

Research Article

**A Study of Madness and the Alienation of Intellectuals in Saul Bellow's World of Fiction**

M.Manivannan<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. R.Palanivel<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract**

This paper crystallizes how and why Bellow's intellectual heroes in his later novels are men of ideas, dissenters and revolutionists of the age, though marginalized, victimized, degraded, disregarded, and forgotten despite their celebrity contributions to American culture. This partly exists in their being idealists, men of imagination and letters and partly because of the spoilt capitalistic American culture. Herzog satirizes the masses' norms, and ironically and sympathetically, is mocked by Bellow himself for his being too romantic. Henderson, Sammler and Humboldt sketch the decline of humanism and the agony of the intellectual. Corde illustrates this humanistic fall through the crisis of the communist system in Romania. Because of this cultural backdrop, American intellectuals are destined to suffer, feel agony and alienation. Here Bellow suggests subversion and deconstruction to the norms of his society. More strikingly, he adopts the strategy of being *'forever en route,'* forever re-evaluating one's beliefs and ideals. His heroes' madness is only a moment of wisdom and over consciousness about the necessity of replacing the culture of masses and capitalism. Deeply behind this, Bellow maintains that the promises of the Enlightenment morality—freedom, faith, happiness, altruism, reason, wisdom, humanism, self-autonomy and harmony—have surprisingly turned into their opposites and have been supplanted by new terms of utilitarian, nihilist, *'irrational'* discipline characterized by amorality, illusion, risk and the crisis of knowledge.

**Keywords:** madness, morality, alienation, reason, intellectuals, and deconstruction

**Introduction**

This paper argues for the way over consciousness engenders the wisdom of Bellow's heroes and their attempts to deconstruct the norms of mass people and low culture. Since deconstruction has been effectively related to modernity and postmodernity; since Bellow's intellectual heroes have been defined in line with madness, subversion, wisdom, deconstruction and alienation in mass society, one investigates, first, the way the heroes are trained in a European intellectual tradition, and how and why they are alienated, marginalized in a society which is dominated by low culture. The themes of human welfare and moral worth, reason and faith as natural law, madness as peace and gift and eventually happiness and human flourishing are fundamental concepts to analyze to qualify Bellow's protagonists as alienated, marginalized and laughed at intellectuals who strive to deconstruct the norms of their society.

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<sup>1\*</sup>Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of English, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu 608002, mani29thapril87@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of English, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, Chidambaram, Tamil Nadu 608002, rplsau@gmail.com

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Deconstructionism is intensely aware of its indebtedness to philosophy. Accordingly, deep affinities are sketched between different discourses, namely literary and philosophical, subversive and deconstructive, which the researcher assumes as a fundamental condition for entering Bellow's fictional world. At this level, the researcher analyzes how and why over consciousness engenders what Bellow calls madness as wisdom, deconstruction as subversion and chaos as life, achievement and humanism. Bellow often coins this with the conflicting poles of high culture and low culture, intellectuals and mass society.

### Human Welfare and Moral Worth

Herzog admits that mass people who belong to low culture –can destroy mankind because –they are foolish, arrogant, crazy and [ignorant]. He calls them –the enemies of life. Herzog is a university professor, a man of great ideas, a student of such great philosophers as Hegel, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Tocqueville, Rousseau, Spinoza, Kierkegaard, and Spencer, among others. He reads Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Mind*, a book on –'law of the heart' in Western traditions, and assumes that –Without a great change of heart, I would not trust myself in a position to authority. His two books, *Romanticism and Christianity* and *The State of Nature in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century English and French Political Philosophy*, epitomize him as an intellectual humanist who loves humankind.

and cries to let life continue. In a rebellious gesture to the conformity of his society, Herzog divorces his wife Daisy because she represents a stable, familial, faithful, traditional Jewish woman; and because he wants to give up the shelter of an orderly, purposeful, lawful existence, it bored me, and I felt it was a slacker's life. His happiness lies in his nervous roaming between Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Vineyard Haven, Europe, and Ludeyville. In his journeys, his quest for a dream wife crystallizes the worth of life

