CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: TRADITIONAL MODERNISTS

He had been a bad husband ... To his son and daughter he was loving but bad father. To his parents he had been an ungrateful child. To his brothers and sisters affectionate but remote (H:11).

One cannot, in the space of a life-time improvise a code of good and evil, and thus one must resort to tradition.

- Cheever

6.1.0. The novels of Bellow and Cheever are, thus, reactions against the loss of community in modern America and they prove beyond doubt that family ties bring people together in spite of their protagonists' desire for freedom. In their ultimate analyses their novels are social history which show the breakdown of familial bonds, more particularly marital relationships. Bellow and Cheever, essentially social realists, depict the day-to-day life of middle class Americans. There are daring fabulators on the American scene - novelists like Barth, Heller, Pynchon, Vonnegut, Updike - but these two are the historians of "modern" consciousness above everyone else. Unlike the modern novelists, Bellow and Cheever do not believe in the
abandonment of the traditional concern of the novel to represent social reality, the complex relation between psychological and social experience and the essential terms governing our "lived" realities. They do not criticize the conventions of everyday life, proper behaviour nor do they abandon reality altogether like the post-modernists. They emphasize communal love and togetherness thereby abandoning "alienation" which has become the central theme of the moderns and a "formal building block", a "fictional donne" for the post-modernists. In fine, they are upholders of tradition in a peculiarly modern way.

6.2.0. The age-old institution - family which has lost its significance in most of the modern and post-modern fiction, gets its due consideration in the novels of Bellow and Cheever. Their protagonists know that familial bonds, acknowledged, create the self, and that human connection is a magnetic force. They are very much aware that kinship generates love and love enfeebled or betrayed, is always capable of being strengthened, though not sustained but it is always sought for. So, what we see in their novels is that the broken family is a frequent recurrent, an established pattern. In reality, they depict a world in which the family structure is disintegrating. Yet, they do not show that the institution of family is decaying as they
believethat the family is a vital institution, capable of ministering to their protagonists' emotional and spiritual needs. They undergo a crisis before they realize that love for the family is a prelude to the love for humanity.

6.3.0. Their concern for family brings them together and it is to this subject that the present study addressed itself. So, Chapter I: "Introduction" justified the grounds for comparison between the two writers. It gave a brief review of comparative studies on Bellow and critical studies on Cheever which drew attention to the fact that Cheever is not subject to much serious scrutiny. It was proposed to analyze the operation of familial-archetypal patterns of relationships in their select novels. Delineating the similarities and differences between Bellow and Cheever, the chapter pointed out that the family is the centre of all action and it is the crucible in which the identity of their protagonists is forged. A brief account of their lives and careers was given so as to show that their narratives do derive their energies from the fevers and distempers of their own lives.

6.3.1. The "elemental conflict" that goes on between the traditional father and freedom-seeking son was analyzed in Chapter II: "Between Father and Son". It showed how Bellow and Cheever present the breakdown of this relation-
ship in their novels. The conflict is the outcome of the wide gap between the old "traditional" world of "domineering" fathers and the "decentered" modern world of the "obedient" sons. There are a great variety of fictional situations bordering on "Oedipal conflicts". Each Bellow hero reminisces his edenic childhood in Jewish ghetto where his father was a "sacred king". It was also pointed out that the Cheever hero is pitted against a living father belonging to a world of the past. The sons are unable to imbibe the traditional values that the fathers in Cheever pass on to them. There are Biblical overtones where the modern day Abrahams are possessed by a desire to kill their sons though it remains merely a desire or wish. The chapter also showed that in Cheever there are foeticidal tensions which disturb his protagonists much.

6.3.2. Chapter III: "Mother-Bound Son" discussed the mother-son relationships. It was pointed out that the delineation of this relationship is very much the outcome of the Jewish "patriarchal" outlook of Bellow and Cheever's "matriarchal" attitude. Mothers do play an important role in shaping the character of their protagonists. The chapter also showed that Cheever's ambivalence about his own mother is reflected in his portrayal of mother characters. Bellow hero loves his mother more than Cheever hero and the latter
feels that his mother's professional success resulted in his father's failure in life and profession. Bellow’s mother characters are traditional Jewish women whereas in Cheever they are prototypes of "New Woman".

