

"Magna est vis veritatis tuae et prevalebit"
[Great is the power of your truth and it shall prevail]

G.C. Jung

As both psychologist, and thinker Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is in a sense too much of the twentieth century. Freud, like Darwin and Marx, is instrumental, to a great measure in revolutionizing twentieth century thought. As Richard Wollheim rightly observes : "It would be hard to find in the history of ideas, even in the history of religion, some one whose influence was so immediate, so broad and so deep."¹ Freud's thought is dynamic, and the broadest aim of his achievements is aimed at a reinterpretation of all Psychical productions pertaining to culture, art, morality, and religion. Ironically, in the contemporary context there have been persistent efforts to project psychoanalysis as a foregone truth, deprived of its ideological reflexes. Over the years, withstanding the academic bellegerence, Freud proved that his thought is, in more ways than one, relevant to

our civilization, and culture. However, "anyone who has a nodding acquaintance with the history of human thought can not fail to recognize time and again in its totality, or in its details, how much Freud's work embodies in form and content the main features of the Western attempt to understand human nature and human mind."² Freud, while accepting the tenets of 19th century science with its metaphors of mechanism, and impersonal forces, developed a language for his science for effective interpretation of man and society, which is wholly psychological in its objectives and methods. His scientific assumptions, continually got reinforced by examples from art, literature, and creative writings. Freud, the man, became an enigma not only for his discoveries but also for his scholarship. Precisely, Freudian thought typifies a personality that is complex, and resolute. The word *conquistador* is appropriate for him rightly. Alone like Robinson Crusoe, he ventured to explore the unknown island of human Psyche :

"I am not really a man of science, not an observer, not an experimenter, and not a thinker. I am nothing but by temperament a conquistador— an adventurer, if you want to translate the word with the curiosity, the boldness, the tenacity that belongs to that type of being."³

The greatest thinkers are often exceptions to generalizations. Undoubtedly, Freud is one of our greatest thinkers. It is interesting to note that the three distinguished Philosophers of the mid-twentieth century, Russell, Sartre, and Wittgenstein have

all given Freud some consideration.⁴ Paying tribute to Freud, Thomas Mann notes :

"Sigmund Freud, that mighty spirit founder of psychoanalysis as a general method of research and as a therapeutic technique, trod the steep path alone and independently, as physician and natural scientist, without knowing that reinforcement and encouragement lay to his hand in literature."⁵

With all its peculiarity Psychoanalysis, indeed, is one of the single most important things that happened to the present century. Freud adhered to the uncomfortable notion that disease is an important clue to human nature. In the process he proved that man is not the master of his own mind. Comparing Psychoanalysis vis-a-vis the intellectual tradition of our present century, Freud came to the conclusion that "two of the hypotheses of Psycho-analysis are an insult to the entire world and have earned its dislike. One of them offends against an intellectual prejudice, the other against an aesthetic and moral one."⁶ These two important factors are the *unconscious* process and the life of the instincts.

The *unconscious* is the "god term" in Psychoanalysis. The study and interpretation of the *unconscious* mental process is the core of Psychoanalytic super structure. Freud approached the study of the *unconscious* with an inflexible concept of causality. He was guided by the principle that every phenomenon has an antecedent cause, whether the phenomenon is psychic or physical. On this basic premise Freud came to realize that

research has offered irrefutable proof that mental activity is bound up with the function of the brain as with that of no other organ. Freud's study of the Psyche provided a new insight into the human problem, and have a compelling effect on the human situation. Freud is often blamed for his reductionism and illogicality. But the very peculiarity of the subject of Psychoanalysis defies this criticism. Freud has left no stones unturned to prove his point. He is more open in his approach and kept on revising his theories as and when new discoveries were made, and evolved a new language to interpret the mental phenomena. He attempted to offer the findings of psychoanalysis as a body of organized theory. In his own words :

"My tyrant is psychology; it has always been my distant becoming goal...."⁷

From the very beginning Freud's research has been aimed to benefit the normal man. Despite the study of the Psyche as a subjective phenomena, Freud attempted to interpret it objectively. If we accept the Freudian premise that subjective phenomena can be adequately explained objectively, then most part of Freudian thesis is incontrovertible. The conundrum that Freud's ideas have raised, is put into perspective analysis in our study, ~~and~~ to show that Freud moved far beyond the narrow confines of being only a Psychologist. He has emerged as a philosopher, a social scientist, and above all a theorist of art and literature.

Over the years Psychoanalysis has been put to trials. It has established itself successfully as a branch of human

knowledge. Freud's efforts consisted not only appropriating the findings of psychoanalysis but in seizing and expanding it. It has touched upon all aspects of human activity and existence. Freud's position in the history of ideas is distinctly clear. He opted for Kant against Hume, and took the German philosophical tradition a step forward, focussing largely on the study of the *unconscious* mind. Of course, the formulations he arrived at, on the *unconscious*, as Freud claims, were without any direct dependence on such forerunners as Goethe, Blake, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. He spoke in an era that, it seems has long been preparing for the revelation he brought.

