana, love and physical intimacy are not just desires but necessities dictated by her Id. She expresses frustration with her husband Brij Vrat’s emotional and physical neglect, leading her to seek fulfillment elsewhere:

“Poor rejected woman as I am, I don’t want to lead the life of a Sannyasin. Loneliness, desperateness, and frustration soon lead a woman to dementia” (Sana, 14).



Her Id transforms her emotional dissatisfaction into a justification for pursuing her affair. This primal need for connection and intimacy overrides the constraints of her superego, pushing her toward impulsive actions. Sana's Id often drives her to manipulate those around her to achieve her goals. For instance, when she convinces Revati to stay with her for five days while her husband is away, she appeals to his desires while fulfilling her own:

"You can taste my grapes and raisins to your heart's content" (Sana, 14).

This metaphorical language reflects her seductive strategy, which is guided by her Id. By manipulating Revati's attraction to her, Sana ensures her own gratification, showcasing the Id's cunning and persuasive power. As said by Dr. Shivaji D. Sargar in his research paper, *"Sana lets her sexual desires drive the course of her life; she is not making any mistakes, and her choices are being consciously made by her. She uses infidelity as an escape from her reality and feels that these choices give her a sense of authority in her dull life"*.

Sana's Id frequently overrides societal norms and values, particularly in private moments. For example, her decision to embrace sensuality and indulgence despite being a married woman reflects her disregard for conventional morality:

"After sipping her first cup of champagne, she took the hand of Pandit ji and started dancing. He had to obey her, though he had never danced with her before" (Sana 14).

This scene encapsulates the Id's ability to transform social boundaries into personal opportunities for pleasure. Sana's insistence on pursuing joy, regardless of societal expectations, aligns with Freud's characterization of the Id as "amoral." While Sana's ego plays a significant role in her professional decisions, her Id occasionally disrupts her rationality. For instance, her impulsive plan to introduce new sports at the schools reflects her instinctual drive for novelty and control:

"Madam Sana decided to introduce baseball and bowling just next week and asked the sports dealer to manage the same quickly" (Sana 26).



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Though beneficial in some ways, this decision is rooted in her Id's craving for instant results and recognition rather than a carefully considered strategy. Sana's Id also drives her to find escape in extravagance and indulgence. After purchasing expensive jewelry, she relishes the attention it brings and the temporary satisfaction it offers:

"Inside the home, she offered the ring to Pandit ji and then put the chain on his neck. Now Pandit Ji kissed her cheeks and neck... Both felt excited, and it was a bit difficult to wait for the removal of clothes" (Sana 32).

The Id's influence is apparent in how material possessions become intertwined with physical and emotional gratification for Sana. Sana's Id is not confined to physical desires; it also governs her emotional responses. Her intense feelings of frustration and longing often overwhelm her, leading to impulsive actions. For instance, after experiencing neglect from her husband, she reflects:

"Had you paid attention towards me, we would not have wasted days and nights meant for love" (Sana 14).

This statement reveals the Id's demand for immediate emotional fulfillment, which Sana feels justified in pursuing through her affair and other acts of rebellion. Sana's Id is a driving force in her life, compelling her to seek pleasure, intimacy, and recognition. From her affair with Revati Prasad to her material indulgences and emotional responses, the Id manifests in various aspects of her personality, often challenging the constraints of her superego and leaving her ego to navigate the consequences.

Freud's characterization of the Id as "a relentless force of instinctual drives" is vividly illustrated in Sana's actions, which prioritize immediate gratification over societal expectations and moral considerations.

The Ego: Balancing Desires and Reality

Sana, the protagonist of Vikas Sharma's novel, is a complex character whose ego plays a pivotal role in navigating her desires (Id) and moral constraints (superego). Freud's concept of the ego—the rational mediator of the psyche—illuminates how Sana balances her



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hedonistic pursuits and societal expectations. Her ego is not static but evolves through various situations, reflecting her adaptability and strategic thinking. This analysis delves into multiple instances in the novel where Sana's ego comes to the fore, showcasing its critical role in shaping her decisions and actions. Sana's ego first becomes apparent in her calculated approach to maintaining her extramarital affair. Despite being driven by the Id's desires, she carefully orchestrates her interactions with Revati to avoid suspicion. For instance, when Revati visits her during Brij Vrat's absence, Sana ensures that their affair remains hidden by crafting an atmosphere of normalcy:

"Will you not meet me if Pandit ji is out of home?" she asked playfully, concealing the gravity of the situation with her charm" (Sana 13).

