

## CHAPTER-ONE

### Introduction

#### Saul Bellow and His Literary Career

More or less, every piece of literature reflects the socio-cultural scenario of its time. Saul Bellow's novels are not exception of this assumption. Saul Bellow had the experience of world wars, its effect to the people and complexities of high urbanization of his time. Therefore, his novels mostly project the issue of existential problem at the backdrop of sophisticated modern urban society following the destructive world wars.

Published in 1959, Bellow's 5<sup>th</sup> novel *Henderson the Rain King* examines the fate of modern man in the highly sophisticated cosmopolitan city of New York, America. It expresses the state of spirit's sleep or spiritual dryness. The individuals, though materially prospered and living with family, are lacking the side of spiritualism. Though they seem outwardly prospered, they are not really contented from their inner heart. They are very weak, humiliated, alienated and their self is lost or about to be lost in the mass culture of urban society. The individuals are living the life of alienation among the crowd and despair in the material prosperity since they are deviated afar from the spiritual aspect which is the true happiness. That is to say, the humans are not realizing their individual selves and their meaning in the world because they are deeply drowned in the sea of materialism. Towards the succeeding stage of life, though its already late, the individual seems longing for acquiring spiritual contentment for which s/he is ready to renounce anything. The individuals seem ready to sacrifice for the wisdom of life.

The son of Russian Jews who had settled in Canada in 1913, Bellow was born in Lachine, Quebec on June 10, 1915. After the family moved to Chicago in 1924, he was educated in the public schools and attended the University of Chicago before graduating from Northwestern University in 1937 with a degree in Anthropology and sociology. Later he

supported himself by writing biographical sketches for the work projects Administration and teaching at Pestalozzi Froebel Teacher's College.

During World War II, Bellow served in the merchant marine and worked for Encyclopedia Britannica. After the war he settled in New York and worked in publishing until a Guggenheim Fellowship allowed him to spend two years traveling in Europe. On his return, he accepted a series of teaching appointments at New York University, Princeton University, Bard College and the University of Minnesota.

So far Bellow's literary career concerns, his first novel *Dangling Man* (1944) centers on a young man agonizing over his wait to be drafted into the army. The novel shows the anxiety of the young man to be able to exist as army in the capitalist society of America. Published three years later, *The Victim* (1947) depicts the intense psychological battle between the Jew Asa Leventhal and his "double" the Gentle Kirby Albee. Both are tightly constructed traditional novels. But only with the appearance of *The Adventures of Augie March*, a sprawling picaresque novel, established Bellow's reputation as one of the great contemporary novelists and the key member of the Jewish-American renaissance in the 1950s. The novel won the National Book Award. Likewise, his novel *Seize the Day* (1956) is the somber but riveting counterpart of the comedy *Augie March*. The novel is notable for its exquisitely controlled prose and vivid depiction of its main character, Tommy Wilhelm, who gets caught up in the corruption of a society fixated on money. *Henderson the Rain King* (1959), in some ways Bellow's most engaging fiction, seemed self-indulgently romantic to some critics. It's a story of an eccentric, energetic American millionaire who journeys to the heart of Africa in order to recover his true self. Also known as picaresque novel, *Henderson the Rain King* depicts the journey of spiritually sick protagonist and his attempt to get healed by enabling himself to acknowledge his Being after reawakening of his spirit's sleep.

Among Bellow's other subsequent novels, *Herzog* (1964) depicts the intense psychological struggle of a professor who is on the verge of mental breakdown as a result of his divorce from his second wife and betrayal of his best friend. Set in New York, *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970) is Bellow's most extensive treatment of death similar to in *Henderson the Rain King*. His other novels are *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), *The Dean's December* (1982), *More Die of Heartbreak* (1987) and *Ravelstein* (2000). Almost all his works express the existential problem against the highly sophisticated material society in some or other way.

The struggle of modern man to recover the lost self or essence by acknowledging the existence through bursting the spirit's sleep is the key concern of the arena of my study in *Henderson the Rain king*. In the novel, the principal character Eugene Henderson is a troubled middle-aged man of fifty five. Despite his riches, social status and physical prowess, he feels restless and unfulfilled; and harbors a spiritual void that manifests itself as an inner voice crying out "I want, I want. I want..." (24) Hoping to discover what the voice wants, Henderson goes to Africa. At the end of his adventure, spiritually empty Henderson transforms his consciousness into understanding of his Being. The more he suffers, the better he understands himself. The nearer he goes in contact with African savage tribes, the better and the more he gains the wisdom of life. Now, he begins to rejoice; feels himself as a new born man and determines to serve the humanity. His love for his wife, children and to the whole humankind is awakened. In short, Henderson makes a journey from becoming to being in order to recognize his true self. He reaches from sense of lost self to recovery, despair to rejoice and loneliness to togetherness. He eventually discovers his existence out of his safari to wilderness of Africa. The crude Henderson gets purified to vitality as true living being following the ordeals and sufferings along with his interaction with uncivilized African people and encounter with the lioness during his adventure. The journey, in fact, is within the

self of Henderson from nothingness through the process of becoming to the state of being. In other words, the journey of Henderson takes place in the territory of his mind. In this sense, the journey is metaphysical journey for being more mental than physical.

Similar to the idea of Camus, Bellow seems to be optimistic out of pessimism. He discovers hope out of despair and absurdism. Yet all for his pessimism, he refuses to join the trend of nihilism. He feels that there must be more positive ways to resist the control of the masses, realistically to value the self. Bellow choice to treat the growth of the spirit comically, because that is the only way to treat it comically and yet affirmatively.

Truly speaking, the Wariri King Dahfu is Existential GURU to Henderson. Dahfu revives the sense of optimism in Henderson's heart by teaching him the wisdom of life. Henderson, therefore, transcends the anxiety of nothingness to the sense of existential acquisition after the reawakening of his self. The spirit, which was asleep earlier in the preceding part of the novel, gets awakened at the concluding part by the growth of consciousness in Henderson. To realize or feel one's existence in the world prior to essence is undoubtedly restoration of existence or being. Henderson feels he exists, therefore, he is. The sufferings ultimately redeem him by moving him to change: to accept moral responsibility for himself and others." sufferings", Henderson comes to realize, "is about the only reliable burster of the spirit's sleep" (78). His agonies begin with the cries of "I want, I want..." (24), but finally leads to cries of "what shall I do? What must I do?" (217).

Henderson does not set out to the darkest Africa until he can tolerate the torture of his inner call- "I want, I want..." (24). He is propelled to make choice of safari to Africa in the condition of bearing the responsibility of consequences. He is thrown into being where he by any means, has to construct his existence no matter how hard he has to struggle. Otherwise, he will lose his existence because only the fittest are the survivors. Struggle truly is for survival while the survival is for the fittest.

Henderson tries hard to overcome his problems; he decides to help and find solutions of his problems not in civilized territory and people, but in the savage state and savage people. He leaves his family and goes to Africa with a guide Romilayu who takes him to “the real past, no history or junk like that”. He feels that this place, Hinchagara, is older than the city of Ur. In that place Henderson meets Arnewi people whom he found to be very simple, cooperative, respectful, spiritually contented but superstitious- uneducated and very obedient to their rituals and traditions. From this place and these people, Henderson feels the first tremor of spiritual eruption.

When Henderson’s attempt to kill the frogs in the cistern ends in disaster, the Arnewi discards him. So, he has to leave the Arnewi village, and his desire to learn wisdom of life remains incomplete. He then goes to the Wariri village where the king Dahfu teaches him the wisdom of life. To overcome his sufferings and to enable himself to face the reality of lion’s way of life the king asks him to imitate the lion’s way of movements in this case, Atti, such as how she moves, how she roars, how she crawls. The lion’s way of life is used by the king because he wants Henderson to absorb the goodness possessed by the lions such as courage, poise, self- confidence, as seen in the lion’s movement. King Dahfu’s lion teaching gives to awaken his human longing.

The thing which follows Henderson’s human longing is awakening of his ability to feel that he is growing to be a new born man. Truly speaking, Henderson’s feeling is enlightened at last. He feels that he is just finding out his real self.

Henderson is ever looking for opportunity to help people. The one, who used to be a private being, turns out to be social being now. In this sense, the novel is also a journey from private being too social ‘being’. This kind of transition can apparently be felt in course of the action in the novel.

Among the post World War II American novels, his fictions best present the problem's of the modern urban dweller in search of identity, desire of hope and sense of belongingness. His heroes are rootless or rooted to a past that no longer seems relevant to the present. Surrounded by friends and acquaintances who adjust and who learn to conform they seek to be individual in a world that appears to have little room for individuality. Convinced of the need for freedom, they do not know where to seek it except on the paths that lead often to loneliness and despair. Yet there is also an affirmation in their lives. Walled in all sides by society, they continue to assert the worth and dignity of individual human spirit.

From 1960 to 1962 Bellow co- edited the literary magazine *The Nobel Savage*, and in 1962 he was appointed professor on the committee of social Thought at University of Chicago. In addition to his thirteen novels, he published many short stories, play and essays. He edited many books and translated many from Yiddish into English written by his fellow Noble prize winner I.B. singer.

Bellow left Chicago in 1993 tired of passing the house of his dead friends, as he said, and settled in Boston, where he began teaching at Boston University. Bellow had three sons from his first four marriages. Since all of his earlier wives were divorced in 1989, he married Janis Freedman. They had one daughter born in 1999. Bellow died in April 5, 2005 at his home in Brookline, mass at the age of ninety.

