

## I. General Introduction

### Bernard Malamud and Jewish American Fiction

Writing about Jewish literature is a very difficult task at a time when coherent and identifiable Jewish culture and religion effectively ceased to exist. Neither “Jewish writers” nor “Jewish fiction” is an obvious or self-justifying subdivision of literature anymore than Jewishness itself is now a self-evident cultural identity. Such writers as Norman Mailer, Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, Joseph Hiller and Cynthia Ozick would seem to have little in common as writers to justify any sweeping definitions of a Jewish historical sense or sensibility.

Bernard Malamud is categorized as a Jewish writer raising the universal problems of Jewish history and especially the Jewish American immigrant experience. As McMichael says, he is a recorder of the Jewish experience with all its despair, possibility and hope for redemption. If we go through the novel *The Fixer*, it can be said that Malamud takes Jewishness as the cause of intense suffering of the Jews. He makes his protagonist, Yakov Bok, speculate in the novel that he suffers “for no better reason than he was born a Jew (226). More than this, Jewishness in this novel has been defined as guilt, torture and affliction.

Malamud often captures the immigrant experience of the Jews and creates in his novels and stories the unique worlds. He is an individual carrying a burden of the whole Jewishness. Malamud’s reluctance to serve us happy ending could be taken for moral realism of a sort, the sober assessment that life is tough, especially for a Jew. What removes this sobriety from realism is its puritan bias. Shechner Mark says, “his

characters are disappointed because they desire and where they fail, they do so because their desire either sabotages itself or is undercut by Malamud's own distaste for achievement" (211).

Malamud is a leading figure among the Jewish writers who specialize in ambivalence and his conflicting cultural perspectives have led to the creation of improbable worlds. He has drawn folkloric sources for his characters and situations while at the same time, keeping an eye on modern life. He is both an inventor of sexual romances and a gloomy interpreter of modern experience. The same dialectic may be found in Saul Bellows writings.

Malamudian characters in his works are made to take their Jewish faith as their main duty and major responsibility though it sometimes becomes a curse for their individual lives. Leonard Unger seems to accept this idea as he states, "Malamud generally uses acceptance of one Jewishness for the responsibility of the human condition" (441). If he denies his Jewishness, the situation comes out to be that he is rejecting the ethical center and this causes him a problem. Malamud seems to have created that consciousness of miracle in his works, which derives from faith in something beyond the self and he has been, successful to create the view of despair.

Malamud's works *The Natural*, *The Assistant*, *The fixer*, *The Tenants*, provide a clear image of the Jewish consciousness. *The Assistant* articulates the dilemma under which the Jews lived for a long time. This novel caught both the rising Jews in America and their daily problems. At the end of the story the hero himself is circumcised and becomes a Jew. His next novel *The Tenants* does not hide the cultural identity of Jews. Moreover, the tone towards mercy and hatred towards all types of cruelties run

simultaneously. *The Tenant's* ostensible message is mercy but its innermost emotion is pure rage.

Malamud's contemporary Jewish American writers are Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, I.B. Singer, Norman Mailer etc. and all of them share Jewish themes like injustice and suffering. Saul Bellow's *The Family Moskat*, *Satan in Gorcy*, *The Magician of Lublin* portray the heartbreaking reality of Jews. Bellow is a minute observer and keen analyst of the oddities of modern life. He best understood the human relationship in the way Kafka, Sartre and Camus. Bellow displayed his genius as a novelist of manner in his three books: *Seize the Day*, *Herzog*, and *Humboldt's Gift*. In *Seize the Day*, he shows his interest in society and manners of the people though it is a depressive account of modern life. It rightly catches the spirit of daily and closed life. His another book *Herzog* presents emotional, intellectual and moral crisis in American lives.

I.B. Singer's writings demonstrate the European Jews and their sufferings. Philip Roth, another Jewish American writer shows the American wilderness where cast and class throw shadows over love and sex. His National Book Award Winning novella *Good by Columbus* shows how rich American Jews have fallen in the swamp. Roth moves to the details of fantastic and unrealistic account of spiritual decay in Jewish family. He is best known for comedy of manners. Norman Mailer's novels *The Naked and The Dead*, *Barbery Shore*, *The Dear Park* show the manners of the people in realistic and naturalistic flavor. Its war theme clearly displays the manners of soldiers entangled with powerlessness and hopelessness.

Kakutani Michiko says, On the basis of *The Assistant* and *The Fixer*, many critics began to regard Mr. Malamud along with Saul Bellow and Mr. Roth, as a Jewish Writer.

It is a label Mr. Malamud finds inadequate. He argues that the three writers share more differences than similarities, and he notes that in his case, Jewishness is more of a spiritual than a cultural or religious quality. Malamud says, "I was concerned with what Jews stood for with their getting down to the bare bones of things. I was concerned with their ethicality how Jews felt they had to live in order to go on living" (21).

Malamud as an author concerns with the plight of one particular ethnic group, the Jews is surely put under the category of Jewish rituals and history. He has handled, here, the Jew as being the symbol of tragic experience of an individual whose Jewishness offers him suffering and pain.

It is a bitter and ironical fact in Malamud's works that yearning for better life a Jew happens to get an imprisonment. Then the consequent suffering makes him compelled to think that a Jew is not born to yearn for. A Jew in Malamud's world is made to accept the truth that he has no right to cherish desires and hopes. This truth is found in *The Fixer*.

Malamud's protagonists are the objects of some foul tricks, specially related to racism. This kind of intrigue is created in this novel by Black Hundreds and the Tsarist government itself. They are motivated by the racism and have aroused against the Jews the most ignorant and brutal of the masses. Their only aim is to ruin Yakov Bok because he is a Jew.

The situation in his works gets even more ironical when an individual trying to carve out a new life by evading the former Jewish one, only finds himself not drawn into the new life but caught by the same former coil. He can neither accept the Jewishness nor reject it. Later, he claims himself being an 'atheist' with the proclamation that he is a

“free thinker”. In both of these situations he gets caught in difficulty as the authority thinks that he did it to create extenuating circumstances and obfuscating details to deflect the legal investigation.

Frederick Karl in his book *American Fictions* writes, “Malamud’s novels define unique world: post Holocaust ethics, Jews and Gentiles intermingling in universal suffering, guilt, and penance, that consciousness of miracle which derives from faith in something beyond the self: the despair that precedes a deepening of ethical belief” (241) . If all this is Jewish then Malamud is a Jewish writer, writing about the problems of Jews and those problems always come as a consequence of their Jewish faith.

### **The Context of *The Fixer***

Malamud’s *The Fixer* is also a historical novel with a political theme dealing with anti-Semitic conspiracy in pre-revolutionary Russia, that is, before the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and after the revolution of 1905. The cobweb of conspiracy in the novel is based on the Beiliss case which is related to Mandel Beiliss, who was arrested in 1911 on the charge of murdering a Russian boy for the sake of his blood that could be used in making the *matzos* a ritual cake. They even concerned that the corpse’s forty-seven puncture wounds at least appeared to have been inflicted in the manner of a ritual from medieval folklore where Jews were said to drain Christian blood for making Passover *matzos*.

The novel can easily be estimated that Malamud has analyzed the European holocaust of the Jews with a peculiar protagonist, Yakov Bok, in it. The central character of the novel Bok, appears to be a scapegoat of the political puzzle of the contemporary

Russia with the reactionary government which wanted the extinction of Jewish race. *The Fixer* was published in 1966, more than fifty years after the Beiliss case.

The novel is about a Jewish handyman or a fixer, who leaves his birthplace, seeking golden opportunities for a new life in the city of St. Petersburg. But it is a sad and ironical fact that instead of getting new life he becomes the victim in the dirty political games of Black Hundreds, the members of anti-Semitic organization which is interested in political unrest creating the worst condition for the Jews. This poor young man who moves with a desire to eliminate Judaism from his life for the sake of better and peaceful life is falsely accused of the murder of a Christian child for the Jewish ritual purpose. He is chained, beaten and inhumanly treated in the prison.

The long and agonizing imprisonment makes him realize the truth that he is not false but the falsehood charged him, plotting the foul tricks because they want to spoil the whole Jews. Though Yakov Bok is imprisoned badly with unbearable afflictions, he refuses to surrender to his fate. Rather, he acquires a revolutionary Jewishness taking him into the Bolshevik Revolution as he cries in the novel with exclamation, "Uphold the law and destroy the Tsar with a thunderbolt" (213). He is not to be surprised but to revolt as he has got a new insight and a new spiritual solidity as strong as a volcanic rock.

He is drenched in the sea of injustice. Even the institutions of the country courts, defense attorney which are supposed to protect and defend the citizen are in fact doing exactly the opposite for him. The novel searches for truth and justice, so he waits for the formal indictment and fights against the insurmountable injustices.

## Critics' Responses

Bernard Malamud's the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize winning novel *The Fixer* is a work of great brilliance. The novel has something of mixed responses by the numerous critics who, however are impressed by its literary merit. Malamud has depicted a Jewish handyman, Yakov Bok, in prison, in terrible conditions, virtually concentration camp scenarios. Due to Anti-Semitism in Russia during the waning days of the Tsarist regime, he is accused of a crime that he did not commit. Malamud not only gives us the impact and feeling of the isolation, desolation and frustration of a prisoner in terrible conditions, waiting just for a letter of indictment, not ever knowing weather he would be accused of the rumor that abounded. Malamud takes us through periods of hopes for the prisoner, and then dashes hopes. He takes us through the feeling of worthlessness, hopelessness and the struggle that such a condition creates with the concept of suicide. It reveals itself with both the absurdity of a Kafka's story and the intensity of Saramago's story. For serious thinkers of the human mind and places, it takes one in conditions of great extremity.