6.3.3. The failure of marital relationships of their protagonists was discussed in Chapter IV: "Marital Bond-Age". Marriages quite often break up in their fiction as there is no much sharing between partners. It was pointed out that in his characterization of women, Bellow clearly belongs to "misogynistic" tradition of American fiction. Bellow dealt with the problems of men in modern American society where women have less role to play whereas in Cheever, women are given equal status and it is a woman-centred history which focusses on women as actors than women as victims. All wives in their fiction are classified into three groups _"the maternal wives", "the erotic" and "the castrators"_. Cheever women, prototypes of "New Woman", practise a sort of "domestic feminism" and the modern Jewish wife in Bellow shows some signs of rebellion. She moves away from the traditional submissive Jewish wife of Bellow’s early novels.

6.3.4. Chapter V: "Sibling Rivalry" examined one of the major themes in their fiction, the "brother-motif". More than all other relationships in their fiction the
brother theme received much attention from these two writers. The chapter pointed out that there is a clear pattern in their portrayal of sibling relationship where the protagonists are invariably younger brothers and their elder brothers are not very much family-minded like them. The younger brother reveals an enlightened spirit whereas the elder is a representative of the materialistic world. Bellow's archetypal brother is the "main chance" man, practical, making money, wanting women, and power and yet tender. In Cheever, "Sibling Rivalry" is modelled on the first "antagonistic brothers" of the Bible and the troubled-love for brother is based on myth and reality. Finally, what we see in Bellow is 'sibling revelry' whereas it is 'sibling rivalry' leading to fratricide in Cheever's novels.

6.4.0. Bellow and Cheever are upholders of tradition and familial values. They share a common interest in the question of power in relationships between men and women, sometimes growing out of their own family situation and this has been the major theme in their works. Of course, this aspect of their work has made it particularly relevant to the fifties and sixties as the whole culture focussed on this issue. Their societies are very much familialized and they uphold the ideology of familialism, in spite of the
fact that their novels are full of events which go to show that there are 'family breakdown', 'parental deprivation', 'broken homes' and 'family discord'. These are all the results of the times in which their protagonists live. Bellow and Cheever realize the importance of family as a basic unit in society and its relevance and significance in tradition and its continuity. Both in Jewish and Christian traditions, family is the centre of all action and family by means of transmission of tradition creates the link between time and eternity. And it is not surprising that these novelists attached so much importance to tradition in their work.

6.4.1. Bellow presents a Jewish philosophical view which is all pervasive in his work. It takes the form of an "ethical monotheism" which is Bible-centered. As Goldman puts it, "... his ethical monotheism becomes part of his overall presentation, and it is visible in the encompassing metaphor he employs, the kind of protagonists he delineates, and the themes with which he concerns himself" (1984:57). Bellow's works strive to establish the foundations of society by reaffirming the world's need for morality, for the return to the humanism of Judaism. Ethical and moral questions are at the core of his works. Bellow's fiction is very much influenced by Jewish and
American cultural traditions. As a result, his writings very much affirm human dignity and possibility.

6.4.2. As a Jewish writer Bellow shows a prevailing Jewish angle of perception. The ongoing cultural assimilation has been the central concern of Bellow. He presents the ambivalence with which many of his characters perceive their Jewishness. He depicts the fundamental contrast between the two opposed ways of life: the more traditional, European mode of Jewishness and the secularized "modern" existence embraced by the fully assimilated. The resulting tension is among Bellow's most obvious concerns in his novels.

6.4.3. Cheever's work partakes a long tradition of American Protestant self-criticism and is in this sense akin to that of Hawthorne, Howells, Mark Twain, Steinbeck and others. But he does not attack American Christianity itself but the distortion or violation of its tenets. He assails the abrogation of Christian values. In all his novels and short stories he celebrates the traditional values of New England Society - virtues of thrift, cleanliness, honour individualism, self-reliance, love of nature, strong family loyalties and the strenuousness of life. He bemoans the loss of these values in the modern society. Invariably, he constantly juxtaposes the past
with the present as to improve the future more profitably. All his novels are packed with religious ceremonies, rituals and festivals thereby giving the modern man a sense of continuity with tradition. Cheever says life is a familial enterprise - social enterprise - past and present are one in every man's future. Only by recovering the past can each generation of characters live in the present, the means of recovery are ceremonial. Through the celebration of tradition Cheever expresses his faith in the livability of life.