Here, the ego mediates between her Id-driven passion and the potential consequences imposed by her superego and society. By masking her actions with wit and calculated behavior, Sana demonstrates the ego's ability to balance instinct with rationality. Another instance of Sana's ego in action is seen in her pursuit of material luxuries. Though driven by the Id's hedonistic tendencies, her ego employs logic to justify these pursuits. For example, when she purchases diamond sets despite financial constraints, she frames her indulgence as an expression of self-worth:

"She felt no Deepawali joy with borrowed gold and diamond sets. Her heart demanded her own luxuries, bought and worn with pride" (Sana 32).

The ego rationalizes this act, transforming it from a superficial indulgence into a symbolic assertion of independence and status. Freud's notion of the ego as a tool for reconciling the Id's desires with reality is vividly illustrated here. Sana's ego takes center stage in her decision to manage her father's educational institutions. This choice reflects her pragmatic understanding of the importance of financial stability and professional Identity:

"There is no better way to utilize my degrees than to oversee these institutions. Education is a noble field, and I want to make my mark" (Sana 23).



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While her Id might tempt her to pursue a more carefree life, her ego recognizes the practical benefits of this opportunity. By aligning her ambitions with societal expectations, Sana ensures that her professional endeavors complement her personal goals, highlighting the ego's mediating role. Sana's ego is particularly evident in her efforts to maintain the facade of a harmonious marriage while pursuing her personal desires. For instance, when she contemplates joining a job, she carefully gauges Brij Vrat's reaction to avoid conflict:

“What'll happen if he feels annoyed with this question? He may ask—‘Who has put this foolish question in your mind?’” (Sana, 18).

Here, the ego anticipates potential objections and adapts Sana's approach accordingly. This instance reflects Freud's assertion that the ego operates on the reality principle, negotiating compromises to satisfy the Id without provoking the superego. Sana's affair with Revati Prasad is marked by her ego's attempts to impose structure on a relationship driven by passion. As said by Prof. Rizwan Khan in his research paper,

“Emotional fulfillment is another motivation that drives individuals to pursue illicit liaisons. In some cases, individuals may feel emotionally unfulfilled in their existing relationships and seek solace or connection elsewhere.”

She insists on clear boundaries and expectations, reflecting her desire to balance her Id-driven attraction with practical considerations:

“Promise me, Pandit ji, you'll ever take care of my beauty, youth, passion, and obsession. Poor rejected woman as I am, I don't want to lead the life of a Sannyasin” (Sana, 14).

By demanding commitment and clarity, Sana's ego seeks to transform an impulsive affair into a more sustainable arrangement, demonstrating her ability to reconcile immediate desires with long-term needs. Sana's discovery of her pregnancy brings her ego to the forefront as she navigates its implications for her personal and professional life. While her Id may revel in the joy of motherhood, her ego ensures that she approaches the situation pragmatically:



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“Still, she wanted to be sure of her pregnancy before sharing the news with husband and parents” (Sana,20).

By withholding the information until she confirms it, Sana demonstrates the ego’s capacity for restraint and deliberation. Her cautious approach reflects her awareness of the potential emotional and social consequences of this revelation. Sana’s ego is instrumental in her rise as a professional leader. When she takes charge of her father’s schools, she adopts a strategic and authoritative approach to establish her position:

“Madam Sana decided to introduce baseball and bowling just next week and asked the sports dealer to manage the same quickly” (Sana,26).

Her decisions reflect the ego’s ability to channel ambition (Id) into constructive actions that align with societal expectations (superego). By asserting her leadership, Sana gains control over her professional environment, demonstrating the ego’s role in facilitating personal growth. One of Sana’s most striking displays of ego is her ability to compartmentalize her dual life as a wife and lover. She rationalizes her affair with Revati as a necessary escape from the monotony of her marriage:

“Today also I had to take the lead as I found you good for nothing” (Sana,13).

