CHAPTER ONE

CREATIVE GENIUSES

...its [a good work of art’s] fervent & powerful efflux evidently flows from a devout soul and its writer as evidently writes from deep plan & science, & with an elaborate ethic intention, born of & designed to justify, the Democratic theory of his country & carry it far beyond the merely political beginning already made. ... [John C. Broderick. Ed. *Whitman: The Poet*, 1965, p. 8].

Art should exhilarate, and throw down the walls of circumstance on every side, awakening in the beholder the same sense of universal relation and power, which the work evinced in the artist, and its highest effect is to make new artists. ... [*Emerson’s Essays*, 1971, p. 201]

The above quoted epigraphs drawn from the works of Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson admirably and adequately qualify Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth as outstanding American artist geniuses. They are capable of enclosing the old and the new.

The theme of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth is always creative and has vistas. The flawless triumph of their art is that they give expression too adequately and admirably to their feelings, thoughts, and experiences in their literary products, and invest them with the balanced proportions, symmetry, perfection, cohesion, order and unity. Moreover, they are endowed with the rare writing capacity to wield the medium of American English to express even the inexpressible. In fact, Saul
Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth themselves are the proper channels of all that they wish to communicate without diminution or increase.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth with verve and vitality, absorbs and expresses everything that they witness in their society and Establishment of their period. In a way their *Oeuvres* can be termed as so many revealing social documents, without the least trace of propaganda literature. Their works sound at times as protest literature, but never get reduced to the level of propaganda. In fact, their *Oeuvres* admirably and adequately capture the violent contrasts that lie rampant in everyone's life. They neatly introduce the fluctuation or the undulations of life, the hopes and despairs, the fears and consternations, and the brightness of tomorrows - - of new days being born.

In the manner of a Walt Whitman, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth accept the present world as the growth out of the past, and the projection into the future. In these respects there is in Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, the American creative artists, that buoyant optimism, which incidentally is the kind of positivism strongly recommended by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, moreover, argue for the triumph of man or woman through the moral law. They maintain that a literary product is the presentation of the real in its imaginative and mental aspects. They understand that the two fundamental aspects for writing fictions are from the minutia of the empirical world to the symbols conceived of by an imaginative brain. The *Oeuvres* of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are mainly objective in character but there is controlled infusion of the subjectivism in their objective representation of life that they
witnessed around in their period of life. In fact, it is not the external fact of reality, not
the semblance of objects as they are perceived by the senses, but the relationship of man
to these events, and the impressions produced upon the mind by these external objects,
events, people, or actions. The *Oeuvres* of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip
Roth, then, are the records of the impressions made by external realities of every kind
upon these artists, and of the reflections, which they have made upon them.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth feel that their mind transference
is of real value and is of equal importance to objective reportage. As such, one detects
their mind transference in their *Oeuvres*. In fact, the mind transference and the
subjectivism of the family, regional, cultural and social backgrounds of Saul Bellow,
Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth determine their mind and art. The subjectivism and
objectivism apart, one detects in their works a studied fusion of deterministic
materialism, Hedonistic utilitarianism, enlightened egoism, coupled with the fervour of
social reform and revolutionary spirit.

The life of the race is the Jewish race or the Black or the White would be
degraded to a mere animal existence without the accumulated stores of previous
experience, which literature places at its disposal. It must be recorded that the *Oeuvres*
of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are governed by excellence of
thought and harmony, and of form, structure and organization, and rhythm, and
musicality of sounds and musicality of ideas, and these are connected to the excellence
in the delineation of round characters that experience poly urges.
Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth appreciate the fact that what is important is not imitation, but creation. While painting the landscape the writer gives the suggestion of a fairer creation of what one normally witnesses in Nature.

The creative artist should omit the prose of Nature but create only the spirit and splendour of Nature. The artist should know that the landscape has beauty for his eyes, because it expresses a thought, which is to him good. He exalts in his copy the features that please him. He will give the gloom of gloom, and the sunshine of sunshine. Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth meet these requirements of an artist. Moreover, they employ the symbols of their day and nation to convey their enlarged senses to the perceptive and critically oriented readers. In this context the pointed observation of Ralph Waldo Emerson is worth quoting here [Emerson's Essays, 1971, p. 193]:

Thus the new in art is always formed out of the old. The Genius of the Hour always sets his ineffaceable seal on the work, and gives it an inexpressible charm for the imagination. . . .

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth value simplicity in their expressions. The assertions of Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson make the point clear. The first one is that of Walt Whitman [Whitman, the Poet, 1965, p. 3]:

The art of art, the glory of expression and the sunshine of letters is simplicity. Nothing is better than simplicity – nothing can make up for excess, or for the lack of definiteness. . . .

The statement of Ralph Waldo Emerson reads well in conjunction with that of Walt Whitman, and it runs thus [Emerson's Essays, 1971, p. 199]:
Pictures must not be too picturesque. Nothing astonishes men so much as common sense and plain dealing. All great actions have been simple, and all great pictures are... 

As creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, have expressed their feelings, thoughts, and experiences in all simplicity. Moreover, they appreciate the fact that true art is never static but always flowing. It speaks from its instant life tones of tenderness, truth, and courage. They understand that art is the need to create. But in its essence it is immense and universal.

The creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, always have new thoughts. They have whole new experiences to unfold. In fact, the experience of each age requires a new confession, and the world always waits for such creative artists. With such capacities and talents the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, project themselves as Namers, and Language Makers. Moreover, they are marked by remarkable imaginative bent of mind. The pointed statement of Ralph Waldo Emerson argues to the point, and hence it is worth quoting here [Emerson's Essays, 1971, p. 217]:

This insight, which expresses itself by what is called Imagination, is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study, but by intellect being where and what it sees, by sharing the path, or circuit of things through forms, and so making them translucent to others...

At this juncture, it ought to be mentioned that the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, are universally acknowledged as the outstanding
perceptive and creative geniuses. Their significance, relevance, and consequence as creative writers is assessed by the reach ability of their Oeuvres. They engage the mind of the critically oriented readers and generate fresh thoughts, new valences, and provide new directions. As such their literary products persist to pulsate with lasting quality. The creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, have acquired excellent skill over writing processes, mastery over vocabulary, ability to introduce that distinct and unique style of writing, which capture the imagination of everyone. In fact, they have sharpened, and rarefied, and refined their writing potentialities. In this regard, they have given new directions to the elements of poetry, fiction, and short fiction, namely, description, storytelling, plot development, narration, characterization, dialogue writing and argumentation.

Moreover, the works of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are marked by rhetorical flourishes, language maximization, innovative designs, verbal brilliance, imagistic charm, exquisite image making, literary and writing competencies and wide range of vision. In this context it ought to be mentioned that these creative artists enjoy the reputation of a large reading public as well as several literary aspirants who wish to learn the art of writing from them. In this connection, Ralph Waldo Emerson’s candid statement concerning a true man exactly defines these two creative artists [Emerson’s Essays, 1971, p. 89]:

Character really reminds you of noting else; it takes the place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. . . . Every true man is a cause, a country and an age; requires infinite success and numbers and time fully to
accomplish his design - - and posterity to follow his steps as a train of clients [My Emphasis]. . . .

The creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, strongly believe that every man and woman could indulge in self-discovery and remake themselves. Once again, the pointed observation of Ralph Waldo Emerson is worth quoting here [Emerson's Essays, 1971, p. 96]:

And truly it demands something godlike in him who has caste off the common motives of humanity, and has ventured to trust himself for taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his right, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law to himself, that a simple purpose may be in him as strong as iron necessity to others. . . .

In their education, erudition, equipment, and in their capacity to cheer, raise and guide Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth measure up to Ralph Waldo Emerson's definition of the American Scholar, which runs thus ["The American Scholar", in Nineteenth Century American Literature, 1987, pp. 59-60]:

He [the American Scholar] is to find consolation in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who raises himself from private considerations and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts. He is the world's eye. He is also the world's heart. He is to resist the vulgar prosperity that retrogrades ever to barbarism, by preserving and communicating heroic sentiments, noble biographies, melodious verse, and the conclusions of history. Whatever oracles the human heart, in all exigencies, in all solemn hours, as uttered and its commentary on the
world of actions - - these he shall receive and impart. And whatsoever
new verdict Reason from her inviolable seat pronounces on the passing
men and events of today - - this he shall hear and promulgate. . . . The
Scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the
time all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must
be a University of Knowledges. If there be one lesson than another which
should pierce his ear, it is The world's nothing, the man is all; in
yourself is the law of all, . . it is for you to know all; it is for you to dare
all [My Emphasis]. . . .

