

# ***Herzog*: An Intellectual Adventure**

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*Herzog* (1964),<sup>1</sup> Saul Bellow's sixth novel, has been regarded as "his three open-form books"<sup>2</sup> along with the third one, *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953)<sup>3</sup> and the fifth, *Henderson the Rain King* (1959).<sup>4</sup> In *Augie March*, Bellow showed his new style in which he has a good command of Whitmanesque catalogue. One had to acknowledge in there that Bellow had shaken himself free of that claustrophiliac inner world as shown in his earlier novels like *Dangling Man* (1944) and *The Victim* (1947). In *Henderson*, while succeeding to the new Augie's style, Bellow gave full play to his authorial creativity by weaving his own anthropological knowledge into that lively and vigorous style featured in the rain-making ritual.

In *Herzog*, a middle-aged university professor plays the leading part; he has just become confused after realizing that his wife and his friend had betrayed him before he knew where he was. He began writing letters to everyone and anyone, many of which were after all never posted, as if he were going to pour out his bitter feelings of his broken heart. This struggle toward scribbling down his true sentiments might result from his impulse to justify his awareness about his own poor standing, as well as his upset at what he is alone out of the communication.

In this article, I will consider the meanings of the mental, or I should say, intellectual adventures which Saul Bellow ventures in *Herzog*. For that purpose, I will make a beginning with his originally creative narrative devices, such as epistolary style. I expect, as a result, that I may understand how and where Bellow tried to found his literary ground in

this fully-developed writing career; in other words, I may pursue the process in which Bellow is gradually recognizing his values as a human being.

M. Gilbert Porter claims that “point of view is central to the assessment of Bellow’s achievement in *Herzog*,” and points out “most critics have settled for summary statements rather than detailed examinations of narrative technique” (5). Porter tries to search how “meaning is achieved through form,” reminding “[w]hat passes for plot in the novel is a narrative strategy” (3).<sup>5</sup>

As obvious as Porter’s indication, it is fair to say that so far nothing may have been left unsaid about *Herzog*, its significance and its meaning. Then this time, in stead of dealing with the contents of the work, I will, to begin with, trace the developing process of the protagonist’s psychology with the narrative clues to go on, especially those colorful changing viewpoints. This is because I am afraid that the reader will fall into almost the same predicament, even if in virtual, as the protagonist has experienced, if I follow after his changing states of mind, where he is being forced to struggle against his own monster, “the human spirit in the material society”<sup>6</sup> in this apparently eventless plot development.

Porter grasps this narrative transition in dichotomies: past and present; private and public; abstract and concrete; first person and third person. He regards that these dichotomies in narration reflect Herzog’s own ambivalence. The scene from which Porter perceives his binomial conception appears when Herzog goes around his dilapidating old house after he is left alone here in the back country by his young wife and a little daughter. He tries to hold back his anger while considering how things have turned out like this, and how he will restore the situation to its former state. Then Herzog takes a look at the dusty windowpane in web, where he notices a radiant line divides his weirdly tranquil face from mid-forehead over his straight nose and full, silent lips. Porter interprets the

division on the protagonist's face, and extends symbolically into his divided consciousness and the binomial narrative conception.

There are also other scenes in which Herzog looks into his face, such as the mirror above the wash basin. Some critics point out Herzog's narcissistic phase. To be sure, Porter knows where to look from an aesthetic viewpoint; however, it is unnatural to extend the meaning of the impressive scene into the protagonist's ambivalence and narrative dichotomy. In my opinion, Bellow seems to take "the freedom of an emotional/intuitional synthesis" (145), as Porter suggests, and to have a good command of "a sophisticated and often convoluted narration" (146).

