Chapter II

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An attempt at evaluating the full extent of the influence, i.e., examining the different aspects of psycho-analysis applied in particular works of art would certainly exhaust volumes. Our emphasis on the change and extension in matter and technique of fiction, psycho-analysis has brought in, is for no purpose other than to attenuate, if possible, the labour and to extenuate or make the task in hand look less ambitions.

To begin with, one may think as much as to say that there is very little distinction between a modern psycho-analytic - episodic novel and the psycho-analytic literature. Some of the aspects of psycho-analysis, illustrated by Freud in The Major Works and The Basic Writings are as artistic in description and explanation as a novel, and appear even more interesting. This development of fiction is surprising indeed. But it is real. It is not even accidental (as it is considered occasionally to have occurred as a result of the wars). The germ of this development is already in literature. It was incidental first; it is now deemed essential in the exploration of life. Inspite of the appreciable degree of difference between the two, literature has embraced psychology in its drive as a faithful portraiture of life, both in the realistic and the romantic or idealistic treatment as an indispensable source of information about life even before psychology had
emerged as a scientific branch of knowledge about the mind. The old masters of art sought incidentally to realise "the liberty of the inward man" through actions in their poetic dramas, just in the way as directed by Freud in his psycho-analysis. A glance at the works of the Greek poets, dramatists and philosophers enumerated by Coleman in his Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life would show the extent of psychological insight, they used to investigate the emotional problems of the mind and its behaviour. These books are indeed literary documents in proof of a profound psychological and intuitive understanding of the multiple uncertain human motivations. It is surprising to note, for instance, how the attitudes of Euripides and Sophocles toward life were accompanied by the psychological insight at a time when psychology was still to be theorised on a scientific basis.

Dostoevsky's attitude towards evil as embodied in Ivan Svidrigailov in Crime and Punishment, and particularly in the characterisation of Fyodor Pavlovitch is profoundly psychological, although his insight into the mechanisms of defense and hostility was not supplanted by psycho-analytic theories. The Karamazov family represents from the beginning one version of the doctrine of original sin. Men are born of fathers and mothers, and the sins of parents are visited upon their children from generation into generation. The lusts and

passions of Fyodor Pavlovitch are passed to his children, and they cannot escape them. Dostoevsky's sense of man, torn asunder by competing elements has been stated to be on a par with that of Plato and Freud.

The tendency of the modern writers of fiction has been towards the effacement of the gap between psychology and literature in the interpretation of life. This is evident from the achievement of the experimentalists (namely, Conrad, Woolf, Joyce, Lawrence). In their passionate attempt to give fictional expression to their interior flux, i.e., states of consciousness these writers concentrate on the loose formula of the mental habit and try to give full account of human experience, ignoring the limitations of the world of art.

In his An Outline of Psychology William McDougall underlines the difference between psychology and literature and that between literature and popular psychology. McDougall, however, pleads for a compromise between literature and psychology in the investigation of life. There can be no antagonism, he states, in the way of one imitating the other. Literature and psychology are 'supplementary'. Literature is a vast source of information about life, and can be a respectable resource for the wise psychologist, he argues. In the same way

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3. Ibid., p. 144.
a prying man of letters in his search of truth about life can rely on psychology to rid him of 'illusion' in the artistic representation of the actual experiences of life.\footnote{McDaugall, An Outline of Psychology, pp. 3, 6.}

Our theme in this chapter is not, of course, to explain and substantiate whether the use of psychology in literature is justified but to make a rapid survey of the extent of influence Freudian psychology has exerted in modern fiction.

The revulsion in the fictional trend starts towards the end of the World War I. Since then, fictions, long and short, have become stuffed with searchings into motives and dream - symbols of psycho-analysis. In the centuries, prior to ours, life was secure, full of order and simplicity, was predictable or fixed to a definite end. Or, it appeared to be so in man's pleasing ignorance and love of illusion. The motives of the character in a novel were open. Readers felt secure in their company, for their 'knavery or foolishness' made sense for them.