The Oeuvres of the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip
Roth, are marked by thematic significance, relevance, and consequence, structural
finesse and technical excellence. They engage the perceptive and critically oriented
reader by primarily appealing to his head. In the works of Saul Bellow, Bernard
Malamud and Philip Roth one detects the right balance and fusion of intellection with
intuition. In fine, they move to the head through the heart. To the casual browser the
accomplished creative artists, Cummings and Nabokov, appear to place the accent on
verba - - the manner of presentment - - rather than on res - - the matter that is
communicated. But it is not the whole truth of his art, for there is a fine fusion of Pure
Art - - form - - and Pure Preaching - - content.

In fact, creative and critically oriented readers realize that Saul Bellow, Bernard
Malamud and Philip Roth do not sacrifice contextual values for the sake of structural
finesse and technical excellences. On the other hand, form contributes to the growth,
strength, significance, relevance, and consequence of their Oeuvres. As Robert Greeley
argues ["Projective Verse", 1966, p. 16], in the case of the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth:

Form is never more than an expression of content. . . .

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are born creative artists. One other characteristic feature of these American geniuses is that they were individualists first and artists next.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are not prepared to sacrifice or compromise their *individualisme* with the conventional theories, received notions, and the *dicta* of society. The strongest imperative for the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, is the preservation of their artistic and intellectual freedom. In other words, they are able to mark their literary products distinctly with their original and individualistic stamp. It is emphatically argued that the creative artists, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, are committed writers. Their commitment is to liberate and replenish art. With this as their main aim, they transform their art into a dynamic force, vital, prodigious, and endowed with independent life. They are not prudish and falsely sentimental. Their art products testify to the fact that they value the assertion of Walt Whitman, which runs thus [Preface to Leaves of Grass, 1982, p. 20]:

> How beautiful is candor! All faults may be forgiven of him who has perfect candor [My Emphasis]. . . .

With their profound erudition - - *phronesis* - - innate talents, power of observation, sharp memory, American ingenuity, writing capacities, verbal brilliance, and the beautiful brain and beautiful soul Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip
Roth have been able to represent life in art with clarity of vision, and precision in expression and masterly stylistic control. Their works dramatize the tension arising out of the medium of communication employed as a means to an end. William H. Gass’s argument [Quoted in Patricia Waugh’s *Metafiction*, 1984, p. 14], is to the point, and it is worth quoting here:

In every art two contradictory impulses are in a state of Manichean war; the impulse to communicate and so to treat the medium as a means and the impulse to make an artefact out of the materials and so treat the medium as an end.

A perceptive and creative reader realizes that Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth do not dispense with structural finesse and technical excellence for contextual values. On the other hand, form, structure, and organization — in fine, *Gestalt* — contribute to the growth strength, and relevance of their art. As Robert Creeley [“Projective Verse”, in *Selected Writings of Charles Olson*, 1966, p. 16] argues, in the case of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth:

Form is never more than an expression of content.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are born creative writers, endowed with rich writing capacities, and virgin imagination. One other characteristic feature of these American genius artists is that they are individuals first and artists next. In other words, they are not prepared to compromise their *individualisme* with the conventional art theories, received notions, and the dictates of the society and the Establishment. The strongest imperative for Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth has been the preservation of their artistic integrity, and intellectual freedom.
In their accent on *Gestalt* Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth merit a close, and critical, and analytical study. They concentrate on the generic form, which is fiction or short fiction. They realize the importance of balancing the form against the content. In other words, they do not sacrifice content for form.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth place the accent, in a balanced manner, on the elements of fiction or short fiction, and the rhetorical requirements, which overlap one another. There is the proper description of the *milieu, Zeitgeist, Weltanschauung* and the race, class and gender. They place equal accent on accurate storytelling as well. They value the importance of tight plot construction, and effective narration. There is the right fusion of intellection and intuition. It is not all inspiration, but inspiration channelled through crafted art.

It ought to be stressed that Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are technical *virtuosi*. They are bestowed with the talent to employ the literary tools and devices with functional valuations and variations. Furthermore, the *Weltanschauung* of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth is deeply collared but not totally obtruded by the stresses and strains - - *Sturm-und-Drang* - - the tensions and anxieties - - *Angst* - - experienced by men and women.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth concentrate on the psychic angle of his men and women characters, who suffer from mental crises. The family relationship has touched an unhealthy low because of sexism, or over-sexed or under-sexed condition, and the beastly animalism in men characters. There is the stress on a life that is rooted in a mechanical and daily dull routine. The tempo of life is one of a fast phase and it is fast living and nothing else. Therefore, the tragedy of men and
women are that they have lost their self-respect, honour, and dignity, and as a consequence they lose their separate and distinct individuality. In such a context, notwithstanding the phenomenal material gains and high standard of living men and women suffer from mental crises and as a result of the persistent psychic strains and stresses turns into neurotic case studies.

Incidentally, through their effective way of describing the scene of action and time of action, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth evoke the right responses and correct emotions. But the descriptions do not root themselves at the level of emotions and physicality. On the other hand the power of evoked emotions strengthens the promotion of the next level of intellection and finally the higher level of moral and spiritual thinking. The fictions and short fictions of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth enable the perceptive and critically oriented reader to detect the clarity of their vision, range, depth, scope, and dynamism of their writing.

In fact, through their literary products Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth project themselves as the most distinguished fictionists, and short fictionists of the post-war period. Thus, by applying their American ingenuity, their zeal for revision, and by their conscious and painstaking craftsmanship, committed art, clarity of vision, extensive reachable nature, significance, relevance, and consequence, and with their richest and varied imagination, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth enjoy the reputation of being known as the outstanding fictionists, and short fictionists.

In fact, the fictions and psychology of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth stand upon common ground. All the three are concerned with human motivations and behaviour. Any examination of the fictions and psychology of Saul Bellow, Bernard
Malamud and Philip Roth must concern itself with the direct fertilization of their imaginative writing by psychoanalysis. Thus art has for psychoanalysis the general function of resolving into one uniform flow of life all that springs from the inner well of primordial images and instinctive feelings and all that springs from the outer mechanism of actuality.

So much so, the fictions and short fictions of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth qualified by moral earnestness, intellectual intensities, and social expectations, prove to be a genuine and objective study of the society and the Establishment. The observation of William O'Connor is a pointer in this regard [An Age of Criticism: 1900-1950, 1952, p. 126]:

Society becomes the work of art. . . .

Moreover, two more assertions of Austin Warren [Theory of Literature, 1949, p. 209, and p.105] deserve to be examined in conjunction with the assertions already quoted in this regard:

[Austin Warren’s first argument is] that literature can be used as a social document and literature can be made to yield the outlines of social history . . . literature is simply a mirror of life, and thus, obviously a social document. . . .

Austin Warren’s other contention is:

The most immediate setting of a work of literature, we shall then recognize, is its linguistic and literary tradition, and this tradition in turn is encompassed by a general cultural “climate”. Only far less directly can literature be connected with concrete economic, political, and social
conditions. Of course, there are interrelationships between all spheres of human activities. . . .

It ought to be stressed that Austin Warren fails not to realize the validity of the argument that literature and society lie intertwined. Thus, based on the assertions of Harry Levin, Austin Warren, and William O'Connor, the literary products of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth cannot be branded and dismissed as mere propaganda literature. On the other hand, they are real purposive art, and they succeed in achieving a reach that transcends time and space. In this context, the pointed observation of Terry Eagleton [Marxism and Literary Criticism, 1956, p. 27] is relevant here:

To write well is more than a matter of "style"; it also means having at one's disposal an ideological perspective, which can penetrate to the realities of man's experience in a certain situation. . . .

In fact, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, the American genius artists, through their fictions and short fictions promote a high level of emendation in the sensitive and perceptive readers, and persuades them to shed their individual ego and embrace the corporate ego, and thereby accept inter subjectivity as the way of meaningful life. Incidentally, the literature of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth speaks directly to the mind and heart of the reader. It is precisely because ideas or mental pictures are the rough material of these writers. In representing reality Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are absolutely limited by the very conditions of the art of writing and by the elements of fiction, and short fictions to project the mental aspects of the external existence, which they portray. In fine, the fictions of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth reproduce external reality in its mental
aspect. They employ the representation of the objective aspects of reality to assist in the presentation of this mental aspect. But then literature is not altogether objective, for there is a blend of the subjective element. Furthermore, in delineating the characters Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth bestow the same attention and care with which they project the female protagonists. In fact, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth have employed their art tools with functional variations and valuations. In fine, through verbal mastery, language manipulation and maximization, linguistic experimentation, innovative forms and technical devices of excellence, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth have gained recognition as creative selves.

