SAUL BELLOW'S USE OF IMAGERY AS METAPHOR IN HERZOG, MR. SAMMLER'S PLANET, AND HUMBOLDT'S GIFT

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Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
May, 1979

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PREFACE

This study is concerned with the analysis of the artistic control exhibited by Saul Bellow in his metaphorical use of imagery in his most recent novels--Herzog, Mr. Sammler's Planet, and Humboldt's Gift. The primary objective is to show how four types of images compare man with his experiences and reveal characterization.

My study of Saul Bellow was initiated under the excellent teaching of Dr. Clinton C. Keeler, my major adviser and the first director of my doctoral committee. The kinds of encouragement and the intellectual stimulation given by this fine man cannot be summarized, but they will forever be a part of my equipment for scholarly pursuits and my pleasure in my work.

I wish to express special appreciation to Dr. Mary Rohrberger, who, as a member of committee from its beginning, read early drafts and made fruitful suggestions, and then, after Dr. Keeler's death, became my director and major adviser. Her helpful guidance and support have been immeasurable. I also appreciate the assistance of the other committee members, Dr. Theodore L. Agnew, Dr. Jane-Marie Luecke, Dr. William Mills, and Dr. Gordon Weaver.

I appreciate the resources of the libraries and the helpfulness of the library personnel at Oklahoma State University and Phillips University, the professional encouragement given me by my colleagues at Phillips University, and the continual patience and accuracy of my typist, JoAnn Wandke.

Finally, the help of my husband, Homer W. Fortson, through all stages of this study has made it possible.

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CHAPTER I

FINDING THE NEW SELF

Through the characters in his novels, Saul Bellow gives readers a way to affirm life, "without strained arguments, with a spontaneous mysterious proof that has no need to argue with despair."[1] Bellow's consciousness of the complex experiences of the human race and his literary art have refined the texture of his writing and enabled him in his fiction to give a rich image of contemporary man. His concern that writers represent man truthfully has resulted in statements about characterization and in a strong portrayal of man and the human situation through a variety of images and metaphors in his own novels. Critics have shown the power of the imagery in his first five novels--Dangling Man (1944), The Victim (1947), The Adventures of Augie March (1953), Seize the Day (1956), and Henderson the Rain King (1959)--and in his earlier short fiction. Bellow continues to capture the complexity of man in his next three novels--Herzog (1964), Mr. Sammler's Planet (1969), and Humboldt's Gift (1975)--through his increasingly rich use of imagery and metaphor.

Quotations from Saul Bellow as early as 1954 show his long-held concern for truthfully representing the experiences of man and man himself. Bellow writes of the deformity of perception one learns about in the course of writing a book: "One learns in the first place how hard it is to get people to pay attention to others in their full complexity."[2] A part of the reason for this, he says, is that most men present

themselves to the world through only a few simple attributes and the creation of a "surface easy to characterize and to understand"; man's "real, complex existence" (101) occurs beneath that surface. A whole system is developed that stands between an act and any response to it in human relationships, and the functioning of this system is seen as "normalcy." That system, Bellow says, "loves abstractions, of course, and is not friendly toward the imagination" (101); the author must consider this situation if he is to present the "various faces of reality" (101). Twelve years later, Bellow reiterates: "We must leave it to the imagination and to inspiration to redeem the concrete and the particular and to recover the value of flesh and bone."[3]

Speaking about the future of the novel, Bellow recognizes that D. H. Lawrence, of all modern writers, is the most opposed to surface depiction of character.[4] Lawrence's defense of his view of character and its representation comes from the time of the writing of The Rainbow:

> You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover--states of the same single radically unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novelist would trace the history of the diamond--but I say, "Diamond, what! This is carbon!" And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.)[5]

Walter Allen, in his history of the English novel, notes Lawrence's concern for "the seven eighths of the iceberg of personality submerged and never seen, the unconscious mind, to which he preaches something like passivity on the part of the conscious."[6] In addition to his concern for more than the social man, Lawrence's concrete imagery suggests his recognition that the submerged or unconscious part of man's personality

must be represented concretely.

Bellow agrees that "the old ways of describing interests, of describing the fate of the individual, have lost their power," but that "The imagination is looking for new ways to express virtue."[7] What is needed for the novel to recover and to flourish, he says, is to discover the "new ideas about mankind" that exist and express them, not as mere assertions, but "in flesh and blood."[8] He feels that although the old idea of the Self has been completely debunked, there are not yet good answers to the questions of what man is, but that the mystery of mankind increases. It does not grow less even though various styles in literature are discarded.[9]

In his Nobel Prize lecture, Saul Bellow again speaks of the way man is represented in recent literature, and he rejects the view of M. Alain Robbe-Grillet that the world "has renounced the omnipotence of the person," and that, therefore, it is not necessary to continue the investigation of character.[10] Characterization, he says, is not easy: "The condition of human beings has perhaps never been more difficult to define" (319). Although there is confusion and disorder in every aspect of human life, private and public crises have helped to form a kind of person, Bellow says, who has "an immense desire for certain durable human goods--truth, for instance, or freedom or wisdom" (321). Art can help man respond to the genuine reality. "This other reality is always sending us hints, which, without art, we can't receive. Proust calls these hints our 'true impressions'" (321).

Three years later Bellow repeats this assertion:

I am suggesting that we receive epistemological guidance of

> which we are unaware and that we actually have infinitely deeper and better ways of knowing than those we've been "educated in. We think we understand what we see about us, and we are, at the conscious level, persuaded that we can understand our own behavior and that of others if we apply the "scientific" rules recommended by rational teaching. But if we really tried to live by this teaching, life would be even more absurd than it is.[11]

Bellow's Nobel lecture further claims that those who do not continually examine man and his condition represent him poorly: "the pictures they offer no more resemble us than we resemble the reconstructed reptiles and other monsters in a museum of peleontology. We are much more limber, versatile, better articulated, there is much more to us, we all feel it" (324). Out of the seriousness of the present struggle for the very survival of the species, Bellow continues, "has come an immense, powerful longing for a broader, more flexible, fuller, more coherent, more comprehensive account of what we human beings are, who we are, and what this life is for" (324-25). And, Bellow recognizes, it is the writers who must give true pictures of man, who must attempt to capture "the essence of our real condition," and help maintain "our connection with the depth from which these glimpses come" (325).

Bellow also returns to this subject three years later. He again notes that writers choose "the limits within which they will write, and it's these limits that we have to examine"; he recognizes the line that art has always drawn between what is visible and what is not, but he asserts that "in the past, artists ventured farther than their eyes could see."[12] Writers must question the limits within which they write, and Bellow says he is "going against the stream" in his attempt to represent man as fully as his many dimensions permit.[13]

This concern for the character portrayed by the writer, as has been shown, is one that continually appears in Bellow's prose. He recognizes

that we do not yet understand the "quaintly organized chaos of instinct and spirit," but that the old unitary personality is gone:

> The person, the character as we know him in the plays of Sophocles, of Shakespeare, in Cervantes, Fielding, and Balzac, has gone from us. Instead of a unitary character with his soul, his fate, we find in modern literature an oddly dispersed, ragged, mingled, broken, amorphous creature whose outlines are everywhere, whose being is bathed in mind as the tissues are bathed in blood, and who is impossible to circumscribe in any scheme of time. A cubistic, Bergsonian, uncertain, eternal, mortal someone who shuts and opens like a concertina and makes a strange music.[14]

The powerful image in his last sentence is an indication of one way in which Bellow attempts to portray his vision of that "mortal someone." He seems to agree with D. H. Lawrence's view that the surface "personality" is "a wastepaper basket filled with ready-made notions," and he asks what seems to him to be the great question: "When will we see men . . . in higher forms of individuality, purged of old sicknesses and corrected by a deeper awareness of what all men have in common?"[15] Of this attitude John J. Clayton writes, "In other words, while he seeks a new conception of individuality, one which distinguishes between the presentation self and the true self, he will not 'give up on' the individual. Indeed, this is more than belief; it is the substance of Bellow's fiction."[16]

Bellow's increasing acceptance of the possibilities of poetic use of language in the novel is revealed in his response to an interview question in 1965. Gordon Lloyd Harper referred to an earlier statement by Bellow that because the novel must deal with such chaos, that certain forms appropriate to poetry or to music were not available to the novelist. Bellow's response is important for the insight it gives into his conscious use of language in his later novels: "I'm no longer so sure

of that. I think the novelist can avail himself of similar privileges. It's just that he can't act with the same purity or economy of means as the poet. He has to traverse a very muddy and noisy territory before he can arrive at a pure conclusion. He's more exposed to the details of life."[17] Bellow recognizes that there is always "the threat of disintegration under the particulars," but he is not willing to surrender to the mass of particulars. Whatever the linguistic demands, Bellow's artistry lies in creating a perceiving character who is not overwhelmed by the confusion, but one who can receive and reveal those "true impressions" mentioned by Proust.

These critics of fiction who have discussed the forms of language appropriate to both discursive and poetic forms make statements important to an understanding of Bellow's accomplishment. Mark Schorer points to the importance of recognizing that fiction is a literary art. David Lodge considers a structural approach in analyzing language use in fiction. Waller Embler's study of the metaphor in western literature gives a perspective for looking at Bellow's images and metaphors.

Schorer writes that fruitful criticism must begin "with the base of language, with the word, with figurative structures, with rhetoric as skeleton and style as body of meaning."[18] The novel, he continues, is more similar to discursive prose than to poetry; it raises questions about philosophy or politics; and it appears to have a closer relation to life than it does to art. However, a novel is not life, but "an image of life; and the critical problem is first of all to analyze the structure of the image. Thus criticism must approach the vast and endlessly ornamented house of fiction with a willingness to do a little at a time and none of it finally, in order to suggest experiences of

meaning and of feeling that may be involved in novels" (539). The last of Schorer's four tentative proposals is that "metaphorical language reveals to us the character of any imaginative work in that, more tellingly perhaps than any other elements, it shows what conceptions the imagination behind that work is able to entertain, how fully and how happily" (560). He recognizes "that style is conception" and that rhetoric exists within "what we call poetic" (560).

Although a number of writings about the language used by novelists follow the Schorer article, Lodge's 1966 book-length study still indicates "the uncertainty in modern criticism about the function of language in prose fiction."[19] Lodge indicates that in many of these studies of patterns of imagery and symbolism, "the listing of images has not been controlled by an active engagement with the text and the wider critical challenges it presents" (6). Because the novel demands the creation of a heightened version of experience and a heightened use of language, "the novelist is constantly divided between two imperatives--to create and to invent freely, and to observe a degree of realistic decorum."[20] The critic of language use in the novel must be aware of this tension and approach his task carefully.

Lodge recognizes both strengths and weaknesses in the structural approach in which one traces significant threads through the language of the entire novel:

> The structural approach has the obvious attraction that it tries to discuss the work as a whole, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. By tracing a linguistic thread or threads--a cluster of images, or value-words, or grammatical constructions--through a whole novel, we produce a kind of spatial diagram of the accumulative and temporally-extended reading experience. The structural approach, too, takes into account the fact that, in the novel, organic unity of form is not incompatible with great local variations of

> tone and verbal intensity. The danger of the structural approach is, of course, that of misrepresentation: one is not dealing with "the whole work," but taking a certain path through it. The value of the criticism depends entirely upon whether it is a useful path, which conforms to the overall shape of the terrain, and affords the best view of it on all sides. . . . The obverse of Leavis's remark, "in literature . . . nothing can be proved," is that in literature anything can be "proved." It is fatally easy to twist and squeeze a literary text to fit the mould of one's own "interpretation."[21]

Where relevant, the citation of other critics can be a partial check on the danger of ignoring the work as a whole while looking at several strands of images and metaphors through a novel. The novels themselves and his own prose statements can also serve as a test of Bellow's use of figurative language. If the images used create a multi-faceted reflection of man, then they may be pointing to a fuller representation of the creature whom, Bellow says, it "is impossible to circumbscribe in any scheme of time," to that "broader, more flexible, fuller, more coherent, more comprehensive account of what we human beings are, who we are, and what this life is for."[22]

In a full-length study published in 1966, Weller Embler examines the metaphor in literature and speaks of the dynamic tension referred to by Lodge. The novel describes the inner life in terms of what happens in the outer life, and, he writes, one purpose of art "is so to use outward behavior that it shall serve as metaphor to describe inner feelings."[23] An examination of the history of modern creative work reveals "that the artist is saying one thing in the guise of another, that he does not, indeed cannot, speak directly of the life within" (7). The genius of great artists and writers is that they have seen what Embler refers to as "transcendental parities" intuitively and have expressed them powerfully.

Embler describes the richness of the metaphor by recognizing its "everyday reality, the transitory portion," and its "enduring portion, . . . a thought, an intuition, an airy nothing." Joined, the transitory image and the enduring thought "create a metaphor, a way of uttering an insight about ourselves and our world" (58). The transitory portion is frequently selected from the "prevailing images" of a time. Five images Embler identifies as powerful in modern literature are the prison, the wasteland, the monster, the machine, and the hospital. The great writer, according to Embler, will show the temper of an age by bringing "the transitory images and the enduring ideas together in unerring imaginative syntheses" (78). In creating the human personality and the human situation, he will use the language of the arts, in which relationships appear to be the substance: "it is the arrangement of the relationships of different realities and the relationship of different truths that is the language of poetry" (137). Western literature has used the image of the individual in different ways in different ages, but Embler concludes: "The guiding, prevailing, master metaphor of the western tradition centers upon the idea of the one, the one who is <u>like</u> the many, but different" (143).

The character upon whom Bellow has focused in his novels is that "one, the one who is <u>like</u> the many, but different." Even though an examination of his use of imagery and metaphor may not encompass all of the richness of Bellow's work, a consideration of these will make it possible to see something of the positive nature of Bellow's view of man and his situation in the midst of Bellow's honest presentation of much that is and much that is not positive. Such an examination may open fruitful directions of inquiry that may complement the many fine

discussions of other aspects of his fiction. The test will be to relate the figurative language to the critical concern of the characterization of man, a subject Bellow feels is crucial in today's fiction.

Recognition of Bellow's imagery and metaphors appears throughout the criticism of his fiction, but Irving Malin's survey of the imagery in Bellow's first five novels and his early short fiction calls attention to the significance of Bellow's figurative language in a way that the isolated references do not. Malin's study is reported in a 1962 essay entitled "Seven Images"; this essay is included in the collection entitled Saul Bellow and the Critics, edited by Malin in 1967. Malin's attempt in that essay is "to show that various images used by Bellow deserve close attention," and he concludes that we need to see how various concepts are imbedded in the images in Bellow's fiction.[24] Malin's Saul Bellow's Fiction, published in 1969, includes the essay as a chapter entitled "The Images" in which, as he wrote in his introduction, he charted the images "which express or incarnate theme and character."[25]

Malin concludes from his study that Bellow's images are natural, archetypal, and carefully chosen. As Malin says, "They make us experience the pains of existence" (85); they are "shaped to symbolize our destiny" (123); and recurring in all periods, the images are archetypal--"as modern as his heroes are, they enact mythic trials" (123). Malin discusses Bellow's use of imagery in terms of seven categories, but does not intend to suggest that the images are simply manipulated; he recognizes the necessity to look at the images separately, but sees that they function together in Bellow's work. From his examination of imagery in these earlier novels, Malin has been able to see a develop-

ment from novel to novel of Bellow's artistry in the use of imagery. The attempt here is to summarize Malin's main ideas and to quote a few of his examples of Bellow's fiction.

The first type of imagery discussed by Malin is that of images of weight. In Henderson the Rain King, the "great weight" of his body is a continual pressure to Henderson; thinking of his life, he has a "pressure in the chest." Trying to reach his dead father, he plays the violin as if "there were strangulation in his heart." Although his body has been "loaded" with "vices, like a raft, a barge," he strains to lift Mummah in order to free humanity from divine weight. Henderson flinches under the lion's weight (as Dahfu does not), but learns to let go and allow his own lion qualities to come out. Of Dahfu's being stamped to death by the animal, Malin concludes, "Henderson realized then that the pressures, burdens, and weights of life are never lifted" (90).

Second, Malin discusses Bellow's images of deformity or disease which are a part of "the painful mortality we bear" (90). In his "traditional" use of such images, Bellow "joins many ancient writers in asserting that the body itself--'shapeless,' clumsy, or crippled--is less beautiful than the will or spirit. It is the necessary 'weight' we carry" (90). In The Victim, Asa is "preoccupied with disease because it signifies the 'freakish' process of living" (91). Asa sees disease as "metaphysical," and Malin quotes Thomas Mann to explain this preoccupation:

> The truth is that life has never been able to do without the morbid and probably no adage is more inane than the one which says that "only disease can come from the diseased." Life is not prudish, and it is probably safe to say that life prefers creative, genius-bestowing disease a thousand times over to prosaic health; prefers disease, surmounting obstacles proudly on horseback, boldly leaping from peak to peak, to lounging,

> pedestrian healthfulness. Life is not finical and never thinks of making a moral distinction between health and infirmity. It seizes the bold product of disease, consumes and digests it, and as soon as it is assimilated, it is health.[26]

Asa, Malin writes, "does learn to cope with life as disease and paradoxically enough, becomes less diseased as a result" (92).

The third type of imagery Malin discusses is that of cannibalism, or the ways in which people consume one another. Joseph in Dangling Man says, "I am deteriorating, storing bitterness and spite which eat like acids at my endowment of generosity and good will." History itself is shown to consume, and our idealizations, Joseph says, "consume us like parasites." Malin notes that "Joseph, depleted by the parasites around and within him, remains 'hungry,' even after eating a large dinner, a whole package of caramels, and a bag of mints" (95).

Because the images of weight, of deformity or disease, and of cannibalism suggest that life is dangerous, ugly, and heavy, Bellow's characters consider themselves imprisoned, and the different kinds of confinement are the fourth type of imagery that Malin discusses. Henderson tries to destroy all prisons, but learns to adjust to them, even the tunnel where the lion is imprisoned. This, however, proves to be a further entrapment. Malin observes: "When Dahfu falls into the lion's cage, meeting his death, Henderson realizes that mere acceptance of confinement will not end it--life is always a cage: 'my life and deeds were a prison.' Altnough we last see him in the open--'leaping, leaping, pounding'--we realize that this is an interlude before another entrapment. Africa has taught him that any continent is a prison: one never leaves it" (104).

The fifth image examined by Malin is that of the beast. Malin

recognizes that although Bellow uses animal imagery in all of the novels, he is becoming more careful in his selection in the later ones. In Seize the Day, Tommy sees himself as a "sheep dog"; he also refers to himself as a "poor hen": "On the road, he frequently passed chicken farms. Those big, rambling wooden lights burned all night in them to cheat the poor hens into laying. Then the slaughter" (107). The animals in Henderson the Rain King also have special significance. Henderson's encounter with the last lion is one in which he cannot emerge as master. Malin observes: "This new lion--like the octopus in the cage--symbolizes death; it can never be completely mastered. The animal images in Henderson the Rain King are 'deep'; they are more thoroughly developed than the few in Dangling Man, showing us again Bellow's consistent advancement" (108).

A sense of movement is the sixth area of imagery examined by Malin. Malin says that Bellow's characters "search for answers to their predicaments. But their movements are usually erratic, circular, violent, or nonpurposeful" (108-09). Augie, in The Adventures of Augie March, is aware of his "larky" way in contrast to the erratic movement of many of the characters who surround him. Malin quotes Augie's thinking: "It was not only for me that being moored wasn't permitted; there was general motion, as of people driven from angles and corners into the open, by places being valueless and inhospitable to them. . . . And once I was underway, street cars weren't sufficient, no Chicago large enough to hold me" (112). Augie learns that space around others may be their space, and that one must become aware of the "axial lines of life."

Vision--sometimes oblique or unbalanced, sometimes fragmented or distorted, but frequently faulty--is the seventh area of imagery

amined by Malin. Self and environment seem to reflect each other in Dangling Man. Joseph regards himself as a split image, seeing himself differently than the Joseph of a year earlier. The mirror images confuse Joseph: "Alternatives, and particularly desirable alternatives, grow only on imaginary trees." He does not have the proper vision needed to choose the right ones. "Everything is double--his two Josephs, Amos and Joseph--because life is a broken self-image; true vision, epiphany, is rare. Seeking it, Joseph constantly runs into distortions, grotesque reflections, as in his dream-double" (117). Joseph appears unsteady because, Malin says, "he sees clearly that life is a cosmic, distorting, treacherous mirror" (118).

Malin's survey of the imagery in Bellow's early work and his identification of the type used by Bellow alerts critics to the importance of the repetition of such imagery. Tracing a particular image or complex of images through a novel may point to new understandings about that work and may also point to the variety of ways in which Bellow uses imagery. For instance, James H. Mellard concludes that Dangling Man is what Ralph Freedman calls "lyrical fiction," a hybrid genre combining features of both novels and lyrical poetry;[27] Freedman writes that "the lyrical novel absorbs action altogether and refashions it as a pattern of imagery."[28] Clinton W. Trowbridge shows drowning to be the controlling image of Seize the Day,[29] and M. Gilbert Porter recognizes the cohesive function of the images through eight "scenes" in that novel.[30]

Malin's identification of seven types of images used by Bellow in his first five novels and short fiction also suggests a framework for discussing significant images and metaphors in Bellow's next three

novels. As his artistic purposes differ with each novel, so Bellow's demands on figurative language differ. In his next three novels--Herzog, Mr. Sammler's Planet, and Humboldt's Gift--Bellow continues to use the seven images Malin identifies in the earlier fiction. Because the larger patterns in each later novel are more interrelated, these images will be examined within four classifications: beast imagery, deformity-disease-cannibalism imagery, movement-weight-imprisonment imagery, and vision imagery.

Bellow is not limited to these four areas in his metaphoric use of language. Nor is he limited to imagery and metaphor in his figurative language. Nor is figurative language the only way in which he suggests more about character than he says literally or directly. But an examination of these four patterns reveals Bellow's careful artistry in creating the texture of human experience. The reader of Herzog, Mr. Sammler's Planet, and Humboldt's Gift may not be consciously aware of how many threads there are in the experiencing of them, but critical tracing of some of these images and metaphors through the fabric of each of them may illuminate the very careful way in which Bellow weaves them into his characterizations. They contribute to an understanding of Saul Bellow's concept of the New Self.

NOTES

[1] Saul Bellow, "The Writer as Moralist," The Atlantic Monthly, March, 1963, p. 62.

[2] Bellow, "The Creative Artist and his Audience," Perspectives USA, 9 (Autumn, 1954), 100. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[3] "Saul Bellow: An Interview by Gordon Lloyd Harper," 1965, The Paris Review, No. 36 (Winter, 1966); rpt. in Saul Bellow, Herzog, ed. Irving Howe (New York: Viking Press, 1976), p. 368.

[4] Bellow, "Where Do We Go From Here: The Future of Fiction," To The Young Writer, ed. A. L. Bader (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1965); rpt. in The Theory of The American Novel, ed. George Perkins (New York: Holt, 1970), p. 444.

[5] Quoted by Walter Allen, The English Novel: A Short Critical History (New York: Dutton, 1954), p. 436.

[6] Allen, p. 436.

[7] Bellow, "Where Do We Go From Here," p. 449.

[8] Bellow, "Where Do We Go From Here," p. 450.

[9] Bellow, "Recent American Fiction," Literary Lectures Presented at the Library of Congress (Washington: Library of Congress, 1973), p. 526.

[10] Bellow, "The Nobel Lecture," The American Scholar, 46, No. 3 (Summer, 1977), p. 317. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[11] Maggie Simmons, "Free to Feel: A Conversation with Saul Bellow on One Writer's Search for Authenticity in His Life and Work," Quest, 3, No. 1 (January-February, 1979), 24.

[12] Simmons, p. 33.

[13] Simmons, p. 34.

[14] Bellow, "Where Do We Go From Here," p. 443.

[15] "Saul Bellow on the Modern Novel," radio lecture, July, 1961, quoted in John J. Clayton, Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1968), p. 20.

[16] Clayton, p. 21.

[17] "Saul Bellow: An Interview," pp. 358-59.

[18] Mark Schorer, "Fiction and the 'Matrix of Analogy,'" The Kenyon Review, 11, No. 4 (Autumn, 1949), 539. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[19] David Lodge, Language of Fiction (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. ix. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[20] David Lodge, "Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach through Language," The Novelist at the Crossroads and Other Essays on Fiction and Criticism (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1971), p. 66.

[21] Lodge, Language of Fiction, p. 79.

[22] Bellow, "The Nobel Lecture," p. 325.

[23] Weller Embler, Metaphor and Meaning (DeLand, Fla.: Everett/Edwards, Inc., 1966), p. 2. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[24] Irving Malin, ed., Saul Bellow and the Critics (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1967), pp. ix-x.

[25] Irving Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1969), p. 85. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[26] Thomas Mann, "Dostoevsky--in Moderation," Preface to The Short Novels of Dostoevsky (New York: Dial Press, 1945), p. xiv., quoted by Malin, p. 91.

[27] James Mellard, "Dangling Man: Saul Bellow's Lyrical Experiment," Ball State University Forum, 15, No. 2 (Spring, 1974), 67-74.

[28] Ralph Freedman, The Lyrical Novel (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1963), p. 2.

[29] Clinton W. Trowbridge, "Water Imagery in Seize the Day," Critique, 9, No. 3 (Spring, 1968), 62-73.

[30] M. Gilbert Porter, "Seize the Day: A Drowning Man," Whence the Power? The Artistry and Humanity of Saul Bellow (Columbia, Mo.: Univ. of Missouri Press, 1974), 102-26.

CHAPTER II

BEAST IMAGERY AND METAPHOR

Introduction

Irving Malin recognizes Saul Bellow's use of beast images in all of his fiction. He notes their new direction in "A Sermon by Dr. Pep," which was first published in 1949; in that short fiction, Malin says, the animal likenesses are accepted, even loved. Augie March also accepts the bestiality around him, but by the time of the writing of Henderson the Rain King, according to Malin, the "deep" animal images show Bellow's advancement in skill in handling imagery.[1]

In his next three novels, Bellow uses beast imagery very significantly. An examination of the protagonists of those novels shows each one responding to the bestiality--both human and animal--in the world around him and within himself. Moses E. Herzog, the protagonist of Herzog, recognizes his own animal nature and sometimes limits himself to animal behavior, but he comes to see in man a potential for love that distinguishes him from other animals. Artur Sammler, in Mr. Sammler's Planet, is frightened by the brute possibilities in man's nature, and his attempts to remove himself from his own creatureliness are only slightly countered by the appreciation and love he feels for Elya Gruner, his nephew. After many experiences with the bestiality in man, Charles Citrine, the protagonist of Humboldt's Gift, comes to appreciate what he has always known, but which contemporary

intellectuals have caused him to doubt--that man is more than an animal.

Herzog

Only indirectly does Malin even mention the beast imagery in Herzog, and that is when he refers to Herzog's imprisonment in "the coop of privacy" where he says, Herzog remains throughout the novel.[2] But several other critics have made general comments on the beast imagery in the novels to and including Herzog. Least valuable is probably John W. Aldridge's identification of what he flippantly calls Bellow's "rather facile trick, of treating his secondary characters as if they were inmates of either a zoo or a madhouse."[3] Marcus Klein has written that each of Bellow's major heroes has found the beast within, and, beyond the lyrical moment of 'Mr. Pep's Sermon," has confronted it "and the human propensity to murder, and they cannot rest in their perception. They must--each of them--as well confront the moral conditions of civilization, the cost of which would seem to be precisely the self."[4] Most important of the three, Earl Rovit has written that a failure to understand Bellow's use of animals in comparison with human nature may blind a reader to his moral point and his deliberate irony:

> Trained in anthropology, Bellow is quite willing to regard the species man as merely one of the evolutionary products of nature and natural processes. But Bellow is determined to insist on the qualitative difference between man and the other sentient species that nature has produced. We may occasionally invest animals with "human" characteristics; and he is always careful to show that although his protagonists may loudly protest their innate "docility or ingenuous good will," brute animality resides deeply and subtly in their basic nature. The difference between the human animal and the brute, for Bellow, is a matter of essential kind rather than degree.[5]

Herzog's consideration of himself, of others, and of his relationships with others are revealed in numerous beast images. He sees man

as different from other species in his human capacity to love. But he frequently reveals himself as acting more nearly in accord with his brute nature than with his human non-animal nature.

Herzog himself is described through beast imagery. On his couch in his New York apartment, "in the coop of his privacy,"[6] he lies "with no more style than a chimpanzee" (11). Unsuccessfully trying to understand his idiosyncrasies, like a hawk he practices "the art of circling among random facts to swoop down on the essential" (10). In an objective moment, he realizes the continued importance of his past, that "early traumata, which man could not molt and leave empty on the bushes like a cicada" (67).

Memories of Herzog's childhood are made more vivid through beast imagery. One memory is of the cats of Nachman's family home and the "spicy odor" (131) of their dry turds. His mixed memory of his father is partly shown through the image of a coat he wore, "once lined with fox, turned dry and bald, the red hide cracking" (137); during the same period his mother wore a "torn seal coat" (139). When his sister Helen played the piano, Moses stood behind her "staring at the swirling pages of Haydn and Mozart, wanting to whine like a dog" (141). Zipporah despised Voplonsky, whom she called "a rat with pointed red whiskers and long crooked teeth and reeking of scorched hoof" (145); and she told her brother that thieves and gangsters "don't have skins, teeth, fingers . . . but hides, fangs, claws" (145).

The view of man as animal to which he was exposed in childhood is a source of conflict because a more humane view, which also was available to him in those years, has an appeal for Herzog. In the courtroom, Herzog is surprised by a judge's human concern for a young

defendant: "That massive flesh rising from the opening of the magistrate's black cloth, nearly eyeless, or whale-eyed, was, after all, a human head. The hollow, ignorant voice, a human voice" (227) The young man charged with robbery had "dyed hair, like the winterbeaten wool of a sheep," and there was "something sheeplike, too, even about his vengeful merriment" (229). Herzog knows that he is judged as having "been spared the destruction of certain sentiments as the pet goose is spared the ax" (231). As a young man coming to grips with his world, Herzog saw himself as "A Jew, a relic as lizards are relics of the great age of reptiles," and he thought he might prosper by "swindling the goy, the laboring cattle of a civilization dwindled and done for" (234). Although Herzog has not lost the "sentiments" of humane feelings, the appearance of them in others, however infrequent, still affect him.

Herzog's experiences of his relationship with his own daughter are partly revealed through beast imagery. At the Museum of Science, he sees many children entering, "black and white flocks herded by teachers and parents" (274). Because Junie means so much to him, he cannot imagine her forgetting him; he says that Sandor must be thinking of "his own Himmelstein breed--guinea pigs, hamsters" (274) to make such a suggestion. Herzog is enervated by the plants and fishy air of the aquarium. The lazy turtles that excite June vaguely suggest the stuporous quality in dreams that Herzog calls his Old World feelings of love. Trailing "a fuzz of parasitic green," one rises "from the depth of the tank in its horny breastplate, the beaked head lazy, the eyes with aeons of indifference, the flippers slowly striving, pushing at the glass, the great scales pinkish yellow or, on the back, bearing beautiful lines, black curved plates mimicking the surface tension of water" (281). The

Mississippi River turtles, with their "red-straked" sides, suggest the same quality as they doze on their logs and paddle "in company with catfish over a bottom shaded by ferns, strewn with pennies" (281).

Two of Herzog's childhood memories involve animals--one of the slaughter of chickens and the other of a sexual attack. In the first, he remembers "those fiery squawks when the hens were dragged from the lathe coops, the shit and sawdust and heat and fowl musk, and the birds tossed when their throats were cut to bleed to death, head down in tin racks, their claws going, going, working, working on the metal shield" (288). Dogs are a strong part of his memory of a childhood sexual attack: "The dogs in the back yards jumped against the fences, they barked and snarled, choking on their saliva--the shrieking dogs, while Moses was held at the throat by the crook of the man's arm" (288). His own concerns with death and with sex are a crucial part of these unresolved problem areas for him, and the memories are evoked by his love for and identification with Junie.

Herzog's confusion after the wreck involves a number of beast images. In his dizziness, Herzog sees at a distance that "the grackles were walking, feeding, the usual circle of lights working flexibly back and forth about their black necks" (282). The staved-in car has a "hood gaping like a muscle shell" (284). Partly religious but essentially beast imagery is what Herzog sees as he looks at the cars on the road: he seems "to see the rushing of the Gadarene swine, multicolored and glittering, not yet come to their cliff" (285). The driver of the other vehicle has a "very unbecoming red color, and all ridges, like a dog's palate" (286); earlier the ripples in this fellow's scalp are described as following "a different pattern from the furrows in

his forehead" (285). The entire unpleasant episode involves the description of a dizzy Herzog, the car, the road, and the other driver in animalistic terms.

At the police station, the animal imagery continues. Herzog relates the "slightly herring-eyed look" of the prostitute with her "dirty ways" (297). The Sergeant who questions Herzog about his gun holds it, "turning it over with delicate fingers like a fish--a perch" (300). Released from jail, Herzog feels "like a lousy lost sheep" (306) and as he continues to question his role in life he thinks of himself as a "loving brute--a subtle, spoiled, loving man" (308).

Beast imagery shows Herzog moving beyond his similarity to his father. Herzog reconstructs in his driving of a "storming" (254) teal-blue Falcon the emotions of Father Herzog, who, during the anger of their quarrel, called him "Calf!" (249) and threatened to shoot him. Like his father, Herzog does not know himself well enough to know that killing another human being is not within his power, so he makes "a nest" (253) in his pocket for his father's pistol. He tries to avoid the "sheep-like" (253) expression on Taube's face, but he has to face the realization that "the protuberant lips, great eyes, and pleated mouth were sheeplike, and they warned him that he was taking too many chances with destruction" (253). When he realizes he cannot kill, Herzog recognizes that "the human soul is an amphibian" (258), whose sides he has touched. The metaphor here shows the growth taking place in Herzog's understanding. A part of his complexity is evidenced in the pleasure he experiences in his remembered abhorrence of Dr. Waldemar Zozo, the psychiatrist who identified him as psychologically immature when he was in the Navy: Herzog relishes thinking Zozo's

"apish buttocks" were "chemically old!" (324). The beast imagery points to the complexity of Herzog's responses even beyond the complexity of those of his father and, at the same time, to the many facets of human potential that Bellow writes about in his own essays.

In his sexual relationships, Herzog sees women as animals and himself as responding with animal reflexes. Whether his understanding in other areas can enable him to move beyond this attitude remains unclear at the end of the novel. The beast imagery shows women negatively, but it also shows Herzog in less than human terms.

Herzog thinks of himself as "a funny sensual bird" (25), but he becomes "a mad dog" (35) when Madeleine decides she wants out of their marriage. However, this possibility in his character is already revealed when a pair of "bitch eyes" in Grand Central station express "a sort of female arrogance which had an immediate sexual power over him" (34). Several individuals call Madeleine a bitch: Ramona says that "That bitch" did Herzog a favor by leaving him. Herzog himself recoils from the pain of her treatment with the play on words of "A bitch in time breeds contempt" (21). Himmelstein sees her as "A strong-minded bitch" (82). Even Gersbach calls her "The poor crazy bitch" (194). The "shaggy and aggressive" (29) Simkin calls her "that bitch" (209), because she hurt a little cousin of his, "an epileptic girl, a sickly, immature, innocent frail mouse of a woman who couldn't take care of herself" (212). In what may appear to be a description of what he was not in his relationship with Madeleine, Herzog is glad to discover that his friend Libbey married a "comfortable, wise old dog, the kind who always turned out to have large reserves of understanding and humanity" (95).

Gersbach, who replaces Herzog as Madeleine's lover, briefly relates himself and his suffering over the loss of his leg to the appearance of a mouse which notices the dropping of blood from his nosebleed onto the floor: "it backed away, it moved its tail and whiskers" (62). Gersbach, however, is not the mouse; he can see "the room was just full of sunlight" in the "little world" (62) under his bed. Perhaps he can be the human being whom Madeleine needs. But Herzog does not relate as well to Phoebe, Gersbach's wife, when he tells her that she let Madeleine drive her as if she "were a nanny goat" (262); against Herzog's attack, however, Phoebe's eyes are as vigilant as though "he were a wild pig, and those bangs of hers a protective hedge" (263).

Herzog's reactions to Madeleine are also revealed in beast images and metaphors describing others. Although Herzog does not want his own daughter to be "another lustful she-ass" (274) like Madeleine, he uses a similar comparison for the two females. When he affectionately calls Junie "pussy-cat" (279), he repeats a part of an earlier image, "a saintly pussy-cat" (64), through which he questioned Madeleine's religious and sexual qualities. There is no doubt in his mind, however, about the results of Madeleine's interests. He remembers the kitchen in their country home as "foul enough to breed rats" (131). A criticism of Madeleine's intellectual pursuits is involved in the imagery describing as brutish the Shapiro who is obviously attracted to her. In a letter Herzog calls Shapiro "that fat natty brute" (315). A mad-dog image describes him on a visit to Ludeyville: "That snarling, wild laugh of his and the white froth forming on his lips as he attacked everyone" (70). Great numbers of singing cicadas accompany Shapiro's voice: "The red-eyed cicadas, squat forms

vividly colored, were wet after molting, sopping, immobile; but drying; they crept, hopped, tumbled, flew and in the high trees kept up the continuous chain of song, shrilling" (71).

The beast imagery used to describe Herzog's relationship with Sono is complicated as is his condition. He knows that he cannot afford the pleasure and passion she gives; even her Siamese cats are "more passionate and hungry" (172) in their mewing than American cats. But he cannot accept the role of concubine in the female game of interpersonal relationships. He explains the irony of the situation: "When a man's breast feels like a cage from which all the dark birds have flown--he is free, he is light. And he longs to have his vultures back again" (169). He remembers that in trying to show him how a man should treat a woman, Sono was instructing him that "The pride of the peacock, the lust of the goat, and the wrath of the lion are the glory and wisdom of God" (188). He suspects that there is, or should be, more to him than even the best of the animals.

