# Chapter IV

# ANALYSIS

As discussed above, it can be seen that alienated behavior can occur in many different ways. First, an alienated individual acts as if he lacks his own power. His destiny is not under his own control. His identity is fixed or determined by some kinds of credentials. In addition, an individual feels meaningless, and does not comprehend his consistent meaning. His idea is insignificant, inconsequential and superfluous. Also, a person cannot accept or follow the social value and norms of his society. He feels he lacks the social value to guide him in different situation. Furthermore, he feels he is unable to participate in his own culture. He feels removed and withdrawn from established values in society. He does not accept his real situation, and cannot understand what he himself does. That is, he is out of touch with himself, and feels at odds with his culture and even with people who are close to him. Finally, he has no reference points of judgment. He feels isolated and cannot relate to others. The present study aimed at examining the themes of alienation in the following novels: Dangling Man, The Victim, and Seize the Day and the discussion will follow the concepts below:

1. Self-Alienation
2. Alienation from Others
3. Alienation from Work
4. Alienation from Social Values

## 1. Self-Alienation

Self-alienation is the condition in which a person does not accept his real situation, and cannot understand what he himself does. He alienates himself from his own self because he does not see the real aim of his life. If he is more and more self-alienated, he may become insane. Self-alienation can be divided into 2 parts: an inability to understand his own feelings and an inability to understand his own behavior.

An inability to understand his own feelings is the condition in which an alienated person cannot explain his feeling, his thought, and his need because all of them are not his real thought and his real need. He doesn't understand what he feels, what he thinks, and what he needs.

An inability to understand his own behavior is the condition in which a person is not aware of, or understands his own behavior or action. He does not know or understand why he does something and from which the behavior comes. And it is the condition that man knows about the meaninglessness and worthlessness in his product, and also knows about the worth of his self-being; but he cannot get out of his plight.

From the three novels of Saul Bellow, it was found that self-alienation of the characters results from work. Generally speaking, work is an important part of human life and work enables man to attain his self-knowledge and ability in producing the necessary factors for living and serving man's inner need such as feeling, pride, pleasure and happiness. The success or the product of work makes man feel that he is important for the activities or work he does.

If he cannot create work or products for his need, he may feel bitter, hopeless or unconfident. And this leads to the feeling of alienation. The following is an analysis of alienation as revealed through the characters of Joseph in Dangling Man, Asa Leventhal in The Victim, and Tommy Wilhelm in Seize the Day :

Joseph, in Dangling Man, was an employee of an Inter-American Travel Bureau. He resigned from his job at the Inter-American Travel Bureau to answer the Army's call for induction, but he had to wait. While waiting, he became bored, and wanted to go back temporarily to his work at the Inter-American. But he could not. While he had no work to do, his wife had to support him. This made him confused. Besides of his boredom, he felt his life meaningless. He could not produce anything to make his life worthwhile while some of his friends changed and lived their lives in a much better way, for example Tad was landing in Algiers or Oran and Stillman traveled in Brazil. He thought he could not do anything because he still had to wait for the Army call and wrote the essays about the philosophers' biography. However, he did not succeed in his work. So he felt estranged because he could not really understand his own feeling and his own needs.

> I have thought of going to work, but I am unwilling to admit that I do not know how to use my freedom and have to embrace the flunkydom of a job because I have no resources--in a word, no character. I made an attempt to enlist in the Navy last time I was reclassified, . . . .
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 12)

Joseph had thought of going to work, but he was not sure whether he could do it or not. He felt confused about his own ability, and had no confidence in himself. When Joseph knew that Ted, one of his friends, had flown to North America, he felt worried about his own fate. It was a bodily feeling that he would not even try to do anything to make himself or his family better than it was. He could not explain what he really needed to do. Moreover, Joseph wanted to miss nothing. He wanted to avoid the small conflicts of nonconformity so that he could give all his attention to defending his inner differences. Not only did he try to live alone without meeting his friends, but he also talked to himself about his actions in the past and the ways he chose to do them. But when the Army called him for induction, he felt he was worthwhile again.

Asa Leventhal, in The Victim, was an editor of a small trade magazine in Lower Manhattan. He had spent his time with his brother's family because his brother, Max, did not live with his family. He worked in another town. His brother's house, his sister-in-law, and the sick nephew made Asa feel depressed. When Elena, Max's wife, called him, he rushed to her apartment. But after that he felt confused because he was worried about his feelings towards his actions. Moreover, when his wife went to visit her mother because her father died, he had to stay home alone. He missed his wife and did not have anyone to consult when he was faced with some problems. He did not know what he really needed to do. When Asa left his brother's apartment, he thought he shouldn't have gone there without asking his boss's permission first and he should have waited until after the work hours. Such feeling shows

us that Asa was sorrowful and felt alienated because he does not really understand his own feeling and his own needs.

> "No, I shouldn't have gone," he said to himself. He was suddenly full of misgivings. It was a mistake to run out of the office like that. If he had considered the thing sensibly, he would have waited till evening. . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 25)

Moreover, he was worried about Allbee following him because Allbee had accused him of making Allbee lose his job at Dill's and Allbee wanted him to give Allbee the refund. He was annoyed with Allbee's activities, especially bringing a woman into his room. He was angry and told them to go away. After Allbee and the woman had left, Asa was not sure whether it was right to push them away. If they did not go away, Asa did not know what he would do with Allbee.