In this context, one takes into account the pertinent argument of Richard Chase: ["The Fate of the Avant Garde", P R, xxiv, 3 (Summer 1957), 363]:

... the health culture depends upon its recurring impulse to experimentation, its search for radical values, its historical awareness, its flexibility, and its receptivity to experience. ...

At this point there is the need to define the term, character, in fiction. The term, character, refers to a personage in fiction, short Fiction, poem or drama. The term, character, also denotes the essential qualities and personality traits of a fictional or real individual. The ability to create compelling and believable characters is one of the hallmarks of the literary artist, such as Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth.

It ought to be noted that a character in a work of fiction is realized in a number of ways. If the character is a flat character -- a two dimensional character -- then there is no artistic maturity seen in creating such a flat character. A flat character is known as a type character and is usually lightly sketched without much detail.
But the character in fiction should be a round character, a three dimensional character. A round character is generally a complex personality, given to poly urges and is a fully realized individual. The chief character or a protagonist of a fiction is usually three-dimensional. His adversary, if any, is known as the antagonist. It must be stressed that the male and female characters of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth measure themselves up to be graded as round characters. But then, they introduce some flat characters to offset their round characters.

Characterization in literature is the presentation of attitudes and behaviour of imaginary persons in order to make them credible to the critically oriented and perceptive reading public. Characterization is a unique feature of fiction. Criticism regards good characterization as an important criterion of excellence in fiction. A fictionist may choose one of the three methods to present a character. The author may directly describe a character's personality, as do omniscient fictionists, such as Henry Fielding in Tom Jones, or the writer may have the perceptive reader deduce the personality of a character from his actions, thus enabling the character to remain enigmatic. Or else, a novelist may present the inner workings of a character's mind, showing the character' psychological reactions to the situations in which he becomes involved. Examples of the later method of characterization are found in stream-of-consciousness fictions such as William Faulkner's As I Lay Dying and The Sound and the Fury. A character may be drawn with a few marked personality traits or with a complex collection of them. The male and female characters of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth belong to both variety mentioned above.

A character may also be either static, showing little change, or remain dynamic, that is, significantly affected by the events of the narrative. And the male and female
characters of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are quite dynamic in nature.

From this point onwards a brief analysis of Bildungsroman and Kunstelroman becomes necessary to better appreciate the fact that Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are mature fictionists. The essential generic characteristic of the Bildungsroman fiction is a concern with the portrayal of an individual’s bildung, where bildung denotes a harmonious self-maturation. Bildungsroman fictions are about the growth of the characters.

In fine, the development of the male and female protagonists is the immediate and ultimate concern. Michael Beddow offers a satisfactory definition, which is worth quoting here [The Fiction of Humanity: Studies the Bildungsroman from Wieland to Mann, 1982, pp. 170-171]:

. . . it [the Bildungsroman fiction] is an essential part of the heroes’ growth and self-discovery that they are separated from the familiar surroundings in which they were brought up and enter into an alien environment. Cut off from their original environment and not wholly at home in their new one, the various heroes are thrown back upon their own inner resources and have to place a good deal of reliance on their private values and aspirations. . . . The . . Bildungsroman heroes have their development furthered by entering surroundings, which are profoundly different from those they have previously known, their awareness of the scope and import of the differences increasing as their experiences progress. . . .
Furthermore, *Bildungsroman* fiction deals with the growth in understanding by way of assimilating experience. The protagonist passes through successive stages of apprenticeship, which leads to his mastery in the art of living.

In a *Kunstelroman* fiction the protagonist grows through learning experiences and matures, and along with the protagonist the artist also grows through learning experiences in the art of writing, and ultimately matures as a splendid and superb artist. Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth through their male and female characters in their fictions grow through the learning experiences and mature into great and accomplished artists.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth project themselves as Omniscient narrators. But at times there is the blend of the authentic “I” and the imagined “I” as effectively achieved by Herman Melville in the very first classic, and immortal sentence “Call me Ishmael” in *Moby Dick*.

Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth project themselves as excellent narrators of events involving male and female characters. They are born storytellers. They excel in all the fictional departments, namely, description, storytelling, narration, characterization dialogue writing, and finally argumentation. The fictions of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth can be analyzed, interpreted, and evaluated against the parameters defined by the modern rhetorician Kenneth Burke in his *Dramatic Pentad* [Drama of Thinking] and against Freytag’s *Pyramid*. Thus, the characters in the fictions and the short fictions in which they appear are gauged against the narrative techniques, high and sophisticated level of characterization, and the elements of fiction, and short fiction, and the psychoanalytic theories. Saul Bellow,
Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth have begun to find their moorings as fictionists and short fictionists.

At this point, it is interesting to make a note of the pointed observation of Kenneth Burke ["The Poetic Process," in *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism: An Arrangement of Contemporary Critical Essays*, 1979, p. 76]:

... art has always appealed, by the changing individuations of changing subject matter, to certain potentialities of appreciation, which would seem to be inherent in the very germ plasma of man, and which, since they are constant, we might call innate forms of the mind. These forms are the potentiality for being interested by certain processes or arrangements, or the feeling for such arrangements of subject matter as produce crescendo, contrast, compassion, balance, repetition, disclosure, reversal, contraction, expansion, magnification, and series, and so on. . . .

Moreover, some of the characters of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth project themselves as psychic case studies. They embody the principle of crescendo because it parallels certain psychic and physical processes, which are at the roots of their experience. Once again, Kenneth Burke’s argument is to the point, and it is worth quoting here [Kenneth Burke, "The Poetic Process," in *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism: An Arrangement of Contemporary Critical Essays*, 1979, p. 87]:

... when the emphasis of society has changed, new symbols are demanded to formulate new complexities, and the symbols of the past become less appealing of themselves. . . . thought, reasoning, problem-solving, emotions, and feelings. . . .
Saul Bellow is regarded as one of the most celebrated Jewish American authors of the twentieth century. His fiction typically addresses the meaning of human existence in an increasingly impersonal and mechanistic world. Writing in a humorous and anecdotal style, Bellow often depicts introspective individuals sorting out conflict between Old and New World values coping with personal anxieties and aspirations. *The Adventures of Augie March, Herzog,* and *Mr. Sammler's Planet* each won the National Book award. Bellow won a Pulitzer Prize for *Humboldt's Gift* and has been widely recognized as a highly original contemporary stylist.

The son of Russian-born parents, Bellow was born on 10 June 1915, in Lachine, Quebec. He developed an interest in Literature while confined to a hospital for a year during his childhood. At seventeen, Bellow and his friend, the future newspaper columnist Sydney J. Harris, ran away to New York City, where they unsuccessfully attempted to sell their first novels. After briefly studying at the University of Chicago, Bellow graduated from North-western University in 1937 with honours in sociology and anthropology. He briefly undertook graduate study in anthropology at the University of Wisconsin.

During World War II, Bellow attempted to join the Canadian Army but was turned down for medical reasons; this experience provided the basis for his first published novel, *Dangling Man.* In 1943 Bellow worked on Mortimer Adler's *Great Books* project for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Bellow then returned to New York, where he briefly earned a living as a freelancer before accepting a teaching position at the University of Minnesota in 1946. In 1963 Bellow accepted a permanent position with the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He served as a War Correspondent for Newsday during the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, and has taught at
New York University, Princeton, and the University of Minnesota. He continued to write fiction and had received numerous awards for his works until his death.

Bellow's novels are characterized by the Bellow hero - - a term referring to the typical Bellow protagonist who is a Jewish, male, intellectual urbanite struggling to find meaning in a materialistic and chaotic world. In developing his characters Bellow emphasizes dialogue and interior monologue, and his prose style features sudden flashes of wit and philosophical epigrams.

With *The Adventures of Augie March* Bellow established himself as a leading Jewish American fictionist. The book is a picaresque narrative chronicling the adventures of a compelling and sympathetic protagonist, Augie March from his childhood in Chicago to his adult years in Mexico and Europe.

In *Henderson the Rain King* Bellow relates the voyage of an arrogant millionaire who travels to Africa to confront his anomie and fear of death. With *Herzog* Bellow fuses the formal realism of his early works with the vitality of his picaresque novels of the 1950s. Herzog is an animated but tormented Jewish intellectual who has difficulty in maintaining human relationships, especially with women.

