

## Chapter VI

### Summing Up

“Intellectual” is the one with a specific social and anthropological commitment and active involvement in human causes, either through praxis or ideological representation than political or lucrative satiation of rational and cerebral calibre. Even though “intellectual” has been an interesting topic of many creative thinkers since the emergence of the term to today’s sense in 19<sup>th</sup> century, Said is particularly selected for his contributions to this concept from diverse and sometimes novel points of view by placing the concept itself as the centre of discussion. Foucaultian ideas, though limited in usage, are also incorporated for the appraisal of the Bellowian protagonists. The thesis has made use of the term “representation” in a dichotomous sense: firstly to analyze the affinity of the Bellowian protagonists to the thoughts developed by Said on intellectuals and how far they are intellectuals according to these ideas; secondly, the thesis has presented the intellectual protagonists as representatives of certain group of intellectuals in the American society in a particular time-span of history as they are caricatured by Bellow. However they are closely related and share many things in common and at a point they become one and the same through ideological and conceptual convergence.

Bellow, hailed as the backbone of American literature in twentieth century, has made use of his genius as a writer with defined social and humanitarian commitment, but proves to be unconventional in many realms. His craftsmanship is evident in the formation of his characters, especially his protagonists, decorated with literary embellishments, and they represent one or other reality in the society. Though his plays are not well received as his fictions, Bellow could convey his convictions regarding the ineffectuality of certain theoretical developments in normal human life through *The Last*

*Analysis*, his only play that made some success. He has made use of the possible sources of knowledge in the formation of his literary characters and one can easily figure out the embedded aspects of the leading philosophical, psychological, anthropological, religious, ethnical, and cultural movements of the existing period. Instead of writing for the sake of writing, Bellow has dedicated his literary career to impart some sort of messages to the readers, whether it is moral, ethical, or secular and he has succeeded in it.

Bellow preferred to be the spokesman of modern man and imbibed the deep problems of humanity of the universe, with special attention to European and American situations. Although he denied all arguments over his representation of Jewish life in his works as an emigrant Jew and affirmed himself as an American in style and method of writing, he often placed his characters in Jewish contexts. Almost all the protagonists of his novels are Jews with exceptions like Henderson and Corde. Influence of Russian and French novelists is also evident in his novels. He considered human relationship as the most important thing in the world and he developed characters always in the background of families.

There is a gradual and contemporaneous change in the writing style of Bellow both in characterisation and depiction of social and political milieus of each period that covers six decades; his first novel *DM* provides the reader an experience of SWW and the existential crises that affected human life; *The Victim* depicts the post-war problems like insecurity that affect human life; *AAM* subtly presents the Great American Dream and its shallowness; the characters become more mature in novels like *HRK*, *H*, *SP*, *HG,DD*, *MDH*, *The Actual*, and *Ravelstein*. Natural rhythm of each stage of history is active in each work or every one of his works presents an actual picture of each period with artistic perfection and realistic callousness. Existential problems combined with anthropological and cultural explosion are well depicted in his works; the concomitant tensions in human

relationships emerge out of modernisation and globalisation are clearer in Bellow's hands; man-woman relationship in a drastic changing world deserve particular attention in his works; degeneration in the ancestral, ethical, and moral values are keenly observed and presented in his novels; conflicting self is a favourite theme of Bellow both in novels and short fictions.

This thesis has attempted to provide ample importance to the multiple possibilities and aspects of the concept "intellectual" which is used in a dichotomous manner. First chapter of the thesis has presented an overall view of the entire thesis along with brief introductions to other works of Bellow and review of literature. Second chapter has gone to the details of the presence of intellectuals in the history in different civilizations. Irrespective of their difference in nationality and indigenous nature, they had much in common that bind them together. Though the term was in use from 14<sup>th</sup> century on in French and Latin languages, it came to importance only in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Surprisingly, despite the concept gained momentum in European countries from 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, their presence was so prevalent in many of the ancient cultures like Asia and Greek and in countries like Egypt in African civilization. In the trajectory of the concept given in the second chapter, all these civilizations are referred with deserved magnitude. Differences in their dealings of the intellectuals in various situations of the society, identical uniqueness in their ways and means, and the ideological and functional distinctiveness are clearly expressed in this chapter.

When Grecian and Roman intellectuals based their ideas and activities on rationalism Asian intellectual contributions were mostly spiritual in nature. Thus Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Persian civilisations are known for their amalgamation of intellectual contributions in both philosophy and spirituality along with other natural sciences. Relevance of intellectuals in each stage of history of these cultures is

highlighted in this chapter. It has also analysed various movements in human history, both in the East and the West that either necessitated involvement of the intellectuals or opened up new venues of opportunities to set their upper hand and this gives the idea of the conceptual shifts in the very thought of intellectuals. This chapter has pointed out the narrowing down of the very concept and also the branching of the concept as a result of farther and deeper research and studies in this particular area.