The psycho-analytic revolution has brought in a radical change in man's attitudes towards the values of life, including art and beauty. The change in art has been towards a growing complexity in matter and treatment. The complexity in literary art is not, of course, wholly the result of a psychological imposition. A considerable portion of it
proceeds from the general complexity of life itself. Freud writes in his *Civilisation and its Discontents*: "Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this, hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension." Human life, now is not, as William James points out, a bundle of qualities but a certain states of consciousness that stream like a river, "now fast, now slow, now clear, now turbid". Or as Freud puts it, the mental processes are essentially unconscious and those which are conscious are merely isolated acts and parts of whole psychic entity, and sexual impulses "play a peculiarly large part ... in the causation of nervous and mental disorders." The new psychologists have expressed evidently our ignorance, and taught us that clarity of human motive as we were accustomed to believe in, is an illusion. Seeing how complicated human behaviour really is, we prefer now to read about the incompletely comprehensible heroes of Hawthorne, Melville, Kafka and Dostoevsky. The long and short fictions of these writers and those of Proust, Joyce, Woolf, Conrad, Lawrence are insignia of strong individualism and disillusionment. Their enigmatic heroes - unheroic, unsocial, unsociable heroes as they are often called, are more enjoyable for us even in their unintelligibility, because we are fated to live like them in an indefinable feeling


of insecurity, desolation and continual tension, caused as
Frederick Hoffman puts it either by unexpected violence or by
the expectation of violence that does not occur.⁸ We experience
no God to protect us, no religion to accommodate us. In the
absence of any doctrine, adequate to explain our situation, we
find us alienated or violent either positively or negatively.

This is the real condition of human existence in the
present century. Modern fiction writers, committed to tell this
truth about life have discarded the traditional techniques of
telling a story (which was a straightforward realistic
narrative wherein action determined meaning and the theme was
clearly and explicitly stated). They have given up any attempt
to conform to the society, which was the perpetual attempt of
the 'respectable' novelists, like Fielding, Smollet, Dickens
and Thackeray, but which proved perfidious to their 'artistic
integrity'. The modern writers feel no urge for holding "a
complacent view of life". The novels and short stories of
Joyce, Lawrence, Huxley and Woolf have no heroes in the
traditional sense. There is nothing heroic about them; nothing
memorable in the sense in which Becky Sharps and Heathcliffs
are memorable. The absence of memorable and outstanding
characters constitutes the chief difference between the
Victorian and the twentieth century psychological novels. The
psychological novelists want to demonstrate what people are
like, and record the flaws and currents of their subconscious

⁸. F. Hoffman, The Mortal No, Death and the Modern Imagination
mind. Their primary concern is with the inner life of the characters, with the strife between the conflicting elements in the same person rather than with the vivid strife between persons. For this end in view, they have evolved a new technical device, new procedure in the form of fiction. These fictions are not determined by plot, by the simple dramatic issue as in the 'well-made' novels. They like diversity and complexity instead of simplicity and conformity. "They are eccentric rather than concentric, prefer discontinuity rather than continuity, evince no particular care about neatly finishing off a given action ... ." By attenuating plot, reducing action, and fracturing chronological order of time, writers in this century have, as Douglas A. Hughes puts it, shifted the focus of the fiction from the conclusion to the middle or a moment before the end of the stories. Most of them occasionally rely, he continues, on 'epiphany', i.e., on a sudden revelation near but not at the end of a story, which clarifies the seemingly pointless action and pedestrian thought of the character. In departing from the traditional method of characterisation, and concentrating intensely— even exclusively on the inner experience of men, they were merely using the new knowledge discovered by Freud and his followers, — knowledge not available in the 19th century.9

A psycho-analytic novel is not now difficult to understand, and even to define. J.W. Beach defines it as one, 

which consists in the author's explaining what, in general or at a given juncture, were the motives determining the person's action, especially when the motives are complicated or obscure and require some ingenuity to disentangle or bring to light. 10

The psycho-analytic methods is stated to have occurred occasionally in the philosophical novels of Fielding. Fielding's analysis of Blifil's behaviour towards Sophia Western, in Tom Jones has been referred to by Beach as an illustration of the method.