*Mr. Sammler's Planet* has often been identified as Bellow's most pessimistic novel. Mr. Sammler an elderly man has experienced the promises and horrors of the twentieth-century life. He offers an extensive critique of modern values and speculates on the future after observing a pickpocket on a bus. Although many critics disagreed whether Mr. Sammler succeeds as a perceptive commentator who ruminates on contemporary existence, Bellow's portrayal of this character has generally been commended.
*Humboldt’s Gift* deals with the conflict between materialistic values and the claims of art and high culture. The protagonist Charles Citrine is a successful writer who questions the worth of artistic values in modern American society after suffering exhaustive encounters with divorce lawyers, criminals, artists, and other representative figures from contemporary urban life. He also recalls his friendship with the flamboyant artist Humboldt Fleischer, a composite of several American writers who despaired in their ability to reconcile their artistic ideals with the indifference and materialism of American society. Citrine finally concludes that he can maintain artistic order by dealing with the complexities of life through ironic comic detachment.

In *The Dean’s December* Bellow directly attacks negative social forces that challenge human dignity. Set in depressed areas of Chicago and Bucharest, Romania this novel focuses on Albert Corde, a respected journalist who returns to academic life to revive his love of high culture. Corde rebukes politicians, liberal intellectuals, journalists, and bureaucrats in both democratic and communist nations for failing to maintain humanistic values.

In *More Die of Heartbreak* Benn Crader is a botanist who becomes engaged to the wealthy daughter of an avaricious surgeon seeking to use him to undermine Benn’s Uncle Vilitzer, a corrupt political boss.

*Ravelstein* is regarded as a fictionalized account of Bellow’s close friendship with the prominent conservative critic Allan Bloom, who died in 1992. Ravelstein is an eccentric, brilliant, private man; when he realizes that he is dying, he asks Chick, the narrator, to write his biography and Chick agrees. Bellow has also written several works of short fiction.
The novella *Seize the Day* focuses on Tommy Wilhelm, the middle-aged man who yearns for wealth and fame but has failed in both his business and human relationships. However, by coming to terms with his mortality --- a prominent theme in Bellow’s fiction --- Wilhelm gains a better understanding of himself and an appreciation of others.

In the short fiction collected in *Mosby’s Memoirs and Other Stories* and *Him with His Foot in His Mouth and Other Stories* Bellow depicts sensitive everyday characters and intellectuals who struggle to maintain their dignity and reaffirm faith.

In *The Actual* Harry Trellman becomes an intellectual consultant for the ageing tycoon Sigmund Adletsky. When Amy Wustrin, Harry’s true love, suddenly becomes a widow, Sigmund brings Harry and Amy together. In 2001 a selection of Bellow’s short stories, *Collected Stories*, was published.

Another wide-ranging collection of Bellow’s essays, *It All Adds Up: From the Dim Past to the Uncertain Future*, was published in 1994. These selected essays, travel pieces, lectures, literary appreciations, and autobiographical recollections reflect Bellow’s diverse interests.

Literature and psychology stand upon common ground. Both are concerned with human motivations and behaviour, and with man’s capacity to create myths and symbols and employ them to represent life situations. Therefore, any examination of literature and psychology must concern itself alike with the direct fertilization of imaginative writing by psychoanalysis, and the use, which literary criticism, and biography, has made of the psychological and psychoanalytical tools. In this context, Carl Gustav Jung
argues to the point, and it is worth quoting here, quite imperatively [20th Century Literary Criticism, 1972, p. 175]:

Psychology being the study of psychic processes can be brought to bear upon the study of literature for the human psyche is the womb of all the sciences and arts. We may expect psychological research on the one hand, to explain the formation of a work off art, and on the other to reveal the factors that make a person artistically creative.

It ought to be stressed here that there is a careful and psychoanalytical study of how id, ego and superego exercise a controlling influence on the principal characters depicted by Saul Bellow. It is in this context psychology is applied to better study the literary works of Saul Bellow. Moreover, there is a psychoanalytical study of how psychic depression and paranoia affect the protagonists of Saul Bellow, and cause Angst, the Sturm-und-Drang, anguish and sufferings in Saul Bellow’s protagonists.

Reverting to the definitions of id, ego, and superego, it ought to be noted that id is the source of all instinctual energy. Id is the reservoir of libido. It is the zone of all passions and instincts. Id causes the pleasure principle. Id is illogical, and id has no unity of purpose. In fact, immoral life begins with id. The newborn child is nothing but id. The potential ego develops with id. As such the newborn child is close to the primitive man. The child as id is full of urges and passions. Id seeks immediate gratification of all of them. Id craves for the gratification of all instinctual needs. But once the child grows it develops ego and superego, and the grown-up child lives according to the codes, and the norms defined by the family and the society. And ego is derived from the id, with the modifications and changes imposed on ego by the external
world. *Ego* cannot be different from *id*. Perceptions play a great role in *ego*. It goes to sleep but exercises censorship in dreams and makes the person moral. *Ego* is shaped and moulded by the external world, by the urges caused by *id*, and by the severity of *superego*.

*Ego* has a distinct role to play in its relationship with *id*, and watches the external world while *id* gratifies its wishes. If it is not possible, *ego* helps *id* to modify, postpone, or sublimate its urges. Ego cannot always make *id* repress its urges, for it will cause neurosis.

And *superego* is an outward modification of *ego*. It is unconscious to a great extent and independent of conscious *ego*, and to a large extent inaccessible to it. The chief function of *superego* is criticism, and *superego* is essentially same as conscience. *Superego* is tyrannical towards *ego*. And *superego* plays the role of the censor in the human being. A normal human being is one in whom *id* and *ego* lie in a perfect balance. Furthermore, Freud defines the purpose of art arguing that it serves as substitute gratification. In this connection, Freud offers his views about creative writers and art in his work, *Creative Writers and Day Dreaming*, which is referred to *in extenso* here [Quoted in 20th Century Literary Criticism, 1972, pp. 36-37]:

The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of fantasy, which he takes very seriously, that in which, he invests with large amounts of emotion - - while separating it sharply from reality.

... The motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single fantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality ... the wishes are of two main groups; one is ambitious wishes,
which serve to elevate the subject’s personality and the other are erratic ones... now for the creative writer, we may really attempt to compare the imaginative writer with the “dreamer in broad daylight, and his creations with daydreams?... that a piece of creative writing, like a daydream is a continuation of and substitution for, what was once the play of childhood....

The argument of Freud, as stated earlier, then is that art is an illusion as opposed to reality and it serves as a substitute gratification. It is with such background knowledge of psychology one better appreciates the *Oeuvres* of Saul Bellow. And Saul Bellow projects his protagonists as neurotic case studies. They suffer from depressions, dementia, paranoia or masochism.

Saul Bellow is himself essentially depressive. His imagination is horrified by the emptiness of human life. That is precisely why it is argued that Saul Bellow is a psychological fictionist, before he is a social scientist, and a moral spokesman.

Therefore, Saul Bellow persistently tries to find the solution to the contradiction to individuality from the point of view of a psychologist. Understandably, his heroes aim at becoming worthy of unburdening their guilty selves, and by entering the shared condition of all. And the struggle to escape the darkness describes the psychic condition of Saul Bellow’s protagonists.

Tonny Tanner makes a pointed observation, *Saul Bellow*, 1978, pp. 18-19:

> The American hero has, indeed, habitually been thrown back upon himself, enduring a state of sombre aloneness, which survives all surface changes of mood. No matter what relish of life he evinces he fives the air
of brooding apart, though the apartness is not a state of supine self-pity. Usually he is questing, searching speculating, either for some superior form of truth, or some richer reality or some affirmative mode of true reconciliation with the world he inclines to renounce. But Joseph's America has fallen under the shadow of Hitler's Europe, and instead of Thoreau's pastoral self-communing, his diary aches with the exacerbated self-probing of a man up to his neck in modern history, Joseph oscillates between corrosive inertia, and compulsive self-inquiry, wrestling with irresolvable paradoxes of world and spirit, which have a drastically deleterious effect on his character and bring him to the point of futility, and exhaustion....

But then, Saul Bellow maintains that the individual can move out of his depressive mania by casting off his burdens, and thereby redeem himself. He can demonstrate to the world that the life of the individual is not one of dusty irrelevancy, and that dignity can be salvaged from the wreckage. As such, Saul Bellow recommends a culture that is essentially affirmative.

