

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Herzog: A Hybrid Construction

By

Nutan Chaudhary

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- Nutan Chaudhary

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The Thesis entitled *Herzog: A Hybrid Construction*, by Nutan Chaudhary has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Nutan Chaudhary

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Abstract

Saul Bellow's *Herzog* is selected as a case study with theoretical basis from Bakhtin's theory of novel. *Herzog* becomes a polyphonic text that is written in hybridized form. In this novel, Bellow's representation of various ideas decentralizes the discourses that have become hegemonic and dominant in the American postwar era society. Bellow provides an opportunity for the other repressed discourses in Bakhtin's carnivalistic approach to ideas.

The example of *Herzog* clearly presents how in a polyphonic text the author cannot impose his or her ideology to the process of the dialogues. Indeed, the novel provides the notion that the ideas of the author become just one beside others and in a fixed process of give and take with them.

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I. Introduction

The research studies Bellow's wittily written novel *Herzog*. *Herzog* (1964), Saul Bellow's famous novel, is a text in which there are host of heterogeneous people and ideas. In this novel all the past and present ideas of the post war American society are present. In the text, one can find references to many, if not all, the philosophical religious, political and even scientific ideas that were prevalent in the post-war America. Many ideas of this period, and also of those of the past that have some sort of relationship with present find expression in the novel. The principal character, Moses E. Herzog, speculates on all these ideas, evaluates them for himself and communicates with them, that is, makes them a subject for dialogue. He writes letters to "everyone under the sun", dead or alive to philosophers, politicians, his friends, his family members (*Herzog* 7). He even writes a letter to god and a letter to himself. All the ideas in the novel are in dialogue form, which makes the novel an intertextual text.

Herzog is in dialogue form with the world around himself; he both gives and takes. He expresses his own attitude toward the other ideas. These attitudes are often negative but at the same time there is usually a tone of attention, involvement, and even respect behind the negations. The other ideas are more negotiated with than negated. Sometimes we may call this satirical. For example, Thomes Marshall once has said that: "what this county needs is a good five-cent cigar" (*Harper* 16). Herzog in one of his casual jottings writes: "What this country needs is a good five-cent synthesis" (*Herzog* 215). The text of *Herzog* is full of this kind of allusions, dialogues, answers. At times the dialogues become internal and the book questions itself.

Herzog can be read as an intellectual history of post-war America as it has affected a man who “all the while remained open to the external world,” and “excited with mental letters” (*Herzog* 7). The major difference between this novel and a possibly written book on the history of ideas is that in contrast to the cool, dead presentation of ideas in a book of history, here, the ideas are more alive; they show themselves in action and interaction.

Bellow (1915-2005), born in Russia in a Jewish community, migrated to America with his family. When he started his writing career from America, he had a kind of challenge to begin writing as a Jew in American literary tradition. He was among them who had to write for two different readers, first of all he had to take Jewish readers in his mind, at the same time he was writing for white readers too. It was really a complex situation for Bellow. He treats both his community and white readers fairly. Due to his dedication to writing, he has achieved a good literary height in American literary tradition and has become one of the most prominent American novelists to come to a height in the 2nd half of the 20th century.

He has produced seven successful novels. His first literary product which introduced him as a Jewish American novelist was *Dangling-Man* (1944), a successful novel which raises the issue of existence. It is somehow related to himself. In the similar way he has produced other six books *The Victim* (1947), *Adventures of Augie March* (1953), *The Day* (1956), *Henderson the Rain King* (1959), *Herzog* (1964) and *Mr. Sammler's Planet* (1970). These are his unique products. Most of his works are more than forms of entertainment, they explore issues of Jewish community. Most of his works show the ambiguous roles of religion and family. The central characters in his novels are Jewish, living in America in different spheres of life. Most of them are in limbo like position, they cannot decide what to do or

where to go, or what course of action to take. His first novel, *Dangling Man*, raises this issue very strongly. The hero, Joseph is a Dangling man who suffers from existential crisis. He has a view on religion that he has not wanted to catch at any contrivance in panic. Joseph, the mouth piece of Bellow, rather rejects religious faith. But after the publication of *Herzog* we see some gratitude of him towards god. In this way, Bellow is ambiguous in terms of religion.

In the novel *Herzog*, the hero Herzog is not a strong man capable of taking right decisions. He is not satisfied with his life and has not found any solution to life, though married twice. His position best reflects the struggle of Jewish people living in American society, he is indecisive. While "*Henderson the Rain King*" begins to focus on Bellow's intellectual quarrel with the modern social sciences, "*Herzog*" extends the critique to the entire modern philosophical tradition. The novel presents the intellectual journey of a modern man. It gives us a chaotic picture of the world as in T. S. Eliot's "*The Wasteland*".

The novel starts with the thinking of Herzog. From the very beginning of novel we can understand that he is pessimistic towards life and mentally disturbed. As he thinks: "If I am out of my mind, it's all right with me" (*Herzog* 7). This is the flashback scene of the story, the story moves forward with his mental journey as well as his physical journey. He spends much of his time writing letters he never sends. These letters are aimed at friends, family members, and famous figures. The recipients may be dead and Herzog has often never met these people. The one common threat is that Herzog is always expressing disappointment, either his own in the failings of others or their words, or apologizing for the way he has disappointed others.

When he is not satisfied with his second wife, Madeleine, he starts having an affair with Ramona, who works in a flower shop and plans to marry her to make his life more beautiful and comfortable. But he has become conscious about the case of marriage because he has been unsuccessful twice in this case; he mistreats his first wife, Daisy, and he is betrayed by his second wife, Madeleine, when she elopes with Valentine Gersbach who was his close friend. He is running on his middle age. He is the father of two and husband of two, but neither a successful husband nor a better father. He is disappointed and fails in every sphere of his life:

To his son and his daughter he was a loving but bad father. To his own parents he had been an ungrateful child. To his country, an indifferent citizen. To his brothers and his sister, an affectionate but remote.

With his friends, an egotist. With love, lazy. With brightness, dull.

With power, passive. With his own soul, evasive. (*Herzog* 11-12)

After the deception of Mady, Ramona has become his friend to share his life and problems. He thinks Mady a good mother, though she eloped with Valentine. “I don’t think Madeleine is a bad mother actually” (*Herzog* 127). But he is not strong in his decision because, in a court he knows from his friend, Simkin, about a case of trail of murdering of a child by his own mother. He is highly shocked by the case and loses trust with Mady for his daughter, June: “Do you think Madeleine is an unfit mother?” he says: “of course I think so but I hesitate to rush between the kid and mother” (*Herzog* 259). He is already distraught after receiving a letter from June’s babysitter about an incident where Valentine locked June in the car while he and Madeleine argued inside the house. So he goes to an aunt’s house and picks up an antique pistol with two bullets in it, forming a vague plan of killing Madeleine and Valentine and running off with June. But when he sees Valentine taking June’s care,

Moses' feelings are mixed, "to do or not to do". He becomes puzzled like Hamlet's confusion: "To be, or not to be, that is the question?" (*Hamlet* 278). At last he takes away his daughter driving a car, but they meet a car accident on the road. Due to car accident he is arrested by police force because he had taken unlicensed pistol. After being released from custody, he again writes letters and for the first time he is planning to send them. The novel concludes with the sentence: "At this time he had no message for any one, nothing, not a single word" (*Herzog* 416). So at last he does not get even a single word to write anything and the novel concludes without completing the scene.

This research has tried to analyze this novel from Bakhtinian perspective. Bakhtin believes that, novel is such a vast platform where various disciplines co-exist. Novel, among the literary genres, is the most problematic one. When we are concerned with epic, with tragedy, or with lyric poetry, there are some definitions available that are more or less agreed upon by different scholars and critics. Now, reading an epic we know that we are dealing with the old heroic days of a culture or a nation, or reading a lyric poem we know that we are reading the emotions of a sensitive mind. But, novel, on the other hand, is a hybrid genre. Discussions of the other genres include politics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, economics etc. But, these genres tend to be specific, they limit themselves and any discussion of them comes to be limited and one-dimensional. Novel, however, involves itself with many different subjects and looks at each subject from many different points of view. It is impossible to write a novel with just one voice and with no social surrounding. As soon as the second voice enters the novel, a different perspective is introduced, these different ideas and perspectives in the novel are in a constant process of give and take.

Actually it becomes “a field of battle for other’s voices” (Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* 89).