Robert Shulman regarded the three novels shown above as "his [Bellow's] three open-form books," and discussed the contracture of *Herzog*. Shulman considered that in these three novels Bellow has "render[ed] fully [his] commitment to metaphor and learning, to the individual and the free, probing intelligence of an 'I' in his "open style," and "render[ed] fully [his authorial] sense that process is more important than conclusion." And he argued that "fixed conclusions may be desperately hard to find in an often baffling and inhospitable universe" (491) in approval to Bellow's controversial open endings.

Now I will examine the opening of the three works.

I am an American, Chicago born—Chicago, that somber city—and go at things as I have taught myself, free-style, and will make the record in my own way: first to knock, first admitted; sometimes an innocent knock, sometimes a not so innocent. But a man's character is his fate, says Heraclitus, and in the end there isn't any way to disguise the nature of the knocks by acoustical work on the door or gloving the knuckles. [*Augie March*, p.3]

What made me take this trip to Africa? There is no quick explanation. Things got worse and worse and worse and pretty soon they were too complicated.

When I think of my condition at the age of fifty-five when I bought the ticket, all is grief. The facts begin to crowd me and soon I get a pressure in the chest. A disorderly rush begins—my parents, my wives, my girls, my children, my farm, my animals, my habits, my money, my music lessons, my drunkenness, my prejudices, my brutality, my teeth, my face, my soul! I have to cry, “No, no, get back, curse you, let me alone!” But how can they let me alone? They belong to me. They are mine. And they pile into me from all sides. It turns into chaos. [*Henderson*, p.3]

If I am out of my mind, it’s all right with me, thought Moses Herzog.

Some people thought he was cracked and for a time he himself had doubted that he was all there. But now, though he still behaved oddly, he felt confident, cheerful, clairvoyant, and strong. He had fallen under a spell and was writing letters to everyone under the sun. He was so stirred by these letters that from the end of June he moved from place to place with a valise full of papers. He had carried this valise from New York to Martha’s Vineyard, but returned from the Vineyard immediately; two days later he flew to Chicago, and from Chicago he went to a village in western Massachusetts. Hidden in the country, he wrote endlessly, fanatically, to the newspapers, to people in public life, to friends and relatives and at last to the dead, his own obscure dead, and finally the famous dead. [*Herzog*, p.1]

Both *Augie* and *Henderson* are written using the first person narra-

tion. In the former novel, the protagonist is an immigrant's son born in America, whose half life begins from the boyhood of nine years till his early thirties. Bellow here develops his story modeled after the eighteenth century's picaresque romance. The picaro instead maintains his position that he is consistently an observer in life. In the latter, the protagonist is a fifty-five-year old man from a good WASP family. He ventures on a trip to Africa, urged by his own inner voice, "I want, I want." Herein Bellow has established his fictional dynamism where the author makes the most of his imagination possible in those actions.

In the former two first person novels, the protagonist, the observer, and the narrator are the same, and every item that appears in the story are represented through the protagonist's sensation and cognition. This protagonist's viewpoint is very effective in either case; when the author expresses the character's peculiar feelings, sensation or moods, or when he portrays the hero's own suspicion or predicament. On the other hand, the first person point of view is open to the charge of its limit in perspective and covered objects.

In *Herzog*, drastically changing from these, in a sense, self-centered and one-way narratives, the author-narrator fixes his viewpoint on the protagonist Herzog, only whom the author gives his explanation about characterization. Through Herzog's sensation and consideration the reader is conveyed the objects around Herzog himself. This cool objective narration is, however, never effective in portraying the protagonist's irresistible emotional explosion. Bellow, then, invents his narrative device appropriate for expressing the writer's true feelings, by using an epistolary style of the eighteenth century romance. The protagonist's fervent scribbling on notes also reminds the reader of the journal form of the first novel, *Dangling Man*.