Beast imagery also shows Herzog's relationship with Ramona to be complicated. The rude rough-skinned salesman from whom he buys clothes to please her has "a meat-flavored breath, a dog's breath" (20). Herzog fears involvement with Ramona because she might "lead him like a tame bear" (23); there are times when he wants "to creep into hiding like an animal" (27). However, the sexual reflex he experiences in New York when he smells her perfume brings forth the expected animal response of "Quack, quack!" (23). In Ludeyville, she evokes the same "progenitive, the lustful quacking in the depths. Quack. Quack" (337). Herzog even tells Ramona that he is "one of the odder beasts" (151). The contradiction of flight and sexual satisfaction that Ramona offers

is suggested when Herzog sees an escaped balloon "fleeing like a sperm black and quick into the orange dust of the west" (178). In the pleasure of planning a meal for them to share, Herzog gets two "swordfish steaks" (337); the image, however slight, is still sexual in its implication. When Will is impressed with her attractiveness, Herzog thinks, "He must have been expecting a dog" (337). Even if Herzog no longer looks at her in animalistic terms, the animal imagery is not abandoned.

Herzog's fear that marriage to Ramona would be a "web" (185), in which he does not want to be entangled like a spider, is increased by the example of Hoberly, Ramona's former friend, who is appealing "like the trained mouse in the frustration experiment" (179). The failure of individual existence in Hoberly suggests, for Herzog, a discrediting of love and a preparation "to serve the Leviathan of organization even more devotedly" (280). However, Herzog's own scholarly work on the individual is in a valise, "swelled like a scaly crocodile with his uncompleted manuscript" (207).

The beast imagery in Herzog shows the acceptance of animals that Malin and Klein indicate. Back in Ludeyville, Herzog eats the slices from half a loaf of bread even though a rat left its shape in the other half; the narrator reveals that "He could share with rats too" (2). There is other evidence. Herzog brushes away "the debris of leaves and pine needles, webs, cocoons, and insect corpses" (310). Before he lights a fire, he thinks of the birds or squirrels who might have nested in the flues, but remembers placing a wire mesh over the chimney. The bark of the wood he places in the fireplace drops away and discloses "the work of insects underneath--grubs, ants, long-legged

spiders ran away. He gave them every opportunity to escape" (310). In the basement bathroom he sees "damp-loving grasshoppers" (311) in the same place where he is comforted by the sight of a rose that stimulates his imagination sexually. Dead birds in the toilet cause his heart to ache. He gives the owls perched on the droppings-streaked red valances in the bedroom "every opportunity to escape" and looks for a nest when they are gone; finding the young owls in the large light fixture over the bed, he is "unwilling to disturb these flat-faced little creatures" (312).

A series of animal images and the question of man's relation to other animals are found in the parade of ideas through Herzog's mind. In a remembered story of Scott's Antarctic expedition, the men drink "the blood of one of their own slaughtered ponies" (315), but Amundsen has more success through using dogs and feeding the butchered weaker ones to the stronger ones; Herzog is amazed that the dogs will not eat the flesh of their own kind until the skin is removed. After a strange diatribe about Romanticism, Herzog is "perhaps somewhat sheepish" (318). He tries to solve the problems of eliminating rats with contraception in Panama City. The news of the discovery of a new tribe of apes as the possible ancestors of man discredits one view of man; Dr. Morgenfrue seems to have discovered that man was decended from "a carnivorous-terrestrial type, a beast that hunted in packs and crushed the skulls of prey with a club of femoral bone" (320). Herzog thinks that the new findings question long-held assumptions about sexual and territorial behavior. However unrelated some of these images may seem on the surface, their consideration within such a short span points to some relationship. Without reaching any final conclusions, Herzog

seems to be probing relations within species--dog-to-dog and man-to-man--and between species in order to understand the nature of man more fully.

A clue to his rejection of an exact identification of man and non-human species is given when Herzog dismisses a project for an Insect Iliad for Junie. He is "pale with this heartfelt nonsense" (324), as he makes notes. He plans to turn all of the human characters into animals--the Trojans into ants, the Argives into water-skaters "with long velvet hairs beaded with glittering oxygen," Helen into a beautiful wasp, old Priam into a cicada "sucking sap from the roots and with his trowel-shaped belly plastering the tunnels" (324), and Achilles into "a stag-beetle with sharp spikes and terrible strength, but doomed to a brief life though half a god" (324-25). The reader begins to think of possibilities--of Helen with Madeleine's waspish characteristics, of old Priam with Shapiro's cicada sucking sounds, and of Achilles as a stag-beetle with Gerbach's wooden leg for a weak spot. The narrator, however, gives no evidence that Herzog does this. He abandons the whole project quickly because "he wasn't stable enough, he could never keep his mind at it" (325).

Although his car has "Two Chinese fangs of vapor" (327) coming from the rear, Will expresses genuine human love and concern for Herzog. Herzog explains to Will, as they inspect the house, that a cat is necessary in order to police the fieldmice, of whom he feels "fond" (329) even though they chew up everything, especially liking glue. Recalling his father's phony labels to be pasted on dark green bottles, Herzog remembers that his own choice was White Horse (333). Accepting himself as "a throb-hearted character" and recognizing that "you can't teach old dogs" (330), Herzog decides his own life is no more fantastic than his father's had been, and no one considered Father Herzog

mad. The whole incident of comparing his wives, children, and his Berkshire estate with Father Herzog and his sons deciding the label of the day is seen as gaily resolving the crisis in which Will wants to commit Herzog for psychiatric treatment.[7]

The movement of blackbirds to their nests accompanies Herzog's movement to insight. In the last hours of sunlight, "the hermit thrushes began, and while they sang their sweet fierce music threatening trespassers, the blackbirds would begin to gather in flocks for the night, and just toward sunset, they would break from these trees in waves, wave after wave, three or four miles in one flight to their waterside nests" (339-340).[8]

The loudness of the birds punctuates the changing color of the hills as the sun withdraws. Herzog recognizes the "Something that produces intensity. . . . as birds produce heat" (340) as a prelude to his acceptance of himself in life as it is. He asks, "Is it an idiot joy that makes this animal, the most peculiar animal of all, exclaim something?" (340) and then believe his reaction to be "a sign, a proof of eternity?" (340).

Through the course of the novel, Herzog has moved from the position of a caged beast to a human animal who can be in a loving relationship with his fellow creatures--a Ramona or a rat. He has accepted the animality in his own nature, and the identification of certain secondary characters with particular beasts points to other human characters who also have a certain bestiality in their natures. What Herzog recognizes and expresses is that an important difference distinguishes the human from the non-human beasts.

Mr. Sammler's Planet

In Mr. Sammler's Planet, the protagonist compares his relatives and associates with animals, but he resists his own creatureliness. He is shown as a weak, retreating beast unable to reconcile his knowledge of himself as a murderer who enjoyed his murdering and the brute force in the world that may end civilization as it has been known. With particular force, the beast images reveal the three-way conflict that exists among Sammler, the black pickpocket, and Eisen. An examination of these beast images and metaphors shows the animal-like characters who people Sammler's world and the brutal lengths to which the conflicts among them may drive man, whose human soul is a "poor bird, not knowing which way to fly."[9]

Sammler compares the human beings around him with animals. Croze stands "like a thrush" (206) with his little belly far forward and lifting his trousers above the ankles. Emil, Gruner's chauffeur, has "the wolfish North Italian look" (271). Govinda Lal is a "birdy man" (206), with the "sensitivity of a hairy creature" and "the animal brown of his eyes" (215). Seeing Lal as an individual contrasts with Sammler's earlier imagining of Hindus as always in crowds, "like mackerel-crowded seas" (180). Lal's ideas make him appear as a demon "mentally rebounding from limits like a horsefly from glass" (227). Sammler compares the human inhabitants of a Puerto Rican slum with "plucked naked chickens with loose necks and eyelids blue" (283). Even Lionel Feffer's ability to gather information reminds Sammler "of a frog's tongue. It flips out and comes back covered with gnats" (117).

Sammler's experiences with certain members of the younger generation cause him to reject them, and the rejection is revealed through

beast imagery. He no longer wants young readers and "the helpless vital pathos of young dogs with their first red erections" (40-41). After the rudeness of a part of his young audience in the lecture hall, his rejection is even stronger: "All this confused sex-excrement-militancy, explosiveness, abusiveness, tooth-showing, Barbary ape howling. Or like the spider monkeys in the trees, as Sammler once had read, defecating into their hands, and shrieking, pelting the explorers below" (47).

Members of his own family do not escape Sammler's comparisons of them with animals. His response to Gruner is a positive one. He has been made comfortable by Gruner's financial success; in Gruner's home, he uses "spermy-sandlewood soap," dries himself with a towel "thick as mink" (258) and sleeps under "the silken green luxurious wool of Elya's own afghan" (260). However, he does not see Gruner limited by business considerations: "He was not in that insect and mechanical state--such a surrender, such an insect disaster for human beings" (263). He does dread the breaking of the blood vessel where it is "weaker than cobweb" (262). Gruner's clean-shaven appearance reminds Sammler of "The priests of Apis the Bull, as described by Herodotus, with shaven heads and bodies" (155). This comparison of Gruner with priests of those who worship the animal is positive; however, the metaphor identifies Gruner within the animal realm of which he is necessarily a part.

Other comparisons of family members are less favorable. In his plane, Wallace is "A sultry beetle, a gnat propelling itself through blue acres" (270). Shula is "a scavenger or magpie," and Sammler thinks he knows her ways "as the Eskimo knows the ways of the seal" (177). He thinks she tries to bind him to her partly by what he calls "animal histrionics" (201). Of her keen senses, he thinks "Idiot ingenuous

animal, she had ears like a fox" (204). Her wig is "mixed yak and baboon hair and synthetic fibers" (38). Sammler seems to agree with Gruner's calling his daughter Angela "Bitch" or "Cow!" Her sexuality is "all in Angela's calves" (82). Sammler thinks of her and "that color under the lioness's muzzle"(34) and of her hair "with its dyed streaks like racoon fur" (73-74). Bruch is remembered as "Apelike" (287).

Walter Bruch's voice is described in animal terms: "He gobbled, he quacked, grunted, swallowed syllables" (60-61) His animal-like appearance is a reaction to sexual frustration: "Bruch raised the backs of his short hands to his eyes. His flat nose dilated, his mouth open, he was spurting tears and, apelike, twisting his shoulders, his trunk" (63-64). But however animal-like his appearance and voice, as Sarah Blacher Cohen recognizes, "Bruch's worth for Sammler lies not in his intrinsic being, but as a psychological curiosity and as a catalyst for reflection on more universal themes.[10] Sammler thinks the very ordinariness of Bruch's deviation is exceeded "by individuals like Freud's Rat Man, with his delirium of rats gnawing into the anus, persuaded that the genital also was ratlike, or that he himself was some sort of rat" (65). He thinks of man's desire for the unusual and "Kierkegaard's comical account of people traveling around the world to see rivers and mountains, new stars, birds of rare plumage, queerly deformed fishes, ridiculous breeds of men--tourists abandoning themselves to the bestial stupor which gapes at existence and thinks it has seen something" (66). Sammler thinks of how many people seek to view the extraordinary or themselves "to be the birds of rare plumage, the queerly deformed fishes, the ridiculous breeds of men" (66). As Sammler sees the persons around him, he sees many who do not really

participate in existence but who abandon themselves "to the bestial stupor which gapes." Because they understand only the animal existence, any variety must be achieved within it.

Wallace's negative view of his father is communicated in three specific instances of beast imagery that reveal Wallace as well. He describes his father's aneurysm: "There's a bubble first. Such as lizards blow from the throat, maybe. Then death" (100). He describes his father's struggle against death: "Any fish will fight. A hook in the gill. It gets jerked into the wrong part of the universe. It must be like drowning in air" (102). Sammler objects to Wallace's use of the ancient figure that is "like a dog in the manger" (244) for his father's refusal to tell the location of the hidden money. Wallace understands his father to be withholding information about the money since he cannot enjoy it; Sammler knows Gruner to be unselfish, but Wallace does not perceive the human values in his father that Sammler recognizes.

Wallace's tendency to categorize information and people without concern for the human element is also revealed in animalistic terms. Wallace pursues his interest in the black man's penis even when Sammler wants to drop the subject; he suggests that Sammler think of himself as a zoologist who has never seen a live leviathan, but he knows Moby Dick from the whaleboat, and he asks its specific length and weight. Wallace says women are animals and Sammler agrees that there is "an animal emphasis" (188).[11] Wallace calls his own sister "a pig" and "a swine" (189), and, for therapy, calls a whole list of people "swine."

Dogs and human animals pollute the environment for Sammler. In his resistance of his own creatureliness as it returns to him with "[i]ts low tricks, its doggish hind-sniffing charm" (121),[12] Sammler notes

how much "this local branch of mankind" (119) has to do with dogs. He is careful on the "invariably dog-fouled" paths of New York next to grass plots, the green lights of which are "all but put out, burned by animal excrements" (109). He thinks of the clergy as not beating swords into plowshares, but "converting dog collars into G-strings" (110). He sees old-fashioned derelicts, one "a female bum drunkenly sleeping like a dugong, a sea cow's belly rising, legs swollen purple" (110). The younger bums are "innocent, devoid of aggression, opting out, much like Ferdinand the Bull" (110). He thinks how similar they are to the Eloi of H. G. Wells' fantasy The Time Machine: "Lovely young human cattle herded by the cannibalistic Morlocks who lived a subterranean life and feared light and fire" (110).

Some of Dr. Lal's ideas about mankind, which are similar to Sammler's are revealed in beast images and metaphors. Lal sees the American role in space exploration as being "like a big crow that has snatched our future from the nest, and we, the rest, are like little finches in pursuit trying to peck it" (208). He sees the astronauts as not very heroic, more "like superchimpanzees" (220). Lal compares the human brain capacity and its behavior with that of animals: Man's inability to comprehend what goes on within his head is like the way "a lizard or a rat or a bird cannot comprehend being organisms" (228). Because of his dawning comprehension, a human being may feel "that he is a rat who lives in a temple"; his adaptation as a creature "makes him feel the unfitness of his personal human efforts" (228).

Sammler refers to H. G. Wells' comparisons of man and animals in his statements about the human species. Sammler mentions Wells' book, The War of the Worlds, in which the Martians "treat our species as

Americans treated the bison and other animals, or for that matter the American Indians. Extermination" (213). Sammler tells how unwise men call for blood "or proclaim a general egg-breaking to make a great historical omelet"; he recalls that during World War II Wells despaired of mankind and "compared humankind to rats in a sack, desperately struggling and biting" (217).

Sammler also expresses some of his ideas about man, the animal. He is amazed at man's ability to show up regularly for jobs; "for such a volatile and restless animal, such a high-strung, curious animal, an ape subject to so many diseases, to anguish, boredom, such discipline, such drill, such strength for regularity, such assumption of responsibility, such regard for order (even in disorder) is a great mystery, too" (150). But man's lack of knowledge about death fascinates Sammler. He compares the disappearance in death with birds. Man watches "these living speed like birds over the surface of a water, and one will dive or plunge but not come up again and never be seen any more. And in our turn we will never be seen again, once gone through that surface" (240). At least, if there were no life after death, then, Sammler thinks, "One's ape restiveness would stop" (240). However, in Israel, where he has been drawn to view death, Sammler feels like "a camel among the armored vehicles" (146). He sees dogs eating "human roasts" (253) and the low Bedouin-style tents abandoned by "poor creatures"; the tents are made of plastic crate wrappings, styrofoam and "dirty sheets of cellulose like insect moltings, large cockroach cases" (254).

Animal imagery increases in intensity as Sammler, the black pickpocket, and Eisen move toward the violence that seems inevitable. The relationship between Sammler and the black is complicated by the

conflict of Sammler's emotional reactions to the black, but the complexity of the three-way encounter among the three men, each of whom is seen as animal, is so great that no single interpretation can be final.

Sammler is described in animalistic terms. One of his eyes sees only light and shade; his "good eye was dark-bright, full of observation through the overhanging hair of the brow as in some breeds of dog" (8). His fear is exhibited as his face colors, his short hairs bristle, and his lips and gums sting (9). The action of bristling suggests an animal in fright; a later description of him as "slightly cat-whiskered" (79) suggests the kind of animal. Confronted by the elegant brute in the bus, Sammler's response is "a dry, a neat, a prim face" (10) that shows he is aware of the importance of knowing one's own territory. Remembering the terror of the robbery, Sammler's heart pounds like "an escaping creature racing away from him" (51). Sammler knows that he has not been completely restored to the position of being able to take for granted not being shot to death on the street, "nor hunted in an alley like a rat" (52) as he had feared during his war experiences.

The black pickpocket is also described as an animal: His face shows "the effrontery of a big animal" (9). Sammler is attracted to the "arrogant pickpocket, this African prince or great black beast who was seeking whom he might devour between Columbus Circle and Verdi Square" (18). But Feffer is concerned about the black, "a cat . . . who sounds like a real tiger" (123). The animalistic images are a part of the composite man that Robert R. Dutton thinks has been portrayed in the black pickpocket, and he notes a "variety of Darwinisms (man's animality, survival of the fittest, man's descent) whenever the thief appears."[13] Robert Boyers also recognizes the "primary animal vitality"

of the black thief and that he is "the most potent image of nature" in the novel; however, Boyers concludes that none of the nature images is "generated in a context that espouses the return to nature in an authoritative way."[14]

In Sammler's lobby, the black man, in his "camel's hair coat," is silent: "He no more spoke than a puma would" (53). The black's exposure of his penis is the center of a scene dominated by the power of the black. Sammler sees the phallus through images of a beast, first as a "tube, a snake" (53) and later in memory as "the lizard-thick curving tube in the hand" (69). Its movement suggests to him "the fleshy mobility of an elephant's trunk, though the skin was somewhat iridescent rather than thick or rough" (54). After the exhibit, the black covers himself and smooths "the marvelous steaming silk salmon necktie . . . on the powerful chest" (54). In speaking of the exposure scene, Allen Guttman writes: "The metaphors are like those of a primitive religion. The man displays his sexual organs as if the moment were an epiphany or as if he were a figure from a Greek vase depicting some Dionysian mystery."[15] Sammler is overwhelmed by the black and his exhibition, but later he thinks of the "sensitive elongations the anteater" also has, but that they are "uncomplicated by assertions of power, even over ants" (59).

At the scene of the fight between the black man and Feffer, Sammler sees the "weight of the big body in the fawn-colored suit" (289-90) crushing Feffer. Sammler's consciousness is overwhelmed by the power of the black: "considering the Negro's strength--his crouching, squeezing, intense animal pressing power, the terrific swelling of the neck and the tightness of the buttocks as he rose on his toes.

In straining alligator shoes! In fawn-colored trousers!" (291). But Sammler's request that Eisen do something about the fight culminates in brutality beyond his ability to bear. Eisen tries to explain to Sammler the full implication of going into the fight against the black, but Sammler cannot face Eisen's action any more than he can deny the pleasure he felt as the murderer of another man in the Black Forest, on a day when he was "not entirely human" (143). Daniel Fuchs points out, "Considering the symbolic meaning this act has in Bellow, it strikes us with shattering force, for it is an acknowledgement, as in King Lear, that the world can present an animal pattern."[16]

Emil finds it necessary to remove Sammler from the scene of the fight before the full consequences of calling on Eisen are known. Because of the amputation of Eisen's toes in the war and his consequent crippling, Dutton suggests that Eisen walks "with a shuffling gait in the familiar image of William Butler Yeat's beast in his 'The Second Coming,'"[17] The mindless and merciless violence of Eisen points to a stage in human history to be dreaded, but the seeds of it are in Sammler even though he is unable to face that knowledge.

All parties eagerly await the outcome of the fight, and even with nothing to hear, Sammler has "the sense that something was barking away" (292). After Eisen strikes the black, Sammler's sympathies shift from Feffer. In this switch of sympathies, Cohen sees Sammler move from being the prey of the ignoble savage to becoming the protector of the noble savage.[18] Guttmann sees the sympathy for the black as mysterious. He notes the ambiguous responses, "fear combined with admiration, compassion tinged with terror," and recognizes: "He is certainly attracted as well as repelled, despite the fact that the

sexually potent pickpocket seems to represent all that has gone wrong with modern civilization."[19]

Sammler's response of rage is to wish that Shula and Eisen had been a little less crazy so that they might have remained in Haifa, "those two cuckoos, in their whitewashed Mediterranean cage" (297), but he also pities the "normal" Eisen, "poor dog-laughing Eisen" (297). Sammler moves from his contradictory feelings about Eisen to an expression of general condemnation of the state of being human, and this must necessarily include himself. Only the example of Gruner gives Sammler any encouragement to express a thought he often has, but which he does not feel strongly: "There is still such a thing as a man--or there was. There are still qualities. Our weak species fought its fear, our crazy species fought its criminality. We are an animal of genius" (308).

As Sammler views the world and persons around him, he is like those whom Bruch's sexual perversions cause him to consider, those who gape at the world but do not participate. Sammler gapes. He is even attracted to the black who seems most like the animal part of man's nature that he resists, but he is then unable to acknowledge the particular way in which he has been an actual participant in the brute animal world of man. The ideas of mankind that result from intellectual detachment, real or attempted, are nevertheless revealed in beast imagery. There seem to be harmless ways in which man is like animals, but Sammler's experience points to a brute force beyond the human's ability to conceive. That brute force makes Sammler want to deny completely his creatureliness. Only the goodness of Gruner enables Sammler to see any possibility in the human animal that would raise him above the beast.

Humboldt's Gift

An examination of the beast images and metaphors in Humboldt's Gift shows Charles Citrine struggling within an existence viewed as animalistic with human qualities not developed in any of the other beasts. Two characters in particular, Humboldt and Cantabile, are used to develop the action and the characterization of Citrine. A development not seen to such an extent before this novel about two literary figures is the increased use of animals from various stories.

Citrine's relations with other human beings reveal an attitude toward man as animal. Citrine and his friends--male and female--are compared with animals in mostly unfavorable ways. Although Citrine could better understand himself and his species if he could see how aggression affects the various species in the animal kingdom, very few of his experiences point him toward that understanding. When Humboldt writes Citrine that men are more than natural beings, that they are "supernatural beings,"[20] he reinforces a hope Citrine has about the nature of man that interprets man, in many respects a beast, as belonging to a species different from other animals.

All of the beast imagery connected with Alec Szathmar, Citrine's attorney, contributes to a picture of an unpleasant character with unpleasant ideas about Citrine. Cantabile's unsavory description of him is that he is "always kissing Scheiderman's ass, which is so low that you have to stand in a foxhole to reach it" (169). Because of a weight gain, "he tried to cover his broad can with double-vented jackets. So he looked like a giant thrush" (206). To Citrine, Szathmar suggests "an eighteenth-century cavalryman" with "mutton-chop whiskers" (206). When Citrine objects to Tomchek as his

laywer, Szathmar claims "Why he wouldn't put you in his fishtank for an ornament" (207), that he took the job as a favor. Szathmar sees Citrine as having no heart, "only a sort of chicken giblet" (209). Angry in the bar for Alec's ineptitude in handling arrangements for him, Citrine calls him "stupid, fucking baboon Szathmar" (212).

The court battle with Denise reveals the participants and their actions through beast imagery. The fact that his ex-wife Denise will beat him "like a dog" (224) releases her affection. Pisces seems to be the astrological sign of the judge: "He wore tiny fish cuff links, tail to head" (231). Citrine fears that with his aging, "they wanted to harness him to an even heavier load for the last decade or so" (232). Julius later advises him that if the judge is after him, he and his money are going to be separated "like yolks and whites" (383). Questions are raised about "squirreling away money" and money "suddenly taking wing" (234). Citrine compares Denise's knowledge of his actions and his response to it with beavers visited in the far West: "Along the shore the Forest Service has posted descriptions of the beaver's life cycle. The beavers were unaware of this and went on gnawing damming feeding and breeding" (236). Later he adds a comment about man: The beavers are not affected by posted information about themselves, but "we human beavers are all shook up by descriptions of ourselves" (258).

The animal imagery used to describe Thaxter reveals a complex figure loved but not understood by Citrine. Renata questions Citrine about the animals he and Thaxter are going to save (249) with The Ark, their unpublished magazine. Thaxter, she thinks, "himself is every kind of an animal" (319). Renata correctly perceives that Thaxter, with "his leopard eyes" (246), is Citrine's "private pet" (251).

Citrine happily greets Thaxter, with his "distorted nose and leopard eyes" (252), waiting between the lions in front of the Art Institute, and eagerly pays for sturgeon to feed him well. Thaxter is "either a kindly or a brutal man" (252) and, for Citrine, deciding which is a torment; Thaxter's "big-cat gaze heavier than before, gloomy, and even a touch cross-eyed" (253) does not clarify the man for Citrine.

Citrine grieves to think of Thaxter "in a black cellar with rats" (471) under the power of kidnappers. Thaxter writes during his kidnapping of guns literally held at his head, but the way he writes suggests another meaning for "muzzles," that of all of the brute force in the world: "In these three muzzles I saw the vanity of all the mental strategies for outwitting violence that I had ever entertained" (480). Just as Citrine reaches the conclusion that his thoughts might be damaging to him, so also Thaxter in a different context reaches a similar conclusion about the danger of thinking apart from reality.

Although Denise does not appreciate George Swiebel as a human being, Citrine thinks of him as a help. Denise sees Citrine as like "one of those overbred racehorses that must have a goat in his stall, to calm his nerves" and that George is his "billy goat" (41). Without Swiebel's help, Citrine feels "at the edge of a psychic pond" (49) and that if crumbs were thrown in that his "carp" would come swimming up; once he thinks that it would be civilized to make a park and a garden for the phenomena inside him in which to keep his "quirks, like birds, fishes, and flowers" (49-50). When George is not available, Citrine's tension is expressed in beast terms: "the suspense claws" (50) at his heart. Citrine is speaking of himself as much as any beast when he notes "odd natural survivals" in the heavy industry district

near George's house: "Carp and catfish still live in the benzine-smelling ponds. . . . Woodchucks and rabbits are seen not far from the dumps. Red-winged blackbirds with their shoulder tabs fly like uniformed ushers over the cattails" (63).

Although Swiebel may seem an emotional help to Citrine, his understanding of aggressive tendencies in man does not help Citrine's car or Citrine in his submission to Cantabile. George writes of his experiences in Africa with Naomi's son and Theo, their guide, who is "built like a whippet" (446). George writes that he would rather "meet up with lions than use public transportation" (447) in Chicago. After telling of "two cats" attacking a man on the Jackson Park El and the inability of anyone watching to help, he describes a "glorious" sight in Nairobi, "a lioness jumping on wild pigs" (447). George appreciates the animal attack in Africa but not in Chicago. He sees that there are interspecies differences, but does not think through their significances.

Descriptions of Citrine's experiences with women are intensified by the beast images used. Naomi tells Citrine that there is "no such animal" (303) as the perfect woman he is seeking. Citrine thinks that "on the biological or evolutionary side Renata was perfect. Like a leopard or a race horse, she was a 'noble animal'" (191). Swiebel advises Citrine that although Renata is a "gorgeous chick" (314), she is not a grown-up woman, and that as a race horse, he must use his strength: "Now you're coming down the stretch and it's time to pull ahead" (316).

With Renata in New York City, several beast images mar what were to have been pleasant occasions for Citrine. Renata objects to Citrine's saying of the "dog-catcher taxis" that "They make you feel that you have

bitten someone and are being rushed to the pound, frothing with rabies to be put down" (317). Renata says Citrine's brother sounds like "one of those crazy brutes" (355) entangled in Citrine's life. Renata's sexual climax is "almost fish-like in its delicacy" (361). Citrine sees the elevator in which he rides upstairs as "the luxurious cage" (367).

The beast imagery related to flights from and to Renata reflects Citrine's emotions. The TWA tunnel through which he walks as he leaves for Houston is "like an endless arched gullet" (379). During their trans-Atlantic phone call, Renata reminds Citrine of his remark "about the British lion standing up with his paws on the globe" (403) and that his paw on her globe was better than an enpire. His experience in the flight to her is like being borne by an animal, "trundled out on the bowed eagle legs of the 747, lifted into flight on the great wings, the machine passing from level to level into brighter atmospheres while . . . his head lay on the bosom of the seat" (404). Deplaning in Madrid takes the form of another beast: "The 747, with its whale anterior hump, opened, and passengers poured out" (406)

Beast imagery reveals how Renata deceives the unsuspecting Citrine. It is the old Señora, with "a serpentine dryness about her eyes" (410) and "the peculiar chicken luster of her eyeballs" (411), who meets Citrine. Even though "this tunicate withered bag" (417) knows his situation, her "dry look" does not discourage him; her blink seems "to come from the bottom of her eye upward, like a nicititating membrane" (419). His impression upon arrival is "of a forest, and of a clearing from which a serpent departed" (419). However the tempted Eve never meets him there.

George calls Renata's mother "a real angler" (314). Another suggested angler is Johnson at the Democratic convention in Atlantic City: Huggins and Citrine watched Hubert Humphrey pretending to relax with his delegation while Johnson "dangled him" (321). Even his own brother, Julius suspects Charlie of "angling for some advantage" (354). However, in spite of much evidence of such use of persons by others, Citrine is not able to see how the Señora "dangled him" for the advantage of Renata.

In a novel about two writers, it is appropriate that a number of images come from various literary forms. Two examples of beast imagery relate to Citrine and one to Humboldt. Shocked at the changes in society and the concern even of prisons for education, Citrine says, "The tigers of wrath are crossed with horses of instruction, making a hybrid undreamed of in the Apocalypse" (51). Worried about money, Citrine seriously considers George's proposal for investing in a mine in Africa because "No man ever knew what form his Dick Whittington's cat might take" (243). When Humboldt's plan to get a Princeton chair seems to be succeeding, Humboldt laughs "that nearly silent pant of his, through tiny teeth while a scarf of smoke floated about him. He looked Mother-Goosey when he did this. The cow jumped over the moon. The little dog laughed to see such fun" (135).

Beast images from literature reveal something about Citrine's relationships with three women and also some of his ideas about man. Citrine's reaction to his wife is partly viewed through the beast images related to a dramatic presentation of Rip Van Winkle, where Citrine sees many mothers "being tigresses of the sublest sort" (292). Citrine agrees with those women who resent the portrayal of Mrs. Rip Van Winkle as "the American bitch" (293). He thinks of the higher significance

of Rip's existence and of his ordinary human American right "to hunt and fish and roam the woods with his dog--much like Huckleberry Finn in the territory ahead" (293). Rip's sleep leads him to consider how even semi-conscious humans can hear "the grunting of the great swine empires of the earth" (294).

Renata's relationship with Citrine is clarified through two literary beast images. When Citrine cries in response to Humboldt's letter, Renata reveals through a literary image her inability to deal with his complexity: "These poor mysterious monsters. You work your way down into the labyrinth and there you find the minotaur breaking his heart over a letter" (341). Renata is able to appreciate the body of Citrine that is man, but she cannot understand the head which is in the form of a bull, or the heart. When Renata suggests that Citrine call a friend to arrange for them to have a drink in the VIP lounge, she makes him "feel like the fisherman in Grimm's Fairy Tales, the one whose wife sent him to the seashore to ask the magic fish for a palace," but she denies being a "nag" (378).

A third woman, Rebecca Volsted, the Danish lady who wants to go to bed with Citrine, is rejected by a Citrine wiser in female relationships than he was with Denise or Renata. She challenges the voice coming from his room as being his rehearsal of "the big bad wolf" (437).

Citrine has his own odd sense of what a human being is and does "not have to live in the land of the horses, like Dr. Gulliver" (89). He agrees with Walt Whitman's unfavorable comparison of man with animals; he sees that animals do not whine about their condition (479). He recognizes animals as more limited than man, but feels that the series does not necessarily end with man. He also cannot accept the idea of

being reincarnated as a bird or a fish: "No soul once human was locked into a spider" (90).

In his relationship with the characters thus far indicated, Citrine encounters combinations of the animal in other human beings and in himself as well. Both Thaxter and Swiebel, men who are special animals to Citrine, face directly the violence of brutes, but their reactions differ. The women in Citrine's life supply animal pleasures, because that appears to be the level of his desire. Both Rinaldo Cantabile and Von Humboldt Fleisher are also strong challenges to Citrine at the level of different desires.

Beast images also permeate the accounts of Citrine's experiences with Cantabile. Many of those exchanges are "translated into thoughts" (465), and then the thoughts inform against Citrine. When Cantabile is threatening Citrine with the baseball bats, Citrine remembers "Konrad Lorenz's discussion of wolves. The defeated wolf offered his throat and the victor snapped but wouldn't bite" (81). Citrine knows that humankind is different from wolves, but his memory fails him when he tries to recall "The difference between man and other species such as the wolves" (81). One suggestion that Bellow seems to make with this image is that his society has given this character much information about man's animal nature, but very little, if any, to show how the human species differs from nonhuman animal species. "[T]he interminable universal electronic miaow of the phone" (46) after the threatening Cantabile hangs up and "the usual foxy clauses" (48) in his insurance policy that may prevent his protection against Cantabile's damage--neither of these, nor the mechanistic and legalistic trickery that they indicate about the nature of man, suggest any interspecies differences.

The Cantabiles were known in the Capone era to have been "bad eggs" (64), and Citrine sees an animal in Rinaldo, the latest representative of the family. Cantabile's mustache resembles "fine fur" (80): The black fur of his mustache spread as the lips of his distorted face stretched" (82). Later Citrine calls Cantabile a "mink-mustached bastard" (170) and again, in Stronson's office, notices "his mink mustache" (287). This Cantabile is the sort of low mobster "fished out" (99) of sewers. His driving makes other motorists "chicken out" (88), and he wears boots probably made of "unborn calf" and "equestrian gloves" (99). In the Bath, when Cantabile's pants are down, Citrine thinks of "Zuckerman's apes at the London Zoo" (89).

Cantabile also sees the animal in Citrine, who recalls with pleasure a day in his birthplace, "a day of marvelous spring and a noontime full of the most heavy silent white clouds, clouds like bulls, behemoths, and dragons" (90) and what he takes to be the understanding of the man then living in the house where he was born. Cantabile calls Citrine a "bird-brain" (96) for not understanding what ordinary people know about life.

Cantabile's test of Citrine is expressed in animal imagery. Because Citrine does not "chicken out" (102), Cantabile remembers him "on the catwalk" and admires his "guts" (452). As they drive to the unfinished skyscraper, "the sun like a bristling fox jumped beneath the horizon" (101). The money thrown from the building by Cantabile goes "off like finches, like swallows and butterflies, all bearing the image of Ulysses S. Grant" (102-103).

The mental strain in "the crow's-nest from which the modern autonomous person keeps watch" begins to affect Citrine's appearances;

he is "getting that look of a badly stuffed trophy or mounted specimen" (171) associated with age. A part of the strain is the Cantabile who forces himself on Citrine. He remembers Citrine's telling him of "some pork chop" (172) chasing him down a street and expects Citrine would "be thrilled to waste the buffalo" (173) that chased him.

Citrine recognizes his weakness for persons like Cantabile, since the main character in his play is of his type. That play made money, "the bloodscent that attracted the sharks of Chicago" (173). Humboldt had charged Citrine with stealing his own character for that role. The suggestion seems to be that both men have the animal magnetism that attracts a Citrine and also large numbers of people who enjoy them vicariously through art. Citrine's movie scenario tells the story of Amundsen in another example of an animalistic relationship among men. The Russians exhibit the contents of the suspected cannibal's stomach in Red Square with a huge sign: "This is how fascist imperialist capitalist dogs devour each other" (181). The old man is exonerated by the statement of the young man who loves his daughter: "Think of what our ancestors ate. As apes, as lower animals, as fishes. Think of what animals have eaten since the beginning of time. And we owe our existence to them" (182).

Citrine realizes that Cantabile is "a pet arbitrary," which is better than being "a mere nut" (185). Cantabile suggests a fatal accident for Denise: "Crazy buffaloes are doing women in left and right, so who's to know" (185). When Cantabile recognizes Citrine's response, he calls himself "Wildass Cantabile, a joker" (185). Citrine realizes that he has brought this kind of conversation on himself because he "had rooted and sorted" (186) his way through mankind; he continues the

swine reference when he says his French decoration is "the sort of thing that they give to pig breeders and to people who improve the garbage cans" (187).

The individuals to whom Cantabile takes Citrine also evoke animal-imaged responses. The underworld fence may be one of the "spider-bellied old codgers" with cabañas near the swimming pool to which "young chicks" (98) might be invited. Citrine calls the fence "an old pelican" (100).

The beast imagery used in the Stronson office incident suggests the animal responses of all of the participants. The detective wears a wig which Citrine compares with the "hair pieces like "Skye terriers" (279) waiting for their masters in the changing booths at the Downtown Club. When Cantabile draws a picture of Stronson's corpse being "fished from the sewer," Stronson, who is "given to squealing," responds by "crying in a kind of pig soprano voice" (283). It seems to Citrine that Stronson's "true nature was quickly reclaiming him" (284), and he wonders if it is Stronson's terror that makes his beard suddenly rush out: "long awful bristles were coming up from his collar. A woodchuck look was coming over him" (284). Cantabile is "a queer creature" who seems almost limber enough to twist his head about and preen his own back feathers"; Citrine dismisses him "as ready for the bughouse" (287).