6.4.3.1. If Bellow's work is essentially Jewish, Cheever writes of the embattled W.A.S.P., the threatened species whose former cultural predominance has been endangered. Like Bellow's heroes, Cheever's also exist in a climate of adjustment, and in their own ways they confront various identity crises. The crises the protagonists encounter are caused by the breakdown of an order. Thus, Cheever addresses many of the most pressing concerns of Americans: dehumanization, the dissolution of marriage and family life, the negative effects of materialistic affluence. His perspective is that of one who has seen better days, and who pines for "good old days" of a simpler and presumably of purer America. He projects the American myth - a land where they can build a just society, in freedom and harmony
with nature. Cheever’s focus is traditionally Christian, a blending of his childhood Episcopalianism and the Biblical concentration on the moral nature of reality that we find in Hawthorne and Melville. This is infected "by the worm of moral thirst" (Bracher 1982:169).

6.5.0. Bellow rejects the category of "Jewish-American writer for himself. It is not a denial of his Jewishness, which he readily acknowledges. What he rejects is the categorization which he views as a limiting factor. He freely "admits to his growing up in an orthodox Jewish home, to Yiddish his first language, to learning Hebrew in cheder" (Fuchs 1978:37). Bellow says, "... at a most, susceptible time of my life I was wholly Jewish. That's a gift, a piece of good fortune with which one doesn't quarrel. It is one of the foundations that I draw from in my art... certainly it exists in me" (1978:37). This foundation has moulded his character, his mode of behaviour and his world view and the process is reflected in the type of art Bellow creates. He agrees that religion is a part of one's imagination - a fact of one's life. That's how he views his Jewishness.

6.5.1. Many Bellow critics agree that there is a definite influence of Bellow’s Jewishness on his writings. But most of the Jewish critics see no acceptable consensus
on the expression of Jewishness. Irving Malin says, "Bellow's view of his heritage is essentially ambivalent. He may use Jewish vision or irony - but he never confronts it... except by indirection. Often he avoids it - by masquerading it as something else" (1969:46). Allen Guttman in his study of the crisis of identity and assimilation among American Jewish writers provides plot outlines to bring out the Jewish quality of Bellow's novels (1971:178-22). Clayton rightly summarizes that "Bellow's defense of man has been made in the cultural confluence of two main streams: the Jewish experience and American experience" (1968:30). But the right analysis of Jewish experience comes from Kulshrestha, who says Jewishness for Bellow: "was a felt experience that gave his work its special start and colour, its speech rhythms, and its increasingly pronounced moral tones. It provided the esthetic context in which his particular problems and priorities as a creative artist could be understood and explained" (1978:13).

6.5.1.1. Bellow's view on this influence is somewhat ambivalent though he certainly accepts and acknowledges that experience in his life:

I have never consciously written as a Jew. I have just written as Saul Bellow. I have never attempted to make myself Jewish. I have never
tried to appeal to a community...I never wanted. I think of myself as a person of Jewish origin - American and Jewish - who has had certain experience of life, which is part Jewish. Proportions are not for me to decide. I don't know what they are: how much is mid-western. That's for others to determine with their measuring sticks. I have no sticks myself (Bellow 1978:13).

So, we can determine with his novels as measuring sticks and say that Bellow is as much influenced by his Jewishness, especially its humanism, as by American cultural tradition. His works are a commingling of the Old Jewishness and the American literary tradition, particularly Transcendentalism and Nineteenth century Naturalism. Bellow often acknowledges the influence of Naturalism of Dreiser and Dostoevsky's works and Mann's writings. He has made use of them.

6.5.1.2. Bellow's writings epitomize the moral outlook that is an integral part of Jewish world view despite the cloud of death that hovers over the Jewish people. Bellow's world view is refreshingly optimistic and not nihilistic as cherished by his contemporaries. This is what brings Cheever closer to Bellow. According to Goldman, Bellow's works "strive to reestablish the foundations of society by reaffirming the world's need for morality, for the return to the humanism of Judaism"
Bellow's works are, to some extent, polemical tracts that follow certain definitive axial lines of Jewish thought especially in the presentation of God, man, and the Universe.