Bellow suggests us that we try to find explanation of problems around us with the help of one or the other philosophy or theory. But society is not as simple as one thinks it to be, it is a very complex mode and merely one genre or discipline cannot represent it clearly. So Bellow mixes them up to show the complexity of problems because no single field of knowledge can explain the complexities of the modern world and human problems in it. When a reader reads many theorists, he comes to know that every theory sees the world and human problems from its own single perspective. So it tries to show how Bellow’s novel dismantles such concepts by mixing diverse genres and disciplines.

Problems of human world are so complex and complicated that one cannot master them with the help of any such rigid domain of knowledge. This issue is aptly presented in the world of Bellow’s novel *Herzog* by not giving any authoritative position to any discipline. The research is going to clarify how the society is formulated in current days and this concept of Bellow is picturized in this novel. When the society was guided by epic like tradition, the novel opened with the new concept of the dialogic to blur the rigid ideas from reader’s mentality. But here, to prove this concept of blurring hierarchy, Bakhtinian theory of dialogism and polyphony is essential.

Mikhail Bakhtin is a prominent Russian literary scholar. Through a life-long study on the novel he propounded the idea that novel is an exceptionally unique genre in which the author often cannot give privilege to one specific idea. By studying all the Russian and European novelists, he came to know the essential difference between epic and novel. Epic is the genre in which there is one ruling and dominant ideology.

Novel, in contrast, is a genre in which there is plurality of ideas and each idea finds expression only among and in relation with other ideas. The novel does not centralize towards the single voice. It has centrifugal quality. He says that novel is the most democratic genre. Democratic comes against autocracy. In a democratic society everyone has equal right to utilize their power, no dominance remains there. Where in autocracy there is clear hierarchy between people and ruling party. So we can associate novel with democracy and epic with autocracy.

According to Bakhtin, the distinction between epic and novel is based on the distinction between dialogic literature and monologic literature. Dialogic literature presents the ideas in a relative way. The ideas have to be alive and at the same time interact with the other ideas. They are neither affirmed nor repudiated directly by the author. As a city is a place of contact between different personalities, novel, and most especially novel of ideas, is the place of contact between world views, ideologies and voices. But, on the other hand, in monologic literature the worldview of the author is the force working on the text: “the one who knows, understands and sees is in the first instance the author himself” (Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics* 82). The author is actively present there either to accept or reject one idea. The values in a monologic work are absolute, and the author takes side with the ‘good’ party. The other characters are there but simply as the defenders of the dominant values, or foes and evil. When a work is monologic: “the genuine interaction of consciousness is impossible, and thus genuine dialogue is impossible as well” (*Dostoevsky's Poetics* 81). There is no give and take between the consciousnesses. Instead dictation of one powerful and dominant idea is prevalent there. The hero cannot question them, he or she cannot choose but acts according to the code of the author. Here, Bakhtin has raised an issue of epic which come against the concept of novel and it makes us easier

to understand the idea of the novel. Epic is the monologic genre and novel is the dialogic genre. Epic is the genre of higher class where the context moves around knights, they become more dominant and the lower class people are marginalized. The dominant parts of the society are in margin but the least of the people, who are in center are ruling over the marginalized people. So, epic does not fairly treat the society. But in the novel, even poor people can be a hero. As the knight is powerful so is the poor person. So this genre is characterized as democratic genre, which always represents the contemporary world.

As it is indicated in the title, using the theories of Bakhtin on novel, that is, the intertextuality, interaction of ideas, carnivalization, and the dialogic nature of novel, there would be an examination of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*. The presence of different dissenting voices and ideas in *Herzog* makes it possible to explore this novel using a Bakhtinian theoretical tool. There are certainly similarities between Bakhtin and Bellow's outlook on the novel.

Using the theories of Bakhtin, this study attempts to show, first, the plurality of the ideas present in the novel, second, that these ideas are independent of the writer's; and if the ideology of the author is present in the novel it is not the dominant one, it is just one among the many; and finally there would be an attempt to reveal the dialogue of ideas in the novel. These ideas include: those of the writer, of the narrator, of the characters, and of the social and literary setting of the story.

This research work consists of 4 chapters: first is the introductory chapter which presents the introduction of the whole thesis. It elaborates hypothesis, introduces the writer and Bakhtin's idea regarding novel in brief. Chapter two deals with Bakhtinian concepts of novel in detail. Here, I will discuss primarily his idea of polyphony, dialogism, heteroglossia, carnivallization and few others. The third

chapter is an analysis of the text on the basis of the theoretical modality developed in the second chapter. Its focus is to prove the hypothesis of this research. The last chapter concludes the ideas and arguments developed in the preceding chapters.

II. A Survey of Bakhtin's ideas on novel: Theoretical Modality

Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin was born in Moscow and brought up in a polyglot family which forecasts his whole future affairs. He was in a situation that was plural and heterogeneous. The presence of different ideas, cultures and languages was not specific to his family. Bakhtin spent his childhood in Vilnius and Odessa which were polyglot cities. It is noteworthy that Saul Bellow also experienced a variety of cultures, languages and ideas from early childhood, the characteristic trait that he lends to Herzog.

Bakhtin gave the issue of novel an aesthetic air and discussed that novel is a privileged genre because in it the author cannot impose his ideology on his characters. Bellow has a similar conception of novel and society when he writes that "the opposites must be free to express their ideas" (*The Future of Fiction* 146). Bakhtin, with a range of aesthetic, ethical, and epistemological questions, entered the intellectual debate of his time. Being brought up in a polyglot and heterogeneous environment, he always saw a grain of truth in each formulation, each way of seeing, each answer. He found every worldview as valid as the other. Consequently, he grew interested more in the relationship between ideas than in the ideas themselves. In each idea, each utterance, he saw the presence of at least two different ideologies. This presence of various ideas is not a passive being-there; rather, there he saw an active dialogue.

Through a life-long study on the novel, Bakhtin found novel an exceptionally unique genre. Novel, as a genre, is more democratic where the author cannot give privilege to one specific idea. To make it more clear he created an essential difference between epic and novel. Epic is the genre in which there is one dominant ruling ideology. In this genre no other ideology except that of the author can find an

expression. It is the genre of upper class where the voice of lower class is dominated and so the reader cannot get the actual picture of the society. The story moves around the powerful characters but the place of shepherd or cowboy is unknown to the reader.

Novel, on the other hand, is a genre in which there is plurality of ideas and each idea finds expression only among and in relation with other ideas. So, imposition of one specific idea is impossible in the novel. Novel shows the real picture of the society to a reader. The characters presented here are equal from top to bottom. The distinction between epic and novel by Bakhtin is based on the distinction between dialogic literature and monologic literature. Dialogic literature presents the ideas in a relative way. The ideas have to be alive and act with the other ideas. They are neither affirmed nor repudiated directly by the author. The characters in the novel are presented equally from different classes of society. So, novel is a fully democratic genre. In contrary, monologic literature is the idea of autocracy, where only one ruling party is dominant to others. So, when a work is monologic, “the genuine dialogue is impossible as well” (Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics* 81). There is only one consciousness that knows what the ‘truth’ is, and this version of truth is dictated to other consciousnesses.

From Idea of Dialectic to Idea of Dialogic

Before tracing the concept of dialogic, it is essential to explore and clarify how Bakhtin was related to Hegelianism and Marxism of his period. Hegel’s view is that history develops out of the confrontation of two opposite forces. He maintains that matter and spirit are in conflict. These two forces are called thesis and antithesis and by the confrontation of these forces a resolution is achieved which is called synthesis. This synthesis is a unified whole according to Hegel. He is more concerned with the ideas and sees the world under the clash of two forces.

The idea of dialectic is also adopted by Karl Marx in his theories about the role of economics in the formation of society and culture. His theory is known as 'materialistic dialectic' but the modifications done by Marx are considered as radical and dialectical core remains the same. Marx says that the two confronting forces are the different classes of the society, they are the masters and the slaves. On one side, there are less number of people, but more powerful who are known as bourgeoisie, on the other side, there is large number of people but less powerful who are categorized as proletariat. And this process continues until the end of history. He says the mode of production determines human's life: "The mode of production in material life determines the social, political, and intellectual life processes in general" (Political Economy 626). History, according to both Hegel and Marx, is the story of gist coming to consciousness. For both, the self discovers itself and the only function of art is to make this self-realization possible.