The method also occurred in the novels of the Victorian novelists inspite of their irritating moral bias. George Eliot's Adam Bede and Middlemarch go behind the apparent motive to something lying deeper in the consciousness, which is the main determinant of conduct. Eliot was not only aware of the physiological bases of behaviour, but also of the Freudian theory of unconscious. This is evident in the characterisation of Bulstrode: "But many of these misdeeds were like the subtle muscular movements which are not taken account of in the consciousness, though they bring about the end that we fix our mind on and desire." 11 The theory of the unconscious found expression even in novels of Meredith and Butler. The mechanism, which man in his unconscious preoccupation employs for securing results that his conscious self does not approve is demonstrated in The Way of All Flesh: "Here Ernest's

11. Ibid.
unconscious self took the matter up and made unconscious
resistance to which his conscious self was unequal, by tumbling
him off his chair in a fit of fainting." 12

It is not true, therefore, to suppose that Freudian
psychology is the origin of the psychological method in fiction.
In the same way it is erroneous to believe that Freud was the
only psychologist to intensify the twentieth century
counterpart of it. The role of Herbert Spencer, Hegel David
Hume and William James in the illumination of modern writers
and in the eradication of modern men's superstition and
illusion cannot be exaggerated. 13 The novels of G.H. Moore
Virginia Woolf, Roger Fly have been commented upon as
illustrative of Hume's analysis of the relations of mind and
object on action. According to James Grier Miller, Spencer's
'unknowable' is, as we have referred to earlier, strangely
similar to Freud's concept of the unconscious. 14 William
James, and not Freud is the originator of the stream of
consciousness method in 20th century fiction. Still, it must
be conceded that psycho-analysis is the most important force
in the new literary revolt. In no field has the search after
meanings and values by light of Freudian principle been carried
on with such painstaking labour and such extraordinary
restraint as in the sphere of imaginative literature. Wilbur P.

13. F. Hoffman, The Mortal No Death and the Modern Imagination,
   pp. 66, 67.
14. Miller, Unconsciousness, pp. 17, 42.
Birdwood is quoted to have said that Freidianism gave the novelist a new scope in the fictional interpretation of character and almost unlimited possibilities for new themes. The fundamental concepts of Freudian psychology, which have attracted the novelists and short story writers are the unconscious and the psychic conflict. We have explained how the unconscious events influence our behaviour even in their original state of existence and have referred to the works of the great Greek artists to illustrate the same. We are just discussing within our limits how modern artists, inspired by Freud's scientific discoveries about the mind have used to create in close touch with the unconscious. Their arts exhibits, so to say, a latent and a manifest content - the processes that operate in dreams.

A psychic conflict is, as we have explained earlier, the conflict between the id that seeks to get released and the ego that checks that release. It arises out of the discordance between what a man wishes and aspires and what stands in the way of accomplishing his wishes and aspirations. Some conflicts are easy for us to solve by the application of self-insight, sublimation and social amelioration; but inward conflicts - conflicts as demonstrated in Euripides's Media, Sophocles's Oedipus Rex, Electra, Orestes, Shakespeare's Hamlet, King Lear, Ibsen's Ghosts need psycho-analytic treatment for settlement. The tragedy in Ibsen's Ghosts as well as in Doestoevsky's 15. Morrison, Freud and the Critic. See pp. 40, 42, 43.
Brothers Karamazov proceed from curses of heredity. "Heredity is the fate of our present day existence." A typical Freudian conflict has been demonstrated in Hardy's *Dynast*, Galsworthy's *Strife*, Sophocles' *The Antigone*, Goethe's *Faust* and Lampedusa's *The Leopards*. In a conflict of this type the hero is forced into an identification with an abstract or collective force in a concrete form. This symbolical conflict has been stated to have originated with Hegel. Hoffman mentions Rimbaud, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Gide, Graham Greene as demonstrating conflicts of self which have been derived from William James's "pure practical consciousness" and intensified by Freud's psychology. Some of the novels, mentioned by Hoffman in his book, utilising conflicts, added and intensified or aggravated by the ideas of Freud, James, Hume, Jung and Spencer are Henry James's *The Princess Casamassima*, Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, Forster's *Howard's End*, Melville's *Moby Dick*, Malraux's *Chen of Man's Fate*, Man's *Hope*, J.G. Gray's *The Warriors*, Faulkner's *A Fable*, Dreiser's *The American Tragedy*, Dos Passos's *Camera Eye*, Hemingway's *Nick Adam*, Proust's *A la Recherche*, Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, The *Rainbow*, Virginia Woolf's *To the Light House*, and the expressionistic novels like *The Adding Machine*, *The Subway*, *The Great God Brown*, etc.