Bellow's emphasis upon the self, optimism, humanism and the feelings there after must be understood in relation to his attitude towards death. He believes that one can not understand life until one comes to terms with death. Such kind of themes in his writing helps him to win the "Nobel prize" for literature in 1976. He also has won". The Pulitzer prize"(1976), "National Book Award" for three times (1954,1965,1971), "Jewish Heritage Award" (1968)", "Friends of Literature Award" (1960), "James L. Don Award" (1964) and dozens of national and international awards and prizes. Instead of writing thirteen novels,

many short stories, plays, essays etc, Bellow contributed on teaching, translation and edition of news papers or books in his life. Bellow's fifth novel "

*Henderson the Rain King* portrays the existential journey of the protagonist that begins with spirit's sleep and concludes in its bursting.

Henderson, like Augie, must learn to live within his own temporal word, although that knowledge does not come easily. In search of transcendence, Henderson escapes to ritualistic Africa, as Augie did to the world of plumed serpents in Mexico

The theme of super- reality finds its fullest expression in Dahfu's own pattern to the imagination and how it becomes actualized in experience, one of Henderson's profoundest and most necessary lessons.

This research is an inquiry into the existence of the chief character of the novel *Henderson the Rain King* on the basis of his spirit. Spiritually sick Henderson comes to acknowledge his true Being after bursting the spirit's sleep due to the extreme sufferings particularly the Bellow's use of lion therapy and the experience or the knowledge.

### **Review of Literature**

Views obviously differ from person to person since different people have different perceptions and ideas within themselves. A work of literature can not remain untouched from this concept. Therefore, numerous critics have diversely commented upon Saul Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King* since its publication in 1959. Colonialism, humanity, existential crisis, Jewishness, female exploitation, heroic ordeals, failure of capitalism etc. are some of the issues interpreted and analyzed by the critics significantly.

The heroic adventure in search of the reality in *Henderson the Rain King* draws attention of some critics. The final achievement of the adventure that is the discovery of reality pervades the organization of the whole novel. In this light, Daniel Hughes asserts:

The discovery can be described by an examination of the organization of the book itself. Paradoxically enough, though this is a novel about reality and the need for its rebirth, the world it presents is most akin to dream. One almost expects Henderson to wake up at the end of the book and come down to breakfast with his wife and children. (82)

Though the pursuit of reality dominates the organization of novel, it presents the world most akin to the dream. Readers' believe that the adventure Henderson takes up is merely mental one. Therefore, the novel paradoxically represents two contrastive words: the world of reality and the world of dream.

The theme of humanism finds its fullest expression in Bellow's novels, particularly in *Henderson the Rain King*. Just as Bellow's break through to moment of union with the world of objects, they have isolated vision of their fellow men as a multitude that bears them down but as brothers. Henderson experiences the sense of collective soul and behaves other men as his own brothers or sisters. In this regard, M.A. King says:

The concept of humanity as a "larger body" or "a single soul" is central to the morality that is implicit in all of Bellow's novels. All of the heroes want to embody what in the simplest terms can be called "true nobility" The meaning of this quest is explored most fully in *Henderson the Rain King*. (191)

Like Bellow's all heroes, the protagonist Henderson has longings to serve the humanity. He desperately seeks opportunities to help people to get true satisfaction which is true nobility for him.

Eusebio L. Rodrigues comments the book with feministic outlook. He howls against the polygamy of males, Dahfu in the novel, and their exploitation over women. In the novel, "Bellow shows us King Dahfu, attended by his wives, smoking a pipe during the first meeting with Henderson (Rodrigues 247). When Henderson goes to the private pavilion of King

Dahfu, he sees the King surrounded by wives who kept drying his face, lighting his pipe, handling him a drink etc. These are examples of grave male atrocities over females in the novel.

It's true that *Henderson the Rain King* has been analyzed from mosaic directions. Many critics have observed the text from diverse angles. Bruce Michelson interprets the text from the perspective of the protagonist Henderson. He remarks:

Henderson represents a crucial moment, therefore, in Bellow's development as an artist: here is an experiment with a narrator who feels directly with his other narrators chiefly witness- the rootless, the obsession, the shift, the inarticulate longing which are the great danger in Bellow's canon and who is denied whatever it is that sustain Bellow's other heroes, usually, a sustaining faith in the life of the mind. (313-314)

Here, he tries to bring the idea of the impact of Holocaust in the fore. Another significant contribution in analyzing this text has been made by Janis Stout. He studies the text in terms of Biblical allusion. In this regards Stout asserts:

When Henderson makes his next stop, in the village of Wariri, his expectations and first experiences are again associated with Biblical analogues. Romillayu, Henderson's faithful guide, calls the Wariri "chillen dahkness", and Henderson completes the allusion to Luke 16:8, with wiser in their generation and all the rest . They area complement to the children's of light, the meek Arnewi. Henderson the eclectic learns from both. (166)

Now, it's crystal clear that different critics have studied the text from different perspectives. No critic so far has analyzed the text from the dimension of spiritual existentialism. So, the present researcher aims to present why the protagonist of the novel

Eugene Henderson makes a journey into the darkest of Africa and how he succeeds in bursting the spirit's sleep so that he comes to realize his existence just like a new born man.

Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King* draws the protagonist's journey of existential quest directing towards spiritual salvation through the act of acknowledgement of his true soul. The moment his spirit is burst, he attained his existence realizing his true self or Being. Thus, the researcher will discuss on the philosophy of existentialism in the preceding section of the thesis so that he can interpret and analyze the text through the very principle as a tool in order to arrive at the presumed hypothesis.

This thesis consists of four main chapters. The first chapter gives a brief introduction about the fiction *Henderson the Rain King* including the statement of problem of the thesis, review of literature and the literary career of the novelist Saul Bellow. Similarly, the second chapter deals with general theory of existentialism and the third offers a short commentary on resurrection of the self along with the textual analysis from existential perspective while the fourth chapter concludes the whole thesis throwing light on the process of transformation within the self of protagonist.

## **CHAPTER-TWO**

### **Existentialism**

#### **Background**

Existentialism is a trend or tendency that can be found throughout the history of philosophy. It is hostile towards abstract theories or systems that propose to describe all of the intricacies and difficulties of human life through more-or-less simplistic formulas. Existentialists focus primarily on matters such as choice, individuality, subjectivity, freedom, and the nature of existence itself. As the destructive world wars particularly the second world war of nuclear holocaust proved that human rationality no more worked, the panic people of western world conceived their existence being thrown into incoherent, disordered, and chaotic universe. The post war products such as feeling of alienation, anguish, nothingness etc. consequently paved way to absurdism and spiritual dryness. Such kind of pervasive feeling of despair or the frustration as well as the departure from established order led to the idea that people were bound to create their value on their own in the world where the traditional values no longer reigned. Against the backdrop of such circumstances, existentialism draws the attention to the risk and, void of human reality and admits that the human being is thrown into the world where pain, suffering, frustration, alienation, nervous breakdown sickness, contempt and death are common.

Existentialism is a philosophy that emphasizes the uniqueness and isolation of the individual experience in a hostile or indifferent universe, regards human existence as unexplainable, stresses freedom of choice and responsibility for the consequences of one's own acts. It boldly claims that the fate does not exist on its own and people are free to do whatever they please on the condition that they bear the consequences. In other words, fate is not readymade entity by birth but an after-made thing and thus fate is ascribed in course of life. According to the existentialists, the realization of freedom causes anguish and feeling of

nothingness that can be relived only by using the right of freedom, achievement, and self-expression. Existentialism is relatively cruel ideology. It is related to Darwinism as it denies the existence of God whereby stressing the individual strength for survival.

### **Meaning**

The twentieth century existential thinking was anticipated by a number of thinkers likes Soren Kierkegaard, Fedor Dostoevsky and Friedrich Nietzsche in 19<sup>th</sup> century, though the term “existentialism” itself was coined by Jean Paul Satre (Solomon 141-45). The term “existence” comes from Latin root ex “out” + sistere from satre “to stand” (Cuddon 316). Thus, existence means to stand out in the universe that is against us and “existentialism” means “pertaining to existence”. Now the term existentialism is used to describe “a vision of the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world” and his relationship or lack of it with god (Cuddon 316). It is a “very intense and philosophically specialized from of quest for selfhood” (Ellmann and Feidelson 803). Jean Paul Satre defines existentialism as an attempt to make life persist by creating a system in which one realizes human loneliness and human subjectivity. Thus, the focus of existentialism is a “being” and “subjectivity” as opposed to logical reasoning and “objectivity”. This is based on individual experience rather than abstract thought; and knowledge which are foregrounded in this philosophy. In the very context, Lavine defines: “Existentialism is a set of philosophical ideas which stresses the existence of the human being, the anxiety and depression which pervade each human life” (322).

Existentialism is less of an “ism” than an attitude that expresses itself in a variety of ways. Owing to the divergent positions associated with Existentialism no single definition is possible. However its principle theme stresses on concrete individual human existence. Regarding its subjectivity, individual freedom and choice, Rayan explains existentialism:

Hence, there is no single existential philosophy, and no single definition of the word can be given. However, it may be said that with the existentialist the problem of man is central and they stress man's concrete existence, his contingent nature, his personal freedom, and his consequent responsibility for what he does and makes himself to be. (639)

In this way, Rayan focuses on freedom of choice and the responsibility that is imposed on himself only. Moreover, he finds man as a finite being and shows the human limitations. Existentialists' major concern is on the problems of man. They center on man's concrete, his personal freedom and his responsibility resulting from his personal choice.

Existentialism is a revolt against traditional European philosophy which would take philosophy as science. Traditional philosophers procured knowledge that would imply that human being has no essence, no essential self, and no more than what he is. He is only the sum of life in so far as he has created and achieved for himself. The following extract can be used to clarify Sartre's view:

We are like actors who suddenly find themselves on stage in the middle of a performance, but without having a script, without knowing the name of the play or what role they are playing, without knowing what to do or say, without even knowing whether the play has an author at all- whether it is serious or a farce. We must personally make a decision, to be something or other- a villain or hero, ridiculous or tragic. Or we can simply exit, immediately. But that is also choosing a role and that choice, too, is made without our ever knowing what the performance was about. (Skirbekk and Gilje 444)

This is how we are plunged into existence. We exist, we find ourselves here free because there are no prescriptions, and we have to decide for ourselves, define ourselves as the kind of person we are going to be. Existence precedes essence.

