

# **The Hidden Jewish Impulse In Saul Bellow Identity Groundbreaking His Novels The Dangling Man And Herzog**

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## **Abstract:**

This Article Thoroughly Examines The Seminal Influence Exerted By Saul Bellow, One Of The Titans Of 20th-Century American Literature, On Jewish-American Literature In General And On His Novel The Dangling Man In Particular. This Deeply Introspective Writer's Works Are Replete With Rich Cultural Content That Has Indeed Influenced The Saga Of Jewish Bellow, Who Was Born To Russian Jewish Immigrants And Raised In Chicago. His Background Deeply Influences His Distinctive Point Of View; It Blends A Philosophical Depth With Realistic Detail. His First Novel, "The Dangling Man," Foreshadows His Exploration Of Jewish Themes. An Existential Angst And A Search For Identity Are Characteristic Of The Experience Of Many In Today's Diaspora. The Article Explores How Bellow's Personal Life And Jewishness Shaped His Literary Style, Especially Regarding The Characterization And Construction Of Stories, Which Have Made An Indelible Mark On The Field Of Jewish-American Literature And The Larger American Literary Tradition.

**Keywords:** Jewish Themes, Seminal Influence, Saga, Titans, Literature

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## 1. Introduction

A star in 20th-century American literature, Saul Bellow is considered a transitional figure; his works are an intimate examination of the human experience within the context of Jewish-American life. His childhood provided him with a rich cultural and historical tapestry against which he developed as a writer (Austerlitz, 2022, p. 2). During his literary career, he has displayed a remarkable depth of psychological insight and a unique style that combines philosophical reflection with stark realism. His novels (including works such as the celebrated *Herzog*, *Humboldt's Gift*, and *The Adventures of Augie March*) have won many awards for Bellow. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1976. His Jewish background is not a biographical detail alone but an ingredient that runs throughout his writing to create a unique viewpoint on questions of identity and alienation in today's world. His characters are often reflective intellectuals caught between the familiar and alien worlds of Jewish-American identity (Austerlitz, 2022, p. 9). His narrating voice is noted for its sincerity and richness. He reveals the subtleties of Jewish life in America, from a critical perspective to a powerful higher commentary.

Bellow's first novel, *The Dangling Man*, has a special place in his work and was the start of an ongoing investigation into the tangled realities of Jewish-American existence. The novel was published in 1944 amid the strife of World War II (Narasaki, 1991, p. 39). It presents readers with seeking into and exploring the existential world, Joseph's universe (a slice of life during wartime). Though less well-

known than some of his later works, this novel is crucial for understanding Bellow's writing development and how he handled Jewish-American themes. "The Dangling Man" foreshadows the more complex characters and themes Bellow would introduce into his subsequent novels. Existence, alienation, and the process of seeking meaning are explored in the book experiences, which particularly resonate with Jewish culture, not least at this time when storm clouds were gathering (Narasaki, 1991, p. 42). Joseph's quest to find a place in this changing world reflects the more general existential questions confronting American Jewry. With this novel, Bellow begins the complex pattern of Jewish life in America, which he continues to develop throughout his career. Revealing the individual's lonely search for identity amidst bigger historical forces contributing to any history of Jewish-American literature

## **2. Saul Bellow's Jewish Identity complexities**

Bellow grew up steeped in the rich traditions and the complexities of Jewish culture. The third of four sons, Bellow grew up feeling culturally double between his parents' traditional Jewish world and North America's expanding modernity (Sukehera, 2017, p. 3689). This bifurcation greatly impacted his worldview and, in turn, affected the nature of his literary voice. When he was nine, Bellow's family moved to Chicago. Later, his writings would come to centre around that city. A melting pot of the early and mid-twentieth century, Chicago's large Jewish population provided ample room for Bellow to explore his conceptions of being a Jew in America without regard for larger American stories (Sukehera, 2017, p. 3689). Exposure at an

early age to Hebrew writers and a Yiddish-speaking home fulfilled him with a taste for storytelling and examining identity. Such influences are apparent in *The Dangling Man*, where Bellow explores the psychological territory of a man in crisis. In many ways, this does reflect the cultural and spiritual discord that set him a drift as a young person.