In Herzog's thinking, women have three predominant images that frequently occur in society: the maternal woman, the castrator and the exotic woman. He should end up having that modern, mad, intellectual and exotic one. –Daisy is of a traditional style. Madeleine and Ramona are exotic, modern, and rebellious, and that is why they satisfy his sexual and intellectual thirst. His desire for women is sexual, romantic, intellectual and rational at the same time. Deeply behind this, Rho shows the protagonist as an –intellectual immured in Rousseauian romanticism, not in Aristotelian and Cartesian rationalism. He deconstructs Classicism, especially its uncompromising view of human beings and the supremacy of reason. He subverts and excites modern culture, its standardized, industrialized mass culture, which produces the vulgar, common person dominating the modern society. To Bellow's mind, one should act following humankind happiness; one should suppose, in Herzog's manner, that the love of life is a basic feature of human nature, and, on this assumption, one's moral duty is to count each other person's right to deserve life and happiness. In this respect, Bellow is in line with Hegel's and Kant's ethics of morality to bring the world home and be satisfied with it. According to Hegel, satisfaction is related to –morality, humanism, true spirit, the happy state, consciousness, reason or pure insight, intellectualism, ethical life, faith. The constructs and unifies both a moral and a rational world capable of providing –Man with hope and meaning.'

Being utopian, Sammler acknowledges a just system of global democracy, human rights, and Man's dignity. To Sammler's mind, humanism can be translated into the Enlightenment values of: –liberty, fraternity, equality, the universality of education, suffrage and human rights. Bellow offers that only the Enlightenment mind can establish such a –'happy state' and reinforce Man's moral worth with its pure insight and rational faith. Assuring the values of –freedom and

necessity, right and obligation as a moral and ethical duty, 'Sammler is presented in the novel as a culture collector and a gatherer of civilizations. He was brought up in the European culture of Enlightenment and Holocaust and has immigrated to America, spending the rest of his life theorizing for humanism and life. Therefore, Sammler is not completely immersed in either culture, either the European or the American. He knows both. -Named Sammler, which means 'a collector' in German, he figuratively plays the role of the historical collector his name represents. Rho proffers that -Sammler almost becomes a modern-day Alexis de Tocqueville, in so far as he is a student of democracy in America, and documents the decline of civility, degradation of culture, and alienation of the intelligence that emerges in the democratized and capitalized society.

Henderson escapes from the materialism and the capitalism of New York. He does not acknowledge the American dream. He rejects the modern habits of life, -my parents, my wives, my girls, my habits, my money, my music lessons, my drunkenness, and looks for redemption and salvation in books and journey. Herzog addresses God, - thou movest me, rising thereby Man's dire strife for humanism and morality -*My God, Who is this creature? It considers itself human. But what is it? Not human of itself. But has the longing to be human. And like a troubling dream, a persistent vapor, a desire,* Von Humboldt Fleisher and Charles Citrine reiterate human welfare by reflecting upon what Kant calls categorical imperatives or maxims that regulate Man's moral worth. They inform us that -money wasn't what they had in mind. Oh God, no, what we wanted was to do good. [We were] dying to do something good. And this feeling for good went back to our early and peculiar sense of existence- sunk in the glassy depths of life and groping for sense. They both, in their different ways, experience the fate of the intellectual in the America of the mid-twentieth century. Humboldt has in mind the idea of converting America from a materialistic land to -a new Athens, a country of -Platonic concepts of truth and beauty, transforming Greenwich Village -from a province into a cultural capital, importing ideas from the whole European tradition and adapting them to the sprawl and chaos of contemporary America. Citrine is supposed to be a culture-maker, insisting in the novel that -everything possible must be done to restore the credit and authority of art, the seriousness of thought, the integrity of culture, the dignity of style. Citrine and Humboldt are men of letters, utopians, theorists and revolutionists of the age. Rho maintains that -they are marginalized, victimized, degraded, humiliated, disregarded, and forgotten in spite of their celebrity and their contributions to American culture, partly due to their romantic, unrealistic and anachronistic characteristics, but mainly because of the fundamentally barren American cultural soil.

In their attempts to free themselves from the different sorts of dictatorship of mass people and low culture, these subjects are more in accordance with Hegel than with Kant. In fact, Sammler strives to bring together peace and war, science and humanism, life and death, virtue/sublime

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and materialism, history and fiction, loss and morality. Herzog depicts wisdom and madness, reason and faith, love and death, revenge and sacrifice, literature and philosophy. Henderson traces family and society, freedom and necessity, hope and fate. Eventually, Humboldt envisions boredom and meaning, poetry and philosophy. On this view, Bellow admittedly endorses that only a sense of unity and 'absolute knowledge' in the Hegelian way can reinforce Man's moral worth and the human welfare in the face of the deconstructive forces of mass people and low culture.

