

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Transformation of Authorial Subjectivity in Don DeLillo's *Mao II*

A Thesis Submitted to the
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University,
In the Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters

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July 2011

Letter of Recommendation

Mrs. Laxmi Adhikari has completed the thesis entitled "Transformation of Authorial Subjectivity in Don DeLillo's *Mao II*" under my supervision. She carried out this research from August 2010 to July 2011. I hereby recommend her thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Transformation of Authorial Subjectivity in Don DeLillo's *Mao II*," submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Laxmi Adhikari has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee:

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Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to my respected supervisor Mr. Hem Lal Pandey, lecturer at the Central Department of English, for his invaluable supervision, inspirational suggestions and comments, which helped me to give the final shape of this thesis. His gentle and loving guidance helped me to eliminate the difficulties throughout the research. The thesis would never have appeared in its present form without his invaluable guidance.

In the same way, I express my deep sense of respect to Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of Central Department of English, T.U., for his cooperation and motivation. I am equally indebted to my respected lecturers of the department Harihar Jnwali, Badri Acharya and Pradip Giri who helped me directly or indirectly to carry out the project. Without their constant support and encouragement this thesis would not have seen the light of the day.

Finally, I am also thankful to my colleagues Durga Silwal, Gyatri Wagle, Hreedayaswor Pandit, and my husband Dipendra Karki whose contribution also played vital role in the completion of this research.

Laxmi Adhikari

July 2011

Abstract

Don DeLillo's *Mao II* highly exposes the condition of the writer in the contemporary world. He presents a writer who becomes a mere "passive object" in the hands of the terrorists. He feels displaced as an intellectual because he cannot incorporate all the ideas in his new novel. After the completion of the novel he spends his days in redoing the pages. He feels that the novel falls woefully short. Instead of publishing his book he feels him incapable to publish his book. He even feels that it is not his writing any more and the language of his book slips off from his hand. Not only this, he experiences that his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world dominated by terrorism. Therefore, he decides to leave his hiding place and agrees to be photographed. He also becomes ready to substitute himself in the place hostage in Beirut held by the terrorist group. Moreover, by presenting the writer acting according to the will of terrorism, directly or indirectly, the novelist shows the transformation of authorial subjectivity from universal intellectual to specific intellectual.

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I. The Author as Universal Intellectual in *Mao II*

This study is a critical analysis of Don DeLillo's *Mao II*. It is an attempt to analyze how subjectivity changes in the society. DeLillo tries to reflect the transformation of the authorial subjectivity in the novel. Thus, it is the analytical discussion of *Mao II*, focusing on the character Bill Gray, the society where he lives and how his authorial subjectivity has been transformed.

Don DeLillo, an Italian-American writer, enjoys the status of one of the most celebrated novelists of postmodern America. The novels that he wrote in 1990s as well as in the new millennium are concerned with the position of the novelist and novel in a media-and violence-dominated society. Such novel is *Mao II* (1991), which is influenced by the events surrounding the fatwa placed upon the author Salman Rushdie and the intrusion of the press into the life of reclusive writer J. D. Salinger. DeLillo is taken as one of the central figures of literary postmodernism. His novels explore the postmodern themes of rampant consumerism, underground conspiracies, the disintegration and re-integration of the family, and the impact of violence and media. DeLillo explores the idea of increasing visibility and effectiveness of terrorists as societal actors and, consequently, the displacement of what he views to be artists' and particularly novelists', traditional role in facilitating social discourse in the context of the role of mass media in forming simulacra which serve to remove an event from its context alter to drain its inherent meaning.

In *Mao II*, DeLillo presents a number of interlinked themes: terrorist activity and hostage taking, and the dominance of the world opinion by terrorism and violence; authorship and the activity of writing; the relative influence of the writer and terrorist; the control of the individuals by charismatic leaders; the crowd and the city; image and reality; survival and death. These themes are treated not as

abstractions but as they impinge on individual lives – how individuals are affected by, or drawn into these political phenomena.

Don DeLillo comes as a postmodern writer whose oeuvre challenges the legitimacy of the multinational capitalism and manipulation of the image through media and advertising to construct the first world identity via the individual's act of consumption. In *Mao II*, he presents the character Bill Gray, compelled, directly or indirectly, to work like a puppet in the society dominated by violence and terrorism. His identity is formed by the power of terrorism. Explaining the role of political strategy in forming identity, Karlis Racevskis writes, "identity is therefore inextricably enmeshed in political strategies and involved with the power/ knowledge effects applied by discourse" (22-23). He argues that the identity of a person (subject) is very closely related with political strategies which involve with the power/ knowledge effects. That is to say, the subjectivity of a being is determined by power. He further avers, "a subject is that which is amenable to the effects of power" (23). A subject is easily controlled by power. Every human being becomes a scapegoat in the hands of power. In this case, Kevin Jon Heller poignantly writes, "subjects do not consciously exercise power; they are merely power's passive objects" (78). We cannot exercise the power consciously and freely rather we are the "passive objects" in the hands of power. That is to say, we are in the grip of power. Heller further asserts:

Because subjects are created by power-relations they do not consciously control, the creation of subjectivity is a homogeneous process in which subjects are little more than "individual copies that are the mechanically punched out". As a result, subversive subjectivity

– subjectivity that is opposed to the interests of power – cannot exist.

(78)

Our subjectivity is created by power relations. The creation of subjectivity is a homogeneous process in which every subject is not more than ‘individual copies that are the mechanically punched out.’ So that the ‘subversive subjectivity’ which opposes to the interests of power, cannot exist at all. In *Mao II*, Bill Gray as a subject cannot escape from power relations. He becomes the power’s “passive object.” Bill as a “passive object” in a violence and terrorism dominated world cannot help him accepting to be the part of a plan to free hostage held by terrorist group in Beirut. Later he works with George Haddad and flies to Athens from London then from Athens to Beirut to exchange himself in the place of the hostage. In a way, he is in the grip of terrorism prevailing in the society.

The novel *Mao II* also captures the situation dominated by terror and violence in which the actions of the character named Bill is controlled by terrorists’ activities. He becomes a mere subject, does according to the terrorists’ will. He is nothing more than power’s “passive object.” He cannot work beyond the terrorists’ boundary.

In the novel, DeLillo presents the author-character, also the protagonist, Bill Gray who maintains the status of a reclusive novelist. He has elected to withdraw from public scrutiny for more than twenty-five years. Bill has published two successful novels. He decides that such celebrity status makes him a commodity and retired to a bunkerlike compound outside Manhattan. At that time, he has worked endlessly revising a novel-in-progress that rests in dozens of boxes and binders in his compound. Capturing Bill’s situation Frank Day and Joseph Dewey write “Gray knows that the book is a waste but cannot bring himself to acknowledge that. With

curmudgeon eccentricity, Gray sees himself as the last fragile vestige of the written word, the last individual voice in an era of electronic media wherein the individual vanishes” (1).

Bill does not think of publishing his third novel, rather goes on re-working and re-editing. He feels displaced as an intellectual and his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world which is dominated by violence and terrorism which DeLillo elucidates in the following lines:

What terrorists gain, novelists lose. The degree to which they influence mass consciousness is the extent of our decline as shapers of sensibility and thought. The danger they represent equals our own failure to be dangerous. And the more clearly we see terror, the less impact we feel from art . . . Beckett is the last writer to shape the way we think and see. After him, the major work involves midair explosions and crumbled buildings. This is the new tragic narrative. (85)

Bill Gray in conversation with George Haddad in London argues that the novelists and terrorists have conflictive relation. What terrorists gain is lost by the novelists. Similarly, as terrorists influence the mass, the novelists on the other side fail to shape their sensibility and thought. The more terrorists terrorize the mass, the more novelists loose their power to be dangerous. The more we see the terror in the society, the less impact we feel from art.

Likewise, Charles Everson, Bill’s former editor and friend, talking about the hostage in Beirut also regards that innocent people always become the scapegoat in the world of terror. And the terrorists always behave as if they do not have heart but the writers understand the rage of the terrorists’ better than any others:

Of course he's innocent. That's why they took him. It's such a simple idea. Terrorize the innocent. The more heartless they are, the better we see their rage. And isn't it the novelists, Bill, above all people, above all writers, who understands this rage, who knows in his soul what the terrorist thinks and feels? Through history it's the novelist who has felt affinity for the violent man who lives in dark. (71)

Charles argues that the hostage held by terrorist group in Beirut is innocent. It is because he is innocent, they make him hostage. It is such a simple idea to terrorize the innocent people. When the terrorists are more heartless then the better the novelists see their violent anger that is difficult to control. And above all the writers' novelist understands the rage of the terrorists. The novelist knows in his soul what the terrorist thinks and feels. According to Charles, throughout the history it is the novelist who has felt rapport for the violent man who lives in dark.