Saul Bellow, despite his note of affirmation, grieves over a world from which nobility and greatness, and dignity are missing. In this context, the pointed observation of John Jacob Clayton is worth quoting [Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979, p. 50]:

Perhaps anguish is particularly Jewish. The other side of Jewish hope for the individual and faith in the common life is Jewish despair, Jewish guilt, and self-hatred, Jewish masochism. . . .
Yet, despite his desire to be affirmative, Saul Bellow’s depressive tendencies get projected in his *Oeuvres*. Understandably, then Saul Bellow’s characters are psychic case studies. They are literally psychological cripples. Once again, in this context, the pointed observation of John Jacob Clayton sums up the point that is made, [*Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979*, p. 53]:

One would expect in a writer who wishes to affirm human life and to defend the individual to find characters with strength, grace, even nobility. But Saul Bellow’s characters are lonely, despairing, cut off not only from society, but from friends and wives. Moreover, they are pathological social masochists, filled with guilt and self-hatred, needing to suffer and to fail. . . .

The classic examples, who fall under this category, are Rogni of the short fiction entitled, “A Father-to-Be,” and Tommy Wilhelm of *Seize the Day*, Henedrson of *Henderson the Rain King*, Joseph of *Dangling Man*, Asa Leventhal of *The Victim*, and Herzog of *Herzog*. These characters suffer masochistically at the hands of others. External forces and pressures weigh them down. They carry their burdens without casting them away. The others extract heavy prices from them.

These characters feel that they alone have to carry the burden of the whole world on them, and others take advantage of them and sacrifice them. And all these had psychic effects on them and as stated earlier reduced them to the state of psychological cripples. And the masochism of these characters makes it impossible for them to affirm the potentialities of their humanity. They define themselves as classic isolates, and depressives. On analyzing psychoanalytically the individual characters mentioned
above, one detects Joseph as a psychological case history. Joseph, the intelligent
monologist, can talk only to himself. In this context, John Jacob Clayton is worth
quoting here [Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979, p. 57]:

He [Joseph] has to invent a Spirit of Alternatives to talk to so that his
ideas can have a sounding board - - his friends he affronts, his family, he
rejects. There is no organized plot; no dramatic interaction among
characters working towards a resolution; the problems and their
resolution remain internal. . . .

Joseph of Dangling Man takes pride in his depressive mania. In an acidly self-
analytical manner he writes down every detail of his paralysis, of his disgusting traits, of
his frustrations that he faces. He is filled with self-hatred, which reveals itself in his
imagining or enlarging offences against him. Joseph’s attitude towards life is that of a
guilty thief. As a moral masochist, anything Joseph takes feels like theft in him. In this
regard, Tonny Tanner makes a pointed observation, which is worth quoting here [Saul
Bellow, 1978, p. 19]:

. . . his [Joseph’s] freedom from any sort of involvement rapprochement
with the world has turned him into a dangling man, devoid of all positive
impulses and constructive initiative. His freedom is a void in which he
hangs, unable to reach any solid reality. His journal is not a mere hobby
but a strategy to retain his sanity. The insensitiveness can satisfy them
with physical action. Joseph because of his candour and habit of
introspection has only one last recourse - - “to talk to myself.” . . .
Joseph of *Dangling Man* is fenced in by his *ego*. And his *ego* hides a great deal of self-hatred, though *ego* and self-hatred appear incongruous. Like Jean-Paul Sartre's man, Joseph runs into a safe *ego*, and *ensoi*. Joseph finds that the Kafkan Wasteland World is a squalid jungle marked by rapacity, selfishness, and spite.

Therefore, Joseph of Dangling Man withdraws to preserve the integrity of the self. Thus, he finds himself in a self-imposed prison. This condition damages his sense of reality, and fills him with delusions, and turns him into a paranoid. And his life gets devalued through stagnation. And in the end he summarily abandons the values with which he has tussled all along.

Joseph expresses his sense of defeat thus [*Dangling Man*, 1944, p. 191]:

> I [Joseph] am no longer to be held accountable for myself; I am grateful for that. I am in other hands, relieved of self-determination, freedom cancelled. Hurray for regular hours! And for the supervision of the spirits! Long live regimentation! . . .

Like every Bellow hero, Tommy Wilhelm of the novella, *Seize the Day*, lives in a world of Machiavellians who exert a real and sinister power over him, and reduce him to the position of a psychological cripple. Tommy Wilhelm suffers, unable to cope with the terrible and ubiquitous power of money. He understands that in this world the dominant values are money values. The profit motive is uppermost. Money has become ultimately involved with man's destructive instincts, Tommy Wilhelm is a complete victim, and the money conscious world has driven him to the wall, and he finds no way of fleeing from it. He is helpless to remove himself from this money world, and he finds everywhere, suspicion, cynicism, and exploitation dominating the lives of people.
Tommy Wilhelm learns some of the harsh facts of freedom, which he expresses thus [Seize the Day, 1959, p. 67]:

Don’t talk to me about being free. A rich man may be free on an income of a million net. A poor man may be free because nobody cares what he does. But a fellow in my [Tommy Wilhelm’s] position has to sweat it out until he drops dead.

And it is the image of the dead man that offers a revelation to Tommy Wilhelm. He appreciates the fact that the dead man is beyond the distractions of modern life. The relevant textual passage makes interesting reading, which is worth quoting here [Seize the Day, 1959, pp. 159-160]:

Soon he [Tommy Wilhelm] was past words, past reason, past coherence. He could not stop. The source of all tears had suddenly sprung open within him black, deep, and hot, and they were pouring out and convulsed. . . . The great knot of ill and grief in his throat swelled upward and he gave in utterly and held his face and wept. He cried with all his heart.

On this deeply emotional ending of the novella, Seize the Day, Tonny Tanner offers a pertinent observation: [Saul Bellow, 1978, p. 67]:

The dead man is a reminder of the inevitable death of the self, at the same time he is a very specific omen to Tommy, helpless and friendless on this day of reckoning; Tommy’s tears are both for humanity and for himself. Yet they also reveal an awareness of the supreme value of life,
sheer life itself, existence beyond the assessment of financial success or failure. . . .

The life of Tommy Wilhelm, from the psychic angle, is that of a self-persecuted individual. At one level he is a moral masochist. At another level he is a social masochist. Weiss argues to the point [Quoted in John Jacob Clayton. Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979, p. 71]:

Wilhelm has the masochistic necessity to fail, to be destroyed at the hands of the punishing father, in order, under the terms of the moral masochistic commitment, to retain his love, and, in less obvious ways, to memorialize certain events in the past. . . .

But this explanation that the masochist makes demands for love in the form of provocation and spite does not cancel Freud’s idea, which is so very applicable to Tommy Wilhelm. Freud maintains that masochistic behaviour is self-punishment to remove guilt especially Oedipal. Like Joseph of Dangling Man, Tommy Wilhelm of Seize the Day runs into a safe ego, an ensou, to escape reality, though Dr. Tamkin advises him thus [Seize the Day, 1959, p. 66]:

The spiritual compensation is what I look for. Bringing the people into the here-and-now, the real universe. That’s the present moment. The past is no good to us. The future is full of anxiety. Only the present is real - - the here-and-now. Seize the Day. . . .

Since Tommy Wilhelm hides his guilt within a masochistic construct to live in the here-and-now, and to seize the day, is to live outside a masochistic construct.
Unlike Tommy Wilhelm, Herzog has other ruses as a masochist. He is able to verbalize his neuroses. It not only turns Herzog intriguing but also safe. He is a sexual as well as a moral masochist. Herzog is excited by female arrogance. He is submissive to Madeline. He allows Madeline to beat him. The dangerous underside of the masochist is to be found in Moses Herzog in the form of repressed sadism. Guilt is at the root of Herzog’s masochism. And his sin is essentially sexual. There is the origin of his guilt in an Oedipal relationship. That is why he permits Madeline to be the Father Figure and punish him. She is his judge, and beater, and she wants him dead. John Jacob Clayton makes a pointed observation: [Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979, p. 198]:

His [Herzog’s] sexual feelings for his mother are clear. It is his guilt over these feelings, which leads him to masculine women, to women who will punish him like a father. Only under such conditions of punishment, only with a woman who threatens him symbolically with the castration and death he fears from his father can he expect his pleasure. . . .