In *The Dangling Man*, Bellow constructs a novel that reflects the Jewish existential. Joseph, the protagonist, reflects an existential crisis -- a common theme in Bellow's works dealing with his Jewish upbringing. Joseph's inner turmoil reflects the dispersal and cultural fracturing the Jewish people suffered (Narasaki, 1991, p. 39). Through Joseph's inward journey, Bellow traces themes of isolation and moral responsibility, fundamental to Jewish literature and Judaic philosophy. The story is punctuated with longing and uncertainty, typical of the Jewish diasporic experience. Yet the prose style of Bellow's novel is analytical and reflective, approximating traditional Jewish scholarly works which stress deep intellectual and spiritual inquiry. This technique reveals something of Bellow's intellectual background and links up with a larger strand in Jewish literary tradition, employing the story as a means of pondering challenging religious and cultural predicaments.

Bellow's involvement with Jewish intellectual traditions was profoundly important for his oeuvre. Bellow's narrative style and technique in depicting his characters reflect the Jewish tradition of debate, introspection, and moral questioning (Narasaki, 1991, p. 40). Bellow is well-read on Jewish religious texts and philosophical

speculations, which are mirrored in the existential questions faced by his characters. Joseph's internal monologues in 'The Dangling Man' are based on Talmudic dialectics, where questions and analyses help you understand yourself and the world around you. Furthermore, Bellow writes much about the moral and ethical problems at the heart of Jewish thinking (Narasaki, 1991, p. 40). His characters often make a moral balance sheet of their conduct and choices, such as the Christian tradition 'Cheshbon Hanefesh' (accounting for your soul). This self-assessing analysis is not only used as a literary device but also mirrors Bellow's thinking about his Jewish identity and the significance of this in our contemporary world.

The Dangling Man is a classic that describes the Jewish-American condition. His importance to Jewish American literature is an epic one. In incorporating his Jewish identity into literary creation, Saul Bellow further opened up directions of inquiry about American literature and the reality of being a Jew (Narasaki, 1991, p. 42). Jewish characters and themes in his works did not fall into the stereotypes, but rather were painted much more realistically and multi-layered a picture of life as a Jew in America. With his work successfully appealing to a large audience, Bellow's Jewish-American narratives became integral to the American literary landscape. In 'The Dangling Man' and his later works, Bellow did not just tell the tale of the Jewish-American experience (Narasaki, 1991, p. 44). He expanded it, interlacing this existential angst over life without point or purpose--the trials of all human beings away from God--with the story (Narasaki, 1991, p. 58). This combination of the specific and general made Bellow a panjandrum in Jewish-American letters but an important

literary figure outside that community. His writing still challenges new generations of writers to find their place in the American quilt.

## **2.1 Jewish themes in *Dangling Man* and *Herzog* novels**

In his novels *Herzog* and *The Dangling Man*, Saul Bellow creates two palpable Jewish figures--Moses Herzog and Joseph--with very different world perspectives. Herzog is a man who has sunk to the depths in both personal crises and intellectual pursuits, whereas Joseph from "The Dangling Man" only exists as an anonymous person stuck in limbo during World War II waiting for his draft (Trepanier, 2012, p. 58). These characters, at first sight so different in their experiences and attitudes, after closer examination, share similarities which resonate echoes of Bellow's exploration into the essence of Jewishness complexities. Both characters are portrayed as introspective people trying to establish a place in a world that seems more and more alien (Trepanier, 2012, p. 58). Despite different circumstances, their trips are encouraged with a search for identity, meaning and belonging. This comparative study sets out to uncover the subtleties of these characters, examining how their inner turmoil and questioning about existence mirror larger themes involving Jewish identity and experience in Bellow's novels.

Characters such as Herzog and Joseph experience major personal crises that force them into deep reflection. Herzog's crises, after all, mainly result from his lousy relationships and professional stagnation (Teranishi, 2007, pp. 20-36). He uses writing unsent letters as an outlet to ease the pain and a way of understanding things. In contrast, Joseph has a different crisis when called for the draft. The

waiting turns into an existential fear that paralyzes him in introspection (Trepanier, 2012, p. 52). Differences though they may be, these two main characters show a strong tendency toward the intellectual. They are always asking philosophical and existential questions. Both Joseph and Herzog suffer from psychoses, but their forms are expressed rather differently. One's intellectualism is overt; his letters often bring up highbrow philosophical subjects (Trepanier, 2012, p. 54). The other's is more implicit--in fact, he has a constant internal monologue in which he reflects on his condition and affairs of the world in general. This intellectual quest, which runs through all Jewish literature, evidences that Bellow is more interested in characters who aren't just helpless victims of their circumstances but wrestle with greater existential questions.