In Europe beast images continue to be associated with Cantabile. In the dusty parlor in Madrid, where Cantabile in his "black lizard shoes" (452) interrupts his peace, Citrine is "as dense in these motes as an aquarium fish in bubbles" (451). Even Cantabile's claim of being "just the breed of dog . . . to protect things like that claim check" (465) reveals his animal nature. Until his mastery of the situation in Europe and in himself, until he is able to function as a man, Citrine

continues to experience the animal in and through Cantabile--to offer his throat to the victor without questioning "the difference between man and other species such as the wolves" (81).

Citrine's memories of Humboldt also contain many beast images that reveal the man and also the limited animalistic way Citrine sees him. Citrine describes the young Humboldt as a whale: "A surfaced whale beside your boat might look at you as he looked with his wide-set gray eyes" (11). The ambiguity of a Moby Dick is suggested by the rest of the description: "He was fine as well as thick, heavy but also light, and his face was both pale and dark. Golden-brownish hair flowed upward--two light crests and a dark trough. His forehead was scarred. As a kid he had fallen on a skate blade, the bone itself was dented" (11). The image of the whale recurs in a later description of Humboldt's gray eyes which seem "more widely separated than ever--the surfaced whale beside the dory" (20). In a head "blearily similar to Humboldt's" (331), Uncle Waldmar's eyes are also "gray and set wide. Within ten miles of Coney Island, perhaps, sucking in and straining tons of water, puffing vapor from his head, there was a whale with eyes similarly positioned" (331). In 1971, the United States declared the commercially-exploited whales to be an endangered species and attempted to protect them by prohibiting by law the importation of all whale products. The poet Humboldt, however, did not have protection in America.

Citrine has many pleasant memories of Humboldt in his earlier days that are related to beast images: Humboldt and Kathleen playing football and the ball in flight wagging "like a duck's tail" (23); the pouncing and attacking of Humboldt's cats, which bounded with "grenadier tails . . . to sharpen their claws on trees" (33); and a later sharp memory

of the sight of Kathleen and Humboldt on their sofa, recalled so fully that he sees "the cats, one with the Hitler mustache, at the window" (368).

However, not all beast-imaged memories of Humboldt are pleasant. There is a similarity between the return of Citrine's painful memories of Humboldt and the revival of the old smells of the slaughter city in the night heat of Chicago. The "stink" of animals "lowing and reeking" haunts the place just as his thoughts of Humboldt haunt Citrine. Through open windows, "the familar depressing multilayered stink of meat, tallow, blood-meal, pulverized bones, hides, soap, smoked slabs and burnt hair come back" (114). Much that Citrine recalls is painful to him, but he stays "on the sofa sinking into the down for which geese had been ravished, and held on to Humboldt" (131).

One memory of Humboldt at Princeton involves Humboldt's use of Citrine. At times Humboldt viewed the pigeons outside his window as Sewell's "agents and spies" (123), and Humboldt's scheming to do something about the posts where Sewell had placed them is revealed in animal terms: "Under the shepherd's plaid of the blanket-wide jacket his back began to look humped (a familiar sign). That massing of bison power in his back meant that he was up to no good" (123). Citrine's lack of concern about Sewell's use of them caused Humboldt to call him a "Yiddisher mouse" (124). For Citrine, Princeton is "a sanctuary, a zoo, a spa with its own choochoo and elms and lovely green cages" (133), and also like "a Serbian watering place" (134). His memory of Ricketts, to whom Humboldt sends him, is especially clear: "the white frieze of his vigorous short hair, his brownish oxheart cherry eyes, the freshness of his face, his happy full cheeks" (134). The word "frieze," in

the sense of a woolen strip, suggests the shearing of Ricketts. In a repetition of Citrine's action, "panhandling squirrels" (134) approach him from all directions outside Rickett's office. Humboldt saw the results as indicative of his idea that the phase of history in which monopoly capitalism could treat creative men like rats was ending. As he remembers his part in those days, Citrine is on his sofa wearing "cashmere socks" (136); the contribution of the goat to Citrine's comfort seems retribution for Citrine's earlier action.

However, the entire episode of the endowment of a chair of poetry for Humboldt resulted in erotic frustration for the man and in creative frustration in his role as poet in America. In approaching Longstaff, a man "who owned a stable of poets," Humboldt hoped to "persuade Longstaff, do in Sewell, outfox Ricketts, screw Hildebrand, and bugger fate" (138). After Longstaff agreed to fund the endowment, Humboldt and Longstaff, who had no feeling for literature, ironically concluded their conversation by talking "about Dante's bird imagery" (139). In his excitement to celebrate erotically, Humboldt rushed to Ginnie, but she had greater concern for her dachshund with a new litter of puppies than for Humboldt's "big cock" (139).

Humboldt's personal life also showed his disintergration. A jealous husband, he watched Kathleen and Citrine talk, "bulging out the coppery webbing of the screen door like a fisherman's strange catch" (149). The consumer of much self-prescribed medicine, he left "[t]he cotton wads of his pill bottles . . . all over the place like rabbit droppings" (150). His physical appearance deteriorated until at the last "he was floundering" in a large suit and his "head looked as if the gypsy moth had gotten into it and tented in his hair" (53).

On that trip when he had last seen Humboldt, Citrine remembers himself in a helicopter like a May fly, "skirring around New York like an ephemerid" (53-54) in a green jacket, and Kennedy playing basketball, nodding "his ruddy, foxy head" (113). Humboldt's last letter to Citrine shows Humboldt's recognition of how he had "loused . . . up" (339) Charlie and his relationship, of his "chattering" from the top of his crazy head, and then of days of depression and silence "in the cage. Grim gorilla days" (339). Citrine sees the evil in the young Humboldt as very small, "an amoeba" (341), but his aged appearance, "like an old bull bison on his last legs" (341), repels Citrine.

As Citrine remembers the deterioration of Humboldt, the beast images continue. Citrine sees Humboldt as an Oklahoma land grabber, "whipping his team of mules and standing up in his crazy wagon," rushing "into the territory of excess to stake himself a claim. This claim was a swollen and quaking heart-mirage" (155). Then, arrested, Humboldt, "fought like an ox" (154); as Citrine imagines it, the poet had probably been "rushed off dingdong in a paddy wagon like a mad dog, arriving foul, and locked up raging!" (155). When Citrine watches George Otway throw himself at the cabin walls in the movie Caldofreddo, he remembers Humboldt's struggle; both actions reflect what he had "seen maddened apes do in the monkey house, battering the partitions with heartrending recklessness" (462). Citrine thinks of the "poor character, poor fighting furious weeping hollering Humboldt" (462).

But Citrine is not able to enjoy the success coming to him while Humboldt's fortunes are going down: the psychiatrist to whom Demmie sent him said that Citrine was depressive, "an ant longing to be a grasshopper" (164), that he could not bear his success. He compares his life

during the production of Von Trenck with that of "The little white terrier, Cato, [who] begged for crusts and snapped his teeth while dancing backward on his hind legs" (152). Citrine would prefer the life of Demmie's pet to his of work, but in protecting and managing him, Demmie was "a tiger-mother and a regular Fury" (151). He thinks that if he were a locust, the sound of the scrape of Demmie's knock-knees would send him soaring over mountain ranges (153). However, Citrine's loss of creativity years after Humboldt's death must be met with more than animal satisfactions.

Humboldt's struggles with and limitations by his human nature are repeated by Charles Citrine, but the two men are different. Citrine has a number of experiences with friends whom he loves like pets. They enable him to understand his own human nature. Both Thaxter and Swiebel suggest responses to violence. Cantabile helps him come to a rejection of a purely animalistic view of man, even as Citrine must come to a rejection of the rather animalistic Cantabile. The most significant help comes from Humboldt, who confirms Citrine in his belief that human nature is different from animal nature.

Conclusion

Animal imagery and metaphor add distinctly to the textures of Herzog, Mr. Sammler's Planet, and Humboldt's Gift. In each novel, the protagonist sees man as animal, but questions the nature of man because there appear to be qualities in him not like other animals. Herzog perceives that difference to lie in man's ability to love. Sammler has only the hint of one man's life left to remind him of the genius

of the human animal; the action in which he is rather hesitatingly involved touches upon the problems of territoriality and aggression. Citrine recognizes man's animal nature, but perceives him to be more than animal; he regains the confidence that man is more than natural. As a novelist, Bellow seems to question not the reality, but the inevitability of war and conflict, and at the same time to recognize the danger in the situation where many do not doubt certain animalistic, even brutalistic, assumptions about man. The potential of man to create can only be freed, Bellow seems to day, through man's use of powers not within his animal nature. Man's human nature must control the animal nature, or brute forces will destroy human possibilities.

NOTES

[1] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 108.

[2] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 154.

[3] John W. Aldridge, "The Complacency of Herzog," Time to Murder and Create (New York, 1966); rpt. in Saul Bellow and the Critics, p. 208.

[4] Marcus Klein, "A Discipline of Nobility: Saul Bellow's Fiction," Kenyon Review, 24 (Spring, 1972); rpt. in Saul Bellow and the Critics, p. 109.

[5] Earl Rovit, Saul Bellow, Univ. of Minnesota Pamphlets in American Writing No. 65 (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1967), p. 13.

[6] Saul Bellow, Herzog (New York: Viking, 1964), p. 9. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[7] Forrest Read, "Herzog: A Review," Epoch, 14 (Fall, 1964); rpt. in Saul Bellow and the Critics, p. 202.

[8] Read, p. 203, considers "the blackbirds gathering in waves to fly to their waterside nests" as the "counterparts in life" to the "skeletons in the watercloset"; he sees water as a source of life as well as of death.

[9] Saul Bellow, Mr. Sammler's Planet (New York: Viking, 1970), p. 7. All further references to this work appear in the text.

[10] Sarah Blacher Cohen, Saul Bellow's Enigmatic Laughter, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1974), p. 182.

[11] Cohen, p. 185, says that Wallace's "denunciations of women . . . sound like Sammler at his most misogynistic."

[12] Cohen, p. 179, says that "The Sammler we observe through most of the novel is more of a hyperactive mind, rarely encumbered by an irksome body or diverted by a waggish one." She cites Kenneth John Atchity, "Bellow's Mr. Sammler": 'The Last Man Given for Epitome,'" Research Studies, 38 (March, 1970), who says that Sammler is so detached from his corporeality that he is not even interested in observing it.

[13] Robert R. Dutton, Saul Bellow, Twayne's United States Authors Series (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1971), p. 161.

[14] Robert Boyers, "Nature and Social Reality in Bellow's Sammler," Salmagindi, 30 (Summer, 1975), 50.

[15] Allen Guttmann, "Saul Bellow's Mr. Sammler," Contemporary Literature, 14, No. 2 (Spring, 1973), 167-68.

[16] Daniel Fuchs, "Saul Bellow and the Modern Tradition," Contemporary Literature, 15, No. 4 (Winter, 1974), 87.

[17] Dutton, p. 161.

[18] Cohen, p. 191.

[19] Guttmann, p. 168.

[20] Saul Bellow, Humboldt's Gift (New York: Viking, 1975), p. 347. All further references to this work appear in the text.

CHAPTER III

DISEASE-DEFORMITY-CANNIBALISM IMAGERY AND METAPHOR

Introduction

In his study of the images used by Saul Bellow in his first five novels and early short fiction, Irving Malin shows that "Bellow often uses images of deformity or disease to express the painful mortality we bear" and that in his traditional employment of such images, he "joins many ancient writers in asserting that the body itself--'shapeless,' clumsy, or crippled--is less beautiful than the will or spirit," but that "It is the necessary 'weight' we carry."[1] Malin discusses images of weight separately from his discussion of images of deformity or disease. In my study, images of weight are discussed in the section on images of movement because of the effect of weight on the ability to move. Malin discusses cannibalism as a separate type of imagery, but his connection becomes the reason for including them in this study with the discussion of deformity and disease imagery: "Bellow associates cannibalism with our 'diseased' condition; people consume each other as the germ consumes the body."[2]

An examination of the disease-deformity-cannibalism imagery used by Saul Bellow in his last three novels reveals the mental condition of his protagonists and communicates something of truth about the nature

of man as he survives in a particular environment. Moses Elkanah Herzog in Herzog overcomes a debilitating mental disease to come to an understanding of human nature that he did not have previously. Mr. Artur Sammler in Mr. Sammler's Planet, as a registrar of the madness and feverishness of his age, is subject to the same violence that infects other men; in his thoughtful age, he questions the madness of mankind even as he is assaulted by it. Charlie Citrine in Humboldt's Gift learns the lesson of Humboldt's life as he rethinks Humboldt's manic depression and its relationship to the creative process in the United States.

Herzog

In the one paragraph Malin devotes to images of disease and deformity in Herzog, he indicates that the movement of the novel is "from the deformed to the well-informed, the diseased to the healthy."[3] Herzog is at first obsessed by the notion of sickness; even the confirmation of good physical health by a medical checkup surprises him. "He continued to think (and remember) in terms of disease: Valentine's wooden leg; the possibility of Wanda's venereal disease; the 'genetic effects of radioactivity'; the 'disfigured breast' of Sandor Himmelstein; the 'body itself, with its two arms and vertical length' as compared to the cross; the 'subjective monstrosity' of people which often matches their physical features; and the wasting away of his mother and the death of his father."[4] Herzog's symbolic healing, according to Malin, is accomplished through cleaning and painting the house at Ludeyville.

The images through which Saul Bellow helps the reader to experience

the kind of movement from disease to health recognized by Malin make Herzog much more than a hospital chart. In two ways Herzog moves to "health." First, he is weakened as an individual by his treatment of others and his own inability to understand the need for the individual to be in a community with others; he finally stops exhibiting his Self and accepts the world as it is. Second, his personal history has made his susceptible to suffering, but he is finally able to challenge intellectual thinking about suffering and pain and stop inflicting suffering on himself. Health in Herzog is most strongly expressed in his Catch-22 acceptance of himself: "If I am out of my mind, it's all right with me" (1).

In the early stages of the action (which must be reconstructed from Herzog's memory of it), Herzog is physically and mentally affected by Madeleine's behavior toward him: "Some people thought he was cracked and for a time he himself had doubted that he was all there" (1). He thinks that Madeleine and Valentine spread rumors "that his sanity had collapsed" (2). He knows that he "had asked to be beaten" and "had lent his attackers strength" (4). He calls his own character "narcissistic," "masochistic," and "anachronistic," but feels he is "not a manic depressive," that there are "worse cripples around" (4). Even allowing for the common belief that man is "the sick animal," he thinks that he is not even "spectacularly sick" or "extraordinarily degraded" (4); he can not allow himself "to feel crippled" (10). Herzog sees Madeleine as a sick woman, a "diseased woman" (37). When Herzog hears the truth about Madeleine and Gersbach ("some awful nuts"), "a dim sick faint feeling came over him. His body seemed to shrink, abruptly drained, hollow, numbed. He almost lost consciousness" (44).

With apparent concern, Herzog accepts the "clinical" view of Dr. Edvig that some of Madeleine's behavior is paranoid: "Toward the sick Moses was always especially compassionate" (56). But he was not compassionate with his mother as she approached death. His mother knew that Herzog could not accept the reality of death and rubbed her palm to show him the natural process of the physical body returning to dust. The image of dust in her hand is not a distorted one, but Herzog's inability to see the ambiguity of life within a process leading toward death is deformed and deforming. Herzog is not "especially compassionate" toward Madeleine either. He attempts to relate Madeleine to Edvig's categories for paranoia, which he studies "like the plagues of Egypt" (77): the slip of paper on which the psychiatrist listed the traits is Herzog's bookmark (90).[5] After categorizing Madeleine as sick, Herzog is able to see that part of her "sickness" is "to be shrewd" (100); although he sees her cunning, he knows "there was also the violence of her hatred, and that hatred had a fringe of insanity" (299). When Herzog thinks he himself is better able to tolerate ambiguity, he uses Dr. Edvig's statement that "neuroses might be graded by the inability to tolerate ambiguous situations" to identify Madeleine's "disorder" as "super-clarity" (304). As long as Herzog uses the psychiatric labels, he cannot see the whole person. His distorted view of personality prevents his seeing the full personhood of Madeleine, Gersbach, Asphalter, or, most important, his own self.

Madeleine very accurately describes Herzog's illness: "It's grotesque how disorganized you are. You're no better than any other kind of addict--sick with abstractions" (123). Evidence also comes from his reconstruction of an evening with Ramona: "Against his will,

like an addict struggling to kick the habit" (156), he would repeat his painful tale of suffering. Only in responding to Asphalter's pain does Herzog become aware of the truth of Madeleine's phrase, "sick of abstractions." Herzog recognizes his attempts to keep human beings within his verbal constructions. Asphalter, in a deep depression after the death of his pet monkey, is "shaking" all of the time except the two hours a week a "headshrinker" keeps him calm. Herzog's conclusion that "consciousness, when it doesn't clearly understand what to live for, what to die for, can only abuse and ridicule itself" (272-73) applies to Asphalter with his sorrow over the death of a monkey and his attempt to follow nonsensical advice and to Herzog with his seeking of reality in language and his many unsent letters. Both Asphalter and Herzog have done what Herzog says the world misleads Asphalter into doing; they have looked "for truth in grotesque combinations" (272), instead of in the ways human beings use one another. Herzog is the healthier of the two men only as he is moving toward the understanding that brotherhood is what makes a man human" (272).

Herzog allows and even helps two men crippled physically by accidents to cripple him emotionally. Sandor Himmelstein is a dwarf and a hunchback, "misshapen from the loss of part of his chest" (79); he was "disabled by a mine" (79) during the war. Although he was "a cripple" (84), he had walked out of the British hospital under his own power. As Sandor's houseguest, Herzog feels that he "should have been in a padded cell" (79) and, later, that he "was going to have apoplexy, to burst" (84); the more comfort Sandor gives him, the closer Herzog feels to death's door. Gersbach has one wooden leg as the result of a train accident; however, he is "undaunted by mutilation" and does

not "sulk because he was a cripple" (219). Sandor says of Gersbach that he "knows what real suffering is" (84). Observing that Madeleine loves Gersbach, Herzog thinks "Oneself is simply grotesque!" (219). Impulsively and painfully, he snatches at ideas, and Professor Hocking's latest book forces him to think that "Subjective monstrosity must be overcome, must be corrected by community, by useful duty" (219). Rethinking how Gersbach and Madeleine cuckolded him, Herzog accepts his role in the situation, that his "idiocy inspired them, and sent them to greater heights of perversity" (192). Both Sandor and Gersbach treat Herzog badly, but they hold up their own responses to their physical disabilities as examples to Herzog. When Herzog is able to recognize the monstrosity of his own masochistic suffering, he can move beyond the limitation of his creative powers of living just as Sandor and Gersbach have been able to overcome physical limitations.

Although Herzog writes in an early note, "Not that long disease, my life, but that long convalescence, my life" (4), he sometimes views himself in terms of disease: As a young Jewish scholar, he was "infected with ambition and the bacteria of vengeance" (234) when he looked away from his books. His memory of his emotional responses at his father's funeral reminds him that he still carries "European pollution, . . . infected by the Old World with feelings like Love--Filial Emotion" (280-81). Even as "a learned specialist in intellectual history, he admits being handicapped by emotional confusion" (106). He wonders why, with his suffering, he survives when others of his generation have not (94), if his life continues so that he might "follow this career of <u>personal relationships</u> until his strength at last gave out" (94).

In his relationships with women Herzog is "most like a convalescent" (5) after Madeleine's damaging of his sexual powers. Through Sono, the woman Herzog left for Madeleine, Herzog made a principled quest for life-giving pleasure, attempting to solve "the puzzle of the body (curing himself of the fatal disorder of worldliness which rejects worldly happiness, this western plague, this mental leprosy)" (170). In his rejection of Sono's happiness, Herzog continues to be infected by the "mental leprosy" of worldliness. Herzog fears that the "asylum" (184) of Ramona might be the "dungeon of tomorrow" (184), in part because of "a case" like poor George Hoberly, Ramona's former lover who rushed "in a fever" (208) to buy gifts for her. Herzog sees Hoberly as submitting "his whole life to some extreme endeavor, often crippling, even killing himself in his chosen sphere" (208).

Herzog experiences great pain as the result of his encounter with reality in the courtrooms in New York. He finds that he is not "immune to lower forms of suffering and punishment" (230). He thinks briefly that he might be having a heart attack: "He felt as though something terrible, inflammatory, bitter, had been grated into his bloodstream and stung and burned his veins, his face, his heart. He knew he was turning white although the pulses beat violently in his head" (230). The easing of the burning in his chest feels "like swallowing a mouthful of poison" (231), but he suspects the poison comes from within himself.[6] Because the suspected evil in himself is transferred to Madeleine and Gersbach, he hurries to Chicago to protect Junie from evil. On the plane, he cannot even stand the sight of health; he "felt incapable of looking into the pretty healthful face" (241) of the stewardess. On the way to Madeleine's house, he claims "the privilege

of insanity, violence" (254) because he has been subjected to so much, including plans for Ludeyville to be "his madhouse" and "his mausoleum" (254). In the insane moment when he imagines killing them, he sweats violently and tastes "copper, a metabolic poison" (255). The sight of the ordinary activities of Madeleine doing dishes and Gersbach lovingly bathing Junie restores Herzog to sanity. As Keith Opdahl says, Herzog "sees that his rage had been another example of what he elsewhere calls 'subjective monstrosity.' He also sees that he had been childish and masochistic, for 'only self-hatred could lead him to ruin himself because his heart was "broken"' (258)."[7]

Herzog finally rejects the crisis psychology that infects his age. He sees as erroneous the view "that the world was in crisis and that desperate measures were needed to cope with it" and "that this erroneous view leads to cures that compound the problem."[8] Opdahl says Herzog becomes aware that "Our retreat from society, our sensationalistic celebration of dread, and our acceptance of violence and obscenity as philosophic truth all derive from our feelings that 'we have to recover from some poison, need saving, ransoming' (54)."[9] And what has brought about Herzog's awareness is his experiencing of the poison communicated in the courtroom and in the thought of murder. Herzog does recover from what seemed like a poison in himself that led him to consider murder as an answer to his problem. He faces the evil in himself that made him consider (however unrealistically in the light of his real character) such a course and can live with his knowledge of himself. He is not the Mithridates he thought about earlier (4) whose body tolerated doses of poison without being destroyed. Not for him is the re-thinking of life engaged in by the liberal thinkers who think

of life as a disease. Their "poison of hope" (4) may mean that hope is a poison or hope is poisoned. Either way misses the direction a healthier Herzog is heading.

Both physical and emotional suffering are involved in Herzog's afternoon with his daughter. Moses' "happiness was painful" when June kissed "her careworn, busted, germ-carrying father" (274) on the lips. He thinks of himself as "an apparition who faded in and out of the children's lives" (280), but hopes that he will not impart to them "that tremulous lifelong swoon of death" (280). When the wreck occurs,[10] he knows June is "not hurt, only frightened" (281). His physical reaction is clear: "He lay over the wheel, feeling weak, radically weak; his eyes grew dark; he felt that he was losing ground to nausea and numbness. . . . He notified himself that he was passing out, and he fainted away" (281). He thinks of how he must appear to June: "His face felt bloodless, hollow, stiff, its sensations intensely reduced, and this frightened him. From the prickling of his hair at the roots he thought it must be turning white all at once" (282). He feels vulnerable and hears in the voice of one of the policemen "that note of deadly familiarity that you heard only when immunity was lost" (282).

Herzog fears the impact that he and his suffering will have on June and Marco. Several childhood memories of events that have affected him sweep through his mind: One memory is that of a frightening childhood sexual attack. Another is an expression he remembers from the good Christian lady in the hospital, "Suffer the little children to come unto me" (289). Another is a piece of advice, "to forget what you can't bear" (289). He knows that "it's true you can't go on transposing one nightmare into another" (289), that some kind of toughening is necessary,

and yet in spite of the fact that he loves his children, he fears that he brings them nightmares in the memories of himself that he gives them.

As a child, Herzog was schooled in grief; he still knows "these cries of the soul. They lie in the breast, and in the throat. The mouth wants to open wide and let them out" (148). Herzog knows that what happened during the war abolished his Jewish father's claim to exceptional suffering, because of "a more brutal standard now, a new terminal standard now, indifferent to persons" (148). However, even if, according to the new standards, the personal histories are not worth remembering, he must remember them. Because so many go down in terrible pain, physical suffering seems not to matter to anyone and even moral suffering is denied. But Herzog knows that he is "still a slave to Papa's pain" and to his memory that his father's "I had such dignity" (149). Herzog cannot deny the power of human personality. His standard seems to be "the majestic nineteenth century individualist combined with the religious Jew."[11]

One reason that Herzog suffers then is that, in the face of modern thinking which denies human value, he insists that the human individual matters. But the thinking of the time, his associates, and his own weakness cast doubt on his attempt at proof. Herzog's associates seem determined to destroy his sense of his own individuality through what he calls "this primitive cure, administered by Madeleine, Sandor, et cetera" (93). Analytic thinking holds that one's "poor, squawking, niggardly individuality--which may be nothing anyway . . . but a persistent infantile megalomania" (93) must be sacrificed. Herzog recognizes that it may be a "fantasy" or a "mad idea" that makes his own actions seem to have historic importance and that people who harm him

are interfering with an important experiment. Although this may sound like a "delusion of grandeur," Herzog's real concern is the modern question of "ordinary human experience" (106). Although he wants to improve the human condition, Herzog, "a frail hopeful lunatic" (106), finds himself drinking milk to quiet his stomach and drown his unquiet mind. When he cannot fall asleep, he resorts at last to "taking a sleeping pill, to preserve himself" (107).

Herzog cannot understand what the poet Nachman, his childhood friend, tells him of the limitation of the individual modern man. He remembers Nachman as "slack from illness, suffering, and absurdity" (130), and Laura, his wife, who "was not too strong in the head either" (130). In his visions of judgment, Nachman sees mainly "the obstinacy of cripples" (134), the stubborn persistence of man in retaining his "secret quality": Man, he says, "will turn the universe upside down, but he will not deliver his quality to anyone else. Sooner let the world turn to drifting powder" (134). Although Nachman calls Herzog "blind," he recognizes his good heart. However, "it is Herzog's defense of his Self that leads to his masochistic posturings."[12]

In one of his last letters, Herzog reveals his relation to his own suffering when he says, "the advocacy and praise of suffering take us in the wrong direction and those of us who remain loyal to civilization must not go for it" (317). He dismisses suffering and says that he has had all the monstrosity he wants. He thinks that the love of suffering breaks people, pain destroys them, and then death is a total defeat. He explains his own suffering as being like that of people of powerful imagination, who, "given to dreaming deeply and to raising up marvelous and self-sufficient fictions, turn to suffering sometimes to

cut into their bliss, as people pinch themselves to feel awake" (317). He takes no moral credit for his suffering, but is willing without more of it to open his heart. He refuses to be a thing, but "simply a human being" (317). In another letter, one to Nietzche, Herzog writes, "I also know you think that deep pain is ennobling, pain which burns slow, like green wood, and there you have me with you, somewhat. But for this higher education survival is necessary. You must outlive the pain" (319).

And Herzog survives the pain. He realizes his ages of experience with anguish, but in his "unusually free condition of mind" he discards his selfhood, "the life that exhibits itself, a real plague" (323-24). He is no longer the poor "dizzy spook!" (324) who holds himself as an exempler. Clayton says the word "'Spook' is accurate, for the man bound to his ego is not living in the flesh but in mental constructions."[13] Herzog is now living in reality, not in a world of his verbal creations.

When Herzog finally recognizes his freedom from the Madeleine he had constructed, he thinks of the joy it is "to have her removed from his flesh, like something that had stabbed his shoulders, his groin, made his arms and his neck lame and cumbersome" (313). It is almost as if a thorn in his flesh (and a large one) is removed.

After the wreck, Herzog sees Will's doctor, has his broken rib taped[14] and the cut stitched, and is told not to strain himself. Herzog feels himself rotating like the lights, "as the doctor wound the medicinal-smelling tapes tightly around his chest" (307-308). He may no longer be a spook, but he is still dizzy. He still does not understand "that mysterious creature, that Herzog! awkwardly taped, helped into his wrinkled shirt by brother Will" (380), nor does he understand

his brother, whose love provides him with physical protection. Herzog's chest is "securely armored in tape" (308).

However, Herzog must take the step that assures him mental health. When Will suggests Herzog go to the hospital for a few days, Herzog agrees it would be pleasant to have "clean sheets and a bath and some hot food. Sleep" (332). But when it turns out that he would be given "supervised rest," he rejects the suggestion of another psychiatrist. He decides not to go to the hospital because "it would be just the wrong thing to do. It's about time I stopped laboring with this curse" (333). The curse Herzog rejects is self-inflicted suffering.

Images of cannibalism in the novel support the movement to health in Herzog. Herzog's intellectual responses to a work by Banowitch shows the direction of his change of attitude. In the first, Herzog's response is realistic but light. He thinks of the "creepy mind" of Banowitch, "seeing all power struggles in terms of paranoid mentality . . . that madness always rules the world" (77) and seeing a "vision of mankind as a lot of cannibals, running in packs, gibbering, bewailing its own murders, pressing out the living world as dead excrement" (77). As he approaches a healthier state, Herzog more directly rejects the "gruesome and crazy book" as "inhuman" (316). In particular, he rejects some of its "vile paranoid hypotheses. . . that crowds are fundamentally cannibalistic. . . . . that smiling teeth are the weapons of hunger, and that the tyrant is mad for the sight of (possibly edible?) corpses about him" (316). Herzog accepts the idea that "the making of corpses has been the most dramatic achievement of modern dictators and their followers (Hitler, Stalin, etc.)" (316).

The idea of consuming either the body or the spirit of man is shown

by Simkin, by Herzog, and by the community of Ludeyville. Herzog's tirade against his situation causes Simkin to tell Herzog that he should "take it easy. . . . You eat yourself alive" (217). A story Herzog tells his son seems to deal with animals, but actually it says something about man. The men in Scott's Antarctic Expedition were thankful to thaw and drink the frozen blood of one of their slaughtered ponies, but the Amundsen group was successful because they used dogs instead of ponies and fed the butchered weaker dogs to the stronger ones. Herzog is impressed by the fact that "the dogs would sniff at the flesh of their own and back away. The skin had to be removed before they would eat it" (315). The story suggests that animals do not knowingly consume their own kind. Herzog's experience with humans makes him wonder at the story. For a time Herzog avoids going into Ludeyville in order not to have to answer questions, because "the grotesque facts of the entire Herzog scandal had been overheard on a party line and had become the meat and drink of Ludeyville's fantasy life" (318); in his letter to Nietzsche he again refers to the idea that "humankind lives mainly upon perverted ideas" (319).

Even with the perverted ideas about man that are current in his time, the ideas about suffering that he disagrees with, and the potential for hurt that can come to a man who feels, the healthy Herzog returns to civilization, refuses the protective role of a hospital, and renews his relationship with Ramona. When Herzog is able to affirm his faith in life, Bellow shows the end in him "of the two diseases with which society--and Herzog--are infected: the romantic glorification of the self and the devaluation of the self; Faustian striving and the self-contempt of them who, not finding paradise within, see a wasteland both within and without."[15]

The images of Herzog portray a physically healthy man of strong feelings who is sometimes overcome physically by the impact of events on him--hearing about the divorce, hearing about the infidelity of Madeleine, being injured in the car wreck. His mental suffering, however, whether imposed by himself or by others, is of even more importance than the physical in revealing his character. His disease "of abstractions" points to the strength of language in controlling his life. When he can reject the verbal constructions about suffering that his age has given him, he can respond to the world as it is and to himself as "a throb-hearted character" (330).

Mr. Sammler's Planet

Images of disease, deformity and cannibalism appear in Mr. Sammler's Planet, but they are even less related to the physical than are those in Herzog. All of the characters are seen in terms of the "normalcy" of Mr. Sammler, "confidant of New York eccentrics; curate of wild men and progenitor of a wild woman; registrar of madness" (122). They are the "contraries" that assail him and the "aberrancies" that storm him. As Mr. Sammler is "drawn back from disinterestedness to creaturely conditions" (22), the postures of the other characters mock him. In this section, the ways in which the positions Mr. Sammler assumes "are mocked by their opposites" (122) will be examined. Because of Sammler's age and personality, the images Bellow creates to reveal him are more mental than physical.

Sammler is aware of his nervous and physical condition. During the war, he had been hurt; both his eye and his nervous system had been damaged. Although he can only distinguish light and shade with his

left eye, he does not "have the look of blindness" (9). The pain from his nerves--his "nerve-spaghetti, as he thought of it"--is greater: "He felt a constriction, a clutch of sickness at the base of the skull where the nerves, muscles, blood vessels were tightly interlaced" (9). The result of the damage to his nervous system is devastating: "Fits of rage, very rare but shattering, laid him up with intense migraines, put him in a postepileptic condition. Then he lay most of a week in a dark room, rigid, hands gripped on his chest, bruised, aching, incapable of an answer when spoken to" (31). Sometimes provocations make him witty, but these witticisms often signal "the approach of a nervous fit" (97); his impatience "sometimes borders on rage. It is clinical" (231). It is only as he feels "disembodied" that Sammler can feel sympathy for "how much these new individuals suffer" (231).

Sammler's awareness of himself continues as he watches the Negro's theft. He even knows the name, tachycardia, to apply to his own condition: "Too much adrenalin was passing with light, thin, frightening rapidity through his heart. He himself was not frightened, but his heart seemed to record fear, it had a seizure" (51). His hard breathing and inability to get enough air make him think he will faint. After the tachycardia, "he was able to walk, though not at the usual rate" (51). Although age is a factor, his doctor nephew recognizes that Sammler is not "a sickly type, apart from . . . nervous trouble" (88-89).

Sammler remembers being an unkind boy. A joke in his family is that as a little boy he used the hand of a servant, with "odd lumps in her gums," to cover his mouth in order to avoid getting germs on his own. His experiences in the intervening years, however, have removed

any protection he might have assumed were his privilege. Visiting his dying nephew Elya, he is "[m]eticulously, the sickroom caller" (83). Sammler feels that his and Shula's war experiences were deforming, and he apologizes for what he considered his "deformity" (233). However, he feels he suffers one disease in common with many who have a certain "poverty of soul" (283): "The disease of the single self explaining what was what and who was who" (283-84).

Sammler's love for Elya causes him to fear the loss his death will be. As he goes to Elya, there is a tightness in Sammler's heart: "The remedy was fuller breathing, but he could not get his chest to rise and fall. Something had locked it" (284). He drinks a glass of vodka as his "First aid for the old" (284). Sammler recognizes that Elya is a better man than he could ever hope to be.

Elya Gruner, Sammler's uncle and the only person in the entire novel who has a physical illness that will prove fatal within the limits of the novel, is "a wonderful patient" (83); he is "completely in the surgeon's hands" (84). Sammler knows that Gruner understands his physical situation, that he has "in his head a great blood vessel, defective from birth, worn thin and frayed with a lifetime of pulsation. A clot had formed from leakage. The whole jelly trembled. One was summoned to the brink of the black. Any beat of the heart might open the artery and spray the brain with blood" (85). In the face of his death, Gruner is determined to be one of the "cases of final gallantry" (85).

The medical profession to which Elya delivers himself for care is presented rather negatively. His Big Nurse presides impersonally over his health: "Under her starched cap the dyed dry hair was puffed out. The face itself, middle-aged, was fleshy, healthy, bossy. The eyes

had an expression of sovereignty. Patients would be brought along the way that they must go: recovery or death" (154). Doctors even are a part of the breakdown of society. Elya has done his duty even though he never wanted to be a physician, but Sammler has heard of other doctors "who rejected the oath, who joined the age" (166). Sammler thinks of the hospital as "that dreary place" (261) and even of surgery as "physically peculiar" (286); not everyone could "enter an unconscious body with a knife" and "take out organs, sew in the flesh, splash blood" (286). "The protective instinct" (286) that Sammler attributes to Elya in his relationship with Emil is not related to his medical practice.

Sammler sees Eisen, Shula's former husband, as a madman crippled by war. Eisen had been wounded at Stalingrad and then "With other mutilated veterans in Rumania, later, he had been thrown from a moving train" (27-28). When he had frozen his feet, his toes were amputated. He was not angry with the Russians, but even in the early days of his marriage, he was violent with Shula. Eisen said he hit her because she went to Catholic priests and because she was a liar; Sammler concludes that paranoiacs "are more passionate for pure truth than other madmen" (30). When Eisen came to New York, Sammler says he is "too violent" (68), that his paintings are made by an "insane mind and a frightening soul" (68), that his subjects look like corpses, "with black lips and red eyes, with faces a kind of leftover cooked-liver green" (68). Sammler even accepts Eisen as "a cheerful maniac" (69) whose ideas about power and money will probably succeed in the modern world, but when Eisen attempts to paint the dying Elya, Sammler concludes "He was one of those smiling gloomy maniacs" (159), and that

his "smart silk suit . . . might have made a satisfactory coffin lining" (159). Sammler thinks Eisen has come far from being a victim of Hitler and Stalin, when he had been "deposited starved to the bones on Israel's sands; lice, lunacy, and fever his only assets" (172), but when Eisen strikes the black, Sammler sees him again "as a war victim, even though he might anyhow have been mad," who belongs in the mental hospital, as a "[h]omicidal maniac" (297). Sammler thinks if he had been a little less crazy he might have stayed in Haifa.

For Sammler, Walter Bruch, with his "light case of fetishism" (65), is a part of the "sexual madness" (70) that is overwhelming the western world. Bruch has a relationship with a refined lady, so he seems to be operating with a double standard. Angela, who shares with Sammler everything she tells her psychoanalyst in the post-analysis she inflicts on Sammler, seems to have only hedonistic standards (if any) in her sexual behavior. The emphasis on sex as a standard is shown through the response of the young at Sammler's lecture, the assumption of sexual force as definitive by the black and by Feffer's excited response to the black's exhibition. Wallace, who sometimes expresses ideas similar to Sammler's, thinks of homosexuality as "a disease" (189), and he says "this boom in faggots was caused by modern warfare" (189) and the desire of some men to escape to the relative safety of being women.