Now, there comes another prominent thinker Bakhtin with the new idea of dialogic through novel. Bakhtin partially agrees with these theories but actually has a different view of the nature and function of art. His concept of dialogic can be read the same as dialectic without synthesis. There is no end to the tension between the opposed forces as only two, rather, there is plurality of forces. He says that the study of monologic and dialectic can't judge the society fair. Both, Hegel and Marx, agree with the conflict in the society and creates a binary opposition between two forces.

In contrast, Bakhtin does not limit his view in binary opposition in the society. He introduced the idea of dialogic, which sees the working of many different forces in the movement of history. This is a plural view, therefore, it cannot be a system. It remains open to any future knowledge. It seeks to know the events not to interpret them according to one specific ideology.

Bakhtin asserts that novel as a genre is in dialogic form which can represent the society as it is. All the entities in this world like religious, social, material are always in process, they are not composed in a frame. The things are always in struggle with each other but this conflict is unfinalizable. The concept of unfinalizability keeps a crucial meaning in the reading of dialogic novel. This term designates a complex of values central to the thinking, innovation, openness, potentiality and freedom. Unfinalizability helps to understand about Bakhtin's understanding of historicity. For him history is not history unless results are partially unexpected. He makes it more clear: "Nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future" (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* 166). The history is neither ordered nor random. And the dialogue is the process which fills life in the text and makes it more potential and the text does not become rigid and lifeless.

In contrast to Hegel's pure idea, the absolute, the final meaning, the last word, in Bakhtin's methodology there is no pure wisdom, no idea with capital 'I'. There are only wisdoms, ideas, which are dependent on each other. They are interdependent under direct and indirect influence of each other. This may seem a little bit dialectical. But it is not. In dialectical mode, there are only two opposed forces but in dialogic, many. Dialectic, quite like the monologic world of the epic, is utopian, it wants the two forces to lead to unified whole, a synthesis. Dialogic leads to a study of the different forces; it leads to epistemology: "when novel becomes the dominant genre, epistemology becomes the dominant discipline" (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination* 15). Dialectic and monologic are within the boundary, they have certain periphery from where they cannot escape: "In dialectics, we have a through that like a

fish in aquarium, knocks against the bottom and the sides and cannot swim farther or deeper. Dogmatic thought" (Bakhtin, "Toward a Methodology for the Study of the Novel" 162). Through dialectical method, the autonomous outcome comes out for which readers are already familiar with, as it is bounded on certain periphery.

What is of great significance is that while dialectic narcissistically leads to a self discovery, dialogic leads to the discovery of the other. Dialectic leads to a totalitarian system, dialogic to a democratic society. Bakhtin again makes the idea of dialogic clear:

The dialogic nature of consciousness. The dialogic nature of human life itself.... Life by its very nature dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogic: to ask questions, to need to respond, to agree, and so forth. In this dialogue a person participates wholly and through out his whole life: with his eyes, lips, hands, soul, spirit with his whole body and deeds.... ("Toward a Reworking of the Doestovsky Book" 293)

So, Bakhtin says novel is the one and only one genre that represents the society crystal-clear. He has raised the issue of dialogic in novel very strongly. He says, novel is an open, dynamic genre producing a "surplus" in which voices can still struggle with each other. He says language is not born till then, when it is not interacted between or among people. Thus, the novelistic imagination is "dialogic".

Heteroglossia

Beside dialogism, the second most important Bakhtinian term is heteroglossia. He studies the co-existence of different national languages within a single culture. It has broad roof to include many languages. Bakhtin says: "multiplicity of social

voices linked and interrelated dialogically which enters the novel through the enterplay between authorial speech..." (*Discourse in the Novel* 263).

Heteroglossia may be more important than dialogue as the logical pre-requisite of any dialogue is the presence of two or more 'voices', ideas. Multiple things merged in a single context is heteroglossia, where no single thing has authoritative position Bakhtin uses this term for the simultaneous existence of "two or more national languages" within a single cultural system (*Dialogic Imagination* 431).

Bakhtin asserts that a society is full of languages. It is not bound only on linguistic dialects but there are many ways of uttering languages. People having different ways of living standard have their own way of speaking. Class, group and generation make difference in our social life. Bakhtin further says:

Discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse toward the object; if we wholly detach ourselves from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word, from which we can learn nothing at all about the social situation of the fate of a given word in life.

(*Discourse in the Novel* 292)

Heteroglossia is the place where many languages are borrowed from different places. It is like a salad dish. Bakhtin says: "Languages throw light on each other; one language can, after all see itself only in the light of another language" ("Epic and Novel" 843). To know about itself, outsidersness of another language is necessary. To make this heteroglossic idea of language more clear, he takes reference from Gallilio. Like the earth, language is a sole planet among others:

The novel is the expression of a Galilean perception of language,....The novel begins by presuming a verbal and semantic decentering of the ideological world, a certain linguistic homelessness

of literary consciousness, which no longer possesses a sacrosanct and unitary linguistic medium for containing ideological thought....

(*Discourse* 366-67)

When there is a variety of different languages, then any language finds meaning only in its relation to other 'languages'. So, the meaning comes only with the relation to other language. The meaning is not absolute, it is relative: "At any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions....that will insure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different then it would have under any other condition..." (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination* 428).

Through the mouth of Volosinov, he says that we do not learn native language through dictionaries or grammar even if we do not care the rules and regulation. So, Bakhtin says language is always dialogic and funneling down the language to any linguistic category is misinterpretation of language.

Many Centers in a Text

Bakhtin makes his view more clear presenting another concept, 'centrifugal'. This idea stands against structuralists who view text having a distinct centre. Bakhtin stands against them and associates himself with the philosophers who are against center or who are turning toward poststructuralist idea like that of Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes,, Michel Foucault , Lyotard and a host of other philosophers and theoreticians.

Deconstruction is one of the most distinguished branches of postmodernism. According to Derrida, who is the propounder of theory of deconstruction, there is no center of meaning for a text. The text may produce an infinite number of meanings. A text finds its life as soon as it is produced and in an open and boundless way it

moves and finds meaning. This is the feature of novel that Bakhtin wants to prove. But Bakhtin is not as radical as Derrida. Though his idea is closer to Derrida's.

Derrida considers no end to the production of meaning of a text. He is against the intention of the author and maintains that a text at times produces meanings that are against the intended meaning. But for Bakhtin signs or texts have some specific meanings, but these meanings are determined in the context of the text. The intended meaning of the author, in a Bakhtinian approach, is one among the many possible meanings that a context may allow. So, the intended meanings of the text are many.

According to Bakhtin, a text is many centered, the center differs as context differs. So, the center of the text should be searched relatively, contextually. According to Roland Barthes, the other deconstructionist, the author is gone or he/she is dead. The text becomes the author of itself; the text writes itself. But Bakhtin neither kills the author, nor gives him or her an absolute position. On the one hand, the author has written the text, he or she has chosen the word and the characters of the novel. To this extent the author may be seen as an absolute force behind the text. But Bakhtin is the one who could see some other working forces as well. The narrator as the one who has his or her own specific worldview is another force. The character with all their difference in attitude with each other, with the narrator and with the author are the other forces in determining the structure of the meaning of the text. For Bakhtin everyone in the text participates in the dialogue and he/she can share equally in the text.

For Bakhtin, novel is a privileged genre, not because it is associated with realism, nor that it can represent things as they are better than the classical genres, but because the novel establishes a complex set of ideological, philosophical, and political relationships between the author, the narrators and the characters. In the classical

genre of epic, these three, together with the readers; do not have any free relationship with each other. To Bakhtin the idea of an identity absolutely free from the others is a false one that is propagated by those who are in power in the society and the novel affirms the plurality and essential difference between the identities and ideas of the people. In a Bakhtinian approach it is impossible for two persons to have the same identical identity \ ideology.

Despite living in a more authoritarian society than Derrida, Bakhtin does not fundamentally reject the possibility of an identity. He considers identity as a relative one. Indeed these two approaches can be compared to the two approaches in the contemporary physics. The dialogism of Bakhtin is very similar to the relativity Theory of Albert Einstein. Actually he was familiar with the works of Einstein. Not only that, he even borrowed one of his key terminology, the concept of 'chronotope', from the physics of Einstein. In this theory he has claimed that it is impossible to measure the absolute motion of anything. We can find the motion of anything relatively.