> . . . . "Maybe I didn't do the right thing. I didn't know what it was. I don't yet. And there had to be a showdown sooner or later. What was I going to do with him? . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 225)

Tommy Wilhelm, in Seize the Day, was the only member of the family who had little education. He had tried to become a screen artist but he failed. His family had never given him the blessings for starting out. After

much thought, hesitation, and debate; he invariably took the course he had rejected innumerable times. He had decided that it would be a bad mistake to go to Hollywood, but he went, and there he worked as an orderly in a Los Angeles hospital. He was unable to withstand hard work and he returned home, and his family blamed him. Moreover, he had also changed his name by omitting his father's name, Adler. His father was not pleased with his new name and still called him Wilky. Although the changed name was a mistake, he admitted it as freely as he liked. However, he had never succeeded in feeling like Tommy. When he thought about marriage, he had made up his mind not to marry his wife, but he ran off with her and got married. His marriage was not successful. He could not stand his wife and wanted to get a divorce; but Margaret, his wife did not give him a divorce. He was sorrowful because he had another woman and wanted to marry her. Besides his failure in work and marriage, he also failed in investment because he trusted his dishonest friend Dr.Tamkin. His father had warned him to beware of Tamkin, and he believed his father's warning. He had resolved not to invest money with Tamkin, but he had given him his last sum of money because he thought Tamkin had assisted him whereas his father did not give him anything he needed. His repeated failures resulted from his own decisions which he could not explain; and because of these, he felt incompetent and insignificant. He did not comprehend his consistent meaning.

> . . . . He had decided that it would be a bad mistake to go to Hollywood, and then he went. He had made up his mind not to marry his wife, but ran off and got married. He had resolved not to invest money with Tamkin, and then had given him . . . .
>
> (Seize the Day. Bellow. 238)

Apart from the inability to understand their own feeling, those characters also felt alienated because of the inability to understand their own behaviors.

Joseph was not aware of and did not understand his own behavior or action. He and his wife had friends but they no longer saw them, and he thought that he and his wife had to change their behavior because they were very much alone. He was always afraid of running into acquaintances who would express surprise at seeing him and ask him a lot of questions that he did not want to answer. The questions made him nervous. Although he seldom went out, he knew about some of his friends' destiny, which in turn, made him think of his own plight and try to look for work. Thus, he asked Myron Adler for help and had appointment with him at the restaurant. There he met Jimmy Burns who was once his close friend, and Burns did not pay attention to him. Joseph lost his head and had a quarrel with Burns. When the time passed, he became worried about the incident he had with Burns. He did not know why he was angry with Jimmy Burns, but he suspected that the quarrel originated in his confused mind. However, he could not explain what reason to anyone even Myron Adler, his close friend. When Adler did not phone him to response about the vacancy, he felt worried so much that he thought Adler might not be

pleased with his bad expression towards Burns that night. Thus, he felt empty and void of meaning.

> . . . . I did not know where this outbreak came from. I suspect that it originated in sheer dishevelment of mind. But how could I explain this to . . . .
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 37)

Asa had an interview at Dill's Weekly before working for Burke-Beard and Company. But Rudiger, the owner of Dill's Weekly refused to admit him to work in his office, and told him to go away. Asa lost his head, but he felt confident and insisted that he needed a job at Dill's Weekly because he needed to improve Rudiger's papers. Rudiger could not accept Asa's words; he was angry. After that Allbee was fired and Allbee had accused Asa of making him lose his job at Rudiger's office. He wanted Asa to be responsible for it and followed him, and Williston also told him that he had caused Allbee to be fired from Dill's Weekly. Asa accepted some of the blame of Williston for Allbee's breakdown although he thought Allbee lost his job because of his drinking. Thus, he suspected why he lost his head at Dill's, and he did not know the real reason about what he did. He thought it might result from his low income or Rudiger's influence that made him act like that. However, he behaved like a bad tempered man towards Rudiger because he was sure that he was right to act out his idea or his intention but no one accepted his right.

> . . . . But why had he lost it? Only because of Rudiger's abuse? No, he, he himself had begun to fear that the lowest price he put on himself was too high and he could scarcely understand why anyone should want to pay for his services. And under Rudiger's influence he had felt this. . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 102)

Because of his unemployment and education, he felt estranged from his family. He tried to do everything to be accepted by his family - - especially by his father. He speculated in commodities, hoping he could get a lot of money from this speculation. Having to support his wife, his children and his mother-in-law's premiums, he needed a lot of money to take care of them. His father cautioned him about Tamkin but he did not believe him. He gave Tamkin a check and had signed a power of attorney, allowing Tamkin to speculate with his money. He thought Tamkin was under his control but in truth he was under Tamkin's control. In the end Tamkin disappeared, and Wilhelm lost everything he had got and his father refused to help him. He had no way to solve his problems. He felt hopeless.