The fever of the age affects both of Gruner's children. Wallace "caught a tearing fever" (92) for horses, football, hockey, and baseball; his fever is contrasted with the number of occupations that he nearly enters. Sammler thinks of Wallace as genuinely loony: "for him it required a powerful effort to become interested in common events.

This was possibly why sporting statistics cast him into such a fever, why so often he seemed to be in outer space" (97). Wallace agrees with Sammler about the foolishness of a person burning himself out "with neurotic fever" (106). Angela's "psychiatric-pediatric" (156) explanation for Wallace is that he felt rejection from the first because she never liked him and his "terrible fits of rage" (157). Angela herself can be "furious" (303) and Sammler recognizes her "feverish look" (303) as they discuss Horricker.

Sammler feels that young people are responding "in defiance of a corrupt tradition built on neurosis and falsehood" (40), but that they also evidence neuroses. Even Feffer is "in psychiatric treatment" (43). Feffer sees the insanity of the political realm when he refers to "all those guys running for mayor like a bunch of lunatics" (125). However, not only the young are affected by madness. All of mankind fear the future: "And in the meantime there was the excuse of madness. A whole nation, all of civilized society, perhaps, seeking the blameless state of madness. The privileged, the almost aristrocratic state of madness" (93). Even Sammler was so deeply affected by "the madness of things" (146) that he had to go to Israel during the Six Days War: "The persistence, the maniacal push of certain ideas, themselves originally stupid, stupid ideas that had lasted for centuries, this is what drew the most curious reactions from him" (146).

Sammler thinks of madness in several ways: as an attempt by a controlled mankind to experience liberty, as a performance beneath which there persists a sense of the normal, and as a part of an attempt to serve mankind and imagination with special distinction. For him, madness is "a masquerade, the project of a deeper reason, a

result of the despair we feel before infinities and eternities" (152), and he concludes that "Madness is a diagnosis or verdict of some of our greatest doctors and geniuses, and of their man-disappointed minds" (152).

In a sense, Sammler in his creatureliness is one of the "man-disappointed minds" to which he objects. However imperfectly realized they are in action, three characters in the novel--Eisen, Shula, and Wallace--suggest the three forms of madness which he considered. Eisen exhibits the madness Sammler describes as "the attempted liberty of people who feel themselves overwhelmed by giant forces of organized control. Seeking the magic of extremes. Madness is a base form of the religious life" (150). Shula, with her histrionics and her care for her father, exhibits the form of madness which is "a matter of performance, of enactment. Underneath there persists, powerfully too, a thick sense of what is normal for human life. Duties are observed. Attachments are perserved" (150). Wallace in his desire to do the extraordinary may not be serving mankind nobly, but he is attempting to work out his own means of using his imagination. It may be that Sammler dismisses modern man's "fever of originality" and "idea of the uniqueness of the soul" (232) because he cannot see the uniqueness of each of these characters.

As he moves to the universal, Sammler wonders if there are not true cures for the "weaknesses and these tenacious sicknesses" (178) of mankind. He decides "You could rearrange, you could orchestrate the disorders" (178), but that men merely fool themselves by changing the words or categories to describe the human condition. Men erroneously think, "Change Sin to Sickness . . . and then enlightened

doctors would stamp the sickness out" (178). Another way in which man changes the description without touching the disease is in the area of racial prejudice and the change to the "idea of the corrupting disease of being white and of the healing power of black" (37). Sammler thinks how human nature does not change even though appearances do. He compares New York City with ancient Babylon and thinks how great cities are whores, different only in appearance: "Penicillin keeps New York looking cleaner. No faces gnawed by syphillis, with gaping noseholes as in ancient times" (167). He thinks the relationship between power and sanity must be clarified; great power makes "its own madmen by its own pressure" and that power corrupts, but it needs to be understood "that having power destroys the sanity of the powerful. It allows their irrationalities to leave the sphere of dreams and come into the real world" (221-22).

There are only three direct references to cannibalism in this novel. Sammler thinks about the "bad literalness" that comes with the loss of meaningful life--Elya's, or his own, or that of another: "Endless literal hours in which one is internally eaten up. Eaten because coherence is lacking. Perhaps as a punishment for having failed to find coherence. Or eaten by a longing for sacredness. Yes, go and find it when everyone is murdering everyone" (96). Sammler thinks of the power of those in authority to kill and of Stalin, "for whom the really great prize of power was unobstructed enjoyment of murder. That mighty enjoyment of consuming the breath of men's nostrils, swallowing their faces like a Saturn. This was what the conquest of power really seemed to mean" (148). Man's ability to escape from that power is part of Dr. Lal's reasoning in favor of going to the moon: "If we

could soar out and did not, we would condemn ourselves"; the species is "eating itself up" (222). The cannibalistic images suggest man is destroyed by himself when he is imprisoned mentally in meaninglessness, by blood-thirsty men when he is under their political power, or by lack of hope if mankind is condemned to be imprisoned when space is open for him to escape.

The madness of the New York Scene swirls around Mr. Sammler, who is set up as normal. However, he murdered a man during the insanity of World War I and still remembers the pleasure that that violence gave him. He reacts against the sexual madness of the age and its particular practitioners, but his own curiosity in the face of the black's exhibition is unresolved. It is the sexual madness and the insanity of power (the power of life and death) that most mocks the positions Mr. Sammler has taken. The personally unresolved positions of Mr. Sammler in these two areas also mock the intellectual ideas he has reached about sexual behavior and the violence of the age. Through his intellectual attempts, in these two areas, Sammler may have displaced his criticism of himself and consequently cannot see those near him--especially Shula, Eisen, and Wallace--as persons attempting to deal with the problems of sex and violence. Bellow has not used Sammler to write an essay on sex and violence but to show a character emotionally incapable of handling the subjects he can treat intellectually.

Humboldt's Gift

In Humboldt's Gift, images of disease and deformity are used to show the situation of a creative writer as it comes to be better

understood by another writer who is too paralyzed to write. The cannibalistic images show how the first writer is destroyed by his society and how the second writer is almost consumed in the legal proceedings in which his ex-wife involves him. This section will examine Charles Citrine and his movement toward health (creativity) as he remembers Von Humboldt Fleisher, a poet deformed and destroyed by himself and his society, and as he encounters experiences that cause him to question his own condition.

In his self-diagnosed manic depression, Humboldt portrays the poet who is destroyed by lack of appreciation in the United States. As Citrine re-thinks Humboldt's decline and ultimate decay, he is able to draw from the life of the poet truths which help him overcome the stasis in his own creative life. When he understands Humboldt and poetry better (that poetry has to be a force in the world) and accepts his own need to move in the direction of the spiritual, Citrine receives the gift of inspiration from Humboldt's life and the script which encourages him to tell truth even though the form in the contemporary world must be comedy.

Citrine is aware of Humboldt's insanity: "The pathologic element could be missed only by those who were laughing too hard to look" (6). However, Citrine's reinterpretation of a poem by Humboldt helps him to understand the man in a different way. The new understanding comes in "one of those ecstatically painful moments" (112). An earlier reading of the poem caused Citrine to think "those shock-treatment doctors have lobotomized him, they've ruined the guy" (111). Now he thinks that he understands Humboldt's message, that perhaps he was "never more sane and brave than he was at the end of his life" (112).

Remembering that insight, Citrine finds himself "getting hot with self-criticism and shame, flushing and sweating" (112). He transfers his anger to "successful bitter hard-faced and cannibalistic people" (118) who feel that poets are powerless and exist solely to show how the best of men cannot succeed in this world.

As Citrine meditates in order to reach large truth, his "heart hurt" (147) from remembering the human nonsense of Humboldt, who had early tapped his affection and admiration. Citrine knew "This hemorrhage of eagerness would weaken me and when I was weak and defenseless I would get it in the neck" (14). When Citrine's play was successful, Humboldt did picket with a sign, "as though it were a cross," on which were written in mercurochrome on cotton the words "The author of this play is a traitor" (15). Although Citrine was not vindictive, he was left "wounded, trembling" (15). Citrine thought how "All the talent in New York seemed to be in the melodrama enacted by feverish, delirious Humboldt" (152). However, Citrine remembered Humboldt with love: "Even when the decay was raging there were incorruptible places in Humboldt that were not rotted out" (240).

One step in the development in Humboldt's disease was an attempt to achieve a tenured chair at Princeton. Humboldt asked Citrine not to "poison" his mind with thoughts that his plan might not succeed. Humboldt feared that what Citrine was saying would "infect" (128) his future. The remembered experience is vivid. Citrine "felt the warmth or fever of his cheeks" (133) and when he returned, Humboldt was waiting "in a fever" (134). Humboldt thought "you could be gaga in a tenured chair at Princeton" (136) and no one would notice. Citrine sees that Humboldt's reason was "coming and going in shorter cycles"

(146), that he was "Manic and it was best to let him be" (136). As Citrine envisions Humboldt in the office of Longstaff, "a greatness freak" (138), Humboldt "must have been swooning with wickedness and ingenuity, swollen with manic energy with spots before his eyes and maculations of the heart" (138).

Humboldt exhibited another aspect of his manic excitation in his trips "to express himself" (160) in the offices of his lawyers and psychoanalysts, who were delighted with the poet he was. Everyone looked forward to seeing the poet: "Then the poet arrives, stout and ill but still handsome pale hurt-looking terrifically agitated, timid in a way, and with strikingly small gestures or tremors for such a large man. Even seated he has leg tremors, his body is vibrating. At first the voice is from another world. Trying to smile, the man can only wince. Odd small stained teeth control a trembling lip" (160). His manic excitation thrilled his audiences; he was different from their usual clients and patients, which endless "conveyor belts of sickness or litigation poured . . . into these midtown offices like dreary Long Island potatoes" (161).

Citrine remembers the changes that took place in Humboldt and partly understands why they took place. Citrine remembers how at first he and Humboldt "had such marvelous talks only touched a little by manic depression and paranoia" and then the way in which "the light became dark and the dark turned darker" (159). Humboldt knew the young Citrine was "quite a nut" (3) about his intense desire to do good, but toward the end, the "[s]ick and sore" Humboldt stressed the contradiction between his idealism and the big money Citrine was making. In his revision of the ideas of others to correspond with

his own attitude toward manic depression, Humboldt felt that the power of a manic depressive was irresistible. He disagreed with Tolstoy's idea that great men and kings are history's slaves, but that "kings are the most sublime sick" and that "Manic Depressive heroes pull mankind into their cycles and carry everybody away" (7). Citrine saw that Humboldt did not impose his cycles for very long, because "Depression fastened on him for good. The periods of mania and poetry ended" (7). Citrine felt the Times obituary picture of Humboldt showed the end of a sublimely sick king: "It was one of those mad-rotten-majesty pictures" (118). It showed, Citrine felt, "the Bellevue Hospital Humboldt" (118). As he aged, Humboldt's face showed a look of disappointment and doubt. He said his "frantic profession" (120) caused the brown circles under his eyes and "the bruised sort of pallor in his cheeks" (120). He felt that "a persecution complex develops" (120) when the poet feels that people are not supportive of him and that he therefore loses the self-respect which is so important in the profession of poetry. In that power struggle, Humboldt was a loser: "Mania and depression drove him to the loony bin" (120) during his declining days.

Even though Humboldt had not imposed his own manic cycles on history, he had had an effect on Citrine, who was diagnosed by his own psychiatrist as "a guilty anxious man. Depressive" (164). As he meditates on his own padded sofa, Citrine is "holding tight" (159) in his own analysis of Humboldt and then in his self-analysis. As he thinks about the way in which his "stout inspired pal declined and fell" (136) and what he could do about talent in his own day, Citrine realizes that his problem is "to prevent the leprosy of souls" (136) that seemed to have affected Humboldt.

Remembering weakness in Humboldt when he was arrested throws Citrine "into despair" (155). The physical wrestling of Humboldt to the ground and forcing him into the paddy wagon and then into jail seems to Citrine like a part of the battle between art and America. Citrine wonders if "poets like drunkards and misfits or psychopaths, like the wretched, poor or rich, sank into weakness" (155). Because poetry is not a force in the modern world, Humboldt "threw himself into weakness and became a hero of wretchedness" (155). When he resorted to violence in chasing Magnasco, Humboldt reveals his entire life as lacking in real power in the same way that poetry is lacking in real power in the contemporary world.

In his letter to Citrine, Humboldt admits his own loss of mental capacity, his inability to read poetry, much less to write it, and his anger at Citrine because Citrine expected him to be the poet who would reveal "the three-fourths of life that are obviously missing!" (340). Humboldt's recognition that "if the intellect can't digest meat (the Phaedrus) you coddle it with zwieback and warm milk" (340) causes Citrine to remember the old, sick and weak Humboldt eating a pretzel the last time he saw him alive. Citrine appreciates that Humboldt had to break out of his case of hardened madness to write the letter, that it might have been as difficult for him to come back from the madness he had emigrated into as it would be for someone "to go from this world to the spirit world" (373). In a second comparison, Citrine says Humboldt "made a Houdini escape from the hardened projections of paranoia, or manic depression, or whatever it was" (373).

Citrine knows that there is "the most extraordinary unheard of poetry buried in America, but none of the conventional means known to

culture can even begin to extract it. But now this is true of the world as a whole. The agony is too deep, the disorder too big for art enterprises undertaken in the old way" (477). Humboldt's "heartbreak and madness" is a conclusive performance for Citrine, proving that "mankind must cease the false and the unnecessary comedy of history and begin simply to live" (477).

The physical sickness of Renata's seven-year-old son, Roger, is paralleled by the emotional sickness that Citrine feels at being deserted by Renata. Roger's sickness reminds Citrine of his own experience as a child in the TB sanatorium. Any pleasure but that of the presence of his family "was depressing joy" and Citrine sees himself again in a Roger "pale with fever" (412). Roger is "in that feverish beautiful state of pale childhood when we are beating all over with pulses--nothing but a craving defenseless greedy heart" (423). Citrine remembers the condition. As he misses Renata, Citrine undergoes "a major attack" of his lifelong trouble, "the longing, the swelling heart, the tearing eagerness of the deserted, the painful keenness of infinitizing of an unidentified need" (414).

It is further pain to Citrine to realize that money will always be available to the undertaker Flonzaley who marries Renata: "The course of nature itself was behind him. Cancers and aneurysms, coronaries and hemorrhages stood behind his wealth and guaranteed him bliss" (417). Even Houdini, who was able to escape so much else, could not escape death; he "was punched experimentally in the belly by a medical student and died of peritonitis" (436).

The sufferings felt by Citrine are imaged in those of Demmie Vonghel, who wanted to marry the young Citrine. Demmie "was a dynamic

sufferer": Sunbathing on the roof, she was "burned so badly that she became delirious" (153); a gush of flame from the open chute of the garbage incinerator singed her; her toes had been deformed by cheap shoes. She and her sister, both of whom had hollows formed by large collarbones, raced with water in those hollows. She dosed herself with pills of many kinds. Discussing topics such as "sickness, murder, suicide, eternal punishment and hell-fire" got her into a "state": "Her hair bristled and her eyes deepened with panic and her deformed toes twisted in all directions" (146). Citrine could see that she was "disturbed" (147); her voice in her nightmares "expressed her terror of this strange place, the earth, and of this strange state, of being. Laboring and groaning she tried to get out of it" (146). Citrine was sympathetic with Demmie: "When she lay suffering, her deep eye sockets filled with tears and she gripped the middle finger of her left hand convulsively with the other fingers" (166). Citrine knows that "her goodness was genuine and deep" (166). Demmie felt Citrine to be the abnormal one, however; she told Citrine that in Venezuela she was going to tell her father of their approaching marriage: "Down in that jungle with savages all around you'll seem a lot more normal to him" (167). The severity of Demmie's suffering and the kinds of things that caused it may be compared with that of Citrine at the loss of Renata.

Cantabile thinks he can help Citrine learn about the world. Although Cantabile participates in the process, his view of Citrine as naive and a freak and his attempt to educate and help Citrine lead Citrine to view Cantabile as another of his headaches (91), a sick citizen of the world, and a maniac. Forced up on the unfinished skyscraper, Citrine "crept along, fighting paralysis of the thighs and the calves,"

his face "sweating faster than the wind could dry it" (103). Back in the car, Citrine hangs his head over the top of the seat "in the position you take to stop a nosebleed" (103). Cantabile thinks Citrine's lack of knowledge of Chicago is "like a kind of paralysis, absolutely unreal," but that Citrine is not a fake, that any "real American is a freak" (185) like him.

Citrine refers to his reading to show the widely-held view of man as insane: "Goethe was afraid the modern world might turn into a hospital. Every citizen unwell" (175). According to Jules Romains in Knock, "when culture fails to deal with the feeling of emptiness and the panic to which man is disposed (and he does say 'disposed') other agents come forward to put us together with therapy, with glue, or slogans, or spit, or as that fellow Gumbein the art critic says, poor wretches are recycled on the couch" (175-76). Citrine sees this view as even more pessimistic than the one held by Dostoevski's Grand Inquisitor, who said that frail, hungry, weak mankind "requires miracle, mystery, and authority" (176). Citrine continues with the worse idea of human beings as "insane" (176). Citrine thinks that Cantabile himself is "a highly excited and, in that Goethean hospital, a sick citizen" (176), but that perhaps he himself is not in such great shape.

Cantabile's behavior in the handling of the authorship claim reveals his disposition. At the Paris theater where they see the movie that Citrine and Humboldt had written, Cantabile is "feverish" about the claim-check. Inspired by the fit of the old Caldofreddo in the movie, Cantabile tries to get the key from Citrine; Citrine "couldn't see what the maniac on the screen was doing because this other

maniac" (464), Cantabile, was all over him. The meeting with the firm's representatives is carried on in a cool businesslike way, but Cantabile's idea is that "everybody should be in a fever" (468). A part of the effect of Cantabile on Citrine was that later, as they walked through the city, the water of the Seine looked "like old medicine" (469). Cantabile's own insane behavior disqualifies him from helping Citrine.

George Swiebel is of some help in guiding Citrine physically and sexually. George's concern for his health is so extreme that Cantabile calls him "that health fiend" (38) and says "he looks like an apple with all that jogging five miles a day and the vitamins I saw in his medicine chest" (38). Citrine does listen to the counsel of the "biocentric" (42) George; he learns one yoga exercise from George as a solution to a stricture in his prostate gland.

Citrine accepts George's evaluation of Denise and Renata. George says that Denise treats Citrine in such a way that he is suffocating, not getting enough oxygen, and that "she'll give you cancer" (42). When Citrine meets Renata, he is overcome by "a gust of the old West Side sex malaria" (204); he thinks that if he is "susceptible to the West Side sex malaria, Szathmar could not resist the arranging fever" (210) in setting up meetings like his and Renata's. Women either make Citrine "ecstatic" or they make him "ill" (211). George is pleased that Citrine is in "a fever over this young woman" (314). When Renata is unconscious in the hotel room, Citrine tries to think "what George Swiebel, my health counselor, would do in an emergency like this" (217), and he removes her shoes, unbuttons her coat to help the breathing, and sees how "things" (217) are. His first examination of Renata's body is almost clinical.

Although George offers his help wherever Citrine goes with Renata, he is not available at moments of crisis. When Cantabile brings the world of reality to Citrine's car or when Renata goes to Flonzaley, Citrine cannot reach George. George's physical instruction is no more help to Citrine in his growth than is the example of his intellectual friend, Thaxter.

Citrine feels that he used the conditions of life to test his "powers of immunity" to the various phenomena of everyday life, in order "to be immune to their effects" (267). However, his immunity does not help him with Thaxter, even though they share a stimulating mental world. Citrine felt that Thaxter would not take advantage of him; however, he "gambled on immunity and . . . lost" (248). Citrine identifies the exotic Thaxter as another of his "headaches" (75), but Citrine appreciates him because "the fever that afflicted his poor head made him an ideal editor" (251). As Citrine thinks of Thaxter's captivity by terrorists, he knows that "he was not perfectly upright but much of his wrongdoing was simply delirium" (471). Renata also identifies Citrine as having "brain fever" (250) when he says ideas are being used up. Citrine feels the judge has no right "to take away money earned in thought and fever by such peculiar operations of the brain" (241). Citrine's state is partly described by the books he is "too paralyzed to write" (242).

As he comes to a better understanding of Humboldt's situation (and his own), Citrine is able to see more clearly what the young Humboldt had known of the relationship between the poet and his society. Humboldt compared himself as a poet and his enemies with the situation of a candidate for admission to the Cannibal Society

of the Kwakiutl Indians: "The candidate when he performs his initiation dance falls into a frenzy and eats human flesh. But if he makes a ritual mistake the whole crowd tears him to pieces" (14). Citrine evidently feels that Humboldt was successfully initiated because he sees reflected in Humboldt's obituary picture the way "successful bitter hard-faced and cannibalistic people exult" (118).

Citrine's involvement in the divorce proceeding with Denise evokes the largest number of cannibalistic images. It is as if the legal entanglement allows this aspect of mankind to be most evident. Cantabile sees the lawyer Pinsker as "that man-eating kike"; he says that he would "chop up your liver with egg and onion" (169) and that that "cannibal Pinsker" would throw Citrine to the judge, who would "give Denise your skin and she'll hang it in the den" (170). Citrine says the lawyers will study his tax returns "and then decide how to cut me up" (219). He asks his own lawyers to restrain Pinsker, not to let him "tear at my guts" (220) and calls him "a cannibal" (220) and "Cannibal Pinsker" (228). Citrine thinks that even Srole seems to be a cannibal: "He'd hack me up, he'd chop me into bits with his legal cleaver" (222). Srole tells Citrine the judge's technique is to terrify him so that he will beg for a settlement in order to be saved "from being butchered and hacked to pieces" (235).

Thaxter correctly assesses the situation his friend is in: "It's really Denise that's eating at you, the courts and the dollars and all that grief and harassment" (270). Even Julius later agrees with the assessment when he says that Denise would not be satisfied "until she's got your liver in her deepfreeze" (389). Although Citrine does not go to the cannibalistic extremes that Denise and the courts appear to have

reached, he is aware of a similar tendency in himself. He knows that he is no killer, but that he does "incorporate other people" into himself and "consume them" (288).

In the movie plot written by Citrine and Humboldt, there is an incident of cannibalism. The Russians who save the survivors of the Amundsen party put the contents of the stomach of the survivor "suspected of cannibalism" (181) on display in Red Square in order to show "how facist imperialist capitalist dogs devour each other" (181). The man later admitted being a cannibal, but the happy ending to the movie is that his daughter's young man in his own acceptance exonerates the old man. The audience howls with laughter, but Citrine has "a worldwide dizzy glimpse of the living and the dead, of humanity either laughing its head off as pictures of man-eating comedy unrolled on the screen or vanishing in great waves of death, in flames and battle agonies, in starving continents" (462). And Citrine knows that, as a writer, he can provide scripts for that audience.

The Humboldt whom Citrine is able to reconstruct is a character who attracts the strong affection of Citrine. As a poet he was subjected to cultural powers which overwhelmed him personally and professionally. However, he did understand something of life and something beyond life that he was able to communicate to his physical survivor, who very much needed to know it for his creative and spiritual survival.

Conclusion

In each of his last three novels, Bellow uses disease, deformity, and cannibal images to reveal something about the character of his

protagonist. In none is there an attempt to show a hero without flaw. Herzog has to overcome his masochistic weakness and better understand the true nature of the Self in the contemporary world. Sammler may attempt to be detached from the present creatureliness of man, but while he lives, he is still involved as a human being in a race with sexual and violent tendencies which are not removed by the labelling of them as madness. Citrine has a painful time remembering his own misreading of Humboldt as he encounters his own causes for failure to be creative.

None of the protagonists is destroyed by the cannibalism in society. Each shows himself to be in contact with his fellowman. Herzog, recovering from his sexual ills, is planning to serve Renata a meal he has prepared. Sammler, after his role as moral standard, serves as priest for Elya; Elya's death raises the question of whether with that act, Sammler will become completely detached from the creatureliness he has judged. Citrine lays to rest the body (and memories) of Humboldt because he is free to write of the truth of the comedy of the human situation.

NOTES

[1] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 90.

[2] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 95.

[3] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 156.

[4] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, pp. 156-57.

[5] Clayton, p. 199, says Herzog gloats over the traits in Mady to free himself from guilt, that "if we reflect on the list at all, we see that except possibly for 'delusions' all the traits belong to Moses Herzog."

[6] Porter, p. 153, calls Herzog's malady here "existential nausea, Kierkegaard's sickness unto death," for which Herzog's intellectualizing offers no help.

[7] Keith Michael Opdahl, The Novels of Saul Bellow (University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1967), p. 152.

[8] Opdahl, p. 145.

[9] Opdahl, pp. 145-46.

[10] Clayton, p. 221, feels the accident is not an accident, that "it is typical of the 'accidents' moral masochists arrange for themselves" and a necessary conclusion to the action that began in the court in New York.

[11] Clayton, p. 202.

[12] Clayton, p. 224. Clayton, pp. 193-197, shows how guilt is at the root of Herzog's masochism.

[13] Clayton, p. 225.

[14] Porter, p. 156, sees the broken rib as a symbolic wound. When Herzog recognizes the irrevocable end of the marriage to Madeleine, the "severance of flesh--one made into two--is accompanied by a broken rib, and "The Adamic motif so introduced sets up the final section of the novel."

[15] Clayton, p. 227.

CHAPTER IV

MOVEMENT-WEIGHT-IMPRISONMENT IMAGERY AND METAPHOR

Introduction

Irving Malin identifies separately the images of weight Saul Bellow uses "to express those 'pressures' of existence which disturb his heroes"; images of imprisonment that Bellow uses to reveal the sense "that life is dangerous, ugly, and heavy"; and the "usually erratic, circular, violent or nonpurposeful" images of movement that result because Bellow's characters "want, at least consciously, to move."[1] Bellow's protagonists are revealed through images that suggest movement, limitation of movement by confinement, and the weights that contribute to inability to move. It is possible to identify these three types of images in separate discussions, but certain patterns are discernible only when the three are shown as interrelated.

As Weller Embler suggests even of our everyday usage, "for the most part, metaphors of motion forward signify to us a desire for change of place or condition."[2] The kinds of erratic movements that Bellow's protagonists are involved in may show that they do not know how to move physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually to achieve their desires, to overcome their limitations. The weights,

not usually physical ones in these later novels, affect the protagonists' movements.

Although only Herzog in Bellow's sixth novel is literally imprisoned, most images of imprisonment used in the last three novels may be described by Embler's conclusion in a study that does not include them:

> Walls, prisons, guards, keys, the trial, the conviction, the sentences, the shutting of the door, the confinement, and the escape--all the realities and fantasies of imprisonment occur so frequently in Western World literature there can scarcely be any doubt that the prison image describes with emotional intensity the feelings and thoughts which people have about freedom, not necessarily freedom from the literal jail but the nature of freedom itself, what it is for, how to define it.[3]

Images and metaphors of movement, weight, and imprisonment in the next three novels reveal the protagonists and their ways of responding to the pressures of life, Herzog is emotionally weighted down or slowed down by Madeleine and by certain unexamined memories of his father; his movements to attain love, peace, self-understanding and acceptance are sometimes irrational. Sammler establishing the metaphor through which all of the experiences that assault him are to be understood; he comes to understand better the weights that burden the individuals from whom he feels estranged. Citrine bears the burden of existence shared by many--the obsessions of sex, death, and money--and his particular burden of not being able to write; when he is freed from the confinement these burdens force on him, he can create again.

Herzog

Malin devotes only two paragraphs to comments on the weight, imprisonment and movement images in Bellow's sixth novel. He does

show Herzog, like earlier Bellow protagonists, bearing the weight of existence: "He has to carry the city's noises, crowds, and machines; the knowledge of past defeats: and his daily burdens."[4] Malin sees a relationship between the images of weight and those of imprisonment. Herzog is imprisoned in the Ludeyville house," with Ramona a kindly jailer, but Madeleine and Gersbach "unkindly ones who trapped him without his knowledge, and Nachman imprisoned by the cruelty of the world."[5] The resolution of the novel is possible, according to Malin, only when Herzog accepts life as imprisonment and comes to regard the Ludeyville house as his true residence. Bellow continues to show more interest in violent, erratic movement than in the static images he also provides. Malin notes that before Herzog comes to rest in the final scene (listening to the purposeful movement of Mrs. Tuttle's broom), his thoughts and emotions whirl him about continually.

The images of movement, weight, and imprisonment in Herzog reveal character in several ways. The movements of humans in reactions to one another reveal both passivity and forcefulness of character; differences between Madeleine and Herzog and between Father Herzog and Taube are clearly revealed in images of movement. The way in which Herzog, in movement from one place to another, sees or responds to external nature also reflects his inner nature; in addition, the movements of machines reveal his character. Herzog's physical imprisonment in jail and his thoughts while there about what actually imprisons him and his new perception of his brother Will contribute to the movement of Herzog away from his imprisonment by Madeleine. Relative freedom can be Herzog's as he learns to control self, as Will has evidently done, so that external forces, such as Madeleine, do not control him.

The impassioned relation that exists between Herzog and Madeleine results in a number of images of movement. The scene in which Madeleine tells Herzog that their marriage is ended is one such scene. Bellow writes that "two kinds of egotism were present" (8). With a love that has "a flavor of subjugation," Herzog loves even the domineering Madeleine's tic: "Her nose, which descended in a straight elegant line from her brows, worked slightly when she was peculiarly stirred" (8). Madeleine completely controls the scene in a moment of "triumph"; she does "what she longed most to do, strike a blow" (8). Her description shows her dominance of him: "Step by step, Madeleine rose in distinction, in brilliance, in insight. Her color grew very rich, and her brows, and that Byzantine nose of hers, rose, moved; her blue eyes gained by the flush that kept deepening, rising from her chest and her throat. She was in an ecstasy of consciousness" (9). The beating she gives him causes "an overflow of strength into her intelligence"; she is certainly not "crushed" (9) by the event. Herzog passively accepts her actions, but later contemplates what would have happened if he had been violent, "if he had knocked her down, clutched her hair, dragged her screaming and fighting around the room, flogged her until her buttocks bled" (10). He thinks that he "should have torn her clothes, ripped off her necklace, brought his fists down on her head" (10). On the actual day of the conversation, he returns to the work of putting up storm windows (too late to protect against the storm she unleashes against him). He sees himself as one who "practiced the art of circling among random facts to swoop down on the essentials" (10), but he does no swooping that day. As he stands among the "frost-scorched drooping tomato vines" (10), his own personality is passively

reflected in the natural imagery.

Images of movement strengthen the differences between Madeleine and Herzog in another encounter that he remembers. A remark about the old books underneath their bed sheet angered Madeleine: "She began to scream at him, and threw herself on the bed, tearing off blankets and sheets, slamming books on the floor, then attacking the pillows with her nails, giving a wild, choked scream" (57). In addition, "she clutched and twisted" the plastic cover on the mattress. When he tried to reach toward her, she clumsily hit him in the face: "She jumped at him with her fists, not pummeling womanlike, but swinging like a street fighter with her knuckles" (57). Herzog remembers taking these blows on his back, but that his meekness only "infuriated her" (57); any sign of agapé in him "put her in a frenzy" (57). Herzog thinks that "her attitude might have changed if he had belted her" (57).

Other images of movement portray differences between Madeleine and Herzog. The power of Madeleine's character is shown as Herzog thinks of her making parental decisions that exclude him: "Madeleine swings her weight like a male" (87), he tells Sandor. In the police station, Herzog marvels at her self-control: "When she took the milk from Junie she knew precisely where to drop the container, though she had been only an instant in the room" (298). Herzog, however, is not in such control of himself: "The pulses in his skull were quick and regular, like the tappets of an engine beating in their film of dark oil" (298). Herzog describes his inability to control himself through a baseball image: "Ikey-Fishbones has dropped another pop fly in left field. The other team is scoring--clearing all bases. She was making

brilliant use of error" (300).

Differences between Herzog's father and his father's widow, Taube, are revealed in their methods of moving. Father Herzog "did everything quickly, neatly, with skillful Eastern European flourishes: combing his hair, buttoning his shirt, stropping his bone-handled razors, sharpening pencils on the ball of his thumb, holding a load of bread to his breast and slicing toward himself, tying parcels with tight little knots, jotting like an artist in his account book" (137). The marks of his 1's and 7's "were like pennants in the wind of failure" (137). By contrast, Taube is slow and "always had been slow, even in her fifties, thorough, deliberate, totally unlike the dexterous Herzogs--they had all inherited their father's preposterous quickness and elegance, something of the assertiveness of that one-man march with which old Herzog had defiantly paraded through the world" (243). Taube seems determined to be slow:

> Creepingly, she accomplished every last goal she set herself. She ate, or sipped slowly. She did not bring the cup to her mouth but moved her lips out toward it. And she spoke very slowly, to give her shrewdness scope. She cooked with fingers that did not grip firmly but was an excellent cook. She won at cards, poking along, but won. All questions she asked two or three times, and repeated the answers half to herself. With the same slowness she braided her hair, she brushed her exposed teeth, or chopped figs, dates and senna leaves for her digestion. (243-44)

Memories of the quick-moving father and the slow-moving stepmother both affect Herzog. Asked for the key to the desk, Taube moves "into slowness, raising a mountain of dilatory will in his way" (251). This is in great contrast with his memory of his father who "hastily walked up and back. . . . Walking quickly there, back and forth in his hasty style, dropping his weight on the one heel" (250).

Taube had warned Moses not to quarrel with his father "by raising her brows" (240). But the memory of his angry father stumbling to get his pistol startles Herzog. His old father had briefly recovered his strength, and that strength pleases Herzog: "The strained neck, the grinding of his teeth, his frightening color, even the military Russian strut with which he lifted the gun--these were better, thought Herzog, than his sinking down during a walk to the store" (250). Herzog sees how his father's strength had been used: "all of Papa's violence went into the drama of his life, into family strife, and sentiment" (146). Herzog knows that his father never could have pulled the trigger of the gun, just as he learns the same thing about himself.

Although Taube was seen by Father Herzog as "a cold forge" (259), with all of the sexual coldness suggested by the image, she warns Herzog that "he was taking too many chances with destruction" (253). She has "fought the grave to a standstill, balking death itself by her slowness"; however, she sees Father Herzog again in Moses, "nervy and hasty, impulsive, suffering" (253).

Physical and emotional extremes are imaged in the exchanges of movements between Father Herzog and Taube and between Herzog and Madeleine. The potential for control in speed or slowness is developed in both pairs. The deliberate slowness that is a part of Taube's nature seems to give her the advantage of conservation of strength in the older couple. As long as Herzog sees Madeleine in control of their encounters, his own strengths are nullified. When Herzog can see (as he later does) that his own nature can be directed to give him some measure of control over his own life, Madeleine will no longer be able to imprison his spirit. But until he reaches that point of equilibrium (which may be

shown in the final scene when he is quietly listening to the sounds of the movement of the broom), he has much mental traveling to do. As he moves mentally and emotionally to that recognition, his physical travels reflect and comment on his progress.

The basic narrative line of Herzog has been seen as Odyssean by Leonard Lutwack, but as a "contemporary adaptation in which thought and interiorization play a greater role than action."[6] Herzog, a "traveler of the mind," however, does physically move from place to place in his search "to find a reason for living as well as a home and family to return to,"[7] and the resulting images of movement intensify the picture of the character during that seeking. Herzog is grateful for being able to go to Europe in order to prevent his own crack-up; there is always something to be grateful for unless a person is "utterly exploded" (7). Herzog realizes that one has "to fight for" (19) his life, and in his ensuing struggle Herzog changes physical location a number of times.

In a cab moving to the station, Herzog is "overstimulated" and has "overstrained, galloping nerves" and a "murky fire inside" (27). The description of the city as his cab moves through it reflects his condition: "The square shapes were vivid, not inert, they gave him a sense of fateful motion, almost of intimacy" (27). He knows that he is "running from the city" in order to survive and foresees a trip on "the confining train." The progress of his cab is impeded as they go through the garment district. The slow movement to escape intensifies the effect of every sound and motion on his physical senses in the same way that the slowness of his movement to resolution of his mental and emotional problem intensifies the effect of every memory: "The electric

machines thundered in the lofts and the whole street quivered. It sounded as though cloth were being torn, not sewn. The street was plunged, drowned in these waves of thunder" (31-32). Then "the cab rattled in low gear and jerked into second" and "made a sweeping turn into Park Avenue" (32).

The demolishing and raising of buildings adds to the noise and reflects Herzog's personal confusion: "the avenue was filled with concrete mixing trucks, smells of wet sand and powdery gray cement. Crashing, stamping pile-driving below, and higher, structural steel, interminably and hungrily going up into the cooler, more delicate blue. Orange beams hung from the cranes like straws. But down in the street where the buses were spurting the poisonous exhaust of cheap fuel, and the cars were crammed together, it was stifling, grinding, the racket of machinery and the desperately purposeful crowds--horrible!" (32). Herzog feels imprisoned and needs "to get out to the seashore where he could breathe" (32). He contrasts this inability to move on the street with his flight on the Polish airline the winter before: "They flew through angry spinning snow clouds over white Polish forests, fields, pits, factories, rivers dogging their banks, in, out, in, and a terrain of white and brown diagrams" (32).