6.5.1.3. The characters Bellow creates are imbued with his ethical optimism. His protagonists are intellectuals (especially Herzog, Humbold, Corde), sufferers (Asa, Tommy, Herzog), strugglers, survivors and believers. They are all humanists: all are concerned with dignity, humanity and community. Bellow writes in the manner of an Old Testament prophet for he is essentially a religious person and literature for him "is a way of coming closer to God" (Lamont 1974:258). Throughout his works, which comprise his "song of songs", Bellow's humanistic tones reflect the anthropocentric concerns of heritage. Herzog is Bellow's finest expression of ethical monotheism (Goldman 1984:62).

6.5.1.4. Although Bellow's ethical monotheism is devoid of all Jewish ritual on the part of the protagonists, it remains in their memory and relates to another generation. Bellow's characters do not speculate about God except for Herzog-nor attempt to prove his existence. That "He is master of the universe is given - just as in the Jewishness of the Jewish protagonists" (Fuchs 1978:37). Bellow writes "I think the Jewish feeling resists romanticism and insists
on an older set of facts" (1964:38). And this older set of facts has served as a basis for Bellow's affirmation of the value and dignity of man. Clayton points out, "At the centre of Jewish culture and Jewish fiction is moral concern for man " (1968:35).

6.5.1.5. This moral concern drives every Bellow hero to think of goodness and this open concern with goodness pervades Bellow's works. Joseph thinks that he has one talent and that talent is for goodness; Asa learns in due course what goodness means and Tommy always longs to be good. All Bellow's heroes share this goodness of heart and an openness to others. The Jew's moral concern for others is related to the Jew's belief in community. Though a Jew is an archetype of "alienatee", he is also very much a product of an ingrown community. In the philosophy of Judaism, life is viewed "as a network of community" (Wiesel 1978:7) whereby the present is bound to the past. In this network of community the role of family is paramount as it creates the link between time and eternity. Family is the centre of all action and so it is of great importance to all the protagonists of Bellow though many of them belong to a fractured nuclear family. The importance of family in Bellow is rightly stressed by Clayton, when he says, "The strong family ties and the sense of community are
responsible for the fact that Jews of Bellow's generation may despair, may be filled with childhood guilt, but they are not hollow men isolated from one another like Beckett's Unnamable" (1988:36).

6.5.1.6. Bellow's fiction is very much influenced by the American cultural tradition which is a product of eighteenth century enlightenment humanism and nineteenth century romanticism and it is also parallel to Jewish cultural tradition. The very spirit of American literary tradition is the spirit of the individual. It stresses the individual's significance, freedom and human dignity. This defense of human dignity is peculiarly American though much of American literature talks about negation, yet it affirms human dignity. Bellow wishes to defend the spirit of the individual. American fiction believes in the significance of the individual, his return to society and affirmation of human possibilities. Marcus Klein's book After Alienation (1964) has shown how contemporary American literature swings between the poles of alienation and accommodation. The hero fears of losing his identity yet longs for a union of self and society. The outsider wants to be assimilated into the community. Bellow's heroes always long for community and assimilation into the society. Bellow, like his great predecessor, Whitman,
wants to sing of the dynamic non-conforming individual and of the union of such individuals into a community of love. Bellow is part of this great American tradition and his work has created magnificent individualists.

6.5.1.7. The Modern artist-hero seeks isolation, but the Bellow Protagonist longs for community. The artist-hero is nowhere present in Bellow and he is replaced by citizen hero. Daniel Fuchs says "the aesthetic gives over to the ethical, the artist to the thinkers-one may even say, the beautiful (in the French sense of "le beau") to the good. Indifferent to myth, Bellow brings us into the wilderness of current history, the citizens arena" (1992:9). All these go to show that Bellow is anti-modern and differs from all his contemporaries. The most common characteristic features of modernism such as alienation, fragmentation, break with tradition, isolation and magnification of subjectivity, threat of the void and hatred of civilization itself are to a large extent absent in Bellow's work thereby earning the label "traditionalist". "Bellow resists absorption by them and repudiates the orthodoxy of 'experimentation' which derives from these characteristics of the modernist aesthetic. Above all, he tries to dramatize states of emotion and
consciousness that prove there is more to life than the aesthetic assumes" (Fuchs 1992:10).