> I was the man beneath; Tamkin was on my back, and I thought I was on his. He made me carry him, too, besides Margaret. Like this they ride on me with hoofs and claws. Tear me to pieces, stamp on me and . . . .
>
> (Seize the Day. Bellow. 308)

The protagonists in the three novels of Saul Bellow have become alienated because of their inability to understand their own feelings or thoughts and their own behaviors. However, they did not become insane because they can improve their attitude and their behaviors, and were able to return to their normal life and their society again, except Wilhelm. He could not find the way to solve his problems and the people around him did not give him the necessary help, even his own father. Having lost everything, he decided to commit suicide by drowning. Joseph, in Dangling Man, was able to improve himself with hope when he received the letter from the Army. He did not have to wait again, and the people in his family were willing to help him. He felt his life had meaning again because he had work to do. Asa, in The Victim, also felt hopeful like Joseph because his life had changed for the better. His wife came back and later he changed his job which enabled him to earn a higher income. His brother, his sister-in-law and his nephew went to live together and were happy. Moreover, Allbee whom he thought was his enemy went away from his life, and his guilty conscience about being responsible for Allbee's getting fired from the job was unburdened because he knew the real reason for Allbee's losing the job. It was his drinking, and it was not Asa's fault. When he met Allbee again, Allbee looked happier than he was; he told Asa that he did not intend to kill Asa, but he needed to kill himself. Allbee's words made Asa feel cheerful and he had more self-confidence because he knew he was not Allbee's victim.

Wilhelm still felt hopeless and his life had no meaning because the people around him did not give him the necessary support. If his father had

helped him or given him some advise, he would have some hope to solve his problems and could have understood what he really wanted to do. He could have had self-identity again. In fact, Wilhelm was ready to accept other people's opinions, and he needed someone to listen to him and give him sympathy and help. When Tamkin came into his life and helped him, he got what he had never received before, he felt safe and secure, he believed Tamkin; he thought Tamkin was his real friend, but later he knew Tamkin cheated him and had never told him the truth about himself. He could not stand it and tried to look for someone to help; no one helped him. He felt disappointed and realized that he had no meaning to live longer. If his father had assisted him, he might have hope to struggle and find the way to solve his problem like Asa and Joseph. Thus, the people around us are important for our life. They can give us the necessary help we need when we have some problems. We should explain or tell someone whom we can confide in our troubles we are faced with. We should not think only by ourselves and try to avoid society. In addition, we should try to make another feel easy to tell us his troubles or ask us for help. We should not ask him if he does not want to tell us because it may make him feel nervous and ashamed.

### 2. Alienation from Others

Alienation from others is the condition in which a person feels isolated, and lacks a genuine relationship with other people. He alienates himself from the others because he sees other people as only his tools or his means to

achieve his purpose. Because of this, he fails to share his feelings with them, whether they are members of his immediate family, or they are his peers, neighbors, or colleagues at work. This kind of alienation can be divided into 2 categories: a feeling of loneliness and a lack of compatible ideas.

Loneliness is the condition in which a person lives among people in the society but feels detached from them. This is because he has neither a close nor a good relationship with them. Moreover, he does not command admiration or respect from the people surrounding him.

An incompatible idea is the condition in which a person's ideas are opposite to those of other people, and he fails to establish his genuine relationship with others.

In the three novels of Saul Bellow, alienation was found to stem from work, as well as from a character's inner feeling about his inferiority complex regarding his ethnicity, status, and education. The characters in these novels have isolated themselves from other people and their ideas are not in line with those of other people they met or were acquainted with in the society. The following is an analysis of alienation as revealed through the characters of Joseph in Dangling Man, Asa Leventhal in The Victim, and Tommy Wilhelm in Seize the Day:

In Dangling Man, Joseph, who suffered from a feeling of estrangement, felt lonely even though he was among his friends and his neighbors, especially when he went to one of his friend's parties, the Servatius party, and met a lot of old friends there. His friends, such as Minna Servatius, made him feel

nervous, and they treated him as if he were a joke and were insignificant in their presence.

> . . . . I liked nothing better than to see my friends singly or in pairs, but when they came together in a large group they disheartened me. . . .
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 40)

Joseph was sad. He thought he liked to see his friends but when his friends gathered together, they made him feel worse. He felt no one welcomed him or was pleased to see him as they greeted the other friends. He felt he was an outsider, and he regretted having gone there. He still asked himself why he did not refuse the invitation to come to this party. Had he refused, he would not have felt so wretched like this. He felt lonely among his friends because he did not have a genuine and mutual relationship with them. As a result, he felt jealous of their warm and friendly relationship.

Neither did Joseph have a good relationship with his wife. When he resigned from his job and had to wait for induction into the army, he could not go back to work and his wife had to support him. He felt humiliated because he was unable to support his own family as the heads of other families did. He thought of his wife only as his dependant whom he had to take care of, and she was not his bosom friend whom he could talk with openly in time of difficulty. Because of his inability to exert himself and his dependence upon his wife for support, he felt worthless and humiliated, and lost the ability to communicate.

> . . . . She has a way about her that discourages talk. We no longer confide in each other; in fact, there many things I could not mention to her. . . . .
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 12)

Joseph had failed to establish contact with his wife. He thought it discouraging to talk to her. When he had problems, he could not go to her for advice. He tried to find the solutions to his problems himself.