These devices like letters and notes in *Herzog* turn out to be important tools to portray the protagonist's inner actions. Only the distance

between Bellow the author and his object, the protagonist Herzog is subtle to measure. For that purpose, it is scaled by both tone and point of view, where the author betrays his emotional attitude toward the object, Herzog. Anyway Bellow has grasped his materials for work; he deals with voices: those of the protagonist, the narrator, and the author; he chooses styles with complete control: the first person for letters and notes, the second and third person by the narrator or the author. In so doing Bellow has succeeded in contracture of his superior multiple and versatile narrations to those shown in *Augie March* and *Henderson*.

Now I will confirm a novel form, the epistolary style A novel form produced in the eighteenth century Europe Bellow makes use of. In the early years it took the form of a journal or letters, and developed into a story structure. Thus, a novel originated from a journal or epistolary style. In my university days, I was lectured that we have now Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarrissa Harlowe* (1748) as examples of epistolary novels. I find in my notebook the lecturer's comments that the epistolary point of view is hardly used in contemporary novels, as it is remarkably limited in a technical way. In the latter sixties the lecturer is supposed to know the publication of *Herzog*. I am going to examine why Bellow decided to make use of that forgotten (out-of-date) novel form.

Anne Bower in her book, *Epistolary Responses: The Letter in the 20th-Century American Fiction and Criticism* (The University of Alabama Press, 1977)<sup>7</sup> explains in detail the characteristics of the epistolary novel, especially in relation to the development of feminism. According to Bower, letter writers' "encoding of a message, no matter what that message may be, is a form of action." She claims that women found letter writing as a means of self-assertion, which was "so often silenced in public." (5): "we often find women characters that increase their power or sense of self through the opportunity to write their own truths." (12).

Being always conscious of the addressee's presence, letter writers can express themselves with openness, while "this seeming openness can be used for manipulation and deception" (3).

Contrasted with other forms, for example, essay writing, Bower points out that "letters [are] more personal, dialogic, and emotional," quoting from other critics (4). Quite different from the diary form, the letter form always "attempts to elicit or offer a response" (5). In so doing, the letter writers—in the case of a novel, the protagonists—may "hold onto their desire and subjectivity and to overcome, in one way or another, the absence of the addressee" (6).

Pointing out the important function of epistolary form, Bower expects letter fiction "would encourage scholarly attention to contemporary epistolary fiction" (12). That is because modern individuals in spite of their most achieved rights as ever, are more likely to be left alone in communicational gaps—that is, restricted freedom and difficulties in communication.

Shulman also remarks on the note and letter forms in *Herzog*. He observed that "he [Bellow] has made the eighteenth-century novelistic convention of letter writing the vehicle for a flexible, comic probing of an encyclopedic array of learned, personal, and social issues." Further, Shulman mentions "[t]he freely interpolated letters as a vehicle for comedy and ideas constitute one of the most brilliant technical inventions in postwar fiction...." He concludes in the end "the fact that the letters are not sent....helps to characterize the twentieth century by way of the obsessive modern concern with a failure of communication," which is "a strain *Herzog* both embodies and resists."<sup>8</sup> *Herzog*, our twentieth century hero, is searching for an ideal form of communication in his own intellectual adventure.

Now I will examine Bellow's letter form adapted in *Herzog*. In the first two pages the author tells how the protagonist began to write letters.

Professor Herzog, still suffering from the shocking incident, has taken to writing down what occurs in his mind, interrupting his lectures in the evening course. The notes in the novel are described in italics. This habit of scribbling notes down turns letter writing. The author, therefore, describes letters in italics, either. On the other hand, just as the second person letters sent to Herzog himself are, so the paragraph supposed to be interior monologue is represented in italics.

*Dear Moses E. Herzog, Since when have you taken such an interest in social questions, in the external world? Until lately, you led a life of innocent sloth. But suddenly a Faustian spirit of discontent and universal reform descends on you. Scolding. Invective. (74)*

The following interior monologue occurs when Herzog is shaving at a mirror before he goes to see Ramona.