The second part of the chapter has aimed mainly at the typology of the intellectuals by many important thinkers at different stages of history starting chiefly with Gramsci. The twofold division of the intellectuals he made, namely, “traditional” and “organic” intellectuals was mainly based on the Marxist ideology and thereafter a good number of people contributed in the study and classification of the intellectuals. Later Foucault came up with new outlook about intellectuals and called them “marginal individuals” in a society and emphasised the role once played by “universal intellectuals” in almost every civilised society by assuming the role as the consciousness of the world and who were later confronted by the emergence of “specific intellectuals”. The reasons and results of such a new group in the world are discussed in the thesis. Speaking truth to power, an unavoidable attribute of a true intellectual was specified by Foucault. The next person discussed is Shils. His “primary” and “secondary” intellectual traditions are as important as his “productive” and “reproductive” intellectual classifications. Benda, Camus, and Said are the other prominent figures discussed in this chapter. When Camus came up with the ideas of “rebel” and “writer” to equate with intellectuals, Said divided them as “professional” and “amateur” intellectuals. Emerson’s picture of the “American scholar” also has got a role to play while describing the ramification of this concept.

The first part of the third chapter has detailed the conceptions of Said and Foucault regarding intellectuals and their functions in the society. As Said plays the key

role in the explication of the Bellowian protagonists, his ideas are given higher attention than that of Foucault. Said's idea of exile, both "metaphorical" and "actual" exiles, position of the "yea-sayers" and "nay-sayers", changes that have intruded into the very life and functions of the intellectuals due to economisation, politicisation, and institutionalisation of entire human activity, professionalization and the concomitant changes that have taken place in the very method of intellectual functioning, necessity of the intellectuals to represent the less and misrepresented of the society, universalised concern over human predicaments and denial of justice, peace and other basic human rights etc have been discussed in this chapter. While dealing with the responsibility of the intellectuals, the second part of the third chapter has highlighted the views of Chomsky, Dewey, Bourdieu, and Thapar. This chapter also has gone through the contemporary issues and situations that require intellectuals' active and selfless involvement.

Bellow and his counterculture of intellectuals have been simultaneously discussed in the fourth chapter. In order to facilitate and provide a glimpse of the importance of immigrant Jews and their contributions to the American literary world, a historical bird view of the Jewish American literature is briefed in this chapter. Some of the central figures in this area, namely, Monis, Seixas, Noah, Lazarus, and Lazerow are seriously discussed along with the common problems faced by the Jewish writers when they confronted historical, cultural, ethnical, and linguistic changes both as victims and successors of immigration. A few contemporary writers of Bellow such as Malamud, Roth, and Ozick are given a due place here.

An in-depth study of Bellow is facilitated in this chapter by analysing his multiple aspects of writing. How Bellow has implemented the spirit of Existentialism, Humanism, Psychoanalysis, and Modernism in his fictional world have been discussed here. Such a study sheds more light upon his literary career and depth of Bellowian characters. It

enabled the researcher to affirm the superiority of Bellow as one among the two backbones of American Literature of the twentieth century. This part of the chapter has adumbrated Bellowian idea of the intellectual and that constitutes the dichotomous aspect of the concept as it is used in the thesis. Though Bellow is disdainful regarding the functionality of the modern intellectuals, mainly due to their ineffectuality in handling everyday affairs of life, he intends them to be men of heart as his character Herzog and others advocate. He becomes highly suggestive in the portrayal of his characters, particularly his protagonists. Instead of axiomatic representation of intellectuals in the society, Bellow critiques them and expresses the necessity to have intellectuals who can really involve in human affairs unlike the modern, professional intellectuals who are after power and money.

The second last chapter is the reading of the Bellowian protagonists of the seven novels with the help of Said. Foucaultian ideas of the marginal individual, universal and specific intellectual are also used in this attempt. A simultaneous representation of the Bellowian intellectual is also done here. In order to avoid repetition and to facilitate the explication of the characters, this chapter has made use of the conceptual part as bedrock upon which the protagonists are analysed. Humanism, universality, contumacy to power, recalcitrance, excoriation, and eccentricity that are common to the intellectuals according to thoughts developed by Said are prevalent among the Bellowian intellectual protagonists besides their exilic and marginal idiosyncrasies. These points are embedded in the thesis and each character is taken for study upon this axiomatic but inevitable ideas.

A chronological order is maintained in the selection of the novels. Each character, starting with March has undergone almost similar experiences in their confrontation with family members, society, different types of power systems, peer groups, and above all other intellectuals in their surroundings. Though their social, political, cultural, and

ideological backgrounds are different, these men always have many things in common; they prove ineffectual and incompetent while dealing with certain matters that affect them and humanity as whole; the protagonists, like March and Corde, nevertheless deemed as losers by the parameters of the modern professionalised victors, they prefer to be with the weaker and unrepresented sections in the society with their humanistic and universal outlooks. Their incorrigible quest for freedom and uncontaminated love for integrity and dignity often place them in altercation with authoritarianism maintained in the society at different levels. Instead of reaching at consensus, they rebel against unjust and untruthful conventionality and demands of other people. These intellectuals often find it difficult to cope with and win over other institutionalised intellectuals and systems around them due to the unholy proximity they keep with the power centres. However, they never give in. Bellow has intellectuals from different age groups and the list goes from March to Sammler, the septuagenarian. Though some of them like Wilhelm and Benn are preyed by other eggheads of the society, they come out of their pernicious influence with the help of their innate goodness and nonconforming nature.