One of the most important similarities between Herzog and Joseph is their profound feeling of alienation, which leads to a frantic hunt for identity. Alienation is a consequence of Herzog's inability to bridge the gap between his ideals and actual life practice (Teranishi, 2007, p. 36). Hence, he is alienated from those around him. At the same time, Joseph is alienated in an existential sense; his limbo waiting in the draft leads to a drifting life (Trepanier, 2012, p. 52). Nevertheless, this sense of being an outsider, of not quite belonging, is repeated throughout Jewish-American literature. It reflects both the historical and cultural dissociation suffered by the dispersal of the Jews (Trepanier, 2012, p. 56). Their stories can be compared to quests for Jewish identity in contemporary society, frequently at odds with old values and beliefs. With these characters, Bellow ponders how such a quest for identity is not simply a private affair but borrowed

from the larger narrative of Jewish attempts to make themselves home in a changing world. Though Moses Herzog and Joseph are both distinct characters in their own right, they shed light on Saul Bellow's examination of Jewish identity. Through their personal crises and existential anguish, the characters of both men bring to life different sides of the Jewish-American experience (Teranishi, 2007, p. 29). With his chaotic personal life and intellectually escapist approach, Herzog, with existential dread and introspective nature, and Joseph, between them, embody the elusiveness of Jewish identity that Bellow depicts. These characters are not merely personalities. They represent the overall experience of Jews trying to live and thrive in a world often fraught between tradition and modernity, at odds with personal desire and societal expectations (Trepanier, 2012, p. 57). Bellow uses these characters to express the subtleties of Jewish life in America, where there remains a constant tension between identity and belonging. This analysis sums up Bellow's contribution to the corpus of Jewish-American literature, proving that he could create characters who are realistic in themselves and expressive of a wide range of common experiences shared by all Jews.

As an observer of the impact of the Jewish themes and the philosophical legacy characterized by Moses Herzog, the protagonist in Saul Bellow's novel "Herzog," is a character of profound complexity and depth. Herzog, a middle-aged man grappling with the failures of his personal and professional life, is portrayed with a rich tapestry of endearing and frustrating traits (Teranishi, 2007, p. 23). He is intellectual and introspective, often lost in his thoughts and letters that he writes to friends, family, and even famous figures, though he

never sends them. This habit of writing unsent letters is a window into Herzog's psyche, revealing his constant search for understanding and meaning in his chaotic life. His intellectualism, a trait often associated with Jewish characters in literature, manifests not just in scholarly pursuits but in his ceaseless questioning of life's moral and existential dilemmas (Teranishi, 2007, p. 26). Herzog's introspection, however, often borders on self-absorption, a trait that contributes to his many personal failings. His complexity reflects Bellow's multifaceted Jewish identity, embodying the struggles, intellectualism, and emotional depth that often characterize the Jewish literary tradition.

The novel's depictions of Herzog's home life are a compilation of success and tragedy, reflecting how the Jewish experience itself has involved both triumph over adversity. He is a man who has come to know the peaks of academic fame and the depths of personal failure, especially when it comes to marriage (Teranishi, 2007, p. 22). These life settings represent a larger theme in Jewish literature: the search for equilibrium and significance within a world of flux. Further Teranishi (2007) suggest that Herzog's crashed marriages, most of all with Madeleine, are not just personal disasters but wider symptoms of a clash between his intellectual ideals and human realities. This tension can be seen as a metaphor for the Jewish diasporic experience marked by negotiation between holding on to one's identity and adapting to new surroundings. What's more, Herzog and his daughter June touch on intergenerational friction and the desire to transmit our culture (Teranishi, 2007, p. 27). That certainly is a major aspect of Jewish identity. Despite his failings, His deep attachment to responsibility for

his daughter is important in expressing the sense of family underpinning Jewish cultural transmission.

Herzog's odyssey in the novel is one of self-discovery and definition, a quest directly related to his Jewishness. You can see in the way he searches for meaning in a post-war world how many Jews felt an apocalyptic existential crisis in the age of the Holocaust, trying to find their place amid great changes (Teranishi, 2007, p. 31). Herzog's intellectual pursuits, his obsession with finding answers to life's big questions, and his eventual realization of the limitations of intellectualism in providing solace or happiness are reflective of the Jewish intellectual tradition. This tradition, steeped in a history of seeking knowledge and understanding to navigate life's complexities, is central to Herzog's character (Teranishi, 2007, p. 33). His eventual turn towards a more reflective and emotionally grounded understanding of himself and his relationships signifies a reconciliation of his intellectual pursuits with the emotional realities of life – a balance often sought in Jewish thought.