This is the novel of extraordinarily intensifying, astonishing, astounding and commiserating all at once. In the story, every chapter, adverted a new scenario about the main character's future. The more I read, the more I grew hungry to find out what would be the fate of the poor Jew. It is a very strong and powerful book which has given me a good look on how the Jews were treated during the last Tsar of Russia. It is the most amazing book I ever read. I couldn't put it down, every time I turned the page to the next one, I was more taken into the book because of all the suspicion it held me in.

According to Richard David, *The Fixer* dramatizes the stirring portrait of injustice of a Jew. Yakov Bok is jailed for a crime that he did not commit. His struggle is as much with himself as with the growing injustice of the state with the ignorance in Kiev, and the weakness of local officials eager to see him imprisoned, even knowing he is not guilty. Yakov searches for the god of the Jews, failing to comprehend a god who would let his people be victimized so mercilessly. Yakov's struggle is as much moral and philosophical as legalistic is the source of much of the book's significance, as well as its occasional tragic-comedy.

When Yakov's father-in-law spends a small fortune in bribes to visit him in prison; they spend their precious ten minutes together debating theology. This scene is seminal because their debate whether god has abandoned Yakov or vice versa is the core of the tale. Later the politico-historical context, the cynical manipulation of anti-Semitic sentiment in Russia, is outlined by Yakov's attorney, but this is a book of morality and injustices much more than of politics.

*The Fixer* is a wonderful story calling to mind Kafka's *The Trial* as well as the dense internal dialogues of Dostoevsky. Yakov Bok is a hero but manages to be heroic just the same. Responding his all time favorite book, having felt the poignant plot and theme, Warren French says:

I have read this book no fewer than 10 times [...] and every time I cry this book was at one time banned because it was thought to be anti-Semitic. I think it's quite possible. It reminds me of the quote from Dante "the hottest place in hell is reserved for those who are neutral in times of moral crisis". This could be the theme of this book. Try as you might to remain



neutral but when the world is faced with injustice ... its just impossible.

(13)

Commenting on this novel as a classic novel of Anti-Semitism, Doughron, Doughron responses Bernard Malamud's Pulitzer Prize winning novel of a poor Ukrainian Jew imprisoned for a murder he didn't commit in Tsarist Russia, is one of the great Jewish interest novels ever written. Although the novel is about the Jewish experience in the anti-Semitic world of pre-Soviet Russia, the hero's predicaments will response with readers of all backgrounds. Yakov Bok is desperately poor man without faith in God. He calls himself a free thinker and is inspired by the works of Spinoza. He sets off for Kiev, hoping for a better life. Instead of that the bad circumstance lands him in jail. There is no justice for a poor unknown Jew in Tsarist justice and Bok's suffering is harrowing.

Similarly another critic Richard Woodward takes the story as a universal one and views, "this novel is about the feeling of complete helplessness experienced when one realizes that all the institutions that are supposed to be there to protect and defend the citizen-courts, defense attorneys, laws etc. are in fact doing exactly the opposite" (27).

It is about the feeling that there is no recourse to the law, that one is one's own in a hostile world Malamud certainly had not only Tsarist Russia in mind, but also the experiences of Jews and dissidents in the Soviet Union, as well as those of black Americans faced not only with lynch mobs but also the hostility of the public institutions that should have protected than from those moves. This message is a universal one about what happens when the respect of public officials for civil liberties and human dignity breaks down.

*The Fixer* is the story of a poor Jewish handyman who comes up against power which is hostile. Even a poor Jew can not be non-political that he quests for justice. The hostile power is represented by an authority figure who makes a point of Bok's being Jewish and who deprecates him while at the same time praising a wealthy Jewish merchant. The point is that the power, through wealth, of the other Jew sets him and his rights apart and above the handyman. The underlying and universal point of this juxtaposition, which Malamud intentionally makes is that rights always grow out of power, those who have no power have no rights as a condition of nature as fundamental as gravity. Sachs Shepark responses the novel *The Fixer* as an excellent novel about anti-Semitism. He says:

It's a fast book, but a very painful and somewhat depressing one. It deals heavily with anti-Semitism. Some of the Anti-Semitic passages are almost breathtaking in their ferocity. It becomes very painful, a times almost but (not quite) tragic-comic. In particular, a lengthy sermon (?) given by a priest that basically likens the Jews to vampires. (9)

Yakov Bok leaves his small village and moves to Kiev for better life. His wife left him for another man and he has no significant relations to speak of. It's a dangerous time to be Jewish, as the pogroms are widespread and practically government sanctioned. Pretending to be a gentile Bok finds work with an anti-Semite at a brickyard and moves into an area that is off limits for Jews. There young Christian boy is killed and Bok is accused of murdering for the ritual purpose.

Although there is no evidence against him, other than hysterical, unreliable anti-Semite "witnessness", things look bad for Bok and he is thrown into prison too await a

formal indictment. The majority of the book covers Bok's time in prison and solitary confinement. It becomes clear the prosecution is dragging its feet, not delivering the indictment, as they have a shaky chance of winning the case if it ever goes to trial.

Viewing the novel *The Fixer* as a propaganda novel Sachs says, I am astonished that so many people see in this book great literature. It is a well done propaganda tale in the manner of *Easter in the Bible*. It teaches nothing of the causes of anti-Semitism.

Of course, the novel has bitterly painful moments. Malamud gives the tale of the "Little Match Girl" translated into a Jewish adult male. Richard Woodward says, "this novel has as much to do with honesty as Alen Dorshwitz's tantrums have to do with the nature of inter-cultural, religious, and racial reality. But obfuscation is Dershowitz's profession. Malamud had a choice between the messy complexities of Darwin but he chose the simplicity of Lysenko (21).

Above all, these critics view the novel as a heart breaking novel consisting of insurmountable injustice and plights of the Jews prevailing in Tsarist Russia. I think, *The Fixer* shows the racial biasness and injustices to the Jews and their miserable life during the Tsarist regime in Russia. In the novel, the protagonist Yakov Bok, endures all kinds of pains, sufferings, tortures for the triumph of truth and justice.

## II. New Historicism and Justice

### New Historicism

A type of literary criticism that developed during the 1980s, has been the accepted name for a mode of literary study that its proponents oppose to the *Formalism* they attribute both to the *New Criticism* and to the critical deconstruction that followed it. New historicists, like formalist and their critics, acknowledge the importance of the literary text, but they also analyze the text with an eye to history. In place of dealing with a text in isolation from its historical context, new historicists attend primarily to the historical and cultural conditions of its later critical interpretations and evaluations. New historicists differ markedly from those of former scholars who had adverted to social and intellectual history as a “background” against which to set a work of literature as an independent entity or had viewed literature as a “reflection” of the worldview characteristic of a period. Instead, new historicists conceive of a literary text as “situated” within the institutions, social practices and discourses that constitute the overall culture of a particular time and place.

In oft-quoted phrase, Louis Montrose described the new historicism as a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the sexuality of history. That is conceived not to be a set of fixed objective facts but, like the literature with which it interacts, a text which itself needs to be interpreted. M.H. Abrams in his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms* writes:

Any text is conceived as a discourse which although it may seem to present, or reflect an external reality, in fact consists of what are called representations—that is verbal formations which are the “ideological

products or cultural constructs” of the historical conditions specific to an era. (184)

New historicists often claim that these cultural and ideological representations in text serve mainly to reproduce, confirm and propagate the power-structure of domination and subordination which characterize a given society.

### **Foucault’s Analysis of History**

Michel Foucault is one of the distinguished French philosophers of the post-modern era. He is basically known for his concept of new historicism. Foucault develops his own idea about genealogy in relation to Nietzsche’s ideas about history. He opposes the traditional idea of history, which is linear, continuous and fact-based. Traditional concept of history is a consentience and idealistic movements which follows certain rules and guidelines. In Hegelian and Kantian terms, this history is moving to teleological point.

Foucault makes the sharp distinction between general study of history and genealogical study of history. Traditional historicism examines only good aspects and plus points of generation whereas genealogy looks both good and bad aspects of the past history. According to him, traditional history is the study of dominant and important past events in linear order. It generalizes the whole history on the basis of few dominant events. He says this type of study always goes of origin but genealogy challenges the pursuit of origin.

Foucault doesn’t believe in the older idea of history as continual progress of human life. He develops the idea of genealogy which is “an idea that conceives of

history as a process of discontinuity. For the genealogists even insignificant, minor events are significant because they do not believe in the perfection of the teleological events” (270).

Foucault emphasized that discourses are always rooted in social institutions and shows that social and political power work through discourse. He says, “power relations in any given era in a society constitute the concepts, oppositions and hierarchy of its discourses. Truth and knowledge are determined by the society in any given era and there are no absolute truths, not even permanently authentic truth and knowledge in the world. Truth and meaning depend upon politico historical contexts. We can’t possess truly ‘objective’ knowledge of history because even historical writing is entangled in cultural ‘tropes’ or symbols! Besides being biased due to the subjectivity of those who write it and the limitations of its creation” (1143).

Discourses are produced within the real world of power and struggle and they are means to gain, maintain or subvert the existing power systems. Truth depends on who creates and maintains history or who has the power to create and perpetuate what is taken as truth. For instance both colonizer and colonized create their own kinds of truth, but they create the opposite truths. So, there are no absolutely true or absolutely false discourses of any kind, there are only more powerful and less powerful ones. Powerful discourses determine and dominate the mode of thought and other discourses. Coming near to Marxists in this issue, Foucault says:

Discourses change with the changes in the power structures of the society, the socio-political, religion-cultural and academic institutions are also bodies maintaining the prerogatives of the strong in the society. The

possibilities and criteria of truth change along with the change in the power structure in the society. (1139)

Discourse consists of representation, power and truth. Representation has different forms-written, audio-visual, oral etc. Power is circulated through these different forms of representations and then such power, which is represented creates the truth which becomes truth to everyone who is under system. In this way, power, determines the truth, as soon as the system of society changes, the truth also changes.

