CHAPTER-II

PSYCHOANALYSIS

Freud is the beginning of the study of human nature but not the end in itself. He laid down the · foundation of Psychology. But his views are eclipsed by onesidedness. Eventhough one has to start with him, to travel through the realms of Freud's research without which the study of a man would be incomplete.

Freud's theory assures us that the human mind is divided in three main regions : conscious, subconscious and unconscious. And there are three main agents that carry out the human business: Id, Ego and Superego. Id is mainly composed of primitive impulses and instincts of human beings. In addition to that, man's biological needs join hands with Id to make it poweful. This psychic energy Id springs from man's unconscious mind. It is more powerful than the forces like Ego and Superego. Though Id is our life long companion it is more active and forceful in our childhood and when we are fast asleep. Id, which is the promoter and supporter of the 'pleasure principle', is always on its way to seek pleasure. Id is quietened only after that particular human need gets fulfilled. Moreover, the 'primary thinking process' has its origin in Id. Although Id is always checked by other forces, it is true that most of our actions are dominated by it.

Another psychic-energy Ego which develops with the development of a person has an important role to perform. Ego works in the domain of conscious mind. It has to judge or think of the situation, and either harness or whip out the wild Id of a person. Ego thus tries to master Id.

Again Ego is either suspended or supported by the third psychic energy-Superego which is the product of social and moral world of any culture. This Superego is always inclined to be faithful to the outward surroundings, the social, economic, political and religious aspects of culture. Ego works in the favour of Superego, allowing to hapen something if it is relevant and valid in that culture.

Eventhough the mankind has been trying to banish the Wars with the slogans 'we want no wars,' paradoxically enough, it has to face the continuous war going on in mind itself. Id, Ego and Superego are engaged in the 'civil wars' forever. These wars have been going on since the origin of man. Nobody can stop them. Nor is a person free from these warring energies. This 'intra-psychic conflict' is an everlasting phenomenon; and what makes or destorts a person is the output of it.

Freud gives much importance to the 'unconscious' mind which is full of psychobiological id-motives. Its contents are always increased by repression.

The repressed motives always try to come up in the conscious mind, but their expression is held back by Ego which always tries to suppress them, and make them unconscious again. As the Id is active all the time, sometimes, these repressed id-motives which are alive in the unconscious mind, disturb the human nature.The unconscious mind, oftentimes, provides the material for the 'day-dreams' and 'night-dreams'.The powerful id-impulses or repressed wishes or desires appear in a distorted manner in the night-dreams and in a clear way in the day-dreams. Thus, the unconscious mind provides the basic motive power for the formation of dreams.

When the 'intra-psychic conflicts' are acute, and are unbearable and beyond control, the Ego, sometimes, develops some strategies to protect itself against Id, Superego and the external reality. This process of coping with the 'conflicting situations' is known as defence mechanism. Very often, in our day to day life, we use this mechanism to avoid conflicts. Suppression, Repression, Projection, Displacement, Rationalization, compensation and sublimation are some of the examples of it.[1]

'The major purpose of the Ego defense mechanisms is to reduce anxiety'[2] But if the Ego is a failure in defending itself against the conflicting situations, it experiences anxiety. The prolonged anxiety, sometimes, creates the neurotic personality. In otherwords, in a normal person, Ego controls

Id in the light of the guidelines from Superego. But very often Id is uncontrollable. The Wild Id shakes human mind upside down and pulls down Ego and Superego. When Id overcomes Ego, the whole balance of the mind collapses and starts the reign of abnormal or neurotic behaviour.

According to Freud Sex or sexual instinct is the driving force of human activities. The psychic energy _ libido of any human being is absolutely sexual. His extreme stress on sexuality as libido energy made him say good-bye to his intimates like Adler and Jung, for they rejected his views. Even today, to a large extent, we have to rely on his psycho sexual theory for understanding human nature. He helps us in exploring some problems like 'Oedipus Complex' and 'Electra complex' which arise in the 'phallic stage' of development, respectively, in male and female child. Freud drove off the 'taboo' of sex from human life and tried to teach mankind to look at it with broad outlook.

Freud gave much importance to child-rearing practices of the parents and the child's intra-psychic conflicts. In his opinion, everything happens in the impressionable years, during oral, anal, phallic and genital stages- the stages in the development of a child. The important deterministic view of his is that man's most of the personality traits are formed in his infancy and childhood. Nothing important happens except

the prolongation of these traits in later life.

C.G.Jung's basic analysis of human mind is somewhat like that of Freud's, but Jung calls them with different names. According to Jung, the whole of human mind has three layers : Individual consciousness, Individual unconsciousness and the collective unconsciousness. In this structure of human mind the uppermost layer is devoted to the person's own consciousness, below it lies the world of his own unconsciousness and at the bottom is latent or hidden the blocked off memory of the whole racial past.This region preserves the pre-logical ideas, habits and desires of the pre-human i.e. primitive human beings. With this thread of 'collective unconsciousness' every individual is pre-nated to his ancestral past. Very often man's own personal desires (conscious or unconscious) elude him, leaving him alone in the hands of 'the world far-off' forgotten in the course of time. Many a time, this collective unconsciousness bumps on the surface of human mind; and the person does many things unknowing his own personal desires. He acts first but is unable to find out the cause of his act, vaguely grappling with the answer to his action.

Alfred Adler, the pioneer of individual psychology is of the opinion that every individual always strives for superiority.