Freudian approach to the study of mental phenomena was all along dualistic. A very characteristic kind of ^adialectical thinking, as Hartman believes, that tend to base theories on the interaction of two opposite powers. Jones endorses this view and goes on to say that "the problem that was the starting point of Freud's cogitation was the dualism of the mind. He was in all his Psychological work, as the result of his extensive experience, seized with the profound conflict in the mind, and he was very naturally concerned to apprehend the nature of the opposing forces."⁸ The very concept of dualism is a legacy of the "nature-philosophie". Schelling observed that polarities in nature are a kind of dynamic interplay of antagonistic forces. In his study of the Psyche, Freud was guided by this basic principle.

Freud's attention was drawn twice in the course of his research, once by Haverloc Ellis, regarding the similarity of his thought with Goethe, and again by Otto Rank who brought out the symptomatic similarities ^{of thought} that existed between Freud, and Nietzsche. Though, Freud was aware of the availability of substantial material on the *unconscious*, he preferred to go about it of his own and tried to avoid any kind of influence. A strong tradition, however, existed in the speculative philosophy concerning *unconscious* mind. But it was Freud who offered a systematic theory on the study of the *unconscious*.

By his own testimony, Freud claimed that it was Goethe's poem on Nature that had led him to his choice of medical vocation. He had drawn substantially from Goethe, in the form of quotations to elucidate his arguments. As Whittles rightly observes : "Both Goethe's idea of beauty and interests in art and archeology as well as his concept of science with its search for archetypal patterns, can be found in Freud."⁹ Goethe had written about a force called *demoniac* in his autobiography. This concept of the "demoniac" is equivalent with Freud's unconscious. The *demoniac* is a type of energy that is not reducible to rational or moral categories. It seems to lay at a point where inorganic matter, organic nature, and the human mind come together.*

"To this principle, which seemed to come in between all other principles to separate them, and yet to link them together, I gave the name the Demoniac, after the example of the ancients and of those who, at any rate, have perceptions of the same kind."¹⁰

To Goethe the *demoniac* is at the same time seductive and terrifying. In Goethe's understanding of the *demoniac*, Freud was definitely assured not only of a forerunner of his ideas but also a sympathetic patron of his new science. In his words :

"I think that Goethe would not have rejected Psychoanalysis in an unfriendly spirit.... He himself approached it at a number of points, recognized much through his own insight that we have since been able to confirm, and some views, which has brought criticism and mockery down upon us, were expounded by him as self evident."¹¹

William Blake's response to a discovery similar to Freudian *unconscious* is less cautious. He considered the irrational energy to mean the collapse of the old and false rational distinctions between body and soul. For Blake active energy is the essence of the undivided body-soul and the faculty of reason, instead of being its opposite and master, is merely the outward bound of energy. Indeed, *the reactor or devourer* is the measure of the "prolific energy". Keeping in mind the similarity of thought, shared between Blake and Freud, Diana George comments that "the two minds cross an expanse of time and space and meet in what I consider a radical union of poetry and science, synthesis and analysis, romanticism and determinism. They meet through metaphorical process through the poet in Freud and the Psychoanalyst in Blake...."¹²

In the history of ideas, the concept of the *unconscious* has fascinated a line of illustrious thinkers. Leibniz described

it as the appetitive intentions of a transcendental nature installed in the self. Later philosophers, particularly Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche broadened the meaning of the concept. Freud in his explanations about the *unconscious* mental functioning came closest to both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Freud read Schopenhauer very late in his life, and claimed that he had avoided Nietzsche for fear of being influenced by him. However, he was well aware of the affinity, between his line of thought and that of Nietzsche's.

Thomas Mann draws attention to the similarity between the *will* of Schopenhauer and the *id* of Freud. Psychoanalysis as Mann has observed : "reveals itself as a translation of Schopenhauer's metaphysics."¹³ Schopenhauer's metaphysics is defined in terms of the *will* and the *idea*. The *will* as the inner content of the mind, when objectified in reality, becomes the *idea*. The *will* essentially is the embodiment of instincts. It is the life of man's primary experience; ceaselessly suffering and striving.

Freud and Schopenhauer share three basic common points. They are : an irrationalistic concept of man, the identification of the general life instinct with the sexual instinct, and the radical anthropological pessimism.

Nietzsche is often considered as the founder of modern psychology. He followed the tradition of Schopenhauer and stood closest to the Freudian thought amongst all the intuitive thinkers. In spite of Freud's disclaimer of Nietzsche's influence on him,

circumstantial evidences show that Nietzsche has been the subject matter of immense interest among the disciples of Freud.

In his attempt to understand the human mind, Nietzsche came to realize that human mind is a system of drives. Nietzsche observed that every one is farthest from himself. And perpetually lives in a world of self-deception. The *unconscious* to Nietzsche is an area of confused thoughts and re-enacts the past of the individual along with the past of the species. It is the study of the instincts that provided to both Nietzsche and Freud a fundamental foothold in order to interpret human nature. The dream has been treated by both as a means for the interpretation of the unconscious mind. The Freudian concepts such as repression, sublimation, and conversion are essentially Nietzschean in origin. The *Apollonian* and *Dionysian* concepts of Nietzsche confirm the basic paradigm of Freud's *conscious* and *unconscious* mind. Between Freud and Nietzsche, the former is methodical and systematic whereas the latter is mostly unsystematic. However, their positions in the history of ideas are complementary.