Satirically enough, Bellow subverts this by drawing a sharp skepticism in Humboldt's mental faculties. He doubts his capacity as an intellectual to put his moral theory into practice. Arranging modern life has become 'one great gorgeous tantalizing misleading disastrous project.' Humboldt, the inspired poet and thinker, is acknowledged by great persons; yet, ironically enough, he 'lost the ability to arrange life, his life. He is only a victim of his genius and intellectual reflections. Bellow points out:

Humboldt 'wrote poems of great wit and beauty; However unwritten poems were killing him.' Humboldt's poems depict life, beauty and happiness. They theorize for a moral world where human being keeps dignity. He is a man of genius and ideas. He is a good storyteller. The chance of uttering his 'great words and songs' entails his intellectual insights against the masses' power and dictatorship. Unfortunately, his 'Unwritten poems were killing him.' Differently put, his unpublished views about life and humanism, unlegislated moral laws in the unpublished poems were 'tantalizing' him. He sarcastically admits that he cannot bring a real change to the world. Herzog's imaginary and philosophical letters underpin that morality is a matter of consciousness of time, that existence must be lived, experienced to the end since 'only at the end of its journey that consciousness is ready to understand what has happened to it and why to think reflectively and self-consciously about the categorical shifts that have led it forward from one problematic position to the next,' and eventually to legislate for its moral and ethical norms. Sammler aggravates the moral lessons of the Holocaust. He admits that human beings must tell right from wrong even when they have to guide them in their judgment. He acquaints Asa Leventhal in *Dangling Man* (1947) with Nietzsche's ideals of the 'Super Man' and the will to power as he decides to go to the war for moral and ethical ends. Moral worth and human welfare are justified in these instances by a matter of intellectual emotion, passion and humanism rather than a matter of rationality and materialism. In short, in Bellow's view, one can admit that the theory of morality is akin to the sense of time, being and consciousness in which is strikingly identified with the wisdom of intellectuals and their ceaseless attempts to deconstruct the existing norms of their society.

Taking this critical position, one can suppose that Bellow falls here into the logocentric trap described by Derrida. In this, his heroes advocate the Enlightenment philosophy of morality initiated by the early Greek philosophers, and yet, they fail to subvert its most sublime ideals. This hypothesis proceeds to suggest that the novelist sharply depends upon the classical hierarchy which is based on, in a typical structuralist strategy, binary oppositions of good and bad, moral and rational, high thinking and low thinking, intellectuals and mass society, and ultimately high culture and low culture to build his fictional world. What Bellow simply does

is that he sets to exchange one negative aspect of morality by a formerly positive one, erecting a hierarchical system that privileges morality and passion over rationality.

### **Reason and Faith as a Natural Law**

Bellow's reading to reason and faith offers three different viewpoints. First, it highlights the symmetries between the themes of wisdom, intellectualism, reason and faith inherent in his later novels. Second, it unravels how Bellow believes that reason and faith, rationality and religion should not contradict each other, a gesture that recalls Hegel's absolute unity. Third, it outlines the heroes over consciousness and their attempts to deconstruct mass people's values and low culture. Reason and faith operate as elements that qualify Herzog, Henderson, Sammler, Humboldt and Corde with intellectualism, wisdom and alienation. These concepts are deployed at this level to unravel the way the heroes' over consciousness about materialism, science, and rationality on the one hand and religion. On the other hand, God and humanism aggravate their gestures of deconstructing the norms of mass society.

In his *Writings on Religion* (2002), John Locke associates morality with reason and faith. He, by this token, strikingly admits that the happiness of Mankind is hinged on the presence of God, the maker of the universal law, and the reason of Man that is going to rationalize this faith. He elaborates:

Morality establishment depends on law and lawmaker. The law is a religion that demands faith. The lawmaker is God himself. This God has the superiority, right, and power to –reward and punish according to the tenor of his law.¶ Man's reason rationalizes the faith and belief in God to be rewarded. Morality and humanism are hinged on this juxtaposition between reason and faith. The Enlightenment considers this a natural law. Hume admits this thinking, though he acknowledges the importance of passion over reason. He supports this argument by admitting that God's command creates morality, and therefore, there is no morality without obedience to its creator. Accordingly, –reason can only be the slave of passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them.¶ The impulse of human action does not arise from reason, but it is directed by it. Kant repeatedly emphasizes that one should act following moral ends and rational means. This –presupposes that the several formulas of the Categorical Imperative are morally fundamental, that rationality is not exclusively instrumental, and that moral agents are to be seen as legislators of moral laws as well as subject to them.¶ Derrida posits the idea anew by introducing the metaphor of the book of God. He quotes a saying of Jaspers –the world is the handwriting of another, God, never fully legible world.¶ Now this book which is written in God's handwriting never existed, there are only traces of it which Derrida calls –the book of reason since God is said to have given us the use of this pen.¶