### **3. Historical impulse Context.**

Saul Bellow's *The Dangling Man* was written in the early 1940s against the turbulent backdrop of American and international history. The turmoil and uncertainty of World War II was the defining feature of this era (Donoghue, 1964, pp. 174-187). For the Jewish American community, this period was especially notable since it came as growing awareness about the Holocaust and its devastating effect on European Jewry gradually emerged. Bellow's injection of existential anxiety and moral questioning into his novel "The

"Dangling Man" is easily understood in such a mood (Donoghue, 1964, p. 178). One of the novel's main characters is Joseph, who symbolizes a sense of rootlessness and spiritual crisis that many people- especially many in the Jewish community- were feeling at the time. The novel's historical background is important in grasping the psychology of its characters, especially in their quest for identity and meaning, lost amidst a world that seemed to be on the verge of moral decay (Donoghue, 1964, p. 177). Though the war is an ever-present but invisible force in the novel, it does provide a context for seeking into larger themes like personal responsibility, civilization's precariousness and mankind's quest for moral footholds amidst chaos. When "The Dangling Man" was written, the Jewish American community was undergoing a transformation crisis. This awareness produced a feeling of collective trauma and spiritual outrage within the Jewish community (Donoghue, 1964, p. 176). For Jews in the United States, that period was not just about dealing with their brethren's agonies across the water but also defining their identity and role in American society. The war forced the Jewish American community to face the conflict between its identity as Americans and its links with Europe, both cultural and historical (Donoghue, 1964, p. 176). That hybrid self is embodied in the novel's main character, who must struggle on a personal level and with the greater existential questions raised by the war. In this way, the novel reflects the Jewish experience of that period- a frantic effort to understand an unheralded human disaster and its bearing on Jewish identity and survival. World War II and the displacement it caused had a shattering impact on Jewish identity, both in Europe and America. The war also brought about an existential

displacement of millions of Jews. The war left many Jewish Americans with a greater feeling of vulnerability and caused them to reconsider their place in the world (Donoghue, 1964, p. 181). The dangling sensation that emerges in Bellow's novel reflects the reality of being Jewish during this period, suspended between a vanished past and an uncertain future, between hope and despair. Joseph's self-doubt and ruminations about the nature of people's existence perfectly encapsulated this liminality for many Jewish Americans (Donoghue, 1964, p. 181). On top of that, the war created a greater sense of solidarity among Jewish people in America. They were fighting for their fellow Jews on the other side of the ocean, and they were demanding respect and rights for themselves here at home (Donoghue, 1964, p. 175). The atrocities they saw during this time were a turning point in Jewish American history. From then, Jews became more active in speaking out for justice and human rights.

In *The Dangling Man*, Saul Bellow describes an individual's life and reflects the spirit of an age. The novel reflects its age, addressing the fears, moral doubts and worries about whether it was all worthwhile that people felt around the time of publication (Donoghue, 1964, p. 175). Through his sensitive rendering of Joseph and his misfortunes, Bellow offers us a peek into the heart of one generation trying to get its footing against a backdrop of tremendous social change. The novel's historical background is necessary to understand its themes and characters (Donoghue, 1964, p. 186). Not merely a background but an element of the backdrop that influences the story and its theme. In this way, Bellow's work becomes an important literary record of the Jewish American experience in a

crucial historical moment. With its themes of identity, morality and existential anxiety, the novel retains a contemporary appeal as it reflects our inner responses to an age of uncertainty.

### **3.1. Literary Techniques and Jewish motives**

Saul Bellow's technique of combining literary styles with the cultural and philosophical aspects of Judaism represents his style. Bellow employs various techniques to embed Jewish themes unobtrusively in his novels, including *The Dangling Man* and *Herzog*. So-called philosophical dialogue (deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition of asking questions) was one of his most effective tools (Teranishi, 2007, p. 36). This reflects the Jewish scholarly tradition, and Bellow's characters often indulge in internal dialogues and discussions that explore existential and moral issues. He also writes in a style that reflects the rhythm and cadence of Jewish oral storytelling, with his penchant for detailed character analysis and moral complexity. Along with its role in developing characters, such a narrative focus also offers an avenue through which elements of modern Judaism can be explored--issues of Jewish identity and tradition within the larger quest to find meaning (Mambrol, 2018, p. 122). Deeply introspective characters are a common feature of Bellow's works. Such psychological self-consciousness is integral to Jewish intellectual tradition. This introspection is part of a literary technique whereby characters who are complex and reflect the Jewish experience are developed. For example, in *Herzog*, the various unsent letters to Moses Herzog's acquaintances testify to his introspective nature and racial restlessness. These letters represent Herzog's way of interacting with the world.

