CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION
"Magna est vis veritatis tuae et praevalebit"
[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 beligerence, 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."

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."

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. 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."

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." 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, 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 dialectical 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." 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 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." 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."
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 Psycho-analysis 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, *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 Psycho-analyst 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." 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. Inspite 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 Lamark 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 Salpetriere 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 along with 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 short 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 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 Psycho-pathology 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 into 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.
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". 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."

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, in fact, 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". 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 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. Of course, Jung on many issues differ with Freud.
significantly. Besides his theories on personality and creativity, Jung's contributions on 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. Of course, 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 in fact, 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."
Notes


8. Jones, p. 378

10. Ibid, p. 543
13. Ellman, and Feidieson, jr, p. 588
17. Sigmund Freud, SE xvi, pp. 376-77
19. Ernst Jones, p. 127
20. Ibid, p. 374