Since he did not reveal his feelings to other people, the relationship between Joseph and his neighbors was not good, either. He detached himself from the people in his rooming house and refused to mix with them; he usually sat in his room and stared at everyone who lived there, especially Vanaker whom he did not like because Vanaker always liked to make a lot of noise which greatly annoyed him. Finally, he was no longer able to stand him, and had a quarrel with him. Joseph tried to tell everyone in his rooming house about the incident but no one understood him and did not listen to his reason, not even his wife. Furthermore, the landlord's son-in-law, Captain Briggs, was angry with him and did not listen to what he said about Vanaker's behavior or his reason for arguing with Vanaker. Joseph lost his head because he felt he was worthless and did not receive any admiration or respect from the people surrounding him, and it seems that he had lost all of his self-confidence when he was among them.

> "What about his behavior?" I said excitedly. "It seems he can do as he pleases, but if I protest I am the one who's blamed. Why don't you ask him about it? What's he skulking in there for?"
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 181)

After the quarrel, Joseph tried to extricate himself from his wretched situation. He went to the Army's office board to ask for induction to the Army and later he received the call from the Army. Although the novelist did not tell us about Joseph's life after that, it is more likely that he will adapt himself to the society and live a normal life again since he began to form a genuine relationship with the others such as his wife, and he felt his life was valuable at the end of the novel.

Like Joseph, Asa, in The Victim, felt estranged and lonely among his friends. When he had problems with Allbee, he tried to talk to his friends and asked them for advice. He wanted to find out why Allbee had lost his job. When Williston, one of his friends, lied to him that it was Asa himself who caused Allbee to lose the job, Asa felt very disappointed. He thought he could not trust anyone, even his friends. He felt they were insincere and did not tell him the truth. He thought he was alone in the world and had to solve his problem by himself.

> . . . . Leventhal was reasonable enough to admit obligation to Williston by finding fault with him. He had never been able to repay him. Was he looking for a chance to cancel the debt? . . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 83)

Neither could he explain his problems to his close friend, Harkavy, because he was not sure if Harkavy would think in the same way like him, and he was also afraid Harkavy might think differently from him. If he told Harkavy everything that had happened to him, Harkavy's reaction would make him feel worse than it was before. Because of his mistrust in other people, he could not establish a contact with them.

> . . . ."There's no secret to keep. It's nothing like that." Glancing at his friend, he hesitated, dissatisfied. Would it be worthwhile to explain the whole matter to Harkavy? He was warmhearted and a sincere friend, but he frequently put emphasis on the wrong things. . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 74)

Wilhelm, in Seize the Day, had no friends, except his own father. They saw each other only at breakfast time, during which his father usually boasted to his friends about Wilhelm's income. His father usually asked his friends to have meals with them. But Wilhelm did not like to have meals with other people; he only wanted to have meals with his father. He needed his father's sympathy, but he did not get this from him. However, his father had warned him about Tamkin, but he did not listen to his father's words because Tamkin gave him everything he could not get from his father, except money. Because of his lack of education, Wilhelm thought his father did not trust him, and he usually thought differently from the others in his family. Although he was

surrounded by many people, he still felt he had no one whom he could really talk to. He was lonely, and felt no one understood him.

Apart from the feeling of loneliness, these characters also felt alienated because their mode of thinking and ideas are different from those of other people.

Joseph, in Dangling Man, felt he and his wife were incompatible in their ideas, and this often leads to his having a quarrel with her several times over trivial matters. For example, his wife disliked the books he read, and she refused to read even when he had tried hard to persuade her to do so. He also thought she discouraged talk so he stopped talking to her and confiding in her. Whenever he had problems, he would keep them to himself and never mentioned them to her. This is partly because he was afraid of her cool reaction and partly because he was afraid of failure in getting the message across to her.

> She has a way about her that discourages talk. We no longer confide in each other; in fact, there are many things I could not mention to her. . . . .
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 12)

Furthermore, Joseph thought his wife ignored him and did not care about him. And this made him feel worthless.

> ". . . . Lately, for all you care, I might just as well not be here. You pay no attention to what I say. If I didn't come home for a week you wouldn't miss me."
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 94)

Because he did not communicate well with his wife, he was accused by her of having thought only of himself. When she needed him to help her look for the book she had misplaced somewhere, he did not help her. He did not dare to tell her that he had lent it to another woman. He kept silent and said nothing. Because he did not tell her the truth, his wife did not understand why he did not help her, and this finally caused them to quarrel.

Joseph's ideas and beliefs also differ from those of his brother, Amos. Whereas Amos thought of a good and decent job and a wealthy status, Joseph thought of using his skills to gain wealthy status and job security. Advised by his brother to marry a rich woman, Joseph refused to listen to him and married Iva, an ordinary woman instead. When Amos offered him a good position in his business, Joseph refused to accept it and applied to work at Inter American Travel Bureau. Greatly disappointed with Joseph, Amos still tried to help his brother in several ways. However, what he did not know was that Joseph suffered from his help because Joseph thought Amos was interfering with his life, and this offended him.

We have been in fairly good terms since, however strange
He thinks my choice of occupation and my ways. He tries not to
Disapprove of me too openly; but he has never learned that I resent
His way of questioning me when we meet.