While avoiding the intuitive philosophers, Freud was immensely attracted to the natural scientists. Mid-nineteenth century has witnessed a radical change over the inadequacies of the prevailing mechanistic view of nature. The achievements of Darwin and Lamarck revolutionized the very concept of man in nature. The result was an emerging new concept of nature; called *vitalistic nature*. Freud acknowledged his indebtedness to Darwin. Because Darwin dismantled the false position of man's

origin; proved that he is as much animal as others are. Both Freud and Darwin sought in the past a key to the present. Freud's thought marks a systematic development from the biological to the psychological to the social. Freud adhered to the Darwinian explanations in a broader perspective in sketching a biological theory of society and morals. He indeed, has furthered the concept; what is known as *Social Darwinism*.

Besides Darwin a host of contemporary thinkers, such as Von Hartman, Theodor Lipps, and others have marked influences on Freud. It can be precisely said that Freud made his momentous discoveries in an era, the background for which was for long been ready.

Psychoanalysis as a method of unmasking the hidden self, comes closer to romanticism. Ascribing Freud, the status of a romantic philosopher Phillip Reiff notes :

"To think of him (Freud) as a Romantic despite his ardent faith in science involves no contradiction, for though he insisted on the pre-rational core of human nature, Freud remained a rationalist. Indeed, there is a peculiar convergence of the two notions — of the scientific idea of rational neutrality and the romantic debunking of reason."¹⁴

Freud's position as a romantist is fascinating. The aesthetic concern of psychoanalysis indeed, comes closest to the tenets of romanticism. However, Freud's thought has its own limitations too. But the achievements of psychoanalysis over weighs the lapses.

Sigmund Freud studied medicine at the University of Vienna and received his medical degree in 1881. Later on his two years of study at Salpêtrière in France, under Charcot brought about a turning point in his career. He shifted his interest from histological research to hysteria. Freud published his first work on hysteria in 1895 alongwith Joseph Breuer. The two important developments that happened to psycho-analysis with the publication of the Studies on Hysteria were a method of diagnosis and a method of treatment. The insistence on the sexual aetiology of hysteria on the part of Freud ultimately resulted in the parting of ways with Breuer. Nevertheless, the Studies had opened up for Freud a fundamental psychological insight and he came to realize that the *unconscious* mind is more important than the manifest mind.

The study of the *unconscious* mind for the most part is the subject matter of psychoanalysis. Till his time, the functioning of the psyche was mostly attributed to the conscious mental functioning. He believed that the mental apparatus can be set in motion in two different ways from without and from within. Freud formulated the first psychoanalytic system taking into consideration the three areas of the mind. The topographical description was drawn putting the *consciousness* at the center and explaining the relationship of the *unconscious* and *preconscious* with it. The *conscious* mind comprises of all thoughts, we are aware of at a given time. Then there is the *preconscious* which constitutes a sort of ante-chamber to the *consciousness*.

There are two sub-groups of *preconscious*, one which can be easily part of *consciousness* and the other which faces difficulty in becoming conscious is the part of the *unconscious*. Freud made the *unconscious* a working tool for the psychologists instead of a speculative device. Freud examined both the *conscious* and the *unconscious* and considered the shifting balance between them.

With the publication of The interpretation of Dreams (1900), Freud acquired more knowledge about the nature and function of the *unconscious* mind. Freud declared that the Interpretation of Dreams is the royal road to the study of the *unconscious*. The process of dream has a manifest content and a latent content. The latent content is most important and provides the necessary ingredients for the manifest content. Freud noted that the evidence of the share contributed by the *unconscious* in the formation of dreams is substantial. The theory of dream postulates three basic principles : (i) that the function of the dream is to protect sleep, (ii) that there is invariably a latent content which is not the same as the manifest content, and (iii) every dream represents the gratification of an unfulfilled wish. And there are four main activities of the dream work. They are *representation*, *condensation*, *displacement*, and *secondary elaboration*.

Interpretation of Dreams was followed by The Psychopathology of Every day Life (1901). Studies in psychopathology was another attempt to know in details the working of the

unconscious mind. In our every day life, we are subject to numerous acts of forgetfulness, slips of tongue, misreading, bungled, or what is called symptomatic actions. Freud explained that behind all these small acts of omission, unconscious motive are at play. Under certain conditions the unconscious motives break through and interfere in every day human behaviour.

The theory of sexuality or *Libido* is the cornerstone of Freudian paradigm. He is often accused of pansexualism. However, there is no denying of the fact that sex occupies one of the most important places in the life of the human organism. The Three Essays on Sexuality (1905) explains the complex nature of human psycho-sexuality, mostly sexual aberrations. The important findings of this book are the fixation of libido in the neurotic and infantile sexuality. The Essays deal with three successive stages of infantile sexual development such as oral, anal, and genital.