Similarly, George Haddad, a shady university professor from Athens, even presents his view about the relation between the society and terror. He explains the connection between contemporary society and terror more poignantly:

In societies reduced to blur and glut, terror is the only meaningful act. There's too much everything, more things and messages and meanings than we can use in ten thousand lifetimes. Inertia-hysteria. Is history possible? Is any one serious? Who do we take seriously? Only the lethal believer, the person who kills and dies for faith. Everything else is absorbed. The artist is absorbed, the madman in the street is absorbed and processed and incorporated. Give him a dollar, put him in a TV commercial. Only the terrorist stands out side. The culture hasn't figured out how to assimilate him. (86)

George describes a typical postmodern consumer society; humanity is so overwhelmed with images, goods, messages and their multiple meanings that everything becomes indistinguishable, a “blur”. In this postmodern society both “artists” and “writers” are lost; only the extreme gestures of terrorists cannot be absorbed and stand to be “noticed”. And the resistance to “assimilation” allows the terrorist to stay in control, at least according to George.

However, instead of publishing his novel, Bill not only feels him incapable to publish his book but also feels that it is not his writing any more. In correspondence with this situation Bill asserts:

I've forgotten what it means to write. Forgotten my own first rule.
Keep it simple, Bill. I've lacked the courage and perseverance.
Exhausted. Sick of struggling. I've let good enough be good enough.
This is someone else's book. It feels all forced and wrong. I've tricked myself into going on, into believing. Can you understand how that can happen? I'm sitting on a book that's dead. (25)

Bill, while talking with Brita Nilsson, a professional photographer, during the photo shoot, says that he has forgotten the meaning of writing. He has even forgotten his own first rule. To make it simple, he lacks the courage and continuity in writing. Sick of struggling, he is very tired now. He has let good enough be good enough. He feels that the book he is writing is someone else's book. He feels all forced and wrong. He even says that he is sitting on a dead book.

Bill agrees to be photographed by Brita Nilsson, a professional photographer who takes the photographs of writer's only. Brita's visit has disturbed Bill because he finds himself attracted towards her as DeLillo elucidates, “he could easily get up from the desk and go to New York and live with her forever in a terrace apartment

overlooking the park or the river or both . . . He wanted to fuck her loudly on a hard bed with rain beating on the windows” (28). Bill is attracted towards Brita. He feels like to go to New York and live with her forever somewhere in his inner heart. Romanticizing the situation further he thinks of living in a terrace apartment overlooking the park or the river or both. He even fantasizes of having sexual intercourse with her in a rainy day. Brita’s visit has disturbed Bill specifically- the actual cause of missing- because she has brought him a message from his friend and publisher, Charles Everson. Brita says:

Incidentally. I bring a message from Charles Everson . . . Actually the only message I bring is that Charles wants to talk to you. He wouldn’t tell me what it’s all about. I told him to write you a letter. He said you don’t read your mail . . . He said what he had to tell you couldn’t be seen or heard by anyone else. Far too delicate. (24)

Brita who is the actual cause of his missing has brought him a message from his friend and publisher, Charles Everson. She meets him at a publishing dinner somewhere in New York. The message is that Charles wants to talk to Bill. Charles does not tell anything with Brita what the message is. Brita suggests Charles to write a letter to Bill but he says that Bill does not read mail. According to Brita what Charles has to say cannot be heard or seen by anyone else. The message is too delicate.

Meanwhile, Charles wants Bill to take part in a plan to free a hostage being held by a terrorist group in Beirut. The terrorist group is influenced by Mao Zedong’s philosophy. Charles informs about the plan further:

And that’s what we’re here to talk. There’s a young man held hostage in Beirut. He’s a Swiss, a United Nation worker who was doing research on health care in Palestinian camps. He’s also a poet . . . I

want you to show up in London and briefly read from the poet's work, a selection of five or six poems. That's all. (54)

After the photo shoot, Bill goes to meet Charles in New York. There Charles informs him that there is a young man held hostage in Beirut by terrorist group. The hostage is a Swiss by nationality. He is a poet and also a United Nation worker doing research on health care in the Palestinian camps. Because Bill too is a writer, Charles wants one writer to read another writer's work, a selection of five or six poems in London in a press conference to help in freeing the hostage.

Thus, the question then crop that why a prolific writer decides not to publish his book but allows to be photographed and also participates in a plan to release a hostage being held by the terrorist group in Beirut.

Don DeLillo's *Mao II* manages to reflect the transformation of the idea of the writer as universal intellectual into the idea of the writer as specific intellectual. Bill Gray, the writer-protagonist transforms his authorial subjectivity from universal intellectual to the specific intellectual. Bill as a specific intellectual finds his fullest manifestation in writer, the bearer of values and significations in which all can recognize him. He has published two novels previously which have done good business in the market. But since two decades he has been his life in reclusion with Scott, his assistant and Karen, his part time and Scott's full time lover.

However, Bill feels displaced as an intellectual in the world which is dominated by violence and terrorism. Bill further characterizes his condition as:

The language of my books has shaped me as a man. There's is a moral force in a sentence when it comes out right. It speaks the writer's will to live. The deeper I become entangled in the process of getting a sentence right in its syllable and rhythms, the more I learn about

myself. I've worked the sentences of this book long and hard enough but not long and hard enough because I no longer see myself in the language. (25)

As a writer, Bill feels that the language of his book has shaped him as a man famous among the other people. He regards that there is a kind of moral force in a sentence when he writes in the books. The sentence he writes, in a way, speaks the his will to live. He tries to depict the relation between the writing and the writer and argues that the deeper he becomes entangled in the process of writing a sentence right in its syllables and rhythms, the more he comes to learn about himself. He has worked with the sentences of his book long and hard but not long and hard enough because he no longer finds himself in the language. Unlike in the past, at present he cannot recognize himself in the language. Thus, he feels displaced as an intellectual.

Bill has completed writing his novel but does not think of publishing it rather he allows Brita to take his photograph. But, why after so many years of isolation Bill Gray decides to publish his photographs and not his novel? In this concern Silvia Caporale Bizzini comments:

It is because Bill has a conflictive relation with his novel, that is to say with the text he is writing. This text does not recognize him as the 'Author' but as somebody that Roland Barthes defines as a 'white card' or as the Joker. When Bill feels that he has lost his identity as a writer (and above all as a committed writer) what he desperately needs is another identity. The camera can give him what he needs at this moment, an image which is able to tell that, in spite of everything, he still exists as Bill Gray, the writer. (109)

According to Silvia, Bill allows Brita Nilsson, a professional photographer who takes the photographs of the living writers, only because he has conflictive relation with the unpublished (but completed) novel. Bill feels that his novel denies recognizing him as an 'Author' but as a 'white card' or as a 'Joker'. Despite the fact that Bill is a committed writer he begins to feel of losing his identity and he desperately needs another identity. Most importantly, he thinks that the camera can give him an image (photograph) to assert that he still exists as Bill Gray, the writer.

However, Bill is desperate for Brita's arrival. He becomes restless and stands at the window waiting for the headlights to appear at the top of the hill. He waits for quite a long time but does not see any headlight to appear. Then he starts counting to ten but no light is seen and he begins to count ten once more, slower now. Finally, the headlights appear. Then he closes the door.

Meanwhile, Bill gives up his privacy and agrees to be photographed. Not only this, Bill also accepts the plea of Charles Everson to be the part of his plan to make free the hostage, Jean-Claude Julien from the terrorist group in Beirut. Bill, as a specific intellectual, connects himself across different forms of knowledge and from one focus of politicization to another with George Haddad. In London, Bill comes to know that George Haddad, a mediator between the terrorist group lead by Abu Rashid and the human rights organization who wants to release the hostage, whose name appears in an address book, has been found in a bomb factory somewhere in France and also has been photographed in the company of known terrorist leaders, has direct link with terrorist group. Despite this fact, Bill agrees to work together with George secretly without Charles and others. He wants Bill to come to Athens and meet the man responsible for keeping hostage captive. In Athens, George tells Bill the man's name is Abu Rashid. Later, George even tells Bill that Abu Rashid

wants to exchange Bill in the place of Jean-Claude Julien, a hostage in Beirut because he will be worth of great deal more to the terrorist group in Beirut than the hostage they are holding now. Despite that, Bill becomes ready to go to Beirut. He is ready to encounter the possibility of being held hostage or probably killed by the terrorist group. No matter what the result he will have to bear but he wants to give his task the final touch.