Through them, he wrestles with philosophical and existential issues that fall squarely within the domain of Jewish thought (Mambrol, 2018, p. 118). Joseph's inner monologues, in which he engages in existential deliberation, also reflect the general Jewish demand for self-reflection and moral scrutiny. He reflects on the force of his will when he says, "Out of my own strength it was necessary for me to return the verdict for reason, in its partial inadequacy, and against the advantages of its surrender" (Bellow, 1979, p. 47). These inward explorations play out against the Jewish thought and history of identity, morality, and the human condition.

One of the techniques he uses to incorporate Jewish elements into his works is language and narrative rhythm. Many expressions and idioms in his prose are Yiddish, making his figures children of a specifically Jewish language tradition. Besides giving an authentically Chinese feeling to the characters and settings, this use of language also indirectly reminds us of their cultural background. In addition, the literary rhythm of Bellow's narrative often resembles that of traditional Jewish storytelling, which is embellished with detailed descriptions and moral nuance (Teranishi, 2007, p. 39). It combines humour with pathos. The style, exemplified in *Herzog* and *The Dangling Man*, is similar to the oral traditions of Jewish culture, tales used to transmit values and teach history (Teranishi, 2007, p. 39). Thus, Bellow's narrative method, which is rich in detail and layered with meaning, reflects the Jewish storytelling tradition that accentuates life's moral and ethical aspects.

### **3.2. Hidden Impulses and the Veiled Jewish Identity**

Saul Bellow's literary journey unfolded during a critical period marked by post-colonialism, shaping his perspective as he navigated the difficulties of living within the Jewish community. Bellow's formative years within the Jewish community were inherently shaped by the post-colonial landscape, as the world grappled with the aftermath of colonial rule (Sukehera, 2017, p. 3689). Growing up in Chicago in the early to mid-20th century, Bellow was part of a Jewish community that, like other minority communities, faced the challenges of asserting its identity in a changing world. The post-colonial period witnessed a redefinition of cultural and national identities, and Bellow's immersion in this environment is reflected in his works, particularly in the exploration of Jewish themes (Sukehera, 2017, p. 3688). The Jewish community, like others during this time, experienced a complex interplay of heritage, assimilation, and the quest for a distinct identity within the broader societal fabric. An intriguing examination of identification, assimilation, and the complex mechanics of belonging emerges from Saul Bellow's choice to sometimes hide his Jewishness in his books. Despite the fact that his writings are loaded with significant Jewish themes, there are passages where the obvious manifestation of Jewishness is purposefully sidelined (Phillips, 2016, p. 8). By making this deliberate decision, we can better understand the complicated ways in which minority writers negotiate their identity in a diverse and multicultural world through literature. Bellow deftly exposes, through Herzog and other characters, the inner turmoil of Jews navigating a changing society. Bellow expertly explores universal topics through the use of a veiled

technique, which also allows her to quietly examine the specific struggles experienced by minority groups in the post-colonial age (Phillips, 2016, p. 10). Bellow creates a story that goes beyond Jewish identification by deftly navigating cultural history within literary expression and by appealing to larger themes of human life through this complicated dance of concealment and revelation. Amidst the post-colonial era, the Jewish community endured prejudice, anti-Semitism, and the lingering effects of historical trauma that weighed heavily on the collective mind, just like other minority groups (Sukehera, 2017, p. 3687). By going deeply into the Jewish community's secret impulses, Saul Bellow provides a powerful prism through which to examine the commonalities and strength of minority experiences, going beyond simple hiding. As a metaphor for hiding one's identity in the face of social pressures, Bellow's characters' hidden Jewishness becomes a central theme in her novels. In Bellow's works, the hidden impulses of the Jewish community are gently revealed through this theme inquiry, which becomes a subtle narrative device that illuminates the complicated ways in which these aspects weave into the narrative. Bellow deftly reflects the post-colonial Jewish-American experience in this way, giving readers a moving look at the many facets of identity, survival, and communal memory within the larger historical framework.