Bellow's awareness of this background has left its imprints on how he perceives reason and faith following the heroes' deconstruction to their society's norms. Herzog is an emblematic epitome in this case. He shows a careful awareness of the connections between reason, faith and morality. He builds his thinking on the assumption that –God may well be the pure idea of reason.¶ He endorses that only reason and faith can guarantee Man's moral worth against his society's low culture's nihilism and assure a –steady progress¶ to human civilization. However,

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such a belief should be regarded as the outcome of long skeptical meditations over the nature and the function of God. Herzog begins narrating his story in a typically positivist move by questioning his generation's belief –What is the philosophy of this generation? Not God is dead. That point was passed long ago. Perhaps it should be stated Death is God. If the old God exists, he must be a murderer. But one true god is Death, again –God is *the evil*, and he unexpectedly ends up with all that which the Enlightenment believes –The victory of God, not of rationality our murdering imagination, our human imagination which starts by accusing God of murder turns out to be a great power and again –*Dear God! Mercy! My God Thou King of Death and Life!* –Thou movest me. Herzog's reflections on God shift from suspicion and death to acknowledgment and life. His generations confess that –the old God is death; the true God is a murderer. God is acquainted with negativity and nihilism. Later, he enigmatically acknowledges the power, rationality and victory of God. God is the king of life and death, the source of morality and happiness. –*Dear God! Mercy! My God Thou King of Death and Life!* The miraculous power of God morally moves Herzog. He confirms that God is, in a Cartesian sense, naturally innate in the human mind. Faith, He maintains, is a clear idea of thinking, an object of rational and spiritual knowledge. Bellow's sense of subversion, from negating God's presence to asserting his being the stream of life and the pure reason, stems from the postulate that God is a unifying idea in the order of speculative reason and a postulate in the moral order of practical reason.

Bellow's later novels are replete with such instances of the search for harmony between reason and faith, rationality, religion, mind, and God. When Henderson in *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) faces death in the jungles of Africa; when he fights against the savage warriors of the Warriri tribe; when a lion attacks him in the forest, a celestial light of God, the savior from death, appears to his spirit. He bitterly prays:

The idea might seem contradictory in Henderson's prayers for life at the beginning and his longing for death in the end; however, the storyteller is assuredly suggesting that death becomes a metaphor of unity with God. When Henderson faces the lion and death in Africa, he prays for life –Oh my God let me not fall under this butcher shop. Take care of the king. While facing his finitude, death, faith seems that all Henderson has. At the moments of weakness, –he wanted to cry raised his weeping voice to pray for mercy and life for himself and the king of the tribe. The metaphor of unity with God appears through his readiness to sacrifice instead of the king –your majesty, move over and I'll die beside you. Or else be me and live; I never knew what to do with life, and I will die instead. Henderson's escapism from the temporal context of New York and the habits of mass society marks the beginning of this unity between faith and reason, God and Man, feeling and intellect, religion and philosophy. Henderson loses faith in his money, factories, power, habits, New York, wives, in other words, rationality and science in America, and regains a spiritual release with Romilayu, his guide in Africa; he loses faith in materialism and regains it in God and reason. He rejects the world of masses, materialism, lights in New York and welcomes God, faith and intellectual tranquility in Africa's wilderness. More strikingly, the wilderness, Romilayu, the tribes in Africa, the dying king of the Wariri tribe, Henderson and all other elements that shape the journey's story acquire a symbolic dimension as they ultimately stand for Jesus' dramatic trip to overspread his mission.

Behind this, Bellow overcomes the polarity of reason and faith and shows, in a typically Hegelian manner, how religion and faith should express an intellectual and philosophical outlook, albeit in a non-philosophical form. He proposes that any religious consciousness should adopt the faith that upholds a rational view of the world. In other words, Saul Bellow hopes to show that any faith should be incorporated with reason and not rejected from it and that Man's moral worth should be converging on rather than departing from the rational insights of reason.