Different critics have appraised Don DeLillo's *Mao II* in their own ways. The novel in one way reflects the American concept by equating the leftist as terrorist. However, most of the American postmodern novels inevitably portray "leftist" as terrorists. Reflecting this concept Vlatka Velcic comments:

Mao II reveals America's growing obsession with terrorism. The accusations of terrorism expands with diminishing accusations that the foundation of every terrorism lurks leftist ideology; in other words, the "leftist" as murderous political "Other" is replaced with a broader category of terrorist with leftist leanings. (411)

Mao II reveals America's growing obsession with terrorist and terrorism. This obsession expands with belittle accusation that every terrorism lurks leftist ideology. They regard "leftist" as murderous. In other words, terrorist as leftist and leftist as terrorist.

In a similar fashion, John Carlos Rowe views, "DeLillo attempts to demonstrate that no one has a unique command over language and that no one owns language, but everyone is subsumed within the language in postmodern world" (qtd. Rowe 28). Rowe quotes from Ryan Simmons who argues that in the postmodern world we neither have unique command over language nor we have our own

language but we all are subsumed within the language. That is to say, language is not in our command rather we are in command of the language.

Similarly, Maureen Whitebrook regards *Mao II* as a commentary on twentieth-century politics. Through this novel DeLillo is able to depict features of modern political life and, by representing them through a story, involving plot and characters to make both concrete and hypothesize the political phenomena. Whitebrook avers:

Mao II raises a number of issues for politics. For example, it refers to the inescapable facts of modern life that much political “knowledge,” or “experience” even, is conveyed not directly but by way of images – the TV screen, portraits of the leader, from huge wall posters, through works of arts, to the t-shirt logo. (766)

The novel raises numerous issues for politics. It refers to the inescapable facts of modern life which are conveyed not directly but by means of images like TV screen, portraits of the leader, wall posters etc.

Moreover, Staphaine S. Halldorson analyzes, “*Mao II* considers the loss of power of a writer’s idea in contemporary American society, the four pages blurbs that accompany paper back are widely ironic” (30). She asserts that *Mao II* shows the contemporary American society with the loss of power of a writer’s idea. The writer loses his power to write in the contemporary American society.

Apart from this, *Mao II* reflects the connection between the terrorists and writers, particularly novelists. In the contemporary world dominated by terrorism they are turned into a mere anonymous dead body and voiceless hostage. Margaret Scanlan appraises:

Mao II marks a new phase; DeLillo’s first extended exploration of the relationship between terrorists and writers. More starkly than his

predecessors in the genre, DeLillo displays a contemporary world in which terrorism's televised narrative has replaced the novel, transforming the writer into an anonymous and voiceless hostage. (1)

Mao II explores the relationship between terrorists and writers. In the novel, DeLillo portrays a contemporary world in which terrorism's televised narrative has replaced the novel by transforming the writer into an anonymous and voiceless hostage.

The aforementioned reviews make clear that Don DeLillo's *Mao II* as a novel foregrounds the transformation of the authorial subjectivity is the definite critical gap which this dissertation seeks to fill through the analysis of why the writer-protagonist named Bill is living the life of a hidden novelist, he feels displaced as an intellectual, he feels incapable to publish his book, feels it is not his writing any more, his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world which is dominated by terrorism, agrees to be photographed and goes to release the hostage putting his life in danger.

II. Author's Position and the Dominion of Violence and Terrorism in *Mao II*

Don DeLillo's *Mao II* reflects the transformation of authorial subjectivity. The novel shows the transformation of the idea of the writer as a universal intellectual into the idea of the writer as a specific intellectual. DeLillo's depiction of a successful writer, his condition in the contemporary society dominated by media, violence and terrorism, his desperate awaiting to be photographed, the writer's feeling of being displaced, the acceptance of the proposal in helping to release a hostage kidnapped by the terrorist group help to transform the authorial subjectivity of the writer-protagonist. Bill resists the idea which portrays the writer as the "consciousness and eloquence" of western epistemology. The writer, within the power/knowledge relationship, the depiction of the writer as still important and somehow necessary in the contemporary social context, marks the transformation of the idea of the writer as a universal intellectual into the idea of the writer as a specific intellectual.

The novel waves the web of author's condition in the world dominated by media, violence and terrorism. The transformation of authorial subjectivity is well justified through the writer-protagonist, Bill Gray. DeLillo explores the idea of the increasing visibility and effectiveness of terrorists as societal actors. And, consequently, the displacement of what he views to be artists', and particularly novelists', traditional role in facilitating social discourse in the context of the role of the mass media in forming simulacra which serve to remove an event from its context and alter to drain its inherent meaning. He also presents the contemporary world where terrorism is a means to shape and influence human consciousness.

Moreover, the universal intellectual is a universal thinking subject. He carefully observes the on going events in the society and acquires the knowledge about the world. That is to say, the universal intellectual is observant of the events

that prevail in the contemporary society. He has lots of theoretical knowledge about the on going events. As a writer he must have knowledge about the contemporary events to write about. He is the acquirer of the present social events. He wants to portray those social events in his books in order to influence the people so that his book becomes successful. As every human being is inquisitive to know about the present events that currently take place, universal intellectual regards that the on going social events which he depicts in his book create a kind of curiosity among the people to know about those events. Thus universal intellectual has the universal knowledge. In this context, Michel Foucault views:

The universal intellectual par excellence used to be the writer: as a universal consciousness, a free subject, he was counterposed to those intellectuals who were merely competent instances in the services of the state or capital-technicians, magistrates, teachers. (68)

Foucault, here, regards a universal intellectual as a person having universal consciousness. This implies that a universal intellectual is aware of the things that take place in the universe. He well observes the present events. By nature, he is very curious. The curiosity that he has marks what he is. He is a free subject in a sense that he can portray any of the social events he likes but within the boundary of logic. He writes books choosing new issues prevailing in the society, but in doing so, he should not forget the law of logic. Universal intellectual has enough skill and knowledge to do something well or to the necessary standards. He is as competent as the people in the service of the state or capital like teachers, technicians and magistrates.

However, Foucault further avers, “universal intellectual derives from the jurist or notable, and finds his fullest manifestation in the writer, the bearer of values and

significations in which all can recognize themselves” (70). Universal intellectual is the expertise in regards to the social events. Not only that as jurist is expert in law and logic making, in the same manner, universal intellectual is also expert in the field of logic making. Anyone can make of claim but giving logic to support that claim is beyond the reach of all the commoners. Only few people have the ability to give logic in order to support their claim and a universal intellectual is one among them. Most of the writings are the manifestation of author’s themes, issues, style, language etc. Universal intellectual carries the values and significations of the society which other people recognize them with. Likewise, Edward Shils, in the concept of universal intellectual, argues:

Through their provision of models and standards, by the presentation of the symbols to be appreciated universal intellectual elicit, guide, and form the expressive dispositions within a society. Not that the expressive life of a society is under the exclusive domain of its intellectuals. Indeed the situation has never existed -- and in fact could never exist – in which the expressive life of a society, its artistic creation. Not that the expressive life of the society is under the exclusive domain of its intellectual or the ultimately aesthetic grounds in its ethical judgments fell entirely within the traditions espoused by the universal intellectuals of the society. (7)

Universal intellectual, representing the symbols to be appreciated inform, guide and form the expressive dispositions within the society. Societies vary in the extent to which the expressive actions and orientations are in accordance with what is taught and represented by the dominant intellectuals. Within these variations, much of the

expressive life of a society, even what is most vulgar and tasteless, echoes some of the expressive elements in the central value system represented by the intellectual.

Meanwhile, unlike universal intellectual, a specific intellectual focuses on both theory and practice. Like universal intellectual specific intellectual also has the knowledge about the current socio-political events. Though a specific intellectual has the knowledge about the socio-political events of the present time he cannot go for the practice of all those events. He practices the theory but within specific sector. Explaining what a specific intellectual is, Foucault avers:

A new mode of the “connection between theory and practice” has been established, not in the modality of the “universal,” the “exemplary,” the “just-and-true-for-all,” but within specific sectors at the precise points where their own conditions of life or work situate them (housing, the hospital, the asylum, the laboratory, the university, family, and sexual relations). This has undoubtedly given them a much more immediate and concrete awareness of struggles. And they have met here with problems which are specific “non universal,” and often different from those of the proletariat or the masses. (68)

The specific intellectuals have knowledge in regards to theory, and also practice the theory. The specific intellectuals work not only in the modality of the “universal”, the “exemplary”, the “just-and-true-for-all,” rather they work within specific sectors where their own conditions of life or work situate them. No doubt this situation or condition has given them much immediate and concrete awareness to struggles. That is to say, specific intellectuals have to face a lot of problems in the society when they go for the specific task. And they have to meet with the problems which are specific and “non universal”.