The traits of paranoia, such as pride, anger, excessive rationality, homosexual inclinations, competitiveness, mistrust of emotion, inability to bear criticism, hostile projections, and delusions, which Herzog attributes to Madeline belong actually to Moses Herzog. And Herzog wildly attacks Gersbach in front of Samkin, his lawyer, projecting his debauchery, disorder, and betrayal of his father’s ways on Gerbach thus [Herzog, 1964, p. 215]:

When I [Herzog] think of Valentine [Gersbach] . . . I think of the books I devoured as a boy, on the French and Russian revolutions. And silent movies like Mme Sans Gene - - Gloria Swanson or Emil Jannings
as a Czarist general. Any way I see the mobs breaking into the palaces and churches and sacking Versailles, wallowing in cream desserts or pouring wine over their dicks and dressing in purple velvet, snatching crowns and miters and crosses. . . .

Herzog employs this remembered description to serve as a metaphor to connect depraved sexuality with revolution that causes the tearing down of tradition. Herzog is afraid to own depraved sexuality, anger, pride, homosexuality, hostile projections, and excessive rationality in him. Therefore, he exemplifies them in Gersbach, the Father in him, who always demands order. The textual passage makes interesting reading:

[Herzog, 1964, p. 11]:

There is someone inside me; I am in his grip. When I speak of him I feel him in my head pounding for order. . . .

Paradoxically, Herzog is a defender of his father’s faith, and at the same time he is a backslider from his father’s image. In fact, Herzog feels that he has to defend tradition precisely because he has none himself. In this context he gets identified as the culture hero. Herzog is the sum total of all Western civilization since the Renaissance. The relevant textual passage makes interesting reading, which is worth quoting here [Herzog, 1964, p. 11]:

His [Moses Herzog’s] life was, as the phrase goes, ruined. But since it had not been much to begin with, there was not much to grieve about. Thinking on the malodorous sofa, of the centuries, the nineteenth, sixteenth, the eighteenth, he turned up, from the last, a saying that he liked. . . .
John Jacob Clayton makes a pointed observation and argues to the point: [Saul Bellow: In Defense of Man, 1979, p. 206]:

Herzog, a marginal figure - - a Jew, Canadian - - born of Russian immigrant parents, a neurotic, whose problems derive not from a modern American family situation but from an unstable, rigid, Victorian-Jewish family situation - - is equated by Bellow with the culture. . . .

All the same, Herzog is a representative modern man suffering from paranoia, and neuroses, and fighting for survival. And Bellow’s other protagonist, Henderson of Henderson the Rain King feels displaced. He desires to find basic truths about the self. From the beginning till he comes to terms with the society he is ego-centred. He finds no value in inter-subjectivity in the beginning till he understands its worth after saving the child. Henderson is too rich and too strong to submit to society’s net. He does not know how to relate himself to other people. He expresses his inability to value the corporate ego. On this point the textual passage makes interesting reading [Henderson the Rain King, 1962, p. 49]:

Society is what beats me [Henderson]. Alone I can be pretty good, but let me go among the people, and there’s the devil to pay. . . .

Henderson, the aristocratic giant, with his limitless money, outrageous strength, and his insatiable, and inarticulate feelings becomes a psychic case history because he is left out. On this point, Tonny Tanner offers a pertinent observation: [Saul Bellow, 1978, p. 67]:

At the start we see mainly a man of mad habits - - drinking, chaotically involved with women, raising pigs in the ancestral home, fighting
with an old violin, flailing around with inordinate strength, and shouting at life in a voice loud enough to bring sudden death to an old servant. His great tradition cannot provide him with a function, a satisfying role, a mode of self-realization. His violence is a form of immense brooding frustration. . . .

Henderson’s longing is without focus. But if he is a figure of unflagging aspiration, he is also a victim of frequent humiliation. Henderson broods thus [Henderson the Rain King, 1962, p. 285]:

I don’t think of struggles of desire can ever be won. Ages of longing and willing, willing and longing and how have they ended? In a draw, dust and dust. . . .

Henderson’s ego consciousness is so acute that he indulges in amour proper and self-concern. His ego sense assumes paranoia proportions, and turns narcissist in character. Only after Henderson sheds his insatiable egotism he learns that life has a purpose, and that it can offer peace. But then Henderson’s life demonstrates the dangers, absurdity, and paranoia conditions arising out of excessive self-concern. In this context, Tonny Tanner offers a pertinent observation: [Saul Bellow, 1978, p. 85]:

It [Henderson the Rain King] manifests, indeed enacts, a compelling joy derived from the sheer fact of human consciousness; but it is uncertain to the point of hysteria on the question of individual value. . . .

And Asa Leventhal’s emotional difficulties arise out of an imbalance between his stolid, impassive exterior, inherited from his harsh, and cold father, and his seething interior, which is a legacy from his mad mother.
Moreover, Asa Leventhal turns out to be a victim of his volatile personality. He is a classic instance of mania-depressive. In Asa Leventhal's case, provocation carries the double sense of aggression and sexual temptation. His psychic feeling makes him accept Albee as his father figure, and Mary as his mother figure. Since he lost his real mother early in his life he suffers from Oedipal Complex.

In this context, Andrew Gordon makes a pointed observation: ["Pushy Jew: Leventhal in The Victim," *MFS*, XXIII, 1 (Spring 1979), 134]:

According to psychoanalytic theory, the death of a parent, a crisis for offspring of any age creates particular anxiety in a child not yet out of the womb. The youth feels betrayed and abandoned, but he also feels intense guilt, as though his evil wishes (sexual or aggressive) had caused the death. Leventhal shows both the insecurity about abandonment and the excessive guilt, displayed now to free floating anxiety about his career, and his relationships with other people. . .

In this context, it is of immediate interest to note how Oedipal Complex surfaces in Leventhal. In fact, Jonathan Baumbaxh notes the psychological undertones in the novel's climactic scene thus [*The Landscape of Nightmare: Studies in the Contemporary American Novel*, 1970, p. 43]:

In finding Albee in his bed with a woman who resembles the landlady Mrs. Munez, whom Leventhal has covertly desired, Leventhal is momentarily horrified, as if Albee has in some way cuckolded him. The Oedipal tensions of this primal scene - - finding another man in your bed with the landlady you secretly covet - - seem unmistakable. . .
Leventhal’s actions are with his lack of awareness of his own motives for those actions. Yet, they are traceable to his emotional and sexual repression. Mark Shechner argues to the point thus [“Down in the Mouth with Saul Bellow,” American Review, XXIII (October 1975), 44]:

I [Mark Shechner] would go further and claim that Leventhal confuses anger with erotic impulses (we all tend to do this when we speak of sex and violence). He mixes up hate with love, and he can control neither, but only discharge the feelings with the blind aggression of a push. Thus, he is at the mercy of the brute uncontrolled force of his rage and libido. He fears the moral and psychical consequences of an aggression he can neither understand nor restrain. . . .

Thus, Saul Bellow projects his protagonists, in his fictions, as psychic cases suffering from paranoia and mania-depression.

Bernard Malamud, the Jewish American writer, was born in Brooklyn, New York, to Russian Jewish immigrants. Much of his youth was spent working in his parents’ grocery store, and critics contend that these experiences are reflected in the setting of The Assistant. Malamud attended high school in Brooklyn and received his Bachelor’s degree from the city college of New York in 1936. After graduation, he worked in a factory and as a clerk at the Census Bureau in Washington, D. C. Although he wrote in his spare time, Malamud did not begin writing seriously until the advent of World War II. Becoming increasingly aware of the horrors of the Holocaust, Malamud began questioning his religious identity and started reading about Jewish tradition and history. Malamud argues thus [Quoted in CLC, vol. 78, 1994, p.247]:
I [Bernard Malamud] was concerned with what Jews stood for, with their getting down to the bare bones of things, I was concerned with their ethnicality -- how Jews felt that had to live in order to go on living.

In 1949, Malamud began teaching at Oregon State University; he left this post in 1961 to teach creative writing at Bennington College in Vermont. He remained there until shortly before his death in 1986. The first of Malamud's novels to receive critical acclaim, *The Assistant*, established his pre-eminence among post-World War II Jewish American authors. It is in this work that Malamud first experienced with the theme of Jewishness, a prevalent motif in his subsequent fictions and short fictions.

Centring on the relationship of a Jewish immigrant shopkeeper and his new employee, a directionless young Italian-American man. The Assistant has been praised for its depiction of moral forbearance as well as for idiomatic language David R Mesher argues thus [Quoted in *CLC*, vol. 78, 1994, p.247]:

To accept one's Jewsihness means, in *The Assistant*, to experience and understand the human condition.