The study of being, which is concerned with ontology, is the fundamental problem of existentialism. The existence of human being is the basis fact and it has no essence which comes before his existence. In this way, human being as a being is nothing. This nothingness and nothingness of an essence is the central source of the freedom that the human being faces in each and every moment. He has liberty in the view of his situation and in decision that make him solve his problems and live in the world happily.

The human being thrown into the world is concerned with freedom. He is bound to accept this freedom of being, the responsibility and guilt of his actions. Each action negates the other possible course of action and their consequences; so the objective is universally true and certain. The existentialists do not go with the traditional attempts to get the ultimate nature of the world in abstract system of thought. Instead, they teach for what it is like to be an individual human being in the world. They point out the fact that every individual even the philosopher seeking absolute knowledge is only a human being. So, every individual has to confront challenging decisions with only limited knowledge, time and space. This kind of plight of human resides at the core of existentialism. They find human life as being basically a series of decision that should be made with no way of knowing conclusively what the correct choices are. The individual most continually decides what is true from false, what is right from wrong; which belief signify to accept and which to reject, what to do and what not to do.

The existentialists conclude that human choice is 'subjective' because individuals must make their own choices without help from such external standards as laws, ethical rules, or traditions. Because individuals make their own choice, they are free because they choose freely; they are completely responsible for their choice. They can't escape from making choice even if they decline to choose. In this regard Macintyre argues, "Even if I do not

choose, I have chosen not to choose” (149). The existentialists opine that freedom is necessarily accompanied by responsibility.

The existentialism stresses on meaninglessness of life, identity crisis and individual existence. According to this, the human beings must be accountable with excuse. They should not miss to take right decisions at right time so that they can confront with the problems befallen upon them. Working out the problem, in a way, is to assume the responsibilities. Not being able to find the significance in this world and universe, the human can not find the clear-cut purpose of life, and their existence is only contingent fact. Their beings do not emerge from necessity rather it is accidental one. If a human being rejects the false pretensions like the illusion of his existence having a meaning, he certainly encounters the absurdity and futility of life. Man’s role in the world, therefore, is not predetermined or fixed: every one is compelled to make a choice in some or other way. Choice is the thing that human beings must make at any cost. The trouble is the thing the human beings most commonly choose. Hence, he cannot realize his freedom and futility of his existence. In this light, Ryan summarizes:

Man is free and responsible, but he is responsible only to himself. As with Nietzsche, man creates moral values. Besides being free, man is finite and contingent being; existing in a world that is devoid of purpose. The pessimism resulting from this position is likewise expressed by Camus’ doctrine of “the absurd”. Absurdity or contraction arises from the clash between human hopes and desires and the meaningless universe into which man has been thrown.

(639)

Jean Paul Satre, the principle exponent of French existential philosophy, makes a deliberate rupture with the metaphysical world view of Middle Ages by proclaiming the precedence of existence over essence. Human beings exist, but what they are or what they

may become depends entirely upon what they themselves choose to do. They must take the responsibility for their own development.

Sartre makes a fundamental distinction between the unconscious being (the being- in-itself) and the conscious being (the being- for – itself). The unconscious being consists of ordinary things and material objects. They are essentially what they are; i.e. they are what they are completely. They are solid. The conscious being, on the other hand, is the human being with no fixed essence. The individual human being possesses the freedom to choose his own life. This freedom, however, soon turns out to be unbearable, and in the face of it the individual suffers anguish. He suffers because he knows that everything is up to him, and he know that he must take responsibility for himself. But there are ways of trying to escape this anguish, for by attempting to conceal his freedom to himself, the individual may delude himself into thinking that he cannot help it if his life is miserable. In this case, the individual shirks responsibility for himself and instead he clings to some transcendent belief in ‘Destiny’. This is what Sartre calls ‘bad faith’

Anxiety arises from human beings realization that destiny is not fixed but is open to an undetermined future of infinite possibilities and limitless scope. Void of future destiny must be filled by making choices for which he alone will assume responsibility and blame. Anxiety is present at every moment of the existence of human being and it is a part and parcel of authentic existence. Anxiety leads the human being to take decisions and wish through bad faith. But the free authentic human being must be involved in his own actions, responsibility and his being which is his own. That’s why, existentialists focus primarily on matters such as choice, individuality, subjectivity, freedom, and the nature of existence it self.

Thus, existentialism revolves around the existence of human beings no matter whatever the angel is viewed through and however it is analyzed by different critics and writers. To make it more clear, the history of existentialism will be discussed in next sub-title.

## History of existentialism

Truly speaking, existentialism is a distinct philosophical and literary movement that particularly belongs to the nineteenth and twentieth century. However, the existential touch can more or less be felt in the thought of Socrates in the bible, and in the work of pre- modern philosophers and writers. In fact, existentialism dates back to ancient men's philosophical attempts to attain self- awareness and understanding of existence of the world around us. The connection of being and thinking was Greek insight and it is the very insight that the modern existentialist are trying to establish. The ancient Greek thought is found to have revolutionized by Socrates who shifted the attention of study of their philosophy from nature to man, man at the centre of existence. The problem of what man is in himself can be realized in Socrates 'know thyself', and 'insight come- from within' as well in the work of Montaigne and Pascal, a religious philosopher and mathematician. The key idea of existentialist they were already common to religious thought when existentialist was first introduced was the idea of man being responsible for his own action. Most of the religious thoughts can be perceived through existential perspective in some or other way. Existential root has often been traced back to Pascal and St. Augustine. The subjectivism of theologian St. Augustine during 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> century exhorted man not to go outside from himself on the quest for truth, for it is within him that truth abides. Like Socrates, he too declared that truth is within him that is why his going out to seek the truth is vain.

Existentialism as a distinct philosophy began with the Danish Christian thinker Kierkegaard in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was sharply critical to Hegel's philosophical system which analyzed being or existence in an abstract and impersonal way. He served the study of objective and abstract academization of reality. Kierkegaard advocated that the irrational is the reality against Hegelianism and limitations; hope, despair, anxiety and so on.

Gaarder in Sophie's world acknowledges that "he thought that both the idealism of the romantics and Hegel's historicism had obscured the individual's responsibility for his own life" (377). In this way, it is obvious that existentialism is opposite of idealism, abstract thinking and objectivity.

The development of existentialism was preceded by the works of the German phenomenologist Frenz Bernto (1878-1917), and Edmund Hussrel (1895-1938). They were followed by the modern existentialists. German existentialism was represented by Martin Heidegger (1889-1979) and Karl Jaspers (1883-1969), French existentialism by Satre, (1905-80) Italian existentialism by Nicola Abannado (b.1910), and Spanish existentialism by Jose Ortego Y. Gaset(1883-1955). Among them, the most forceful voices of existentialist thought were the works of the French existentialist: Satre, Simone De Beauvoir and Albert Camus. No one has contributed more to existentialism than Satre. In literary influence, the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyvesky (1883- 1924) and Austrian Jewish writer Franz Kafka (1883-1924) contributed significantly. Dostoyvesky in his novels presented the defeat of man in the face of choice and the result of their consequences and finally in the enigmas of himself. Kafka in his novels like *The Trial* (1925) and *The Castle* (1926) presented isolated man confronting vast, elusive and menacing bureaucracies. In the arena of art, the analogues of existentialism may be considered to be Surrealism, Expressionism and in general those schools that view the role of art not as, reflection of objective and eternal reality to man but as the free projection of the human being.

Beside its use in literature and art, existential philosophy deserves wide space in philosophy, religion, culture and politics. Existentialism made its entry into psychopathology through Karl Jaspers' *Allgemeine psychopathology* (1913), which was inspired by the need to understand the world in which the mental patient lived by sympathetic participation in his

existence. Christian existentialism, inspired by Kierkegaard, is a creed of its own kind. Similarly, Camus' semi-philosophical essays won sympathizers in this area.

Although the classic forms of existentialism are characteristics of post world war philosophy, art and literature, as we have already seen with Dostoyevsky, the existentialist ideas were already anticipated long before. Among them, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) deserves special mention. There are at least three ways in which Nietzsche qualifies as a classic existentialist all of which we can see in what may have been his magnum opus, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1885). He focused precisely on non- existence of God by proclaiming the non- existence of all value in one of the most famous saying in the history of philosophy, "God is dead". Nietzsche's replacement of God is the *Ubermensch*. This was originally translated "superman". It is Latin interpretation of word where "super" means 'over' as does German "Uber". When Nietzsche says man (*Mensch*), he means someone egotistical, brawling, aggressive, arrogant and insensitive. The superman is not vulnerable to taming domestically. The second most important thing is that the superman is free because all his own values flow from his own will. Value is matter of decision and matter of will. Because the superman whom we find victor with 'will to power' is free that he talks what he wants and does what he likes. He is authentic. The third point, which is developed as the greatest teaching of Zarathustra, does the same job as Satre's redefinition of "responsibility". This is the 'Eternal Recurrence'. Since every point where a time like the present has happened or will happen, it is also an eternity of time before it, than what is happening now has already happened an infinite number of times and will happen an infinite number of times again. Though actions to Nietzsche are no longer good or evil they still did not mean that they are right or wrong after all. It simply means that before you do something, you must determine that you really want to do it.

Phenomenology and ontology have had remarkable influences on existentialism. Sartre and Heidegger were disciples of founder phenomenologist Edmund Husserl where Sartre was influenced by phenomenologist, Heidegger who tried to disclose the ways of being in his most famous but controversial book *Sein Und Zeit* (1927). In this book, Heidegger discusses what it means for a man to be and how it is to be. It leads to a fundamental question – what is the meaning of Being? And, he has tried to reach the final truth of existence or situation of being through speculation and interpretation. His another book *I<sup>st</sup> Metaphysik?* (1929) illustrates *Nichts* (nothing) which stands for no- nothing by giving phenomenological approach to the situation of human existence.