Sammler, Corde and Humboldt are outspoken expressions of the harmony between reason and faith, intellectualism and God, which generates Bellow's attempt to aggravate Man's moral worth. L. H. Goldman views these subjects as heroes, intellectuals, sufferers, strugglers, survivors, philosophers, believers. They are humanists: they are all concerned with dignity (theirs and others), humanity (or lack of it), faith (in relationship with reason). Sammler In *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970), survivor of the holocaust, offers a utopian homeland where both reason and faith can assure Man's dignity and freedom –on the moon, people would have to work hard simply to stay alive, to breathe, to think, to pray. Assuming that –sexual madness was overwhelming the Western World, that –money, power, [science], do drive people crazy, that the modern world has become a spectacle, that life is dominated by the habits of the masses, the features of low culture, that God is already dead and will remain as such forever, and that the Enlightenment reason gives rise to the century's greatest crimes and atrocities, Sammler interestingly confirms that there should be a moral revolution in the light of the Kantian legacy which admits that reason is blind without faith and faith in its turn is crippled without reason. Sammler's intellectual speculations over God and reason, spirit, and civilization can only epitomize an alienated intellectual's over consciousness. The death of God entails disillusionment and the tragic fate of both the capitalist and the communist regimes. He points that –Both the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. were utopian projects. There, in the East, the emphasis was on low-level goods, shoes, caps, toilet-plungers, and tin basins for peasants and laborers. Here it fell upon certain privileges and joys. They were here wading naked into the waters of paradise, etcetera. In *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), Humboldt takes the idea further to state that –America was God's experiment. Many of the old pains of humanity were removed, which made the new pains all the more peculiar and mysterious.

In *The Dean's December* (1982), God meant communism, socialism, and whatever ideology the Left tradition promises. Faith and reason are combined to result in such a historical consciousness about modern civilization.

Before unfolding his novel *The Dean's December*, Bellow starts with the following introductory remark, that –Although portions of this novel are derived from real events, each character in it is fictional, a composite drawn from several individuals and imagination. No reference to any living person is intended or should be inferred. Bellow not only evades all the expected polemics of the Left but also awakens its attention as to the elusive promises of the utopian ideology—communism. In his *The Agony of the American Left in the 1950s* (1969), Christopher Lasch declared –the end of deep political conflict in the West, the end of utopian attempts to reconstruct society. Echoing Bellow's trip to Jerusalem in *To Jerusalem and Back: A Personal Account* (1970), the protagonist, Dean Albert Corde, examines Romania

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with curiosity at first, but as his story develops, he becomes –a hungry observer of the communist society. The first impression Corde gets in Bucharest is a feeling –like tying a plastic bag over your face and telling you to breathe deep, that which he escaped in Chicago. The symbolic death of God summons the unbearable conditions of life in Romania. Bucharest is cold. It is no longer a Paris city in December. The streets are full of baggers; cemeteries are full of crazy people and strangers. Intellectuals are rejected. Police officers, colonels and dictators are considered the real leaders and saviors of the country. –The Dean Corde cannot bear this kind of life. The ideology of communism fails as it increases the suffering of people. Vlada, Minna's friend and a Rumania-American scientist at Chicago, reminds Corde of the characteristics of Rumania –It's nothing to them that you're a dean, but it counts that you're a journalist. Also, that you're connected with the Ambassador and with the famous columnist Mr. Spangler. The ruler, dictator, like that Corde essayed to escape from Chicago as Rho maintains –plans to rule Rumania under the name of communism and systematization; in other words, Rumania is a machine to him. And it turns out to be a huge cage or a prison. All the means to strip individuality comprise one device. Censorship and bugs control the characters like prisoners.

Ravelstein in *Ravelstein* (2001), a professor of history and philosophy, reflects on –antiquity, Machiavelli, Hobbes, the Enlightenment, and then by way of Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau onward to Nietzsche, Heidegger—to the present moment, to corporate high tech America, its culture its politics. He believes that in the modern age –no real education was possible in the [Western] universities except for aeronautical engineers, computerists, biology, physical science and the like, while God has already been decentralized, dehumanized and finally rejected from the focus of the intellectual circles. Ravelstein assuredly declares that the intellectuals must guard Man's essence in this sad age and that happiness is still required, and faith is again brought in to do the job. *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), *The Victim* (1947) and *Dangling Man* (1944) represent another significant instance concerning the awareness of the ethical connections between reason, faith and morality. In his *Saul Bellow: Vision and Revision* (1984), Daniel Fuchs has insightfully assessed them as the recreation of the philosophy of Judaism as intertwined with the project of the Enlightenment. Joseph in *Dangling Man* (1944) incarnates the problem of choice between reason and faith. Satirically enough, he is a war casualty who has not fought, not even enlisted to be a soldier in the war. Joseph begins to realize that his moral norms are highly dependent on his responsibility for choosing either to survive since –there is no dignity anywhere, nothing but absurd falsehood, or to follow his faith and end up becoming a victim, like Asa Leventhal, –It is our humanity that we are responsible for our dignity, our faith. Asa Leventhal in *The Victim* (1947) begins where Joseph ends up. That he bears moral responsibility overtones a problem of conflicting concepts and ideals between egoism and altruism, Man and God, the ethics of the individual, and society's norms, believing that –It's bad to be less than human and it's bad to be more than human, Asa stresses the biblical narrative and the Enlightenment morality, which usually appear as a covert metaphor in Bellow's narratives. Bellow has always been claiming that Augie March in *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953) is –a comic subject about death. Death,



being the metaphor for the ultimate unity with God, underlines the starting point and the end which Bellow's subjects seek to achieve.