(Dangling Man. Bellow. 59)

Joseph did not like to explain his action to people when he was certain he was right. His silence caused other people to misunderstand him. For example, when he was accused by his niece for punishing her, he did not explain causing his brother and his sister-in-law to misunderstand him because he did not care about the consequences the incident had brought on him. Even though his wife tried to persuade him to tell his brother and his sister-in-law how aggressive his niece was, he refused to do so. This made them angry because they did not understand why Joseph punished their daughter.

"Tell us, what was it? Nobody says you're a thief."
"It's what you're thinking. It's clear enough to me"
(Dangling Man. Bellow. 73)

After he had been out of work, his brother had sent him checks with a large amount of money. However, Joseph returned them immediately. He did not see the goodwill extended to him by his brother. His brother thought of the future but he thought of living day to day.

> ". . . . There are many people, hundreds of thousands, who have had to give up all thought of future. There is no personal future any more. That's why I can only laugh you when you tell me to look out for my future in the Army, in that tragedy. . . . ."
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 65)

From the discussion above, it can be seen that Joseph was estranged from his wife and his brother because he did not trust them. Had he confided in them and told them what he thought, they would have been willing to help him succeed. Later, when he pulled himself together and told his wife what he had done and what he wanted to do, his wife decided to help him because she began to understand him.

Like Joseph, Asa, in The Victim, did not have compatible ideas with the members of his family and with his acquaintances. He did not have a good relationship with his sister-in-law, his brother, his superior and even with his close friend, Harkavy. Asa had to take care of his brother's family because his brother worked in another town. He wanted to take his sick nephew to hospital, but his sister-in-law, Elena, wanted to keep her sick son at home and bring the doctor in to cure him. Refusing to listen to Elena, Asa took his sick nephew to hospital. When his sick nephew died, he felt guilty and tried to avoid meeting Elena. Because of this incident, he thought Elena hated him and accused him of being the cause of her son's death.

> . . . . Elena was bound to blame him and her mother sure to egg her on. He had argued for the hospital, he had brought the specialist; he had meddled. The old lady did not matter, but his dread of Elena was intense.
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 146)

In addition, he had different ideas from those of his brother, Max. He thought Elena, Max's wife, was insane and that Max was in trouble with Elena. When he told Max about Elena's stubbornness, Max did not listen to him. He told Asa that his wife was a sane woman. She was only sad because of her son's death, and she would soon recover, and Max was in trouble with her because she did not want to live in another town with him. And when Asa warned him to beware of his mother-in-law, Max answered that she was only an old lady who could not harm anyone. Even though his mother-in-law disliked him, she helped him look after his house during the time he was in trouble. Max did not believe what Asa had told him because Asa did not reveal to Max what had really happened to him. This causes him to isolate himself from his brother.

> Leventhal hesitated. 'Once in a while, she does . . . But you admit you have trouble with her.'
>
> "What do you expect? She carries on. Sure she carries on. It's a kid, after all. That hits. But she'll be all right. She's getting better already."
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 194)

Moreover, he also lost his contact with his boss, Mr. Beard. He thought Mr. Beard did not like him as he did not appreciate his work and he usually criticized Asa when talking to the people in his office. When Asa received Elena's call, he asked Mr.Beard for permission to leave early. However, Mr.Beard refused to let him go. Angry with Mr. Beard's decision, Asa decided to leave without his boss's permission. This caused Mr. Beard to get angry and he complained about it to Mr. Fay. Having heard what Mr. Beard said about him, Asa was very nervous and quickly stepped out of the office.

> 'It's a family emergency,' said Leventhal.
> 'Can't it wait a few hours?'
> 'I wouldn't go if I thought it could.'
> Mr.Beard . . . . 'Use your own judgment,' he said.
> (The Victim. Bellow. 10)

Had Asa explained what a family emergency was and why he had to hurry, Mr.Beard might have understood him and let him go without getting furious. Since Asa did not say anything about his family to his colleagues, no one knew anything about him. They all misunderstood him and thought it was nonsense to leave in the middle of work.

> 'Walks out right in the middle of everything. Right in a pinch. With everybody else swamped.' . . . . Mr.Fay . . . . answered, 'It's funny that he should just pick up and go. There must be something up.'
> (The Victim. Bellow. 11)

As for Mr. Fay, Asa was not pleased with him either, because he went along with Mr. Beard when the latter blamed him. However, thinking that it would not hurt to have a friend in his office, Asa thought Mr. Fay was decent and he seemed to understand him. He always warned him or gave him advice about work, but Mr. Fay disappointed him. In Asa's view, Mr. Fay was no different from the others in the office. When Asa decided to tell his story to him, Mr. Fay quickly turned his back on him. This made Asa feel wretched; he hoped that Mr. Fay would help him solve his problems or at least listen to his troubles, but Mr. Fay merely treated him as one of his colleagues in the office.