*My God! Who is this creature? It considers itself human. But what is it? Not human of itself. But has the longing to be human. And like a troubling dream, a persistent vapour. A desire. Where does it all come from? And what is it? And what can it be! Not immortal longing. No, entirely mortal, but human. (227)*

Incidentally, Bellow works out a variety of devices in order to represent everything within Herzog's inner world. It is not only Herzog's real feelings shown in letters, conscious of the addressees that are described in the first person. Herzog goes to the municipal court to see a lawyer so that he may get custody of June back from Madeleine. After hearing a trial of another case, he suffers from the constriction of the



chest. Emotion and the subsequent analysis are portrayed in the first person suddenly after the third person of the preceding sentence.

Young Jews, brought up on moral principles as Victorian ladies were on pianoforte and needlepoint, thought Herzog. And I have come here today for a look at something different. That evidently is my purpose.

I wilfully misread my contract. I never was the principal, but only on loan to myself. Evidently I continue to believe in God. Though never admitting it. But what else explains my conduct and my life? So I may as well acknowledge how things are, if only because otherwise I can't even be described.... (238)

The first person continues through his memory of his mother to the last few nights before her deathbed. His mother creeps out of her bedroom into the dim light of the kitchen where her youngest son is reading a book. They exchange a few words. The next deathbed scene changes into the third person narration.

'I saw the light,' she said. 'What are you doing up so late?' But the dying, for themselves, have given up hours. She only pitied me, her orphan, understood I was a gesture-maker, ambitious, a fool; thought I would need my eyesight and my strength on a certain day of reckoning.

A few days afterwards, when she had lost the power to speak, she was still trying to comfort Moses. Just as when he knew she was breathless from trudging with his sled in Montreal but would not get up. He came into her room when she was dying, holding his school books, and began to say something to her. But she lifted her hands and showed him her fingernails.

They were blue. (241)

By portraying the last conversation in the kitchen at midnight in the third person, Herzog looks back bitterly and coldly at himself. He did not return sweet words to mother who must have gotten out of her bed with all her last night, pitying the son left behind. The first paragraph in the first person shows, on analysis, how the middle-age Herzog repents of his youthful indiscretion: how wrong he was not to understand an earnest maternal love. The next last scene, however, is to be described realistically and with detachment depending on the objectivity of the third person, all the more because he felt ashamed of his own cruelty.

Herzog hears another case, where a woman of lower intelligence is suspected that she might abuse to death her own child in an encumbrance after being deserted by a man. He gets excited, incapable of distancing himself from a situation he also shares: he has a son by his ex-wife and a daughter by his present wife. The compressed scene is well represented again, making good use of literary form. Bellow expresses the gradual revelation of truth that results from the interchange between the magistrate and witness by using represented speech of the third person narration. Further the author contrives much presence in the self-interrogation of Herzog who is being driven into his own tight situation by hearing the real trial.<sup>9</sup>

After this, unable to stay there any longer, Herzog gets into action. He visits his mother-in-law, a widow of his father in Chicago. While the second mother is away from the parlor, he finds a chance to sneak into his father's library and steal an old pistol left by the deceased. The article reminds him of his naughty childhood when he was scared by his father's pistol. With the pistol in his bosom Herzog heads for the old familiar home in which his wife and daughter live. Looking in at the window from the yard, he comes across the scene of Gersbach bathing his daughter.

Watching them talking affectionately like real father and daughter, Herzog feels intense frustration about his lack of paternal commitment. A moment after, however, he revives his strong spiritual power, thinking that “But he [Gersbach] had no *true* expressions” (264). His boiling hatred of “those two grotesque love actors” has subsided: “Firing this pistol was nothing but a thought” (265) through close analyses by his well-honed intellect. The sudden decisive turn involves the ultimate self-examination in the first person with an opening monologue in italic and hurries at a stroke to the loss of murderous intent, and to the powerful end of his recovered awareness.