The development of the individual is marked by the development of the *Libido*. The libidinal stages starting from the oral stage and ending up with the phallic stage contribute to the formation of *narcissism*, *Oedipus Complex* and *character formation*. In his paper Instincts and Their Vicissitudes (1915), Freud added other possibilities for libidinal drives. The important being the reversal into the opposite. Alongwith reversal; concepts such as *sublimation*, *reaction formation*, and *repression* are also important findings of the *Libido* theory.

In a series of essays on metapsychology, Freud offered what constituted the views of his final phase. Besides his division of the mind into the topographical, the economic, and the dynamic, he offered the theory of pleasure and unpleasure. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920), Freud explained the economic factors of pleasure and unpleasure. He made two important observations of the pleasure - unpleasure theory : (i) the reality principle takes over the pleasure principle in the course of human development, and (ii) repression is responsible for turning pleasure in to unpleasure.

The second phase of Freud's career is marked with the framing of a new set of terminologies for the psychic apparatus. This shift is from the descriptive approach of mental apparatus to a dynamic division : from the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious to the *id*, the *ego*, and the *super ego*. This reformulation in fact, never changed Freud's basic position on the *unconscious* mind. The *id* is the source of all drives, the reservoir of instincts. It is essentially not very much different from the unconscious in its nature and function. The *ego* is defined as the coordinated organization of mental process. There is a conscious and unconscious part of the *ego*. After maturation the *ego* becomes the dynamic center of behaviour. The *super ego* is undoubtedly a novel idea. Through this concept Freud expanded the concept of *Oedipus Complex*, and successfully explained the interpersonal identifications and relations. The *super-ego* is the *ego-ideal*. It is the watchful, judging, and punishing agency in the individual.

Within the mind as a whole, Freud observed, two instincts are in constant struggle. They are *Life Instinct* (Eros) and *Death Instinct* (Thanatos). The course of life is but a circuitous path to death, forced upon the organism in the beginning by external forces and conserved for repetition by the instincts. The life instinct is associated with its special kind of energy called *Libido*. Against this the aggressive death wish works. Drawing upon the new structural concepts of mind, Freud discovered some new concepts such as *masochism*, *sadism*, and *anxiety*.

Psychoanalysis gradually opened up wider perspective touching upon social, cultural, and religious issues. Freud's views in this matter are valid in many ways even though, they are subject to unending debates. His approach was mostly biological and the major difference on his views come from the culturalists. His works viz., Civilization and Its Discontent (1930), The Future of an Illusion (1927), Totem and Taboo (1912-13), Moses and Monotheism (1939,a) and Group Psychology and the Ego (1936), deal largely on the social issues pertaining to the origin of civilization. Freud's views in these books on society and civilization are characterized by an uncompromising insistence on showing the repressive contents of highest values as achievements in the culture. *Ontogeny recapitulates Phylogeny* is one of the important hypotheses which he applied to trace the growth of civilization from the days of the primal horde to the dawn of civilization. Freud also applied the notion of the return of the repressed to the general history of civilization.

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The mutuality between psychoanalysis and Literature takes the paradoxical subject-object relationship "in much the same way as literature falls within the realm of psychoanalysis (within the competence and its knowledge), Psychoanalysis falls within the realm of literature and its specific logic and rhetoric".¹⁵ Trilling's observation on the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis is worth quoting here.

In his words :

"There is perhaps a certain paradox in the picture of a science standing upon the shoulders of a literature which was in so many ways actively opposed to science. But the paradox, if there be any, will vanish if we remember that this literature was assimilated, in a degree it could not possibly perceive, to the science it so often protested; it was a literature passionately devoted to one form of knowledge, the knowledge of the self."¹⁶

Scattered throughout his writings though, Freud's views on literature and art are seminal. One finds that Freud's ideas on literature has been no greater than the effect of literature on Freud. Psychoanalysis broadly touches upon the basic concepts of literature, i.e., the work of art, the artist, and the audience.

The artist occupies the central position. He is often characterized as a neurotic. Though critics differ on the question of the artist being neurotic, yet the significant aspect of his personality is that he scores over the neurotic for his ability to return to reality from the world of phantasy, As Freud says:

"An artist is once more in rudiments an introvert, not far removed from neurosis.... consequently like any other unsatisfied man, he turns away from reality and

transforms all his interests and his libido too to the wishful construction of his life fantasy he understands now to work over his day dreams as to make them loss what is too personal about them."¹⁷

The very act of artistic creation, Freud equated to child's play. Like the child at play the artist works on a series of displacements, bringing together dream, and fiction in the joint function for fulfillment of a wish. The artist's fantasy represents a complex structure. Though the debate on art and neurosis is a burning issue till today, it is agreed that the artist is specially gifted. As Freud puts it : "before the problem of the creative artist analysis, alas, will lay down its arms". Besides the artist, psychoanalysis deals with the work of art. In this connection the important literary genres discussed are, poetry in its relationship with dream, fantasy with fiction, drama and audience, and psychoanalysis in relation to biographical studies.