Malamud's first novel, *The Natural*, is an allegory about the rise and fall of a baseball player. It is different from most of his work in that there are no Jewish characters. After the book was made into a movie starring Robert Redford in 1984, Malamud said in an interview that he was grateful for the film [Quoted in *CLC*, vol. 44, 1986, p. 413]:

*The Natural* allowed me [Malamud] to be recognized once more as an American writer as opposed to a Jewish writer.
Lelchuk remarks [Quoted in CLC, vol. 44, 1986, p. 413]:

Malamud has always had a fondness for telling tales arranged for the purpose of a specific moral lesson. Neither realism nor surrealism has been his forte through the years, but the fable, the parable, the allegory, the ancient art of basic storytelling in a modern voice; through this specific mode he has earned his high place in contemporary letters. . . .

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Malamud’s second fiction, The Assistant, relates the experience of Morris Bober, the humble, elderly owner of a small, profitless Jewish market in an urban sand predominantly Gentile neighbourhood. Morris leads a difficult life, struggling to provide financially for his wife and their daughter Helen, who wishes to attend College. One night Morris is robbed and beaten by a neighbourhood thug and his accomplice, Frank
Alpine. As recourse for his actions, Frank returns to the store and volunteers as the shopkeeper’s assistant in order to clandestinely repay the stolen money.

During the course of his employment, Frank engages Morris in discussions of theology, morality, and human existence, and is profoundly influenced by Morris’s convictions. Frank also befriends Helen and eventually falls in love with her; but his affection is debased, when, immediately after saving her from an attacker, he rapes her. Both attempting to atone for the wrong he has done and reacting to Morris’s strong moral influence, Frank begins the process of proselytization and, after Morris’s unexpected death, completes his conversion to Judaism through ritual circumcision. At the conclusion of the fiction, Frank assumes management of Morris’s store.

The title story, “Magic Barrel”, of Malamud’s prizewinning first short fiction collection, *The Magic Barrel* is one of most frequently discussed works of short fiction. It is a quintessential Malamud in form and content, and perhaps most of all in moral vision; the story combines elements of realism and fantasy in an urban, Jewish setting, and centres on the protagonist’s struggle to break through the barriers of personal isolation. While Malamud’s handling of such themes as love, community, redemption, and Jewish identity has been widely praised, he is also noted for his creative use of ambiguity.

The short fiction, “The Magic Barrel”, focuses on the interaction of two main characters, a young unmarried rabbinical student named Leo Finkle and Pnye Salzman, a vulgar, yet colourful, marriage broker who smells distinctly of fish. At the story’s outset, an acquaintance advises Finkle that it will be much easier for him to find a congregation after graduation if he is married. Having spent his life studying, Finkle has
little experience in the area of romance and reluctantly decides to engage the services of Salzman. The marriage broker shows Finkle numerous pictures of potential brides from his “magic barrel” and comments on their qualities, particularly their ages, educational backgrounds, family connections, and the size of their dowries.

Finkle, however, seems uninterested in Salzman’s usual selling points and constructs flimsy excuses for rejecting many of the candidates. Salzman eventually convinces Finkle to meet a woman named Lily Hirschorn. During his traumatic encounter with Hiroschorn, Finkle recognizes that his life has been emotionally empty and that he has lacked the passion to love either God or other humans.

Finkle’s discovery of a picture of Salzman’s daughter, Stella, prompts him to act on his self-knowledge. Distinctive from the women in the previous photographs, Stella appears to be someone who has lived and suffered deeply. Salzman refers to her as a fallen woman, stating that she should burn in hell, and argues that the presence of her picture among the others was a mistake and that she is not the woman for Finkle.

Finkle, however, remains strongly attracted to Stella and envisions an opportunity to convert her to goodness, himself to God. The story’s concluding tableau is highly ambiguous. It depicts Finkle running toward Stella, who is standing under a lamppost dressed in a white dress and red shoes, while Salzman stands next to a wall around the corner, chanting the kaddish, a prayer for the dead.

Malamud’s *The Fixer* has been inspired by the ordeal of Mendel Beiliss, a Jew tried and acquitted of ritual murder in Kiev in Czarist Russia in 1913. *The Tenants* is a fiction about the conflict between two writers, one Jewish and the other Black. Malamud has authored *Idiots First, Pictures of Fiedelman, Rembrandt’s Hat, Dublin’s Lives,*
God’s *Grace, A New Life*, and *The Stories of Bernard Malamud*. The pointed observation of David Remnik is worth quoting here [Quoted in *CLC*, vol. 44, 1994, p.411]:

Malamud gave singular voice to all that is strange, emblematic, and magical in his characters’ lives. Malamud’s lives, of course, were mainly Jewish lives, but for some odd critical and journalistic reasons, he was lumped together with a more comic spirit [Philip Roth] and a more cerebral one [Saul Bellow]. All these produced Jewish American literature, but they never comprised a *jeshiva* of fiction. Malamud’s stories - - and he was best in shorter work - - are little miracles that cannot be jammed into any critical duffed bags. They are elusive, simple at first, then as dark and awesome as genuine spiritual experience. . . .

The writing conviction of Malamud in his words runs thus and that is, art tends toward morality [Quoted in *CLC*, vol. 44, 1994, p.411]:

It values life. Even when he doesn’t, it tends to. My [Bernard Malamud] former colleague Stanley Edgar Hyman used to say that even that act of creating a form is a moral act. That leaves out something, but I understand and like what he was driving at. It’s close to Frost’s definition of a poem as a *momentary stay against confusion*. Morality begins with the awareness of the sanctity of one’s life, hence the lives of others - - even Hitler, to begin with - - the sheer privilege of being, in this miraculous cosmos, and trying to figure out why. *Art, in essence, celebrates life and gives us our measure* [My Emphasis] . . . .
Philip Milton Roth, the Jewish American writer is a fictionist, short fictionist, essayist, auto biographer, and critic. Roth is one of the most prominent and controversial Jewish American writers in contemporary American literature. He draws heavily upon his Jewish American upbringing and his life as a successful author to explore such concerns as the search for self-identity, conflicts between traditional and contemporary moral values, and the relationship between fiction and reality. The sociological content of some of his works and his harsh satiric portraits of Jewish life have inspired considerable critical debate. While some commentators view his work as anti-Semitic, perverse, or self-indulgent, others laud Roth’s skill at rendering dialect, his exuberance and inventiveness, and his outrageous sense of humour.

Roth was born in Newark, New Jersey. After graduating from Weequahic High School in 1950, he enrolled at Newark College of Rutgers University. He transferred to Bucknell University in Pennsylvania in 1951. There he published his first short fiction, “Philosophy” in the literary magazine Et cetera, which he helped to found and edit. Roth graduated magna cum laude and Phi Berta Kappa, earning a Bachelor’s Degree in English in 1954. He received a Master’s Degree in English from the University of Chicago in 1955, and served briefly in the United States Army but was discharged due to a back injury he sustained during basic training.

Although he returned to study for his Doctoral Degree [Ph D] in English at the University of Chicago, Roth withdrew to pursue his writing career in 1957. With the aid of a grant from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, a Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship, Roth was able to complete his first book, Goodbye, Columbus, and Five Short Stories. Roth began teaching at the Writers’ Workshop at the University of Iowa in 1960, and in 1962 he became a writer-in-
residence at Princeton University. Roth resigned to become a full-time author following the financial success of his third novel, *Portnoy’s Compliant*. With his provocative and well-regarded fictions, he quickly established himself as one of America’s best-known authors. He has received several prestigious awards for his work, including two PEN / Faulkner Awards for fiction, a Pulitzer Prize, several National Book Critics Circle Awards, and a Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters from the National Book Foundation in 2002.

Roth first garnered significant critical reaction with his first work, *Goodbye, Columbus*. In the much acclaimed novella, which was adapted for film by Paramount in 1969, Roth satirizes American materialistic values by focusing on the conflicting emotions of Neil Kulzman, a lower-middle-class Jewish man struggling to adjust to the unfamiliar lifestyle of Brenda Patimkin, a wealthy Jewish suburbanite with whom he falls in love, Roth is credited with propelling Jewish American fiction into the realm of popular culture with *Portnoy’s Complaint*.