Einstein argues that the motion of everything is affected by time and space. The earth itself is moving in its own way and the time is going ahead with the speed of mili - second. So that the motion is not absolute and to find it we have to study relatively with time and space. So is the view of Bakhtin, when a novel truly represents the society, the society is not constant, everything is changeable in the society. Now, the meaning does not come out truly unless it is studied relatively with the incidents of the society. The closer we go to relative study, the better result comes out from the text.

Bakhtin follows the idea of chronotope coined by Einstein to make his idea of novel more clear. He suggests the readers not to search the absolute meaning from

the text. The meaning of the text is based on the theory of relativity. He introduced the term into literary genres in a metaphorical sense. The meanings of a text are plural but not indeterminate when a reader opens the text. The meaning in the text is not readymade, the thing is that context determinates the meaning.

Bakhtin novelizes and carnivalizes the centers of power. The only way to fight against any authoritarian center, in Bakhtin's strategy, is to pluralize it. He praises the novel 'as an anticanonical genre'. The novel, for him, is privileged because it works against any totalitarian system, whether social or literary. It is the genre that decanonizes all the ideas that are present in the society and represents them in a new form, so that no discourse, no ideology can find any superiority over the others. Novel and most specially, polyphonic novel, is that unique form in which the author and his discourse cannot be the totalitarian of the text. He or she is neither excluded from the text, nor is the dominating voice of the text, rather, the author is present in the dialogues of the text. The polyphonic novel does not have one specific ruling ideology, there are many ideologies present there. Besides, they are not there in a monadic, atomized way, but they are in a constant process of reciprocity with each other.

Bakhtin gives stress that a novel achieves the height of its success when the languages are dialogized and heterologized. The language should interact as well as merge within a single text for fully developed novel. Bakhtin focuses on the hybridity of language in novel.

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types and a diversity of individual voices. In a novel, a language becomes meaningful with the support of another language. It is a prosaic text but in verse language is used in compact form. The text is bound in limited words and the reader has to take out meaning controlling

himself within compact form of language in verse. So, the outcome of real picture is almost impossible from verse. But in novel, prosaic style is used, where the author can express his view openly. Bakhtin takes novel not only as a complex form of thinking, but also a great achievement in the history of literature. It is an open ended text in terms of language and no language enjoys absolute privilege in the 'eyes of novel': "An image of language may be structure only from the point of view of another language which is (temporarily) taken as a norm" (*Discourse* 359). In a novel different categories of languages are used. So many languages from different contexts can work together in the single text. In the novel *Herzog*, the author has used many languages: French, Irish, and Italian. So, language is another feature of novel which helps to prove it as a text truly representing the society.

Bakhtin maintains that when novel becomes a dominant genre, the other genres become 'novelized': "the novelization of the other genres does not imply their subjection to an alien generic canon; on the contrary, novelization implies their liberation from all that serves as a brake in their unique development" (*Dialogic Imagination* 63). In the process of novelization, the other genres assimilate the dialogic approach of the novel. So the epic becomes more relative in point of view, and poetry becomes more polyphonic.

The concept of prosaic presents the thing as it is and to take the concept of prosaic in this research is more comprehensible. It can be taken as opposing the concept of 'poetic'. Poetic is the concept that comes beyond reality. It is more imaginary genre which uses superficial language to make it more lovely and so it goes beyond the boundary of the society. The poetic concept does not give us the true photograph of the social life. Bakhtin opposes the poetic and emphasizes on 'prosaic'. He privileges prose in general and novel in particular. It presents the

activities of everyday life very commonly. Novel is the only one medium to conceive the interrelationship of everything around us for Bakhtin.

Carnivalistic Approach

One of the main elements in any culture that leads to the production of polyphonic dialogic texts according to Bakhtin is laughter. The term carnival represents the world of humour that dismantles any sort of hierarchy. Bakhtin focuses on it to break the tendency of superiority which is rooted in the society. In an carnivalistic world, everything, every activity overlaps the social norms and values. So, it has the remarkable power of making things upside down, inside out, look into the center and doubt it, lay it bare and expose it. He says, the crucial anti-authoritative element in any culture that leads to the production of dialogic text is laughter.

Laughter for Bakhtin is very important as it ridicules all those who claim some sort of superiority and power over the others. It is anti-authority, anticanonical:

Laughter has the remarkable power of making an object come up close where one can finger it familiarly on all sides. Laughter demolishes fear and piety, before an object, making of it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it.... (*Dialogic Imagination* 23)

In a sense laughter can be considered as more fundamental and more essential than dialogue. It is a centrifugal element which breaks the centre and hierarchy and creates the society of equal level. It demolishes all the things that have some sort of power and have found an established position. Laughter brings down the established institutions into the 'crude zone of contact' with everyday reality. Without this bringing down of the powerful elements in culture true dialogue is impossible.

Bakhtin uses the term carnivalization to explain the incorporation of carnival into social life and the effect on literature and language; It is the unofficial truth which is beyond the truth and which is officially associated to our daily life. According to J.A. Cudden the term 'carnival' is taken from the Latin *carnemlevare* which means 'to put away flesh'. The carnival is an event in which all the established norms and institutions of the society are satirized. In it, the people with all their diversities and plurality find power, and the king, along with the other canonical institution of the society, becomes just one among the many. Even the rogues, clowns, and the fool become the privileged figures of this cultural event and laugh at everything and satirize everything including themselves. Therefore, there would be no point of authority for one specific person or ideology. The most important thing is that nobody escapes from mocking. The context of nobody represents everyone in the dismantling of hierarchy:

The suspension of all hierarchical precedence during the carnivals was of particular importance....all were considered equal during the carnival. The human relations were not only a fruit of imagination, they were experienced. The utopian ideal and the realistic merged in this carnival experience, unique of its kind. (*Rabelais and His World* 10)

In carnival culture people are not tied with official rules, they can satirize every authority, everyone from top to bottom are brought to the ground level. In this event people experience the things in their own way, without the need for a socially higher rank to teach them how to see. Actually, they dismantle the logic of the ruling system, the dominant discourse. Bakhtin traces novel with the spirit of carnival. As carnival plays a vital role in the society to dismantle the hierarchy through culture, he

uses the weapon of novel to the same task in the area of literature. It has close relationship with novel, which rejects all the institutional ways of knowledge and begins to experience the things in its own 'novel' way.

In a Foucaultian approach, carnival and all the other centrifugal forces in culture are more like a licensed fool. Foucault argued: "Where there is power, there is resistance"(Smart 77). To break the barrier of authority he supports the concept of carnivalesque approach. He is also against the dominance of power.

Actually, what Bakhtin is searching for is a real utopia, and he saw this in novel. Bakhtin wants to establish an ideal world through novel where the world becomes equal everywhere without any dominance and hierarchy. Novel, having its roots in the way of the people, in plurality, and in dialogue, can provide a realistic space in which no institution is overcapitalized. The works of the contemporary Jewish novelist, Saul Bellow, are of exceptional merit, so he is theoretically very similar to Bakhtin. His popular novel, *Herzog*, can be read as a dialogic text. Being a novel of ideas, a plurality of ideas are presented here. This makes it worth reading in the mirror of Bakhtin's theories.

III. Herzog: A Hybrid Construction

Introduction

Bellow is a “hybrid genius” as M. F. Schulz calls him. The characters of Herzog are from everywhere in the world. Most of the characters are presented as “international”. Moses Elkaneh Herzog, the title character, is a cosmopolitan figure. His last name is a German word and his first and middle names show his Jewish background. Herzog, while in Europe to overcome his mental depression, “made a cultural tour for Narragans Corporation, lecturing in Copenhagen, Warsaw, Cracow, Berlin, Belgrade, Istanbul, and Jerusalem” (*Herzog* 14). He is more than familiar with these places, each one of these cities is somehow related to his life: Jerusalem as “the dwelling of the Multitude”(189). For Bellow the world is very much complex and plural, which in turn, makes his novels polyphonic.

The text of *Herzog* possesses numerous ideas. Bellow is successful in presenting a dialogue of ideas in this novel. The protagonist as well as other characters help to bring the idea of dialogue to the readers. The novel moves forward with the central character, Herzog’s, mental journey to physical. He suffers from his own internal struggle. From the very beginning of the novel we become aware that the novel moves around his internal journey: “If I am out of my mind, it’s all right with me, thought Moses Herzog” (*Herzog* 7). Although he is suffering mentally, he is hopeful and becomes optimistic in his struggle. He has gathered a strong will to live in the complex society.