Specific intellectual is an essential figure in the society. The more complex the society, the more essential the specific intellectual is. As Shils comments:

Specific intellectuals are indispensable to any society, not just to industrial society, and the more complex the society, the more indispensable they are. An effective collaboration between specific intellectuals and the authorities which govern society is a requirement for an order and continuity in public life and for the integration of the wider reaches of the specific intellectual into the society. (21)

The specific intellectuals are very important not only to industrial society; rather they are important to any society. The more complex the society is, the more important the specific intellectuals become. The well collaboration between the specific intellectuals and the authority is most important. The effective collaboration between specific intellectuals and the authority which governs the society is like to have fragrance in gold. For to have the order and continuity in public life; an effective collaboration is required. Not only that for the betterment and progress of the specific intellectual, the collaboration between the authority and the specific intellectual is must.

Mao II by Don DeLillo is the story of a famous novelist Bill Gray. Bill is in his early sixties and is born as Willard Skansy Jr. which Scott Martineau; his devoted assistant comes to know through his birth certificate while he goes missing. Bill as a writer is a universal thinking subject. He has the “universal consciousness.” Since Bill is a novelist, he needs more and more subject matters, new issues, and new events to write a book. Thus, he must have lots and lots of knowledge about the subject matter that he wants to depict in his writing. When he has a lot of information about the particular subject matter then he succeeds to present the better novel.

Loosing a small thing may prove to have a big effect. So he well observes the on going socio-political events. That is why, Bill is a universal intellectual. As a universal intellectual, he has the universal knowledge. Bill, as a universal intellectual, is the representative of the truth through his novels.

Thus, Bill is a universal intellectual. His novels represent the truth of the contemporary society. Explaining the representation of universal intellectual's work Bizzini writes:

In relation to his criticism of traditional western epistemology that Foucault started to connect more firmly the role that the intellectual and culture play in the frame to the power relation that constructs the subject. His can be considered as one of the answers to the collapse of the classical theorization of, for example, the Sartrean universal intellectual in the post war period. Foucault rejects this idea because he considers that it is directly related to the idea of the existence of an absolute truth with its corresponding essentialist and universal subjects. (106)

Silvia argues that Foucault in relation to his criticism of traditional western epistemology started to connect the intellectual in the frame work of power and knowledge. He regards that a universal intellectual stands for the representation of the truth. Universal intellectual in his work mentions the absolute Truth that exists in the society. In simple terms, a universal intellectual writes about what is real that happens in the society. The writing of the universal intellectual also deals with universal subject corresponding with the absolute truth.

Correspondingly, universal intellectual always involves in search of the truth which he can further represent in his work and helps his readers to know the absolute

truth. Foucault in his interview with Gilles Deleuze avers, “universal intellectual involve in the search for truth, for the principals embodied in events and actions or for the establishment between the self and the essential, whether relationship be cognitive, appreciative, or expressive” (206). Foucault argues that the universal intellectual is always in search of truth for the principle that is imbedded in the events and actions. Not only that, a universal intellectual goes for the truth for the establishment of a relationship between the self and the essential whether the relationship is cognitive, appreciative or expressive.

Bill is a popular novelist. He has already published two novels. Bill as a universal intellectual represented the truth of the society in his novels. His novels are not only the portrayal of the societal truth but they convey a kind of message through which people are able to bring change in their lifestyle. His books in a way create a unique image in peoples’ livelihood. Appraising Bill’s work in the novel *Mao II* Daniel Bosch writes, “Gray is able to create books that change people’s lives” (211). Bill, as a universal intellectual, is able to create such books that bring changes in peoples’ lives. Likewise, explaining the status of a universal intellectual Bizzini avers:

According to Barthes, the universal intellectual is what is left of the heritage of a past time when his word had a prophetic meaning and represented the voice of the authority with the death of author, this charismatic, and indeed andocentric figure disappear. (106)

The universal intellectual, according to Roland Barthes, is the follower of the heritage of a past time. His words have a meaning that states the will of the authority. The universal intellectual in the past stands for male-white only. The females are not included no matter if they are more talented than the males. Universal intellectual

represents the voice of the authority in his works. He is, in a way, made puppet in the hands of authority. From one corner, Bill Gray also fits in the Barthesian model of universal intellectual. He is an American writer. He is a male and white person. His state of being white and his profession as a writer help him to be universal intellectual. He too, like other universal intellectual, serves the nation by addressing the voice of the authority in his works. The authority likes only those who appraise their rule and work according to their wish and will. If not then the authority banish those people. But in the case of Bill he is still living in United States of America and his two published novels are also not banished. That is, in a way Bill also represents the voice of the authority.

In *Mao II*, Don DeLillo presents the writer-protagonist Bill Gray living the life of a hidden novelist. Bill has published two novels before he chooses to go for living the life of a reclusive novelist. In this context, Frank Day and Joseph Dewey comment:

Novelist Bill Gray has elected to withdraw from public scrutiny for more than twenty five years. The author of two books that, in the 1950's, had found a cult like following, Gray decided that such celebrity status made him a commodity and retired to a bunkerlike compound outside Manhattan. (1)

Bill has lived his life as a reclusive writer for more than twenty- five years. But Bill has realized that his life of a recluse portrays him as a celebrity and such celebrity status makes him nothing more than a commodity.

Bill Gray as a writer has to collect subject matters, new issues, and new events for his books. In a way, he must have the knowledge about what is going on in the present situation. There is a saying that old is gold and new is diamond. Nobody

wants to get attached with old things. Everybody likes new things which are in fashion. Similar is the case with the readers too. Readers are also attracted towards those books which deal with the new subject matter or new issue.

Correspondingly, Bill's previous novels become very famous. Those books are liked by everybody else. Everybody knows him through his books. His books are able to touch peoples' inner heart. Not all the writers have such talent to influence. Brita Nilsson, a professional photographer who takes the photograph of the writers, also likes the novels written by Bill. When she meets Scott in New York she says, "I do love his books. They really mattered to me" (12). In fact Brita loves the books by Bill. Those books have very significant effects on her. This is further clarified through her conversation with Scott in Bill's house as she says:

Somebody gave me Bill's first novel to read and I said, whoa what's this? That book was about me somehow. I had to read slowly to keep from jumping out of my skin. I saw myself. It was my book.

Something about the way I think and feel. He caught the back-and-frothness. The way things fit almost anywhere and nothing gets completely forgotten. (26-27)

When Brita works as a salesperson in a heavily carpeted shoe store somebody gives her Bill's first novel to read. She feels that the book is about her somehow. As we see our reflection in the mirror, she finds her reflection in Bill's book. It is because Bill as a universal writer reflects society and the on going events. She finds something in the book about which she thinks and feels. The book is superb and perfect. Scott too has a similar view and avers, "yes. Sentences with built-in memories" (27). The conversation of Brita and Scott makes it clear that Bill is such a novelist who creates the characters and those characters are the representative of the people in the society.

That means to say, Bill in his novel portrays the contemporary social events which touch the heart of every readers from different society and profession.

However, Bill as a universal intellectual is a universal thinking subject. He keeps in touch with on going socio-political events. He, in a way, has to be updated with the incidents occur in the contemporary society. After the publication of two successful novels he has to balance the fame of popularity. Once a man gets driving license means not to get it for forever. He has to go for its renewing time and again. Likewise, the publication of two successful novels will not establish Bill as a popular writer for forever. He has to publish other good novels in order to renew his identity as a famous novelist. The publication of other novels means other new subject matters, new issues, and new characters as a representative of the contemporary society. If he will not bring out other books, his admirers will not recognize him after many years of gap. And this is terrible which he has not imagined ever. Through his two published novels Bill has able to establish him as a famous writer. His readers are the great admirers of him. He feels disturbed when his fans meet him on the way and interrupt him. To escape from this, he chooses to live as a recluse where nobody interrupts him and he can fully concentrate on his work. He then decides to go far from New York in remote area where the media and his fans cannot reach. He successfully lives the life as a reclusive writer for more than two decades beyond the reach of anyone who can recognize him as Bill Gray, a novelist. He even chooses to live a reclusive life so that he can, without any disturbance, observe the contemporary socio-political events which he can further portray in his upcoming novel.