Her ego reframes this betrayal as a justified response to Brij Vrat’s perceived neglect, allowing her to pursue her desires without fully succumbing to guilt. Freud’s assertion that the ego “fashions compromises to preserve self-esteem” is evident in Sana’s justification of her actions.

Sana’s ego is also evident in her sensitivity to societal judgment. For instance, when she contemplates her professional ambitions, she considers how her actions might be perceived by others:

“Will her father-in-law support this step unexpectedly? Will she be able to teach Physics after a gap of nearly five years?” (Sana,18).



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By anticipating potential challenges, Sana's ego enables her to navigate societal expectations while pursuing her goals. This foresight underscores the ego's role in balancing personal aspirations with external realities. Sana's ego is crucial in her interactions with Brij Vrat, particularly when managing disagreements or sensitive topics. For example, when she proposes joining the schools, she frames the conversation in a way that minimizes resistance:

"Seeing the enthusiasm of his daughter in the job, Naveen Nishchal proposed... and Sana looked towards Brij Vrat, and the latter had no objection" (Sana,24).

By involving her father in the discussion, Sana strategically deflects potential conflict, showcasing the ego's capacity for diplomacy and persuasion. Sana's ego also plays the role of one of the central forces in her psychological landscape, mediating between her Id's desires and the moral constraints of her superego. Through calculated decisions, strategic adaptations, and rational justifications, the ego enables Sana to navigate her complex world of relationships, ambitions, and societal expectations. Freud's concept of the ego as a rational mediator is vividly illustrated in Sana's story, highlighting its critical role in shaping human behavior.

The Superego: Guilt and Redemption

As said by Vikas Sharma in an interview published in a research paper written by Alka Sharma to the question asked "Do you regard *Sana* as a treatise on ethics?"

"Yes, of course. I have mentioned the importance of positive values such as devotion, faithfulness, integrity, sincerity, new thoughts, domestic harmony, personal freedom, dignity of a woman as a woman.."

Sana feels bound by her role as a wife within a traditional marriage despite her dissatisfaction with her husband, Brij Vrat. Her initial struggles to ask for a job reflect her hesitation to deviate from societal expectations of a dutiful wife.

"Will Pandit Brij Vrat allow her to join a job? Will her father-in-law support this step unexpectedly?" (Sana,18)

This demonstrates her internalized societal values and the weight of traditional marital roles on her decisions.



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While her superego often restrains her, Sana also challenges societal norms through her affair with Revati Prasad. Her justification of infidelity as fulfilling unmet emotional and physical needs signals a clash between her desires (Id) and her internalized morality (superego).

“Promise me Pandit ji, you’ll ever take care of my beauty, youth, passion and obsession... Loneliness, desperateness and frustration soon lead a woman to dementia.” (Sana, 14)

Here, Sana rationalizes her actions, indicating an attempt to reconcile her actions with her superego's guilt and societal judgment. Sana's desire to establish her own career reflects her superego's demand for self-respect and societal validation. Despite the patriarchal context, she carves out a space for her intellect and capabilities.

“It’s hell of affair to survive without you, darling. Can’t you feel my emotional love for you? Who can replace your love and your romance?” (Sana, 19)

Yet, this dependency on her husband's approval of her choices reflects the lingering influence of her superego's alignment with societal norms. Sana's superego also manifests through material aspirations, which she equates with self-worth and societal respect. Her expensive purchases and interest in status symbols are a way to meet the expectations imposed by her upbringing and environment.

“But then she selected a diamond ring and a chain for him with full pleasure... Now her desire got fulfilled.” (Sana 31)

Sana oscillates between traditional virtues and modern individualism. Her affair and her aspirations for a career showcase a push against traditional norms, but she remains tethered to their judgment. To ease her guilt and align her actions with her superego, Sana often rationalizes, as seen in her affair and materialistic indulgence. Sana's decisions—be it her career or personal relationships—are partly driven by her superego's demand for validation and respect. Sana's superego is a battleground of traditional morality, societal expectations, and her quest for self-Identity. She represents a complex character caught between conformity and rebellion. Her inner struggles are vividly portrayed through her dialogues and decisions, making her a symbol of modern dilemmas in a traditional setting.