Since Asa did not communicate his true feeling to other people, they did not understand him. For example, Harkavy very often did not understand what Asa said and needed. When he was asked to introduce Allbee to Shifcart, Harkavy did not understand why Asa had to help Allbee. Harkavy accused Asa of sending Allbee to Shifcart on purpose, but Asa denied it, saying he only needed to rid Allbee off. Although Harkavy did not understand what it was Asa wanted, he tried to give him advice on how to get rid of Allbee. However, Asa did not listen to Harkavy, and he tried to solve his problem by himself. Believing it was a mistake to tell Harkavy about his family, his wife, his mother and all of his personal problems, he felt Harkavy was not the person whom he could rely on in time of trouble.

> 'No, nothing . . . I've been having a lot of trouble. My family - you heard about that. And Mary's away, that's been hard on me, too. My nerves aren't in very good shape. I feel I've been trying to throw something off. You aren't being very helpful. Just let me alone to handle this in my own way.'
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 213)

Although Harkavy tried to persuade him to forget about Allbee's problem, Asa refused to listen to him. Moreover, he was disappointed with Harkavy for not giving support when he needed it. In fact, Harkavy did not understand what he really needed.

In Seize the Day, Wilhelm did not have a good relationship with his father. Their ideas were different in many ways. His father wanted his children to go to college, but Wilhelm did not want to. He wanted to be an actor so he dropped out of school. His father was unhappy about Wilhelm's decision; he objected to it, but Wilhelm did not take heed of his father's feeling. He ran away to Hollywood and there he changed his job several times, and finally he lost his job and had to go back to live with his father. To support his wife and his children, he thought of earning more money from stock speculation. His father did not like the idea, and warned Wilhelm not to listen to Tamkin who pretended to be good to him. But Wilhelm did not believe him; he still trusted Tamkin and speculated in the stock market. Not only did his father help him, but he also complained about his welfare. His father did not sympathize when he asked for help or advice; he only nodded as he did with his patients. When his father boasted about his position to his

friends, and tried to make Wilhelm look good before the other people, this made Wilhelm feel nervous, helpless, and depressed because he was not what his father said he was. And because his father did not give him a chance to convey his thought, Wilhelm could not communicate his feelings to his father and felt that he was left alone in the world. Thus, he turned to Tamkin and was cheated by Tamkin.

> "My son is a sales executive. He didn't have the patience to finish school. But he does all right for himself. His income is up in the five figures somewhere."
>
> (Seize the Day. Bellow. 230)

It can be seen from the discussion above that the protagonists are alienated from others because of their loneliness and incompatibility of ideas with those of other people. Joseph in Dangling Man was lonely because he did not communicate his feelings to the others, even to his wife. However, at the end of the novel, he could adjust himself to the society by establishing a genuine relationship with other people such as his wife. He told her what he had done and what he wanted to do, his wife began to understand him and help him succeed in what he needed. This made him feel his life was still meaningful. He did not have to isolate himself from his wife and other people again, and he was able to communicate his feelings to them. Like Joseph, Asa in The Victim, felt lonely and alienated from others because he thought it was not necessary to reveal his personal problems to other people. But later, when he revealed some of the problems to Harkavy and asked him for help, he felt

relieved. Even though Harkavy did not help him with what he had asked, he gave him some advice that made him find the way to solve his problems. Finally his wife came back to him; his family became whole again because his wife understood him. Moreover, he had a better life and a better job. But Wilhelm in Seize the Day, who was lonely like Joseph and Asa, was unable to find the way to solve his problems since he could not find a way to communicate his ideas with his father and did not convey his feelings or his troubles to him. He still thought of solving his problems by himself; he had never believed in his father's instruction or advice since his youth. So his father refused to help him when he needed help. His father thought Wilhelm would not follow his advice. If Wilhelm had believed in his father, his father would have been more willing to help him in time of his trouble.

### 3. Alienation from Work

Alienation from work refers to the condition in which a person does not feel satisfied with his work; he feels he lacks the opportunity to attain his potential; thus, he cannot realize his dream. He has to work purely for economic reasons, and this has stunted his growth toward self-realization. This kind of alienation stems from either dissatisfaction with work, or an inability to realize his own potential, or powerlessness.

Dissatisfaction with work is the condition in which a person feels his work has strangled him and does not give him any pleasure or satisfaction.

An inability to realize his own potential is the condition in which a person cannot utilize his own skills in performing his job. He also feels powerless because he is not in control of the process of life, and he is under the control of other people.

In the three novels of Saul Bellow, the protagonists are alienated from their work in many different ways. It can be analyzed as follows:

After resigning from his work at the Inter-American Travel Bureau, Joseph in Dangling Man had to wait for the Army's call for induction; he did not have anything to do, except some odd jobs for his wife which he did not want to do because they were boring and unchallenging. For example, he had to cash the checks for her several times, and every time he had several problems at the bank. Because of this, he tried to avoid going to the bank again in spite of his wife encouraging him to go there.

> ". . . . You take it for granted that I have nothing to do. Every morning you leave half a dozen orders for me. And just A while ago you mentioned that I read papers."
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 178)

However, eventually he had to keep on doing them so he became bored because he was unable to utilize his own potential. He tried to find another job to do, but he could not find it. Unable to find a more challenging job, he was forced to keep on doing his wife's errands. Unhappy with the job, he tried to avoid doing it. However, he did not explain to her why he was unwilling to help her. This made his wife get angry and misunderstand him. However,

when he was finally drafted into the army, he felt he could utilize his own potential. And this helps ease his mind. Although the writer did not tell us about Joseph's life after this, it is more likely that he will be satisfied with his work in the Army. This is because he was cheerful after receiving the letter from the Army at the end of the novel, and he was willing to respond to the Army's call.