Existentialism, needless to say, flourished much during 1940s or 50s on literature, art and philosophy, where Jean Paul Sartre stands as the exponent representative. As time passes, his philosophy has changed or developed, but he continually focused upon the human existence of being. Sartre believes that we are author of our life. We exist, appear on the scene, make choices and create ourselves. Sartre, in *Essays in Existentialism*, states: “If a man as the existentialist conceives is indefinable, it is because at first he is nothing. Only afterwards will he be something and he himself will have made what he will be” (36).

Sartre finds valuable philosophical materials in Descartes’s subjectivism, Husserl’s analysis of consciousness, Heidegger’s existentialist concepts and themes and also in two major forerunners of existentialism, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (Lavine 341). From Kierkegaard, Sartre takes the emphasis upon individual conscious existence and from Nietzsche he takes the concept of death of (341). Sartre’s originality lies in his reinterpreting, revision, and reworking of these materials into a bold new integration which become the center of French Existentialism (341). In addition to borrowing, reintegrating and remaking new idea, Sartre is most notably remembered for his classification of two kinds of existentialists: theist and atheist.

Standing very close to philosophical outlook of Sartre, who contributed by adding some more stones to the house of existentialism, was his lifelong companion and intellectual associate Simone De Beauvoir (1906- 86). Being close to Sartre certainly does not mean that her thought are mere ephemeral copy of Sartre. She deserves a wide space for her original and independent interpretation of existentialism, though not radically different from Sartre. She attempted to apply existentialism to feminist outlook in her famous book *The Second Sex* (1949). She takes the position that the history of attitude of women has determined her own views. Commenting on Beauvoir's stance against patriarchal myths, Hazard Adams writes:

Indeed, it was encyclopedic in its coverage, offering historical, biological and psychological perspective on women, a consideration of the prevailing patriarchal myths about them, and an account of female love and sexuality in virtually all of its frames. (993)

Beauvoir vehemently opposes the existence of basic 'female nature' or 'male nature' which according to her is male- construct for dominating women in patriarchy. It has been generally claimed that man has transcending nature so he will seek meaning and direction outside the home while women is immanent which means she wishes to be where she is. She, therefore, natures her family and enjoys on household things. Beauvoir sharply disagrees with this male stereriotype. She calls on all women to protest the process of being made but they should become instead.

Another eminent French existentialist was Albert Camus (1913- 60), whose literary work is regarded as primary source of modern existential thought. However, he himself laid no claims to be an existentialist. Principle theme in his works (novels) is the idea that life is, subjectively speaking, meaningless. These result into absurdity which can be overcome by a commitment to moral integrity and social solidarity. The most dominant theme of his writings most frequently mentioned is absurdity, which is produced via conflict. The conflict is

between our expectations of rational, just universe and the actual universe that is indifferent to all our expectation. This kind of conflict between our desires for rationality with our experience of irrationality has played an important role in many existentialists' writings.

Camus reflects his notion of absurdism through the story of Sisyphus. In *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1943), representative of modern every man Sisyphus happily makes choice of ceaseless act of rolling a rock up to the hill only to watch it roll back again and again, rather than accepting death as punishment. This kind of struggle seems hopeless and absurd because nothing will ever be achieved, but Sisyphus struggled anyway.

Starting with the study of being right from the Greek philosopher Socrates, existentialism has covered a long distance to arrive this modern time. Now, existentialism has been developed as a distinct philosophy despite a few variations in its surface. The existentialist thinkers have originated their own doctrines with their own emphasis of particular aspects. Despite some contradictions and conflicts on view of few existentialists; the philosophical attitude of it as a whole stresses upon 'being' or the 'existence' of human being.

### **Prominent Existentialists**

#### **Kierkegaard: Existing Before God**

Denouncing Hegelian dialectical system, the Danish philosopher and religious thinker Soren Kierkegaard emphasizes upon personal choice and responsibilities rather than overall rationality. Hegel maintained the philosophy of reconciliation and synthesis, which Kierkegaard called 'both/and' system as opposed to his existential dialectic 'either/or' there by highlighting freedom of choice and its consequences upon any person. Kierkegaard opines that "God" is truth for him, God is infinite subjectivity and the very subjectivity is truth. To him, any individual is unique in nature and cannot be generalized by common term.

By choosing inward and personal character, one makes a leap of faith in God which he regards as an 'ethno religious' choice. There are two alternatives for individual to choose; either he has to choose God and get redemption from the angst, 'an ethno religious' choice, or he has to reject God and go the perdition, 'an aesthetic choice'. But paradoxically enough, according to Kierkegaard the choice is criterionless and it is the individual himself who has to fix the criteria by making choice. The Christian doctrine and its quest for objective truth have nothing to do with Kierkegaardian concept of Christianity. He believes only in existence of God, but not in any superstitious doctrine, and insisted that 'Christianity is therefore not a doctrine, but the fact that God has existed'. Kierkegaard sees the whole world as a conglomeration of ambiguities and paradoxes.

True existence, therefore, is possible only when one becomes aware of the paradoxical presence of God, Christianity and man. Suffering, observes Kierkegaard, must be born peacefully and happily because only the elect and select of God suffer. Abraham suffered because he was the beloved of God.

### **Nietzsche: The Death of God**

Nietzsche's ethics have been divided by Bertrand Russel into two categories: the first about Nietzsche contempt for women and the second about his sharp critique of religion against, specifically against Christianity. He considered women as a good machine to produce warrior. His critique of Christianity is even sharper and bitter than that of women following his proclamation of 'The Death of God'. He called Christianity as a 'slave morality' and held the view that religion provides no truth because of the death of God and Christianity has become the shelter of weak and disable people. In his essay, "*The Death of God and Anti-Christ*", Nietzsche writes:

The Christian conception of God – god as good of the sick, God as a spider, God as spirit, is one of the most corrupt conceptions of the divine ever attained

on the Earth. It may even represent the low water mark in the descending development of divine types. God degenerated into the Contradiction of life, instead of being its transfiguration and eternal yes! God as declaration of war against Life, against nature, against the will to live. (912)

Just to imagine of God is to go against life, against will power. There is no God in the world. If there are any, they are none other than supermen. Supermen are higher kind of men who declare war over the masses of inferior people, and are free from any restrictions imposed by society. Super man is architect of history and his own life. 'The super man, explains Virgin Perry and his co- writer, are people of restless energy who enjoy living dangerously, have contempt against meek and humility, and dismiss humanitarian sentiments. Napoleon is Nietzsche's model of superman who, he said, was great man defeated by the petty ones. Nietzsche's idea of 'will to power' is not longingness for absolute power; rather it is the natural and deeper psychological motive of human psyche.

### **Heidegger: Being**

Another leading figure of existentialism was Heidegger who publicly appreciated Hitler and Nazism. However, he himself declined to be classified as existentialist. He made a distinction between being and Being. The oblivion of Being (individual) into the being (group) has made us lost in unreal existence. To get back to the lost being, Heidegger suggests us to return into the ground of metaphysics, and find the roots of our existence (Ellmann and Feidelson 808 ).He held the view that man should explicitly face the problems of Being; he has to determine his existence ,create his own possibilities and make choices and commitment. The feeling of dread due to the awareness of death may incite us to flee away from the problems of Being; accepting a way of life set by others instead of coming face to face with it. But, if we take the dread of death as an opportunity, we may construct a space of our own and make the life unique and better.

Heidegger discloses the improbabilities of not being able to escape the historical context because one is directly or indirectly bound by the conditions and outlooks inherited from the past. He also reveals that human conditions or existence is chained by temporal dimensions, which is the existential time. The Heideggerian time flows not from past through present to future but from future through past to present. We experienced past in guilt and we anticipate future in dread.

### **Satre: Existence Precedes Essence**

Originated by Jean-Paul Sartre, the phrase “existence precedes essence” has come to be a classic, even defining, formulation of the heart of existentialist philosophy. It’s an idea which turns traditional metaphysics on its head because throughout Western philosophy. It was always assumed that the ‘essence’ or ‘nature’ of a thing is more fundamental and eternal than its mere ‘existence’. Thus, if you want to understand a thing, what you must do is learn more about its ‘essence’. Disclosing the precedence of existence over essence and atheistic existentialism, Satre writes:

It states that if God does not there is at least one being in whom existence precedes essence, a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept, and that his being is man, or, as Heidegger says, human reality. What is meant here by saying that existence precedes essence. It means that, first of all man exists, turns up, appears on the scene and, only afterwards, defines himself.

(15)

It should be understood that Sartre does not apply this principle universally, but only to humanity. Sartre argued that there were essentially two kinds of being. The first is being-in-itself (*l'en-soi*), which is characterized as fixed, complete, and having absolutely no reason for its being — it just is. This describes the world of external objects. The second is being-

for-itself (*le pour-soi*), which is characterized as dependent upon the former for its existence. It has no absolute, fixed, eternal nature and describes the state of humanity.

Sartre draws two important conclusions from this. First, he argues that there is no given human nature common to everyone because there is no God to give it in the first place. Human beings exist, that much is clear, but it is only after they exist that some “essence” that can be called “human” may develop. Human beings must develop, define, and decide what their ‘nature’ will be through an engagement with themselves, their society, and the natural world around them.

Second, Sartre argues that because the ‘nature’ of every human being is dependent upon that person, this radical freedom is accompanied by an equally radical responsibility. No one can simply say “it was in my nature” as an excuse for some behavior of theirs. Whatever a person is or does is wholly dependent upon his/her own choices and commitments — there is nothing else to fall back upon. People have no one to blame (or praise) but themselves.