Bellow's autobiographical account in his *To Jerusalem and Back: A Personal Account* (1970) draws consistency between reason, faith and morality. Although the book sketches the author's journey by describing his real trip from Chicago to Jerusalem with a political and economic reflection on the context of the Middle East in the seventies, Bellow says in the opening, –It is my childhood revisited. The preposition –back offers three different meanings a) returning to Chicago at the level of the story, b) recollecting Bellow's childhood at the level of memory, and c) highlighting reciprocal and metaphorical movements in space from Chicago to Jerusalem and in time from adulthood to childhood. Interestingly, John Jacob Clayton regards the journey as a never-ending movement from Man to God:

Bellow maintains his intellectuals' primary importance as moral agents seeking to promote human welfare in ways that accord with reason and faith, rationality and religion, man and God. Although his heroes start to reflect on reason and faith by referring back to metaphysical issues, they deliberately mock it's being satirized and ridiculed in modern American cultural life. There being intellectuals trained in the European tradition and Enlightenment thinking valorizes their over consciousness about the problems of the age or what Bellow himself calls their high culture; ironically, decenters them from the heart of the American intellectual scene. Bellow takes two contradictory positions: he sympathetically satirizes them as men of only ideas and letters and simultaneously censures American mass society and low culture as the primary cause of their problem and alienation.

### **Madness as Peace and Gift**

In what way does Bellow redefine the concept of madness? Admitting that he exalts madness, contrary to the Foucauldian fashion, and elevates it to a state of peace and gift, wisdom and high culture, how does it intensify the over consciousness and the wisdom of his heroes? How and why does it help deconstruct the norms of mass society and low culture? To answer these questions, one should first acknowledge that Bellow belongs to a Western cultural paradigm that acquaints madness with intellectuals, wisdom and Man's moral worth. Although this tradition has been sketched in Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Taylor Donnelly, in his *Vogue Diagnoses: The Functions of Madness in Twentieth-Century American Literature* (2012), states: its roots could be traced back to metaphysics and the Renaissance. Foucault and Derrida devoted more attention to the concept of madness. On this view, Foucault, in his *Madness and Civilization* (1965), believes that madness has been recognized as part of the truth (p. 20). Derrida paradoxically states that it should not belong to that sort of metaphysical truth. According to him, madness is already there, in the origin of geometry, to recall Husserl; in other words, it is a form of knowledge in 'the structure of thought' to borrow Foucault's terms. Madness in the Derridean sense begins only with the moment of skepticism about metaphysics and the decentralization of the Enlightenment reason.

Foucault examines the issue from two opposite angles a) madness as a phenomenon in history related to unreasoned people who are confined, marginalized and finally rejected and excluded

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from society, and b) madness as a kind of knowledge to cure unreason in the age of reason. These views find their way to Bellow's fictional world, which shows his awareness of this theoretical edifice and places him in a position that echoes Derrida's perpetual equivocation to metaphysical thought. Foucault declares that –unreason becomes the reason of reason I had been mad enough to study reason, I was reasonable enough to study madness,|| implying that to achieve peace, wisdom and morality, one should first experience madness. From his part, Derrida insists that one should question the foundations of metaphysics and subvert them to understand Man's moral worth. The purpose of that is to liberate the power of reason from an unreasoned authority, the sense of wisdom from the non-sense of madness.

Herzog reflects this intellectual speculation over the concept of madness as he starts narrating his story. His primary words in the story, –If I am out of my mind, it's alright with me,|| overtone his high and lofty thinking. In a Derridian tone, they implicitly underpin the masses' low thinking, which he undermines and ignores. Herzog is torn between what the masses think about him –some people thought he was cracked,|| and what he is –he had doubted he was all there.|| He is dangling between nihilism and existence, his being out of his mind and his being intellectual. Madness is deepened when he asked for help from his old friends –Dear Wanda, Dear Zinka, Dear Libbie, Dear Ramona, Dear Sono, I need help in the worst way. I am afraid of falling apart. Dear Edwin, the fact is that madness has been denied to me. I do not know why I should write to you at all||. The exotic female figure attracts him and helps show what kind of protagonist he is. Wanda, Zinka, Libbie, Ramona and Sono offer release and a psycho sexual-sanctuary for Herzog's doubly victimized hero. Ramona remains at the central of Herzog's intellectual commitment –Dear Ramona, I think your wisdom gets me, you are a great comfort to me. We are dealing with elements more or less stable, more or less controllable more or less mad|| residing as a pre-marital or extra-marital love object. Despite his odd behaviors, he wins struggle against the deconstructive forces of society. He –felt confident, cheerful, clairvoyant, and strong.|| His madness lies in his failure to cope with space. He cannot settle in any place as he kept ceaselessly moving from one city to another. He travels from –New York to Martha Vineyard but returned from the vineyard immediately. Two days later, he flew to Chicago. From Chicago, he went to a village in Western Massachusetts.|| This fidgety reiterates his endless search for hope and life, metaphorically translated into his letters to everyone under the sun. Hidden in the country, he writes letters to poets, philosophers, politicians, theorists; he writes –endlessly and fanatically to the newspapers, to people in public life, to friends and relatives and at last to the dead, his obscure dead, and finally the famous dead.||