The theory of Jokes is one of the single most important contribution of Freud which is less controversial. Freud's theory of Joke (wit) and its relation to the *unconscious* is of seminal importance for the modern theory of the comic. Like Bergson, Freud attempts some remarkable analysis of what he regards as the basic comic situation. Freud used reduction in order to establish that the character of a joke is irreparably lost in every new formulation. However, the *joke* as a manifestation of the *unconscious*, found in an act of conscious, voluntary, social, institutionalized, verbal medium of communication. Norman Holland attributes significant importance to Freudian

theory of the jokes and argues that the theory of the jokes provides the key to the understanding of psychoanalytic theory of literature.

While trying to develop a systematic theory on art and literature, Freud took to the job of applying his own psychoanalytic concepts into critical analysis of literature and art. For unknowingly he put forward the foundation of a new school of literary criticism. Freud saw in art another manifestation of the human spirit. His opinions on art and literature are path breaking. Psychoanalysis, infact, embodies in itself the basic tenets of a new aesthetic theory. The artist, his life of fantasy, his aspiration to achieve recognition and the love of woman cast him in the psychoanalytic set up to be at the centre of all aesthetic activities. Freud also takes note of the literary form and the audience; the other two important aspects of literature. As Sterba rightly points out, "a proper understanding of what Freud meant when specifically talks about art requires nothing less than the whole of Psychoanalysis".¹⁸ Freud's essays ranging from Michael Angelo to Dostoevsky are interesting and provide authentic clues for Psychoanalytic approach to literary and art analysis. In a broader perspective Freud asserts that art has a social function. Art embodies in itself the primitive impulses and tends to be anthropomorphic. Beyond the individual and the social, Freud believed in the universal view of art and literature.

Freud's success in the application of the Psychoanalytic tools for interpreting the creative works are spectacular. Some of his critical expositions such as, Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's Gradiva, Hamlet, Dostoevsky and Parricide, Rosemersholm, expose a disciplined mind at its best. Whatever might be the lapses in these essays, Freud's interpretation has offered undoubtedly a new direction, in the pluralistic approaches of critical ~~in theories~~ in the contemporary context.

Psychoanalysis has marched a long way since the days of Freud. The total literary and critical fraternity have been equally divided as pro and anti - Freudians. From Jung to Lacan and Derrida, psychoanalysis has been criticised, modified and applied to various fields. Jung who was once, one of the most ardent disciples of Freud, differed from the master on the question of sex in psychoanalysis. He started his own school like Adler and others. However, their differences on the theoretical grounds do not substantially differ with that of Freud. As Jones pointed out : "The quarrel between Freud and his disciples had their origins not as seemed, in doctrinal divergences, but actually in unresolved infantile conflicts of the dissidents"¹⁹

There is some truth in the observation of Jones. The writings of Jung in many ways seem to be an extension of Freud's ideas. The concepts of the *introverted* and the *extroverted* as well as, the *anima* and *animus* are in more ways than one echo Freud. Ofcourse, Jung on many issues differ with Freud

significantly. Besides his theories on personality and creativity, Jung's contributions on areas of myth, archetype, collective unconscious are relevant for a better understanding of Freud.

The most dramatic developments in Psychoanalytic criticism have come as reactions to Freudian orthodoxy. There has been a kind of revolution in the study of Freudian ideas. Freud's theory of art and literature has been as much a point of confirmation as a point of departure. However, the orthodoxy of Freud's ideas have their relevance too. Freud's concepts with all the controversies ~~about~~ them have always been relevant to literary criticism. The best interpreters both for favour and also against Freud's theories on art and literature of the first half century have been critics and writers of eminence, like Joyce, Lawrence, Mann, Fitzgerald, Herbert Read, Van Wyck Brooks, and Edmund Wilson. Among ^{the} next generation of interpreters, some of the luminaries are Ernst Kris, Erik. H. Erickson, Norman O' Holland. And among the later who still find Freud's ideas useful, Harold Bloom is the best and certainly the most prolific. Freudian literary criticism received a blow from the decade long defection of some of the prominent psychoanalytic critics. From among them Federick C. Crews is most prominent.

During the turbulent sixties Norman O' Brown attempted to invert the meaning of Freud by praising the cultivation of the *polymorphus perverse* over the control of *sublimation*, and Herbert Marcuse attempted to relate psychoanalysis to political repression. Although both these thinkers have been in vogue for sometime, their insights hardly led to much literary criticism.

In the seventies, the most important developments in psychoanalytic criticism generally, came from the study of continental models, particularly the study of the 'French Freud' Jaques Lacan. In further complication of the French view of Freud, Jaques Derrida also comments both on Freud, and Lacan. All these multifaceted developments in Freudian scholarship convince us about one thing — the relevance and importance of Freud in our century. Ofcourse, it is out of scope of this study to deal with these varieties of critical responses to Freud's thought. However, these responses highlight the dynamism of Freud's ideas.