Just at this moment of extreme individualism, however, Sartre steps back and reminds us that we aren’t isolated individuals but rather members of communities and of the human race. There may not be a universal human nature, but there is certainly a common human condition — we are all in this together, we all living in human society, and we are all faced with the same sorts of decisions.

Jean-Paul Sartre believed that we live in a godless universe where there are no absolute, objective guides to action, morality, belief, or understanding. He discards the existence of God to guide and support to us. In his critical essay *Existentialism and Human Emotion* Sartre rejects the orthodoxy of any absolute power like God: “Existentialism as a means of facing the consequences of the world that is devoid of any absolute power like God (13-14). For him, we are all free — radically free such that we experience the psychological

strain of feeling 'abandoned' and forced to take full responsibility for everything that happens, even though we may not really wish to. He regards human existence as alien, forlorn and forgotten where we ourselves have to architect our existence.

### **Camus: Revolt Against Absurdism**

Albert Camus was a French-Algerian journalist and novelist whose literary work is regarded as a primary source of modern existentialist thought. A principle theme in Camus' novels is the idea that human life, objectively speaking, is meaningless. This results in 'absurdity' which can only be overcome by a commitment to moral integrity and social solidarity. Returning to the dominant themes of Camus' writings, the most frequently mentioned feature would have to be the notion of the 'absurd'. According to Camus, the absurd is produced via conflict — a conflict between our expectation of a rational, just universe and the actual universe that it is quite indifferent to all of our expectations.

Camus sees the condition of modern man similar to that of Corinthian King Sisyphus. Sisyphus is the martyr and teacher to all modern men who, because of his disobedience to God and his passion for life, suffers eternal torture heroically. This Universe, states Camus, henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Camus reached to the conclusion to declare the condition of man absurd when he realized that the speculative systems of past provided no reliable guidance of life or guaranteed any foundation of human values. According to him, when the absurd man becomes aware of his futile living, he is naturally filled with anxiety and becomes hopelessness but he does not surrender himself in the mouth of death. Instead, he acknowledges his consciousness of absurdity as a reliable guidance to revolt against this absurdity.

This theme of conflict between our desires for rationality with our experience of irrationality plays an important role in many existentialists' writings. In Kierkegaard, for example, this produced a crisis which a person needed to overcome by a leap of faith — a

conscious renunciation of any requirement for rational standards and an open acceptance of the irrationality of our fundamental choices.

Camus illustrated the problem of absurdity through the story of Sisyphus, a tale he adapted for a book-length essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1943). Condemned by the god, Sisyphus continually rolled a rock up hill only to watch it roll back down again — every time. This struggle seems hopeless and absurd because nothing will ever be achieved, but Sisyphus struggled anyway. Camus thought that we should rebel against these absurdities by refusing to participate in them. In the essay, Camus asserts that by refusing to surrender, Sisyphus, the representative of modern man can create meaning through a free act of affirmation on which he gives meaning to a situation which until then had none. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus says:

I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a matter seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy. (70)

In order to get liberation from the anxiety of the absurd world, one may go to the rules of God or he may submit himself to the hand of death. But either of these choices is ridiculous and bad for the absurd man. The living of the absurd man depends upon the maximum struggle against this absurdity. The world is full of absurdity, but Sisyphus teaches revolt through action that offers freedom and justification for continuing life.

It is in fact the process of creating value through rebellion that Camus believed we could create value for all humans, overcoming the absurdity of the universe. Creating value,

however, is achieved through our commitment to values, both personal and social.

Traditionally many have believed that value must be found in the context of religion, but

Albert Camus rejected religion as an act of cowardice and 'philosophical suicide'.

In *Henderson the Rain King*, the protagonist Henderson can not acknowledge his existence by his spirit as his soul is in the state of sleep. He can not bear anymore the pain of the inner call of his heart- "I want, I want... (12). Hoping to discover what he wants that is his spiritual existence, he makes a journey to the darkest Africa where he reawakens his spirit's sleep and then comes realize his true self.

## CHAPTER-THREE

### Resurrection of the Self

Despite the riches, social status and physical prowess; Henderson is restless and unfilled, and harbors spiritual void that manifests itself as an inner voice frequently crying out “I want, I want...” (12). To satisfy the sense of lack and justify his existence, Bellow’s protagonist Henderson makes a journey to the darkness of Africa. The journey tacitly indicates the mental journey to his inner self. On the way to his journey, he aspires to create the essence of his existence and he succeeds to recover his self by the end of the journey following the bursting of spirit’s sleep. The extreme fear and sufferings he undergoes help reawaken his spirit’s sleep.

Being materially sophisticated though, a sense of lack haunts him. So, he goes to the wilderness and primitive Africa. The farther he goes, the more he encounters people and experiences wilderness of Africa. The more he suffers, the wider his spirit bursts. The wider the spirit bursts, the better he understands the reality of life which signifies the growth of acknowledgement of existence. Henderson, eventually, recovers his lost self through the act of bursting of spirit’s sleep. That is to say, Henderson finally transforms himself into a spiritual being with the essence. As result of his journey to the interior, his attitude towards himself and his world changes from hatred to joyful acceptance.

As soon as Henderson’s ‘self’ is restored, he feels his real feeling, hears his inner voice and realizes his inner spirit. He begins to love people; respect the humanity and misses his distanced family very much. He frequently says that he will pay anything in order to meet his wife Lily amidst the journey. He really longs to contribute the society by serving the humanity. He determines to study the medicine and help the people in the rest of his life. To be clearer, now his heart leaps up with joy when he sees the people, watches the landscape and anticipates the pleasure of meeting his family. He feels he is real living being to its fullest

afterwards. Being too happy, he desires to dedicate the rest of his life in the service of humanity. Until the end of his journey, he comes to realize that the life is an opportunity which we get no second time. Life should be celebration but not the lamentation. We should live it meaningfully sharing the happiness and sorrows among the humanity as much as possible. Therefore, the delight for the life is restored in his soul and mind until the completion of his journey to the darkest Africa. The salvation avails not in the complicated and highly advanced city of New York but in the simplicity, savage and the wilderness of Africa because the development carries the complication with it.

So far the symbolic journey concerns, Bellow establishes the wilderness of Africa as a spiritual hospital to his protagonist Henderson while the King Dahfu, Wariri people and Arnewi Queen turns out to be his spiritual doctors who collectively heal him. The lion therapy is similar to the medical system of physiotherapy.

Though the text can be interpreted in various ways, this research will be limited to the existentialism from spiritual perspective through the observation of Henderson's journey, its circumstances and the activities he performed because this aspect of the text has not been approached yet. The protagonist Henderson's transformation from unconscious self to conscious self following his bursting the spirit's sleep is the arena of my research. And, the study will follow the structure of three consecutive phases: The Initiation, The Growth and The Recovery, to complete Henderson's journey.

### **The Initiation**

The beginning of the novel revolves around the initiation of protagonist's journey to the heart of Africa. This part offers what entices him to leave for Africa. In other words, it projects light on the departure of Henderson to the Primitive Africa. The existential hero Eugene Henderson feels suffocation in the noisy mass culture of modern America despite his material prosperity and social status. He suffers alienation and despair in the bustling city of New York.

Although he tries his best, he can not work out the agonies storming in his heart. He, therefore, takes the trip to Africa after the things turn unbearable to him. In this context, Henderson confesses:

What made me take this trip to Africa? There is no quick explanation. Things got worse and worse and worse and pretty soon they were too complicated.

When I think of my condition of the age of fifty five when I bought the ticket, all is grief. The facts begin to crowd me and soon I get pressure in the chest. (1)

The above extract clearly hints the cause behind Henderson's journey to the darkness of Africa. Things got worse and worse to Henderson because of spiritual dryness paving the way to the loss of self in Henderson. He seems to be surrounded by grief from all sides due to his dead spirit. This kind of state entices Henderson to make journey to the heart of Africa in order to obtain spiritual salvation. The existential angst drives him from advance metropolitan city of New York to the savage Africa in order to soothe his wounded soul.

Pig farmer by profession, Henderson becomes restless since the beginning of the novel. He says "...a cosmic coldness in which I felt I was dying" (19). After not being able to tolerate unbearable pains and coldness in the spirit, he is finally propelled to leave his house to the heart of America. He is desperately seeking redemption of his spirit. So, he determines to make the journey to pre- historic Africa. The following extract explicates why he takes up the journey as Henderson proceeds:

...and a ceaseless voice in my heart that said, *I want, I want, I want, oh I want – yes go on*, I said to myself, *strike, strike, strike!* I kept going on the staircase in my thick padded coat, in my pigskin gloves, and pigskin shoes, a pigskin wallet in my pocket, seething with lust and seething with trouble and realizing how my gaze glittered up the top banisher where lily had opened the door and was waiting. (12)

The aforementioned extract clearly explains the enticing factors behind the journey. Severely troubled Henderson takes up the journey following the ceaseless calls of 'I want' and 'strike' in his heart. What he wants is the awakening of his dead spirit so that the awakening of spirit will enable him to realize his existence in the world. He is completely hearing the call of the voice and totally forgetting his surroundings. The warmth of the day could not soothe his tormented soul, so he sets out to primitive Africa to recover his spirit.

Henderson, who is sufferer, introduces himself to us with the comment, "In my own way I work very hard. Violent suffering is labour" (4). His wife observes that he suffers harder than any person she ever saw. "Who can suffer like me?" he asks, and proclaims, "I am to suffering what Gray is to smoking. One of the world's biggest operations" (260). He himself admits that his stomach is full of troubles and he is sick in spirit. He plays violin or drinks alcohol as a means of remedy of this situation. But, these remain either transient or mere delusion since he can not feel better at all. He relates this state to the form of madness and thinks himself to be mad. Since he can not escape the despair by any means, his sufferings cross the boundary. Linking this situation to madness, Henderson asserts:

America is so big, and everybody is working, making, digging, bulldozing, trucking, loading, and so on, I guess, the sufferers suffer at the same rate.