Hoffman states Rimbaud's surrealistic expressionism as a fine penetration to the Freudian unconscious.

"Expressionism", he says, "is a direct representation of the inner life - a formalised, spatial integration within a fixed

unmoving time of the total self." 17

Joseph K.'s arrest in Kafka's The Trial can be explained in the light of Freudian psychology. Freud warned in his later writings against the danger of a too powerful super-ego, which being internalised controls the dangerous instincts of the id. He also says that all men cover their mothers so that they remain even in adulthood guilty of incest - for an eternity of peacelessness. Joseph K. is a man condemned by too powerful a super-ego. His arrest is the condition of life itself - a life trapped in a world not merely hostile to it, but apparently impervious to human action.

The children in William Golding's Lord of the Flies are a typical representation of the Freudian id.

Some memorable plays written in demonstration of different abnormal phenomena are: Eugène Ionesco's The Miller, Jean Genet's The Maids (1947), The Blacks (1958), Arthur Miller's The Crucible, Death of a Salesman, O'Neil's Morning Becomes Electra, Long Day's Journey into Night. 18

Freudianism became most popular in American literature. The young Americans deemed it a cultural need and accepted Freud's doctrine of sexual liberation enthusiastically, and vigorously attacked the hypocrisy and repressiveness of American puritanism.

The first American writer who made use of Freudian psychology is Sherwood Anderson. His revealing stories are I'm a Fool, and I want to Know Why. His Winesburg, Ohio is a collection of psychological sketches. With kindly insight he presents the inner struggle of troubled persons, who, broken by forces they cannot understand, imprison their life in cages of false values.

The most successful studies of character were made in America by Conrad Aiken. His Silent Snow, Secret Snow are 'touchy studies.' The influence of Freud's determinism is obvious in his Skepticism. Aiken literally accepted Freud's pleasure and reality principles, and his attitudes towards art and the artist. His Blue Voyage is a stream of consciousness novel with a hero, who is a victim of schizophrenia, caused by a childhood trauma.

Another American writer who was fascinated by the novelty of Freudian psychology is May Sinclair, who stuffed her novels with incest, Oedipus infanticide, repression, psychoses and what not? Her Three Sisters demonstrates the evils of undue devotion.

J.W. Beach considers D.H. Lawrence to be the only English novelist, who took the psychology of sex, and mentions

20. Ibid.
his Sons and Lovers (1913) to be the first Freudian novel in English. Lawrence is said to have become familiar with the popular aspect of psycho-analysis through Frida Lawrence in 1912. But Sons and Lovers is a novel, which has used Freud's Oedipus complex in its 'classic completeness'. The autobiographical novel analyses Lawrence's neurotic attachment to his mother. It has been described as a 'catharsis achieved by reliving of an actual experience.