The struggles of the individuals in *Herzog* are neither purely inner nor the community and environment are given an irrational and confused voice in his fiction to challenge the hero. The voices of the other consciousnesses are as valid and convincing as the voice of the hero. He clarifies that however the hero may struggle

in the society it is not distinguished geographically, but his struggle is societal. The protagonist of the novel is always in dilemma in deciding what to do. So varieties of thinking come in his mind at the same time. Letter writing is his main occupation to address various personalities from different field of the world to calm himself. Only these letters can empathize him, and he starts his mental journey:

He had fallen under a spell and was writing letters to everyone under the sun. He was so stirred by these letters that from the end of June, he moved from place to place with a valise full of papers. He wrote endlessly, fanatically, to the newspapers, to people in public life, to friends and relatives and at last to the dead his own obscure dead, and finally the famous dead. (*Herzog* 7)

It shows his conflicting mind and the complexity of human being to sustain in the society.

Bellow's adoption and modification of naturalist tradition is important. But his view is opposite to the naturalists. To him the struggle of the mind is the issue, but especially in the case of Herzog, he sees no tragedy in this struggle as the naturalists did. The struggles are rather comic. In an interview with Gordon Harper, he calls Herzog as showing: "the comic impossibility of arriving at a synthesis that can satisfy modern demands" (Harper 16). To him the struggle is neither rural, nor urban, but civil. Naturalists were interested in the study of the life of an individual in communities. But they failed to recognize the full, plural nature of reality. Relying on the scientific theories of Darwin and Marx, the naturalists try to see the struggle of the individual either with a crude, blind environment, or with his or her own dark psychological forces. Both Marx and Darwin have narrow definition of the society

and see it from a single perspective. Bellow's objection of these thinkers is that they had tried to define the society partially.

The characters of the early novels of Bellow are either victims to the forces beyond their control, or are cut off from the society. It is only with *Augie March* that the Bellowian character begins his free adventure in the world of environment. The voice of Augie is a voice against the other, voices not among and beside them. Herzog's voice can also be considered as diametrically opposed to other voices in the text, often he "deals with ideas in negative fashion" (Harper 17). But as compared with Augie's treatment of the other ideas, Herzog's is more affirmative. He has a sideward glance toward the other ideas, to use a Bakhtinian term. Herzog communicates with everybody who bears some sort of relevance to his situation, quoting the other ideas in his letters.

For writer such as Hardy, a binary world view works and is observed with the struggle of the individual against a faceless world. In his early works, Bellow had a similar vision of the world, but in *Herzog* the relationship between the hero and his world is not based on a tragic, naturalistic, and deterministic worldview. Bellow's vision of the world in his later novels is plural and not binary. He sees the work of many institutions in the world that are equally valid.

In the world of *Herzog*, ideas are neither presented as immaculate and perfect as they are to Romantics, nor one idea is chosen as superior to other ideas. Herzog is in struggle with his society and with its dominant ideas, but at the same time he is deeply related to them. He cannot cut or ignore his ties with the people of the city. He is fighting with society for survival and at the same time his survival depends on his occupancy in a society. City is a source of evil, but Bellow believes that it

provides the only site for contesting and winning over the evil. Only the plural environment of a city can provide a criticism of the established ideas.

In an interview with Gordon Harper, Bellow comments on the novelists that they are wrong to put an interpretation of history at the base of their artistic creation. He does not like to present an Idea with an overcapitalized 'I' at the base of his artistic creation. He objects that whatever the novelists create in their art does not cover the society, the culture in its true way. So he suggests them to trust their own sense of life: "It is better that the novelist should trust his own sense of life, less ambitious, more likely to tell the truth" (Harper 18). Perhaps this is why Bellow's writings have always been accused as being anti-intellectual. Answering the prevalent criticism of his world as anti-intellectual he maintains: "when people complain of lack of ideas in novels, they mean that they do not find familiar ideas, fashionable ideas. Ideas outside the 'canon' they don't recognize" (Harper 17).

People or readers may think that Bellow is lacking something in his idea but they are unknown that he is the writer who is trying to present the actual figure of the society to the readers. The writings of Bellow, especially those written after *The Adventures of Augie March*, are crowded with so many equally valid voices that it is impossible to distinguish the voice of Bellow from the other voices. So, *Herzog* is the text which gives a different taste from traditional autonomous taste. Bellow's novel, *Herzog*, belongs to another group of authors who are aware of the infinite diversity of ideas and of reality.

Bellow's idea of Polyphony

The discourse in *Herzog* is the sum total of all the discourses that are present at the American society of the post-war era. Its mixture of discourses and genres is an attack on the monologic interpretations of man and history. The sense of doubt and

uncertainty is created in the reader regarding the narrator and ultimately Bellow's sense of self and identity. Through creating a variety of different but equally valid voices, Bellow wants to challenge the tyranny and hegemony of the institutionalized discourses prevalent in his society. In *Herzog* these are attempts not to present one discourse as superior to the other.

In a polyphonic work such as *Herzog*, the ideas are not presented in an evolutionary way. There is no linear succession of ideas in it. The past is as alive and active as the present. All the voices are there simultaneously. The voices of the historical past of the western culture, of his own past, of his father and friends coexists in the present time of the novel. The ideas of the past are alive and are juxtaposed with each other and with those of the present. The novel can be read as a living museum of the literary traditions and all of these contribute in making this novel as a hybrid genre. And the final silence of the story suggests the impossibility of coming to a synthesis for all these theses. This is the strategy that Bellow acquired at Dostoevsky's knee who "strives to organize all available meaningful material, all material of reality, in one time frame, in the form of a dramatic juxtaposition" (Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics* 28).

This statement is exactly true for the author of *Herzog*. Reality to Bellow is a hybrid of different voices and images, as literature is a hybrid of many genres, and history a hybrid of many discourses, and man a hybrid of many psychological traits. These different layers of reality are at times contradictory, but they do not cancel out each other dialectically, neither do they merge with each other.

Bellow's breaking of authority

Herzog is a mixture of a variety of genres and discourses. Novel, to Bakhtin, is more than just one genre among the others: "it squeezes some genres and

incorporates others into its own peculiar structure” (*Dialogic Imagination* 5). When simultaneously a variety of different genres are present in one text, no genre can claim itself to be hierarchically higher than the other. The coexistence of a variety of different ‘high’ and ‘low’ genres in *Herzog* makes this novel a hybrid construction. So *Herzog* is the umbrella text where different literary traditions: the revenge tragedy, triangular of love, epistolary tradition, confessional writing, nursery rhyme all the things are included in the same text to make it a hybrid one. Bellow has given the equal position to epic, which represents the upper class, and to prose, which represents the common class in the novel. It is the strong point to apply many genres in a same ground to show the equality, for example, the journey to underground, which is an epic convention, is inserted into this novel:

...he walked the underground tunnel of shops—flowers, cutlery, whisky, doughnuts and grilled sausages, the waxy chill of the orangeade. Laborious he climbed into the light-filled vault of the station, the great windows dustily diving the autumn sun—the stoop-shouldered sun of the garment district. (*Herzog* 131)

The scenario of underground tunnel represents the world of epic. *Herzog* is very much like the hero of an epic who experiences the world of Hades. At the same time other genres are at work to dismantle the possible hegemony of the genre of the epic. Bakhtin categorizes them under the broad heading of everyday genre. He does not negate epic from his world because epic also partially represents the society which talks about upper class. His disagreement with epic is only on neglecting the marginalized people who do not get any place in epic. He only tries to dismantle the hierarchy and provide equal position to non-powerful classes at the same ground. In the novel *Herzog*, Aleck, a minor character with whom *Herzog* is acquainted in a

court, tells the judge: “Your authority and my degeneracy are one and the same” (236). This has the effect of dismantling the authority of the established social institutions and giving a marginal voice as that of Aleck a validity equal to that of the canonical voice of the judge: “So this bruised, dyed Aleck also had an idea” (236).

The different discourses that are present in *Herzog* have some relation with each other, the way the genres are related to each other. As in Melville’s *Moby-Dick* where the narrator approaches the whale through different discourses, *Herzog* approaches his problem through different discourses. These discourses can be divided into philosophical, religious, scientific, poetic, legal, political and psychological. Very much like many genres being inserted into *Herzog*, multiple discourses are inserted into it. Bellow makes the central character of his novel an intellectual to make the insertion of a variety of discourses possible. *Herzog* is a man interested and actually involved with many different discourses. One of these discourses is psychoanalysis. *Herzog* asks one of the psychiatrists to write for him the signs of a paranoid personality: “I took a list of the traits of paranoia from a psychiatrist recently... I asked him to jot them down for me. It might aid my understandings, I thought” (*Herzog* 83).