Foucault's discourse is related to the production of any information that provides knowledge. Once the discourse is created, knowledge about some aspect of life is provided. This knowledge helps to create the truth. But Foucault says that such truth is neither true nor false. Truth depends on discourse and discourse depends on interpretation. Hence, every truth is prone to linguistic manipulation, and truth is prone to interpretation. Whenever power changes, truth also changes, as a result our understanding of history also changes.

### **Subject in the Network of Representation, Power and Truth**

#### Refusal of History as 'Evolution'

Michel Foucault inspired the more radical thesis of new historical thinking that was refusal to see history as an evolutionary process, a continuous development toward the present. Neither was history regarded as an abstraction idea, or ideal, or something that began in the beginning and would reach to the end, a moment of definite closure. The tendency of new historicism to view history as a social science and the social sciences as historical became very radical in its textualisation of history and

historicization of text. The age-old demarcation between history and fiction was now blurred. History, like a work of art became something like a negotiated product of a private creator and the public practice of a given society.

The text was to be read in connection with all discursive practices and power relations expressed in it by the language that is, as argued by new historicists, but not to be read with the motto of art for art's sake. Similarly, the idea of textuality of history came as a jolt to the age-old search for metaphysical spirit that was said to be all pervasive throughout the historical movement. This was because new historicists tended towards less fact and event orientedness. This may be perhaps, because they realize that 'truth' about what really happened could never be purely and objectively known. In this way, they developed a theory which was no more linear and progressive, as something developing towards the present.

The historicism of 1930s, tried to examine literary works within the diverse and interrelated historical contexts by analyzing them with respect to the cultural and the social forces that influenced and were revealed through texts. The 'historicity of text' therefore seems to have been practiced by critics even before new historicists. The analysis of text by the new historicists differs from the previous approach because new historicists seek to analyze a literary work with respect to historical forces that encompass power relations and discursive practices which were in operation during the composition of that work. In this reference, J. Hillis Miller, in his speech 1986 presidential address to the modern language association, answers why new historical concept of the text is new:



Literary study in the past few years has undergone a sudden, almost universal turn away from theory in the sense of an orientation towards language as such and has made a corresponding turn toward history, culture, society, politics, institutions, class and gender conditions, the social content and the material base. (Triumph 283)

Miller's arena of theory implicitly includes formalism, new criticism and deconstruction which saw language as not concerned with outside things, according to Miller, this shift forms the theoretical bases of historical and socio-economic circumstances in literary analysis, which seems to assume that works of literature both influence and are influenced by historical reality.

The argument of new historicists that we can never possess objective knowledge of history because historical writing is always entangled in tropes owes much to the philosopher and the 'historian of otherwise', Michel Foucault. Although Foucault shares a lot with these new historicists, his redrawing of boundaries of history has had a central influence on the domain of the ideas like power discourses and subject.

The Foucauldian notion that views a text as verbal formation in the form of ideological products or cultural constructs of a certain historical era assist the concept of historicization of text. For Foucault, the text never represents or reflects pre-existing entities and orders of a historical situation, rather it speaks of the power structures, oppositions and hierarchies which are after all the products and propagators of power. A text, in Foucault's view, speaks of history but not as it is described by traditional Marxists and historicists. It within itself buries the 'situatedness' of institutions, social practices including their workings amidst the power relations and the hierarchies. So, a

text becomes ‘ a history of otherwise’ in that it presents a historical situation not as a ‘background’ but as something with which it can have constant interaction, for text is both product and the propagator of the power structures of society.

Foucault influences those who believe in the textuality of history because he is always aware of the fact that a historian can’t escape the ‘situatedness’ of his time. Foucault takes a historian to be embedded in the social practice. It is by this logic, clear that history is also written from the perspective of the historian. The position a historian occupies in society determines the history he writes. The way he goes inside the forms of power structures and social practices determines his description of history.

Foucault’s main interest in historical reading was to see how various discourses govern a certain era but in a contradictory way where a discourse doesn’t come to terms with others. Now comes Foucault’s confrontation with the traditional concept of history and his apparent neutrality in describing deep-rooted techniques of power in historical movement. Writing about Foucault’s ideas, and describing him as the historian of otherwise, McHoul and Grace write:

Foucault is no historical determinist [. . .] what are we is not what we must necessarily be by virtue of any iron laws of history. History is as fragile as it seems, in retrospect, to be fixed. But for Foucault, history is never simply in retrospect, never simply ‘the past’, it is also the medium in which life today is conducted. (viii)

Foucault becomes more difficult in his analysis of history from this depiction of him as no historical determinist.

Foucauldian historical reading moves forward to see the flaw in Hegelian perspective of history as a linear and progressive phenomenon that one day will reach perfection. The flaw, Foucault sees, lies in the humanist's (Hegelian's) thinking of an individual who always corrects himself by identifying his deviation from the norm of the historical situation. This is Foucault's analysis that sees the results to be the product of the cold alliance between an individual and morality and his embeddedness with discourse and power. The Hegelians concept of universal reason that existed behind the surface forms of human knowledge was what irritated Foucault. So, Foucauldian counter history sees the even present gist that is said to bring a change by synthesizing the thesis and the anti thesis in continuist history as a myth of human progress.

Foucault's radical anti humanism is best expressed in his essay entitled *Nietzsche, Genealogy History*. Taking the concept of truth and power as described by Nietzsche in his idea of genealogy, Foucault has three fold aim in this essay. First, he offers his argument supporting his break with archaeology. Secondly, he expands the scope of genealogy. Thirdly, he revises the role of the historian. His arguments support his break away from archaeology and describes genealogy as a diachronic methods. Genealogy, for him, is a Nietzschean effort to undermine all absolute grounds and to demonstrate the origins of things only in relation to and in context with other things. So, genealogy, unlike archaeology which seeks to uncover the layer of civilization by positing in them the stability of system of thought that stay long for an era and come to a sudden end, turns towards the problems of power and practice.

Writing about Foucault's shift for archaeology to genealogy Arun Gupto describes the Foucauldian concepts of these two historical readings to be complimentary.

Both of these historical approaches are for Gupto, in disagreement with “a fairy tale like totalizing concept of history” (114).

The most interesting idea with genealogy is its scope. Firstly, genealogy attacks the supposed coherence of a thinking subject. Secondly, it dissolves the fiction of singular human identity. Thirdly, it attacks the notion of origins in historical investigations. Fourthly, genealogy stresses the idea of history as discontinuity. Finally, it focuses not upon ideas or historical mentalities but upon the body so as to show it totally imprinted by history.

Departing from the traditional concept, Foucault reformulated the role of a historian. According to him, a historian has three fold task. First, the investigations should be directed against truth. Second, while confronting the one reality, a historian should be in favor of the use of history as a parody. Thirdly, he should be against a singular continuist human identity.

History imprints and destroys the body and this destruction can be exposed only when we approach a history from genealogical perspective. ‘Body’ for Foucault can never remain outside the power relations of a society and its discourse. And because of the subject’s failure to resist and resign from institutional commonalities, the body become victim. The body can never escape from the web of past images and knowledge that imprint it.

Foucault’s radicalism of history manifests itself in three dimensions- it rejects absolute truth or origin and argues for fictionalized history and historicized fiction, it confutes the linearity of history and exposes how a body is imprinted and inscribed by history. This theory is radical in the sense that it shocks us by going at least one step

farther than Marxism, Darwinism, Freudianism and even deconstruction, for all of them, unlike the Foucauldian perspective, believe in progressive history that starts in the beginning and comes to an end.

### **Foucault's Idea of Discourse-as-Thought**

The concept of discourse moved away from having something to do with language along with structuralism's demise. The formalist approach that attempted to find the general underlying rules of linguistic and communicative function was given a jolt by those theorists who took discourse as something related to social discipline and practices. With the advent of such theorists, discourse began to be seen as something where human knowledge is collected and structured, Foucault thinks of discourse in terms of bodies of knowledge. It is closer to the discipline than to the linguistic system or grammar. Discipline for Foucault has two senses: one, it refers to disciplinary institutions such as prison, school, hospital and so on and two, it refers to scholarly disciplines such as science, medicine, psychiatry and so on. We can therefore clearly establish Foucault's idea of discourse as the historical relationship between scholarly discipline and institutions of social control.

According to Foucault, the whole rationalization of society is a 'myth'. A society should be analyzed as a process in several fields, each of which shares the "fundamental experience of society: madness, illness, death, crime, sexuality and so forth" (subject and power 329). And all of these human phenomena are the units of knowledge i.e. discourse. And the discourses of all of such phenomena have their own vocabulary, concepts and rules, the knowledge of which constitutes power and serves as the dominant ideology of society.

Foucauldian concept of discourse has a number of components which are fairly identifiable: objects (the things any discourse studies or produces); operations (methods or ways treating the objects) concepts (the terms which constitute the unique language of discourse) and theoretical options (those different assumptions and theories on the basis of which discourses are formulated). With the help of all these components a discourse produces effects and is itself produced. But all of these components are subject to change. So, discourse is always in process of formulation, correlation and transformation, which takes place after a certain epoch.

Foucault takes statements as components of discursive formations which are primarily functional. He denies the one to one correspondence of forms and functions of linguistic units as argued by the speech act theory. So, facility conditions of propositions, sentences and speech acts may not work for Foucault's discourse.

If Foucault is interpreted on the basis of his idea of discourse, he doesn't appear to be interested in logical analysis of propositions or formal linguistic system. His concept of discourse encompasses the material conditions associated with time and space. For Foucault, the statements or the functional units of discourse don't represent the state of affairs but they do things and bring about effects rather than merely produce speech acts.

