

Beyond the Bat: The Three-Level Architecture of Consciousness

The Strange Loop: Level 3

Level 3a: Conceptual Categorization

Applying culturally learned concepts (like "Anger" or "Amaze") to differentiate raw experience.

Level 3b: Recursive Self-Modeling

The "strange loop" where social prediction machinery is redirected to model the self.

Social Origins of the "I"

Consciousness is the brain predicting its own states by modeling itself through others' eyes.

Level 2: The Five Core Schemas

Pre-reflective models (Body, Spatial, Attention, Affective-Homeostatic, Self) that structure raw biological signals.

Meaningful integration:

Feelings emerge only when biological effect is synthesized with these structural mental schemas.

Level 1: Core Affect

The biological foundation providing valence (pleasantness) and arousal via interoceptive monitoring.

Evolutionary Timeline of RSP Levels

Level 1: Core Affect
~450 Million Years Ago
Early Vertebrates

Level 2: Core Schemas
~225–60 Million Years Ago
Mammals & Primates

Level 3: Recursive Modeling
~7 Million–70k Years Ago
Hominin Lineage