In the mind of *Herzog* no discourse can exist free from others. He defines man as “a relating animal”, who relates everything with everything (272). Sometimes this business of relating becomes comic, but Bellow is serious about his comedies. *Herzog* subverts every discourse of the contemporary American culture that may have a higher position. He carnivalizes the intellectual scene of the American culture.

The juxtaposition of diverse discourses from psychiatry, religion, and history make all discourses contain some fragments of truth. Even the canonical discourse becomes just one discourse beside the others. *Herzog*’s comic tone makes it possible

that no idea, those of the author, of the narrator, of the characters, or the canonical ideas of the society could find hegemony in the text over the other ideas.

Undoubtedly, carnivalization is the most radical form of dismantling the authority of the canonical discourse. The author does not have authority to impose his individual intentions on the text. So, dismantling the ideas or decentralization of the ideas is one of the consequences of carnivalization. All the events in the novel are presented not in vertical way rather in horizontal way. The vertical way creates hierarchy in system and it creates binary opposition. To subvert the binary opposition, the system should flow horizontally where the aspects from different perspectives can be included which can be seen in the particular novel: “without protest, he laid down his money, his note-books, pens, the scrap of handkerchief, his pocket comb, and his keys” (*Herzog* 356). This, in turn, makes the novel neither a genre among the other genres, nor the result of a canonical idea. It is rather a mixture of a carnivalized plurality of genres, discourses, and ideas that exist simultaneously and horizontally in the present moment of the novel.

Bellow sees that Nietzsche’s thinking has established the single authority in the society. Nietzsche in his book “*Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883-1892)”, claims that God is no more, but his stand is, there is a superman who is in the center, his rejection of the authority of God is considerable but Bellow’s disagreement with Nietzsche is on creating the center for superman. Because creating a center is to create binary opposition:

I don’t agree with Nietzsche that Jesus made the whole world sick, infected it with his slave morality. But Nietzsche himself had a Christian view of history, seeing the present moment always as some crisis, some fall from classical greatness, some corruption or evil to be

saved from. I call that Christian. And Madeleine has it, all right. To same extent many of us do. Think we have to recover from some poison, need saving, ransoming. Madeleine wants a savior, and for her I'm no savior. (*Herzog* 71)

So, Nietzsche's view does not help Bellow to create equality in the dialogic world. For Bellow society is not guided by the single authority, it is one of the others but not the final one. He disagrees with the idea of superman conceptualized by Nietzsche and suggests not to take it as a superior one. Nietzsche's philosophy only moves around Dionysianism and Apollonianism, he talks only about those gods and nothing more. Bellow through his protagonist of *Herzog* suggests the readers not to accept him blindly but to judge critically building up the concept of dialogic in the mind.

Herzog's letter writing process itself is a factor of the dialogic world as it is also a genre which is incorporated in the text. Herzog addresses many personalities within a single letter which helps to support the idea:

Dear Wanda, Dewar Zinka, Dear Libbie, Dear Ramona, Dear Sono, I need help in the worst way. I am afraid of falling apart. Dear Edvig, the fact is that madness also has been denied me. I don't know why I should write to you at all. Dear Mr. President, Internal Revenue regulations will turn us into a nation of bookkeepers. The life of every citizen is becoming a business. This, it seems to me is one of the worst interpretations of the meaning of human life history has ever seen.

Man's life is not a business. (*Herzog* 19)

The personalities, addressed in the letter represent different field. They do not concern for single perspective. In the letter, psychological problems are addressed to the doctor and the national issues are raised to the president. So, we become aware

that people from different class, personalities from different society can be grasped in a single place which represents the world of diversity.

Bellow presents a technique of studying the characters from different perspectives. This helps to evoke the autonomous techniques of ancient tradition. When a reader sits to observe the idea from the text he is almost familiar with the idea presented by the author in ancient tradition. But Bellow wants to destroy the tradition and establish the new one based on dialogism: “Herzog himself is reading *Herzog*. He reflects upon himself as he would upon a character” (276). Herzog’s reading of himself is not a unified and homogenous reading from one single point of view. He sees himself through different eyes. We see here the character himself is observing the text as a reader. As an example, while writing a letter, he remembers his visit to Simkin. Instantly, he begins to read himself through the eyes of Simkin: “Though Simkin was a clever lawyer, very rich, he respected Herzog. He had a weakness for confused high-minded people, for people with moral impulses like Moses” (*Herzog* 35).

Herzog as a Dialogic Character

Herzog is not a hero in the traditional sense of it. James M. Mellard calls him “a hero of consciousness” and asserts: “In contrast to the popular heroes.... the cowboy, the detective, the spy, the adventurer, even the lover.... Herzog plays out his role not in the realm of action but in the realm of consciousness” (90).

Herzog is the hero maintaining multiple of irresolvable dialogues in the realm of consciousness. Mellard is aware of this fact, but looking at the novel from another perspective, he comes to a different conclusion: “there is a certain irresolvable equivocation in Herzog’s position, for, all the while he studies the patterns and

meanings of history, he believes that any answer he arrives at shall necessarily be partial incomplete” (87).

Mellard argues that Herzog certainly is not traditional historicist, but arriving at a kind of existential historicism. Herzog is “ a historian of the contemporary mode” (86). However, dialogic rationality is the term that can describe the mentality of Herzog better. Dialogic reason sees all the other voices and ideas as existing in the present moment of novel, constructing the novel through the process of dialogue. The actions of Herzog are dialogic and he is a hero of dialogue. His book *Romanticism and Christianity* is an attempt to make a dialogue between the past and the present:

His thesis had been influential and was translated into French and German. His early book, not much noticed when it was published, was now on many reading lists, and the younger generations of historians accepted it as a model of the new sort of history, “history that interests us”—personal, *engagee*—and looks at the past with an intense need for contemporary relevance. (*Herzog* 12-13)

Herzog’s decision is motivated into his rationality. When consciousness overlaps, he becomes more rational. He is the master of experience and not the slave of memory. He is really a great hero who knows that he knows nothing and he accepts his errors and weaknesses. Every decision he makes are conscious:

He groped, and found what he was looking for—Father Herzog’s pistol... He had a right to kill them. They would even know why they were dying; no explanation necessary....He was sweating violently, his shirt wet and cold under his arms.....His left hand touched the gun enclosed in the roll of rubles. He might have shot Gersbach as the methodically salted the yellow sponge rectangle with cleansing

powder. There were two bullets in the chamber.... But they would stay there. Herzog clearly recognized that very softly he stepped down from his perch, and passed without sound through the yard again....

Firing this pistol was nothing but a thought. (*Herzog* 309-315)

His burning mind does not move forward for attacking but rather steps back and his heart sympathizes his thinking of murdering, deciding not to point with the pistol. Although, Herzog violently wanted to finish both, Valentine and Madeleine, but when he reaches near them, his mind is guided by his morality and decides not to kill them but leaves them alive. He is aware about Valentine who has seized his happiness of family and wrecked his life, but his morality stopped him from killing them. His mind is guided by social norms and he represents a true hero of society. So, Herzog is a hero of consciousness and is maintaining a multiple irresolvable dialogues in the realm of consciousness.

Herzog heroically does not totally reject other ideology. His heroism lies in the fact that he assimilates the strong points of each group and like an architect, builds his vision of the world using the other's most efficient world views. In the traditional sense, he has no heroic quality like that of an epic hero being smart physically brave, having courage to take revenge. But here Bellow has broken the traditional technique presenting a hero with dialogic character. Herzog is not so brave as to avenge his suffering. He is suffering during his life due to many factors and so he is mentally unwell. Neither he is a successful husband nor has continued his professional life. Still he is the hero who has represented the world of dialogues. Through this novel, Bellow has claimed that a hero should have dialogic features. Though he is a renowned professor who has satisfied hundreds of students but he is a failure husband

who could not satisfied both of his wives. He is not so bold to tackle the problems of his life:

Resuming his self-examination, he admitted that he had been a bad husband—twice. To his son and his daughter he was a loving but bad father. To his own parents he had been an ungrateful child. To his country, an indifferent citizen. To his brothers and his sister, affectionate but remote. With his friends, an egotist. With love lazy. With brightness, dull. With power, passive. With his own soul, evasive. (*Herzog* 11-12)

When he is not satisfied with the society and cannot revolt against it, he struggles with himself :

What a catalogue of errors ! Take his sexual struggles, for instance. Completely wrong. Herzog, going to brew himself some coffee, blushed as he measured the water in the graduate cup. It's the hysterical individual who allows his life to be polarized by simple extreme antithesis like strength-weakness, potency-impotence, health-sickness. He feels challenged but unable to struggle with social injustice, too weak, so he struggles with women, with children, with his 'unhappiness'. (*Herzog* 255)

Though Herzog does not accept injustice in the society, he looms around the trivialities like women and children. He is helpless from his side because he is not bold to give justice to the society rather he kicks his dissatisfaction within himself. He knows the worm of faithlessness in the society destroys its strength.