Foucault is a philosopher of discontinuity and his study doesn't see the development of different discourses in the linear episteme running up to the present. Though his main concept regarding discourse is best expressed in his book. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, his other works like *The Order Things*, and *Madness and Civilization* also touch upon the issue of discourse. All of these books attempt to clarify how disciplinary institutions create and develop discourse in different fields of human

knowledge. *The History of Sexuality* (vol.1) for instance, deals with how the discourse called sexuality is developed for sex and reveals how the discourse of sex changes over different times, *Madness and Civilization*, on the other hand is concerned with the discourse of psychiatry (i.e. madness) and shows how this discourse is defined by clinical institutions like the hospital. In the same way, criminology is studied in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*.

It is almost impossible to describe how every phenomenon related to human knowledge is described in discourse of its own, we can take sex and its discourse i.e. sexuality to clarify the intricate relationship between sex and power for the production of sexuality. In the same way, patriarchal discourse produced woman as a cultural construct the penological discourse produced the criminal and the western discourse produced their norms, strategies and relations of power applied in the field of sex produced in specific historical and material. So, the discourses are produced in specific historical and material conditions i.e. archive. Discourses are contradictory because they themselves are not absolutely true, there always lies gap between practice and statements of discourse.

Discourse represents the specific cultural circumstances under which lie the power structures and the relations of power and they don't represent the real. Truth always hovers between the real and (mis) representation. Commenting on this Foucauldian idea, McHoul and Grace write "Discourse is not just a form of representations the socially productive imagination. These conditions can therefore be referred to as discourses or discursive formations of possibility" (34). On this matter Foucault says effects of truth are produced within discourses which are neither true nor false.

How then is truth determined by discourses if no discourses represents the real? It is such discourses that enable institute of different discipline to wield power with which the criteria of different of the truth is established. Who is allowed to speak with authority? What is free to be thought, written, account are all determined by statements of discourse. Individuals so, living in certain discursive formations have to follow the truth looming around them. They can't think or speak without obeying the unspoken archive or rules and constrain which is but the construct of disciplinary institutions. If they do so, they must risk being condemned to madness or crime for discourses always are to have been reserving what Foucault calls, an exhaustive ordering of the world.

One of the facets of Foucauldian discourse is how individuals are made subjects by the discourse. According to Foucault, discourse can be a theoretical framework for manifestation of ideology of any society. And by this logic, a discourse never allows freedom to individual. He is always guided by the rules of this discursive formation and their effects. Foucault in his paper *Politics and Study of Discourse* suggests “Seek in the discourse not its laws of construction as do the structural methods, but its conditions of existence [. . .] refer the discourse not to the thought to the mind or to the subject which might have given rise to it, but to the practical field in which it is deployed” (15).

Discourse places a human in certain position. The subject is supposed to speak, think or write from the place specifically set for him. It is because discourses are the product of discursive conditions (i.e. rules and criteria) that specify the position of subjects who can now identify themselves as patients, doctors, perverts, criminals etc.

The Foucauldian concept of discourse may remain vague if not compared with Edward Said's concept of Orientalism as a discourse and Antonio Gramsci's hegemony.



Though Foucault is said to have not taken any political issues in his writing, it is there in his early essay *George Conguilhem: Philosopher of error* that he explicitly equates European knowledge and the mirage of western rationality with the “economic domination and political hegemony of colonialism” (54). Seen through this statement alone, Foucault seems to be sharing affinities with both Said and Gramsci who respectively talk about textual colonialism (i.e. Orientalism) and the willful consent to be ruled i.e. hegemony as the effects of European discourses. But Foucault’s concept of discourse is not exactly akin to these two theorists. The point can be established with reference to Said who writes on how Orientalism: continued investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the orient into western consciousness (6).

The above statement clearly shows the three major differences between Saidian and Foucauldian discourses. Firstly, Said takes discourse as a continued phenomena with which Foucault, the philosopher of discontinuity, obviously disagrees. Secondly, Said takes the European knowledge about the orient as tainted that comes after being filtered through a grid. This is similar to Foucault’s notion for he also doesn’t believe in real representation. But for Said there exists the real orient which should be sought outside the discourses of Orientalism neglecting its tainted representation. Thus Said (miss) interprets Foucault. Thirdly, Said examines the east-west relationship as that of power and domination for which Orientalism functions as knowledge and imperialism as power. But for Foucault, the power relationship results from differences in discourses that are involved in discursive practices.

Foucault seems to have some commonalities with Antonio Gramsci, who defines hegemony as the willful consent to be ruled and doesn't examine power relationship in it in terms of domination. People belonging to certain discourses, according to Gramsci, may have that consent to be ruled whereas the superior discourse (not metadiscourse) may try to rule with the help of the truth it establishes. Foucault also agrees that discursive practices result from the differences in discourses which are intricately woven with power that helps a discourse be a governing and an ordering medium in society. Finding an intersection between Gramsci and Foucault would be easy with reference to Roman Selden who says, "The discursive practices have no universal validity but are historically dominant ways of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitation" (106).

In this way, Foucault sees discourse as the product of archive of the material conditions. He sees discourse as inseparable from power because every discourse according to him, becomes the ordering medium of the institution it belongs to. Although discourse is neither true nor false, it attempts to represent the real and forms limits and constraints for its subjects. It does so with the help of certain dichotomies related to normality or abnormality. For example, the discourses define madness, criminality and sexual abnormality and so on in relation to sanity, justice and sexual normality. Such discursive formations massively determine and constrain the forms of knowledge. Therefore, all human subjects are positioned by discourses or knowledge of different fields and of themselves. So, to view discourse, as a pure form of knowledge would be a flawed approach. No discourse could escape from the network in which power politics

governs all other components. So, a subject is always imprinted and conditioned by the discursive practices of his society.

### **Power as a Medium for Subjection**

Some of Foucault's works contain a powerful, original and coherent body of political ideas. Especially in his theory of apparently neutral and politically invisible techniques of power, he appears to be concerned with politics of a society. Foucault's ideas on subject, knowledge and truth make him at least a political philosopher. This is because, his interest lies not merely in power and its manifestation but also in techniques which produce truth so as to lead an individual to subjection.

Foucault's radical thesis on power has to be seen from three angles; its productive but dangerous nature, its deviation from that of the concept of thinkers of his time and constitution of subjectivity through power relations. Firstly, Foucault's turning away from the repressive hypothesis of power so as to attribute the productivity and creative potential, it bears much weight in his radical thesis of power. Power according to him is a creative source for positive value and is practiced hegemonically. It is not hierarchical flowing from top to bottom and is not used vertically to dominate the other. Foucault's power doesn't adhere to the repressive hypothesis that sees power functioning in the form of chain which localizes it in a few hands. Power, for him is not just the ruthless domination of the weak by the stronger. In history of sexuality (Vol.1), Foucault writes about the all pervasive nature of power:

Power is everywhere: not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere [. . .] power comes from below; there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled at the root of

power relations and serving as a general matrix-no such duality extending from the top down and reacting on more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body. (93-4)

From this it becomes clear that Foucault's main project was to turn the negative conception of power upside down. (By negative conception, we mean the vertical and hierarchical notion of power). In doing this, he owed more to Nietzsche than to Karl Marx, who like Foucault, saw history in terms of power but defined power as something to be wielded by somebody upon the other. On the contrary, Foucault saw power not to simply as a repressive force or tool of conspiracy but as a complex of forces that produce what happens in a society.

Foucault's concern with the productivity of power, as his notion that power is all pervasive also deserves equal weight power, seen in his light is about two parties who are involved in its exercise. Such exercise in power relations produces effects on the objects, concepts and the structures of institutions which play vital role in the circulation of power in its modern forms. Practices with such power relations generate knowledge regarding various components including human beings of the social structure. He strongly defends this point in *Discipline and Punish*, as he says "We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms; it excludes, it represses, it obstructs, it makes, it conceals. In fact, power produces, it produces reality. It produces domain of objects and rituals of truth" (194).

The use of power and knowledge in the productive way doesn't mean that it is always safe. It is so, not because of false knowledge that is used in the practices of power, but because it can be essentialist. For Foucault, such essentialist notion and

compulsive quest for Foundationalist certainties is not safe. The idea is what James B. Faubion states in his introduction to *Power: Essential works of Foucault (Vol.3)*, 'Nothing including the exercise of power is evil in itself but everything dangerous' (xix).

Secondly, unlike the main trend of postmodernism which questions the truth so as to argue for truths, Foucault's main project is not to devaluate and discredit the truth or science in general but to question the historical conditions necessary for the emergence of such truths. For this purpose, he demonstrates the historicity of different disciplines and the concepts of objects related to such disciplines along with power relations and their strategies.

In developing this new idea of power, Foucault is less concerned with power as an entity or process that with an interrogation of the material conditions which promote specific power relations. He calls this project of evaluating one's on historical epoch or present an ontology of the present writing on this idea of Foucault, McHoul and Grace say "An ontology of the present would aspire to unearth the particular historical conditions which produced the types of scientific truth peculiar to society" (60). From this it becomes clear that, these two critics see, as we do, Foucault setting himself apart from all other contemporary social theorists. This is because of his interest in, not the status of the truths but on the conditions necessary for the production of such truths.

Thirdly, there lies an attachment of constitution of subjectivity to power relations because discourse of discipline positions an individual within certain limits, the individual thinks, speaks and tries to act accordingly. The knowledge prescribed by discourse is what determines power relations, an individual is subjected to be defined according to this demarcation. Power categorizes the individual marks him, attaches him

to his own identity and imposes a law of truth on him own identity and imposes a law of truth on him. It is a form of power that makes individual subject.

Foucault doesn't say that all power is evil or all government unacceptable but he does think that the theorems claiming to confer legitimacy on power or government are fictions. And social contract based on such legitimacy is nothing but a fairy tale.