Herzog also contrasts the moment on the street with that of a childhood train ride: "the locomotive cried and the iron-studded cars began to move. Sun and girders divided the soot geometrically" (32-33). When the train crossed the St. Lawrence, Herzog "saw the river frothing" through the stained funnel of the toilet. Later, from the window, he saw the water shining and curving "on great slabs of rock, spinning into foam at the Lachine Rapids, where it sucked and

rumbled" (33). As the train moved, he saw Indian shacks raised on stilts, the burnt summer fields, and heard the echo of the train coming back from the straw "like a voice through a beard" (33). Herzog thinks how now the train is "ribbed for speed, a segmented tube of brilliant steel," and that these individuals with whom he made the earlier trip are all gone, even his mother, who "would moisten her handkerchief at her mouth and rub his face clean" (33). His inability to forget the past makes it impossible for him to follow an old saying: "Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead" (33).

The images of movement revealed at Grand Central Station also reflect Herzog's emotional state: "The hushed electric trucks were rushing by with mail bags," but he found it difficult to read the Times: "It was a hostile broth of black print MoonraceberlinKrushchwarncom-mitteegalacticXrayPhouma" (34). The spacing here is not frequently used by Bellow, but it is very effective in creating the movement of sweeping over headlines. Herzog's glance evidently sweeps over the platform also, for he briefly engages the eyes of a woman who attracts him sexually. He is relieved to go to a different car; "the russet door closed behind him on pneumatic hinges, stiff and hissing" (34).

Herzog's position in the New Haven car reveals his confinement within his problems: "He sat in a cramped position, pressing the valise to his chest, his traveling-desk, and writing rapidly in the spiral notebook" (34); on the train he continues his frenzied writing, "gripping his seat in the hurling train" (66). The movement of the train shows his emotional movement: As it "rushed over the landscape," then "swooped past New Haven," and "ran with all its might toward Rhode Island," Herzog "felt his eager, flying spirit streaming out, speaking,

piercing, making clear judgments, uttering final explanations, necessary words only. He was in a whirling ecstasy" (68). However, even this ecstasy is complicated by his further self-knowledge: "He felt at the same time that his judgments exposed the boundless, baseless bossiness and willfulness, the nagging embedded in his mental constitution" (68). Richard Pearce sees in this movement of the train "an ironic or contrapuntal contrast to the discontinuity and direction of Herzog's letters."[8]

The content of Herzog's thoughts on the train also reveals the whirling to which he is being subjected--what he considers the conspiracy against himself. Even Madeleine's Uncle Herman helped by taking him to a hockey game where "the players mixed like hornets--swift, padded, yellow, black, red, rushing, slashing, whirling over the ice. Above the rink the tobacco smoke lay like a cloud of flash powder, explosive" (35). Above the entire experience with Madeleine also lay the explosiveness of the knowledge about Madeleine and Gersbach. Madeleine's Aunt Zelda sympathized with Madeleine; even her kitchen appliances revealed female hostility: "the white molded female forms bulged from all sides. The refrigerator, as if it had a heart, and the range with gentian flames under the pot" (37). The movement of Zelda's nose told Herzog that she rejected everything he said. Zelda told him that the house in Ludeyville "made a prisoner" (39) of Madeleine. Helpless, Herzog remained silent; it was then that he "heard the clothes dryer below whirling" (40).

The scenes which Herzog sees through the train window reveal the extremes of emotion through which he passes. The narrator tells us that "all at once the train left the platform and entered the

tunnel" (41). It is as if the whirling of the dryer in his memory and the movement of the train occur simultaneously. Through a long incline, "the train rose from underground and rode in sudden light on the embankment above the slums, upper Park Avenue" (41). Light only makes Herzog more aware of his situation: He sees that "an open hydrant gushed and kids in clinging drawers leaped screaming"; that Spanish Harlem is "heavy, dark, and hot"; and that Queens is "a thick document of brick, veiled in atmospheric dirt" (41). The weight suggested by these images reflects the weight of Herzog's problems. Although Herzog cannot answer the question about what women want, after some time the appearance outside the train window does suggest that he is able to relax: "Over Long Island Sound the air grew clearer. It gradually became very pure. The water was level and easy, soft blue, the grass brilliant, spattered with wildflowers--plenty of myrtle among these rocks, and wild strawberries blossoming" (42).

Two additional examples show how the movements of the train, giving the experience of a moving landscape outside the window, reflect the emotional states of Herzog. When Herzog thinks of ways of disposing of the house at Ludeyville and he remembers his "reception by the natives," his self humor passes over his face as the train flashes "through meadows and sunny pines" (49). However, when he thinks of Phoebe, the view outside the train impinges on his consciousness in the same way that that knowledge affects him emotionally: "of course--the Connecticut landscape raced, rose, contracted, opened its depths, and the Atlantic water shone--of course, Phoebe knew her husband was sleeping with Madeleine" (58).

After riding the ferry, Herzog catches a cab on the way to his

very short visit with Libbie. That "taxi went slowly, as if the old engine had a heart condition" (92). Almost immediately Herzog knows that the trip is a mistake and his hesitation is shown briefly in a sports image: He is "a strong-looking man, holding his valise in a double grip like a player about to throw a forward pass" (92). His own state is "enough to make a man pray to God to remove this great, bone-breaking burden of selfhood and self-development" (92-93).

When the confused Herzog responds to the urge to fly to Chicago, a decision that has "simply arrived" (241), he hopes that in the plane, "in the clearer atmosphere, he would understand why he was flying" (241). The plane flew above "white clouds that were foaming" and when the plane bucks, Herzog holds "his lip with his teeth" (241). His fear of a plane wreck in which "human figures were seen to spill and fall like shelled peas" (241) reveals his state of mind.

Although different reactions in Herzog's development have been reflected in the images of his movements, his travel to Ludeyville is described in one sentence: "He reached his country place the following afternoon, after taking a plane to Albany, from there the bus to Pittsfield, and then a cab to Ludeyville" (309). His erratic movements cease when his self-discovery is made, so his physical movements no longer comment on his progress. Another kind of image of movement must be examined to see the process before his physical return to Ludeyville and his mental and emotional return to himself. The trial forced on him by his own character in the rooms of a New York court reveals his own inability to face some of the realities of life.

The way in which Herzog moves in the New York court reveals how he is affected by someone caught in the hands of the law; it "agitated

him" (231). The first defendant he sees is a Negro whose "legs appeared to be trembling with nervous strength. He might have been about to run a race; he even crouched slightly, in the big cocoa-brown pants, as if at the starting line. But about ten feet before him were the shining prison bars" (225). Later, Herzog notes, "Those tense legs desired their freedom" (226); when the black is led away, "the same wolfish tension" remains.

The next defendant is told that if he continues in his same course he will be in the grave within five years. Herzog's appearance is calm: "Herzog discovered that he had been sitting, legs elegantly crossed, the jagged oval rim of his hat pressed on his thigh, his striped jacket still buttoned and strained by his eager posture, that he had been watching all that happened with his look of intelligent composure, of charm and sympathy" (230). However, his calm appearance is contrasted with his real feelings when he is struck by some kind of attack, "as though something terrible, inflammatory, bitter, had been grated into his blood-stream and stung and burned his veins, his face, his heart" (230).

Herzog's experiences in the court building place him on trial for his "childish" humane feelings. His behavior implies "a barrier against which [he has] been pressing from the first, pressing all [his] life, with the conviction that it is necessary to press, and that something must come of it" (231). He wonders how long he can stand "such inner beating"; he fears that "[t]he front wall of this body will go down" (231) in the battle in which his whole life is "beating against its boundaries" (232).

When he returns to a courtroom and listens to a part of the trial of two child-murderers, the calm angers him. He "gripped" his

hard straw hat "strongly"; "The ragged edges of the straw made marks on his fingers" (237). Even the force with which a mother-defendant had thrown her child against the wall seems to strike at Herzog and "he felt stifled as if the valves of his heart were not closing and the blood were going back into his lungs" (230). As he "walked heavily and quickly" from the room, he stumbles into a woman with a cane wearing "a cast with metal clogs on the foot" (239) and only with great difficulty is able to apoligize. The poison continues to rise in him "as if he had gotten too close to a fire and scalded his lungs" (240). Herzog tries with all his might "to obtain something for the murdered child" (240). "He pressed himself with intensity," but feels only "his own human feelings," and they are inadequate for "the monstrousness of life" (240) he feels. Even though he opens his mouth to relieve the pressure, "He was wrung, and wrung again, and wrung again, again" (240). As Malin understands the scene, the "cries of the soul" are imprisoned within Herzog and "congest his heart."[9]

The courtroom drama has been seen by Ruth R. Wisse as "'a play within a play,' exploring the subject's relation to what is basest in the modern world," and Herzog's irrational response, his decision to go to Chicago to protect his child, as "not effective, merely affective."[10] But John Jacob Clayton's larger, more comprehensive view of the scene shows it to be the beginning of an action completed only with Herzog's accident and booking in Chicago:

> From Herzog's entrance into court through his trip to Chicago, his attempt to murder, his accident and booking, one large pattern develops. If on that morning in court he feels symbolically put up for trial--and leaves--now he submits to judgment. It is as if he had to sin in a small way and be taken by the police in order to

> be released from his guilt. If I am correct that the unsuccessful attempt to kill is an imitation of the father, its purpose being to free Herzog from anxiety, then the accident and booking are primarily a minor punishment to ward off a major one and yet to free Herzog from guilt.[11]

Clayton sees in Herzog's even temporary freedom from oedipal guilt the explanation of Herzog's cheerfulness and loving behavior as he leaves the station with his brother.[12]

In addition to freedom from his father, Herzog's personal experience in the hands of the law during his physical imprisonment reveals a character in the process of another kind of liberation. When Herzog calls Will for bail money, he is tired and yet "not all heavy-hearted, but, on the contrary. . . . rather free"; when he hears Will's voice, strong feelings flood him "in the confinement of the metal booth" (302). In a cell with two other men with whom he has no communication, Herzog is on "the wrong side of the bars"; he knows that this is "not the sphere of his sins," that "[o]ut in the streets, in American society, that was where he did his time" (303). He cannot be imprisoned within what is not his sphere. His calm decision is to leave Chicago and come back only when he can truly help June.

In the jail, Herzog hears "[t]he drone of trouble coming from the cells and corridors," inhales "the bad smell of headquarters," and sees "the wretchedness of faces" (303). He considers the dismal jail: "If a common primal crime is the origin of social order, as Freud, Róheim et cetera believe, the band of brothers attacking and murdering the primal father, eating his body, gaining their freedom by a murder and united by a blood wrong, then there is some reason why jail should have these dark, archiac tones" (303). But he rejects this thought about

man's social order as "nothing but metaphor" (303) and not the explanation of his own blundering.

Herzog's freedom from the enslavement of false explanations of his Self makes him more alert to the ambiguities of life. A kind of imprisonment that he feels he has avoided is that which affects intellectuals: "that civilized individuals hate and resent the civilization that makes their lives possible" (304). His personal reaction to this recognition of ambiguity is another ambiguity, that he does love Ramona and that he is free to love her. He is free because he now understands the potential for enslavement that existed in his relationship with Madeleine. Herzog's response of sympathy for the tiny birds that have been "entombed by the falling lid" (312) in the toilet bowl is an extension of his own relief when he knows that he is no longer imprisoned by Madeleine: "Joy! His servitude was ended, and his heart released from its grisly heaviness and encrustration" (313).

Herzog is whirled again as he moves in the direction of becoming more like his brother Will than like his father. Herzog understands Will to see him as "spluttering fire in the wilderness of this world" because of his temperament, a "stumbling, ingenuous, burlap Moses" who would need Will's protection.

Herzog thinks he has characteristics like those who are '[s]eeking to sustain their own version of existence under the crushing weight of mass. What Marx described as that 'material weight'" (307). Herzog's dizziness (the result of his accident wounds) is duplicated in the lights "going round, wheeling" in the small examining room of the doctor's office: "Herzog himself felt that he was rotating with them as the doctor wound the medicinal-smelling tapes tightly about his chest"

(307-08). His next thought is "Now, to get rid of all such falsehoods . . ." (308) as his personal and crushing versions of existence.

As Moses looks at Will, he sees what he may become if he is able to control his own emotions:

> Will had learned to conduct himself with restraint. A Herzog, he had a good deal to hold down. Moses could remember a time when Willie, too, had been demonstrative, passionate, explosive, given to bursts of rage, flinging objects on the ground. Just a moment--what was it now, that he had thrown down? A brush! That was it! The broad old Russian shoe brush. Will slammed it to the floor so hard the veneer backing fell off, and beneath were the stitches, ancient waxed thread, maybe even sinew. But that was long ago. Thirty-five years ago, easily. And where had it gone, the wrath of Willie Herzog? my dear brother? Into a certain poise and quiet humor, part decorousness, part (possibly) slavery. The explosions had become implosions, and where light once was darkness came, bit by bit. (328)

In the person of the brother whom he loves, Herzog is able to see an example of the forceful, loving nature he himself feels. But Will is one who "knows-the-world-for-what-it-is" (307) and he has learned to control the force of that nature.

Mr. Sammler's Planet

Artur Sammler seems to have survived the holocaust in order to experience additional onslaughts against his sanity. His attempt to maintain sanity is compared with keeping Holland dry against the almost continuous efforts of the sea. The immediate threat to Sammler is the imminent deatn of his nephew, Elya Gruner, but his enslaving memories of the war and death, the actions of relatives and acquaintances, and the challenge that comes from a powerful black pickpocket are continuing assaults on his sensibilities. Sammler sees mankind

weighted to an existence on earth that contrasts with the freedom of a bubble in a coffee flask; he sees no escape in a flight to the moon.

A number of individuals interfere with Sammler's physical movement to the bedside of Elya Gruner: Shula, through her theft of Dr. Lal's manuscript; Angela, through sexual problems, inability to relate to her father, and a need for reconciliation with him; Wallace, with his aerial money-making scheme to identify the greenery of the countryside; and Feffer, through his fight with the black pickpocket to keep possession of photographic evidence of crime. More important than physical blocks to movement to Elya, however, are the conditions of life that are presented in the various images of weight, imprisonment, and movement. Images of weight and imprisonment describe man's condition on earth, and images of movement show the forces that interfere with man's attempt to live well.

Just as Bellow's earlier protagonists have felt the weights of human life, Sammler contributes to and experiences its heaviness. Hanging on the bus strap, Sammler is "sealed in by bodies, receiving their weight and laying his own on them as the fat tires took the giant curve at Seventy-second Street with a growl of flabby power" (10). From his window, Sammler sees the "heavy" bourgeois solidity of human life as he views buildings which are "[l]ike stamps in an album--the dun rose of buildings canceled by the heavy black of grilles, of corrugated rainspouts" (13). The sense of imprisonment suggested by grilles and colors contrasts with the action of his coffeemaker: "The grounds in the little drawer of the mill he held above the flask. The red coil went deeper, whiter, white. The kinks had tantrums. Beads of water flashed up. Individually, the pioneers gracefully went to

the surface. Then they all seethed together" (12). Sammler wonders if one has a right to "private expectations, being like those bubbles in the flask" (13). Sammler's initial reaction to Lal's book about space is hopeful, but his ultimate response is that Lal's answer is not "the way to get out of spatial temporal prison. Distant is still finite. Finite is still feeling through the veil, examining the naked inner reality with a gloved hand" (57).

An image of the movement of water early in the novel establishes the importance of Sammler's reactions to all of the facts and sensations that impinge upon his consciousness. Sarah Bracher Cohen says that the image is probably drawn from "Freud's comparison of the establishment of the ego's sovereignty to a 'work of reclamation, like the draining of the Zuider Zee!'"[13] It occurs to Sammler that defending against the constant onslaught of impressions is a "Dutch drudgery, . . . pumping and pumping to keep a few areas of dry ground. The invading sea being a metaphor for the multiplication of the facts and sensations. The earth being an earth of ideas" (8). As Sammler later contemplates the confusion and inconsequence of humans, he thinks that "the whole experience of mankind was now covering each separate life in its flood" (30). Marcus Klein says Sammler "sees himself as being engaged in a kind of exercise in good plumbing,"[14] but certainly Sammler's attempt at maintaining sanity is more than a "good plumbing" job. After establishing this metaphor of the "invading sea," Bellow reveals the character of Sammler by showing the conflicts within his culture and within himself that define his self. Sammler's experience with the black, for instance, becomes "one of those mental invasions there was no longer any point in attempting to withstand" (69).

As a character, the black pickpocket is clearly contrasted with Sammler in manners of movement. Sammler's movements on the street are "tense, quick, erratically light and reckless" (10). However, the work of the black is imaged in calm movements: "lifting the clasp and tipping the pocketbook lightly to make it fall open . . . nipping open the catch of a change purse. . . . Then with the touch of a doctor on a patient's belly, the Negro moved back the slope leather, turned the gilded scallop catch" (14). In contrast, when the tense Sammler realizes that the police will do nothing about the crime, he is stunned "like a motorcyclist who has been struck in the forehead by a pebble from the road, trivally stung" (18). At a personally "swaying, difficult moment," Sammler unwillingly observes the black at work, and "Inside, Sammler felt an immediate descent; his heart sinking. As sure as fate, as a law of nature, a stone falling, a gas rising" (50). The black's movements, however, are still controlled: "The thief tugged his clothes like a doctor with a clinic patient" (50).

Although Sammler feels some confidence in his knowledge of "the arts of hiding and escape," he is not able to avoid the quick-moving black who comes up behind him in the lobby of his building, "and not simply behind but pressing him bodily, belly to back. He did not lift his hands to Sammler but pushed" (53). After the frightening exposure, the black leaves, with even the machinery of the building supporting his mastery. At the same instant, the doorman arrived from the basement, too late to help: "The elevator, with a bump, returning from the cellar opened simultaneously with the street door" (54). The black moves with confidence "seeking whom he might devour between Columbus Circle and Verdi Square" (18). Although Sammler is intrigued by the

black's movements and rides the bus hoping to see him in action again, he is never up to the challenge of the crowds on Broadway: "By a convergence of all minds and all movements the conviction transmitted by this crowd seemed to be that reality was a terrible thing, and that the final truth about mankind was overwhelming and crushing" (283).

In the fight on the street, images of movement continue to distinguish Sammler and the black. With superior strength, the black overmatches Feffer: "Shifting his grip, the Negro grabbed and twisted his collar, holding him as he had held Sammler with his forearm against the wall. He choked Feffer with the neckband. The Dior shades, round and bluish, had not moved from the low-bridged nose" (290). A sense of being companionless and lacking physical power overcomes Sammler; "he saw himself not so much standing as strangely leaning, as reclining, and peculiarly in profile, and as a <u>past</u> person" (293). His state in this unreal situation is described as "Flying, freed from gravitation, light with release and dread, doubting his destination, fearing there was nothing to receive him" (293). The help Sammler gets from Eisen, a man "orbiting a different foreign center" (293), is more than he asks for. Eisen's hard blow causes the pickpocket's glasses to fly (293). The second and more powerful blow of the bag of weights knocks the man down, but the description of the black shows his continued control of the situation: "He did not drop. He lowered himself as though he had decided to lie down in the street" (294). In contrast, after the incident, Sammler has "trembling arms and legs" and feels "extraordinary weakness" (296).

The power of the black pickpocket's threat to Sammler is in part the result of a sexual standard different from Sammler's.

Sammler meets the fact of a different sexual standard among the young without sorrow. However, he does feel the gaps or empty spaces in his being because of the separation of his self from others: "As the traffic poured, and the sun, relatively bright for Manhattan--shining and pouring through openings in his substance, through his gaps. As if he had been cast by Henry Moore. With holes, lacunae" (47). With their own stories of their sexual trials and escapades, Angela Gruner, Lionel Feffer, and Walter Bruch attempt to fill those gaps. In his attempt to escape earthly creatureliness (which seems imposed upon him by nature), Sammler dreams of a different kind of existence from the one in which Angela, essentially because of her sexual behavior, is "now flying under thick clouds" (72) in her relationship with her father. Even his own daughter, Shula, is beyond Sammler's understanding. In one image, her position washing the outside of his windows shows the different viewpoints of her generation and his. He cannot consider things from her viewpoint as she sits on the window sill with her feet dangling inside the room, "spraying cold froth on the panes, swabbing it away, left-handed with a leftward swing of the bust (ohne Büstenhalter)" (38-39).

Angela's sexuality is communicated through images of weight and confinement, and Sammler understands them to be burdens to her. An early image of her size shows her tempering the message of her gender with comedy: "She crossed her legs on a chair too fragile to accommodate such thighs, too straight for her hips" (74). She is not elegant and sensuous when the subject of Wharton Horricker is "weighing" (158) on her mind: "Her figure was heavy, breasts a burden, knees bulging pale against the taut silk of the stockings" (155). Her

normally graceful actions become distressingly heavy" (161) and Sammler wonders whether the volupté she had "was not one of the sorest strangest burdens that could be laid on a woman's soul" (161). As Sammler becomes more aware of this weight of human existence, he is able to view his daughter differently. Accidentally seeing her completely nude in the bathtub one night makes him especially aware of her even the next morning: "His glimpse of the entire Shula last night now made him feel her specific weight, as she trod the grass" (261).

Because Shula does not understand Sammler's intellectual interests, her erratic movements in attempting to help him lead to conflicting emotions without him. In the apartment he shared with her, he "suffered confinement" (96) comparable to his confinement in the mausoleum. She is especially concerned about him because in World War II, "the geyser that rose a mile or two into the skies" (33), all of his notes on H.G. Wells were destroyed. He no longer had any interest in writing about Wells, but her activities are geared to helping him to do what he has no intellectual interest in doing. When Shula steals a manuscript, Sammler thinks of having within himself "a field in which many hunters at cross-purposes were firing bird shot at a feather apparition assumed to be a bird" (202). He feels that Shula is testing him, to see if he is "truly creative, a force of nature," or not. He explains to Shula that "One book by Wells is like trying to bathe in a single wave." (202).

The encounter between Dr. Lal and Sammler which Shula effects by her theft of Lal's manuscript slows Sammler's movement toward Elya Gruner and reveals two men who view differently the challenge of moving into space. On one level, leaving the planet refers to the choice of

space-age travel, but on another level, the images point to the leaving of this planet through personal death and/or death of the planet. Sammler considers these possibilities as he contemplates the opposing movements mentioned in Ecclesiastes 3:5: "For every purpose under heaven. A time to gather stones together, a time to cast away stones. Considering the earth itself not as a stone cast but as something to cast oneself from--to be divested of. To blow this great blue, white, green planet, or to be blown from it" (55). He comes to the point of considering the earth as "a platform, a point of embarkation" (137) for space travel or death and that the earth and time will be changed: "The earth a memorial park, a merry-go-round cemetery. The seas powdering our bones like quartz, making sand, grinding our peace for us by the aeon" (138). Sammler's consideration of the three possibilities may explain the title's identification of the planet as his own.

Sammler does not personally want to travel to the moon; he would prefer traveling to the ocean bottom in "Dr. Piccard's bathysphere" (186). Claiming to be a "depth man rather than a height man," he requires a ceiling, and the ocean does have "a top and bottom, whereas there is no sky ceiling" (186).[15] That Sammler distinguishes between high-ceiling masterpieces like Remembrance of Things Past and low-ceiling masterpieces such as Crime and Punishment suggests the challenge of working within limitations, not confinement. In fact, Sammler's next thought is "Claustrophobia? Death is confinement" (187).

Lal, whom Sammler comes to see as like "a bushy planet-buzzing Oriental demon mentally rebounding from limits like a horsefly from glass" (227), sees man's desire to go into space as a different kind of challenge into depth. Lal claims: "To see the sidereal

archipelagoes is one thing, but to plunge into them, in a dayless, nightless universe, why that, you see makes sea-depth petty, the leviathan no more than a polliwog--" (225). Even as Lal and Sammler discuss the physical possibilities and challenges of space travel, recurring thoughts of Elya Gruner and his imminent death intrude in a "image of movement in space" that Sammler cannot dismiss: "Elya reappeared strangely and continually, as if his face were orbiting--as if he were a satellite" (226).

The image of the "wadis" reminds the reader of the metaphor of the invading sea. Sammler compares the action in his own brain with a natural one that takes place in areas where there is flooding. The term he uses, "wadis," describes valleys, gulleys, or riverbeds in northern Africa and southwestern Asia. He thinks the "mental dry courses in his head" are like "wadis, . . . small ravines made by the steady erosion of preoccupations" (148). And for him, "The taking of life was one of these" (148). The thoughts of death--the killings and the killed of the past--trace a certain deep course in Sammler's brain. He tries to avoid thinking of the coming death of his beloved Gruner in order to forestall the flooding in his own mind that will be turned loose when Gruner's fatal hemorrhage occurs.

However, Sammler is assaulted in his self-protective attempt by a memory Wallace shares with him of his near drowning. Wallace had fallen through the ice on a frozen lagoon in December when "the ice was gray. The snow was white. The water was black" (192). He remembers hanging onto the ice, his soul feeling "like a little marble rolling away, away" (192). An older child "crawled" on the ice with a branch and "dragged" (193) him out.

A memory of his own escape from death affects Sammler even more strongly. His memory of his imprisonment in a death-hole with his wife and others continues to assault him. The impact of the prisoners' being forced to dig the hole themselves is strengthened by Bellow's use of the word "dig" once and the word "digging" three times in three lines of prose. The process is one in which "[t]he hole deepened, the sand clay and stones of Poland, their birthplace, opened up" (276). After the prisoners were forced into the hold, dirt was thrown in on them. The experience is still vivid for Sammler: "The thick fall of soil. A ton, two tons, thrown in. A sound of shovel-metal, gritting" (276). The slowness of the "digging" by the prisoners is contrasted with the machines' power in moving large amounts of dirt in a movement fatal for all but Sammler, who "had clawed his way out" (276) and escaped suffocation; Samler, "scratching dirt, pushing the corpses, came out choked with blood, and crept away on his belly" (209). During the months after this escape from death, Sammler "was hidden in a mausoleum" (93) belonging to the Mezvinski family, but he heard no news of mankind during his "boarding in the tomb" (94) to offset the "yellow despair" of the confinement.

As Ben Siegel has recognized, "The holocaust and his own escape from the grave are the experiences by which Sammler measures all events."[16] More often than he is consciously aware, Sammler thinks of his wife "underground, in this or that posture, of this or that color or physical condition" (208). For a time after his escape from the grave and the tomb, Sammler wanted "with God, to be free from the bondage of the ordinary and finite" (121), but his return to creatureliness continues his imprisonment by that "ordinary and finite."

Even his life with Shula gave him the sense of being imprisoned: "the big swell of the apartment house, heavyweight vaselike baroque, made him feel that the twelfth-story room was like a china cabinet into which he was locked" (31); living with Margotte presents no problems like this one with Shula. Being driven by the threat of the black pickpocket to use the subways which he always disliked, Sammler faces a feeling that Feffer calls "positively claustrophobic" (122). "Descending to the subway was a trial" for him and in some way reminded him of the "grave, Elya, death, entombment, the Mezvinski vault" (124).

Just as Sammler's memory of his own escape from death more powerfully assaults his sensibilities than does Wallace's account of his escape from death, so also does his memory of his firing of a gun into a human being affect him more strongly than does Feffer's account of a gunshot. When he was challenged, Feffer's acquaintance fired into a Manhattan telephone directory on a music stand five feet away; although the roar was tremendous, the bullet penetrated only two inches (129). Feffer's account revives Sammler's memory of a gun he shot at close range after his own escape from death. Sammler made the enemy "fling away his carbine. To the side. A good five feet into snow. It landed flat and sank" (142). Then, although the man begged for his life, "Sammler pulled the trigger. The body then lay in the snow. A second shot went through the head and shattered it. Bone burst. Matter flew out" (143). The firing of the gun in Feffer's account had "something comically fanatical about it," but Sammler's gunshots killed the other man and Sammler discovered that taking a life "could be an ecstasy" (145). Sammler's memory is jogged by the similarities in the two incidents (an ineffective gun, the range of five feet, and a certain

destruction of material), but the very great differences in the destruction of a book listing names and the destruction of a human brain so agitate Sammler that he cannot rest. His pain causes him to see existence as a game in which it is bad "to be pounded back and forth so so abnormally on the courts, like a ball between powerful players" (145).

Sammler considers Wallace's flooding of the attic "a metaphor for Elya's condition" and knows that the result of the breaking of the weakened blood vessel will be a "terrible flood!" (262). The images that are evoked by Bellow to describe that hemorrhaging are never given in a description of Gruner. However, the images created by him to describe the flooding with water of the house by Gruner's son, Wallace, may be felt by the reader to describe that fatal action of blood within Gruner's body. The occupants of the house "heard a sound of spraying above, and a steady, rapid tapping, trickling, cascading, snaking of water on the staircase" (241). On the second floor, "the carpet corridor was like a soaked lawn and sucked at Sammler's cracked shoes" (241).

As Sammler approaches the time when he must accept Gruner's death, he recalls an incident that occurred when he was in Israel. Water and death are associated in the memory. The war was so intense that the odor of death was very strong. The dead bodies in their slow movement toward disintegration nauseated Sammler: "In the sun the faces softened, blackened, melted, and flowed away. The flesh sank to the skull, the cartilage of the nose warping, the lips shrinking, eyes dissolving, fluids filling the hollows and shining on the skin. A strange flavor of human grease. Of wet paper pulp" (254). Sammler

joined some men who refreshed themselves in the sea. The water was beautiful: "In a broad band along the beaches the foam mixed with heat-shimmer for many miles, in varying deep curves of seething white between the sand and the great blue" (256). However, even that body of water could not mask the odor of death for long. Soon even the handkerchief Sammler tied over his face absorbed the smell. Death "tainted his clothing. His spittle tasted of it" (256).

A part of the pain Sammler experiences at the hospital is expressed in images of movement. His own nerves connect the smashing of Eisen's medallions on the pickpocket's face "with the crushing of his eye under the rifle butt thirty years ago" and the "sensations of choking and falling" (299). Sammler is hit again by those violences and as he waits for the comfort of "the rubber bump of Elya's wheeled stretcher against the door" (299), he must be prepared for other assaults, which come almost immediately in the news that the low-flying Wallace "scraped his wheels off on a house" (300) and in Angela's anger at Sammler's attempt to reconcile her and her father.

Even Sammler's responses to the death are imaged in his physical movements. Told that Gruner is dead, Sammler insists that he be taken to the body. He is led through a hospital labyrinth, down in an elevator "and through lower passages paved in speckled material, through tunnels, up and down ramps, past laboratories and supply rooms" (315). Weeping to himself, Sammler "walked at the habitual rapid sweeping pace, waiting at the crossways for the escorting nurse" (315). This last part of the trip to Elya Gruner's body is as perplexing physically as Sammler's emotional movement toward Gruner's death and his own death. In his final thoughts about Gruner, Sammler appreciates the example of Gruner's way of living "through all the confusion and degraded

clowning of this life through which we are speeding" (316). As Sammler moves toward his own death, Gruner's life may serve him in the way that the "escorting" nurse serves him physically.

Sammler's emotional response to the actual death is also imaged in movements--the movements of water. Sammler knows that Elya was a strongly feeling man, not "one of your monstrous crystals or icicles" (263), and that Gruner's death will be a great loss for him. An image of the blind side of Sammler's face with its "thin long lines like the lines . . . within a cake of ice" (22) may suggest a less strongly feeling man in Sammler. However, at Elya's death, Sammler cries to himself: "He felt that he was breaking up, that irregular big fragments inside were melting, sparkling with pain, floating off" (315-16). Elya's death strips Sammler of a creature who has been a comfort. The loss is "[o]ne more reason to live trickled out" (316). To the extent that no other creature can comfort him as Gruner has done, Sammler reaches the point he read about in Meister Eckhart, at which "if nothing can comfort you save God, truly God will console you" (257).

The way in which Sammler has been affected by the forces that move around him is shown throughout the novel in images of moving water. Facts and sensations impinge upon him. He is forced to submit to the physical assault on his person by the black pickpocket and to the mental assault of a new sexual standard for judging everything. As he becomes more aware of the burden that sexuality can be, he becomes more sympathetic with the human situation. Death, which is shown to be a physical reality to him through his personal experience in World War II and in the dead he viewed in Israel during the Six Days War, becomes a spiritual reality in Elya Gruner's death.

Humboldt's Gift

Images of movement, weight, and imprisonment are used in Humboldt's Gift to clarify the relationship that has existed between Citrine and Humboldt and to show how Citrine moves beyond Humboldt's understandings about the relationships that exist between men and their mechanical and artistic creations. The movements of both men reveal the tensions each feels in his literary career and in his personal life. Citrine's seeking for spiritual understandings is imaged in the directions of his movements; no single meaning attaches to what at first glance appear to be erratic directions of movement, but there are several suggestive patterns. Humboldt and Citrine are shown in their relationships with the women they love in images of imprisonment. Humboldt imprisoned Kathleen, and Citrine is in sexual bondage to Renata. Citrine is also shown in his personal obsessions with death and money. Freed from his inaccurate memories of Humboldt, from his legal entanglements with Denise, and from his obsession with death, Citrine will be able to see more clearly man's true nature and to use more effectively his own creative abilities.

As a young man Citrine was "sunk in the glassy depths of life and groping, thrillingly and desperately, for sense, a person keenly aware of painted veils, of Maya, of domes of many colored glass straining the white radiance of eternity, quivering in the intense inane and so on" (3). This contrasts with the movement indicated by the end of Humboldt's success, when "he started to sink" (2). But Citrine's dream of youth came to wear out "[l]ike a roller-towel in a Mexican men's room" (16). He came to mock his earlier idea that he "had been stamped and posted and they were waiting for him to be

delivered at an important address" because he might "contain unusual information" (19). As he recalls Humboldt, Citrine is able to see in vivid action the poet-man who has had such a great influence on him. He must understand the real Humboldt in order to be free from the imprisonment of his influence.

In his meditating, Citrine comes to control his physical movements in order to be able to control his mental-spiritual activity. He meditates lying down, his idea being that "To lie down was no small gesture of freedom" (143). He lies down because of the pressures on him: "There are times when the most practical thing is to lie down" (110). The same kind of attitude is evidenced when he slows down his walking pace because he is late (24). Once, fighting an impulse to rise from his couch and to interrupt his meditating, he stays on the sofa "sinking in the down . . . and held on to Humboldt" (131). His purpose in his meditation exercises is "to penetrate into the depths of the soul and to recognize the connection between the self and the divine powers" (143). Among the thoughts "whirling" through his head in the top story of the New York Plaza Hotel is his decision "to make a strange jump and plunge into the truth" (356) in order to relate the conduct of life and metaphysics in some practical way.

Because Humboldt could not control his environment for creating, he had "perhaps not so many as two consecutive hours of composure" (240). His "high dreaming states," those which a poet needs, were "always being punctured and torn by American flak" (240). He made the "[m]arvelous gestures [that] had to be made," but his nervousness revealed tension: "His legs were restless and his feet made nervous movements. Below, shuffling comedy; above, princeliness and dignity,

a certain nutty charm" (11). His smoking also showed his tension: "He consumed his cigarettes to the last spark and freckled his tie and his jacket with burns" (12). Humboldt told Citrine that he had "vertigo from success," that his ideas kept him awake, and that if he went to bed without a drink the room was "whirling" (12). He called poetry the "frantic profession," but toward the last his "art dwindled while his frenzy increased" (120).

Humboldt's insomnia seemed to testify to the strength of the world which "had all the voltage. Once you had picked up the high-voltage wire and were someone, a known name, you couldn't release yourself from the electrical current, you were transfixed" (312). Citrine also knows "the high voltage of publicity" (163), but Humboldt's imprisonment by the current is a lesson, and Citrine comes to understand that there is power in poetry "to cancel the world's distraction, activity, noise, so that one may become fit to hear the essence of things" (312). For a time, however, Citrine is distracted by Renata and her physical power over him: "Energizing influences passed into [his] hands from her breast during the night" (326-27).

Citrine compares Humboldt's condition at the end of his life, "probably groping among his bottles for a drop of juice to mix with his morning gin," with his own condition at the same time, when he was "whopping over Manhattan" (8) in a helicopter. Inspired to keep in good physical shape, Citrine is able to escape a mugger; he "leaped away and sprinted down the middle of the street" (8). "Strengthened in illusion and idiocy" by his doctor's reports, Citrine "embraced a busty Renata on this Posturepedic mattress" (9). However, he fears the loss of the Renata he has "taken in the wars of Happiness by a

quick Patton-thrust of armor" (9). In desperation, he plays racket ball or paddle ball; on the court, he is "playing, leaping, flinging" himself around "to scoop dead shots and throwing [his] legs and spinning entrechats like a Russian dancer" (68).

Citrine compares Humboldt's situation with that of Houdini, the great Jewish escape artist, who

> defied all forms of restraint and confinement, including the grave. He broke out of everything. They buried him and he escaped. They put him in a straight jacket and manacles and hung him upside-down by one ankle from the flagpole of the Flatiron Building in New York . . . . In czarist Russia the Okhrana stripped him naked and locked him in the steel van it used for Siberian deportations. He freed himself from that too. He escaped from the most secure prisons in the world. (435-36)

Citrine tells Kathleen that "Humboldt had to break out of his case of hardened madness" (372) in order to have his sense of humor at the last, that "he made a Houdini escape from the hardened projections of paranoia or manic depression, or whatever it was" (373). However, Houdini was not able to escape his own grave, and the reality of the grave is what Citrine himself must face. Humboldt's final action, Citrine thinks may have been as hard for him to do as it will be for Citrine "to go from this world to the spirit world" (373).