6.6.0. Just as Bellow employs a Jewish framework as a reference for his work, Cheever, too works with a specific and highly personal cultural context. As a chronicler of Protestant suburban middle class, Cheever has attracted little of controversy that surrounds, Bellow, because he is free from the problematic demands of group solidarity that burdens a minority writer. As a member of W.A.S.P majority, Cheever is at liberty to attack the status quo without incurring hostility. He suggests that the breakdown of religious belief has caused a malaise, and the acceptance of the "death of God" has caused many of the problems. Cheever's novels and stories portray confused, questing, unfulfilled characters devoid of the spiritual values that sustained earlier generations. This explains Cheever's professed and obvious liking for juxtaposing images of the present with evocations of the American past.

6.6.1. Cheever has remained traditional both in his conception of novel and treatment of themes. He celebrates tradition and continuity at a time when it is dissipating. He has not deviated much from the traditional novel though he is quite aware of the experiments in novel writing undertaken by his contemporaries. Cheever explains very
clearly why he has resorted to tradition. He writes in his Journal, "one cannot, in the space of a life time, improvise a code of good and evil, and thus one must resort to tradition" (1991:370).

6.6.1.1. Cheever's vision of life is rooted in his religion, just as Bellow's is influenced by his Jewishness and ethical monotheism of Judaism. Cheever has a strong faith in Christianity. He describes himself as "a liturgical church goer". He says that religious experience is the legitimate concern of any adult who has experienced love. His approach, like that of Bellow, is affirmative, "For him life is an affirmative activity and not prison sentence" (Rupp 1970:20). His novels consist of celebrations of rituals, both social and religious, glorification of New England landscape and expeditions in the wilderness with all its primitive joys—fishing, skating and sea faring adventures. His characters both young and old long for the traditional New England life. All his novels are located in New England, particularly in small towns like St Botolephs, Sheddy Hill and Bullet Park. Although the action in all his novels takes place after the War, all the characters reach back to the times of old New England.

6.6.1.2. At the same time Cheever's New England is not real New England. In his first two novels the myth of
American Eden is embodied in the life on "West Farm", the hereditary domain of the Wapshot family and in St. Botolphs, an imaginary little town in Massachusetts, New England. In Cheever's novels and stories, the Eden myth intrudes via the characters' reminiscences of the New England youth which they all have in common. Cheever's fictional world rests on the confrontation and victory of technology over nature. The idyllic naturalness of St. Botolphs and of West Farm forms a sharp contrast with the artificial hell of New York's dormitory towns. Cheever's protagonists move between these two worlds: the mythical paradise and a far more concrete hell. The confrontation and victory of technology in Cheever's fiction is very well analyzed by Francis J. Bosha who says:

Cheever began with a myth—that of the middle class Manhattanist, an educated cultivated immigrant from a more stable American setting (a small town like St. Botolphs). Cheever then moved forward and backward: he traced his man back to an old but moribund New England origin, and brought him forward, first to the illusory bourgeois paradise of the suburbs then to the richer but blacker culture of Proximore Manor and Bullet Park, where empty ceremony hides the inevitable solitude of each individual (Bosha 1981:5).

Hence, his novels span from St. Botolphs, Massachusetts, at the turn of the last century, to the anonymous mad
streets beyond Falconer prison, when guilty twentieth
century man starts over again.

6.6.1.3. Cheever is a novelist who has utmost regard and
concern for tradition. He is a person who strongly
believes that a retrospective view of the past may give us
wisdom to govern and improve the future more profitably.
His first two novels, *The Wapshot Chronicle* and *The Wapshot
Scandal* celebrate life. The chief characters in these two
novels are caught in between tradition and modernity and
this is the pattern in all his novels. He seems to say
that man who adapts himself to the modern situation,
understanding the past will survive both physically and
spiritually. One good example is that of the character of
Coverly in *The Wapshot Chronicle*, who doesn't show much
promise at the start but he survives. This is what makes
him akin to a Bellow hero, who is a great 'survivor'. The
characters of Cheever are caught in a too rapidly changing
world where the traditional values by which they wish to
live are no longer operable.