All of these intellectuals feel out of place in their own homes, cities, and nations with their exceptional thinking and eccentric behaviour. They often tend to disturb the established equilibrium of the cultural and societal norms of truth and modes of behaviour established by the powerful. They feel as outsiders, like Sammler, in the flux of modernisation that degenerates morality and ethical aspects of human life. Though majority of these protagonists are professionals, to be exact, professors in universities, they feel like Corde how threatened is their life on account of their nay-saying dispositions. Seldom they appear as public intellectuals with their active involvement in social and political affairs, still they express their views unaffected and unfiltered either through letters like Herzog or in conversation or as writers as Sammler or Corde. Their

polemic and questioning natures make them often enemies of the powerful in the society and indifference to profit and monetary matters make them strangers among other money-minded professionals. The protagonists' naivety and unaccommodating behavioural patterns make them fools in the society. The intellectuals' humanistic nature and universal concern are often revealed and they feel helpless in the human existential predicaments. Apparatuses of government power structure like police, judiciary, judges, and media become their enemies. Intellectuals like Augie become symbols of relentless refuters of power and money and they denounce everything for the sake of freedom, love, and humanistic concern for fellow human beings. In short, they become exceptions among the normal people, become disturbers of the status-quo and powerful answer seekers, they value higher human values than money and credentials, and above all they are great lovers of humankind though they are not like Old Testament prophets with thunderous exhortations.

The dichotomous representation attempted in the thesis intends to bring out similarities between the ideas provided by Said and Bellow than to prove that they are identical. The ideas of Said regarding the nature, vocation, functionality, challenges, and responsibilities of intellectual revolve around the concept of amateur intellectual against the milieu of professional intellectual. He is passionate in describing the possibilities of intellectuals in the modern world foregrounding the challenges as well that are comparatively stronger and effective in them. Said gives equal importance to the active participation, as well as ideological involvement of the intellectuals in their struggle for justice, peace, and harmony in the world. The writers, according to Said and many other thinkers have got a pertinent role in mobilizing and conscientising the society against infringed and curtailed freedom, rights, individuality, and truth. Instead of being propagators of truths and ideas provided by the powerful, such people speak truth to

power and question ways and methods of the powerful in their own respective societies, nations, and even globally. They have to think as philosophers, imagine as poets, feel with heart, steadfast in love, speak as prophets, fight as warriors, act with compassion, and live as humanists. The protagonists – March, Wilhelm, Herzog, Sammler, Citrine, Corde, and Benn – with all their weaknesses and drawbacks adhere to these qualities amidst all sorts of adversities, breaking downs, defeats, failures, threats, and falling apart.

These seven Bellowian intellectuals are specimen of the counterculture envisaged by Bellow, who himself is an intellectual. They are the representatives of the rare types of intellectuals among smart, professional, powerful, and worldly minded intellectuals. These intellectuals themselves are used by the author to prove the ineffectuality of many ideologies and theories of the twentieth century in dealing with the existential dilemmas of the people around the world. Amidst other specific intellectuals these people become men of heart, compassionate, loving, humanitarian, altruistic, and agents of peace, justice, and truth. Though their brooding nature, zigzag movements, and eccentricity often keep them away from public roles, they think and act for humanity, they feel and cry with the suffering people, injustice infuriates them, and become other-oriented than permitting to be engulfed by selfish motives and fear. The thesis also looks forward scope for further research such as “Hegemony of the Elite Intellectuals in America and the Exclusion of the Marginal”, “Role of the School Teachers in Kerala before Modernisation of Education”, “Influence of Saul Bellow on His Contemporary American Writers”, and “Suppression of Subaltern Intellectual Voices in Pre and Post-Independent India”.

“Representation of the ‘Intellectual’: Portrayal of the Intellectual Heroes in the Selected Novels of Saul Bellow” thus represents seven intellectual protagonists of Bellow in accordance with the ideas provided by Said. It also represents the Bellowian picture of an intellectual in the ever-changing twentieth century America. This research hopes to

invoke the necessity of active involvement by the intellectuals in the current social, political, cultural, religious, ethnic, global, and anthropological problems. When such people remain silent and roost in the zones of their ivory tower comforts, societies become preys to irrational, biased, unjust, and inhuman powers that deny peace and freedom to people, curtail their rights, and promote discordance, war, and death. As Bellow is treated as a man of optimism instead of nihilism and gloom, this thesis also looks for a harmonious world where peace, love, and justice flourish and humanity thrive.