Moreover, Bill chooses to live a life of a recluse so that he can well observe the ongoing socio-political incidents. For this task to achieve there is TV in his

house. TV is the best means to get informed about the events, incidents of the particular society or worldwide. Watching TV means to be updated with the world events. There is the facility of almost everything Bill needs. There is a typewriter through which he can keep record of his ideas. But still he feels displaced as an intellectual. Bizzini writes, "*Mao II* is the story of a famous, much admired writer who can no longer find a satisfying place in contemporary society; it is for this reason that he decides to hide while he tries to write his last book. The writer feels displaced as an intellectual" (108). Bill, a famous and much admired writer finds no satisfactory place in the contemporary society. Due to this reason, he decides to hide himself while writing his next book. But during his concealment, he finds no satisfaction at all, rather he feels displaced as an intellectual.

Bill in his hiding wants to accomplish all the socio-political events which are going on in the contemporary society. He does not want any interruption at all. In fact, he succeeds in this task. But the question arises, is it possible to write about what one knows in a single book? If it is done also, will it not be a mess? It is obvious that Bill cannot incorporate all the ideas, which he acquires, into a single book. Otherwise it will be none other than a junk of ideas. And after all he must give continuity to an image as a successful writer by creating a book with heart touching issues.

Despite the fact that it is impossible to incorporate all the knowledge that one has into a single work, how may does he feel? Same is the case with Bill Gray. Bill, a universal intellectual acquires the knowledge about events prevailing in the contemporary society. But he cannot include all of them into his single work. He realizes that all the knowledge he gains cannot be manifested into his single novel. The demonstration of all the knowledge is only possible through various novels. And

it is not sure whether he further publishes other novels in the days to come or not. During the time period of more than two decades, Bill is able to complete only one novel. He has already completed his third novel but he goes on re-writing and re-editing which he tells to Brita during the photo shoot in these lines, "finish. I'm finished. The book's been done for two years. But I rewrite pages and then revise in detail" (25). Though the book has been written before two years Bill goes for rewriting the pages and revising it in detail in large number which can be clarified further as DeLillo writes:

In the attic there were file cabinets containing research material. Scott recited subject headings and showed her dozens of color-coded folders. His desk and typewriter were here. There were cardboard boxes filled with loose manuscript pages. There was a large photocopier machine and shelves lined with reference books, style manuals and stacks of periodicals. He handed Brita a pale-gray manuscript box unmarked, and gestured to six identical boxes on the desk and said this was the final version, the typed and corrected and proofread copy of Bill's new novel. But Bill was still working, making changes. (28)

In the attic of Bill's house, there are many files that contain research materials. Scott also recites the subject headings. There are many cardboard boxes full of loose manuscript pages. There is a typewriter and photocopier machine. The shelves are filled with reference books, style manuals and periodicals. There Scott shows her a manuscript box with the final version, the typed and corrected copy of Bill's new novel. But Bill goes on reworking for his third novel. Scott further describes Bill's situation in conversation with Brita when she asks him, why does not he want Bill to publish his novel? Scott replies:

It's his call. He does what he wants. But he'll tell you himself the book falls short. Bill has been working on and off for twenty-three years on this book. He quits it, then returns. He rewrites it, then puts it aside. He starts something new, then comes back to it. He takes a trip, he returns, he resumes work, goes away, comes back, works every single day for three years, he puts it aside, picks it up, smells it, weighs it, rewrites it, puts it aside, starts something new, goes away, comes back. (27)

Bill restlessly reworks on his third novel for which he has spent twenty- three years in writing. According to Scott Bill feels that the novel on which he is working is woefully short. He quits and then returns to write again. He sometimes takes trip then returns and resumes the work. Likewise, he works every single day for three years. He feels that his book is very short. Bill cannot incorporate all the knowledge that is in him. As a result, he feels displaced as an intellectual.

However, instead of publishing his novel, Bill feels incapable to publish his book. During the photo shoot, Bill tells Brita that Scott is not in the side of publishing his third novel. Bill says, "Scott, Scott's way ahead of me .Scott doesn't want me to publish" (25). But this is not all true. Bill feels incapable to publish his book because after lots of reworking on the novel, he still thinks that he cannot include all the events prevail in the contemporary society. Thus he goes on reworking instead of publishing his third novel. Scott, his devoted assistant amplifies the situation as:

The works has burnt him out. He's burnt out. Bill has always had to struggle for every word. Bill walks five feet from his desk and doubt hits him like a hammer in the back. He has to go back to his desk and

find a passage he knows will reassure him. He reads it and he's reassured. An hour later, sitting in the car, he feels it again, the page is wrong the chapter is wrong, and he can't shake the doubt until he gets back to his desk and finds a passage he knows will reassure him. He reads it and he's reassured. He's been doing this all his life and now he's run out of reassuring passages. (27)

Bill's work has burnt him out metaphorically. He has to struggle for every single word. He writes, reads it and gets reassured. After some moments, he feels that the page is wrong, the chapter is wrong. He cannot be assured until he sits on his desk and finds a passage he knows will reassure him. Brita even tells her to stop reworking on the novel and publish it. She asserts, "and you'll stop redoing pages. This book is finished. I don't want to make a fetish of things are simple. But it's done, so you stop" (26). Brita suggests Bill to stop re-writing and re-editing the pages of his novel. Since the novel is finished, he should stop now. Despite this fact, Bill is not ready to accept this truth. He goes on redoing the pages thinking that the book is not complete yet. Reflecting such mentality of Bill's, Bizzini comments, "the book that Bill Gray is writing is a text which, significantly, he thinks will never be finished" (108).

Correspondingly, instead of publishing his novel, he does not only feel him incapable to publish his book but also feels that it was not his writing any more. He feels that the writing of his book does not belong to him but belongs to someone else. Bill Gray in the period of photo shoot tells Brita that the language of his book has shaped him once but now he does not find himself in the language he writes. His writing now is no more his writing. He assumes that the language is slowly and gradually slipping off from his hand. Bill's condition can be clarified through these lines as he avers:

Every sentence has a truth waiting at the end of it and the writer learns how to know it when he finally gets there. On one level this truth is the swing of the sentence, the beat and poise, but down deeper it's the integrity of the writer as he matches with the language. I've always seen myself in sentences. I begin to recognize myself, word by word, as I work through a sentence. The language of my books has shaped me as a man. There's a moral force in a sentence when it comes out right. It speaks the writer's will to live. The deeper I become entangled in the process of getting a sentence right in its syllable and rhythms, the more I learn about myself. I've worked the sentences of this book long and hard but not long and hard enough because I no longer see myself in the language. (25)

Every sentence carries the truth in it and the writer knows how to get it at the end. This truth, on one level, is like the swing of the sentence but down at the deeper level this truth is the unity of the writer as he matches it with the language. Bill has always found himself in the sentences he writes. As he works through the sentence he begins to acknowledge himself, word by word. He believes that the language of his books has shaped him as a man famous among the people. He feels that there is a kind of moral force in a sentence when he writes in the books. The sentence expresses the writer's will to live. Actually, he tries to show the relation between the writer and the writing and argues that the deeper he becomes entailed in the process of writing a sentence, the more he comes to learn about himself. He has worked with the sentences of his third novel with lots of effort spending on it. But despite this all, he no longer finds himself in the language.

Bill does not find himself as the writer of the book. He has worked on every words, phrases and sentences tactfully. He is very tired now. He is very tired of writing. His conversation with Brita during photo shoot well amplifies this situation:

I've lacked courage and perseverance. Exhausted. Sick of struggling. I've let good enough be good enough. This is someone else's book. It feels all forced and wrong. I've tricked myself into going on, into believing. Can you understand how that can happen? I'm sitting on a book that's dead. (25)

Bill is sick of struggling. He has even lacked the courage and continuance to achieve his aim. Now he feels that the book he is writing is someone else's book. The language of his book does not follow his command. In this situation, he feels that the language is slipping off from his hand. The language is not in his grip. He feels as if he is sitting on a dead book.

Thus, now Bill writes for the sake of writing. As a writer he thinks that writing is his life, aim. To write means to stay alive. So, to live also he has to give continuity to his work of writing. Bill further says, "I write to survive now, to keep my heart beating" (25). Since he no longer finds himself in the language, he feels that his book is not his own work but someone else's book. Despite this fact, he still wants to continue writing. It is simply because he wants to write for nothing more than to survive, to keep continuing his heart beating.