It is infact, appropriate to say that any conclusion on Freud is another beginning, almost a parallel : "in the face of the vast unknown Freud's attitude could not be other than Newton's with his pebbles on the beach of knowledge."²⁰

Notes

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3. Ernst Jones, The Life and Works of Sigmund Freud, (London: Hogarth Press, 1961), in single volume, p. xi
4. Richard Ellman, and Charles Feidleson. jr, ed., The Modern Tradition : Backgrounds of Modern Literature, (Newyork : Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 540
5. Thomas Mann, "Freud and Future", in Freud : A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Perry Meisel, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. : Prentice Hall Inc, 1981), p. 46
6. Sigmund Freud, The Complete Introductory Lecturers on Psycho-Analysis, ed., and Tr., by James Strachy, et al, (Newyork : W.W. Norton & Co, 1963), p. 21
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8. Jones, p. 378
9. H.F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of Unconscious : The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry, (Newyork : Basic Books, 1970), p. 466

10. Ibid, p. 543
11. Sigmund Freud, SE, vol. xxi, pp. 208-209
12. Diana Hume George, Blake and Freud, (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 16-17
13. Ellman, and Feidleson, jr, p. 588
14. Phillip Reiff, Freud : The Mind of the Moralist, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975), p. 34
15. Shosana Felman, "To Open the Question", *Yale French Studies*, 1977, vol. 55-56, p. 7
16. Lionel Trilling, "The Legacy of Freud : An Appraisal", *Kenyan Review*, 1940, vol. 2, p. 153
17. Sigmund Freud, SE xvi, pp. 376-77
18. Richard Sterba, "The Problem of Art in Freud's Writings", *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*; 1940, vol. 9, no., 2, p. 256
19. Ernst Jones, p. 127
20. Ibid, p. 374

"you know that the truth often has to be said manytimes"

Oscar Pfitser

In his letter of November 14, 1911, Freud wrote to Jung :

"As you know, I always have to proceed from the outside to the inside and from the whole to the part."¹

This statement of Freud, underlines the basic position that he took all along his life. The paradigms of Freud's thought have been crystallized into positive myths, even if he is often accused of being the father of a subversive science. However, Psycho-analysis as a method and theory for the study and understanding of human mind, nature, society, art, and literature has come to stay. To explore the encoded truths about human nature, indeed, becomes the main objective of Psychoanalysis. Even if we strip of Freud, the status of the law giver, we can not escape from the tremendous influence that Psycho-analysis has exerted on our day to day life. ~~today~~ However, Freud's sincerity in his path-breaking discoveries is beyond

doubt. There is undoubtedly a certain monkishness of intent and purpose in his intellectual odyssey that covers such diverse areas as Psychology, art, literature, sociology, and religion.

To understand Freud's oeuvre, one is obliged to return to his thesis on the *unconscious*. The *unconscious* for all the theoretical and practical purposes is the corner stone of the Psychoanalytic superstructure. While confirming his unconscious as a parallel of Blake's "devourer", Schopenhauer's "will", and Nietzsche's "Dionysus", Freud embraced the "dualistic" concept of nineteenth century naturalism. "The dualism of being is certainly no new conception and the idea of *coincidentia oppositorum* is quite familiar to us but the double meaning and the duplicity of existence, the snare and the reduction for the human understanding which lie hidden in every single phenomenon of reality, had never been experienced so intensively as now"². Freud has not only come closer to the natural scientists like Darwin, and Newton, he also put forward a romantic theory of art on the line of Schelling and others. "Freud's vision of Psychic life set upon a quest for the recent inner experience of man analogous to the other sought by Physics in natural order. Like Newton, Freud bracketed the human experience as a domain between two unknowables, a phenomenal realm of limited sense awareness whose confinement sentences human kind to the hard labour of discovering, by various influential methods, the realities without and within. Freud regarded his quest for the revelation of inner reality as one that had already been undertaken, successfully in regard to nature by

the natural scientists in the tradition to which he gave his allegiance."³ Freud's distinction with his illustrious predecessors is his credit for providing a systematic theory of the psyche. He pursued the study of the *unconscious* with the determination of a radical scientist and reached almost at the same conclusion of his speculative peers. The *topographic, economic, and dynamic* descriptions of the psyche precisely, was addressed to uncovering an inner psychic reality through a distinction between unconscious and conscious mind. "The Psychoanalytic quest for an unrecognized and here to fore unknown inner reality sought what had escaped the investigations of both the natural scientists and the Philosophers. Freud, pointed out with considerable satisfaction, that his conclusions completed a scientific organization of nature and human psychic life that the enlightenment and nineteenth century positivism failed to complete."⁴ With his objective analysis of the Psyche, Freud projected a temperament that is both classical and romantic in temper. While his method is strongly rooted in the classical objectivity, the outcome of his study commonsurated with the romantic understanding of the Psyche. In this sense Freud is a typical classical romantist.

Freud as a scientist in his training and practice basically belonged to Helmholtz School. Though Psychoanalysis has undergone modifications, and revisions by Freud himself, but the fundamental principles of causality and determinism have remain unaltered. Every phenomenon Freud believed must have an antecedent cause whether the phenomenon is physical of Psychic.

Psychoanalysis in fact, followed this principle with devotion through the arduous path of its development. Freud is justified saying that his study of the Psyche is a movement from the without to the within. In order to cure hysteria, Freud developed the theory of "*free association*", which ultimately turned out to be an effective tool for analysis of other aspects of human knowledge. He also went to discover various other features of the Psychic function. Dream interpretation of course is one of his greatest achievements for the study of the unconscious. And he proved himself to be right that "dream is the royal road to the unconscious". Dream interpretation was not only confined to the study of the unconscious but it led to influence Freud's total thinking process while approaching other branches of human knowledge, particularly art, and literature.