Originally appearing as a series of sketches in *Esquire*, *Partisan Review*, and *New American Review*, the novel takes the form of a profane, guilt-ridden confession related by Alexander Portnoy to a silent psychoanalyst, Sr Spielvogel. Decrying his Jewish upbringing, Portnoy wrestles with his Oedipal Complex, obsession with Gentile women, and sexual fetishes in an attempt to free himself from the restrictions of his cultural background. Following the book’s *[Portnoy’s Complaint]* publication, scholars and Jewish Americans labelled Roth an anti-Semitic Jew and objected to the novel’s sexually explicit content and what they considered as Roth’s degrading treatment of Jewish life. However, *Portnoy’s Complaint* also won praise for its ethnic humour, adroit dialogue, and psychological insight. Much of Roth’s ensuing work is about the
relationship of fiction to reality. The fiction, *My Life as a Man* concerns a novelist Peter Tarnpol who is writing about a controversial novelist named Nathan Zuckerman.

And Zuckerman appears in several of Roth’s later fictions, including *The Ghost Writer*, in which the young author gains notoriety and sparks intense critical debate with his salacious fiction, *Carnovsk*, much as Roth did with *Portnoy’s Complaint*.

Two subsequent fictions, *Zuckerman Unbound* and *The Anatomy Lesson* trace Zuckerman as he encounters the joys and disadvantages of fame and then succumbs to the terrors of writer’s block. These books, *Zuckerman Unbound* and *The Anatomy Lesson*, examine such topics as the difficulties of familial and sexual relationships and the conflicts between traditional and contemporary moral values.

Roth received the National Book Critics Circle Award for his next novel, *The Counterlife*. The fiction, *The Counterlife*, chronicles Zuckerman’s travels to Israel, where his brother has joined a militant terrorist group, and then to England, where he combats English anti-Semitism.

The fiction, *Operation Shylock*, focuses on the fictional story of the writer Roth, who pursues a man in Israel, who has been using his identity. Roth travels to Israel, finds his impostor, and gets involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The fiction, *Operation Shylock*, centres on a character named Philip Roth, who travels to Israel in 1988 after learning that a man claiming to be Philip Roth is in Jerusalem promoting a movement called *Diasporism*, Roth eventually meets his impostor - - a former private detective from Chicago who is dying of cancer - - and gives him a nick name Moishe Pipik.
Predicated on his belief that a future Muslim attack on Israel will prompt the Israelis to respond with nuclear weapons, Pipik contends that in order for Judaism to survive, all Ashkenazi Jews must return to Europe and relinquish Palestine to native Middle Easterners. The fiction, *Operation Shylock*, also concerns Roth’s interaction with George Ziad, a Palestinian friend from Roth’s college years who tries to recruit him to the Palestinian cause, and Louis B. Smilesburger, a Mossad spymaster who is trying to recruit Roth for “Operation Shylock” an Israeli intelligence scheme designed to uncover Jewish American financial backers of the Palestinian Liberation Organization [PLO]. After many unsuccessful efforts, Smilesburger eventually convinces Roth to travel to Europe to spy on Ziad and his Jewish contacts. Although Israel’s stance toward Palestinians, which Roth characterizes as combative and aggressive, is treated throughout *Operation Shylock* as damaging to the Diaspora, which is credited with producing many of Judaism’s cultural achievements, Roth’s final cooperation with Smilesburger suggests that there is a part of Roth that cannot turn away from Israel.

Critical reaction to *Operation Shylock* has been mixed. While praising Roth’s use of the Doppelganger, and his elaborate development of themes concerning his Jewish identity, Judaism, the Diaspora, and the future of Israel, many commentators argue that the fiction, *Operation Shylock*, suffers from rhetorical excess and Roth’s interest in self-presentation. Roth’s incorporation of historical events and actual people in the work and his insistence that *Operation Shylock* is autobiographical and not a piece of fiction has also puzzled critics and generated controversy. Nevertheless, John Updike has contended thus [Quoted CLC, vol. 87, 1994, p. 247]:

This Dostoyevskian Phnatasmagoria is an impressive reassertion of artistic energy, and a brave expansion of Roth’s densely overstocked
little store of concerns’ into the global marketplace. It should be read by anyone who cares about (1) Israel and its repercussions; (2) the development of the postmodern novel; (3) Philip Roth.

In 1955, Roth published his other fiction, *Sabbath's Theater*. It received mixed critical reaction. Critics often compare the fiction, *Sabbath's Theater*, to *Portnoy's Complaint*, because Roth focuses on the sexual obsessions a monomaniacal musings of a self-involved protagonist, Mickey Sabbath. As Sabbath realizes that he has lost everyone close to him, he considers ending his own life. The fiction, *Sabbath's Theater*, won the 1955 National Book Award for fiction.

Roth’s next three fictions are considered a trilogy: *American Pastoral*, *I Married a Communist*, and *The Human Stain*. *American Pastoral* chronicles the story of a Jewish man in Newark, New Jersey, whose placid, suburban life is torn apart by the violent actions of his unbalanced daughter. The novel, *American Pastoral*, received both a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize.

The novel, *American Pastoral*, recounts the life story of Seymour “Swede” Levov, as remembered by Roth’s alter ego and frequent protagonist, novelist Nathan Zuckerman. And Zuckerman learns more about the life of his schoolmate Seymour Levov, a Jewish, blonde-haired, blue-eyed, high school sports hero at their 46th reunion, through Levov’s brother, Jerry. Seymour has passed away, a startling revelation to Zuckerman.

Levov was a Newark, New Jersey neighbourhood idol, blessed with good looks and popularity. He inherited his father’s glove manufacturing business, became very successful, married an Irish Catholic girl - - Miss New Jersey of 1949 - - and purchased
a stone manor in the country. His idyllic and tranquil world is shattered when his
daughter, Merry, in conjunction with a radical group, the Weathermen, sets off a bomb
that kills a doctor in the neighbourhood post office. Merry becomes a fugitive, is raped,
destitute, and eventually involved in three other bombing deaths. She becomes a
member of the Jain, a fanatical Hindu sect with extremist ideas. She does not bathe, in
efforts to protect the water, and rarely eats, in order to preserve plant animal life. When
Seymour finds his daughter five years after her disappearance, he is shocked and
outraged; later, at his reunion, he learns that she is dead. Divided into three sections
entitled “Paradise Remembered”, “The Fall”, and “Paradise Lost”. The fiction,
American Pastoral, examines many themes. Philip Hensher writes [CLC, vol. 119,
1999, p.119]:

Like many of [Roth’s] books, it [American Pastoral] examines love, and
the rejection of love, in taking on a terrorist who rejects the love of her
family, and the love of the country which nurtured her, he has found an
ideal, satisfying subject for his recurrent obsession. . . .

Lauded for its satirical commentary on American society, the fiction, American
Pastoral, is also revered for its sensitively drawn characters, its epic qualities, and its
examination of the failures of American idealism in public life. Many commentators
have noted similarities between the fiction, American Pastoral, and the biblical story of
Job. Reviewers have concurred that Roth is a master of providing descriptive, detailed
prose, but feel that his nostalgic chronicle of American history from the 1940s to the
1970s is strained and occasionally heavy-handed. Michiko Kakutani observes [CLC,
vol. 119, 1999, p.119]:
The fiction, *American Pastoral*, is one of Mr. Roth’s most powerful novels ever, a big, rough hewn work built on a grand design, a book that is moving, generous, and ambitious as his last novel, *Sabbath Theater*, was sour, solipsistic and narrow. . . . Roth uses his sharp, reportorial eye not to satirize his characters but to flesh them out from within. . . .

Nathan Zuckerman reappears in *I Married a Communist*, this time as the narrator of a tragic story of Ira Ringgold, a radio actor whose life is ruined by his ex-wife’s charge that he was a devoted Communist. Blacklisted, he is unable to work and plots an elaborate revenge, which he is ultimately unable to exact.

Zuckerman also appears in *The Human Stain*, which relates the story of Coleman Silk, an elderly Professor at a North-eastern College who is dismissed from the position because of a politically correct witch-hunt. After the sudden death of his wife, Silk falls into an affair with a school janitor who is half his age. Eventually it is revealed that Silk has been hiding a secret that has dramatically shaped his entire life.

In Roth’s next fiction, *The Dying Animal*, he utilizes the character of David Kepesh, who originally appeared in an earlier fiction, *The Breast*. In *The Dying Animal*, Kepesh is an elderly man who, years earlier, had left his wife and son to partake in the sexual revolution. At his advanced age, he is still obsessed with women and the sexual act.

In Roth’s latest work, *The Plot Against America*, he explores what might have happened if Charles Lindbergh, the renowned aviator and anti-Semitic politician, would have been elected President in 1940 instead of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roth also
speculates on the repercussions of this very different political landscape on his Jewish family in Newark, New Jersey.

Thus, Bellow, Malamud, and Roth project themselves as the creative Jewish American artists.