Moreover, Bill feels that his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world which is dominated by terrorism. Even Bill, theoretically free to keep writing himself into existence, loses the heart to do so. At first culture of terror seems to give him purpose. Terrorists are the societal actors in the contemporary society. Bill's conversation with George in Athens elucidates this idea in these lines:

What terrorists gain novelists lose. The degree to which they influence mass consciousness is the extent of our decline as shapers of sensibility and thought. The danger they represent equals our own failure to be dangerous. And the more clearly we see terror, the less impact we feel from art. (85)

Bill Gray in the conversation with George Haddad, mediator between the terrorists and the human rights organization which wants to release the hostage in London argues that the novelists and terrorists have a very conflictive relationship. What terrorists gain is lost by the novelists. Similarly, as the terrorists influence the mass the novelists on the other side lose their sensibility and thought. When terrorists terrorize the mass the novelists lose their power to be dangerous. The more we see the terror, the less impact from the arts. Terrorists are supplanting the novelists in the world dominated by violence and terror. Terrorists are very powerful because they have weapons to terrorize the people. They even kill and injure people. This is why, terrorists are the heroes of the contemporary society. George reflects this concept as he says, “and it’s difficult when they kill and maim because you see them, seriously now, as the only possible heroes of our time” (85). Likewise, Bill feels that the terrorists have direct effects in the lives of novelists. Terrorists through their activity try to win over the fame that novelists have in the society. What novelists do through their novels, the terrorists do by means of terror. In this sense, the terrorists have taken the territory of the novelists. Depicting this condition, Bill during a photo shoot with Brita says:

There is a curious knot that binds novelists and terrorists. In the West, we become famous effigies as our books lose the power to shape and influence. Do you ask your writers how they feel about this? Years ago I used to think it was possible for a novelist to alter the inner life of the

culture. Now bomb- makers and gunmen have taken that territory. They make raids on human consciousness. (21)

Bill thinks that there is an inquisitive knot that binds novelists and terrorists together. Years ago he thinks that novelists have the power to bring changes in the society. They have power in their writings. He thinks that it was possible for a novelist to make change in the inner life of the culture. But now the bomb- makers and gunmen have taken that territory. Ultimately, the terrorists replace the writers. The terrorists make raids on human consciousness. That means to say, they shape the human consciousness which the writers used to do.

Bill thinks that terrorists terrorize the people who are weak and innocent. They choose an innocent man to terrorize and convey the message that they hold the strong position in the society and can do anything they want. The more they spread terror in the society, the stronger they prove to be. George, while talking with Bill, poignantly says:

Of course he's innocent. That's why they took him. It's such a simple idea. Terrorize the innocent. The more heartless they are, the better we see their rage. And isn't it the novelist, Bill, above all people, above all writers who understands this rage, who knows in his soul what the terrorist thinks and feels ? Through history it's the novelist who has felt affinity for the violent man who lives in the dark. (71)

George accepts that terrorists choose innocent to be their victim. For them it is an easy task to terrorize the innocent. Jean- Claude Julian, a Swiss, a united Nation worker who has been doing research on health care in the Palestinian camps is kidnapped by the terrorist group in Beirut leading by Abu Rashid simply because he is innocent. To terrorize the innocent is such a simple idea. The more they are heartless, the better we

see their anger. Above all the writers it is the novelist who understands their anger. He, in his heart, knows what terrorist thinks and feels.

However, Bill feels displaced as an intellectual and his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world which is dominated by terrorism. Instead of publishing his novel, he does not only feel him incapable to publish his book but also feels that it is not his writing any more. And so Bill decides to leave his hiding place and agrees to be photographed by Brita, a professional photographer who only takes pictures of writers. In New York Brita tells Scott:

I will just keep on photographing writers, every one I can reach, poets, playwrights. I am on the prowl, so to speak. I never stop traveling and taking pictures. This is what I do now. Writers . . . Every man and woman who is out there and who is reachable. If someone's not well known, so much the better. Given a choice, I prefer to search out writers who remain obscure. (12-13)

Brita expresses her wish to keep on photographing the writers. She wants to photograph novelists, poets, playwrights everyone that she can reach. She will give continuity to this task and never stops travelling too. Whether be it man or woman she wants to capture those writers who are reachable. If she is given a choice then she prefers to search out the writers who are unknown. Bill is desperate to be photographed. He awaits the arrival of Brita restlessly. He is fed up of his year's long isolation. So he decides to break his long period of isolation. He is very excited for Brita to arrive. DeLillo amplifies Bill's situation as:

The room was dark and the man stood at the window waiting for headlights to appear at the top of the hill and weave across the field, across the tree stumps and bent stalks and rock debris. It was not eager

or needful waiting but only a sense that the thing was about to happen and if he stood here a moment longer he would see the car turn into the rattle lane, a wobbly shadow set behind the lights, and come down the hill toward the house, taking on dimensions. He resolved to count to ten and if the lights did not appear he would go to the desk and turn on the lamp and do some work, going over what he'd written during the day, the scant drip, the ooze of speckled matter, the blood sneeze, the daily pale secretion, the bits of human tissue sticking to the page. He counted to ten and no lights showed he began to count to ten once more slower now, standing in the dark, making an agreement with himself that this time he would really go to the desk and turn on the lamps if the car did not appear at the top of the hill by the time he reached ten, the mud-spattered compact, and settle down to work because it was only children who thought they could make things happen by counting, and, he went to ten one more time and then more time and then just stood watching until the headlights finally showed. (14)

Bill, in the dark room, stands at the window waiting for the headlights of a car in which Scott is bringing Brita in his home. He senses that the thing is about to happen. Fed up of waiting he starts to count to ten. But when the lights do not appear then he goes to the desk and turn on the lamp and starts doing some work. He counts to ten and when no light are seen he begins to count to ten one more time. Here, he behaves like a child. It is only children who think that they can make things happen by counting. Finally, the headlight shows up. Bill is fed up of living a reclusive lifestyle. So he wants to show up himself. He is sick of hiding. Thus he avers, "I've paid a terrible price for this wretched hiding. And I'm sick of it finally" (23).

However, Bill with his decision to be photographed transform from a universal intellectual into a specific intellectual. Bill as a universal intellectual has theoretical knowledge about the contemporary socio-political event that prevails in the society. But after the transformation Bill has the both theoretical and practical knowledge. He wants to practice the theory. Bill, as a specific intellectual, cannot practical all the theory. So he is limited to a specific sector of photographing. He helplessly allows himself to be photographed.

Brita not only arrives in Bill's home to take his photographs but also to convey the message that she has brought from Charles Everson, Bill's previous editor and also a friend. She says:

Actually the only message I bring is that Charles want to talk to you. He wouldn't tell me what it's all about. I told him to write a letter. He said you don't read your mail . . . He said that what he had to tell you couldn't be seen or heard by anyone else. Far too delicate. He also said he used to be your editor and good, good friend. And he said it was distressing not to be able to get in touch with you directly. (24)

Charles Everson is Bill's former editor and good friend. Charles feels distressed in not being able to be in touch with Bill directly since Bill does not read his mails. Charles wants to meet and talk to Bill. He does not say anything about the message but only hints that what he has to tell to Bill cannot be seen or heard by anyone else, it is far too delicate.

After his photo shoot, Bill goes to New York to meet Charles. There, Charles reveals the cause why he wants to meet Bill Elucidating the cause for call Charles avers:

There's a young man held hostage in Beirut. He's Swiss, a UN worker who was doing research on health care in the Palestinian camps. He's also a poet. Published maybe fifteen short poems in French-language journals we know next to nothing about the group that has him. The hostage is the only proof they exist . . . We're mainly academics and publishing people and we are just getting started and this is the crazy part of the whole business. This group takes a hostage simply because he's there, he's available, and he apparently tells them he's a poet and what is the first thing they do? They contact us. They have a fellow in Athens who calls our London office and says, there's a writer chained to a wall in bare room in Beirut. If you want him back, we can do a deal. (54)

Charles informs Bill that there is a young man kidnapped in Beirut. That hostage is a Swiss by nationality. He is a United Nation worker who was doing research on health care in the Palestinian camps. He is a poet too. He has published fifteen short poems in French language journals. They do not have any information about the group that takes him hostage. The terrorist group takes him a hostage simply because he is available there and he tells them that he is a poet. A fellow of theirs contact in London office and says that there is a writer chained to a wall in a Beirut. If they want him back alive then they have to do a deal.