#### **4. Impact on Contemporary Jewish-American Literature**

With the creation of characters like Moses Herzog in Saul Bellow's literature, a meaningful turning point can be detected, contributing greatly to Jewish-American publishing. Via his

characters' complex and highly self-reflective nature, Bellow provided a new perspective to view and understand the world of Jewish America (Cortelessa, 2018, p. 2). What distinguishes his characters--with their existential queries and moral dilemmas--is how they express a quintessentially Jewish experience in contemporary America. Not only did this approach strike a powerful chord with readers, but it also served as an archetype for subsequent Jewish-American writers (Cortelessa, 2018, p. 12). The spirit of Bellow can be seen in how they developed their characters, creating a narrative and exploring Jewish identity. Characters such as Herzog arose. A thoughtful and reclusive type who wrestled with his Jewish-American identity problems, he became the prototype for behaviours in this particular character among later generations of literature. Perhaps the most far-reaching effect of Bellow's work on later Jewish-American writers is its creation of rich, multidimensional Jewish characters. Before Bellow, Jewish characters in American writing were either stereotyped or relegated to the margins (Rai, 2012 p. 15). Bellow altered this discourse by developing characters such as Herzog, who not only played a leading role in the story but were complex and rich with depths of being. With this portrayal, Jewish-American writers could further their exploration of characters and experiences. Free from the stereotypes, they could depict all the diversity of real life in America (Cortelessa, 2018, p. 16). The influence of Bellow is also apparent in the way contemporary Jewish-American writers deal with subjects such as Jewish identity and existential malaise. Through characters like Herzog, his works explore the problems of supporting one's identity as a Jew in modern-day America (Teranishi, 2007, p. 22). A sense of

otherness with respect to tradition, a choice between faith and secularism, confused visions held by community, family, (Rai, 2012 p. 18). and self are all problems he has wrestled with at great length. Later writers concentrating and interesting with these themes have looked to these outcomes as a model, often using their writing as a tool to confront issues of identity and belonging. The existential ideas that Bellow has followed - the need for meaning and the problem of faith and alienation- have become focal points in American Jewish literature (Cortelessa, 2018, p. 19). These are not confined to personal difficulties but reveal facets of the Jewish experience as a whole and can be related to by those readers who see their own lives and histories mirrored in these stories. Moreover, the influence of Saul Bellow is evident in the style and voice of Jewish-American literature. His cocktail of serious intellectual discussion, good humour and deep feeling has shaped how Jewish-American stories are told (Rai, 2012, p. 19). Later writers have appropriated and adjusted parts of Bellow's style, including introspective monologues, a manner rich in detail, and an amalgamation of philosophical exploration with ordinary reality. As a result, an identifiable and unique Jewish-American voice has developed in literature. It can grapple with existential questions of being on the level of Dostoevsky without losing touch with the material reality of what it means to be one shade of light brown in today's America (Rai, 2012, p. 14). Further, Bellow's gift for giving his stories a universal feel and a particular one has inspired writers to produce works that are at once very much rooted in Jewish culture and yet relate to all readers. As such, Bellow has contributed to defining a Jewish-American literary tradition with global appeal--a tradition that

will regally continue in the work of other writers and add its richness to the entirety of American literature.

## **Conclusion**

Summarizing the salient points of this article, it is clear that disillusionment, isolation, existentialism, postmodernism and displacement refusal even some sort of racism are features that, Saul Bellow's work altered in all aspects of Jewish-American literature. The unique environment of his youth--a mix of Jewish tradition and American culture--greatly affected his writing. 'The Dangling Man', which deals with themes like existential angst, alienation and the tension between tradition and modernity, reflects this atmosphere. The complex, self-observing Jewish individual is characterized in characters like Moses Herzog. This motif struck a chord with many later Jewish-American writers and deeply influenced them. By incorporating these Jewish elements into narrative, characterization and other literary techniques, Bellow demonstrates his ability to put the nuances of cultural and philosophical Judaism within the framework of storytelling. On top of this, his depiction of Jewish characters, especially Herzog, has been an example for other writers to follow in forming shades and tints of complexly drawn Jewish characters. His contribution to Jewish-American literature is monumental. Not only has Bellow given a voice through which the Jewish-American experience may be heard, but he also makes his unique mark on all American literature. Although each work stands as a testimony to the role of storytelling in overcoming cultural and existential gulfs, his body of work reflects the experience of Jews by

using psychoanalysis theories and therapeutic ways of treatments which bear influence of Jewish readings, while issuing forth from its basic universal realities. In this way, he has won himself a fundamental position within the literary canon.

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