Before working at Burke-Beard and Company, Asa in The Victim had changed his work several times. He used to work for an auctioneer, until old Harkavy died. He was out of work for a while, and then he worked as a shoe salesclerk, and then as a clerk in a hotel. After that he was put on a civil-service list and then he was sent to the Baltimore regulations. When he heard young Harkavy had started a trade paper, he resigned from his old job and came to work with young Harkavy, thinking he could handle this job. However, he soon became disappointed. Harkavy could not help him because he had no experience. At that time jobs were scarce, and a person who had had no experience or no influential back up had no chance of getting a job in New York. Fortunately, Asa was able to get one at Williston's office, though temporarily, and later he worked at Burke-Beard and Company. This made him feel satisfied at first because he thought he could use his own skills in performing his job.

'I was lucky. I got away with it.'

(The Victim. Bellow. 22)

But later he became disappointed because he felt restricted in the freedom to express his ideas and thought in his work and had some negative attitudes towards his supervisor, Mr. Beard, who had never appreciated anyone's work. Having his work finished, Asa showed it to Mr. Beard and asked him for his comment, but Mr. Beard only looked at his work with his displeasure and said nothing. It made Asa question why he had to tolerate working with him. He never thanked Asa, or his people, even though he appreciated their loyalty and hard work.

> 'Well, can I handle your goddamned job?' Leventhal wanted to ask. He did not say this, he looked casual. Nevertheless a deep quiver of vindication went through him. . . . . .
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 141)

Since he was not recognized by his boss, he became indignant, disappointed, and bored. And this undermined his enthusiasm to work and his willingness to perform his best. Besides, he felt he could not make a decision to do what he wanted to do. This caused him to feel meaningless because he could not control the process of his work. However, he finally was able to attain his potential after he had resigned from Burke-Beard and Company and worked at Antique Horizons.

Like Asa, Wilhelm in Seize the Day is in the same situation; he was not pleased with work and could not utilize his own ability. He wanted to become an actor, but the agency refused to accept him. So he had to find several jobs to do – jobs that weren't challenging and stimulating. He kept changing his

job whenever he felt bored with it until finally he had no job to do at all. When he had the last sum of money left, he used it in stock speculation to earn a quick income. But he did not succeed because he had no experience in speculation and had to rely on Tamkin to do it for him. When Tamkin cheated him, he was disappointed because he trusted Tamkin. He also felt powerless because he realized that he was under Tamkin's control and his destiny was not in his own hand. He could not struggle to survive in this world. Moreover, when he turned to his father for help, his father refused to give him what he needed. It caused him to feel hopeless and decide to commit suicide at the end of the novel.

> . . . . I was the man beneath; Tamkin was on my back, and I thought I was on him. He made me carry him, too, besides Margaret. . . . .
>
> (Seize the Day. Bellow. 308)

It can be seen from the discussion above that the protagonists are alienated because of either their dissatisfaction with work, or their inability to realize their potentials, or their powerlessness. Joseph in Dangling Man became dissatisfied with his work; he had to do menial, boring, and unchallenging jobs for his wife while waiting for the Army's call, and he had several problems. Besides being unemployed, he felt he had lost the opportunity to realize his ability. Thinking the people around him refused to give him the chance to do the work that made him utilize his own ability, he became powerless. Because of this, he felt his life was meaningless and

worthless. But later, after having received the Army's call, he became excited and hopeful since he thought he would have something to do in the Army to restore himself – his identity and self-esteem. Asa in The Victim could not accomplish what he wanted to accomplish in his job even though he tried to convey his ideas to his supervisor several times. It made him feel frustrated and dissatisfied with his job since he was not in the control of his work. However, at the end of the novel it is more likely he will feel better; he had changed his work, and it seems that he had got a good chance to use his potential at Antique Horizons. But Wilhelm in Seize the Day felt powerless; he was unemployed and could not control the process of his life. His destiny depended on Tamkin and his father. If Tamkin was really good to him, or his father had given him a chance to express his feelings, he could have survived and lived a better life. At the end of his life, he still felt hopeless; no one understood him and was unwilling to help him.

4. **Alienation from Social Values**

Alienation from social values is the condition in which a person cannot accept and conform to the values and norms in his society. He rejects these values and norms because he thinks they benefit certain groups of people; they do not benefit everybody in society. Thus, he feels unhappy to conform to them and insists on adhering to his own judgment and beliefs.