In stating the ways of power in a society, we can't disregard a question: does Foucault give the same position to power as the structuralists do to the centre? No. Foucault's position is very different from that of the structuralists because his power unlike centre can't function in the absence of knowledge/ truth. Clarifying this idea, James D. Faubion, in the introduction to his book writes:

One of the key clarifying points Foucault makes is that what is most interesting about links between power and knowledge is the direction of false or spurious knowledge at work in human affairs but, rather, the role of knowledge that are valued and effective because of their reliable instrumental efficacy. (xviii)

Jame's term, instrumental efficacy for knowledge makes it clear that Foucault's main interest is not about power as such but its application through techniques that are supported by knowledge/truth.

Power marks an individual and imposes the law on him but it is knowledge that makes it possible. It means power's attempt to subject an individual becomes successful with the help of knowledge. To subject an individual means to compel someone else to be under control or dependent and to lie a conscience or self-knowledge to his own

identity. The subject therefore, is always placed in a net like organization of power, knowledge and representation. It becomes something around which power circulates and produces its effects.

Paul Bove calls any discipline is “an accumulative, co-operative project for the production of knowledge, the exercise of power and the creation of careers” (qtd. in Spannos 52). Such a project always produces knowledge irrespective of truth or falsity and support the techniques of power. Foucault’s observations about the regulatory mechanisms of knowledge and their assistance to the techniques of power are expressed in his hypothesis about dominant knowledge systems that are the products of the disciplines. In this way the subject can’t but live in the network of power, knowledge and the techniques of power, all of which produce and revolve around the subject.

If knowledge is the part of a social practice of subjecting individuals by mechanisms of power that lay to truth, why can’t the subjects question the truth on its effects of power and power on its effects of truth? Foucault doesn’t say that the governed have no rights. He is of the opinion that a subject can possess a vertical attitude of not being ‘governed thus’. A subject can always raise question about the systems he lives in. He can also bungle the consent with which the power works on the two parties involved.

We can’t say that Foucault talks about the liberation of embodied individuals. No doubt the writings of Foucault’s latter career, pay much attention to human rights, the revolutions and the resistance of the subjects but he, unlike Kant, an enlightenment philosopher, doesn’t see an individual breaking open from inside the tutelage. It means, he doesn’t say that subjects can be liberated from this kind of subjectivity they are bound to live with because according to him, subjects also try to resist from a certain location in

the power structure. They resist from within. So, they only try to alter the power relations by rising from another discourse. Revolts of these kinds will also be nothing more than simply an attempt to create another essentialist discourses. The subjects, already being components of the power structure can't get rid of the subjectivity imposed on them but only try to alter prevailing power relations.

If so, is it useless to revolt then? Of course not although the subjects can't liberate themselves from the state and the state's institutions, according to Foucault "They can promote new forms of subjectivity through refusal of this kind of individuality that has been imposed on them for several centuries" (Subject and power 336).

He suggests that this can be done not by going beyond the limits set by the discourses but by thinking from within. The subjects are sure to fail if they attempt to create the next essentialist notion by opposing the prevailing one. So, only to develop the critical attitude as the 'will' not to be governed without trying to develop the new essence is the best revolution of subjects against a system that imposes order on them.

Foucault challenges the productions of certain truths. He doesn't say that power is evil itself, rather his idea of power is related to productivity. In his latter works, he suggests that productive power limits an individual and subjects him to certain conditions. This subjection of an individual is possible with the help of techniques of power that are aided by truth/knowledge. But the subject can resist his position and conditions that are set for him by the ideological framework of the discourse.

In such a resistance, Foucault doesn't see the liberation of human beings as argued by humanists. His reason is that the claims arising from the resistance are also the products of another discourse. So, Foucault says, the best way for the subject is to



develop a critical attitude as the 'will', not to be governed thus and to deny the essentialists' notion by locating oneself at the frontiers. But in doing so, the subject should never attempt to establish the essence on his own.

## **Justice**

About justice D.R. Sexena, in his book, *Law, Justice and Social Change*, says, "Justice is a concept involving the fair, moral and impartial treatment of all persons, especially in law. If a person lives under a certain set of law, justice is considered making the person follow the law and be punished if not" (21). So, justice is the quality of being fair or reasonable.

Plato says, Virtue should be rewarded and vice should be punished. But, in Bok's case, virtue is not rewarded that he works in a brick factory and because of his hard labour, the bankrupted factory is recovered and earns more profit. Instead of getting reward, Bok is badly punished by the orthodox Christian government accusing him a Jew murdering a Christian child. Marfa Golov and her blind lover murdered the child but being a Jew, Bok is entrapped in the conspiracy. The real murderers are not punished, but an innocent Jew is punished. So, Bok searches for reward of his virtue and punishment to the vices.

Thomas Rymer says, Justice as earthly rewards and punishments in proportion to the virtue and vice of the various characters. But in *The Fixer*, the protagonist, Yakov Bok is not punished in proportion to his guilt. He is innocent but is severely punished and tortured. Justice depends on power holders who work for their own justice. The power is in the Christian authority of Black Hundreds and they punish those who are their enemies especially the Jews. So, the novel seeks justice which does not accept any

ideological justice and the justice created from the power. Yakov Bok searches the real justice which involve the fair, moral and impartial treatment of all persons.

### III. Quest for Justice in *The Fixer*

#### Story in Brief

The novel opens with Yakov Bok looking at the people running in the morning in the same direction. Later on he comes to know that the dead body of a twelve years old boy has been found out near by. Jews are accused of the murder. Then he is frightened because he is staying in the Lukianovsky District, in which Jews are forbidden to live. He remembers his father who was also shot there.

Five months ago when he decided to leave Shtetl Shmuel, his father-in-law suggested him not to go to the forbidden place, but Bok did not care. His wife was barren and she left him, as he did not care her. Then he decided to leave his place in search of better opportunity. Shmuel requested him not to forget God but he said he did not believe in God.

When he left the place and was on the way to Lukianovsky coincidentally, he saved a Russian old man, Nikolai. Then he was well treated by Nikolai and his daughter and even appointed in a brick factory. Although he was doubtful and had some fear in his mind, he accepted the job. He also disguised his name as Yakov Ivanovitch.

Now, Yakov himself is accused of the murder of a twelve years old Russian boy in association with other Jews to take out blood to prepare matzos. He refuses the charges trying to prove himself a free thinker but he is taken to a cell and confined there. He is tortured too much inside the prison but he does not confess. Then he is persuaded to tell a lie that he killed the boy due to compulsion imposed by the Jews. But he rejects

one day, he suspects that the food is poisoned and denies to have it rather he goes on fasting.

By giving bribe to the authority, his father-in-law comes to meet him only for ten minutes. Again he asks him to believe in God but Yakov still does not. Shmuel also says that he will manage the lawyer to prove him innocent. Later his wife, Raisl, also comes to meet him. Firstly he becomes angry and calls her a whore. He blames her of what has happened. Later on he realizes his own fault that he did not give proper love. He also decides to accept her and the child that Raisl gave birth.

In the prison when he is extremely tortured, he thinks of committing suicide but he does not do so thinking that it will ultimately help the oppressive authority. Jews whoever came to meet him, ask him to take pride in whatever has happened because it is for the sake of their God. But he rejects saying that he is a free thinker. If the government suppresses its subjects, behaves partially in the name of religion, cast and creed, then the people can not tolerate such a biasness. They try to alter the prevailing power for their justice. Eventually when Yakov realizes the fact that his justice depends on the justice of the whole race and he speaks for them all. He tries to make himself a revolutionary thinking of killing the Tsar shouting death to the anti-Semites! Long Live revolution! Long Live Liberty!

### **The Novel as History, History as the Novel**

Malamud's novel *The Fixer* addresses the subject of history through its fiction and both demonstrate the ambiguity of the history-fiction border. *The Fixer* is a historical novel with political theme dealing with anti-Semitic conspiracy in pre-revolutionary Russia. The cobweb of conspiracy in the novel is based on the Beiliss case which is

related to Mendel Beiliss who was arrested in 1911 on the charge of Murdering a Russian boy for the sake of his blood that could be used for making the matzos, the ritual cake. They even concurred that the courses forty-seven punctured wounds at least appeared to have inflicted in the manner of legendry ritual from Medieval folk lore where Jews were said to drain Christian blood for as disappearing within the Russian justice system as an alleged murdered and possible conspirator. The character, Mendel Beiliss becomes a political pawn for Tsarist reactionaries and for political revolutionaries, for raving anti-Semites and for pogrom fearing Jews.

This novel is a fictional treatment of Mendel Beiliss in the character of Yakov Bok, who is primarily concerned with the meaning of freedom as he seeks to escape from history that is, from a certain absolute history constructed out of such myths as the blood libel legend. Some of the critics were impressed by its status as a historical novel. Eliot Fremont Smith notes-“one can't hold a novelist too closely to history [...] yet Yakov-Beiliss identification is unavoidable” (2).

Unbounded by the conventions of history, the novelist is perfectly free to use his imagination and Malamud discloses Bok's thoughts in a revealing passage:

Once you leave you're out in the open [...] It shows history, which means what happens to somebody starts in a web of events outside the personal. We are all in history, that's sure but some are more than others, Jews more than some. It was full of all sorts of barriers and limitations, as though certain doors had been boarded up in a house and to get out, you had to jump out of a window. (7)

Eventually, Yakov Bok begins to discover that he can't escape his history by retreating deeper into himself nor can he transcend the politics inherent in such a history with all his philosophical musing. Only by plunging head, first into history can there be any hope of freedom. Upon this revelation, as he is carted in a prison wagon, to his trial, he has a vision of Tsar and realizing that the sovereign is the culmination of Russian history just as he himself is the culmination of Jewish history Bok assassinates him. One history defeats another. At that moment, Bok awakens to the wagon door being blown open and, in the final cathartic moment, he is thrown back out into the turbulent water of history and politics.

Malamud's novel exemplifies how one particular history of Russia (and Europe as a whole) had misportrayed the Jewish people while claiming to be the history of Russia and denying the Jewish voice in its development. What might be called bad storytelling threatened to bring persecution and death upon the Jewish people due to a sort of literary holocaust where one history monopolizes truth, denied its own nature and suppressed all other accounts and literary forms as inferior representations of the truth.