Freud's metapsychological analysis of the mental function is salutary. For he introduced altogether a new method of inquiring into the Psyche. The *economic*, *topographic*, and the *dynamic* analysis of the Psyche is the theoretical modification on the hitherto concepts of mind and led to the renaming of the Psychic apparatus as *id*, *ego*, and *superego*.

The unconscious process and the life of the instincts are the two important factors which have earned the dislike of the total world. Freud is often, blamed for reductionism and for being too much subjective. Nevertheless, if we accept that subjective phenomena can be objectively interpreted, then Freudian hypothesis of the dualism of human psyche is incontrovertible, as in natural science. The manifestation of the

unconscious and the compelling effect of the instincts on human situation are not like the physical manifestations, they are part of human behaviour. Therefore, the study of behaviour, which Freud undertook from a scientific point of view, obviously remain incomprehensible as they are not concrete phenomena. However, Freud's findings have an organised basis and logical coherence. And Psycho-analysis should be credited with having the wider perspective of touching upon all aspects of human activity and existence.

Freud's Studies on Psychopathology opened up new vistas on the workings of the enigmatic unconscious. Freud explained that behind every small acts of omission and commission in our day to day life an unconscious motive is at work. Freud found out that the unconscious motives have a strong bearing of sexuality. Inevitably sex or *bibido* theory becomes the touchstone of psychoanalytic paradigm. Freud's historic findings on child sexuality, became an unseemingly subject matter of controversy. The advocates of morality, and ethics declared open war against Freud on the ground that his Psychosexual finding about children is a devastating blow for the hitherto concept of children being closer to divine and are the flowers of innocence. But the truth can not be blotted out on traditional beliefs. Ultimately, Freud proved others wrong and his concepts on Libidinal fixations, sexual aberrations leading to neurotic disorders and finally successive stages of infantile sexual developments offered an organised picture of man's psychosexual development from childhood to adulthood. New concepts such as

narcissism, Oedipus complex, and character formations were developed. Freud's studies on instincts and their vicissitudes led him to develop concepts such as *sublimation, reaction formation, and expression*. Towards, the later part of his life Freud made important observations on pleasure and unpleasure theories. He came to the conclusion that the *reality principle* takes over the *pleasure principle* in the course of human development and repression is responsible for turning pleasure into unpleasure. Taking cue from his psycho-sexual studies on man, Freud applied his findings to society, culture, and religion. In the process, psychoanalysis turned out to be an enlarging system encompassing the issues which are very much part of human life and his existence. His radical opinions on the inter-relationship between repression and civilization are striking. Within Psychoanalytic ambience Freud made an uncompromising stand on believing that achievements of any civilization is exclusively dovetailed with repression. However, his opinions are subject to unending debate. Among all the critics of Freud, the Culturalist psychologists are most severe on his observations about society and culture. But Freud's stand should not be confused with the culturalist's accusations as his approach is biological. The attack on Freud's observations are almost parallel to that of all great thinkers like, Darwin, Newton whose path-bearing discoveries were never accepted and had been subject to derisive criticism initially. Similarly, one finds the clear difference between the approaches of the culturalist and Freud. While Freud took up the individual and his psychic behaviour being

the first principle for study of society, the culturalists take the opposite road, taking the society first and the individual there in.

Literature has a peculiar relationship with psychoanalysis. I am purposefully using the word peculiar in order to say that throughout Freud's career, it is literature which had provided sustenance to a science to which it is apparently opposed. Freud's writings on literature are not organised. Scattered though, throughout his writing his theory of art and literature today undoubtedly occupies an important place in critical arena as a germinal model of literary theory.

Within the bounds of Psychoanalytic model of literature, the artist occupies the central position. His past life, his obsessions, and experiences in life are the main ingredients to which he gives colour, and shape. Those who take the text as the object, they may fall short of knowing about the psychogenesis of art. The artist's life is no more considered in the psychoanalytic frame work as altogether invisible. Nevertheless, through the artist we come to know about the art. The artist like the child's play structures his castles in the air. But his endowment, has the distinction of adopting to reality, through language and ~~power~~ sublimation, by which he creates art. However, the artist like any other ordinary man is prone to neurotic tendencies. He too also gets frustrated with reality. But he sublimates his frustration into art. Because he is the one who knows the way back from fantasy to reality. Here the artist scores over the neurotic. Therefore, the debate on the artist as neurotic should not be taken too far. The nature of the

artist, therefore, should not be held in suspect. Freud's contention on neurosis and the artist is acceptable, along with artist's power of sublimation. Critics allude too much importance to the neurotic aspect of the artist while offering least importance to *sublimation*. *Sublimation*, however, is the key to overcome the neurosis and to reach a higher goal. Successful *sublimation* makes art a transcending reality. Psychoanalytic theory of art will remain incomplete without attributing adequate significance to sublimation.