Bellow admits that Herzog's wisdom lies in transcending his failure to communicate with the masses to addressing intellectuals. His letters to famous intellectuals epitomize what Bellow calls the high culture to which he belongs. He investigates the history of madness archeologically. –*In my view, I tried to suggest that clinical psychologists might write fascinating histories. Megalomania for the Pharaohs and Caesars. Melancholia in the Middle Ages. Schizophrenia in the eighteenth century*||, and confesses that mad figures end up ruling the world and –madness always rules the world.|| Historically and clinically, madness has appeared with different images as megalomania, melancholia and schizophrenia. For Herzog, madness is over consciousness and subversion; it is the deconstruction of nihilism and death.

He –could not allow himself to die yet. The children needed him. His duty was to live. To be safe, and to live, and to look after the kids. This was why he was running from the city now, overheated, eyes smarting. Behind this, Bellow informs that madness is no longer a state of mind throughout which one loses his rational faculties; rather, it is a moment of consciousness and deconstruction that intellectuals adopt to become moral legislators and bring some change to the world.

Schwartz ascribes Humboldt's lunacy to the poet's isolation in modern life and even more strikingly to –the whole way of life in modern society. With the massive industrialization and mass factory production system in America, Schwartz confesses that only writers are destined to suffer. Humboldt informs Citrine that –Monopoly capitalism has treated creative men like rats. Men of letters have nothing to do with –the increasing industrialization of society, their intellectual, utopian and imaginary visions do not find any way in –the activities which constituted daily life in an industrial society. Poetry becomes a dangerous occupation in America as it makes poets strange and alienated beggars. This business spirit is the root of the American culture. Richard Hofstadter, a cultural historian, indicates in his *Anti-intellectualism in American Life* (1966) that –it was business that isolated and feminized culture by establishing the masculine legend that men are not concerned with the events of the intellectual and cultural world. Such matters were to be left to women. Humboldt's deep awareness about the radical economic, political and social changes alienates him in the academic community and the non- academic society.

An example of this is his failure to get a permanent chair at Princeton University after his temporary teaching there. Bellow summons Harold Rosenberg's saying that –Marx conceives the artist as the model man of the future and –Hegel's Historical Men or World-Historical Individuals through whom truth operates and who have an insight into the requirement of the time, who divine what is ripe for development, the nascent principle, the next necessary thing in his essays –A World Too Much with Us, and –Machines and Storybooks: Literature in the Age of Technology. He agrees with both Hegel's and Marx's claim that artists should not be alienated in their field, that no one can replace their work as they depend on their imagination and inspiration. If Bellow's, Marx's, and Hegel's theories are reasonable, Humboldt should have been accepted to Princeton University. More bitterly, –he could not find a stable job at any university which added further anxiety to his innate anxiety.

Orlando Huggins illustrates Humboldt's case. He is another intellectual in the novel which is destined to suffer. Like Philip Rahv, Lionel Trilling, Irving Howe, and Dwight Macdonald, he is a leftist intellectual who discussed Marxism, Stalinism and Capitalism. He is:

Humboldt and Huggins reach the point that –To the high types of Martyrdom the twentieth century has added the farcical martyr. This is the artist. By wishing to play a great role in the fate of mankind, he becomes a bum and a joke. They're over consciousness about the issues of the age leads them to suffer, to be mad in the eyes of common people and mass society; they become \_martyrs'; when they seek for an influential position in society, they ironically –become a bum and a joke. Humboldt supports Adlai Stevenson in the elections of 1952 not only because he thinks he can beat Ike, or even because he a man of culture, but also because he

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believes that –Culture would come into its own in Washington, and he might be situated in the heart of the intellectual scene in America. He addresses Charles Citrine:

Sammler perceives madness as survival and critical consciousness about the twentieth century war atrocities and civility decline. He equates it with sainthood and wisdom –At the present level of the human evolution propositions were held by choices narrowed down to sainthood and madness. We are mad unless we are saintly, saintly only as we soar above madness. It is the wisdom that comes by the end of the day, the end of an age and the end of civilization. In his *illuminations* (1997), Walter Benjamin points out that —as Hegel put it, only when it is dark does the owl of Minerva begin its flight. Only in extinction is the collector comprehended. Sammler is the symbolic representation of the owl Minerva, as he emerges as a culture collector and civilization gatherer at a time of crisis of culture and humanism in America, or what Bellow thinks as the late age of capitalism. –Sammler spends most of his daytime in the New York public library collecting and recording the culture of the masses in America, and thinking of the possibility of transplanting European Enlightenment to the New World, all the while watching the various social evils and vulgar lives of the masses on the street. However, his experience leads him to frustration and despair. He discovers that European and the American cultures have been morally and ethically degenerating starting from the early twentieth century. Bellow himself experiences this frustration with regards to the modern American culture confessing in an interview with Robert Boyers that –Occasionally I worry about what's happening to culture in the United States, but on other days I think there is no culture in the United States, and there's no point in worrying about it. By culture, Bellow means the European classical culture, the Enlightenment, the eighteenth and the nineteenth century moral and ethical values.

Bellow maintains that the Enlightenment has always meant happiness, morality, freedom, justice to Kant, beauty and essence to Fichte, passion to Hume and Baudelaire, the absolute unity of faith and reason, object and subject, to Hegel, self-autonomy and free will to Nietzsche, science and value to Weber, progress, newness and dynamism to Habermas, humanism to Bauman, whose essence had already been gathered into its focal point in the Kantian moral philosophy. However, satirically it takes a wrong turn, and Sammler provides a good example of being a victim of the Enlightenment. The Nazi regime killed his entire family except for his daughter, Shula. He escaped from a totalitarian Europe dominated by the power of one man to a democratic America controlled by every man; he had to spend all the summer in a cemetery to save his life, like a dead man; he was wounded and blinded in war; he and Shula suffered from trauma after that; he was betrayed by most of his Polish friends when he fought for them.

–He is a witness to the consequences of the Enlightenment, and deeply involved in it, and realizes that the history of the Enlightenment is no better than a series of killings. Privileged of being a man of high culture, Sammler becomes the symbol of deconstructing low culture and mass society.

Bellow develops a theory of madness in his writings which is interchangeable with subversion, deconstruction and morality. In his lately published book *It All Adds Up: From the Dim Past*

to the *Uncertain Future* (1995), he acknowledges this fact assuming that man's intellectual career is bound to a series of ruptures in understanding art and life. He Maintains:

Expressions like –mistakes to correct myself revise skeptical stubborn learners, enlightening radical changes where I went wrong I long for correction era of improved errors| overtone a moral symmetry between Bellow's madness and Derrida's theory of deconstruction. Both develop a theory that rests on the assumption that any meaning is always under a perpetual erasure and no final interpretation of the text. The novelist strengthens this parallelism in his 'Nobel Prize Lecture' (1976), admitting that he is still a student who is learning from Joseph Conrad, the Oriental style, Hemingway, Kafka, D. H. Lawrence, Moliere, Racine, Dickens, Balzac, the death of the author, the politics of totalitarianism, modern ethics. Bellow announces that subversion, madness and morality are the features that govern his reflections on deconstruction, and this is to be understood in line with self-correction, wisdom and morality, a gesture that places him in the Enlightenment tradition in Habermas's sense.

### Conclusion

This paper's discussion has focused on investigating how the Enlightenment moral and ethical ideals influenced Bellow's protagonists and deepened their over consciousness about the rupture between intellectuals and masses in modern American cultural scene. It has analyzed the extent to which the Enlightenment thought has shaped the novelist's view of morality, humanism, happiness, man, art and life in general. Therefore, it has developed the thesis that Bellow's moral theory stems from the fundamental features of the Enlightenment's morality namely man's moral worth, human welfare, reason, faith, Man, God, happiness, madness, wisdom, peace etc. The researcher has purported concurrently to show how these values and ethics penetrated into the minds of Bellow's protagonists and deepened their consciousness about the marginalization of intellectuals and the centralization of low culture and mass society in twentieth century America. Bellow maintains that his heroes are wise intellectuals, though regarded mad beggars and poor strangers; and their over consciousness about their tragic fate in modern capitalistic and democratic America summons the deconstruction of these norms.

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