Humboldt's control of Kathleen is imaged in Citrine's words describing her situation: "Lie there. Hold still. Don't wiggle" (23); Humboldt understood that if she submitted to his will, his happiness would result in her happiness. Kathleen loved Humboldt "and allowed him to hold her captive in the country" (25), to keep her "in purdah" (26). His watching her was "like a bailiff escorting a prisoner from one jail to another" (148). However, Humboldt said Citrine was "not place bound, time bound, goy bound, Jew bound" (122) when he wanted

to call him insensitive to slights. But Citrine is bound to an illusion "that by a kind of inspired levitation, [he] could rise and dart straight to the truth" (158) without being concerned with the things valued by a culture-Jew like Humboldt. Citrine's illusion seems strangely similar to Humboldt's physical "soaring" (136) to Longstaff's penthouse on Longstaff's private elevator; Humboldt's idea also "was to go straight to the top" (136-37).

Because of his illusion of moving physically to truth, Citrine is affected by vertical movement. On business errands, "zooming or plunging in swift elevators" (197), Citrine notes the "check in the electrical speed" before the door opens and his heart speaks up with the expectation of seeing his Fate in a female form. He tries unsuccessfully to be scientific and sensible about "this hungry demeaning elevator phenomenon" (197). He met Renata when an elevator "door rolled open in the county building" (203) and for a time she was a Fate. A recognition of "rising too high, too far" in an elevator with Cantabile in the unfinished skyscraper Citrine saw as "a headless trunk sweeping up, swarming with lights" (101) suggests a limit to the thrill or fear that comes from such physical movement. Also, after his encounter with the daughter of his childhood sweetheart, he wonders when he will "rise at last above all this stuff, the accidental, the merely phenomenal, the wastefully and randomly human, and be fit to enter higher worlds" (291).

Citrine's relationship with Renata is revealed in images of movement and imprisonment, but Citrine feels that "there will be no such personal erotic bondage" (356) in the life to come. Her carrying off of Citrine's shoe forces him to go up "in the luxurious cage of

the elevator" (367) for a replacement pair. His other pair of shoes is one that Renata selected for him, "weightless red shoes from Harrods, a little short in the toe, but admired by the black shoeshine man at the Downtown Club for their weightlessness and style" (367). The description of Citrine's feet in these shoes as "a little cramped but fine"(367) could also apply in his relationship with Renata. Even the airport tunnel he walked through after separation from her, "like an endless arched gullet or a corridor in an expressionistic film" (379), reveals Citrine's sense of entrapment.

Citrine recognizes the great "plan for conquest" (403) of Renata's mother, the Señora, and her "unassailable" (410) composure. Her condition contrasts with Citrine's Gemini treatment, described in one of Renata's astrology books, "as a mental feeling-mill, where the soul is sheared and shredded" (191). However, Citrine mistakenly feels he understands the Señora because he understands the working of his mother's Singer sewing machine:

> You pushed the wrought-iron treadle. This moved the smooth pulley, the needle went up and down. You pried up a smooth steel plate and there found small and intricate parts that gave off an odor of machine oil. To me the Señora was a person of intricate parts and smelled slightly of oil. It was on the whole a positive association. But certain bits were missing from her mind. The needle went up and down, there was thread on the bobbin, but the stitching failed to occur. (192)

After the conquest, Renata can leave Citrine suffering: "She marched off in boots and plumes, as it were, and left me figuring, in pain, what was what, and how, and what to do" (432). Renata does not appreciate Citrine's sense that he "must do something to help the human spirit burst from its mental coffin" (433); in fact, she helps keep him in such a coffin.

The legal entanglement with Denise is imaged in military movements, weight and imprisonment. In court, Denise "was pelting" Citrine "with the ammunition she stored up daily in her mind and heart" (227). Citrine found himself "in a state" in which he "understood what emotions had torn at Humboldt's heart when they grabbed him and tied him up and raced him to Bellevue" (232). Citrine's ability to meditate gives him the strength to restrain himself under the provocation of a legal system meting out "justice." He realized he would gain nothing if he were "to utter burning words," if he were "to burst out like Lear" or "like Shylock" (232). Although the court wants to "harness" him to a heavier load for the last decade of his life, Citrine imprisons the useless words, crosses his arms on his chest, and keeps his mouth closed, "taking a chance on heartbreak through tongue-holding" (232). However, the battle is not over. The judge wants Citrine to feel "the ironic weight" (229) of his situation and begins "to strafe" (233) Citrine in earnest; "his hand on the valve," he "increased the heat still more" (233) with the threat of impounding his money. The judge opposes Citrine's liberty to sail up and down elevator shafts" (234) looking for his Fate. Only in the bathroom stall is Citrine "free at last" (237) to read Kathleen's letter.

Citrine sympathetically accepts the weights imposed in the area of sexual relations. He sees that although Denise has the strength of the social order on her side, she is "a burdened woman" (224). Citrine thinks that "the weight of the sense world is too heavy for some people, and getting heavier all the time" (293). He recognizes Renata as potentially dangerous, but also knows that he could never be interested in any woman who does not threaten him with loss; his heart

is the kind "that had to overcome melancholy and free itself from many depressing weights" (413). Renata, however, is not so sympathetic with Denise. She thinks it would be nice if Citrine could find some way to "crush" (188) Denise and her lawyers.

Death is imaged as a weight or imprisonment, or inability to move. One instance of entombment amuses Citrine: Demmie Vonghel's mother, a very large woman, "squeezed into the tomb of Lazarus but could not get out again. Arabs had to be sent for to free her" (166). Citrine loved Humboldt and mourns and misses him, because "Humboldt put that sort of weight into himself and developed in his face all the graver, all the more important feelings" (16). After his father's death, Citrine remembers Father Citrine as "a man so unfit to lie still"; he thought of him as "that great sprinter, that broken-field runner, and now brought down by the tackle of heavy death" (387).

Citrine remembers one time in his life when he "was suffering intense death anxieties" (196); he would not attend funerals because he could not bear to see a coffin shut, and "the thought of being screwed into a box" (196) made him frantic. A newspaper account of children finding and boating in some empty caskets upsets him. In Citrine's mind gaped "a display of coffins lined with puffy rose taffeta and pale green satin, all open like crocodiles' jaws" (197). Citrine sees himself "put down to suffocate and rot under the weight of clay and stones--no, under sand; Chicago is built on Ice Age beaches and marshes" (197). His death anxiety makes him furious with Poe: "His tales of catalepsy and live burial poisoned my childhood, and still killed me. I couldn't even bear to have the sheet over my face at night or my feet tucked in" (197).

Under Steiner's influence, Citrine is no longer "experiencing the suffocating grave or dreading an eternity of boredom" (220-21); he feels "unusually light and swift-paced as if . . . on a weightless bicycle and sprinting through the star world" (221). As his attitude toward death changes, he experiences happiness, enough to make him "soar." Most joyful is "the possibility that there might be something to soar into, a space unused, neglected" (328). He feels the potential for more movement: "Assume a cosmos, . . . and it's metaphysically a more specious situation" (328).

Citrine comes to recognize the opportunity of assuming "the immortality of the soul" (442). One would be freed "from the weight of death that everybody carries" and his freedom is compared with "the relief from any obsession (the money obsession or the sexual obsession)" (442). Citrine comes to see that holding onto money is like "clutching an ice cube" (375); he can appreciate the disdain for his money that Cantabile expressed with his "child's paper glider" made from Citrine's bills "speeding" (102) above the Christmas lights. He had known earlier that a generalized need for love "had perhaps the great weight of stupidity in it" and that it "was an awful drag" (211). When he is freed from erotic bondage to Renata, he is rid of these three weights--fear of death, the money obsession and the sexual obsession.

Citrine himself sees the similarities in the movements of hysterical beings--of an actor who resembles Humboldt, of maddened apes, of Humboldt on his way to a mental hospital, and of Cantabile, fearful of losing a key and with it access to a valuable manuscript. When Citrine sees Otway in the movie role of Caldofreddo throw

himself at the cabin walls, as he had "seen maddened apes do in the monkey house, battering the partitions with heart-rending recklessness, [he] was stabbed with the thought of how Humboldt had fought the police when they took him away to Bellevue. . . . a fighting furious weeping hollering Humboldt" (462). The movie scene of Caldofreddo's frenzy forty years later inspires Cantabile to try to regain the key; Citrine "couldn't see what the maniac on the screen was doing because this other maniac was all over [him] " (464). In each instance, the attempt at restraint results in frantic activity.

In his attempts to remove the weights and confinements of his existence, Citrine has frantically engaged in several kinds of actions --lying down to meditate, slowing down to get somewhere, soaring to find truth. His frantic behavior is clearly shown in the several directions his movements have taken. The attitudes toward man to which he is exposed in his culture and which he has not clearly examined are further limitations on his creativity. Some of these attitudes are clearly shown in the movements of man's mechanical inventions and the control of man by such movements instead of the control of the machines by men with spiritual power and a clear understanding of the creativity of man.

Citrine's awareness of the contributions of machines is imaged in movements that comment on his human weaknesses. During his meditating, Citrine is aware that "the beating engines of the great Chicago building make a strong hum" and that he "could have done without this," but he acknowledges that he is "beholden to modern engineering, too" (123). Citrine identifies the "interminable squalling" (55) of the dial tone of his telephone with the anxiety level of the disengaged

soul--his own. Citrine's own emotion in the early incident with Cantabile is imaged in the repetition of the "squirming barber pole" (80) and "the squirming barbershop cylinders of red and white and blue" (82). The ticking of his door knocker "like a telegraph key, only more delicately, suggestively" (409), suggests his anticipation of Renata; a clue to the break with Renata is given when their trans-Atlantic telephone conversation "crumpled and ended" (404). When he thinks about Renata with another man, his feelings give "a wash . . . like the water in a ferry slip when the broad-beamed boat pushes in and the backing engines churn up the litter and drowned orange rinds" (412). Citrine feels that Szathmar's turning him over to the attorney Forrest Tomcheck is "like laying a speck of confetti in front of a jumbo vacuum cleaner" (207); he is made powerless before legal forces.

Just as Humboldt was affected on a tour through Chicago by "the buzzing of the roller skate wheels on the brittle cement" (72), Citrine responds to the images of movement in his city, with its "big urban engines going" (115). He knows the city and its changes: "It's like a film montage of rise and fall and rise" (71). The removal of old neighborhood landmarks particularly affects him: "Eternity got no picturesque interval here. The ruins of time had been bulldozed, scraped, loaded in trucks, and dumped as fill. New steel beams were going up" (75). Citrine is painfully aware of the eternal changes taking place in the physical setting of his past experiences, and he becomes painfully aware of how his personal past is being rearranged and even buried in order that a new framework for the structure of his life can be erected.

Images of movement that establish the relationship of a person and his car reveal the character of its owner. Citrine so identifies with his car that when it is mangled he feels the physical blows. His relationship with Renata affects his thinking about himself and his car. Humboldt's driving shows a man who found it difficult to control the power of poetry or a machine; he showed himself even in the way he parked. Cantabile's car is imaged in blood, and although Citrine is attracted to and repelled by Cantabile, the threat and challenge of Cantabile brings Citrine closer to a living relationship with his own creativity and its control.

The discovery that his own "elite machine," a Mercedes-Benz, has been attacked, is unnerving to Citrine: "My elegant car, my shimmering silver motor tureen which I had had no business to buy . . . was mutilated" (35). The effect on Citrine is like an attack on his person: The car "had been beaten and clubbed," the shatterproof windows "looked spat on all over," and the windshield, "covered with white fracture-blooms. . . . had suffered a kind of crystalline internal hemorrhage" (35-36). Citrine "nearly broke down"; he "felt like swooming (36). He reaches the point where the car is a part of what he calls his "Antony and Cleopatra mood," in which he thinks, "Let the world know that such a mutual pair [he and Renata] could wheel through Chicago in a silver Mercedes, the engines ticking like wizard-made toy millipedes and subtler than a Swiss Accutron--no, an Audemars Piguet with jeweled Peruvian butterfly wings!" (36). The moment when Citrine realizes that the car has become an extension of himself is "terribly fertile in reactions" (36).

Citrine's identification of himself and his car is continued in Renata's power over both his car and himself: "what she did to the car I felt in my own person" (44). He does not even think she needs "an ignition key to start the car. One of her kisses on the hood would turn it on. It would roar for her" (260). One incident of her chauffering him indicates how her use of the car shows her responsiveness to him. When he approached the car, "Renata was punctual, and she had the engine of the old yellow Pontiac idling, waiting to be off" (187); he got into the car, "slammed the door, and said, 'Go!' She went" (188).

The sense of power Humboldt felt when he was manipulating a car reflects his misunderstanding of the true power of a poet. This mistaken notion of power made Humboldt not only the bad driver Citrine thought he was but one driven like a machine by the culture that created and controlled the car the the poet. The car Humboldt drove was a "roaring, grinding four-holer. This Buick was all over mud and looked like a staff car from Flanders Fields. The wheels were out of line, the big tires pounded eccentrically" (11). Citrine saw "that the way people park had much to do with their intimate self-image and revealed how they felt about their own backsides" (20). Humboldt's attempt to park in an adequate space ended by his twice getting "a rear wheel up on the curb" and giving up, "turning off the ignition" (20).

Humboldt's driving was no better: "He was a terrible driver, making left turns from the right side, spurting, then dragging, tailgating" (21). Citrine recalls how Humboldt "charged down Barrow Street" (20) and "the car walloped the pavement" (21), how it "went snoring and squealing. . . . the carburetor gasped, the eccentric

tires thumped fast on the slabs of the highway" (21-22), and how Humboldt drove the Buick, "the busted muffler blasting in the country lanes and the great long car skedaddling dangerously on the curves" (127). Citrine remembers his own experiencing of motion as Humboldt's passenger: "We plunged over the Pulaski Skyway while the stripes of girder shadows came at us through the shuddering windshield" (22); another time, when "[b]riars lashed the Roadmaster as we swayed on huge springs through rubbishy fields where white boulders sat" (22); and the response of the car to rolling terrain, when "the Buick rose and then dived into the weed" (22).

Humboldt used his car as an instrument of destruction, to release his own frustration: "on a back road in New Jersey, he tried to run Kathleen down in the Buick" (141). After a party on the evening of the day when he found out there was no longer the Foundation money for his endowed professorship, he hit Kathleen, forced her into the Buick, and then, because there was a car parked behind him, "wheeled over the lawn and off the sidewalk, hacking off the muffler on the curb" (145). Humboldt continued to punch Kathleen as he steered with the left hand.

> At a blinking light, near a package store, she opened the door and made a run for it in her stocking feet--she had lost her shoes in Princeton. He chased her in the Buick. She jumped into a ditch and he ran into a tree. The state troopers had to come and release him because the doors were jammed by the collision. (143)

His own use of the vehicle supposedly under his control enabled it to imprison Humboldt.

Humboldt also used a car in an attempt to destroy Citrine, but the "entrapment" (339) he planned for Citrine backfired. Humboldt used Citrine's blood-brother check to buy an Oldsmobile and told his buddies

that Trenck was "the hit that paid for this powerful machine" (340), and justifiably so, because Citrine put Humboldt's own spirit into the main character. It is as if he thought Citrine had betrayed their brotherhood by putting him in Trenck; however, Humboldt's betrayal of Citrine, expecially at the time when Citrine was mourning the loss of Demmie, finally destroyed Humboldt and he became the lost automobile. He spoke of himself as if he had become a worn-out machine: "I broke down. My gears are stripped. My lining is shot. It is all shattered" (340).

Thinking of himself as "the first poet in America with power brakes" (20), Humboldt spoke of what a Buick with power brakes and power steering would have meant even fifty years earlier to literary figures such as Henry James, or Walt Whitman, or Mallarmé. The thought of such mechanical power at their fingertips stimulated Humboldt's talking and his driving, but he misunderstood the power in the automobile just as he misunderstood the power available to him as a writer. However, his gift to Citrine does contribute to Citrine's coming to an understanding of the use of poetic power in the twentieth century. Citrine expected to see Humboldt in some life to come, but "didn't expect him to come . . . as in life, driving ninety miles an hour in his Buick four-holer" (110). Citrine thinks of Humboldt's giving as he thinks of his driving: "He bore down on me. He struck me with blessings" (110).

Cantabile's car and the way in which Cantabile and Polly drive it affect Citrine; they reveal how man becomes an automaton and the machine is in control unless man is very alert. This exchanging of the human and the machine is accomplished in part through images of blood and the beating of a heart that are used to describe the car.

Cantabile's Thunderbird is a "throbbing open car" (255) with "leather bucket seats red as spilt blood" (87). The "soft crimson" upholstery of the elegant car is "blood red" (253) and reminds Citrine of "blood, pulmonary blood" (100). Citrine has peculiar thoughts "in the warm darkness of this glowing, pulsating, and lacquered automobile" (260).

Cantabile's arrogant and dangerous driving suggests Humboldt's disdain for others. On one occasion Cantabile "took off at top speed from a standstill, like an adolescent drag-racer, the tires wildly squealing," holding "the wheel in both hands as though it were a pneumatic drill to chop up the macadam" (87). On another occasion, Cantabile deliberately runs a red light: "He rode the bumper of the car ahead and he made other motorists chicken out" (88). At the expressway, Cantabile "swept right and gunned up the slope, running into merging traffic. Cars braked behind us" (88). When they came down from the skyscraper, Citrine "fell into the seat of the Thunderbird," but Cantabile "caught the wheel and started the motor" (103) and then "sped away toward the next light" (104).

As Cantabile's chauffeur, Polly follows his will in managing the car. Cantabile's way of breathing the air "as if he were stealing it" (253) is reflected in the car's "puffing fumes" and "beginning to block traffic" (253). Because Citrine has been rethinking the life of Humboldt, who had been so immersed in T. S. Eliot, the scene makes him think "of the violet hour when the human engine waits like a taxi throbbing, waiting" (253). In the traffic, Polly drives masterfully: "She worked the white Thunderbird into the left lane without touching the brake, without a jolt, with fearless competency, a marvelous driver" (258). Her mastery of the task of driving and the "element

of stability" she provides through it are the only positive elements in the scene; Citrine's "heart hammered upon a single theme," (258), to be elsewhere.

An image of Polly "idling her legs" (180) exchanges the driver and that which is driven; that image and the instance of Polly's excellent driving move Citrine to a comparison of the car as god and the driver as a mere automaton. Citrine thinks that if the various trivial tasks of mankind were performed by a supernatural agency and there was no demand for wisdom or virtue, then there would be little that man could prize in man. He sees this as "exactly the problem America had set for itself. The Thunderbird would do as the supernatural agency" (259). In Cantabile's car, which was being magnificently manipulated by a human automaton valued for her ability to drive, Citrine thinks of what should be prized in the human being.

The power of the world is especially developed through the images of movement that describe Julius' heart surgery. As Citrine understands the surgery, "they break into your chest, remove the heart, lay it on a towel or something, while they circulate the blood by machine. It's one of those demonic modern technological things" (353). According to Julius' view of the operation, "they saw you open and I even think the bastards lift the heart right out of your chest" (381). After the surgery, Citrine expects to see "blood stains, perhaps, or bone dust from the power saw; they had pried open the man's rib cage and taken out his heart; they had shut it off like a small motor and laid it aside and started it up again when they were ready" (399). However, the recovering Julius reminds him that "A heart can be fixed like a shoe. Resoled. Even new uppers" (400). Citrine could not talk with

his brother about love "under the going mental rules of a civilization that proved its right to impose such rules by the many practical miracles it performed, such as bringing [him] from Texas to New York in four hours, or sawing open his sternum and grafting new veins into his heart" (392).

However, during the movement of the bodies of Humboldt and his mother to new graves, Citrine stops trying to escape the reality of death and its confinement and accepts the evidence of the power of man's cooperative creativity in machines. At the graveside Citrine saw Humboldt's coffin set "on the canvas band of the electrical-lowering device" and "a low yellow compact machine which apparently did the digging and bulldozed back the earth. It was also equipped as a crane" (485). The sight starts a reflection on the power of the machine, the strength of which came from the collaboration of engineers and other artificers, and the weakness of Humboldt, who "had proceeded for some time upon the mere power of his own mind" (495) and had only begun to look toward the collective phenomena. The weight of death is as difficult for Citrine as ever: "Brown clay and lumps and pebbles--why must it all be so heavy. It was too much weight, oh, far too much to bear" (497). However, even the pain does not keep the alert Citrine from noticing another burial innovation: "Within the grave was an open concrete case. The coffins went down and then the yellow machine moved forward and the little crane, making a throaty whir, picked up a concrete slab and laid it atop the concrete case. So the coffin was enclosed and the soil did not come directly upon it" (497). Citrine recognizes that the individual does not get out of this prison and he concludes: "Thus, the condensation of collective intelligences

and combined ingenuities, its cables silently spinning, dealt with the poet" (487). Then "the bulldozer began its work" (487).

Citrine's recognition that he had allowed his own car to become an extension of himself is a step in his progress to recognizing how machines that have been developed by the cooperation of human minds are related to man. Men are shown in their relationships with automobiles, surgical equipment, and finally with grave-digging machines. In each instance the instrument of power manipulates the human being because the will of the individual is weaker than the force of the machine, or the human being lacks power because of his failure to understand his spiritual potential. And this is exactly the situation the writer in America faces.

The conflict between the power of man's mechanical creations and his literary creations has contributed to the downfall of many writers. Citrine understands the ruin and death of Humboldt to point to the attitude in America towards its poets: "The weakness of the spiritual powers is proved in the childishness, madness, drunkenness, and despair of these martyrs" (118). America sees poets as lacking in "[m]iracle and power" (118) because they "can't perform a hysterectomy or send a vehicle out of the solar system" (118). In the process of seeking the power of spiritual truth, Citrine is finding what Humboldt was seeking, "to find the common ground of poetry and science, to prove that the imagination was just as potent as machinery, to free and to bless humankind" (119).

Understanding the relationship between man and his machines is as difficult for Citrine as understanding his relationship with Humboldt and resolving his personal obsessions with sex, money, and death. As

Citrine moves toward spiritual knowledge, he comes to see men as related to their creations--whether mechanical or artistic--and cooperatively bound to one another in their creation.

Conclusion

In each of his last three novels Bellow uses motion or immobility to comment on the characters. Herzog is literally imprisoned and escapes; he also escapes the far more confining imprisonment of his own unexamined thoughts. Through many images of moving water, Sammler is challenged in his attempt to maintain his sanity in a world he considers mad; the fatal flooding of his nephew's blood vessel is the final test of his ability to move as a man. The contrasting movements of Humboldt and Citrine effect very different results as Citrine's re-examination of Humboldt's life frees him from the weights that hinder his creativity.

The three protagonists are imaged in frantic movements as they try to achieve meaning in their lives. Sammler's positive recognition of human worth comes at a moment of loss, but Herzog and Citrine reach understandings that may be productive.

NOTES

[1] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, pp. 85-108.

[2] Embler, p. 32.

[3] Embler, p. 62.

[4] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 154.

[5] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 154.

[6] Leonard Lutwack, Heroic Fiction: The Epic Tradition and American Novels of the Twentieth Century, Crosscurrents/Modern Critiques (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1971), p. 91.

[7] Lutwack, p. 96.

[8] Richard Pearce, "The Ambiguous Assault of Henderson and Herzog," in Saul Bellow: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Earl Rovit, Twentieth Century Views (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975), p. 78. Hereafter cited as SBCCE.

[9] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 154.

[10] Ruth R. Wisse, "The Schlemiel as Liberal Humanist," in SBCCE, p. 96.

[11] Clayton, p. 222.

[12] Clayton, p. 222.

[13] Cohen, p. 203.

[14] Marcus Klein, "Postscript 1973: to "A Discipline of Nobility: Saul Bellow's Fiction," in SBCCE, p. 159.

[15] Ben Siegel, "Saul Bellow and Mr. Sammler: Absurd Seekers of High Qualities," in SBCCE, p. 129, claims that choosing earth shows that Sammler's sympathies "are with the limited, the definite, indeed with the bottom of the sea, which embodies, he feels, a descent into dense tangibility, into cool, inward, finiteness. These elements symbolize for him man's duties and depth."

[16] Siegel, p. 128.

CHAPTER V

VISION IMAGERY AND METAPHOR

Introduction

Irving Malin identifies several kinds of vision imagery in Saul Bellow's early work. The split image, the double, and mirrors occur in each of the works. The heroes "tend to see existence in oblique or unbalanced ways; the mirrors into which they peer are frequently distorted."[1] Faulty vision is shown to be everywhere and "the crucial problem" in all of the early works, as Malin says of Henderson the Rain King, "is how to achieve insight."[2]

An examination of the vision images used by Saul Bellow in his next three novels reveals protagonists through mirror images and through the varied perspectives taken by different characters. Mirror images reveal the protagonists in ways that reveal their distortion of human values. Different perspectives become increasingly important in each of the three novels. Moses E. Herzog is so uncertain of his own way of looking at reality that he is overly affected by those around him as he constructs his webbed image of reality. Artur Sammler's vision is flawed by his perspective of death and sex amid the reality of the human species. Charles Citrine's movement to richer vision is more complicated than that of either Herzog or Sammler. His visions of mankind and of himself must be clarified so that he may function as human being and artist in his culture.

Herzog

In the single paragraph in which he comments on the vision imagery in Herzog, Irving Malin indicates that Herzog in particular looks at himself so much that he cannot separate the true from the false. The mirror reflections and the theatrical behavior of all of the characters distort their truth. Malin summarizes their reactions to the complexity of life: "Motives are duplicities."[3] He points out that even when Herzog sees "Valentine bathing June--a true vision of their relationship--he thinks in terms of 'reflections,'" but that Herzog does come to recognize his own unreal motives and his role as "actor."[4] Malin sees the images of "faulty" vision decreasing when Herzog returns to Ludeyville and the number of solid objects increasing, "as if Herzog too assumes real solidity as he flees from his 'prison of perception.'"[5]

The vision images in Herzog show more than a fleeing from perception. They reveal a protagonist coming to a greater understanding of the ways in which human beings are limited by their perceptions. This section will examine, first, Herzog's awareness of his own half-blindness and of the webbed picture of reality he must construct. Second, it will examine the perspectives of various characters who affect him.

Herzog recounts a number of experiences in the course of the novel that he recalls from a complex perspective: "He looked keenly at everything but he felt half blind" (2). This state is the end result of an earlier one in which he felt a need "to put in perspective" and "to clarify" (2). There is no clarity; in his human condition Herzog

never reaches a state in which there are no contradictions, but his understanding that a human being must live with ambiguity is a different perspective from the naive one with which he starts. He does not escape his perceptions, as Malin suggests, but he does better understand human perceiving. He sees himself as part of a universe in which he will "try to form his own shaky picture of this magnificent web" (48). He envisions men in India working with Dr. Bhave: "In his vision Herzog saw their shining eyes, and the light of the spirit within them," but recognizes one has to "start with injustices that are obvious to everybody, not with big historical perspectives" (48). Herzog knows that other men's visions must not be passed over, but also that the visions of genius quickly "become the canned goods of the intellectuals" (74). In his experiences are a developing trust in his own perspective and also an increasing awareness of the ambiguity that attends any human perception.

The sight of his Ludeyville lawn raises a question about Herzog's life, which is blighted like the elm tree, but which after all contains a heart even if he cannot understand it:

> The lawn was on an elevation with a view of fields and woods. Formed like a large teardrop of green, it had a gray elm at its small point, and the bark of the huge tree, dying of dutch blight, was purplish gray. Scant leaves for such a vast growth. An oriole's nest, in the shape of a gray heart, hung from twigs. (72)

Herzog thinks "God's veil over things makes them all riddles" (72). The same laciness suggested by the web hangs over this sight for Herzog. But he knows that he can have no rest from things that are "so particular, detailed, and very rich" and also "too exciting" because he is "a prisoner of perception, a compulsory witness" (72) to them.

Another webbed image of vision that affects Herzog occurs at waterside, where he looks "through the green darkness at the net of bright reflections on the bottom" (91). Herzog's heart is stirred "by the open horizon; the deep colors; the faint iodine pungency of the Atlantic rising from weeds and mollusks; the white, fine, heavy sand; but principlally by the green transparency as he looked down to the stony bottom webbed with golden lines" (91). He considers how he would ask God to make such use of him if "his soul could cast a reflection so brilliant" (91). However, he recognizes that the actual sphere in which he must live "is not clear like this, but turbulent, angry" (91).

Because of the effect of his many enemies, Herzog looks "terrible, caved-in" (18). Madeleine and Gersbach are the special enemies who, he feels, have impeded the great work of civilization that depends on him. "This was in the eyes of Moses E. Herzog [underlining mine], what was so grotesque and deplorable about the experience of Moses E. Herzog" (125). Eye imagery describing Madeleine and Gersbach reveals their effect on him. Herzog remembers that Madeleine enjoyed her own reflection in the mirror and "how much heart and pride there was in her when she looked at herself" (21) and that once, after viewing her nude reflection in the bathroom mirror, she told him that she was too young, beautiful, and full of life to "waste it all" (21) on him. Angered, Madeleine's "wild blue glare was so intense that her eyes seemed twisted" (124). He remembers her repairing her lipstick after dinner in a restaurant by looking "at her reflection in a knife blade" (318). However, he continues to be affected by her beauty: "the blue of her eyes was clear," but he remembers also the "terrifying menstrual ice of her rages, the look of the murderess" (63).

Gersbach, who "had the eyes of a prophet" (59), actually sits in judgment of Herzog in his relations with Madeleine. But he is a judge whose hair is "brutally barbered" (60-61) in the back. Gersbach speaks of death in his comforting, advising role, and his eyes are "amazingly spirited, large, rich, keen, or thought Herzog, like the broth of his soul, hot and shining" (61). However, when Herzog and Gersbach go out in the snow, Herzog's eyes cannot "bear the glitter" (61). Herzog finally realizes that Dr. Edvig, the Chicago psychiatrist, is also "snowed" (65) by Madeleine in the same way that he is affected by Gersbach's distortion of sympathy. Although Dr. Edvig's glasses are "round, clean, and glittering" (53), and, again, "his lenses glittered" (54), he does not see Madeleine any more clearly than does Herzog. "Old-fashioned, with pink nearly colorless frames, his glasses made him drably, humbly, thoughtful and medical" (54), and Herzog's old-fashioned dependence on the doctor confuses his own vision and affects his appearance. Herzog feels that the resulting grief "greatly damaged--it positively wounded--Herzog's handsome face" and that his own enemies "might now feel revenged to see how ravaged he looked" (60).

Mirror and glass images reflect more than Herzog's physical reactions. The uncertainty of Herzog's reaction to Ramona, whose "eyes touched him deeply" (17), is shown as he buys new clothes to please her; in the glittering shop windows he looks "shamefaced and excited" (19). In the store, he avoids "full exposure in the triple, lighted mirror" (20) because his face is "devastated, especially about the eyes, so that it made him pale to see himself" (20). As Herzog gains a clearer perspective of himself, his response to his reflection in the mirror of the Penn Station gum machine shows his progress. That mirror "revealed to

Herzog how pale he was, unhealthy--wisps from his coat and wool scarf, his hat and brows, twisting and flaming outward in the overfull light and exposing the sphere of his face, the face of a man who was keeping up a front" (104). However, he smiles at what he considers "this earlier avatar of his life, at 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" (104-105).

Herzog's memories of his boyhood friend, the poet Nachman, and his memory of the man Nachman became reveal a picture of an earlier Herzog who was blind to certain values, who, as Nachman said, had "learned to accept a mixed condition of life" (134). Herzog's perspective as he looks down from the height of his New York building, "seeing lunchtime crowds like ants upon smoked glass" (128), reveals a certain separation from other men; he thinks that he is "set apart from daily labor for greater achievements, but at present without confidence in his work" (128). This perspective reveals Herzog's desire to separate himself from Nachman and from Nachman's understanding.

Nachman's view of reality differs from Herzog's and, even wearing "thick unclean glasses" (129), Nachman sees certain things to which Herzog is blind. Herzog explains Nachman's running away from him as an attempt "to avoid explanations" (134), but Herzog is not able to hear them either. Only briefly does Herzog wonder if changes in himself frighten Nachman (130-31). The two men come from the same background. In an early memory, Herzog "clearly" sees the Hebrew characters in the Bible which refer to the blood of one's brother: "Thy brother's blood cries out to me from the earth" (131). Herzog remembers avoiding the

rabbi's instruction by hiding in the water closet where he "observed" (132) the "old men [who] came down from the shul with webby eyes nearly blind" (131). Herzog's eyes are not affected by age, but in the sense of not seeing clearly, they are "webby." Nachman's tender love for his Laura and his rejection of the importance of monetary wealth are very different from Herzog's experiences. As Herzog compares the adult Nachman and the child he had been, he cannot "dismiss his vision of the two Nachmans, side by side" (133). More real to Herzog is "the child with his fresh face, the smiling gap in his front teeth, the buttoned blouse and the short pants" (133) than "this gaunt apparition of crazy lecturing Nachman" (133). In Nachman's "visions of judgment," Nachman sees "mainly the obstinacy of cripples" (134), one of whom he evidently sees in Herzog. Because Herzog does not think highly of Nachman's New Psalms on the subject of man and his way of holding on to his "secret quality" regardless of the consequences, Nachman calls him "blind" (134).

Other persons affecting Herzog are seen again in terms of their ways of seeing reality: Ravitch, the drunken boarder whose project in life was to send for his family which was lost in the Revolution and was still in Russia, is remembered in part by "the drunken grief of his closed eyes" (137); all Jewish children, who "by a never-failing miracle, opened their eyes on one strange world after another, age after age, and uttered the same prayer in each, eagerly loving what they found" (140); his brother, Shura, "with staring disingenuous eyes . . . plotting to master the world, to become a millionaire" (140); his Aunt Zipporah, whose way of looking at his childhood home was "like a military inspection" (147); and his Uncle Yaffe, who looked at the young Herzog "with the brown eyes of an intelligent, feeling, satirical animal.

His glance glittered shrewdly, and he smiled with twisted satisfaction at the errors of young Moses" (142).

Herzog's memories of the way in which his own parents faced or did not face reality affect him. His mother "had a way of meeting the present with a partly averted face. She encountered it on the left but sometimes seemed to avoid it on the right" (139). On this right side, Herzog remembers that "she often had a dreaming look, melancholy, and seemed to be seeing the Old World" (139). Herzog seems to have inherited this tendency from his mother. In the courthouse, he is "dark-eyed, attentive" and averts "his face slightly as he prepared to listen" (225). Even Junie later reminds Herzog of his mother, "pensive, slightly averting her face as she considered the life about her" (256).

Just as Herzog watched his parents after the beating his father had been given by the hijackers, he now contemplates those two figures and considers their continuing effect on him; he is "still a slave to Papa's pain" (149) at this point. He realizes that his mother may have been struck "by the amount of melancholy, her own melancholy, she saw in Moses. The family look, the eyes, those eye-lights" (232); but he does not want that sadness to continue. Herzog concludes that understanding what a human being really is and the meaning of his death may change that expression (232), but the more that he thinks, "the worse his vision of the past" (235). His mother pitied him when she had faced the reality of her own death and understood that he was "a gesture-maker, ambitious, a fool; but that he would need his eyesight and his strength on a certain day of reckoning" (234).

In Herzog's visit with Taube, a number of vision images emphasize the emotional impact of the sights of his father's home and memories of

experiences there. A dim bulb in the hall sheds a pinkish color, and the fixture itself reminds Herzog of "the vigil light in the synogogue" (245). The "remembered luster" continues "in the faint twilight parlor" (245). Photographs of Herzog, his son, and his father identify three stages of man. One is a "smiling" picture of Herzog's son, "Marco as a little boy, bare-kneed, on a bench, a fresh face, and charming, dark hair combed forward" (245). Herzog, in a photo taken when he received his M.A., is "handsome but somewhat jowly," his face expressing "the demands of ingenuous conceit" because he was at a stage when he "refused to know evil" (245), expecting others to familiarize him with it. He comes to know that one "must cleanse the gates of vision by self-knowledge by experience" (86). Among the other photographs is one of Herzog's father "in his last incarnation--an American citizen--handsome, smooth shaven, with none of his troubled masculine defiance, his one-time impetuousness, or passionate protest" (245). The stages from the freshness of his son, through the conceit of his earlier years, through the earlier defiance of his father, to Father Herzog's calmness and smoothness are ones that Herzog must pass through.

Herzog's memory of his relationship with his father is partly revealed in sight imagery. His father wanted to shoot Herzog because he could no longer bear the sight of him or his "elite" look, "the look of conceit or proud trouble" (248).

Tante Taube is also revealed in vision imagery. She keeps no photographs of herself in the parlor because she prefers to forget "her beauty or her former vigor" (245). When she examines Herzog, her "eyes were puffy, but steady enough" (245). When Herzog's voice betrays emotion, her eyes examine him "rather sharply, as if she did not believe

that his feeling was for her and tried to find the real source of it" (246); or, Herzog considers, it might be her cataract that gives her that expression. When Taube recounts her present life, her "large, luminous, tame eyes, the eyes that had domesticated Father Herzog," no longer are "watching" Herzog: "They gazed at a point beyond him" (248).

Herzog realizes Madeleine's love for Gersbach when he sees her "deep" look, "like a steel binder bent open" (219). Herzog's own desire for vengeance against Madeleine and Gersbach and his realization of the little he has done to achieve justice and how much more social organization has accomplished cause him to look at himself carefully in his "blotchy" bathroom mirror: "He saw his perplexed, furious eyes and he gave an audible cry" (22) about his mortal and human longings. The conflict between the desire for revenge and his desire for human love seems to be irresolvable. Herzog comes to see more clearly than anything he sees in an "intensely lighted telegraph office" that "only the incomprehensible gives any light" (266).