All the representative novels of Lawrence are erotic; they abound in psycho-analytic phenomena, most of which can be recognised as the unconscious processes of "self-maximisation" through love, transference, sublimation and the inferiority complex. Lawrence believed in the knowledge of the blood, i.e., in truths felt by the body rather than comprehended by the mind. Lawrence first hated Freud to be an advocate of incest — of "a huge seamy serpent of sex" and treated psycho-analysis as "an immoral endeavour". But he gradually learnt to appreciate Freud as one who "pulled us somewhat back to earth, out of our clouds of superfineness". Morrison speaks about Lawrence's temperamental sympathy for the theories of

Jung, and also about his rejection of Jung's mysticism and libido in preference of Freud's sex. 25

The three novels of Joyce, namely, Ulysses, The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man, and Finnegans Wake are Freudian. Ulysses has been interpreted as a subjective drama of psychological disintegration. The novel is without a definite plot. The influence of depth psychology is deeply felt in the characterisation of Bloom, who is betrayed in complete nakedness of body and soul. Bloom is a womanly man – a masochist with tendencies at self-torture.

In all the three novels, the novelist stresses on the problem of adjustment and on intimate relationships in familial situations. The family world is real and the problem of adjustment is psychological.

The psychological problem in the Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man takes place within the mind of Dedalus in an atmosphere of morbidity, and ends with his adjustment to art.

In both the novels the mother plays a role, similar to that of Lawrence's Sons and Lovers, and the novelist himself is the hero.

Joyce's Finnegans Wake has very little to say about the objective world. It is the dream-phantasy of old stuttering Humphrey Chlimden Earwicker. His wife, Ann is too young for him.

25. Morrison, Freud and the Critic, p. 204.
The erotic phantasy and feeling of guilt in him are roused by his daughter, Isobel. The idea of incest between him and his daughter, and homosexual motive between him and Kevin and Jerry, his two sons are developed in dream.

The dream in the novel can be explained as Freudian in its completeness. The Freudian sensor is made to intervene to change Isobel into Isoult la Belle.

According to Freud the impulses of men are set free in sleep. The sexual instincts of man and woman, the child-instinct, the masculine and feminine principles - all come into play in confusing way, shadow forth disturbing relationships, which yet spring from the prime processes of life.

Of all the English novelists Virginia Woolf was the most conscious about her method. About her method in Mrs. Dalloway and To the Light House she wrote: "the sights and sounds that have been of most interests to you swam to the surface ... and remained in memory; what was unimportant sank into forgetfulness. So it is with the writers ... In fact, his undermind works at top speed, while his uppermind drowses. Then after a pause, the veil lifts, and there is the thing - the thing that he wants to write about - simplified, composed."26 About life she says, "Life is not a series of gig lamps, symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, semi-transferent envelope, surrounding us from the beginning

of consciousness to the end." 27

It is needless to explain what she meant by this. All the 20th century novelists, committed to the psycho-analytic exploration of life stress on the psychical or symbolical reality rather than on the exterior one. The exterior objective reality, that is directly reported in a novel serves only as an occasion; its sole concentration being on things, which the occasion releases.

In France, the analytical novel discussing individual problems and emotional conflicts became prominent throughout the 20th century under the leadership of Andre Gide (1869-1951).

The French writers enjoyed a more favourable condition for the use of Freudian psychology, than the English writers. They were free from any moral discipline or illusion of truth. They felt no misgiving in expressing the idea of determinism - the idea of a world indifferent to man. Marcel Proust's Remembrance of Things Past bears testimony to this. It is a novel of acute psychological analysis. The novel enumerates the reflection of a young boy over a cup of tea. In Baron de Charlus, Proust takes homosexuality as the main theme. He has been remarked as the first great novelist to give inversion a place in fiction.

The new literature came into being in India in the wake of the Russian revolt for communism, and the psychology of

sex and other abnormalities explored by Freud, and deciphered by Havelock Ellis. Both had almost the same effect on the Indian youths. The two theories have, inspite of their very many differences on the surface an inward resemblance inasmuch as, both are concerned with diseases issuing from basic insecurity.

Among the Bengali writers, Buddhadev Bose and Achintya Sen Gupta were pronounced Freudians at that time. They were prolific writers, who, teased by what their local masters did bad resorted to Freud and Marx for inspiration and enlightenment. The influence of Lawrence and Huxby is well apparent in the problem novels of Buddhadev Bose. The emphasis here is shifted from the plot to the analysis of character's motives. Achintya Sen Gupta was attracted more by Hamsun as is evident from his Bed&, where a young man loves six women since his boyhood, but marries none of them. In Bibaher Ceye Boro (1931) he challenges the institution of marriage through sexual connection between the hero (Prabhat) and the heroine (Ashru). Love here is hurled to the lower level of sex; but sex is treated as a force, responsible for all greater feelings of man.