6.6.1.4. In *The Wapshot Chronicle* and *The Wapshot
Scandal* Cheever traces the Wapshots back to Norman
conquests and depicts the history of the family and the
town of St. Botolphs for two hundred years preceding the
mid-twentieth-century events of the novel. The novels
centre not only around Moses and Coverly and on their initiation into life but also on St. Botolphs and its history, its people and its ways. "It was an old place, an old river town" (TWC, 3). As Waldeband says, the major characters, especially Leander, are:

Portrayed realistically and the same time invested with mythic stature... Moses and Coverly are simultaneously ordinary young men involved with work and women and archetypes of the initiate entering the world of experience" (1979:45).

6.6.1.5. Leander, a descendant of an Old New England family is a mythic figure most like a sea-god. Waldeband says, "Cheever makes use of mythic analogues through out his fiction, pointing out in one interview that the easiest way to parse the world is through mythology" (1979:45). He makes use of archetypal situations or general mythical parallels as echoes. We have a direct reference to Icarus on one occasion when Leander feels that his son, Coverly, is falling short of his expectations of him; he feels "Icarus! Icarus! - as if the boy had fallen some great distance from his father's heart" (TWC, 53). The way Cheever treats the death of Leander is another example of how, he invokes myth. He wades into the sea, begins to swim and he is not seen again. The mysterious death and the unrecovered body makes Frederick Bracher observe "like
6.6.1.6. The Wapshot Chronicle reverberates with echoes of the past and traditions which have informed the life of Leander and crucial events of his sons' initiation into adulthood. Tradition is augmented with legendary and mysterious qualities so as to win the reader's consideration. Leander has no respect for meaningless rituals of religion and life. He believes in living his life in all its crude form. He is nature's child, a man given to outdoor life. He wants his sons to "grasp that the unobserved ceremoniousness of his life was gesture or sacrament toward the excellence and continuousness of things" (TWC, 53). He hopes his sons will carry on his sport of skating. As a step towards his sons' initiation into life, he teaches them how "to fell trees, catch a fish, save money, dress a chicken, clear a gun, sail a boat etc" (TWC, 53). He is a master teacher of his two sons. The important thing is that both sons operate within the ceremonial context.

6.6.2. The Wapshot novels show the widening gap between the traditional small town, St. Botolphs and the changing contemporary world where the young Wapshot boys
seek their destiny. This widening gap and lack of continuity between contemporary world and past bewilder Coverly and he struggles with a hope "to create or build some kind of bridge between Leander's world and that world where he sought his fortune" (TWC: 117). The contemporary life with all its speed and tension appall Cheever. Coverly's wife, Betsey, is a lost soul in the new atmosphere of Remson Park, a rocket-launching station. She remains a stranger as she "comes from a small town... where everybody's neighbours" (TWC: 31). She tries her best to establish contact with her neighbours but she thoroughly fails as they never respond to her sense of community. She wants to be a part of community but there is no community in the world of rockets and nuclear energy. She goes away to her sister's place for sometime to escape from this madness of modern age.

6.6.2.1. *The Wapshot Chronicle* dwells at length on the natural ceremonies of a coherent, traditional past. The style of the novel recalls them in order to reveal their value. In *The Wapshot Scandal* Cheever presents the conflict of past and present and reveals an important paradox: in a time of highly organized social effort, the individual is more isolated than ever. In order to live, he must find significant ceremonies. In this way Mr.
Applegate's Christian prayer is significant, and so also is Coverly's Christmas dinner. The Wapshot Chronicle abounds in ceremony. The novel begins with Fourth of July parade, continues with a biblical genealogy of Wapshots from Ezekiel who arrived on the "Arabella" in 1630 to Leander, who begat Coverly and Moses. The novel moves through a series of ceremonies, each designed to reinforce the bond between a man and his past. The last of them is Leander's funeral. The ceremony comes to an end with Coverly reciting Prospero's farewell to art. In between we have assorted ceremonies such as Honora's odyssey to town, Leander's spring fishing trip, Moses, and Coverly's ritual leave-taking, Moses's ceremonial nocturnal adventures in an eighteenth century castle with his beloved. Above all, we have the ceremonial chronicling of life in Leander's journal.