In Malamud's *The Fixer*, the aim is obviously something more than to invent a fantasy world involving an utterly fictional character's struggle against imaginary social and political forces. Nor is his account simply a historical novel set in Tsarist Russia and taking as its general subject the scapegoating of a Jewish man. Specifically choosing the historical details of the Beiliss case. Malamud gives his account more credibility for readers who are aware of the story's factual nature. As Foucault says, the history is historicized from the perspective of power holder. Through the character, Yakov Bok, Jews wait for that golden day when the power would come in their hand and would write

the history from Jewish favor. This inner psyche is seen when the novelist demonstrates his oft-quoted dictum that “all men are Jewish” (149). That is to say, he wanted to present “a metaphoric way of indicating how history sooner or later threatens all men”. Mendel Belisis is merely one man; Yakov Bok is every man. Thus, Malamud wants to universalize his character to make Jewish history as a factual one.

As Louis Montros described the new historicism as a reciprocal concern with the historicity of texts and the textuality of history, Malamud has also blurred the demarcation between history (Tsarist regime and its reactionary government of Black hundred during 1911) and fiction (the novel). He has written the history in the form of fiction and the fiction in the form of history i.e. novel as a history and history as a novel. Therefore the fact that the novel both refers and is referred to by the Beiliss case becomes clear with Malamud’s technique of historicizing the novel and fictionalizing the history. In this reference Greenblatt writes, history can not be divorced from textuality.

### **Discourse and Truth**

Power holders create discourse to circulate their ideology, to impose power over the people who are under the system. According to Foucault, Discourse consists of representation, power and truth. Power is circulated through different forms of representations which give knowledge and that becomes truth. In the novel *The Fixer* too, the reactionary government of Black Hundreds creates the discourse that the Jews are the murderers and Yakov Bok, murdered the Christian boy. When people found the murdered body of a child, the reactionary government got a very good opportunity to accuse the Jews. For that they create the discourse that “the boy had been bled to death for a religious purpose so that the Jews could collect his blood and deliver it to synagogue

for making a Possover matzos” (4). They spread this rumor through newspapers and other medias and circulate the knowledge that the Jews are murderer. On of the member of Black Hundreds, Lativan says:

Anyway, God will save all from the bloody Jews, Jews are bloodsucking parasites, cheating, and pockmarked. They'd rob us of day light if they could. They foul up earth and air with their body stink and garlic breath. A Jew is a devil, its known fact and if you ever watch one peel off his stinking boot, you'll see a split hoot, it's true. Russia will be done to death by them and the disease they spread unless we make end to it. (27)

In such a way, the reactionary government creates the discourse like Saidian Oriental discourse that the westerners are superior and easterners are inferior westerners are civilized and easterners are barbaric and wild. This discourse of anti-Semites is spread throughout Russia from different forms of representation and it becomes truth to everyone. The police inspector examined the swollen face and mutilated body, he counted thirty seven wounds made by a thin pointed instrument. Then the coffin was lowered into the grave, hundred of leaflets exploded into the air: “We Accuse The Jews” (68). Even in the Prison, as other prisoners found from the papers that Yakov was a Jew, they hated him sneering, “So you are the bastard Jew who killed the Christian boy and sucked the blood out of his bones?” (107).

Foucault's discourse is related to the production of any information that provides knowledge. Once the discourse is created, knowledge about some aspect of life is provided. This knowledge helps to create truth. Truth and meaning depends upon politico historical contexts. The members of Black Hundreds who are the enemies of



Jews, take Yakov's Knife, make blood stains on it and produce the information that Yakov murdered the Christian child. Showing the blood stained knife, Grubeshov says to Yakov:

We found this tool sack in your habitat in the stable. Look at this rusty knife and these awls cleansed of blood with this rag, and now deny these instruments were used by you and your gang of Jews to perforate and bleed the boy of a sweet and innocent Christian child. When poor Zhenia Golov's heart was drained of blood and he lay on the floor lifeless, you and the Tzadik Jew with the white stockings picked him up and left his corpse in the cave. (137)

This information produces the knowledge that Yakov murdered the child and such knowledge helps to create truth. Foucault says truth and meaning depends on politico-historical contexts. Here too, the power and political context is in the hand of Black Hundreds, the enemies of the Jews and they easily create the truth that Yakov is a murderer.

Power determines the truth and by hook or crook the power creates truth in favor of it. For this the power sometimes gives bribe to the certain people and sometimes tempts them by giving attractive assurances. The government officials gave bribe to Marfa Golov and a beggar to be the witnesses. They tell Yakov to confess the crime and he will get many opportunities. Tempting from the different assurances Grubeshov says to Yakov:

Listen Bok, I speak to you for your own good your position otherwise is hopeless. A confession by you will have more than on beneficial effect. I

assure you, you will have a Russian passport in your pocket and the means of transportation to some country outside of Europe. This includes Palestine, America or even Australia if you choose to go there. The alternation is to send your lifetime in prison. (224)

Foucault emphasized that discourses are always rooted in social institutions and shows that social and political power work through discourse. The Tsarist government works through the discourses created on the basis of the government officials and the members of Black Hundreds like Prosko. He said:

I watched them through the window and saw them praying the Jewish god and making matzos. I figured they baked some in the stove up there and I was right, there was half a sack of flour hidden under the bed that the police got [ ...] one day two or three school kids came in the yard with their book satchels. I saw him chasing them. When I asked why did he chase, he answered me If they are so innocent Jesus Christ will protect them. (114)

Another bribed man Richter as a proof reports:

I saw them praying with their little black hats on and I spied on them when they were baking those matzos. It was snowing when the boy was murdered. I saw another Jew with a round hat down the stairs and they left the brickyard in a hurry [ ...] I found pieces of matzos they had baked half a bag of flour under the bed, sacks of tools and that bloody rag I told you about. They had said some magic words from a Zhidy book. (115)

Collecting proofs from such a bribed men and their own officials, the political power of Black Hundreds sue the case against the Jewish man, Yakov. Then the Deputy Warden and police severally punish him, inhumanly behave and force him to confess the crime. As Grubeshov forced Yakov to confess the crime, he replies:

Confessing what your honor, if as I told you I didn't do it? I can confess to you something but I can't confess this crime. You will have to excuse me there- I am innocence. There is no evidence against me because I didn't do what you say I did. Why would I do such a thing anyway ? You are mistaken your honor. Somebody has made a serious mistake. (135)

Foucault's concern with the productivity of power is all-pervasive and two parties involve to exercise it. Such exercise in power relation produces effects on the objects. Practice with such power relation generate knowledge and false knowledge is used in the practice of power to prove their evidences. As the attorney General knows Bibikov, Collecting the proofs to save Yakov, they take the false proof from the speech, which Yakov spoke in his sleep though he hadn't. To frighten Yakov, Grubeshov says "You may think not but there is already a record of more than one confession you have made in your sleep. It is obvious that your conscience is heavily burdened, and feel some sorrow for what you done" (217).

To convince Tsar and the people from the false knowledge, Grubeshov names the witnesses and says to Yakov:

You know very well the witnesses by Marfa Golov, Nikolai Maximovitch, his daughter, general people, Prosko and the two drivers who saw you offering sweets to Zhenia and will testify in court that you chased the boy

several times in the brickyard. I shall also cite testimony by Gronfein, whom you urged as a favor to the Jewish community to bribe Marfa Vladimirovna, so she would not testify against you. By a beggar woman, who saw you sharpening the knives. We have gathered more than thirty reliable witnesses. His Majesty has read all the relevant testimony. (221-22)

In such a way, the government exercises power collecting false proofs, which generate the knowledge that Yakov murdered the Christian boy.

According to Foucault History is historicized and real history of the marginal group is not written and is not heard. When Bibikov knows that Yakov is falsely accused, then Bibikov goes to consult with the Minister of Justice. Being neglected he Plans and says to Yakov:

I went there to submit the evidence. I had already gathered, and to request that the charge against Yakov be limited, as I had already suggested to Prosecuting Attorney. I put my file of evidences on the table of the Minister, he threw it in the corner and shouted at me go out! Then if they insist on a prose caution, I may reveal my findings to the press, which could conceivably cause a scandal. I'm already planning unanonymously to give out selected information to one or two highly placed journalists as to the true state of affairs regarding the nature of the evidence against you. (168)

The power is in the hand of Black Hundreds in Tsarist regime and Jews are marginal groups and enemies of Black Hundreds so, Yakov's appeal through Bibikov is not heard. So, he plans to spread Bok's innocence, through medias.

Bibikov determines to continue this investigation to the best of his ability and powers in order to discover, if necessary publish the whole truth. Explaining why he determined to investigate the case, he says to Yakov:

My visit to you, which I decided on impulsively, is to inform you my plans of finding out the truth, so that you will not think you are without friend in the world. I know you are falsely accused. I am determined to continue this investigation to the best of my ability and powers in order to discover, and if necessary publish the whole truth. I am doing this for Russia, as well as for your sake and mine. (169)

Discourses are produced with in the real world of power and struggle and they are means to gain, maintain or subvert the existing power systems. Truth depends on who creates and maintains history or who has the power to create and perpetuate what is taken as truth. Both colonizer and colonized create their own kinds of truths. Bibikov has collected the evidences that Yokov is not the murderer and says:

My theory is that the murder was committed by Marfa Golov's gang of criminals and house-breakers in particular her blind lover Stepan Bulkin [...] The boy was grossly neglected by his mother. The boy was killed in his mother's house, Bulkin taking the leading role in beastly sacrifice. They burned the bloody rages and plunged the knife deep into the child's heart. Then Marfa herself wrote an anonymous letter suggesting that Jews

did the evil work. The original letter to the police was signed 'A Christian'. (170)

On the other hand, the government officials have also created the discourse about the murder. Collecting the reports from different sources, Grubeshov says:

Yakov enticed the boy into the stable with sweets and two or three of them pounced on him gagged his mouth, tied him hand and foot and dragged him up to his habitat. They frightened the child and began to stab him twelve stabs first then another making thirteen wounds each in the region of the heart, on the neck and on the face. They collected dripping lifeblood into bottles until he had bled him white. When Zhenia Golov's heart was drained of blood and he lay on the floor lifeless, you and the Zadik Jew picked him up and left his corpse in the cave. (136)

So, truth depends on who creates and maintains history or who has the power to perpetuate what is taken as truth. The power is in the hand of Black Hundreds and they don't accept any proofs and reports from Yakov's favor. They create truth themselves and accuse Jews to exclude them from Russia. They have power and maintain history. So, Jewish voice is not heard. Though Bibikov has investigated the murderer, his evidences are spoilt and they create their own truth that Yakov, a Jew murdered the Christian child for religious purpose.