Psycho-analytic investigation of human relationship in the true Freudian way starts with the novels of Manik Bandopadhyay (1908–1956). There is no trace of idealism that embellished the writings of Rabindra Nath Tagore in his

28. Contemporary Indian Literature (Sahitya Academy), p. 28.
attitudes towards sexual and other human relationships. His 
Bhikhu in Prageitihask symbolises primitive darkness where 
sex engrafs no conflict, no torture in the mind. His Hat 
demonstrates a psychological phenomenon of sadism. Failing to 
control her disobedient hand that revels in tearing dress, and 
pulling flowers without her awareness, Mahamaya forces it into 
the weaving machine. The polarity of love and hate is 
illustrated in the person of Charu and Pari. Bhezāl 
demonstrates the inner ugliness of love within its surface 
endowment. The father—daughter and mother—son relationships 
occur in Mahākālar Jātār Jāt in oedipal significance.

Bandopadhyay was first a warm admirer of Freud, but 
towards the later part of his career, he turns out a critic of 
psycho—analysis. As a matter of fact, he wanted to rid himself 
of the monotony of psychological oversimplification and 
onesidedness of which D.H. Lawrence became the victim. 29

Like Bandopadhyay, Banaphul, a physician, applied the 
psycho—analytic interpretation in the study of the middle class 
life. In Tinkhanda (1935) he writes: "Outwardly we are so 
gentle but inwardly so rude! That primitive cave—man is alive 
in us even to—day. All efforts of civilisation too have left 
him an animal ... ."

Some of the psycho—analytic writers of fiction, long 
and short are Dhurjatiprasad, Dr. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Nirode 
Choudhury, G.V. Desani, Ilachandra Joshi, etc.

29. Ranendra Nath Dev, Bāṅglā Upanyāsē Ādhunik Paryyāy (Book 
Of the Freudian novelists in India, Shri Joshi (Hindi) has been subject to incisive criticism for his artistic imperfections. He is like the American Waldo Frank a symbol of writer's obsession with Freudianism. Except Sanyasi, his early novel, all his fictions, long and short are repetitive and episodic.\(^\text{30}\)

Freudianism furrowed no great influence in modern Indian literature. Indian literature used to thrive in the absence of the two vital things, namely, the psychology of sex and the experiences of poverty. This is evident from the great writings of Rabindra Nath Tagore and others. But the young writers who became familiar with Freud and his discoveries indirectly through Havelock Ellis's Studies in the Psychology of Sex (1897-1928) and also through the applications of them in English literature got enraged at the teasing idealistic preoccupation and self-sufficiency of the major Indian writers. They considered Freudian searching into life and its values a cultural need for riddance of traditional illusion and idealism. Still, it must be said that Freudianism could not operate in any Indian literature so well as was expected. The accompaniment of Marxism with it served as an alternative in the choice of the writers. They found reason to be ambivalent in their attitude towards one in preference of the other to the effect that both suffered setbacks in their

\(^{30}\) Contemporary Indian Literature, p. 92.
This brief survey of modern fiction leaves no doubt however about the fact that of all forces psycho-analysis has been the most prominent and decisive force in its present progress. Our survey has, of course, been too general and abstract to give an impression of the detailed picture of its impact. A searching study would lead us to believe that no aspect of Freudian psychology has been left unutilised in modern creative literature. Circumscribed, as we are, we should, without further digressions remain content simply displaying the influence of psycho-analysis. And finally, while this survey seeks to stress on the change and extension in the matter and technique of fiction, it does not intend to qualify the nature of the changes. The artistic imperfections that have occurred as a result of the applications of the scientific discoveries have been reserved for chapters to start, and will be illustrated through our fictions.