Of course, Freud has made only cursory remarks on various literary forms. But, he has made authentic observations on audience. In his observations on the audience, particularly his concept of *identification* in the part of the spectator with the characters is substantially Aristotlean. However, his concepts on the audience, or reader has led to the birth of Reader Response criticism.

The continuance of the application of Psychoanalytic findings in human behaviour embarked Freud to put forward a systematic theory of the joke. Freud's theory on the joke is less controversial and can be taken up as the germinal model for the understanding of his theory of art and literature. The *unconscious* undoubtedly plays an important role in the joke situation. Freud's "techniques" and "analysis" of jokes clearly show how the unconscious manifests itself. However, the joke as the manifestation of the unconscious, found as an act of consciousness is expressed through voluntary, social, and institutionalized verbal mediums of communication. Freud uses

reduction in order to establish that the character of a joke is irreparably lost in every new formulation. Like Bergson, Freud attempted some remarkable analysis of what he regards the basic comic situation. However, Freud's contributions on joke bear the stamp of his genius and has enriched the hitherto theoretical developments on the comic as a genre.

In the pluralistic set up of the critical literary theories of today, Psychoanalytic literary criticism not only achieved a place of distinction but also forced us to rethink over the traditional methods of literary inquiry. The influence is not merely superfluous, nevertheless, it has affected the whole system. Freud himself should be credited for establishing a school for his creed by pioneering the new method through his various interpretations of literary text. The interpretations of *Gradiva*, *Hamlet*, *Brother Karamzov*, etc. have been salutary. However, Freud's concepts have never been accepted easily by the academic critics. He had always been looked upon with suspicion. However, what Freud could not have anticipated during his life, the impossible has happened now. Psychoanalysis literally has given birth to so many new methods of literary interpretations such as deconstruction, reader response, third force, and cognitive schools of criticism. Freud's importance, in the context of literary criticism should be above any controversy. Because, his ideas are germinal, and only time will tell us what more Psychoanalysis still has to offer to the world of art and literature. It is apt to say here in the words of Sterba that "a proper understanding of what Freud meant when

specifically talks about art requires nothing less than the whole of Psychoanalysis."⁵

From within the Psychoanalytic movement, the critics of Freud initiated the theoretical opposition to Freud's ideas. Many of Freud's disciples broke away from him and developed their own schools which in the course of time became redundant, except the Jungian School. Jung has in fact, contributed very many important concepts on art and literature. His studies on *myths*, *archetypes*, and *collective unconscious* are seminal. While looking at the theoretical differences between Freud and Jung, it is found that basically Jung's ideas have taken their origin in Freud's thought. Deliberately, certain aspects such as the importance of sex, child sexuality, and other issues were ignored by Jung. However, any discussion on Jung helps in a greater way for understanding Freud's ideas. Jones comments that the relationship between Freud and his disciples had their origins not as seemed, in doctrinal divergences, but actually in unresolved infantile conflicts of the dissidents."⁶

Any attempt to conclude on Freud is in fact, another beginning. He is a person who has been as much held in adoration, as much abused. Freud's modest statement, that like Darwin he has his few pebbles of knowledge, holds more meaning than what has been said on Freud, ~~himself~~. It is wrong to say that Freud has disturbed us rather he deserves the adulation for enlightening us. It might be that psychoanalytically we are not yet capable of making us free from the clutches of the *unconscious* and accept the truths about life. However, the

essential Freud is very much of a complexman. But he armed himself with solid logic without making any allowance for criticism. Therefore, Freud's intellectual honesty is the hallmark for everything he stands for.

Sometimes a single individual in the course of human history makes the whole humanity obliged to him for his service to the world for something or the other. Freud definitely deserves more of our adulation and praise than derision. For his science was totally devoted to the human cause. Therefore, Freud's ideas do not just defend an empty centre. He stood solidly by what he said, and would be least happy if we attribute him as a mystic visionary. In fact, psychoanalysis does not need any apologist for defending it. Because it is committed to the human cause in total. It is appropriate here to conclude with the words of Trilling that :

"One is always aware in reading Freud how little cynicism there is in his thought. His desire for man is only that he should be human, and to this end his science is devoted. No view of life to which the artist responds can insure the quality of his work, but the poetic qualities of Freuds' own principles, which are so clearly in the classic tragic realism, suggest that this is a view which does not narrow and simplify the human world for the artist but on the contrary opens and complicates it."⁷

Notes

1. William McGuire, Ed., The Freud/Jung Letters, (London: Hogarth Press and Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 90
2. A. Hanser, Social History of Art, (London : 1951), vol.,IV, p. 224
3. Richard Khuns, Psychoanalytic Theory of Art on Developmental Principles, (Newyork : Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 4
4. Ibid, pp. 11-12
5. Richard Sterba, "The Problem of Art in Freud's Writings", *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* vol., 9, No.,2, (1940),p.256
6. Ernst Jones, Life and Works of S. Freud, vol., II, (Newyork: Basic Books, 1955), p. 127
7. Lionel Trilling, "Freud and Literature" in Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays, Ed., Perry Meisel, (Englewood Clifts : Prentice-Hall, 1981), p. 111