In the three novels of Saul Bellow, this kind of alienation was found to stem from the values of the characters, which clash with those of the society

and which lead to deviant behaviors that later develop into a feeling of alienation. The following are the analyses of alienation as revealed through the characters of Joseph in Dangling Man, Asa Leventhal in The Victim, and Tommy Wilhelm in Seize the Day:

Though the writer did not tell us explicitly, Joseph in Dangling Man seemed not to accept the standards or the rules held by most people in his society. We were told that Joseph was not happy to accept these social norms because he realized that those norms were not what he expected, and that they restricted his freedom to seek happiness (26). When he knew he had to wait for the Army's call, he went back to his old office to ask for his job back but his attempt was rejected. He tried to look for other jobs, but he, again, failed; no one would help him. Therefore, he had to stay at home and help his wife do her errands. In spite of his frustration, he had to do them so that he could be on good terms with his wife. After having realized this self-disintegration, he tried to regain his self-confidence.

> Partly, I say. And here I feel it necessary to revive Joseph, that creature of plans. He had asked himself a question I still would like answered, namely, "How should a good man live; what ought he to do?"
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 39)

Feeling shameful for having lost his job, Joseph tried to avoid meeting his acquaintances; in his society the head of the family was the breadwinner of the family. Being unemployed, he felt denigrated and lost his self-confidence.

He was afraid his wife would think of him as the others did. As a result, Joseph developed a close relationship with Kitty Daumler who was willing to listen to him and he visited her several times. However, after having realized that it was against the social rules for a married man to have an intimate relationship with another woman besides his wife, he later stopped visiting her. This made him feel squirm and nervous; he thought these beliefs strangled him. Afraid of being exposed to ostracism, he did not tell any one about his new woman.

> "You're so attentive -. I regarded politics on an inferior activity. Plato tells us that it everything were as it should be, the best men would avoid office, not vie for it."
>
> "They did once vie for it."
>
> "They did. Public life is disagreeable. It's forced on me."
>
> (Dangling Man. Bellow. 138-139)

Like Joseph, Asa in The Victim was alienated from his cultural and social norms as a result of his disappointment and failure. With his skills, he was certain to get a decent job, so he refused to listen to Williston who told him about the slight chances for an inexperienced person with no strong references to get a job in New York. When he went to apply for a job at Dill's Weekly, he was turned down; Rudiger, the owner of Dill's, refused to give him a job and this made him feel humiliated.

> . . . . An experienced man might find something even now, in bad times. An inexperienced one didn't have a chance. unless by a freak – his shoe shone over the burnished heater – unless he knew someone very influential.
>
> (The Victim. Bellow. 21)

Later, he worked at Williston's office only briefly before moving to work at Burke-Beard and Company as an editor. At first, he was happy. But later he realized that he could not get along with his boss who would not let him work up to his ability. This made him feel unhappy; he felt restricted in his freedom of expression. However, because of his experience as an editor, he was able to get a better job at Antique Horizontal after he had resigned from Burke-Beard and Company.

In Seize the Day, Wilhelm rejected the values which his father had defined for him. His father wanted Wilhelm and his sister to go to college, but Wilhelm dropped out of school in order to be an actor. Unfortunately, his attempt was unsuccessful. He changed his jobs several times. Unable to tolerate any troubles and to devote himself to his work, he could no longer work at any place for very long. Because of his limited education, he could not get good jobs except menial ones. Having failed and lost his job, he finally decided to earn a quick income in the stock market, hoping that he would get more money. Again, he failed. Even though his father warned him about the speculation, Wilhelm was still determined to take the risk in this way. As a result, he lost all of his money.

> "You make too much your problems," said the doctor. "They ought to be returned into a career. Concentrate on real troubles-fatal sickness, accidents." The old man's whole manner said, Wilky, don't start this on me. I have a right to be spared.
>
> (Seize the Day. Bellow. 257)

Moreover, Wilhelm refused to hold on to the traditional belief that a married man cannot have any extramarital relationship with another woman; he had an affair with a new woman, Olive, and lived with his new woman at her parents' house while he was still married to his wife. So he and Olive encountered many problems since their neighbors did not accept them. Even though Olive's father understood them, he was still worried and warned Wilhelm about his daughter's feelings. Wilhelm realized that her father was right when they went to church late one day-- the people at the church stared and whispered bad things about them. Olive felt so shameful that she could not stand the gossip and ran away from the church. Had Wilhelm and Olive waited for the divorce, they might not have had any problems like this. However, his wife, Margaret, did not give him a divorce, so Wilhelm and Olive had to live together without the benefit of the church. This indicates he rejected the social norms.

> Olive's father was a decent old guy, an osteopath, and he understood what it was all about. Finally he said, "See here, I have to

advise Olive. She is asking me. I am mostly a freethinker myself, but the girl has to live in this town."

(Seize the Day. Bellow. 298)

It can be seen from the discussion above that the protagonists in the three novels of Saul Bellow were alienated because of their rejection of the social values. Joseph in Dangling Man rejected the social values because he was unhappy to conform to them. However, he could adjust himself to these values in order to restore his own self. Asa in The Victim did not accept the social values because of his over self-confidence, but later he realized he was wrong; his experience he got from his old job helped him get a better one. But Wilhelm in Seize the Day could not adjust himself to the social values; he still thought of earning his money in speculation, and his neighbors did not accept his extramarital relationship. Both of these led him to many problems for which he could not find the solutions.

The themes of alienation in the three novels were different from one another because of their different conditions. In each novel, the protagonist showed us how he was alienated from his surroundings and beliefs that affected his life and inspired his thought, framed his worldview and then affected his behavior.