Likewise, Charles also pleads Bill for his help to release a hostage. He chooses Bill for this task when Brita says that she is taking Bill's picture. Then Bells ring in his head. If Bill is willing to be photographed after all these years, why not take it one step further? Charles requests with Bill and says:

Do something that will help us to show who we are as an organization and how important it is for writers to take public stand. Frankly I'm hoping to create a happy sensation. I want you to show up in London and briefly read from the poet's work, a selection of five or six poems. That's all. (54)

Scott requests Bill to help to work as an organization and show the importance for the writers to take a public stand. He wants Bill to show up himself in London and read the poets work, a selection of five or six poems. First of all Bill suggests Scott to get a Swiss writer for to carry out the task. He even asks, "get a Swiss writer. Won't the Swiss feel left out?" (54). Scott replies his question in such a way:

I can get any writer I want. But I want Bill Gray. Look, I didn't tell any one you were coming here today. Not even my secretary. Because if I had there'd be a queue outside that door stretching like a conga line into the distance. There's an excitement that attaches to your name and it will help us put a mark on this event, force people to talk about it and think about it long after the speeches fade. I want one missing writer to read the work of another. I want the famous novelist to address the suffering of the unknown poet. I want the English-language writer to read in French and the older man to speak across the night to his young colleague in letters. Don't you see how beautifully balanced? (54-55)

Scott asserts that he can get any writer he wants. But he wants Bill Gray to carry out this function. He wants Bill for this task because there is an excitement that attaches to his name this will help them to put a mark on this event, force people to talk about it and think about it long after the speeches fade. Charles wants one missing writer to read the work of another missing one. He wants Bill, a famous novelist to address the

suffering of the poet unknown to him. Scott wants the English-language writer to read in French. The things are beautifully balanced. But Bill says nothing. Then Charles tries to assure Bill saying:

This is the soul's own business, Bill. I think it's something you need to do. Get out of your room, away from your preoccupations. And I make these promises. There will be no advance announcement of your presence. No interviews after your appearance. Still cameras only. The conference will be kept to fifty or sixty people, all inclusive. I want a ripple effect. Word will spread, follow-up stories will appear, curiosity will build. I want our work to have a future. (55)

Charles, being very confident, says that Bill has to do something. He has to come out of his writing room and do something extraordinary. He also promises that there will be no previous announcement of Bill's presence. He will grant no interviews after Bill's appearance. He knows that Bill's unexpected appearance will create a ripple effect.

In DeLillo's novels nothing is ever simple and straightforward. He presents one thing to hint many others. Same is the case in his novel, *Mao II* also. Charlie wants Bill to help in releasing the hostage but it does many tasks as Robert Morace comments:

Helping free this hostage will also publicize the terrorist group (Maoist rather than fundamentalist) that is holding him; "The hostage is the only proof they exist." It will also publicize the existence of the new human rights group to which Everson belongs and which he may be using as a front for securing the book Bill hates, Scott says should not

be published, and Everson, as editor, needs to consolidate his own waning powers in the world of corporate publishing. (3)

DeLillo, through the task of releasing the hostage in Beirut, not only wants to show the helping to free the hostage. Bill's assistance in helping to release the hostage will also publicize the terrorist group in Beirut that is holding hostage. It will also publicize the existence of the new human rights group to which Everson belongs to. And it will even publicize Bill's new novel which he hates, Scott does not want to publish. Being a publisher of course Charles wants to publish Bill's third novel. He says, "I want the new book, Bill" (56). And Bill replies, "I'm still working . . . I'm in the final pages . . . I'm polishing. That's what I'm doing" (56). But Charles gets very angry with Bill and asserts, "I want this book, you bastard" (56). From the conversation between Charles and Bill it becomes clear that the press conference in London is just mere publicity of Bill's new novel.

However, Bill shows his interest in lateral connections across different forms of knowledge. Bill is a novel writer but accepts Scott's plea to rescue a hostage. Explaining the task that specific intellectual has to carry out Foucault writes:

Since the time when each individual's specific activity began to serve as the basis for politicization, the threshold of writing, as the sacralizing mark of the intellectual, has disappeared. And it has become possible to develop lateral connection across different forms of knowledge and from one focus of politicization to another. Magistrates and psychiatrists, doctors and social workers, laboratory technicians and sociologist have become able to participate, both within their fields and through mutual exchange and support, in a global process of politicization of intellectuals. (68)

In the course of time, intellectual's role has been changed. The specific intellectuals connect different forms of knowledge and from one focus of politicization to another. The threshold of writing as the sacralizing mark of the intellectual has disappeared. The specific intellectuals are not limited to their work of writing only but they also participate in other fields through mutual exchange and support. In the novel, Bill as a specific intellectual not only involves in the act of writing but also entailed in the act of releasing hostage. For this task, he becomes ready to go to London and show up himself in a press conference. This step of Bill's proves that he cannot go beyond the chain of power/knowledge relationship. In this context, Bizzini poignantly argues:

Foucauldian specific intellectual is not interested in speaking on behalf of other people. Each intellectual works in her or his own field to give the various social groups the tools which will enable them to speak for themselves and according to their different needs. The role of the intellectual has diversified together with the multiple foci in which Foucauldian power relations act within the social network. All the intellectuals belong to this chain, that is to say to the power/knowledge relationship, and their role as a specific intellectuals is to resist the idea which portrays them as the 'consciousness and eloquence' of Western epistemology. (106)

Foucauldian concept of specific intellectual finds himself not interested in speaking on behalf of other people in the society. Each and every intellectual work in his related field to provide a tool for various social groups which enable them to speak for themselves according to their different needs. Though all the intellectuals belong to the chain of power /knowledge relationship their role as a specific intellectual is to

resist the idea which portrays them as the ‘consciousness eloquence’ of western epistemology. That means a specific intellectual has to resist the idea which depicts him as the person having good command over language of Western epistemology. Specific intellectual not only has command over language but he can do other things that brings awareness on the side of people. Bill, in the novel, resists the idea of ‘consciousness and eloquence’ and chooses to aware people to speak for the hostage.

Bill goes to London for the press conference where he has to read a hostage’s poems according to their plan. But eventually the bomb blast in the venue interrupts their plan. Bill in London comes in contact with George Haddad, a mediator between terrorist group and the group who wants to release him. Bill, previously, gets a lot of information about George as Scott says:

He said our friend George is an interesting sort of academic. His name appears in an address book found in an apartment raided by police somewhere in France — a bomb factory. And he has been photographed in the company of known terrorist leaders. (72)

Colonel Martinson or Martindale knows about George that his name appears in an address book that is found in an apartment raids by police somewhere in France in a bomb factory. Apart from it, he has been photographed in the company of well known terrorist leaders. This proves that George is not only a mediator but has direct connection and involvement in terrorist activity. Bill further comes to know that he is in danger for he worth a great deal more to the terrorist group in Beirut than the hostage that they are holding now. As Scott avers, “he says he has information that you may be in danger. He hinted that you would be worth a great deal more to the group in Beirut than the hostage they’re now holding” (72).

George proposes Bill to work with him leaving Charles Everson and his organization. The way Charles' and his organization following in fact does not help to release the hostage in Beirut. He cannot be saved following the way they choose.

George then suggests the plan as:

This young man can't be saved. I'm not even saying released. He can't be saved, his life is at risk unless we're able to work without organizational pressure and without a constant police presence . . . You and I need to trust each other enough to start over, just the two of us, somewhere else. I live in Athens now. I'm conducting a seminar at the Hellenic-American Institute. It's very possible, although I can't actually promise, but it's possible I can arrange for you to meet the one man who can literally open the basement door and let the hostage go.

(75)

George suggests Bill to come to his side leaving Charles. If Bill will follow Charles then the hostage will neither be saved nor be released. The hostage cannot be saved because his life is at risk until and unless Bill works with George without organizational pressure and constant police presence. George proposes Bill to work with him in order to release a hostage. George is conducting a seminar at the Hellenic-American Institute in Athens. It is more possible for him to arrange for Bill to meet the man who can literally open the basement door and release the hostage.