6.6.2.2. Cheever is neither a nostalgic traditionalist nor a naturalistic determinist as "he is thoroughly aware that man can not return to or repeat the past, especially an imaginary past, however tempting escape it may seem" (Burhans 1969:120). Cheever's complex concern with past is combined with a profound insight into contemporary human condition. Leander is the complex character whose concern with past and tradition makes him to pass on a sense of
tradition and ceremony to his sons. Coverly consciously tries to receive and retain the sense of tradition and continuity. And the use of the archetypal situation of young men leaving home makes good sense in the novel. In this sense these two novels fall under the category of "Bildungsroman".

6.6.3. Bellow, as Earl Rovit puts it, tried to resist a sentimental nostalgia for the unrecoverable values of the earlier age; at the same time, he has insisted intently that new is not necessarily good just because it is new, nor it is better than what may be left of the old. Bellow's is fundamentally an uncomfortable middle of the road position (1975:3). This is equally true of Cheever though he is not that controversial as Bellow and may be a lesser artist. But his approach to tradition and modernity is akin to Bellow's attitude. Cheever juxtaposes the traditional and the modern to say that a retrospective view of the past and tradition may give us some strength and wisdom to govern and improve the future more profitably. But the fact remains that both the novelists have realized the significance of tradition in the lives of their characters and they have given us significant novels which deal with this complex problem.
6.7.0. They are at once traditional and modern. Set against the interrupted structures of Pynchon and Barth and other post-modernist writers, where the readers' natural search for narrative hold is deliberately frustrated, the works of Bellow and Cheever seem definitely invite the label "traditional". Both have the traditional sense of human nature and its continuance in time and experience. Though they are writers belonging to different cultural heritages, they share a common interest - a great skill at examining various conflicts that can exist within a family which is a very important link between time and eternity. Both are able to see the "metaphysical tensions" at home. They share a kind of concern for the family unit, something to be preserved or something to be shattered. Despite obvious differences of technique and tone, these two novelists do display a certain unanimity of concern for family relationships. And this concern formed the main argument of this thesis.

6.7.1. Clayton says that the story in Bellow's fiction begins in a "ghetto-Eden" where Jewish character of the setting is important but not essential. So we have suffering and family love. The boy worships or fears his loving but punishing father, while he is given love and shelter by his gentle mother. And we also have brothers and
sisters, an older aunt or grandmother (1968:233). But in this patriarchal society daughters are given only secondary place as they are considered less important. We find Bellow hero clinging to his family and this attachment to the family helps him to overcome his anxiety later. The family may disintegrate as it moves out of the "ghetto-Eden" or by death or departure of its members to outside world but the hero's story is one of reintegration into the loving family group on a larger scale: a return to Eden. In spite of all family break-ups, tensions, divorces, separations, the protagonists remain "family minded" people. There is definitely a discord in their lives but they accept the obligation of marriage and fatherhood as they worry about their children. They make unsuccessful attempts to understand and improve their relationships with their wives. But they evade attachment to even their most intimate relatives. This may be because of the point of view adopted by Bellow which ultimately isolates the heroes as though they were genuine solitaries.

6.7.2. It is no wonder Joseph in Dangling Man spends waiting to be inducted into army while his wife Iva earns the bread. Augie wanders all over the world moving away from people and places. Tommy is legally separated from his wife and children. Henderson goes off to Africa leaving his
family behind. Herzog reminisces on the past in his bachelor apartment. But all the while they ruminate about their fathers, mothers, wives, brothers, sisters and children. When he desires contact or aid, the family comes in actual existence. Generally, family obligations may not exert real demand on the heroes. Yet they remain "family minded" people. With this story of family as a frame-work individual novels are studied to explicate that Bellow hero is still a family man in spite of so many tensions and conflicts he faces. Rovit says "the sense of family is one of the most urgent possessions in the life of Bellow hero" (1967:10).

6.7.3. Cheever upholds tradition and his approach to life is joyful and affirmative. His novels abound in ceremony and project a sense of the self and of human values that are not only traditional but historical: honour, self-reliance, individualism, strong family loyalties and the strenuous life. He believes that life is a familial and social enterprise. Past and present are one in every man's future. Ceremonies are means of recovering the past and a new generation can live in the present only by recovering the past. Continuousness of the things depends on ceremoniousness of life. And so Rupp observes, "Cheever evokes a richer life fully felt. For him life is
an affirmative act and not a prison sentence" (1977:20). Hence, it is not surprising that he attaches so much importance to family and human relationships in his novels. All of them celebrate marriage and family relationships as family is a link between time and eternity.