Everybody wanting to pull together. I tried every cure you can think of. Of course, in an age of madness, to expect to be untouched by madness is a form of madness. But the pursuit of sanity can be a form of madness too. (25)

Being spiritually sick, Henderson tries every possible kinds of cure he can think of in order to obtain salvation from madness of his spirit. He, however, assumes the impossibility of redemption from madness in the age of madness and the desperate attempt to be safe from madness is also a kind of madness which is hard to escape from. Therefore, nobody can flee the state of madness in this complex material world despite the desperate attempts. The

pursuit of sanity, which is almost impossible in this so called civilized but mad world, is also another form of madness. Here the term 'madness' is the madness of 'soul' from where it is almost impossible to escape and enter into the world of sanity. He doubts whether we can be able to reach on the state of recovery in the age of madness in the mad world. Nevertheless, he still has a strand of hope of getting the wisdom of life out of despair and pessimism in order to recognize his true self which is the only solution to heal his problem of spiritual madness.

### **The Growth**

The growth of acknowledgement in the heart of Henderson begins right from the moment he sets out to the darkest Africa in order to pursue his true self. The sufferings he faces and the knowledge he acquires in course of the journey turn out to be wisdom of his life which help him to reach the summit of realization of his being. The very wisdom enables him to find oasis in the desert, make meaning out of meaninglessness and get order amid the chaos.

The "actual day of tears and madness"(38) brings Henderson the confrontation with his own 'living death' that is necessary to make him realize that he cannot go on 'spending' his 'life' in this way. The seed of growth is planted when he sees the dead body of his housekeeper before he sets out for Africa. Looking down at his dead housekeeper he realizes that death is inevitable, and he seems to sense that not even he may escape it. Instead of seeing death as a manifestation of all human limits, as he has done until, now he suddenly feels that it has no real significance: "so this was it, the end- farewell?"(39). Therefore, there is no need for him to go on deceiving himself that he is a "thing" beyond the limits of the human condition. He might as well try to face true reality and to accept death as a natural part of his existence. In order to pursue this new train of thought, he "pins a note DO NOT DISTURB to the old lady's skirt" (39) and goes to have a look at her cottage. Looking at all

the junk she has collected to fill up her empty existence, Henderson is shocked to see the obvious parallel to his own life:

Oh, shame, shame! Oh crying shame! How can we? Why do we allow ourselves? What are we doing? The last little room of dirt is waiting. Without windows. So for God's sake make a move. Henderson, put forth effort. You, too, will die of this pestilence. Death will annihilate you and nothing will remain, and there will be nothing left but junk. Because nothing will have been and so nothing will be left. While something still is –now! For the sake of all, get out. (39)

This existentialist insight heightens his awareness of his own wasted life. He realizes that he has reduced himself to 'nothing' by the way that he has spent his 'life' until now. Having fled his human condition, which must be lived within an acknowledgement of death, he has been trying to reduce himself to a state of pure 'thingness', and thus he has alienated himself from his surroundings and from his own true self. He sees that unless he tries to work with himself in order to make himself give up his role- playing and those perpetual lapses onto 'bad faith' which the role- playing signifies, he will eventually imprison himself in the realm of unreality, and he will end up having made a gross absurdity of his life- just like the old women.

Henderson goes to the Africa of his soul. The wilderness and darkness of the African interior is likened, to the bewilderment in Henderson's mind, and thus his experiences in Africa represent his various stages of development in this bewilderment. This interpretation is supported by Henderson's recognition that "may be every guy has his own Africa" (257), and by his assertion that "the world is a mind. Travel is mental" (167) and it is further underlined by the dream- like quality of the experience, which is stressed throughout the novel: "for me the entire experience has been similar to a dream" (262). Henderson starts out on his quest in order to pursue his true self and to learn to accept reality. If he is able to attain both, he hopes

that he can thereby fulfill himself as a truly existing person. In this way, the confrontation with death has turned him into an active searcher for self.

In the middle of the trip, Henderson splits with his friend Charlie Albert because he wants to travel through “the antiquity of the place” (53) where there would be “no foot print” (53) and reach the most uncivilized community of Africa. Henderson, indeed, succeeds to go in order to redeem his self. In Africa, he walks along the dry river, naked mountains without trees breathing hot air. He identifies such situation with his own as he says:

It was hot, clear and arid and after several days we saw no human footprints. Nor where there many plants; for that matter there was no much of anything here; it was all simplified and splendid, and I felt I was entering the past- the real past, no history or junk like that. The pre-human past. And I believed that there was something between the stones and me. The mountains were naked, often snakelike in their forms, without trees.... (47)

In Africa, the environment and atmosphere is dry and hot and so is the spirit of Henderson. He feels the outer atmosphere with the mental agony he has undergone yet. The above lines manifest the initiation of his spiritual awakening. He, at least, begins to recognize his real plight so far as he comes near the realization of reality.

His guide Romilayu takes him to the place called “Hinchagara (46)” where they receive warm hospitality by Arnewi people. They stay with them according their indigenous rituals. Right then sprouts the awareness of his self in his heart and mind since after Queen Willatale teaches him the wisdom of life particularly “Grun tu molani”, “man wants to live” (85). The purpose of all lives of both animal and human is just to live, to be. Henderson has had this life principle within him during his stay with the Arnewi people. Later, he agrees and thus adds, “Not only molano for myself, but for everybody. I could not bear how sad things have become in the world and so I set out because of this molani” (85). We can feel the birth

of humanisms in the heart of Henderson at this moment. He desperately seeks to do something to the other. He, therefore, wants to help the grieving Arnewi people by blasting the frogs in the cistern because the drinking water was plagued by the frogs, rendering the water unclean. Unfortunately, his attempt ends in disaster and he has to leave this village before he can get complete wisdom of life. Actually, he is looking for an opportunity to serve the humanity, which, he thinks now, is supreme satisfaction.

Eugene Henderson falls in crisis of his identity when the queen asks him who he is and where he comes from. He asks himself who he is but he can not find satisfactory answer. So he can not reply her. He is not prepared for that very obvious question and he becomes frustrated because he does not know how to answer her. He is the total sum of all of how social and moral 'roles' but he senses the queen will not be satisfied by an answer which simply refers to all those relationships, i.e. to his false identity. What she wants to learn is what or how his true self really is but he can not tell her. In this context, he says:

After the queen had welcomed me she wanted to know who I was and where I came from. And as soon as I heard this question a shadow fell on and all pleasure and lightheartedness of the occasion and I began to suffer. I wish I could explain why it oppressed me to tell about myself, but so it was, and I did not know what to say (76). Once more it was, who are you? And I had to confess that? I did not know where to begin from. (77)

Seeing that Henderson is not able to answer her question, queen Willatale understands that he is fleeing responsibility for himself, and she tells him: "world is strange to a child" (84). Henderson's desire to live within the physical world, but beyond the reach of death has alienated him from himself, because he has tried in a very Satrean manner, to reconcile these two irreconcilable alternatives. In this self- deception he has behaved like a child in the various 'roles' he has taken on in order to escape responsibility for his own life.

The nearer Henderson comes to Wariri village, the better he acquires the wisdom of life. His trip to Africa around his encounter with Wariri village, its people and their king Dahfu indicates the growth of spiritual bursting. When he encounters a dead body in the hut of Wariri village, he comes to realize the inevitability of death to all creatures including human beings. He gradually grows to accept the reality of death. From the acceptance of death, he succeeds to stir the lid of spirit to movement. That man was physically dead but Henderson was spiritually dead. He asserts:

I felt my mouth becomes very wide with the sorrow of it and the two of us, looking at the body, suffered silently for a while, the dead man in his silence sending a message to me such as, "Here, man is your being, which you think so terrific." And just as silently I replied, "Oh, be quit, dead man, for the Christ's sake." (137)

Death is so terrific but its ultimate reality where lies our being. Henderson comes to realize the uncuttable reality of death when he feels the corpse sending him this message in silence. He comes to realize the equality and the inevitability of death to every one. To born means also to die sooner or later because the death comes with the birth but remains unseen and mystic. Here, Henderson seems on the way to recognize his self through reality.

Having befriended the Wariri king Dahfu, Henderson learns many more things about the wisdom of life. Moreover, Henderson receives the royal honor along with the king. When he becomes the centre of respect and attention among the crowd of Wariri people, he feels a sort of tremor in his spirit which leads him towards spiritual awakening. That is to say, he is seeking transformation within himself at this moment Henderson, who had the identity of a pig farmer and ex- soldier, in mass urban society of America, is recognized as living human being beside the king. He finds no words to speak or express this happiness but can not

remain quiet either. He, therefore, roars like the great Assyrian bulls to express the extreme happiness. Henderson confesses:

I had no words to speak, no mortar or bazooka to fire, replying to the Guns of amazons. But I was impelled to make a sound, and therefore I uttered a roar like the great Assyrian bull. You know, to be the center of attention in a crowd always stirs and disturbs me. I had done so when the Arnewi wept and when they gathered near the cistern. (171)

Henderson seems to be growing towards the process transformation following his reception of royal honors equivalent to the king. When he is entitled as the Rain King, he receives the magnificent acclaim by the Arnewi people. In this light, Henderson says:

However, I roared. And the acclaim was magnificent. For I was heard. I was seen gripping my chest as I bellowed. The crowd went wild over this, and its wells were, I have to admit it, just like nourishment to me. I reflected, so this is what guys in public life get out of it? Well, well. I no longer wondered that this Dahfu had come back from civilization to be a king, even a small king? It was not a privilege to be missed. (172)

Henderson had never experienced such a glorious moment of honour before in his life. He also understands the real pleasure of being king from the king Dahfu, no matter how small he is. The applause he receives becomes nourishment to the spiritually sick Henderson, enhancing the growth of awareness in his soul. The quivering of his spirit's sleep at this moment indicates the growth of awareness soul.

