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Writings of the Western Civilization Dilemma Reflected in the Interaction of American Jewish Communities in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*

LI Dong

Abstract: The distinct German Jews and Eastern European Jews in the cultural geography of Manhattan, New York, are the two major Jewish groups that Bellow focuses on in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*. The author emphasizes the “vice” of the former, stressing the “goodness” of the latter. In addition, Bellow, by underlining the ethical “chaos” caused by moral corrosion of the former upon the latter, not only reproduces the historical reality of the interaction between the two major Jewish communities, but also fundamentally concerns the “disorder” dilemma presented by American (Western) society in the 1960s. Bellow believed that the Jewish-Enlightenment-liberated German Jews were the Jewish representatives of the Western Enlightenment, and their pursuit of “individuality” could easily lead to “chaos” and “disorder”. Therefore, Bellow labeled German Jews as “evil” and ultimately hinted at the reasons why Western civilization was in trouble in 1960s.

Key Words: German Jews, Vice, East European Jews, Individuality, Chaos