Herzog's perception of his relationship with his daughter increases his perceptivity in other areas. He feels that awareness is "his work; extended consciousness . . . his line, his business" (278). He sees in a mirror reflection his daughter's concern over a statement made about Gersbach (179). He comforts her and remembers the "beautiful" pipes and "the reeking mash" in the Verdun still that he was not to mention when he was no older than June. He is upset that he seems fated "to be the visiting father, an apparition who faded in and out of the children's lives" (280). But even more, he is upset about his emotion over death; to him, "as he held his daughter in his arms, looking through aqueous green at the hagfish and smooth sharks with their fanged bellies,

this emotion was nothing but tyranny" (28). For the first time, he takes "a different view" (280) of his father's funeral and his emotional response to it.

Herzog's state of consciousness is revealed through vision imagery at the time of the car wreck. His vision is at first "bothered by large blots, but these dwindled presently to iridescent sparks" (281). He closes his eyes when he realizes his situation; the "silent looks" (282) of the cops tell him they have him. The flashing lights of the squad cars are "revolving"; the other driver is "staring at him, angry"; and "the grackles were walking, feeding, the usual circle of lights working flexibly back and forth about their black necks" (282). Later, he is "still somewhat stunned and dizzy, brought down, as he pictured it, from his strange, spiraling flight of the last few days, and the shock, not to say desperation, of this sudden drop" (284-85).

As Herzog's vision clears, he realizes the futility of what his actions have forced his daughter to view: "the child saw him dragged out fainting, cut on the head, the revolver and rubles sliding from his pocket" (285). As he thinks of this again, his own eyes smart "and he shut[s]them with thumb and forefinger" (288). He remembers himself at her age, when "he had seen everything vividly. Everything was beautiful or frightful" (288). The sight of his child and his identification with her make Herzog tremble with love (289). His recognition that a man does not need self-gratification if his love can have scope for expansion results not in an image of vision, but in a vision of what is not seen with natural eyes: Man has meaning "as long as such intensity has scope" (289). He summarizes and rejects the thought of his generation, "that nothing faithful, vulnerable, fragile can be durable or have any true power,"

and that "Death waits for these things as a cement floor waits for a dropping light bulb. The brittle shell of glass loses its tiny vacuum with a burst, and that is that" (290). He decides that "what had made him faint was not the accident but the premonition of such thoughts" (290). Man's ability to see is more involved and less destructible than a light bulb that can be broken.

Herzog contrasts his own earlier naive way of looking at life with Sandor's "personal, brutal version of the popular outlook" and that of "canny as well as sweet" (291) Tante Taube, and he seems to benefit from both. In the police station, Herzog makes "a special effort to keep a neutral look--no defiance, no special pleading, nothing of the slightest personal color" (294). He is past the point he remembers where "he once believed in the appeal of a direct glance, . . . , one human being silently opening his heart to another" (294). Now he acknowledges to himself that the sergeant would throw the book at him if "he tried looking into his eyes"; he looks "intently at the floor" (294). Herzog recognizes bondsmen nearby "by their natty appearance" and realizes that he does not make a good impression; his "passionate heart" makes him "a bad credit risk" (294).

A clearer picture of Madeleine is revealed through vision imagery at the police station, and through that picture Herzog learns something about human nature that is not seen with physical eyes. At first, her look is "devoid of intimate recognition" (297), but Herzog takes "a long look at her blue-eyed, straight, Byzantine profile" (298). Herzog knows "her fire-blue eyes, her spiky glances," and the "crazy clear hauteur of the eyes" (298); for him she is "a mixed mind of pure diamond and Woolworth glass" (299). In the "radiance of her look" he sees "the hard

clear look of joy in her eyes" (300). The sergeant, who is described as having "Ben Franklin spectacles, two colonial tablets in thin gold frames" (291), puts on "the Ben Franklin glasses with the tablet-shaped lenses" (301) and begins to see Madeleine's "haughty peculiarities" more closely. When Madeleine speaks to Herzog for the first time, she is "looking him in the eyes" (301). Controlling "the violence of her stare," by degrees her eyes become "smaller, stony" (301). Herzog sees their expression of "a total will that he should die. . . . a vote for his nonexistence" (301). Since she dare not answer his incriminating question, she continues "to stare in the same way" (301). Herzog does not have his own solution to ambiguity, but he realizes that "super-clarity" (304) is her disorder.

The way in which Herzog is seen and the way he sees in Will's doctor's office are parts of his clearing of perspective and perception. The doctor's "small keen eyes looked at him with thin-lipped amusement" (307). Herzog knows that Will sees him as "spluttering fire in the wilderness of this world" (307) and decides that he should rid himself of the falsehoods that have been a part of his vision of himself. The concern of his brother, a good "man of duty and routine, [who] has his money, his position, influence, and is just as glad to be rid of his private or 'personal' side" (307), affects Herzog, who wants to be used and to be shown "the way to make his sacrifice to truth, to order, peace" (308).

Vision images describing Herzog in Ludeyville show his escape from the perceptions of another person. He circles the yard and stops, shutting "his eyes in the sun, against flashes of crimson, and drew in the odors of catalpa-bells, soil, honeysuckle, wild onions, and herbs" (310).

However, only briefly does he keep his eyes shut, blocking out his own visual perceptions. He comes to recognize that his consciousness must be employed, that "the human intellect is one of the great forces of the universe" and cannot safely remain unused (311). Lonely but "consciously cheerful," he still owns a house with windows "so discolored as to seem stained with iodine" (311); in a "gray, webby window" he looks "weirdly tranquil" (2). His contentment is due to the absence of Madeleine, with her "happiness to see him in trouble" (313). As a vision image shows, there is life in him again: "Those strange lights, Herzog's brown eyes, so often overlaid with the film of protective chitin of melancholy, the by-product of his laboring brain, shone again" (313). He is "beaming" (313). He is hopeful about reaching "peace and clarity": "The light of truth is never far away, and no human being is too negligible or corrupt to come into it" (314). He writes to his son that he has come to the homestead "to look things over and relax" and that "the place is in pretty good shape, considering" (314). The vision images do not suggest clarity of sight, but they agree that he also is "in pretty good shape, considering."

However, Herzog knows that his appearance does not reveal his "good shape." His paleness is partly caused by the fact that "the mirror of the bathroom door into which he stared . . . reflected the massed green of the trees" (320). However, he recognizes the strangeness of his condition, "wandering about like this, hearing forceful but indefinite music within, seeing things, violet fringes about the clearest objects" (325). He knows he cannot wear a "wise look" when his brother comes" "Certain expressions burn people up, and especially the expression of wisdom which can lead you straight to the loony

bin" (326).

Vision imagery reveals Will's helpful perspective as he clearly sees Herzog and his situation. In spite of the hereditary peculiarity of looking with a "partly averted face," Will examines Herzog and Herzog's house with eyes "quietly and firmly shrewd, not dreaming" (329). Both brothers recognize the lack of wisdom in the purchase of the house but do not face it directly; both "smile slightly, without looking at each other" (329). Herzog tries to give an impression of complete normalcy because he knows that Will is studying him--"Will, who had become the most discreet and observant of the Herzogs" (330). However, his "extraordinary state, eyes dilated with excitement, the very speed of his pulses possibly visible in his large irises" (330) make this difficult. "Things already looked bad enough" (331), so he glances "into the clear shade of the garden" and tries "to become as clear as <u>that</u>" (331). However ambiguous the "clear shade" remains for the reader, it strengthens Herzog. Will's look of love also encourages him.

Will's watchfulness as Herzog re-establishes his relationship with Ramona evidences that love. When Herzog calls Ramona, Will is standing beside the telephone booth, and "his dark eyes discreetly appealed to Moses to make no more mistakes. . . . Will's gaze held a family look, a brown light as clear as any word" (336). When Ramona does appear, Herzog appreciates Will's glance being sympathetic. Ramona sees that the two are similar in appearance: "The same fine head, and those soft hazel eyes" (337). As Herzog arranges for Ramona to come for dinner, Will looks at him "with his uncertain smile," and, after hearing Herzog's affirmation that he is not being left in anyone's hands, leaves him with "a mild, soft look of irony, sad and affectionate" (338).

The uncertainty of Herzog's future, more clearly seen by the more worldly brother Will than by Herzog, is further revealed in a vision image of the first person for whom Herzog will have a message when he returns to activity. The fat Mrs. Tuttle has an "odd distant look in her gray eyes, as if the fat of her body had an opiate effect on her," and she looks through her cigarette "with tranced gray eyes" (335). Whether Herzog's "word" can be as clear as Will's gaze remains to be seen. Dutton is pessimistic, saying that any resolution of the theme of innocence versus worldliness in the novel "can end only in a partial vision, or words, in a distorted one."[6] The vision images and metaphors do not suggest a resolution to that theme.

The vision imagery and metaphors in Herzog show a protagonist with sight. Herzog sees Madeleine's disorder of "super-clarity," Will's gaze which is compared to "a brown light as clear as any word," the ways of viewing reality taken by Nachman and members of his own family, and his own state of being "half blind." Seeing all of these conditions, he is certainly less innocent, if not yet entirely worldly. His vision is larger even if, or perhaps because, he is aware of the inability of any man to see without distortion or to completely perceive reality.

Mr. Sammler's Planet

The vision images in Mr. Sammler's Planet reveal the protagonist, Mr. Artur Sammler, to be a human being attempting to avoid the problems of "creatureliness." His lack of vision in one eye suggests a limitation of a certain kind of sight--the kind that must see sex, death, and involvement with others from a personal as well as an intellectual perspective. Vision imagery shows his sexual and personal judgments and

his attraction to and evasion of the subject of death. This section will examine vision imagery that reveals the character and perspectives of Mr. Sammler, including his attempt to escape from the life and death of his species, his attempt to evade the reality of Elya Gruner's imminent death, and his actual view of death itself in Gruner's person.

Mr. Sammler is aware that in the human condition he is confined in a prison of his projections: "Things met with in this world are tied to the forms of our perception in space and time and to the forms of our thinking. We see what is before us, the present, the objective. Eternal being makes its temporal appearance in this way" (61). "[O]n a perfectly clear day" (141), Sammler had been marked for a mass grave, so that "Visions or nightmares for others" are "for him daylight events, in full consciousness" (141). Therefore, he is not confident that he always sees things correctly: "His experiences had been too peculiar, and he feared that he projected peculiarities onto life. Life was probably not blameless, but he often thought that life was not and could not be what he was seeing. And then again, most powerfully, he occasionally felt on the contrary that he was a million times exceeded in strangeness by the phenomena themselves. What oddities!" (114). In New York he cannot be "the sensitive observer, the tourist . . . inspecting the phenomenon. The phenomenon had in some way achieved a sense of its own interest and observability" (149-50).

Sammler wonders about the "common in "the common life" and what would happen "if some genius were to do with 'common life' what Einstein did with 'matter'?" (151). He sees that "at the present level of crude vision, agitated spirits fled from the oppressiveness of 'the common life,' separating themselves from the rest of their species,

from the life of their species, hoping perhaps to get away (in some peculiar sense) from the death of their species" (151). Although his rational judgment deals with other "agitated spirits," his own mental evasion of Gruner's death brings this judgment of the species to a personal level. There had been a time after his own escape from death when Sammler "wanted, with God, to be free from the bondage of the ordinary and the finite" (121). But, returned to the human condition, Sammler knows that in the "encounter of the disinterested spirit with fated biological necessities" (121-22), the human being is related to all he meets: "These flecks within one's substance would always stipple with their reflections all that a man turns toward, all that flows about him. The shadow of his nerves would always cast stripes, like trees on grass, like water over sand, the light-made network" (121).

In the face of the death of his beloved Elya Gruner, Sammler continues "thinking, and seeing," observing as "a peculiarly delicate recording system" (91). However, sometimes his "interpretive skill" is "insufficient" (265). But his responses are not simple. Their complexity is partially evidenced by the incident of the black pickpocket: "on the bus he had seen things he didn't want to see" (73), but he returns to the scene to view them again. He does not like to be conspicuous by reading in public, "passing pages back and forth before the eye, pressing back the hat brim and his face intensely concentrated" (109). However, he plans to read Lal's manuscript on the subway because his curiosity is aroused.

Mirror images reveal Sammler's removal from the physical. For instance, once thinking about the "prize of power" being the "unobstructed enjoyment of murder," he dresses, ties his shoelaces, brushes

his hair, "[t]rancelike"; he is at "several removes from the self in the glass, opposite" (148). His physical self is not his concern. "Mirrors on four walls" in Gruner's bath show "Mr. Sammler to himself in more aspects than he wanted" (258). His return to creatureliness does not include personal vanity, but his mirror reflection does reveal his recognition of his situation: His face undergoes "in the mirror a strong inrush of color" from which even his "opaque guppy eye" (258) takes up some light. The suggestion that the blinded eye is Sammler's contact with the "creaturely" side of his nature is strengthened by the attempt of the blind eye "to participate" (221) in a smile at the Dr. Lal for whom he has some positive feeling.

Sammler is aware that his eyesight is different from that which he had as a younger man. "One eye is functioning" (214) behind his tinted glasses. He compares himself to "the old saying about the one-eyed being King in the Country of the Blind," but says he is "not in the Country of the Blind, but only one-eyed" (214). His statement seems to suggest a limited vision among those who see, but some of his judgments suggest that he sees when in fact his blinded eye prevents certain kinds of recognition. Sammler has "his own view of everything, an intensely peculiar one" (71), or at least "his own views on most matters" (147). Although he is sympathetic with others most of the time, he finds "Margotte's kind and considerate view of people . . . terribly trying" (274). However, even with the skull pressure and "eye-pangs" (274) caused by his inability to reach Gruner, he does not want to be too hard on her because of "her own female vital aims" (274).

Sammler's view of Angela, however, is limited by the description of her within those sexual aims. Her father describes her as having

"fucked-out eyes" (275), and Sammler's encounter with her in the hospital is partly described in terms of her way of looking at him. He thinks she is "only half following him, though she looked straight at him, full-face, kees apart, so that he saw the pink material of her undergarment" (307). He sees her gaze as "dilated, brilliant, smeary, angry," but does not want to fight with her, "a despairing woman" (307).

Sammler's own daughter's eyes are seen as "heated, and in the old man's words to himself, kookily dilated, sensuality-bent" (209). She follows Dr. Lal's converation "with devoted eyes" (228), and, later, Sammler suspects her intentions as she stands close to Lal: "If great eyes could be mechanical aids--if staring and proximity could lead to blending!" (242). But Sammler is surprised by his reaction to accidentally seeing her in the bathtub: "In the light he saw Shula trying to cover her breasts with a washcloth" (196). Later he finds himself feeling concern for the sensitivity of that area: "if there was danger of exposure or of hurt, he felt it in his own organs" (209).

Sammler's disciplined control of himself in a trying situation enables him to see clearly the physical detail around him; this contrasts with what he considers Eisen's undisciplined attempt to capture that detail in his paintings and his grotesque results. Having trained himself in external composure, Sammler is able to sit calmly and see how "[g]lass tables on legs and semicircular struts of brass spattered the Oriental rug with light, brought out the colors and the figures" (260-61). According to Sammler, Eisen's paintings are "appalling" (68); "by using color, he robbed every subject of color" (68). In Eisen's paintings, Sammler sees that "[e]verybody looked like a corpse,

with black lips and red eyes, with faces of kind of leftover cooked-liver green" (68), and himself "like a kewpie doll from the catacombs" (69). In Eisen's shiny varnish, Sammler sees himself as "really done for. . . . as if one death was not enough" (69).

Sammler is sympathetic with his nephew Wallace, whose "round black eyes" seem to be "[p]rofoundly dreaming" (91) even in the midst of conversation, but he does not share his perspective. Sammler recognizes the "family resemblance, especially in the eyes--round, dark, white, filling the big bony orbits, capable of seeing all, but adream, adream, dreamy, apparently drugged" (92). The noise of Wallace's "shining, clear yellow" Cessna gives Sammler a headache: "The injured eye felt pressure. The air was parted. On one side nuisance, on the other a singular current, an insidious spring brightness" (272). When the planes are first sighted, Sammler considers the difference made by one's perspective and how Wallace probably would consider his piloting as "a roaring center," but that to Sammler and Shula he is just a "sultry beetle, a gnat propelling itself through blue acres" (270). When Sammler sets his chair back into the shade, "[w]hat had been in the sun a mass of pine foliage now resolved itself into separate needles and trees" (270). His own vision is affected by his focusing. He cannot stare up for long, because his eyes begin to smart. It is Emil who says Wallace appears to be flying close to the chimney of a house, "but only from our angle" (273).

Sammler's emotional involvement with and perspective of death are revealed through vision imagery as he seeks experiences in Israel that are rich in their impact on him: "Two eyes would have been inadequate to the heaviness and smoothness of the color, parted with difficulty by

fishing boats--the blue water, unusually dense, heavy, seemed sunk under the naked Syrian heights" (29). In all of his viewing, the main subject is the dead, the swollen shapes of the dead being "the main thing to be seen" (255). Sammler seems to have a need to see "these sights" (256) of death and fear of death and to reconstruct them in his memory, but his response to the entire experience of the black's exposure is a challenge to the "illusion involved" (60) about anyone having sufficient power to face the antagonist in life. He thinks one's ideas about life may be nothing when death turns "its full gaze" (262) on the individual.

Since his escape from death in Poland, Sammler has been "a portent watcher," looking for meaning in "curious ciphers and portents" (93) in the external world. While others examine signs for clues about future football scores, he observes the traffic and sees a "vacant building opposite marked for demolition" (93) just as Elya's body is marked for death:

> Large white X's on the windowpanes. On the plate glass of the empty shop were strange figures or non-figures in thick white. Most scrawls could be ignored. These for some reason caught on with Mr. Sammler as pertinent. Eloquent. Of what? Of future nonbeing. Elya! But also of the greatness of eternity which shall lift us from this present shallowness. . . . Capacities, impressions, visions amassed in human beings from the time of origin, perhaps since matter first glinted with grains of consciousness, were bound up largely with vanities, negations, and revealed only in amorphous hints or ciphers smeared on the windows of condemned shops. (93)

The "thick loops and open curves across an old tailor-shop window" (93) speak to Sammler, who thinks that "the spirit of the time through the unconscious agency of a boy's hand had scrawled its augury" (96). The undecipherable signs that speak of the "grains of consciousness" that

have been brought together in Elya, indeed that are Elya, hold Sammler's attention, point to Elya's death, and also to the "greatness of eternity" that vastly exceeds Sammler's ability to understand it.

Another portent related to Sammler's evasion or lack of acceptance or understanding of Elya's death is that of the moon: "Drop a perpendicular from the moon. Let it intersect a grave. Inside, a man till now tended, kept warm, manicured. Those heavy rainbow colors come" (109). The brief reference to the rainbow may be the refraction of light in the presence of moisture that would be tears if Sammler could let them fall. But consciously Sammler cannot cope with the "full sum of facts" about Gruner: "Remote considerations seemed to help--the moon, its lifelessness, its deathlessness. A white corroded pearl. By a sole eye, seen as a sole eye" (109). Sammler's inability to look at life and death with both eyes is suggested in this image. Again Gruner's death invades Sammler's consciousness, this time in the curious form of "a red flush . . . like that of a vast crimson envelope, a sky-filling silk fabric, the flap fastened by a black button" (120). Sammler wonders if what he sees is "a mandala," an Oriental design symbolic of the universe, in which the black button is "an after-image of the white moon" (120).

Sammler reasons against "unprofitable instants of clarity" in which the human creature demands more "when the sum of human facts could not yield more" (87). However, two such instances come to him. First is his "enlarged vision" (15) after viewing the crime of the pickpocket. His world is "wickedly lighted up. Wicked because of the clear light that made all objects so explicit, and this explicitness taunted Mr. Minutely-Observant Artur Sammler" (16). Sammler's left eye distinguishes "only light and shade"; the other eye is "dark-bright, full of

observation" (8). Because of his height, Sammler sees more than he sometimes wants to see and is also observed. "He wore smoked glasses, at all times protecting his vision, but he couldn't be taken for a blind man . . . he didn't have the look of blindness" (8-9). He sees the crime "as if watching open-heart surgery" (19), but the sight is "[n]othing to be grateful to height or vision for" (50). The weak victim has "poor eyes, watering with terror; white lashes, red lids, and a sea-mucus blue, his eyes" (50). The powerful pickpocket also wears "dark shades" (9). Observed watching, Sammler has presence of mind to pretend not to have seen the crime, but there is "a pang in the bad eye" as he bends to see the name of the street coming up; he avoids "a gaze that might be held, or any interlocking of looks" (51) with the black.

The impact of the exposure of the black is partly communicated through vision imagery. In Sammler's own lobby, "red-eyed lights of the brass double fixture" (53) watch as the black man exposes himself to Sammler, from whose face the smoked glasses are removed. The lesson of the exposure is revealed through the eyes of the black pickpocket: "The black eyes with a light of super candor moved softly, concluding the session, the lesson, the warning, the encounter, the transmission" (54). Returning Sammler's dark glasses to his nose, the black "then unfolded and mounted his own, circular, of gentian violet gently banded with the lovely Dior gold" (54). A part of a later rethinking of the scene includes "the two pairs of dark glasses" (69).

The impact of the exposure on Sammler is duplicated in the reflected images of television screens. After the exposure, Sammler finds himself in the position of having a stunned mind and "a temporary blankness of spirit," which is compared to "the television screen in the lobby,

white and gray, buzzing without image" (54). He is like those faces in the street on which he can see a certain "poverty of soul" (283). When the lobby television does work, it shows "[g]ray and whitish figures, unsteady on the vertical hold" (284). Sammler sees "himself mortally pale on the screen. The shuddering image of an aged man" (284). Just as the television reflection images Sammler, so also does the light flickering on the wall behind Gruner's bed (155) reflect an imitation of his life in that room of the dying man.

In Feffer's fight with the black, vision images again show control in the situation: "The Dior shades, round and bluish, had not moved from the low-bridged nose" (290) during the early part of the fight. In the black's glasses, New York is "reflected in the lenses, under the stiff curves of the homburg" (291). The reflection of New York is not disturbed until Eisen violently strikes the black and the glasses are knocked from him (293). Eisen's force shuts the black's eyes, but he still struggles to stand. Emil protects Sammler from viewing the final consequences of the struggle. Safely in the car, Sammler is sick with rage at Eisen and wants to shut his own eyes (297).

In the same way that Sammler resists his vision after seeing the pickpocket at work, he also resists the second instant of clarity, which occurs at the hospital. Even at the beginning of the conversation with Angela, Sammler sees trouble. It may be that having faced his own death on "a perfectly clear day" (141) affects Sammler in the hospital when he pulls his chair "out of the light--he couldn't bear to face windows through which nothing but blue sky was visible" (298-99). Angela's "candle-white" (299) color is only one of the signs of trouble to which the aroused Sammler is sensitive; her attempt to give "a look of appeal"

(299) is made difficult by her sexuality. Sammler sees everything "with heightened clarity" (301) just as he had seen Riverside Drive "wickedly illuminated" after the pickpocketing incident:

> That was how he was seeing now. To see was delicious. Oh, of course! An extreme pleasure! The sun may shine, and be a blessing, but sometimes shows the fury of the world. Brightness like this, the vividness of everything, also dismayed him. The soft clearness of Angela's face, the effort of her brows--the full mixture of fineness and rankness he saw there. And the sun was squarely at the window. The streaked glass ran with light like honey. A barrage of sweetness and intolerable brightness was laid down. Sammler did not really want to experience this. It all rose against him, too dizzy, too turbulent. (301)

Although the experience is difficult for him, Sammler does "see" death when he uncovers Elya's face in the room where the autopsy is to be done. He sees the Elya whom he loves: "the nostrils, the creases were very dark, the shut eyes pale and full, the bald head high-marked by gradients of wrinkles. In the lips bitterness and an expression of obedience were combined" (316). Even as he recognizes Elya's fulfillment of life, he acknowledges that he knows his human role, which is one that includes death.

The vision imagery in Mr. Sammler's Planet is closely related to Sammler's one-eyed vision and his way of seeing the human situation which he resists experiencing. The black's removal of Sammler's glasses (his protection against exposing his half-blindness) and the sight in that instance are shattering to the protagonist who thinks he has withdrawn from the human species. The sight of his naked daughter is likewise disturbing to that sense of separateness from the human condition. But the sight of the dead Elya brings forth the most affirmative mental whisper of which Sammler is capable about his recognition of his humanness.

Humboldt's Gift

Charlie Citrine's search in Humboldt's Gift to see men as supernatural beings is not an easy one of moving from blindness to sight. The light he seeks seems always to have been a part of his experience, and the persons he knows are also related to his consciousness in various complicated ways. The poet Humboldt has a relationship with light; he understands something of the role of the writer in helping mankind be aware of that light, but his reaction to his treatment by his culture must be rejected by Citrine as an inadequate one. However, understanding the complexity of Humboldt helps Citrine see more clearly himself and his role as writer. The process again is not a simple one of moving to sight. It is complicated by Citrine's fearful reaction to what he cannot understand or accept, aging and death; by his lack of understanding even of the many visions he can see; by friends who tie him to the idea of man as natural being only and yet force him to challenge that concept.

Only when Citrine's state of consciousness permits him to view man through the clairvoyant's vision can he see how related man is to others and how false is the perspective that sees him as an object apart from other objects. Although Citrine's whole progress might be described as "seeing through a glass darkly," he is aware of man's potential for radiance. His role as writer demands not only that he be aware of light, but that he recognize and function within the interchanging of light and dark in this stage of existence. Vision imagery reveals Citrine's state of consciousness as he comes to understand a perspective of mankind that will enable him to see the

light in man and a perspective of himself that will enable him to communicate that light in his art.

Through the way in which their eyes or their way of looking is described, several characters are shown to be related to Citrine's state of consciousness. Some are helpful to him, but some are hindrances to his spiritual pursuit. Vision images connected with Vito Langobardi show a kind of knowledge that Citrine has, but which he sometimes ignores. Demmie's "goodness" related her more closely to Citrine's searching than does the "pious look" of sex that Renata presents. Kathleen is also closer to Citrine than is Renata. Even his legal situation is partly revealed through eye imagery which describes others. The challenge of Rinaldo Cantabile is finally met when Citrine is able to see him in the light, but Cantabile helps Citrine by shaking down the dust of the past that has blinded him.

At the Club, Citrine has an impersonal relationship with Langobardi, whose "eyes seemed to have the periscope power of seeing around corners" (69), but he cannot presume on that relationship by "looking into his face and opening his own features to the warmth of impulse" (70). Even with "[e]yes dilated with doubt, with confidentiality" (70), he cannot ask what he needs to know. This awareness and action by Citrine contrasts with his earlier pressure on Ricketts in Humboldt's behalf and his knowledge then that Ricketts' "sincere brown eyes seemed to ache" (133).

Citrine remembers how Demmie's eyes revealed her true heart and her dynamic suffering (153). They also revealed the fat child in her: her "great blue midsummer ocean-haze eyes in a trance" (154) were startled when Citrine interrupted her pleasure in a pudding. The way

Demmie saw things may in part explain Citrine's love for her during the part of his life that he knew her and her continuing influence on him after her death: "The miraculous survival of goodness was the theme of her life. Dangerous navigation, monsters attracted by her boundless female magnetism--spells charms prayers divine protection secured by inner strength and purity of heart--this was how she saw things" (165). Demmie is a reminder of "the survival of goodness."

In several ways, vision images show Renata to be unrelated to Citrine's deepest purposes. His meeting with her involves a moral judgment of him; in the bar the eyes of the customers seem "as big as portholes and shed a moral light" (212). Citrine comes to recognize Renata's "slow way of detaching her gaze" from a man who interests her and also that "with such handsome eyes" (177) she had probably worked out her own methods to achieve what he calls her "pious look" (316). To describe that look, Citrine says, "Think of an El Greco beauty raising her eyes to heaven. Then substitute sex for heaven" (316). But Citrine cannot see Renata in his future. In "some phantom Atlantic City boardwalk of the mind" Citrine sees himself "on the border of senility, his back hooked, and feeble" (9), but he cannot see Renata pushing his wheelchair. Renata may be sexually attractive, but she is not a part of Citrine's vision nor of his finding his visionary powers.

Even their ways of seeing and their ways of manipulating one another's sight show Renata and Citrine to be opposed to one another. Renata calls Citrine "an eager looker" (317) and makes up her own word, "gloony" (350), to describe the gleam in his eye. Citrine's resumption of his "innate manner of doing it, his personal way of looking" (317) is in part a response to Renata. He can put her "on to views for the

purpose of absenting" (318) himself, but this absenting of himself from his audience is contrary to his artistic purposes and, as he comes to understand, contrary to his own humanity. He sees the view from their New York hotel room "in a single instant": the glow of Christmas lights, the headlights of jammed traffic, "and shop illuminations, multicolored, crystalline, and like the cells in a capillary observed through a microscope, elastically changing shape, bumping and pulsatory" (318). Citrine can tell by "the movement of her eyes, however, . . . that money thoughts were on her mind" (318).

Citrine is also recognized as having money thoughts, but the recognition comes from one closer to his own motives. Kathleen sees him add the check twice and struggle with the tip. She recognizes him as "a great observer," but not "the only observer" because she has watched him for years "looking at people cannily. As if [he] saw them but they didn't see" (375) him. Her ability to observe and Citrine's wondering about her dreaminess--"Was she born to be kept in the dark?" (368)--suggest more closeness between them than between Citrine and Renata.

Citrine's treatment at law is imaged in Szathmar, whose "eyes kept turning to the left, where no one stood. If someone were standing there, some objective witness, he would support indignant Szathmar. Szathmar's dear mother had this same trait. She too summoned justice from empty space in this outraged way, laying both hands on her bosom" (208). Justice for Citrine results in the loss of his money. Judge Urbanovitch gazes at Citrine with "round-eyed terrible lightness" (234) in the hearing held before the judgment to impound his money. Even Citrine's lawyers do not help him: Billy Srole's "filmy side glance" reveals his bemusement with how the law can treat Citrine, and Tomchek's eyes need

"no film, for his deeper opinions never reached his gaze" (222). Not to have protected himself against the law amazes Citrine's brother, Julius, whose "eyes were big alert and shrewd" (355).

The complex attraction and challenge of Cantabile is shown in vision imagery. Cantabile is "distinctly seen" (63), but Citrine does not know if the attraction or the observation comes first. Citrine feels that at the poker game he "received a visionary glimpse" of him, that he "saw the edge of his spirit rising from him, behind him" (89), and he is aware of a "natural connection" (91) between them. Because of this "natural connection," Citrine finds himself "looking into the moony eyes of Cantabile," who looks "tender concerned threatening punitive and even lethal" (186). Cantabile is a distortion of a stage in the development of Citrine. Cantabile's eyes are "bigger than they ought to have been, artificially dilated perhaps" (87); his dark eyes hint "that he aspired to some ideal, and that his partial attainment or non-attainment of the ideal was a violent grief to him" (87), but Citrine suspects what is true also of himself at that point, that through listening "to the voice of his own mind speaking from within" (186) that he is more than the part of himself that is related to nature.

The light in the room in which Cantabile meets Citrine in Spain reveals the ending of the unquestioned influence of the natural on Citrine, the end to his thinking about man as limited to his natural being. The scene may imply Bellow's dismissal of a naturalistic approach or indeed any approach not fully examined in the present. Citrine has never seen the sun in the dark salon before; the effect of the many religious pictures, the bric-a-brac, and the rubbishy scatter rugs suggest "a period vanishing together with the emotions one had had for this period

and the individuals who had felt such emotions" (451). Citrine's caller is aware that Citrine is "catching the dust-filled sunlight straight in the eyes and [cannot] see his face" even as he is "pulling at the drapes to let in more sun and sending down the dust of a whole century" (451). In the light of the sun Citrine can see the dust which his confusing attraction to and submission to Cantabile and his attraction to and submission to intellectual ideas have permitted to swirl around him. When Citrine can see Cantabile clearly and can know how much more he himself is capable of doing and being than "received" ideas of man have told him, he can (and mankind again can) examine values long held in disrepute.

Mirror images reflect distortion. In his own mirror, Citrine sees his "face, framed to be cheerful, taking a metaphysical premise of universal helpfulness, asserting that the appearance of mankind on this earth was on the whole a good thing--how this face, filled with premises derived from capitalist democracy, was now depressed, retracted in unhappiness, sullen, unpleasant to shave" (65-66). Certain premises which he has never questioned are producing results that he does not like to see: "angelic precipitates condensing into hypocrisy, especially around his mouth" (66). Another mirror shows him people also ironically reflecting a distortion. The steakhouse bar, where he goes as Cantabile's prisoner, is crowded with attractive people, but the "gorgeous mirror was peopled with bottles and resembled a group photograph of celestial graduates" (104). The mirror reflects the non-human because Citrine is unable, under the control of Cantabile, to see or reflect the truly human person he is.

The image projected by Humboldt can also be misleading, but it may be instructive to Citrine. The young Humboldt was seen as being "like a

person from a painting" (54). The picture chosen by the Times shows the inability of a poet to succeed, or even survive: "It was one of those mad-rotten-majesty pictures--spooky, humorless, glaring furiously with tight lips, mumpish or scrofulous cheeks, a scarred forehead, and a look of enraged, ravaged childishness" (118). Citrine's judgment of Stronson's newspaper picture is affected by his knowledge that newspaper pictures "distort faces peculiarly" (266), but his last sight of Humboldt corresponds with the appearance of the photo.

Citrine's actual appearance is a disappointment to some who have different expectations for a poet, but others are pleased by the contrast he offers: he looks "like a man intensely but incompletely thinking," his face being "no match for their shrewd urban faces" (93). In his support of the arts, even Longstaff was hampered by his appearance: "he had looked like a movie star, like a five-star general, like Machiavelli's Prince, like Aristotle's great-souled man" (138). Citrine must come to grips with the difference between the appearance expected by the world of those associated with the arts and the ability of the world to change that appearance and the work of that person. If he does not understand his role as writer and person in a world that has a certain perspective of the literary arts and of the person, his own obituary picture may reflect a distortion of his own purposes.

Citrine remembers Humboldt as a man without "enough material" who "wanted to drape the world in radiance"; he sees Humboldt's radiance as "the old radiance and it was in short supply" and that "a new radiance altogether" (107) is needed. Humboldt "intended to be a divine artist, a man of visionary states and enchantments" (119), and Citrine remembers "the shine of his eyes when he dropped his voice to pronounce the word

'relume' spoken by a fellow about to commit a murder, or when he spoke Cleopatra's words 'I have immortal longings in me'" (240). Citrine also remembers Humboldt's "[m]aterializing huge and delicate" in Longstaff's penthouse where the sun "was shining as it shines through the purer air in skyscrapers" (138). But Humboldt could not "come up with enough enchantment or dream material to sheathe himself in. It would not cover" (240). Humboldt, however, recognized that many people are waiting for the great poet, "for the strength and sweetness of visionary words to purge consciousness of its stale dirt, to learn from a poet what had happened to the three-fourths of life that are obviously missing!" (340). But he was not that poet and, as he deteriorated, "the light became dark and the darker turned darker" (159). Even a vision of Humboldt's shade takes "the form of a dark gray cloud" (367).

Citrine also sees society's need for the poet "to light up the enormity of the awful tangle" (118) that life is, but not encouraging him in that role. He understands that Humboldt was driven in his theatrics to crossing "the universe like light," but the kind of distortion to which he was driven, such as striking "off X-ray films of the true facts" (162), evidences the destruction of both the art and the poet. Citrine is more successful with light in that he realizes his challenge to "the alleged rationality and finality of the oblivion view" through "five and a half decades of distortion and absurdity" (357) and determines "make the lost time yield illumination" (109).

An image of Citrine's attraction to physical light may be explained as his attraction to spiritual light, but he is unable to interpret it in that way. On a physical level, he finds himself drawn to the electric-light shop near Wacker Drive, "with its ingenious new

devices, the tints and shapes of bulbs and tubes"; it contrasts with "the gloom of Michigan Avenue" (291). The purchase of "a 300-watt floor reflector" for which he has no use expresses his "condition" (291), his concern for the materialistic, but does not improve it.

Citrine is aware of spiritual light and is able, with difficulty, to describe its presence within himself. This light is "a real element" in him, "like the breath of life itself" (177), which he has known for a long time, but seems to forget. Now "this early talent or gift or inspiration, given up for the sake of maturity or realism (practicality, self-preservation, the fight for survival), was . . . edging back" (178). He describes it as "a kind of light-in-the-being, a thing difficult to be precise about, especially in an account like this, where so many cantankerous erroneous silly and delusive objects actions and phenomena are in the foreground" (177). He is convinced of its reality and joyous about his experiencing of it: it is a contrast to "the hysterical, the grotesque about [him], the abusive, the unjust, that madness in which [he] had often been a willing and active participant" (177).

Dr. Scheldt's guidance helps Citrine's understanding (292) of this long-dormant "element." Citrine knows that "If someone were to arise with a new vision of Faith, Love, and Hope, he would want to understand to whom he was offering it" (108); he comes to see that such a visionary would have to understand the part of man's existence made up by the sleep-soul, and that he could only see the truth of that sleep-soul "from the perspective of an immortal spirit" (109), which he does not doubt he possesses. Dr. Scheldt's pamphlets show that unwillingness to come out of the state of sleep is "the result of a desire to evade an impending revelation" (293) and how Angels, guided by the Spirits of

Form, affect individuals by helping them "see the concealed divinity of other human beings" (294). Many people have told Citrine to wake up, as if he "had a dozen eyes and stubbornly kept them sealed" (46). He recognizes the truth of Jesus' saying, "Ye have eyes and see not" (46).

Citrine's attempts at meditating show his pleasure and acuity in viewing again events and persons, and they also reveal his earlier self. His favorite method of meditating is to sit at the end of the day, remembering everything "in minute detail, all that had been seen and done and said" (117). He goes backward in time "viewing [himself] from the back or side, physically no different from anyone else" (117). This viewing of himself from outside himself will be increasingly important as he continues his seeking. As Citrine goes back in time, what he sees helps the reader, and Citrine to a certain extent, to reconstruct and understand his earlier self from his later perspective. That earlier self is revealed to be fearful of death and asleep.