Suffering undoubtedly is the principle factor of Henderson bursting the spirit's sleep. The severer he suffers, the wider and larger his spirit's sleep breaks. He suffers both physically and mentally during his trip to savage Africa. He is seen exhausted a lot due to his long trip on foot through the almost treeless hot territory of Africa accompanied by

uncomfortable lodging and poor foodings. He feels tortured in his soul when his attempt to help Arnewi people ends in disaster.

Moreover, Henderson's spirit's sleep gets totally stirred to the state of awakening when he suffers very near to the death. Full of sweats, very hot and almost with his paralyzed sense, Henderson is propelled to enact the lioness' way with herself in the den. Henderson mentions that King Dahfu asked him to:

“Roar, roar Henderson-Sungo. Do not be afraid. Let go off yourself. Snarl greatly. Feel the lion. Lower on the forepaws. Up with hindquarters. Threaten me. Open those magnificent mixed eyes. Oh, give more sound. Better, better” he said, “though still too much pathos. Give more sound. Now, with your hand-your paw-attack! Cuff! Fall back! Once more- strike, strike, strike, strike! Be the beast! You will recover humility later, but for the moment, be it utterly.” And I was the beast. I gave myself to it, and all my sorrow came out in roaring. (267)

He is so frightened that he is half conscious and so much suffers that he sees the very close glimpse of death. He himself reveals: “Death and I are just about the kissing cousins” (175). The very encounter with the lioness is the deadly blow which bursts Henderson's spirit's sleep. The very bursting the spirit's sleep enables him to feel himself as a Being and enables him to realize his existence. When he recovers his lost self, he misses his family, loves any man he meets and attunes himself with the echoes of nature. He feels the mountains, hills, rivers, trees and the whole landscape as his intimate companion and rejoices with their company from his inner heart on the way back to his home.

The Wariri people honor Henderson as “Sungo” or “The Rain King” after he lifts the idol of Rain Goddess Mummah and brings the rain. Afterwards, the king Dahfu keeps teaching him the wisdom of life. And, he also morally forces him to befriend the lioness so

that he could help him (Dahfu) on his capture to so called father lion Gmilo in future. Dahfu, therefore, takes Henderson to the underground den and makes him imitate the ways of lioness Atti. We find no words to express how much he fears and suffers since we have never gone to that extreme of sufferings. In this context, Henderson remarks:

I was gripping the inside of my cheek with my cheek, including the broken  
bridgework, while my eyes shut, slowly, and my face became as , I was highly  
aware, one huge mass of acceptance directed toward fate. Suffering. (Here is  
all that remains of a certain life- take it away! Was implied by my expression).  
But the lioness withdrew her head from my crotch and began once more to  
walk back and forth, the king saying to me(my comforter), “Henderson-  
Sungo, is it all right.(222-3)

The above text exhibits how the bullet of suffering penetrates into the core of Henderson’s spirit that breaks the spirit’s sleep open. The extreme fear and pain triggered from his forced company with the lioness help him bursting the spirit’s sleep and enables him to regain his existence. The storm of suffering enters, waves inside his heart and breaks his spirit’s sleep open so as to enable him to view his true existence

Having the suffering been major factor to break his spirit’s sleep; I can not remain myself quiet from analyzing the other similar incidents. Henderson asserts, “...and the abruptness of this gave me a bad shock. It felt a burst of terror go off in my chest” (226).

Though he extremely fears the confrontation, he gradually grows on accepting the reality and becomes conscious of the life that is his existence.

The longer Henderson confronts the lioness, the better he is achieving his transformation. “Violent feelings seemed to have passed off or to have been transformed” (194). He was overwhelmed by the extreme fear in the beginning. But now, he also begins to

get delight from the moment with the beautiful animal. He on the one hand is too frightened and he is getting pleasure on the other hand. He says,

“And how you are afraid! In the highest degree, I am really delighted by it. I have never seen such a fear manifestation. It resembled anxious pleasure to me. Do you know, many people love this blend of fear and satisfaction most (228)? This statement clearly manifests

Henderson’s progression very close towards consciousness of his being as well as the

acceptance of truth. This succeeding moment with the lioness gives him anxious pleasure.

The man, indeed, rejoices the satisfaction which he gets out of the most terrific or the riskiest.

So is the situation with Henderson who experiences both pleasure and pain at once. This kind of blending is the best thing which can not be attained easily since it is so rare and so risky.

The rare things obtained out of the risky attempt are the most valuable as the happiness

follows the pain. The consciousness he obtained from the confrontation enables him to realize

his existence. He, therefore, enjoys the terrific moment even if he fears it the most.

Henderson’s quest of reality is complete when he encounters the lion Gmilo with on the climactic lion-hunt. Even though Henderson has been trained by Dahfu to meet this contingency, even though he has assumed lionlike characteristics, it becomes apparent to him that, until now, he has not experienced true reality:

The snarling of this animal was indeed the voice of death. And I through how I had boasted to my dear lily how I loved reality...but oh, unreality, unreality, unreality! That has been my scheme for a troubled but eternal life. But now I was blasted away from this practice by the throat of the lion. His voice was like a blow at the back of my head. (307)

The lion completes Henderson’s quest; we understand that Henderson has come to know a truth because of the connection between suffering and knowledge insisted on throughout the novel. But what is this knowledge? What reality has Henderson discovered?

The knowledge Henderson acquired out of the extreme fears, sufferings and the experiences is nothing other than the acknowledgement of his true self. The very true self acquired by Henderson helps him to realize his existence. Here, Bellow has applied the lion therapy as a method of treatment which cured the spiritual patient Henderson. This stage after the encounter with the lion Ghmilo is the final blow that helped trigger the feeling of rebirth to Henderson. Afterwards, he comes to understand who he is, where he is and how he is.

### **The Recovery**

Until the death of Dahfu, Henderson's soul is sufficiently enlightened. Initially disillusioned Henderson, now, feels as a new born man with fresh enthusiasm and vigour for life. He feels that he is just finding out his real self following the reawakening of his spirit's sleep. He understands and then accepts the reality of life i.e. inevitability of death through his experiences and the teachings of the king. After this, Henderson's spirit is awakened which is the final stage of his transformation i.e. the Recovery. In this stage, he succeeds to recover his lost self or revives his dead soul. His strong conviction on resurrection helps him to awaken his dead spirit. Henderson exclaims: "I believe Lazarus. I believe in awakening of dead. I am sure that for some, at least, there is resurrection (140). This kind of belief shows the evidence of the reincarnation of his spirit.

As soon as his spirit is burst, he begins rejoicing every moment, everywhere. During his return he aims to study medicine, become doctor and serve the humanity. Actually, he feels as a living human at this moment onwards. He, therefore, keeps a desire to help other people.

The suffering ultimately redeems him by moving him to change: to accept moral responsibility for himself and others. "Suffering", Henderson comes to realize, "is about the only reliable burster of the spirit's sleep" (78). His suffering begins with cries of "I want" but finally leads to cries of "what shall I do? What must I do?" (217). what he must do is to

become cousin to the gnat and the grass; to stop making “such a noise all the time”(284); to become a sacred healer of the sick like many another Jewish hero, Henderson learns to care less for himself and more for others. Fathering an orphan at the novel’s conclusion- in the novel’s beginning- Henderson finds “pure happiness” (340). Love for an unknown child and for a flawed universe is his “remedy”. He has written to his wife: “I had a voice that said, I want! I want? I? It should have told me she wants, he wants, they want. And moreover its love that makes reality reality. The opposite makes the opposite” (286).

Similarly, he feels the eruption of love to his wife, daughter and son; and misses them a lot then he ever did. He seems to be too anxious and too hurry to meet his family and relatives. His homesickness now is everyone’s homesickness:

For I said, what’s the universe? Big. And what are we? Little. I therefore might as well be at home where my wife loves me. And even if she only seemed to love me, that too was better than nothing. Either way, I had tender feelings towards her. I remembered her in a variety of ways; some of her sayings came back to me, like one should live for this and not for that; not evil but good, not death but life, and all the rest of her theories. But I suppose it made no difference what she said; I wouldn’t be kept from loving her even by her preaching. (275- 76)

With the acceptance of circumstance and trust in his survival instincts, Henderson now, in fact, will not be kept from loving the world by anyone’s preaching: Lily’s, Dahfu’s, Willatale’s or of anyone else .The love gets revived in the heart of Henderson as soon as he has his spirit’s sleep is burst. Henderson, who suffered loneliness earlier in the beginning of the novel, wants to meet his wife Lily and share his feelings with her. He does not want to worry even if she only seems to love him because something is better than nothing. His

determination to show his love and care to her and live happily together with his family justifies the social adaptation emerged in his heart.

The experiences and teachings by the Arnewi people and the Wariri king during the trip in African interior turns out to be elixir in Henderson's life. He himself admits that he has learnt so much precious things in 20 days which he never has gained throughout his life in America so far: "This experience in Africa has been tremendous it has been tough. It has been perilous. It has been something! But I have matured twenty years in twenty days" (282). During the twenty days of journey in Africa, Henderson's spirit is awakened so that he feels he has matured twenty years in twenty days.

The king teaches him that to live means to face the facts and to bear the responsibilities through his experiences as the king of the Wariri, King Dahfu must follow the rule which exists in the tribe's community, although he knows that the rule, actually, is just the intricate game plotted by the Wariri priests who wants to hold the real power in the tribe. The rule is that to be the real king of the Wariri every king must be able to capture the savage lion which presumably bears the late king's soul. If he fails he has to be killed. This rule has been obeyed by the king's forefathers. It is the reason why the king must also play his role in this dangerous game. Besides, he has an opinion that he has to do what he has to. This is expressed in the statement "I too must complete becoming" (210). And that opinion is also seen in the following quotation: "nevertheless a play of life has to be allowed. Arrangements must be made" (296).