Though Bill knows the reality about George he accepts his suggestions and goes to Athens leaving Charles and the people related to the mission to release hostage. George tries to assure Bill and says, "your safety was foremost in mind. And your release would have come in a matter of days. These things were discussed at a certain level, hastily. I admit it" (84). This statement of George brings light to the

reality that Bill will be replacing Jean-Claude Julien, the hostage in Beirut. George tries to assure Bill that he will be released in some days later. He admits that Bill will be released soon. The society is so complex that Bill as a specific intellectual is needed. Appraising the need of a specific intellectual Shils observes, “the larger the society and the more complex the tasks its rulers undertake, the greater the need therefore for specific intellectuals” (6). The larger the society appears, the greater is the need of specific intellectuals. Bill cannot deny releasing a hostage. Though he knows well that George and the terrorist group wants him to substitute the hostage held captive in Beirut, he without any hesitation accepts George’s proposal. Specific intellectual’s work is praiseworthy. Foucault supports this concept and avers:

One must even say that the role of the specific intellectuals must become more and more important in proportion to the political responsibilities which he is obliged willy-nilly to accept as a nuclear scientist, computer expert, pharmacologist, etc. It would be dangerous error to discount him politically in his specific relation to a local form of power, either on the grounds that this is a specialist matter which does not concern the masses, or that the specific intellectuals serves the interests of state or capital. (72)

The role of a specific intellectual has become more and more important due to the political responsibilities which they cannot deny to accept being a reputed figure of the society. To discount a specific intellectual politically prove to be dangerous error in his specific relation to a local form of power either on the ground that this specialist matter which does not concern the mass or that the specific intellectual serves the interest of the state or capital.

Bill accepting George's proposal rejects the American policy towards terrorists. America wants to uproot the terrorism not only from the society but from the world. But Bill, being American citizen, rejects American values. Stating this condition of specific intellectual Shils comments:

The process of elaborating and developing further the potentialities inherent in a system of cultural values, entails also the possibility of rejection of the inherited set of values in varying degree of comprehensiveness. In all societies, even those in which the specific intellectuals are notable for their diverse path of creativity, as well as inevitable tendency towards negativism, impel a partial rejection of the prevailing system of cultural values. (8)

In all societies specific intellectuals are notable for their work that differentiates them from other intellectuals. They choose for diverse path of creativity and their tendency towards negativism which compel them to reject the cultural values prevail in a system. Specific intellectual, in a way, rejects the prevailing cultural values of the system.

Bill, being American citizen, is attracted towards the terrorists' activities without any direct force from the terrorists' side. He, with his own will, wants to substitute the hostage by replacing himself in the position of the hostage. Elucidating the activity of specific intellectual Aleksander Gella amplifies:

Not by any means all specific intellectuals have been equally attracted by revolutionary politics nonetheless the function of specific intellectuals in doctrine of revolutionary movements is to be considered as one of their most important accomplishments. (5)

Specific intellectual feels to be attracted by revolutionary politics. The function of specific intellectuals in the revolutionary movements is regarded as one of their most important accomplishments.

Bill, in Athens, comes to know that his days to come are not easy. He has to perform the difficult task. He knows the truth that terrorists may kill him in Beirut. It is not sure whether he will be alive or not. Bill and George talk about what may happen in Beirut after Bill goes there to release the hostage. Bill asks, “look. What happens if I go to Beirut and complete this spiritual union you find so interesting? Talk to Rashid. Can I expect him to release the hostage? And what will he want in return” (89)? And George says, “he’ll want you to take the other man’s place” (90). Bill wants to know what sort of situation he has to face in Beirut. Then he asks George to know whether Abu Rashid, a leader of terrorist group in Beirut, will free the hostage or not and what he wants to take in return. George replies Bill that Abu Rashid wants Bill to take the other man’s place as a return to free the hostage because he worth a great deal to the terrorist group than the hostage. Then Bill says, “gain the maximum attention. Then release me at the most advantageous time” (90). And George tells, “gain the maximum attention. Then probably kill you ten minutes later. Then photograph your corpse and keep the picture handy for the time when it can be used most effectively” (90). After hearing from George that Abu Rashid wants Bill to replace the hostage. Then Bill asks George to release him in proper and beneficial time. But George tells him that he may be killed after ten minutes and then they photograph his corpse and keep that picture handy till the time when it can be used most effectively. This idea brings light to the cruelty of terrorists’. Bill says that he worth more than his photograph and asks, “and what happens if I get on a plane right

now and go home?" (90). George replies that the terrorists will kill the hostage and photograph his corpse because it is better than nothing.

Despite this, Bill does not change his mind. In Athens he sustains an injury when a car hit him. He does not visit the doctor since he has internal injury. Later, Bill through the veterinarians knows that he suffers from lacerated liver or hematoma; local swelling filled with blood but can not be seen externally. He also knows that neither he has to drink nor travel in a ship because both will prove to be dangerous for his health. Specific intellectual face many difficulties on the way to their work. In this context Foucault avers:

Now the specific intellectual encounters certain obstacles and faces certain dangers. The danger of remaining at the level of conjunctural struggles, pressing demands restricted to particular sectors. The risk of letting himself be manipulated by the political parties or trade apparatuses which control these local struggles. (72)

As the society is becoming more and more complex the specific intellectual has to encounter with many difficulties. Bill is firm in his decision to go to Beirut. But he meets with the tragic death in the ferry on the way to Junieh. He dies ingloriously and anonymously -- his identity papers are filched as he collapses on the boat's deck.

DeLillo characterizes the situation in his words:

Once the passengers were all ashore the cleaning crew boarded and an old man with a limp took the cabins along the starboard side on the upper deck. When he came to the man lying in the bunk he looked at the bruised and unshaved face and the dirty clothes and he put a slightest beat. He said a prayer and went through the man's belongings, leaving the insignificant cash, the good shoes, the things in the bag, the

bag itself, but feeling it was not a crime against the dead to take the man's passport and other forms of identification, anything with a name and a number, which he would sell to the militia in Beirut. (118-19)

Bill dies on his way to Junieh from where he plans to take taxi to reach to Beirut. Nobody in the boat knows that he is dead. Bill's dead body is found on the upper deck by a cleaning crew member. The cleaner regards the cash, the shoes, the things in bag, the bag itself as insignificant things and takes Bill's passport and other forms of identification that includes anything with a name and a number thinking that he can sell them to some person from militia in Beirut. This makes Bill to die ingloriously and anonymously.

In this way, the novelist clearly presents how the writer-protagonist Bill feels displaced as an intellectual and his writing loses the capacity of representing his self in a contemporary world which is dominated by media, violence and terrorism.

III. Author's Transformation from Universal to a Specific Intellectual

This research contends that Don DeLillo in *Mao II* enumerates the dangers that a writer confronts in the contemporary world dominated by media, violence, and terrorism. The identity of a subject is formed by power/knowledge relationship. The subjectivity of a person is determined by power. One cannot exercise power consciously rather he becomes the "passive object" in the hands of power. The subjectivity is created by power-relations. Thus, the creation of subjectivity is a homogeneous process in which every subject is a mere "individual copies that are the mechanically punched out". His subjectivity is always in the grip of power.

DeLillo succeeds in portraying the contemporary world. With genuine idea and thought he filled life to his novel with wisdom. He raises some startling images and questions about individuality and crowds, writers and terrorists, peace and war. Obviously DeLillo has attempted something here that demands our attention. His novel can be seen as the product of terrorism. Terrorism is the dominant idea in the novel which is able to change peoples' lives.

The very idea of the transformation of the authorial subjectivity is ostensible in each and every nook and corner of this novel. The representation of the transformation of the idea of the writer as universal intellectual into the idea of the writer as specific intellectual in the novel is the dominant concern of the research. While choosing the characters and assigning the appropriate role for them, the novelist brings Bill Gray at the centre. Bill, a novel writer, is the dominant character in the novel. Bill has elected to withdraw from public scrutiny for more than twenty-five years. During these years he feels displaced as an intellectual and his writing loses the capacity of his self in a world which is dominated by terrorism. Instead of publishing his novel, he does not only feel him incapable to publish his book but also

feels that it is not his writing any more. Gray has reasoned that his withdrawal has, in fact, simply made him more of a celebrity. So, he decides to re-engage the world. He first agrees to sit for a photo shoot and then, for more dramatically and disastrously, to assist in an international campaign to free a Swiss diplomat and a minor poet who has been taken hostage in Beirut. However, when he participates in a public reading in London, he realizes that the conscious raising event is merely a publicity event that his publishers are using to promote the release of his long-awaited new novel. Determined to help the kidnapped poet, Bill recklessly and heroically decides to go to Beirut to offer himself in a trade for the poet. As he travels to London, Bill finds his imagination deeply moved to empathize the Swiss poet and feels himself for the first time in a long time ready to write with renewed energy. Ironically, he dies ingloriously and anonymously when his identity papers are filched.

Amid the special pressure of the late-century media and terrorism driven world, DeLillo questions the value of the writer's long established privilege to withdraw from society to create art in a sort of protective isolation. Without offering easy answers, DeLillo sees the impossibility of the contemporary writer ever having the impact and clout of writers before the media and terrorism.

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