Nicholas S.DiCaprio writes about need :
Need is a dominant force that runs
personality. Almost everything the
person does is traceable to need.
Needs can be taken as 'deficit-states'
which can be eliminated or reduced
by specific goal objects. In a state
of need an organism is impelled to activate
toward an appropriate goal.[3]

According to Adler, the need for higher position, higher status, higher stature lies at the bottom of man's mind. To achieve superiority is the only goal of every individual; and due to this his life becomes an endless strife or struggle for superiority. Each suffers from the 'inferiority complex' because no two individuals are alike in what they get or have. One of them enjoys facilities, status, name, fame and superiority. One who can't have these becomes conscious of his inferiority. He always wants to kick it out, to get rid of it by all means. For Adler, the personality of a person is always dynamic, vital and is guided by some supreme desires that want to uplift him. Sometimes the person may lack the abilities or potentialities to come out or the environment mars him. If he becomes successful it is the very heaven for him only for sometime, because he always hungers for superiority; but if he fails, mental disorder or neurotic behaviour awaits him. Sometimes this complex may block the further development of his life.

Another name well established in the field of psychology is Erik Erikson.According to him, human personality is an everchanging and everdeveloping thing. Erikson's 'psycho social' theory of development views the person from the stand point of his socio cultural environment. He says :

'Many conflicts result from the clash between child's 'non-sexual' needs and desires and expectations and the limitations of his culture.'[4]

He is of the opinion that there is a total integration between a person and his environment throughout life, therefore, personality growth and changes cannot be restricted to the first few years. He divides the cycle of life into eight stages. Each stage offers a particular conflict and the child has to face it, solve it in a positive sense. These conflicting pairs are : trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus role confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generosity versus stagnation and ego integrity versus despair.[5]

A person must face these conflicts and solve the problems associated with each stage of life. If the problems are solved easily, he develops; and if he fails, to solve these problems in time, the situation may create some hindrances or obstacles in the development of his personality.

In this way, many personality disturbances or traits or behavioural patterns are formed out of man's interactions with social enviornment. Once the personality disorder looms large in the life of a person, both willingly and unwillingly he has to await his destiny. Nicholas DiCaprio comments :

The commonly used expression 'search for identity' is associated with Erikson's work. In his opinion, the search for identity is an ever present concern in the life of an individual. However, it reaches its point of crisis during the 'adolescence' when the significant changes in the self of a person take place. A young person is caught in the identity problem. He is still a child but with adult needs, still dependent but expected to behave independently, sexually mature yet unable to satisfy his sexaul needs. He does not know who he really is. Again a young man's earliest achievements are to establish a sense of identity. A child is rewarded or praised for certain actions.The cultural agents, among whom the most powerful are the parents, give much stress on the achievement of the adolescents. In this adolescence, the period that is generally marked as ·'the period of storm and stress' the matter of achievements becomes highly critical. Sometimes the areas of achievements are many; standards very high; sometimes there are unequal opportunities, various derivatives from the mainstream of culture. Sometimes the person's achievements fall short of the expectation of the parents or other cultural agents; and as the achievement enables him to find a place in his social group and as he couldn't hit the mark, there is disappointment and disillusionment[6]

According to Erikson,

'If the process of attaining a sense of identity is successful, the individual has the conviction that he had to become the way he is, that there is no other possible way for him to be; further, he must feel that society sees him this way.Such a conviction implies that he feels integrated, at once

with himself, and comfortable in relation to his physical and social surrounding.[7] Thus, Erikson's psycho social theory magnifies the role of socio cultural environment in the development of a person. Every aspect of personality development and its functioning is the joint product of individual's endowments and cultural influences.

The term 'personality derives from the Latin word persona, which refers to the masks used by actors in the Greek theater'.[8] Duane Schultz asserts :

> 'There is no neat and simple answer, at least not yet'; to the question what is personality, it is a complex thing which can be represented only by means of a complete set of concepts and principles... It is only a part of psychology and rather a small part of that.[9]

Elizabeth B. Hurlock says :

> 'Personality is the quality of a person's behaviour in any situation. It is not just a single trait.'[10]

It comprises both visible and invisible aspects of man which give him his own individuality in society and guides him in a long run of life.

The various personality theories discussed above are not the 'inventions of thoughtless hours' but, according to Duane Schultz, ' the products of highly perceptible and intelligent persons who have looked at mankind through theoretical point of view.'[11]

David Daiches Says :

> We can look at the behaviour of characters in a novel or a play in the light of modern psychological knowledge and, if their behaviour confirms what we know about the subtleties of the human mind, we can use the modern theories as a means of elucidating and interpreting the work.[12]

We see some people always successful in their social relationships, while others of the same stature fail to acquire it. Why does it happen ? These theories help us in answering this question. I am sure that these theories are helpful while answering why does Richard Wright's hero act and think and feel in a peculiar way. where are the root cause of his activities ? Are they buried in hero himself or in his surrounding social factors ? In the subsequent chapters, I propose to analyse the character of Richard Wright's hero in his world famous novels Native Son and The Long Dream and his autobiography Black Boy.

While looking into the characters I am to use the 'eclectic method' without relying exclusively on any single theory. It will be taking the best from each one mentioned above; taking what is needed from each. And then explaining what I observe within the frame work of each theory and at the end, inferring from hero's behaviour the special or typical make up and dynamics of his personality.

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