*The human soul is an amphibian, and I have touched its sides. Amphibian! It lives in more elements than I will ever know; and I assume that in those remote stars mater is in the making which will create stranger beings yet. I seem to think because June looks like a Herzog, she is nearer to me than to them. But how is she near to me if I have no share in her life? Those two grotesque love-actors have it all. And I apparently believe that if the child does not have a life resembling mine, educated according to the Herzog standards of ‘heart,’ and all the rest of it, she will fail to become a human being. This is sheer irrationality, and yet some part of my mind takes it as self-evident. But what in fact can she learn from them? From Gersbach, when he looks so sugary, repulsive, poisonous, not an individual but a fragment, a piece broken off from the mob. To shoot him! -- an absurd thought. As soon as Herzog saw the actual person giving an actual bath, the reality of it, the tenderness of such a buffoon to a little child, his intended violence turned into theatre, into something ludicrous. He was not ready to make such a complete fool of himself. Only self-hatred could*

lead him to ruin himself because his heart was 'broken.' How could it be broken by such a pair? Lingered in the alley awhile, he congratulated himself on his luck. His breath came back to him; and how good it felt to breathe! It was worth the trip. (265)

The first person narrator/author speaks to the reader with the use of "we" as follows:

So much we know now. But this --even this -- is not the whole story, either. It only begins to approach the start of true consciousness. The necessary premise is that a man is somehow more than his 'characteristics,' all the emotions, strivings, tastes and constructions which it pleases him to call 'My Life'. We have ground to hope that a Life is something more than such a cloud of particles, mere facticity. (273)

In the other part the first person narrator tries to obtain the protagonist's consent.

She had what the French called *le fronte bombe*; in other terms, a pedomorphic forehead. Ultimately unknowable, the processes behind it. See, Moses? We don't know one another. Even that Gersbach, call him any name you like, charlatan, psychopath, with his hot phony eyes and his clumsy cheeks, with the folds. He was unknowable. And I myself, the same. But hard ruthless action taken against a man is the assertion by evildoers that he is fully knowable. They put me down, ergo they claimed final knowledge of Herzog. They *knew* me! And I hold with Spinoza (I hope he won't mind) that to demand what is impossible for any human being, to exercise power where it can't be exercised,

is tyranny. Excuse me, therefore, sir and madam, but I reject your definitions of me. (306) [underline is mine]

Herzog, going to spend half the day with June, is bumped against from behind by a careless driver. A policeman comes to deal with the accident and he finds the pistol in Herzog's bosom. Herzog is booked for illegal possession of firearm; the police calls Madeleine to take June back. Madeleine, turning coldly from him, takes from June the milk, which Herzog gave, and drops the container impassively. Now she is just an unrelated person. When he wonders what she is thinking behind her pedomorphic (childlike) forehead, Herzog develops an acute awareness that human beings cannot understand each other. Thus, hard ruthless action taken against him is the assertion by the two evildoers that they fully understand him.

Ready to go on the counterattack against the two, Herzog, now retrieved calmness for himself, can make a final decision that he makes no last judgment, leaving that to the two who have fallen in self-deception that they have final knowledge of Herzog. With that decision he can say, "Count me out. Except in what concerns June." Now calmly he decides he will withdraw from the love triangle in which he has utterly been involved.

The second person representation is largely used when the narrator talks to the protagonist. The viewpoint from which the author looks at objects is conveyed to the reader through Herzog's sensation and consideration. The mental processes in which Herzog develops his own awareness as an intellectual are portrayed in the letters addressed to his friends and lover Ramona. In so doing, the narrator/author here and there attempts to warn the protagonist to be self-righteous by using "you", or makes him mock himself in order to maintain equilibrium between the subjective and the objective. Herein it seems to me that the author wants

the reader to consider Herzog not as an incomplete person but as an intellectual, for the latter is a double of the former.