Herzog is not an isolated consciousness, but a mind in relation to others, “a relating animal who is sometimes sentenced to relationship” (*Herzog* 268). What

distinguishes him from many other characters of the genre is his unique awareness of this fact. He says to Asphalter, his friend who endangered his life to save a monkey, “I really believe that brotherhood is what makes a man human. When preachers of dread tell you that others only distract you from metaphysical freedom then you must turn away from them” (*Herzog* 280). So, Herzog is a hero of dialogue because he maintains a dialogue even with the preachers of dread, as well as with all the other monologic constituents of the western culture, “As I gave up from my coffin at first I can keep my attention on my death, and on my relations with the living, and then other things come in—every time” (*Herzog* 277).

Being a dialogic hero, his activities are motivated towards dialogic actions. His writing of Ph. D. thesis is an attempt to make a dialogue between the past and present. His thesis has captured the society of ancient period and the contemporary. Herzog is presented as an author himself. He, in his research of Ph. D., has incorporated both previous and the contemporary political society of England and France:

He had made a brilliant start in his Ph. D. thesis—The state of Nature in 17th and 18th century English and French political Philosophy. He had to his credit also several articles and a book, Romanticism and Christianity. On the strength of his early successes he had never had difficulty in finding jobs and obtaining research grants. (*Herzog* 11)

So the research is an attempt to make a dialogue study of different societies of different periods. So his philosophy has been translated into many more language:

His thesis had been influential and was translated into French and German. His early book, not much noticed when it was published, was now on many reading lists, and the younger generation of historians

accepted it as a model of the new sort of history, “history that intersects us”. (*Herzog* 12-13)

His family life is not running in a good way, but in contrast, his academic life has a good reputation. He has a height of respect in the society and is honorable but his satisfaction in family is broken down. *Herzog* represents the true picture of society. His story shows the picture of our society which we are facing in our daily life. A man cannot do everything from everything. He/she has to compromise from something in his/her whole life. This is not the perfect world where people can live perfectly, they have to struggle for their survival. Sandor Himmelstein is one of the characters in this novel who is situated diametrically in an opposed point to *Herzog*. He believes, “Facts are nasty” (*Herzog* 109). He thinks that the things which become true are unpleasant. But the fact from what *Herzog* is suffering is not upsetting. He is the figure who does not hesitate to take the weakness easily. He accused himself for disturbing the homely environment of his family. He takes the facts positively: “I couldn’t take care of my wife, poor fish. He took care of her. I wasn’t fit to bring up my own daughter. He has to do it for me, out of friendship, out of pity and sheer greatness of soul. He even agrees that Madeleine is a psychopath” (*Herzog* 240). *Herzog* has presented the example of dialogicality in the society. He has the understanding of bitter reality of human life. But Sandor is the character who takes the facts bitterly. So *Herzog* describes him as “fierce dwarf with protruding teeth and deep lines in his face” (*Herzog* 109). *Herzog* is momentarily angry with himself for asking help from this hunchback lawyer. At the same time, he imagines Himmelstein as a man who could “be attractive, too generous, convivial, even witty” (*Herzog* 109). This is the ability to juxtapose the character traits of one person to make a dialogue between the different layers of none specific consciousness. It is the matter of

agreement and disagreement. On one side Herzog is disinterested with Sandor whose interpretation of reality is covered with loosen mentality and at the same time his positive attitude comes for him on the same ground. Though Sandor calls the social realities as nasty thing, Herzog takes him as a generous one. It signifies the dialogic reality of society. In the world of dialogue different things can be seen from different perspectives. In a dialogic world juxtaposition of the things are possible so we cannot say one thing is dominant and others are marginalized. It shows that dialogic world is a king of democratic society where people are free to agree and disagree with anything and choose their right choice.

Bellow asserts that opposite things happen in a same society which can be seen through the eyes of Herzog. He is living in a society where he faced people of opposite nature. In one side, there is a class of people who can kill and squeeze their children's neck for their own selfishness such as the man which lawyer Himmelstein describes to him: "A young couple, a woman and the man she had been living with in a slum hotel, uptown, were being tried for the murder of her son, a child of three" (*Herzog* 288). But he can see person like Lucas Asphalter in the same society who is upset in the death of his pet monkey, which keeps value in his life. So, Herzog appreciates him because he endangered his own life to save a life of monkey. Bellow talks about the humanity in human life, humanity should lie there where life is. The concept of humanity is one of the features of dialogic society because it guides a man to the world of human being.

The consciousness of Herzog is located at the point of contact between many world views that are sometimes even contradictory. This, as showed, makes Herzog a dialogic character. The very first sentence of Herzog shows how much the other's ideas are active in his mind: "If I am out of my mind, it's all right with me, thought

Moses Herzog” (*Herzog* 7). This idea, that he is out of his mind is the subject of Herzog’s mental dialogue. This first sentence of the novel is a free location for a contact between two ideas. The two juxtaposed ideas may exist within the consciousness of one specific person. Herzog’s life does not flow smoothly and he faced many ups and downs throughout his life. Sometimes he is betrayed by his wife and sometimes earned fame and prosperity. People respect him and call him ‘Professor Herzog’ by their inner heart. Herzog represents the true figures of society. Though he is struggling in the society, he does not want to escape from it. He has been familiar with the reality of the society that the real society is far different from the artistic or imaginary one. An imaginary society does not help an individual to struggle in it. But Herzog accepts whatever positive or negative incidents he faces. So, he says: “it’s all right with me” (*Herzog* 7). For him, life is like two faces of coin which cannot be separated from each other. Herzog is like that optimistic person who always waits for light if he is struggling with dark. So, *Herzog* is the text which teaches us to live calmly with all the struggles of our life.

The idea of the others about Herzog and his temporal assimilation of that idea do not negate the necessity of dialogue. He only affirms the thought of the others about himself. His identity, so to speak, is formed through his relationship with the other people and he is dependent upon the others for his realization of the self: “Some people thought he was cracked and for a time he himself had doubted that he was all there. But now, though he still behaved oddly, he felt confident, cheerful, clairvoyant, and strong” (*Herzog* 7). What is more important is that Herzog’s dialogicality lets the other people enter his territory. This acceptance of the others is something that is with him from the very beginning. He feels “confident, clairvoyant and strong” because he is able to maintain a dialogue with the others, those who are at times opposed to him

and the cause of his “sufferings” (*Herzog* 7). Bellow’s presentation of Herzog is very powerful to make others aware about the dialogic world. Dialogue is also maintained between different layers of his consciousness. It is formed as a result of his contact and communication with the other people of the city, and is as multiple and plural as the world around himself.

The dialogues of Herzog with others are not just about his personal affairs. They are concerned with larger cultural and intellectual issues. It is the relating mind of Herzog that finds a close relationship between the two. Herzog faced many problems in the course of his life. He was married twice but failed in each marriage. Due to his ambitious nature to become tougher and more assertive, he demands divorce from his wife but in the second case he is demanded divorce by his second wife, Madeleine, charging him an impotent man. Before divorce with Mady he had already resigned from his profession. Now he is starved in his life and is a sufferer. In the course of his life he met few persons like Ramona, his girlfriend, Sandor Himmelstein, his lawyer and Lucas Asphalter, his intimate friend who provided their helping hands in his suffering. After meeting them he knew to smile in tears and accept the bitter reality of the society.

Bellow’s adoption of the epistolary tradition also helps the research to prove that *Herzog* is a hybrid text. He breaks down the conventional writing of epic tradition from the mind of readers which creates concept of hierarchy in reader’s mentality. To break the tradition and to sweep the mentality of those readers he priorities other genres like the prosaic, the epistolary to say that nobody is high and low in a society but everybody has equal right to live in a society. To prove his views he takes support of novel which is fully dialogized where every genres are equally presented. A dialogic novel is the platform where knight as well as a shepherd or a

cowboy can remain together. Although epic has created a binary opposition between them, a dialogic novel erases the binary opposition to take them together.