New historicists tended toward and less fact and event orientedness because they realize that truth about what really happened could never be purely and objectively known and written. As the real event and truth is not written, the victim ones search for truth and justice. When Yakov's imprisonment is prolonged and the guards, other

prisoners beat him, regularly torture and sold him using uncouth language like “you mother fucking Jews” (94). Then Yakov determines not to confess the crime but to find truth and say’s to Samuel:

As for the law, it was invented by man, and only for the rulers but not for the innocents. What good is it to me if the Tsar has no use for it? If God can’t give me simple respect, I’ll settle for justice. Uphold the law destroy the Tsar with a thunderbolt! Free me from prison! God’s justice is for the end of time I can’t wait that long. I need justice now. (258)

The whole society has set itself against Yakov bok, a poor man with a few grains of education, but in any case innocent of the crime they accuse him of what a strange and extraordinary thing for someone life himself, a fixer who lived for a few months in a forbidden district, to have as his sworn and bitter enemies the Russian state through its officials and Tsar for no better reason than that he was a Jew.

Where is reason? Where is justice? What does Spinoza say – “It’s the purpose of the state to preserve a man’s peace and security” (274). But Russian state denies Yakov Bok, the most elemental justice and to show its fear and contempt of humankind, has chained him to the wall like animal.

### **Power as a Medium for Subjection**

Discourse of discipline positions an individual within certain limits, the individual thinks, speaks and tries to act accordingly. What determines power relation, an individual is subjected to be defined according to its ideology. When Raisl came to meet Yakov in prison, the Prosecuting Attorney did not let her in until she brought a paper of confession to sign. He told her to urge Yakov to sign it. Anyhow she had to meet him and she is allowed to meet him under that condition. Thus the power compels Yakov to sign on the confession, which included:

I, Yakov Bok, confess that I witnessed the murder of Zhenia Golov, the son of Marfa Golov, by my Jewish compatriots. They killed him on the night of March 20, 1911, upstairs in the stable in the brickyard belonging to Nikolai Maximovitch Lebedev, merchant of the Lukianovsky District.  
(291)

He wrote 'Every word is a lie' in Russian language on the line for his name. As Raisl came to meet Yakov, the guards didn't let her in. She showed him that she was Yakov's wife. She went there more than five times then the attorney got a very good chance to subject her and Yakov. So, it is the subjection of power to an individual.

Power entraps an individual in such a way that he can't escape the boundary set the discourse. The discourse entangles a man in a cyclone of the power and he himself is subjected. During Yakov's first days in the courthouse jail and accusation had seemed to him almost an irrelevancy, nothing much to do with his life or deeds.



But when he realizes that there was no reason, no one to help him and to listen him then he thinks and speaks according to the power holders. The discourse positions him within certain limits and boundaries. After the visit to the cave he had stopped thinking of relevancy, truth or even proof. There was no reason, there was only their plot against a Jew. Being born Jew means being vulnerable to history. He felt entrapped, abandoned, helpless. He had disappeared from the world and nobody he could call friend know it. He cursed history, anti-Semitism, fate and even occasionally the Jews. He cried out in his sleep, "Who will help me?" (155).

To eliminate the Jewish proofs, the reactionary government killed Bibikov, Kogin and a lawyer who were collecting the proofs to prove Yakov as an innocent Jew. But from the side of government, most of the proofs are taken from bribery and forgery. They need the style of Yakov's hand written letters to copy them so that they could show his hand written documents of conspiracy against Christians. For that, Gronfein seems as if he is Yakov's own friend. Then he convinces Yakov that he has his own lawyer who wants to prove him an innocent man. Gronfein makes Yakov write two letters to Samuel, his father-in-law and Aaron Latke, the printer. In his letter he writes:

Dear Samuel, As you predicted, I got myself into serious trouble and am now in the Kiev prison. After thirty days God knows what will happen to me. What's happened already is bad enough. I am accused of killing a Russian child, who I, swear I didn't touch. Take this letter to some Jewish journalist or may be to a sincere philanthropist if you happen to know of one. I know, it is impossible but try to help me as soon as you can. Who else can I appeal to? Yakov Bok. (161)

After getting letter, Gronfien, being a member of the government official, takes it to the Deputy Warden. They copy the letter just like Yakov's and write a confession letter. Then they compel him to sign on it when Raisl goes to meet Yakov.

Foucault's main project was to turn the vertical and hierarchical notion of power. Power for him is practiced hegemonically. It is not hierarchical following from top to bottom to dominate others. It is all pervasive and is applied everywhere. Somebody wields to constitute and practice power. Yakov too, practices his power upon Raisl. When she can't give birth a child for five years, he creates a discourse that she is barren and stops sleeping with her. Then she leaves him but she comes to meet him when she knows that he is in Kiev prison. What made her anxious and worried is that she says:

You know what bothered me most were curses and dirty names-whore, prostitute. Because I slept with you before we married. You were convinced, I was sleeping with the world. I slept with none but you until you stopped sleeping with me. As you said, I was barren, I ran every direction. I tore at my dry breasts and cursed my empty womb.

Whatever I stayed or left I was useless to you, so I decided to leave. I left in desperation to change my life. I haven't come to fight about the past but I came here to see you and to inform you, I have a baby now.

(286)

Here, Yakov has used his power over his wife Raisl. Males treat women as a commodity and their own possession. Yakov uses her in need and throws her when he doesn't. He needed wife first and weds her but he neglects her as she doesn't give birth a child.

Again, when she informs that she has a baby, he accepts her. In this way the patriarchal

society practices the power hegemonically over the females creating the discourse that females are weak and inferior so, they need males to live.

Though Yakov Bok has to stay in a damp and smelly prison cell full of lice and bugs though he is severely beaten, tortured, he wants for a trial and he doesn't confess the crime that there was underground involvement of the Jews conspiracy in Russian affairs and in the murder of Zhenia Golov. Threatening to shot dead, Grubeshov says to Yakov:

A trial will not save you nor your fellow Jews you would be better of confessing. If not we could announce your death in prison, or something of the sort and spirit you out of Russia. If you insist on the trial then, don't be surprised if bearded heads roll in the street feathers fly. Cossack steel invades the tender flesh of young Jewesses. (300)

If the government suppresses its subjects, behaves partially on the name of religion, cast and creed, then those people can't tolerate such a biasness. Then the people try to resist from a certain location in the power structure. They try to alter the prevailing power relations. Everything too much is not good. As the Tsarist regime tortures Yakov much, ill-treated and unjustly behaved, the limitation of tolerance goes beyond the control. Then the fixer thinks of catching a revolver and pushes a bullet into the rusty cylinder chamber. In his imagination, he goes in front of Tsar Nicholas II and pointing the gun at Tsar's heart Yakov say's:

I am the victim, the sufferer for my people who suffered for so long because of their religion. What will be will be. Don't expect me to beg and confess the crime that I didn't. This is also for prison, the poison, the

six daily searches. It's for Bibikov, Kogin and the lawyer whom you killed and for a lot more that I won't mention. (334)

With bloody face in anger, Yakov thinks of pressing the trigger at Tsar's heart. In this way, Yakov shoots the Tsar Nicholas II to alter the existed power which subjected him, troubled him caused insurmountable injustices and treated unjustly.

A chief concern is to specify the functioning of the social, economic and political forces and power structures that produce all forms of cultural phenomena and endow them with their social 'meanings', their 'truth', the modes of discourse in which they are discussed.

In Foucauldian concept of power, Chris Barker says, the power relationship of any society has the strong impact upon the formation of cultural formation. So, culture has to be associated with the power and hierarchy of any society. The culture of Russia during Tsarist regime was associated with the power of Black Hundreds and the Jews were forbidden to live in Kiev. In course of searching a better life Yakov reaches there by chance and being a Jew he is accused of murdering a Christian child.

The cultural materialists Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield say culture as the transformation of a social order, which exploits people on the ground of race, gender and class. The social order of the Tsarist Russia has exploited the Jews on the ground of race. If Yakov were Russian, he would be an innocent person. He is punished because of his race. To be a Jew is an everlasting curse for him. As a result, Malamud says "he was sick of their history, destiny, blood guilt" (188).

Generally cultural theorists focus on marginal culture and Raymond Williams wants to break the hierarchy of high culture and low culture. The power politics of Black Hundreds thinks Russian culture as a high culture and Jewish culture as a low culture. They have forbidden the low cultured Jews to live in their place and want to drive them away from Russia. Because of that they accused Yakov murdering a Christian child. Yakov never accepted the charge because, if he does, his whole race may get into problem. Rather, he uses his free will to gain patience and rejects the accusation so that his own Jewish race can be free of blame.