Expecting the broken rib to be cured, Herzog goes back to the country house alone. He spends in tranquil meditation, while mending the dilapidating house in his absence. Now that he has gradually become stable in mind he does not write notes and letters as often as he once did. A few days before his older brother Will visits him, Herzog is cautious of him even if so far brother understand the youngest well. The brothers have succeeded in constructing business as if they were embodied in the principles of American materialism. If they judge their youngest brother to be mentally sick, Herzog suspects he will be deprived of these tranquil days of meditation and labor.

In less than a week after Herzog flew to Chicago with fury and hatred in his heart, he recovers confidence and calmness surprisingly even to himself. And again he talks to mother in his reminiscence: the addressing words are represented in italic; the interior monologues of Herzog's in roman separately. The youngest son had no sense to say a tender word to his mother in her deathbed. Now he admits that he lacked the capacity to manage terrifying forces, including the power of love. And the only way to reach out where it is incomprehensible, he recognizes, ridded of his egoism, is to put the hyperactivity of his face to the radiance of the sun. The words given to his mother might be Bellow's long cherished ambition as an intellectual/writer at this point.

*The life you gave me has been curious, he wanted to say to his mother, and perhaps the death I must inherit will turn out to be even more profoundly curious. I have sometimes wished it would hurry up, longed for it to come soon. But I am still on the same side of eternity as ever. It's just as well, for I have certain things still to do. And without noise, I hope. Some of my oldest aims*

*seem to have slid away. But I have others. Life on this earth can't be simply a picture. And terrible forces in me, including the force of admiration or praise, powers, including loving powers, very damaging, making me almost an idiot because I lacked the capacity to manage them. I may turn out to be not such a terrible hopeless fool as everyone, as you, as I myself suspected. Meantime, to lay off certain persistent torments. To surrender the hyperactivity of this hyperactive face. But just to put it out instead to the radiance of the sun. I want to send you, and others, the most loving wish I have in my heart. This is the only way I have to reach out --out where it is incomprehensible. I can only pray towards it. So... Peace! (333-34)*

Ramona visits suddenly, and brother Will's anxiety can be somehow appeased. Herzog comes to think that his real wish is to wish for nothing, to be what he is, and to be satisfied just as it is willed. He decides further that he should stop writing letters so as to show his brothers and people around him his sanity. Now Herzog has found a glimmer of light, while groping around in the dark of frantic self-recognitive meditation. Walking over notes and papers, he lies down on a couch for the time being, listening to the steady scratching of the broom when Mrs. Tuttle, the general store keeper's wife, is sweeping.

Herzog's adventure has come to an end, even though not quite satisfactorily. Augie, a picaro, manages to get along as an expectant observer. Unlike him, Herzog has desperately taken action against his predicament, a love triangle, having his existence shaken to its foundation. Now that he has suffered a severe blow he could perceive those actual circumstances of his brothers' and Ramona's, who are apparently swimming with the stream in the world. He has been known in academic circles for his articles. The university professor feels like he is being

attacked when he sees that everyone around him is against him<sub>w</sub>—it is typically exemplified their uncompassionate doing to “spread the rumor that his sanity had collapsed” (8).

Saul Bellow, however, does not solely support his protagonist. Herzog himself in a sense has led his wife to betray him in conspiracy with his friend. Even though he has a new lover, he knows his face to be gaunt by his troubles. He hears the duck-like response—*quack*, when he feels sexual desire for wife or lover. Further, Bellow describes the protagonist in speculation, “lying with no more style than a chimpanzee” (17).

Earl Robit argues in his article concerning Jewish humor that in American protestant country there is a vigorous theoretical ideal of protest, and that humor is of the party of the opposition.<sup>10</sup> Robit goes on that “humor is one of the ways in which human beings can attain a meager sense of their own brotherhood,” and that “the ironic insult of Jewish humor includes slightly more humanity than it rejects” (517). Furthermore, he defines humor: “It is a strategy of intelligence moving into action, either to protect something of its own that it judges to be good, or to attack something that it deems to be bad” (518). Adopting Robit’s definition of Jewish humor, it can be said that Bellow portrays his protagonist to be “Jewish enough to maintain a balance between the gross realities he perceives and the ideals that convict his soul” (519).