In one re-viewing, Citrine makes a strong physical identification with Huggins, his double in the experience of having been trusted and then doubted by Humboldt. Huggins shows "the distortions of age" (322), but Citrine remembers him with affection. A sight of twenty years before comes back to Citrine: Huggins and a lady friend, both naked, facing each other astride a log and discussing the Army McCarthy hearings, with Huggins' penis, expressing "all the fluctuations of his interest," going "back and forth like the slide of a trombone" (322). Citrine "could never feel unfriendly toward a man of whom [he] kept such a memory" (322). Huggins remembers Citrine as having "the star attitude," but no "twink" (323). Huggins' early view of Citrine may be taken as a hint of a lack of light (which Citrine's later visions

will make more clear). The exchange between the two men shows a continuing friction made more bearable for Citrine by Huggins' obvious aging, with which Citrine can identify but to which he has a need to feel superior. The reader can recognize, even if Citrine cannot, a fear of aging and of death.

Citrine can see himself with surprising clarity as he studied Huggins in that earlier time; he can even see "specks of green and amber" in his own eyes in which Huggins might have seen "whole eons of sleep and waking" (321). Another time, Citrine does not even need a photograph of thirty years before to see the same sleeping in himself; in the photo he sees in his mind, he "might as well have been wearing flannel pajamas as that flapping double-breasted suit . . . for in the flower of [his] youth and at the height of [his] powers [he] was out cold" (295).

Citrine's rescue of Frank Tigler from water into which the non-swimming cowboy fell also shows his own earlier fear of death. In contrast to the Indians who "didn't interfere with death but seemed simply to let it happen" (238), Citrine "was instantly afraid he might never see him again" (237) in the deep water. He can see "the late Tigler's Western figure as if it were cast in bronze, turning over and over in the electrical icy water" and then himself, "who had learned swimming in a small chlorinated tank in Chicago, pursuing him like an otter" (238).

Another vision reveals Citrine's emotional reaction to death. The "visual distortion" in the steam room of the Russian Bath is "considerable" (194). Distortion of the human forms makes a slight figure seen from the rear appear to be a child, but from the front it is seen to be

"a rosy and shrunken old man" (195). The conversation of Father Swiebel and Renata's ex-husband creates a vision of the impersonality of death that overwhelms Citrine: "Where men are as nude as the troglodytes of Stone Age Adriatic caverns and sit together dripping and red, like sunset in a mist, and, as in this case, one has a full brown sparkling beard, and eyes are meeting eyes through streaming sweat and vapor, strange things are apt to be spoken" (195). In Citrine's vision, death is seen as "seething under the treeless fairway" and the "name plates" are "nameless" and made of "glitterless brass" (196). Once Citrine is "committed to spiritual investigation," many matters are presented to him "in a clearer light" (395). He can "see" his brother and the "paradise" he envisions on the Texas peninsula dumping ground and understand that death is a threat to this kind of opportunity.

Citrine's attempts to strengthen his will through meditation, so that "the will might become an organ of perception" (111), are not entirely successful. In one meditation, he tries to project himself into a rose bush by visualizing "the twigs, the roots, the harsh fuzz of the new growth hardening into spikes . . . attempting to project himself into the very plant and to think how its green blood produced a red flower" (223). He concentrates on "the inset spiral order of rose petals, the whitey faint bloom over the red and the slow opening that revealed the germinating center" (223). Citrine considers Rudolf Steiner's comparison of a plant and the human being and the greater potential of the human life, even with its burden of instincts, desires, and emotions, if they can be cleansed by the higher powers of the soul. He considers that even if Steiner's idea be untrue, the experience of thinking of the roses puts him "into a kind of bliss" (223). Citrine

also visualizes a second object out of the sensible world--an old black iron Chicago lamppost from forty years back--in his attempt to "feel parts of the soul awakening that never had been awake before" (223).

Even Citrine's attempt to know the desires of his own daughter's heart fails in spite of the fact that he is "all set up to know in the richest colors, with the deepest feelings, and in the purest light" (416). He considers himself "a brute, packed with exquisite capacities" (416) which he cannot use. He recognizes that his task (as was Humboldt's unfulfilled task) is "to burst from the fatal self-sufficiency of consciousness" (417) and put his strength into the Imaginative Soul.

Sometimes Citrine's re-viewing changes his judgment on a matter. In meditating on the subject of Humboldt, Citrine re-reads one of his poems. He sees it as a communication that "the imagination must not pine away. . . . It must assert again that art manifests the inner powers of nature. To the savior-faculty of the imagination sleep was sleep, and waking was true waking" (112). Citrine reads "the phantom strokes" of Humboldt's handwriting, "like a fuzzy graph of the northern lights" (111) and does not see the evidence for insanity he saw earlier, but a vague suggestion which he takes to be a confirmation of his later understanding.

Citrine does not "want to be one of your idle hit-or-miss visionaries" (131), but three visions show his inability to understand even when he can see. The "two large circles" he sees as he stands on his head are a physical illusion which he understands to be caused by the weight of the body buckling the cornea. In his superficial equating of the physical and spiritual, the "big diaphanous rings" are "like seeing eternity" (50). At this point Citrine does not recognize how special

is that ring of eternity. Although he says he is ready for eternity, Citrine is yet unable to see the visions in the way that the speaker in Henry Vaughan's "The World" can see.

A second incident reveals that Citrine's perspective is flawed by his consciousness of self. He is "illuminated" by seeing himself from his lawyers' viewpoint, and decides that "Maybe these sudden illuminations . . . were an effect of the metaphysical changes [he] was undergoing" (220). The sight is like ones he has occasionally in which he sees himself "with exhilarating objectivity, literally as an object among objects in the physical universe" (221) and the future of that "object." A claim which he later encounters in his anthroposophical studies shows his situation at the times of these sights: "Consciousness in the self creates a false distinction between object and subject" (261). Citrine is undergoing metaphysical changes, but he has not yet reached a state of consciousness that will yield the insights he seeks. In this incident, he sees himself and the two lawyers as "three naked egos, three creatures belonging to the lower grade of modern rationality and calculation" (221) without garments of station or the appropriate sheath for each. In his ecstatic fit of objectivity, the "false distinction between object and subject" are removed and Citrine sees that "Now there are no sheaths and it was naked self with naked self burning intolerably and causing terror" (221). But his subjectivity, his consciousness of self, prevents his understanding what he sees.

A third sight also shows Citrine's personal response to a "vision." In Stronson's office, where Citrine faces arrest because of Cantabile's actions, Citrine has a brief vision or illusion that shows that he can see clearly in spite of his disgust with Cantabile. It seems to him

that those in the office are "under something like a huge transparent wave" flashing above them "like crystal" (283). Citrine hopes that when it breaks and detonates, each will "be scattered for miles and miles along some far white beach" and that Cantabile's neck will be broken, but he sees each one "cast up safe and separate on a bare white pearly shore" (283).

In each of these three "visions," Citrine perceives more than he is able to understand. Because he sees man as separate from other men, he thinks he can judge Cantabile or the lawyers apart from himself. Only in the relatedness of all human beings can he begin to see the ring of light that indicates a special role for the writer in bringing sight that will help his fellow men be aware of eternity.

Citrine's inability to understand these three visions is paralleled by his inability to see the relationship between man in literature and man in life. Seeing the relationship that exists between man as subject of his writing and man in his life situation, Citrine can see purpose in his own writing. When Citrine is challenged by an enraged Humboldt about the difference between life and literature, he sits "sweating" (157) in a star's dressing room but feels "like an arctic survivor in a small boat, an Amundsen hailing ships on the horizon which turned out to be icebergs" (158). Without Humboldt, Citrine fears there is no one with whom he can share his illusion of truth.

Citrine's examination in Chicago of Humboldt sets in motion a course that reveals a perspective to which Citrine responds with varying degrees of success. He sees that Humboldt is "a natural subject for reflection" in Chicago because that city contains "the whole problem of poetry and the inner life of America"; there one can "look into such

things through a sort of fresh-water transparency" (9). In "a Chicago state," Citrine finds that "The sentient part of the soul wants to express itself," and at the same time that he has "a sense of being the instrument of external powers . . . using him either as an example of human error or as the mere shadow of desirable things to come" (66). This confusion as poet and person effects a state in which "Chicago's material and daily interests and phenomena are neither actual and vivid enough nor symbolically clear enough" (260).

Even as his studies in anthroposophy begin to reveal a new perspective to Citrine, his own "troubles of a Chicago nature" make him consider Scheldt's "esoteric mysteries" as "spiritual hokum" (288). The natural setting reflects his uncertain understanding of Dr. Scheldt's texts: "The sun is shining clear, the water beyond is as smooth as the inner peace he has not attained, as wrinkled as perplexity, the lake is strong with innumerable powers, flexuous, hydromuscular" (261). He is able to repeat several truths that he does not fully grasp: "The physical body is an agent of the spirit and its mirror," its "reflection," and that the spirit sees itself in the body, just as he sees his "own face in a looking glass; "The earth is literally a mirror of thoughts" (262) and objects are embodied thoughts. However, he is not yet able to "obtain the inward view"; he is not yet able to "get out of himself and stand far off" (262). He is able to say that "Death is the dark backing that a mirror needs if we are to see anything" and that "Every perception causes a certain amount of death in us, and this darkening is a necessity" (262). However, he is not able until later to know that "things do not end there" (336). Only from a different perspective can he say that "The thought of the life we are now leading may pain us

as greatly later on as the thought of death pains us now" (336).

Humboldt's life is an example for Citrine of inability to build upon "the perennial human feeling that there was an original world, a home-world, which was lost," the role of poetry in helping the aliens on Earth beginning their naturalization, and the idea of "this planet as a thrilling but insufficiently humanized imitation of that home-world" (24). But Citrine does seek a perspective to understand this incomplete suggestion of Humboldt's.

Citrine's "hunch" is that "in life you look outward from the ego, your center" and that in "death you are at the periphery looking inward" (10), and he suspects that his misery in life comes from ignoring his own metaphysical hunches (228). He does not object to the word "mystic," which for him does not mean much more than the word "religion," which "says that there's something in human beings beyond the body and brain and that we have ways of knowing that go beyond the organism and its senses" (227-28). In a way that Naomi suggests that he has always talked about ideas, Citrine questions how all the complaining done in life will seem "when the soul has flowed out into the universe and looks back on the complete scene of earthly suffering" (303).

Citrine thinks of looking back on his life in the twentieth century and understanding it from a larger perspective because "there is far more to any experience, connection or relationship than ordinary consciousness, the daily life of the ego, can grasp"; he sees the soul as having to belong "to a greater, an all-embracing life outside" (332). In his reflective purgatory, he will "see it all from a different perspective and know, perhaps, how all these peculiarities added up" (333).

In Citrine's physical escape from the Chicago world, he experiences

"the peace and light above" the clouds. He has "the idea that, as well as beholding, [he] can also be beheld from yonder and [is] not a discrete object but incorporated with the rest, with universal sapphire, purplish blue" (313). This view does not separate men as individual objects, as he has previously seen them, but shows them in their interrelatedness. He is open to an even larger question:

> For what is this sea, the atmosphere, doing within the eight-inch diameter of your skull? (I say nothing of the sun and the galaxy which are also there.) At the center of the beholder there must be space for the whole, and this nothing-space is not an empty nothing but a nothing reserved for everything. You can feel this nothing-everything capacity with ecstasy and this was what I actually felt in the jet. (313)

Citrine shows here his capacity to later "see and hear the outer world with no static whatever from within, an empty vessel, and completely silent" in order to have unveiled to him "secrets undreamed of" (457). The ecstasy that results from Citrine's physical escape by air prepares him to see himself differently than he has in his "Chicago state."

Humboldt's letter comes to a Citrine who is ready to respond when his earlier hunches are confirmed. Humboldt's statement that men are "not natural but supernatural" (347) frees Citrine to be fully responsive to the light which has always been in him, to be awake to reality, and to use his talents to speak about man and eternity as one who knows them. Humboldt writes that he has "a leg already over the last stile" and he looks back, seeing Citrine "far back laboring still in fields of ridicule" (347). In addition to the looking-back-from-the-(almost)-outside image, Humboldt also points to the perspective of one in life who is not to be misguided by the blind. He encourages Citrine to follow the perspective of Blake, a poet whom Citrine considers significant because he "was naked and saw man naked and from the center of his own

crystal," not one who "was merged into his environment or encrusted with parasitic opinion" (311). Blake saw the world as "a world of Imagination & Vision" and the importance of one's way of seeing in reaching happiness: "The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing which stands in the way" (348). The latter viewers, Blake wrote, would not "regulate [his] proportions" (348). And Citrine is encouraged to let only those affect him who can see with "tears of joy."

A later vision that Citrine examines in close detail reveals even more to him about perspective, about man in his full physical and intellectual being, and about death: "Just as the soul and spirit left the body in sleep, they could also be withdrawn from it in full consciousness with the purpose of observing the inner life of man" (393). In the resulting reversals of everything, one "can see the circumscribed self from without," from "the space [one] formerly beheld" (393). That physical being seen by the Spirit is radiant. The eyes are "two radiant suns . . . identified by this radiance" and a "glow" comes from the skin: "From the human form emanate light, sound, and sparkling electrical forces" (394). In the reversal of the intellect, "even the life of thought is visible within this radiance"; "thoughts can be seen as dark waves passing through the body of light" (394). An entirely different perspective from the one to which Citrine has been responding for much of his life is given in this vision: "There is a star world within us that can be seen when the Spirit takes a new vantage point outside its body" (394). The musculature of the human body "is a precipitate of Spirit and the signature of the cosmos is in it" (394); that signature continues in life and in death. Citrine learns that when the "savior

faculty the imagination" is roused, that man can "look again with open eyes upon the whole shining earth" (396).

Viewing the film he and Humboldt had written about an Arctic survivor, Citrine has a vision of man's possibilities in the world and his own role as a writer in providing the alternative of laughter in that world. He sees "a world-wide dizzy glimpse of the living and the dead, of humanity either laughing its head off as pictures of man-eating comedy unrolled on the screen or vanishing in great waves of death, in flames and battle agonies, in starving continents" (462). But everything that Citrine sees is not light; a second vision shows him a future that includes both light and dark. He has "a partial vision of flying blind through darkness and then coming through a break above a metropolis. It glittered on the ground in icy drops, far below" (462-63). He tries "to divine" whether they are landing or flying on; that they "flew on" (463) shows Citrine moving into that unknown future.

The reversals that occur as Citrine, the survivor, watches the film version are as significant as those that occur in the dressing room. Citrine is affected by the strong resemblance between Humboldt and Otway, the actor who plays the cannibal in the movie. While others laugh in the theater, Citrine sobs and Cantabile mistakes his pain for laughter. Citrine thinks that the resemblance between Humboldt and Otway means some "invisible link" (474) and that Otway will be attracted by the scenario Humboldt suggested to Citrine in his last letter.

The vision images in Humboldt's Gift show Citrine as increasingly able to see man from a perspective not known to the natural senses, but as a supernatural being. He moves from seeing man as an object among objects to seeing man in his relatedness to all. He must see from the

perspective of his own center, which is affected only by those who see with joy. Although Humboldt's radiance was not widely disseminated, his life and his letter help Citrine to be able to see how he must proceed in revealing the light in man. After the preparation made in all of his earlier meditating and seeking, through all of his friends and acquaintances, and especially through Humboldt, Citrine is ready to continue the work of the writer, whether in dark or in light.

Conclusion

Vision imagery used by Saul Bellow in the three novels being examined is increasingly more important and more complex than that used in the earlier works. Although each of these three protagonists is attempting to achieve insight, such a statement only partly describes the complexity of possible achievement by Herzog and by Sammler, and it only begins to suggest the richness of the vision imagery surrounding Citrine. There are clues to spiritual "insights" held or reached by both Herzog and Sammler, but physical sight is more often imaged in Herzog and Mr. Sammler's Planet than the kind of physical and spiritual vision images crucial to Citrine's development in Humboldt's Gift. In each of these three novels, Bellow has used varied human perspectives, with their limitations and possibilities, as metaphors of man's condition.

NOTES

[1] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 116.

[2] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 121.

[3] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, pp. 155-56.

[4] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 156.

[5] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 156.

[6] Dutton, p. 121.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEW MODERN

Irving Malin's call for further investigation of Saul Bellow's artistry through his imagery is in agreement with Mark Schorer's plea for analysis of the structure of the image of life presented in the work of fiction. Such studies are steps toward understanding of the "house of fiction" and of the "conceptions the imagination behind that work is able to entertain."[1] Malin's study treats the images, the themes, the characters, and the styles of Bellow's work from its beginning through Herzog. From his study of the seven types of images, Malin recognizes Bellow's capacity for creating images and his increasing control of that capacity in relating the images to his major concerns.

The present extension of Malin's study reveals that in his next three novels, Bellow continues to control and even to strengthen the metaphors in the identified areas to enrich the texture of the experience that he creates for the reader. But the analysis of imagery and metaphor presented here is not meant to be exhaustive. There are additional images in the categories discussed that have not been included in the chapters devoted to each of them. Also, there are additional kinds of images in the novels. The number of images in these other areas is smaller, but the individual images are not less powerful. Additional investigation of recognized patterns and identification of

other patterns may further validate the thesis that an important part of Bellow's artistry lies in his control of the image as metaphor. And recurring images give clues to the protagonists' ways of perceiving, which in turn give insights into their characters.

Beast imagery in Herzog indicates that the human protagonist may consider himself an animal and be limited by that thought. The severity of the limitation may be such that he forgets what being human can mean and so he can only behave like an animal. The animal is then distasteful to him--as when he (and others) thinks of Madeleine as a bitch or of himself as a sensual bird--and his conclusions about humans are negative. When he is not limited to thinking of himself as an animal, he can be positively responsive to each species for what it is and to himself as animal--even "the most peculiar animal of all"--and as more than animal. His hope gives a dimension to human existence that distinguishes him from the beast.

Although he tries to believe he is not well, a physical examination shows Herzog to be a healthy man; however, the disease, deformity, and cannibalism imagery shows him as mentally and spiritually not well. He suffers mentally because of his acceptance of certain verbal constructions about suffering current in his age; he suffers spiritually because of his acceptance of the modern denial of human value. Herzog's good heart enables him to survive the pain many thinkers have told him he should enjoy. In particular he escapes the suffering he has allowed Madeleine to impose on him. Although he recognizes mankind's capacity for destruction of humans through war, he rejects the view of man as basically cannibalistic. In his own experience he must show how he can move beyond living upon "perverted" ideas.

Images of movement, weight, and imprisonment show Herzog responding erratically because his mental condition is disturbed; the physical environment reflects his mental state. He responds to prisoners of the legal system as if he were in their shoes, and then, as an actual prisoner, he understands that it is not the legal institutions that enslave him, but the systems of cultural beliefs that falsely explain the Self. His own energy, which he has allowed Madeleine to imprison, can be freed when he understands his own forceful and loving nature.

The vision imagery in Herzog shows the protagonist to be consciously weaving for himself a "webby" picture of reality. Herzog's perception is contrasted with that of Madeleine and that of Will. He has an inherited family tendency to avert a head-on collision with truth and this in part protects him from Madeleine's problem of "superclarity." The vision images point to his awareness of man's inability to see without some distortion of reality.

The examination of these four types of images reveals a protagonist in Herzog who, although existing among conditions and with ideas that underrate his value, continues to show human values. He is capable of accepting his animal characteristics, but he knows that he is more than the animal that certain thinkers tell him he is. He has the potential for mental and spiritual health as well as the physical health for which his culture adequately provides. He can recognize the limitations of being human and the unproductive or unfair weights men place on one another because of their false understandings of man and his nature; however, he can direct his own use of energy. He can recognize distortion in the world and in himself, but can see beyond these distortions to a view of man that enables him to function positively. The

images do not tell us how Herzog will solve the very human problems he faces, but they do show him to have resources within himself to face them positively.

The beast imagery in Mr. Sammler's Planet reveals inhabitants of an animalistic world whose potential for bestiality threatens the structure of human society. Sammler is himself subject to the animal tendencies he decries in others even though he resists his own "creatureliness." The black pickpocket is imaged as a beast with an unnatural sense of power because of his sexual prowess. Eisen, the crippled human animal, is imaged as an unexplainable (or at least unexplained) threat to the future of man. Only the life of Gruner gives Sammler any reminder that man is an animal of genius.

The disease-deformity-cannibalism imagery that surrounds and describes Sammler reveals a man functioning within a culture that he judges for the same problems within it that he has not resolved within himself. The characters around Sammler are imaged in various degrees of madness and Sammler condemns the modern world for the madness of the people in it. He resists his own "creatureliness" because he cannot resolve the difficulties created by the intellectual positions he assumes, by his own sexual curiosity, by his own elation as a murderer, and by the violence of the street fight. The diseases to which the characters in this novel are subjected are more mental than physical. Sammler is affected by the psychological illnesses of mankind as much as any of the other characters, but he is unable to recognize his own symptoms. His intellectual detachmnet does not immunize or cure him; but it inhibits his response of sympathy or relationship with his fellow man.

The hospital image is not used to say mankind is sick; Gruner,

the patient who dies a physical death there, is not affected by the same type of ills that infect all of the other characters. He is aware of them, but, according to Sammler's death eulogy, his life is an example of human responsibility even in a human existence that includes so much madness.

Movement, imprisonment, and weight images reveal the onslaughts of life's experiences on Sammler's sanity. His movements toward the hospital and within the labyrinth of the hospital reflect the emotional upheavals that Gruner's death causes. Sammler encounters many obstacles in his physical and emotional movement to Gruner's death and to acceptance of the inevitability of his own death. Sammler himself compares these impeding forces that affect his sanity with images of moving water and relates water movement to the fatal movement of blood in Gruner's brain. The pattern of this water imagery is more fully developed than the pattern of any single image in Herzog or Humboldt's Gift. Sammler's response of pain to Gruner's death is imaged in the final scene as ice breaking up and melting.

The vision images show Sammler attempting to protect himself from his own condition of limited sight. He is aware both of being confined in a prison of his own perceptions and also of reflecting everything he sees and does. Mirror images emphasize his lack of concern for his physical appearance or even for his physical self; however, the vision images show his physical and moral judgments of others. As a "portent watcher," Sammler looks for meaning where others are not even looking and he resists the insights that come to him in moments of intensity--during the incident of the pickpocket's theft and the encounter with Angela at the hospital. Only the actual sight of

Gruner's dead body and Sammler's recognition of Gruner's fulfillment of life evoke Sammler's positive affirmation of human possibilities.

The examination of these four types of images reveals a protagonist in Mr. Sammler's Planet who judges both the lack of human value in the persons around him and the changes in values that appear to have taken place during his lifetime. He resists his own creatureliness, but judges the animality and psychological diseases of other human beings. The images depicting the movement of water very clearly picture the impact of life's experiences, most importantly death, on him. Images of vision barely reveal to him something beyond the human limitations he judges and represents.

As in Herzog, the beast imagery in Humboldt's Gift shows a protagonist living within an animalistic world and among persons who are limited to the bestial both in their understanding of and their behavior as human beings. The animalistic Cantabile attracts and infuriates Citrine as he struggles within his own animal nature with intellectual ideas that confine man to a description that would fit any animal. Humboldt's suggestion for Citrine is that man is more than natural, and Citrine is encouraged to see that man can be distinguished from other species of animals.

The disease-deformity-cannibalism imagery reveals the protagonist as he reaches a static plateau in his creative life. Re-examination of his memories of the deceased Humboldt helps Citrine to understand Humboldt's self-diagnosed manic depression and the causes for it in the society which controlled his poetic output. The cannibalistic images of the legal proceedings in which his ex-wife entangles Citrine nearly consume him. However, as he better understands his creative role

as poet and man, he regains his creative health.

Images of movement, weight, and imprisonment show Citrine trying both to understand himself as a man seeking spiritual knowledge and to participate creatively in his profession. He is weighted down or imprisoned by the woman he loves, by the woman he has loved, by his mistaken memories of his friend and mentor, and by obsessions with death and money. Humboldt's frantic movements are comparable to Citrine's; remembering Humboldt accurately helps Citrine to benefit from their similarities and differences. Freed from the impediments to his creativity, Citrine can better understand man's true nature and better develop his own creative talents.

Vision images in Humboldt's Gift are less physical and more complicated than those in Herzog and Mr. Sammler's Planet. Citrine's desire to create as a writer can be fulfilled as his desire to understand man more fully comes to fruition. The process through which Citrine's vision is clarified so that he can see man in his interrelatedness with other men is paralleled by the process of his seeing the need for cooperative endeavors among men. As creators, men can produce laugh-provoking comedies for other men, or they can use their joint energies to create destruction. Citrine does not at all understand some of his visions, and he only partially understands others. But as he looks to a future that is not exactly clear to him, he plans willingly to participate as a creator of joy and not of destruction.

The examination of the four categories of images in Humboldt's Gift reveals a protagonist who has the most optimistic outlook of any developed in these three novels. Citrine lives among bestial men in an animalistic world; like Herzog, but unlike Sammler, he accepts his

animal nature and comes to understand how man differs from other animals. The disease images show Citrine as capable of psychological illness, but they also show that certain kinds of knowledge about man may be curative. Images of movement show his frantic behavior as he seeks awareness of this knowledge. The visionary images and metaphors describe Citrine's seeking for truth that helps him to move joyously and creatively into the future.

These three novels are not just essays pretending to be novels. The ideas in them are used as counterpoint for the feelings being imaged. The protagonists' conflicts exist in part because accepted intellectual ideas are in conflict with the protagonists' experiences and feelings. Herzog in particular struggles with his culture's ideas and emerges if not triumphant, then at least not defeated. Citrine also struggles with what his culture tells him about man's nature, and he is able to reject what he considers false and to trust certain truths he seemed for a time to have allowed his culture to nullify for him. To the extent that Sammler's experiences are more mental, he is less able to experience or remember those truths about man; in him the nature of man is shown, but his inability to experience the creature within himself limits his ability to test on his own pulses the verbalized accounts accepted by his society.

In his 1968 study Malin concludes that it was "too early to 'place' Bellow," but that even then it was possible to see "that he has produced a significant body of work--mature, human, imaginative--which will be read fifty years from now."[2] The present study gives further evidence of Bellow's artistry in his work, now enlarged by more short fiction, Mr. Sammler's Planet, and Humboldt's Gift.

Bellow's place in American literature is assured. He is a modern master of fiction. Thus far in his fiction, as has been shown, his patterns of metaphorical imagery contribute to characterization.

Bellow's concern that novelists capture the reality of the human spirit as it truly exists may cause him to experiment as well with other elements of fiction, as did the moderns of the early part of the twentieth century. A similarity to Lawrence has already been claimed. Bellow's requirement for characterization is also similar to that expressed by Virginia Woolf in "Modern Fiction":

> Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? We are not pleading merely for courage and sincerity; we are suggesting that the proper stuff of fiction is a little other than custom would have us believe it.[3]

Woolf recognized in her contemporary, James Joyce, one who was spiritual as opposed to those materialists who wrote of unimportant things, who expended "immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and the enduring."[4] She saw Joyce to be "concerned at all costs to reveal the flickerings of that innermost flame which flashes its messages through the brain, and in order to preserve it he disregards with complete courage whatever seems to him adventitious, whether it be probability, or coherence, or any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he can neither touch nor see."[5]

That Bellow's actual characterization in a novel corresponds with

his theory is revealed by a statement of Stephen Spender to the effect that Herzog is a subjective man in a subjective book:

> But the egocentricity is atoned for by the fact that what Herzog discovers about himself is the bundle of spiritual and physical qualities which makes every living person an instrument through which the world is experienced. The difference between Herzog and the other characters is the intensity of his consciousness that he is such an instrument.[6]

The care with which the early modernists developed the form of their novels enabled Mark Schorer later to state what is one of the distinguishing marks of the major early modernist novels: "modern fiction at its best has been peculiarly conscious of itself and of its tools." Achieving "the whole of the modern consciousness" as its subject matter, modern fiction "discovers the complexity of the modern spirit, the difficulty of personal morality, and the fact of evil--all the untractable elements under the surface which a technique of the surface alone can not approach."[7] Technique, Schorer claims, covers almost the entire range of choices made by the author; he uses the term in the large sense which George Lukacs later uses it, as "the formative principle governing the narrative pattern and the presentation of character."[8] For Schorer, technique discovers as well as contains intellectual and moral implications:

> The virtue of the modern novelist--from James and Conrad down--is not only that he pays so much attention to his medium, but that, when he pays most, he discovers through it a new subject matter, and a greater one. Under the "immense artistic preoccupations" of James and Conrad and Joyce, the form of the novel changed, and with the technical change, analogous changes took place in substance, in point of view, in the whole conception of fiction.[9]

Many critics have discussed Saul Bellow's novels with deep insight and have helped clarify understandings of his artistry and his techniques. Others, however, have limited their contributions by considering

him only as a novelist of ideas, which he most certainly is; but they have failed to consider the ways in which he creates characters who are involved in conflicts of which those ideas are only one part. Earl Rovit, for one, has made some valuable statements about Bellow's fiction, but in "Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer: The Secret Sharers," he condemns both Bellow and Mailer for leaving "the conventional solutions of style and structure pretty much in the places where they found them."[10] Of Bellow, Rovit writes:

> A story-line seems more than anything else a weblike scenario that he weaves more and more tightly around his captured protagonist; it is primarily a method of presenting the stifling power of the human predicament in order to measure his hero's ability to endure the harrowing weight of his own life. In effect, the typical Bellow plot is rarely more than a device to bring his protagonist and his reader into a heightened emotional awareness of the thin sliver of freedom that life permits to consciousness.[11]

If Bellow can "bring his protagonist and his reader into a heightened emotional awareness of the thin sliver of freedom that life permits to consciousness," then the means through which he accomplishes this should affect the whole conception of fiction.

However, Rovit continues: "In fact, one can readily imagine Bellow under different circumstances being perfectly comfortable as an eighteenth-century essayist--formidably intelligent, comprehensively 'liberal' in a crisply satirical way, and slightly contemptuous of such errant frivolities as fiction."[12] John Gardner, a novelist contemporary to Bellow, conveys a similar idea when he says, "I think Bellow is fundamentally an essayist and not a writer of fiction. Any time he wants to, he leans the characters against the door and philosophizes."[13] This attitude prevents the approach to Bellow's modern fiction that will give deeper understandings of his contributions to style and structure.

A first step to understanding Bellow's plotting in these three novels is to note that they differ from those nineteenth-century plots in which one event leads to another in a causal sequence. This fact can be seen even in a few statements taken from Masterplots essays in which critics indicate Bellow's failure to meet conventional expectations. Rovit's statement about Herzog captures the response of many who feel that there is no traditional plot: "Nothing happens in the novel except that the protagonist comes to a kind of ambiguously defiant acceptance of his mortal condition."[14] He makes an accurate statement about the novel's being "a long fragmented reminiscence," but he does not appear to recognize the full import of Bellow's use of the structural devices he names: "All the standard devices of the 'remembrance of things past' novel are in full employ--memoir, flashback, interior monologue, free associational skips, and a sense of circular time."[15] Daniel F. Boyce writes that Mr. Sammler's Planet is "a novel of comment" rather than "a novel of action," and that Bellow sacrifices plot almost entirely: "Nothing really happens in the story; the incidents follow no real cause and effect relationship other than to offer a springboard for Sammler's comments on contemporary society."[16] William E. Grant recognizes that the action of Humboldt's Gift, "much of which is concerned with Citrine's involvements with Cantabile, Renata, and Denise, is played out against Charlie's memories of his former idol, Von Humboldt Fleisher."[17] Since Grant spends most of his text describing those external involvements, he apparently misses the importance of those memories to the action of Humboldt's Gift.

Keith Opdahl's statement about Herzog, the last novel he examines in The Novels of Saul Bellow, might apply equally to Sammler's actions

in Mr. Sammler's Planet: "Herzog's actions are the product and justification of his thought"; Opdahl further notes that Bellow finds drama "in detail, thought, and characterization, but most of all in the act of reminiscence."[18] Tony Tanner also recognizes how Bellow has "dramatized the problems of trying to sort out information from noise in our modern environment."[19] In Humboldt's Gift, Bellow more evenly balances the external action and the internal action than in either of the two immediately preceding; even Humboldt's Gift, however, can only be understood by considering the associational as well as the linear plot.

Bellow's use of time and point of view may also be techniques through which he affects the style and structure of his novels. The sense of time he creates in these last three novels is both psychic and chronometric. He follows James Joyce, Marcel Proust, William Faulkner, and Virginia Woolf in tracing the circuitous motions of memory. But he also follows the public time symbolized by clocks. In this latter time, Herzog is about a week long and Mr. Sammler's Planet about three days long; Humboldt's Gift is longer. Psychically, however, the three cover all the years that their protagonists' memories are able to bring to the present of the chronometric time.

Richard Pearce's study of Bellow's complex use of time in Herzog convinces him of Bellow's allegiance to the traditional novel, despite his "restless experimentation in narrative forms, and despite his lessons from Joyce in subjectivity and discontinuity." Pearce concludes: "Bellow's faith in the traditional novel leads him to impose a linear and causal pattern on an experience that seems to undermine linearity and causality."[20] Bellow's success, however, demands more explanation. A study that promises the beginning of the explanation is Paul

Hernadi's examination of Bellow's use of "substitutionary perception" and his evoking of internal time, Henri Bergson's duree, without separating it from the public dimension of temps.[21]

Many contemporary authors challenge the traditional use of plot, characterization, and time in their novels because for the author to control these elements of fiction is to suggest the kind of situation in which the human being is controlled by his language, his heredity, and his intellectual and physical environment. However, the best challenging of form and language in the novel is accomplished in form and through language. Some writers use language in such a way that they constantly negate the illusions of any single reality they are at the moment erecting. Thomas Pynchon and John Barth, although differently, structure their novels by alternately erecting and destroying versions of reality and traditional conventions of fictionality.

Bellow challenges the traditional concept of the unitary character, but not to the extent of denying the validity of the novelists' interest in characterization. His questioning of how that character is to be revealed and what it is to reveal results in a rather subtle challenging of the other elements of fiction. For instance, instead of changing the form of the novel, he has his protagonists consider the problem of the enslaving power of language because it is their problem as well as the novelists' problem. Images of sensations and experiences of thought work in counterpoint to create a reality in which there are brief glimpses of truth. These glimpses protect the protagonists from reality instructors of one sort or another--sometimes persons, sometimes institutions, sometimes ideas--that would mislead. Tanner recognizes that "Pynchon works by a systematic disorienting of conventional

reading habits and expectations and Bellow does not," but as late as 1975, after Mr. Sammler's Planet, Tanner was wondering what modification in form would be necessitated by the inclusion of any more stress within Bellow's novels.[22] Whether it is an answer to the problem of stress within the novel or not, the presence of more external action may be Bellow's partial solution. In Humboldt's Gift, he shows his character (a writer) functioning within the world as a social being, but also functioning on the level revealed through imagery.

The desire expressed in various ways by the early modernists to capture "reality" is also evidenced in Saul Bellow's novels. His concern is not to destroy the form of the novel, but to build on what has been done before that is worth building on. His themes may appear to be traditional and, to some readers, his plots and characters may also appear traditional. However, in his characterization and in some of his statements about characterization are to be found ideas similar to those expressed earlier by D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. Their ideas about and the methods they (and others) have used to make more flexible the revelation of character must be a part of Bellow's "modern" approach to characterization. His careful method of creating images as metaphors must certainly be seen as part of this flexibility.

NOTES

[1] See pp. 6-7 of this dissertation for Schorer's statement.

[2] Malin, Saul Bellow's Fiction, p. 166.

[3] Virginia Woolf, "Modern Fiction," in The Common Reader, by Virginia Woolf (1923); rpt. in Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, ed. David Lodge (London: Longman Group Limited, 1972), pp. 88-89. Hereafter cited as TCLC.

[4] Woolf, p. 88.

[5] Woolf, p. 89.

[6] Stephen Spender, "Literature," Great Ideas Today, ed. Mortimer Adler and Robert M. Hutchins (Chicago: The Encycloepedia Britannica, 1965), p. 170.

[7] Mark Schorer, "Technique as Discovery," The Hudson Review, 1, No. 1 (Spring, 1948), 86.

[8] Georg Lukács, "The Ideology of Modernism," from The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, by Georg Lukacs, trans. John and Neeke Mander (1955); rpt. in TCLC, p. 475.

[9] Schorer, "Technique as Discovery," pp. 73-74.

[10] Earl Rovit, "Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer: The Secret Sharers," in SBCCE, p. 164.

[11] Rovit, "Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer," p. 163.

[12] Rovit, "Saul Bellow and Norman Mailer," p. 163.

[13] Don Edwards and Carol Polsgrove, "Conversation with John Gardner," The Atlantic Monthly, May, 1977, p. 44.

[14] Rovit, "Herzog," Masterplots, 1965 Annual, p. 129.

[15] Rovit, "Herzog," p. 128.

[16] Daniel F. Boyce, "Mr. Sammler's Planet," Masterplots, 1971, p. 208.

[17] William E. Grant, "Humboldt's Gift," Masterplots, 1976 Annual, p. 137.

[18] Opdahl, p. 146.

[19] Tony Tanner, "Saul Bellow: An Introductory Note," Salmagundi, 30 (Summer, 1975), 3.

[20] Richard Pearce, "The Ambiguous Assault of Henderson and Herzog," in SBCCE, p. 79.

[21] Paul Hernadi, Beyond Genre (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 189-204.

[22] Tanner, p. 4.

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