### **Power Politics, Religion and Suffering**

Yakov Bok is accused of a murder of a twelve years old Russian Boy and is taken to prison. He tries his best to define himself but no body cares to listen to his voice. He is repeatedly asked the question like “ Are you certain you did not take part yourself in this matter” (85) ? Did you do it alone? Instead of answering the question he trembles with anger. Nobody is there to support or to believe him. The power politics accuse him because of his race.

In the cell Bok is never treated well even not equally as other prisoners. He is forcefully accused, “Chained and manacled” (103). Everybody blames him, scolds him and shows a bitter hatred. He is forced to confess the crime but as he denies it, he is treated worse. They try to persuade him but he is not persuaded. Being a Jew, is his guilty. That is why he felt entrapped, abandoned and helpless. He had disappeared from the world and no body he could call friend. Nobody. The fixer berated himself for not having listened to Samuel’s advice and staying where he belonged.

There is not even a doctor to check him up in the prison. Basically the religious forces entrap him. He is not accepted by the authority and other people as an innocent person because he is a Jew. Inside the prison he has to face too much heat, foul smell since it is not cleaned for a long time. In cold season he has to tolerate chill. He is not given proper food rather poisonous food, which he rejects to eat and goes on fasting. When he demands for candle, he is punched on the face, he is not allowed to read any book. Sometimes he has to undress himself while searching his body.

The power politics of the rigid and orthodox Christian society casts him off. His condition is like rubbish to be discarded. The social treatments have stood against him. He is completely isolated and everybody looks at him with a sense of hatred. As he belongs to Jews community, he is thought to be “the born criminal” (202).

Yakov Suffers too much not because of being a murderer but being a Jew. The orthodox Christian Society entangles him. The days inside the prison are so dreadful that he cannot eat and sleep well. Always a fear of death haunts him and about this Malamud says, “All night the fixer sat huddled in the corner of the cell filled with the dread of dying. If he slept a minute, his sleep was steeped in the taste, smell, horror of dying” (149).

Because of the heart-pinched scolding, physical as well as psychological torture, the anxiety of death goes from him and “he often wished for death” (163). The other prisoners always hate him and he is not only beaten by the guards and police but also by the other prisoners. When there are lice in his head, “the prison barber doused it with kerosene” (160). He is also given poisonous food which he rejects to eat and goes on fasting. He is weary and tired.

Operation inside the prison makes him nervous because everybody is heedless towards the truth and unanimously accuse him a murderer, a criminal. He can never live a normal life inside the prison. Though he is inside the prison physically, he never gets chance to have a rest mentally. There is always a psychological fear implanted in his mind. He can't even sleep properly. But "Sleep in fear and waked in fright" (256). As the power regularly tortures him, then he thinks that death will be the end of all sufferings. He was terribly weary, hungry to rid himself of the hard chains and the devilishly freezing cell. He hoped to die quickly, to end his suffering for once and all, to get rid of all he was and had been.

God is supposed to be the creator and protector of human beings. He is thought to determine human life and release them from suffering. But when a person has to face untold grief without any cause, the belief in the existence of god is shattered. If god exists and is the supreme justice, why does an innocent person have to suffer unnecessarily? The question arises. If he exists, why doesn't he come to help the sufferer? When his father-in-law suggests him not to forget God, then Yakov out of anger says, "Who forgets whom? What do I get from him but a bang on the head and a stream of piss on my face? So what's there to be worshipful"(14)?

The orthodox Christians charge him as a religious murderer and he is punished badly. But he insists, "in fact, to tell the whole truth, I'm not a religious man, I'm a free thinker [...] a man's religion is his own business" (111).

Black Hundreds are the Christians and when a Christian child is murdered there in the cave, the Black Hundreds accuse the Jews. Because of the religion he adopted, Yakov Bok is arrested and imprisoned. The power holders want to extinct the Jews from

Russia so, they accuse Jews from the name of Yakov and he as a representative of all the Jews suffers too much. So, Yakov gets excessive suffering because of his religion and also because of the policy of power politics to drive away the Jews from Russia.

*The Fixer* ends with its ensuring conclusion that injustice, either it be of racism or any other, inevitably politicizes its victims and forces upon them the imperatives of trying to change the history through the attempt to overthrow the unjust power by force. Death is not such as a terrifying thing for him. He no longer fears of death for the sake of truth and justice. Bok, here, can be seen as a being who began his life as an accident-prone and morally neutral but now the better and obstinate man who seeks to exist with tragic dignity of new learning. In this stage of his events he happens to say, “there is no such thing as an un-political man, especially for a Jew”(257). He becomes conscious of the fact that one can not sit still and see himself destroyed. This kind of change is surely the fruit of suffering, torture caused by unjust government.

The final speech of Yakov Bok, “Where there is no fight for it, there is no freedom and justice”(333) easily clarifies that the brutal suffering which he endured in prison has made him realize his rights and has endowed him with the superpower to struggle for truth and justice.

Bok understands that his justice wholly depends on the justice of Jews. Then he speaks for the whole race and says, “I am victim, the sufferer for my poor people” (275). He imagines to destroy the reign of Tsar and free himself and his people from the unseen prison “Pointing the gun at the Tsar’s heart, Yakov pressed the trigger” (275). Jews are alive but like animals and plants not as human beings. They are suppressed, tortured.



Their justice and existence is in crisis. That is why to maintain their existence they have to destroy others. At the end, Bok expresses his revolutionary thoughts in this way:

Where there is no fight, there is no freedom. Being a communal hero he protests the existing system of Tsarist regime. What is it Spinoza says? If the state acts in ways, that are abhorrent to human nature it's the lesser evil to destroy it. Death to the anti-Semites ! Long live revolution! Long live liberty. (335)

Now, it may be said that Yakov Bok is a communal hero as he advocates for the communal Justice. He says, "You can't be one without the other that's clear enough" (275). Thus, we come to know that he speaks for the liberation of the whole race only because his individual justice depends on the Justice of the community. Unless they are free his quest for justice will be nothing more than a dream.

Anyway, Bok suffers a lot throughout his life, finds himself as an isolated one in the world when he is in strict confinement. He faces all these problems because of the choices he makes that he could sign on confession and could get release from the prison but he did not for the sake of whole Jewish justice which is prior to anything else.

#### IV. Conclusion

Malamud's *The Fixer* dramatizes the stirring portrait of injustice. The protagonist Yakov Bok searches for justice as he is accused of murdering a Russian boy for no particular reason except being a Jew. In the novel, Malamud has clearly shown that power determines truth. The political power is in the hand of Black Hundreds, the orthodox Christians, who want to drive away the Jews from Russia so, they accuse a Jewish Handyman. Though he is severely beaten, tortured and ill-treated in a dark and foul cell of the prison, he does not confess the crime even at the risk of triggering pogrom. He waits and fights against the insurmountable injustices and endures all kinds of pains, sufferings and psychological tortures for the triumph of truth and justice.

Foucault says, "Truth and meaning depend on politico-historical contexts" (17). Yakov Bok is also entrapped in the political conspiracy of Black Hundreds who easily create the truth that he is a murderer and killed a Christian boy for a religious purpose. New historicists see the history from marginal perspective. According to Foucault, "history is historicized" (84). The real history of the marginal voice is not heard. Yakov Bok's voice is marginal voice, which is not heard though it is real. From the new historicist perspective it is not the real justice so, Yakov Bok searches the truth and quests for justice.

While going through the novel, *The Fixer* we find the bitter truth that generous intentions of a decent man is frustrated by both racial and political upheavals. Yakov begins his life as a straight man attempting to find a new life. The pressure of his need of escaping the limitations of Judaism drives him to a new state forbidden for the Jews. But this attempt does not give him new achievement but provides him with disastrous result.

His life story after this situation moves in such a way that reveals his failings. These failings are caused by the racism seeking to put the Jews into final ruin. The events which occur in his life after the arrest, are not the reasonable effect of his individual action. Neither the accusation nor the severe affliction is the product of his deed. At first, he becomes puzzled but he slowly gets the understanding that there is a strong outside force working against him. He is conscious of the fact that from his birth a black horse had followed him. The black horse is something behind the curtain knitting a cobweb of misfortune for a poor Jew like Yakov Bok himself. The black horse in the novel is a symbol of racism and power politics seeking nearly mad vengeance upon the Jews and unfortunately Yakov becomes its prey.

Yakov uses every means to justify his innocence but the power politics remains unmoved by its plea. The authority is determined to push him to catastrophe because he is a Jew. He smells a further treachery of the racists and gets ready to bear the strong blow. He has no other way than accepting the affliction as he is completely entangled in the web of Christian conspirators. If he can do something is that of rejecting the charge of killing the Christian boy to save his whole Jewish race from the possible blame. He suffers to serve a large purpose of giving justice to the whole Jews. He becomes clear about the idea that if history itself falls on him in the form of racism, then there is no reason to repent about being a Jew. This kind of consciousness gives him the power to resist the unjust treatment in the prison.

The orthodox Christian power suppresses him and tortures him. The more crises he has to face, the stronger his quest becomes. For the sake of his truth and justice, he is ready to break all the rules and regulations norms and values of the society that are the

real obstacles on his way. He becomes a revolutionary and thinks of destroying the prevailing social structure and system to create a new one where justice and true existence will be guaranteed and he will not be treated worse than animals rather as a real human being. When suppression crosses the limit, he thinks of upholding the law destroying the Tsar to set himself free from the prison. He also imagines killing Tsar with pistol.

At the end when he realizes the fact that his justice depends on the justice of the whole Jewish race, he speaks for the communal justice. Without real justice, we don't have real existence and till there is suppression, there is no true justice. Eventually he understands the reality and fervently shouts slogan, in favor of liberty and demands death for Anti-Semites.

Even at the risk of triggering a pogrom, Yakov Bok, refuses to confess the crime that he did not commit and he fights and struggles to overthrow extreme injustice from the society in a dignified way. He endures all the brutal sufferings, pains and tortures in the prison and quests for the justice for himself and the whole Jewish race.

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