Epistolary tradition is a genuine technique for addressing the ideas that are not instantly present on the contemporary intellectual scene. One of the best examples that can be provided here is the old opposition between Nietzsche and Christianity. This opposition has been the cause of many intellectual tensions of the twentieth century. Herzog in a letter to Nietzsche compares his ideas with those of Christianity:

No, really, Herr Nietzsche, I have great admiration for your sympathy. You want to make us able to live with the void. Not lie ourselves into good-naturedness, trust, ordinary middling human considerations, but to question as has never been questioned before, relentlessly, with iron determination, into evil... Humankind lives mainly upon perverted ideas. Perverted, your ideas are no better than those of the Christianity you condemn. (*Herzog* 389)

Herzog is in opposition with both Christianity and Nietzsche, but he has “great admiration” for both of them. Herzog opposes Nietzsche because he has created a single authority in the society and claims that the god made world sick: “I don’t agree with Nietzsche that Jesus made the whole world sick” (*Herzog* 71). His experience is good but his knowledge is not contemporary because Nietzsche rejects the superiority of god who made the world void, he focuses upon the empowerment of human being. His displacement of god by a superman is partially fit in the dialogic world because superman does not exist in the world of Herzog. Herzog is in conflict with him because he does not get any solution from any field. Sometimes he accepts something but in course of time he rejects the same thing. He does not agree with Nietzsche but

later he has a great admiration for him. Neither he can decide boldly nor can he get solution to his problems. Actually, he is disturbed mentally from his divorced life. He remembers many philosophers in his letter, still he does not escape from quicksand nor religion can rescue him. This is because the world is so void that solution of any problem cannot be taken out easily. But, despite of many problems, Herzog is the character who has learned to exist in this society. In spite of his unsolved problems, struggling life he is more strong and has known to sustain in the complex world.

The point to be noticed is that the dialogic society is always in process and multiplicity of ideas interact together in such a society. The society which is issuing towards infinity, it is worthless to find conclusion. So the text comes to an end without the termination. A. Bezanker sees the text, *Herzog*, as a fully dialogic novel which has adapted the ideas of dialogism. He claims that Bellow has treated varieties of genres equally. So, *Herzog* is really an amalgamation of varieties of techniques: "I suggested at the outset that Bellow's fiction is an amalgam of the literary and intellectual traditions of the west. Quotations, references and allusions" (159). Herzog himself seems to be a character who does not believe in any single philosophic idea prevalent during his time, nor he believes in the dictates of fate. Either Marx's materialistic world or Freud's psychoanalytical world or Nietzsche's world of superman, they were more dominant on their period and people became compelled to accept their ideas but Herzog does not agree with those philosophies. The single figure of the protagonist is presented with varieties of characteristics : Herzog the victim, Herzog the would be lover, Herzog the man on whom the world depended for certain intellectual work, to change history, to influence the development of civilization.

The focal point of the novel for its dialogic study is its concluding style. Bellow has uniquely concluded the text: “At this time he had no message for anyone. Nothing. Not a single word” (*Herzog* 416). The protagonist, Herzog, has invited his girlfriend, Ramona for dinner and she accepted his invitation, he prepares for dinner, but the text gets a full stop and ends before attending the dinner party. Through this scene, Bellow wants to present his view that a society is always going on, on its own speed, on its own process. The activities of society do not stop in the absence of material. On the other hand the protagonist thinks himself as a man who has got victory in his life. He cries excitedly in Hebrew: “Hineni!”, which means here I am (*Herzog* 377). It determines that he is the true representative figure of society, who has struggled during his whole life living within the society. Though he addresses many great personalities under the sun, he does not get final answer of his problem from any field of knowledge. By this he has understood the bitter reality of the society, he has known that the society is so mysterious that the problems here are unsolved. But he is familiar to the society of dialogic feature so he has victory over it.

Herzog experiences many bitter realities of his life that made him almost cracked but he controls himself from destroying his life. While living, he sees the real picture of the society and human life and thus he becomes able to struggle in the society. And all these make Herzog, the protagonist, a dialogic character. Bellow has mixed different genres and disciplines in the text to subvert the single authority of the established social institutions. He has presented the world of epic, the epistolary tradition and the journey scene. He has taken many disciplines of psychology, religion and politics but nothing is dominant to one another. They are not presented in hierarchical order. The characters presented in the text are from international background and we are familiar with many languages in it such as English, Hebrew,

Yiddish, Germany etc. Through all these supporting points, it is clear that *Herzog* is a fully hybridized and dialogic text.

IV. Conclusion

Herzog reveals the idea that various disciplines and philosophies, like that of Darwin, Freud, Marx, can have their relative worth or value but they should not claim absolute and final truth. Different genres like epic try to establish hierarchy in society. Novel, as shown in the present exploration of *Herzog*, cannot be defined in the traditional, Aristotelian approach. Novel is a genre in the making, it is a genre concerned with the moving moment of the present time. Lyric is photographic, it may be concerned with arresting the present moment, but it cannot produce moving pictures. Epic is nostalgic, it cannot talk realistically about the present time. But novel, on the other hand, simultaneously talks about the past and the present, juxtaposing them with each other along a horizontally axial line. As a whole, it is a city of different genres and it lets the other genres enter its territory and act.

Herzog as a novel presents a variety of different lyrical pictures of its protagonist's state of mind. At the same time it talks about the past of the western culture. Learning from his own life's reality, Bellow created this novel which has adapted the idea of dialogism. On thoroughly studying of the novel there are so many crucial points to support the point that this novel is dialogic. It incorporates different genres into its structure, blurring the old system of distinctions between genres. It also blurs the distinction between literary and nonliterary, fact and fiction, and incorporates into its structure nonliterary discourses which according to Bakhtin are categorized under the broad heading of the genres of the everyday life.

Herzog is a novel in the making and any closed philosophical, theoretical system fails to read it. According to Aristotle, genres are distinct and absolutely different from each other. His view is more dominant to create the hierarchy which is not the representative of the society. Bakhtin comments Aristotle's thinking of genre

as: “works as much as there is no mention of novel” (*Dialogic Imagination* 8). This is because novel with its mixing of a great number of formal and informal, or high and low genres presents itself not as a genre among the other genres, but as a location, a city for the contact of many genres.

Bakhtin’s theories are attempts to show texts, and in general, cultures as ‘hybrid constructions’ of heterogeneous elements. The task of Bakhtin was to pluralize the ‘theses’ of the dialectic principle. Indeed, for him, the dialogic property of culture is to show the heterogeneity and polyphony of culture and of texts. He saw pluralization and carnivalization as the best form of fight against monologic authority. Being produced in a plural situation, *Herzog* is a theory-text that lays primary stress on dialogue. There are certain cracks in the society that make it plural. The plural quality of the society is fully manifested in the text of *Herzog*. *Herzog* takes issue with almost all the discourses of the American society. The different discourses are artistically put beside each other and are juxtaposed in a variety of ways. *Herzog* is a place of contact for many different views. The actual act of reading it cannot reduce the different views to a final resolution. Reading *Herzog* is like adding a mirror to the number of mirrors that are already there, facing each other.

To Bakhtin, novel is the product of a democratic discourse that recognizes each idea only in its relation to the other ideas. The novel, *Herzog*, is humanistic genre because it presents the central character Herzog as a relating animal. This novel while narrating the personal sufferings of an individual, talks about the whole history of the modern era, the different institutions of the society, and the living and active discourses of the era. Bellow’s vision of the world in *Herzog*, despite the prevalent ideas of the cold war era, is not only pluralistic but also dialogic. Different discourses are juxtaposed in *Herzog* in a free and democratic way.

The heterogeneous and dialogic mind of Herzog, while criticizing almost every institution of his society, does accept the positive share each has in the making of the society. Herzog not only recognizes a right for the existence of all people, but he also takes their ideas as important for him. He likes to see his image in the mind of the other people and at the same time hates to see his image in an actual mirror because to him the image shown in a mirror is a monologic picture, therefore not valid. At the micro level of the individual, the novel makes all individuals answerable to each other. And at the macro level of the society, and of the world affairs, this polyphonic novel makes the nations to recognize each other without the suppressive control of any one.

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