*Herzog* is an ambitious work, in which Bellow ventures to let the protagonist attempt to close in the essentials of the intellectual at the risk of his existence, developing a plausible setting that a proud intellectual cannot penetrate real feelings of his young wife. Especially noteworthy, it can be gathered from characterization that the protagonist is almost as life-sized as the author himself. Like Bellow, Herzog at 47 years is teaching in a university; those memories of parents and brothers are probably presumably similar to autobiography, although details may not



be cross-checked. More than the big-hearted declaration by a Jewish American citizen in *Augie March*, much more than the self-realization in pan-American trend of the fifties in *Henderson*, *Herzog* is a powerfully confident representation by Bellow, who has attained his own intellectual identity in American society through conflicts with Jewish tradition.

### Notes

- 1 Saul Bellow, *Herzog* (N.Y.: Viking, 1964; Penguin, 1969). All textual references are to this later edition.
- 2 Robert Shulman, "The Style of Bellow's Comedy" in Irving Howe ed., *Herzog: Text and Criticism* (New York: Viking, 1976), p.489.
- 3 Saul Bellow, *The Adventures of Augie March* (N.Y.: Viking, 1953; Penguin, 1984). All textual references abbreviated Augie are to this later edition.
- 4 Saul Bellow, *Henderson the Rain King* (N.Y.: Viking, 1959; Penguin, 1976). All textual reference abbreviated Henderson are to this later edition.
- 5 M. Gilbert Porter, "'Weirdly Tranquil' Vision: The Point of View of Moses Herzog" in *Saul Bellow Journal* 8.1 (1989), p.4.
- 6 Tony Tanner, *Saul Bellow* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), p.5.
- 7 Anne Bower, pp.1-9; 10-21.
- 8 Shulman, p.502.
- 9 The medical examiner was on the stand. Had he seen the dead child? Yes. Did he have a report to make? He did. He gave the date and circumstances of the examination. A hefty, bald, solemn man with fleshy and deliberate lips, he held his notes in both hands like a singer—the experienced, professional witness. The child, he said, was normally formed but seemed to have suffered from malnutrition. There were signs of incipient rickets, the teeth were already quite carious, but this was sometimes a symptom that the mother had had toxemia in pregnancy. Were any unusual marks visible on the child's body? Yes, the little boy had apparently been beaten. Once, or repeatedly? In his opinion, often beaten. The scalp was torn. There were unusually heavy bruises on the back and legs. The shins were discolored. Where were the bruises heaviest? On the belly, and especially in the region of the genitals, where the boy seemed to have been beaten with something capable of breaking the skin, perhaps a metal buckle or the heel of a woman's shoe. "And what internal findings did you make?" the

prosecutor went on. There were two broken ribs, one an older break. The more recent one had done some damage to the lung. The boy's liver had been ruptured. The hemorrhage caused by this may have been the immediate cause of death. There was also a brain injury. "In your opinion, then, the child died violently?" "That is my opinion. The liver injury would have been enough."

All this seemed to Herzog exceptionally low-pitched. All—the lawyers, the jury, the mother, her tough friend, the judge—behaved with much restraint, extremely well controlled and quiet-spoken. Such calm—inversely proportionate to the murder? he was thinking. Judge, jury, lawyers and the accused, all looked utterly unemotional. And he himself? He sat in his new madras coat and held his hard straw hat. He gripped his hat strongly and felt sick at heart. The ragged edge of the straw made marks on his fingers. (*Herzog*, 244)

- 10 Earl Robit, "Jewish Humor and American Life" in *Herzog: Text and Criticism* (N.Y.: Viking, 1976), pp.516-17.