Moreover, the king still has a hope that if he succeeds in playing his role in the game he will be the real power holder in his tribe. The king will have to pay his life or will no longer be king if he can not capture the lion Ghmilo. This state of do or die to make existence, however, practically teaches Henderson that whatever the situation seems to be, he must try

hard to overcome it, for he still has a chance to win. What the king teaches him is that one should face the situation befallen upon and bear the consequences brought by one's deeds.

All of the king's teachings and experiences create Henderson to be a real new born man who is ready to face the reality of life. Henderson's new born self is marked by the awakening of his realization that he must change and not live in his past way of life. That he must make an arrangement about how he will live. This is seen the following quotation:

I must change I must not live on the past, it will ruin me. The dead are my boarders, eating me out of house and home. The hogs were my defiance. I was telling the world that it was a pig. I must begin to think how to live. I must break Lily from blackmail and set love on a true course. (287-8)

It implies that he must be satisfied with himself, with the things he possesses, and with everything in his surroundings. He must face the reality of life as it is. He must not escape from it as it does not save him. The wisdom he gets is reflected in the way he wants to take his love to Lily in a true course, which means that he has to break her from her bad character as a black mailer. He also wants to enter a medical school so that he can serve his life to other people.

In short, the thing that has been found by Henderson in Africa in course of his desperate efforts through the help of King Dahfu and Queen Willatale is his true self through the realization that to live means to be ready to face the reality of life with every possible consequences that may appear from it and to live means to play his role as a man. Now he realizes, life is full of struggles and we have to manage those obstacles and hindrances one by one. Only then, one can live happily in this absurd world forgetting or working out the gloomy part of our life. We have to struggle for making our existence because only the fittest can survive in the world. Concerning on the struggle to help burst his spirit's sleep and his self-realization, Henderson explains:

“Because the sleep is burst, and I’ve come to my self. It wasn’t the singing of boys who did it,” I said. “What I’d like to know is why this has to be fought by everybody... one thing however, I kept saying to myself and telling Romilayu, and this was that I had to get back to Lily and the children. (328-9)

As soon as his spirit’s sleep bursts, he is back to himself and realizes his true self full of optimism. The instinct for survival, the desire for humanity and love for every man specifically to his wife emerged in his heart after he discovers his self through the process of spiritual salvation. He creates meaning out of despair and optimism out of pessimism after he recognizes the life and the world. This sort of realization of spiritual incarnation implies that Henderson has recovered his existence by acknowledging the essence of life. On the way back to home, the journey from the spirit’s sleep to its burst, grief to joyfulness, and ignorance to acknowledgement completes by enabling Henderson to realize his existence. The novel concludes giving the glimpses of Henderson’s happy days ahead salvaging him from existential crisis to existential security through mental and psychological awareness.

Dealing with the alienated individual’s search for a meaningful existence, Bellow makes the point that the enlightenment is inherent in simplicity, wilderness, rituals and spiritualism, but not in material extremes. Bellow makes his protagonist Henderson to speak: “I am a high spirited kind of guy. And it’s the destiny of my generation of Americans to go out in the world and try to find the wisdom of life. It just is” (277). Here, Henderson seems to be the representative of Bellow’s generation of Americans who go out of their highly sophisticated urban society and wander around the world in search of wisdom of life. In this way, Saul Bellow offers the most sustained and most pertinent criticism of his contemporary American society examining the fate of modern man at the backdrop of modern capitalistic society.

## CHAPTER-FOUR

### TRANSFORMATION WITHIN

This dissertation has attempted to trace out the process of transformation in the consciousness of the Hero. In the novel *Henderson the Rain King*, Saul Bellow explains about the spiritual journey of the principle character, Eugene Henderson, who comes to realize his existence following reawakening of his spirit's sleep resulted from the severe sufferings he encounters, human dignity he receives and the wisdom of life he learns in the pre- historic and uncivilized Africa. Among several aspects of the novel, my thesis deals merely with how the protagonist comes to feel as a newly born man with new optimism, enthusiasm and vigor for life; and how he comes to rejoice every moment after the completion of his trip.

Despite the riches, social status and physical prowess; Henderson is restless and harbors a spiritual void which forces him to make a journey to the darkest Africa. On the way to his voyage, he discovers his spiritual existence after the recovery of his consciousness. To be able to realize oneself as a living being and recognize one's existence among others is recovering self. The novel presents a journey from living death to living life, despair to happiness and spirit's sleep to its bursting. There stages undergo to complete the journey- the initiation, The Growth and the Recovery- which eventually transforms Henderson. These three stages of the trip award Henderson with spiritual incarnation.

The first phase examines the causes behind Henderson's Adventurous journey to Africa. Similarly the second phase explicates the process of growth in Henderson's consciousness. And, the third phase forecasts how Henderson feels after his spirit's sleep is reawakened.

The adventure begins with the ceaseless call in his heart-"I want, I want, I want..." (12).The recurring voice makes him restless and later, forces him to begin the journey.

Actually, the American millionaire is not happy or satisfied with his circumstances as he suffers alienation, despair and frustration in modern cosmopolitan city of New York. There he feels death-in-life since he is not able to realize his existence.

The dry and hot territory of Africa, Henderson feels, is identical to his tormented soul. The Arnewi and Wariri people suffer physical drought (of nature) while Henderson does spiritual drought. 'Grun- tu- molani' or 'the desire to live' is the key wisdom he learns from the queen Willatale in Arnewi village whence begins the growth of awareness in Henderson's heart. The common pig Farmer of New York receives royal honor along with the King Dahfu in Africa. Moreover, he is entitled with 'Sungu' or 'The Rain King' after he lifts the statue of rain goddess Mummat. At this moment, Henderson highly grows to be aware of his existence.

The severe suffering he faces during the trip enhances the growth of his consciousness. The glimpse of death he draws out of extreme terror and sufferings yields the acknowledgement of his true soul. Moreover, his encounter with the corpses enables him to be aware of the reality i.e. inevitability of the death. The moments he remains with the lioness frighten him so much that he is subconscious, full of sweat and his body is paralyzed. This very terrific moment gives thrilling to Henderson's heart and the very thrilling bursts his spirits sleep. Until the death of king Dahfu, he grows to be able to acknowledge his existence and thus he understands the meaning of life.

As soon as the growth of awareness in the spirit is over, Henderson feels as if he is a new born man and begins to rejoice every moment afterwards. Moreover, the flame of love is rekindled in his heart which makes him determine to serve the humanity. He must have understood life as an occasion which is to be celebrated but not to be lamented.

'The Initiation' through 'The Growth' to 'The Recovery' completes a mental journey in Henderson's mind which consequently transforms him to be a truly living being. He exists, therefore, he is. He, who used to be a spiritual patient in the material city of New York, is

healed in the uncivilized and darkest territory of Africa. African territory, its people and its environment collectively heal Henderson's spiritual sickness thereby enabling him to acknowledge the meaning of life.

To conclude, Henderson's journey is the journey to his inner self. On the way to his journey, he aspires to create essence of his existence. As soon as the stage of recovery is over, he finds his existence. Soon after this, he determines to create his essence by offering meaning to his existence because existence precedes essence. Humanity, as Henderson desires to serve people, is prime concern of Saul Bellow to justify one's existence.

### Works Cited

- Adams, Hazard, ed. "Simone De Beauvoir". *Critical Theory Since Plato*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992. 993-1000.
- Bellow, Saul. *Henderson the Rain King*. New York: The Viking Press, 1959.
- Camus, Albert. "The Myth of Sisyphus". *Essays on the Creation of Knowledge*. Eds. and Comps. Shreedhar P. Lohani, Rameshwor P. Adhikari, Abhi N. Subedi. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1996. 68-70.
- Cuddon, J.A. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Penguin, 1992.
- Ellmann, Richard and Charles Feidelson. *The Modern Tradition: Background of Modern Literature*. New York: Oxford, 1965.
- Gaarder, Jostein. *Sophie's World: A Novel about the History of Philosophy*. Trans. Paulette Moller. New York: Berkley, 1996.
- Hughes, Daniel. "Reality and the Hero: Lolita and Henderson the Rain King". *Saul Bellow and the Critics*. Ed. Irving Malin. New York: New York University Press, 1967. 69-91.
- King, M.A. "Saul Bellow: The Hero in the Middle". *Critical Essays on Saul Bellow*. Ed. Stanley Trachtenberg. Boston, M.A: G.K. Hall, 1979. 181-94.
- Lavine, T.Z. *The Philosophical Quest: From Socrates to Satre*. New York: Bantam, 1989.
- Macintyre, Alasdair. "Existentialism." *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. Paul Edwards. New York: Macmillan, 1967.
- Michelson, Bruce. "The Idea of Henderson". *Twentieth Century Literature*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, 1967.

- Nietzsche, Friedrich. "The Death of God and the Antichrist". *The Modern Tradition: Background of Modern Literature*. Ed. Ellmann and Feidelson. New York: Oxford, 1965. 905-12.
- Ryan, John. K. "Existentialism." *Encyclopedia Americana*. 1966.
- Rodrigues, Eusebio L. "Bellow's Africa." *American Literature*. Vol. 43. 1971.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Existentialism and Human Emotion*. Trans. Bernard Frechtman and Hazel E. Barnes. New York: Castle, 1948.
- . *Essays in Existentialism*. Ed. Wade Baskin. New York: Citadel Press, 1993.
- Skirbekk. Gunnar and Nils, Gilje. *A History of Western Thought: From Ancient Greece to the Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Solomon, Robert. "Existentialism". *A Dictionary of Philosophy*. Ed. Thomas Mounter. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- Stout, Janis. "Biblical Allusions in Henderson the Rain King". *The south Central Bulletin*. Vol.40. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980. 165-167.