6.7.4. Cheever's treatment of marriage and family has mythical, especially Biblical, and autobiographical overtones. There is a strong Christian base for his concept of family which is Bible centred with various units such as the "strong patriarch", "loving mother" and "obedient son". Surprisingly enough, as in Bellow, Cheever's novels are also not much concerned with 'daughters' of the family. In fact, in Cheever we do rarely have a daughter character who is worth noticing. Mrs Sarah Wapshot in The Whapshot Chronicle longs for a daughter.

6.8.0. The societies of Bellow and Cheever are patriarchal ones where sons have much role to play and less importance is given to daughters. But we do find some strong feminists in their novels too, such as Madeleine in Herzog and Melissa in The Wapshot Chronicle and to some extent Sarah Wapshot in the same novel practising a sort of "domestic feminism". The patriarchal societies develop some cracks and in due course of time they might even collapse, as it happens in Cheever's second novel The Wapshot Scandal.
where women are given more importance than men. Bellow’s *The Dean’s December* is a surprising departure from the failure of relationships in the earlier novels. Minna is an independent professional woman and there is a community of women in the novel. Bellow now believes in the possibility of love and harmony between marriage partners. But once again we see Bellow’s misogynistic attitude in *More Die of Heartbreak* which Kazin describes as "a work fired by misogyny" (1987:3). Bellow has built a world of women, mostly viewed by men. Yet, this famously "Jewish" novelist has made a woman, Clara, with some of the qualities of Bellow’s earlier women, the protagonist of his novelette *A Theft*. Bellow’s own opinion on his approach to women clearly explains his stand. He says, "I don’t fuss about gender. And I am always grateful, whatever the source. But this notion of having to carve out a province for yourself on the literary map and label it seems to be a mistake... The gender question, as such, leaves me cold" (1995:106-07). On the whole, women do have a part to play in his fiction, but they are instruments in a man’s quest for identity.

6.8.1. Thus, the novels of Bellow and Cheever present familial relationships which are archetypal-familial patterns that have received literary perceptions from age to
age. So, we perceive the image of the father based on the archetypal patriarchs - Abraham, Ezekiel and Moses. The fathers in Bellow and Cheever are traditional "domineering" men who lay down the law and watch over their order. The mother characters are modelled on the traditional role that of a loving, over-protective, all engulfing nurturer. So, the Bellow hero sees his mother as "the bringer of life", "the source of pleasure and comfort". For Cheever hero, she is a giver of pain and death and he learns that she took away pleasure and he blames her for denying satisfaction. For Bellow hero, his mother is Mary whereas for Cheever hero, she is Eve. The brother-brother relationship is modelled on the first "antagonistic brothers" - Cain and Abel - leading to "sibling revelry" in Bellow and "sibling rivalry", filled with fratricidal tensions in Cheever. Bellow and Cheever present an array of fascinating women responding in different ways to cultures that alternately exalt and oppress. So, we see women in various "avatars" - the traditional "submissive" wife; "domineering" wife based on the concept of emancipated "New Woman", a further development of archetypal Xantippe and Mrs.Noah particularly in their later novels. We see the submissive wife, happy to be supportive and "to stay in her place", who is the ideal. And the "domineering" wife is ridiculed or hated because the modern women are all considered as
"bitches" or "castrators" who interfere with or deny men's search for identity

6.9.0. Poly-generic writings and their cultural aspects of Bellow and Cheever provide much scope for further research. Full length comparative studies of Bellow with the Continental writers like Conrad, Dostoevsky, Kafka, and Satre can be taken up for further research. The short stories of Cheever and Chekhov, Bellow and Cheever as short-story writers, non-fiction of Bellow and Cheever, Bellow's plays, 'Fact'-fiction of Bellow and Mailer, Familial relationships in Bellow and Roth, Tradition and modernity in Cheever are some other areas which could be explored in future studies. To sum up, the "Oeuvres" of Bellow and Cheever convey multifacetedness of their personalities as writers, whose one aspect, that is, the "familial-archetypal patterns of relationships" was taken up for study, the rest needs further research.

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