Pandit Brij Vrat: The Superego Personified

Pandit Brij Vrat, Sana's husband, embodies the superego's dominance, reflecting societal norms and moral rigidity. Brij Vrat's life is dictated by his sense of duty, a hallmark of the superego. His reaction to Sana's pregnancy showcases his prioritization of responsibility over personal desires:

"Ladies don't conceive child every day and every week... she had to be looked after well" (Sana,21).

His decision to resist temptation during the Yagya in Agra further exemplifies the superego's control:

"Virtue of the Pandit and purity of heart and soul matters a lot" (Sana,19).

In this instance, Brij Vrat suppresses his Id to uphold his spiritual and moral obligations, illustrating the superego's governing influence. Despite his moral uprightness, Brij Vrat experiences moments of vulnerability where his Id briefly surfaces. His attraction to Sana upon her return from Agra reveals a flicker of desire:

"He kissed her boobs and made love as he had been hungry for love in the last five days" (Sana,18).

However, these moments are fleeting, as his superego quickly reasserts control, ensuring that his actions align with his moral values. As said by Dr. Shashi Kant Tripathi in his research paper,

"Brij Vrat is the product of a religious family; he has unshakable faith in the ways of God to men and is living a satisfactory married life."

Pandit Revati Prasad: Id-Driven Temptations

Revati Prasad serves as a counterpoint to Brij Vrat, embodying the Id's dominance over reason and morality. Revati's interactions with Sana are primarily driven by his Id, as he



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succumbs to his physical attraction to her. For example, during their first encounter, he abandons his reservations and engages in an affair:

“He pressed her hips tightly and kissed on her cheeks again and again” (Sana,14).

Unlike Brij Vrat, Revati rarely reflects on the moral implications of his actions, prioritizing immediate gratification over long-term consequences. Though driven by his Id, Revati occasionally employs his ego to conceal his behavior. For instance, he lies to his wife about performing rituals in Delhi, creating a facade of propriety:

“He informed his wife that he was going to New Delhi to perform three-four rituals in rich families” (Sana,15).

This rationalization illustrates the ego’s role in enabling his desires while avoiding societal judgment.

Naveen Nishchal: A Complex Psyche

Naveen Nishchal, Sana’s father, presents a balanced interplay of the Id, ego, and superego, reflecting a well-rounded personality. Naveen’s entrepreneurial drive and pursuit of wealth are fueled by the Id. His success in the chemical industry and his accumulation of assets highlight his instinctual need for achievement and gratification:

“Within two years, he was a man of one crore rupees... but gangsters of Gurgaon troubled him regularly for Choth” (Sana,47).

Naveen’s ego plays a crucial role in navigating challenges, such as relocating his operations to avoid extortion threats:

“He bought an old factory in the Industrial Area of Faridabad” (Sana,47).

This decision reflects the ego’s capacity to mediate between ambition (Id) and practical constraints. Despite his professional success, Naveen remains deeply committed to



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his family. His decision to support Sana's educational endeavors exemplifies the superego's influence:

"These schools belong to you both as I have no interest in education business" (Sana,23).

His actions reflect a strong moral compass, balancing ambition with altruism. The interactions among the characters in *Sana* reveal the psychological tensions that arise from the interplay of the Id, ego, and superego.

Conclusion

Freud's psychoanalytic theory offers profound insights into the characters of *Sana*. Sana's internal conflicts, Brij Vrat's moral restraint, Revati Prasad's hedonistic pursuits, and Naveen Nishchal's balanced psyche illustrate the dynamic interplay of the Id, ego, and superego. By analyzing these characters, we gain a deeper understanding of the psychological forces that drive human behavior and shape interpersonal dynamics.

Vikas Sharma's novel is a compelling exploration of the human psyche, revealing how Freud's constructs remain relevant in understanding the complexities of human desires, choices, and moral dilemmas. Through its rich characters and psychological depth, *Sana* exemplifies the enduring relevance of psychoanalytic theory in literature. Sana's journey encapsulates the eternal struggle between desire, reason, and morality, while the supporting characters offer complementary perspectives on the dynamics of the Id, ego, and superego. Vikas Sharma's novel not only reflects the enduring relevance of Freudian theory but also illuminates the universal nature of the psychic struggles that shape our lives.

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