

**A Thematic Study of *Seize the Day* and the Meaning of the Time**

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## Contents

Introduction	4
Chapter 1 Wilhelm's external and internal environment	10
Chapter 2 Nature of father and paternity	28
Chapter 3 The image of money	46
Chapter 4 Interpretation of final scene	64
Conclusion	80
Notes	88
Works cited and consulted	92

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## Introduction

It has been a long time since Jewish American writers flourish in American literature field. After the Second World War, their importance has become more and more larger in present American society. For example, there are such writers as these; Abraham Cahan(1860-1951)who was the first immigration generation, Saul Bellow(1915-2005)and Bernard Malamud(1914-86)who were the second immigration generation, Philip Roth(1933-)who is the third immigration generation, and Harold Jaffe(1945-)and David Matlin(1944-)who are the post-modernism generation. All these writers take over Jewish inheritance in American literature from past to present-day society.

Among these Jewish American writers, it is Bellow who is sparkling a much brighter shine. Bellow had continued to publish masterpieces in American literature after the publication *Dangling Man*(1944). Among his masterpieces, the largest masterpiece must be *Seize the Day*(1956) if we consider of the work's structure, symbolism, closeness, and theme. One of the reasons why

Bellow received the Nobel Prize was this: he understood and analyzed the contemporary humanity and culture in profound and extremely careful manner. *Seize the Day* is suitable for this evaluation. The following works such as *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) and *Herzog* (1964) treat the quest for the meaning of man and existence. *Mr. Sammler's Planet*(1970) ends in the scene of mourning for a dead person by the individual. The theme of existence and individual in *Seize the Day* plays a foreboding role for following works. So that, I think the appreciation of *Seize the Day* can give birth to a understanding of global appearance of Saul Bellow's works in his later years. In this sense, my argument about *Seize the Day* has a important meaning.

A lot of critics interpret *Seize the Day* in many ways. Especially about ending and theme, their opinions differ from future-expecting to tragedy. Robert Dutton interprets this work as future-expecting. He thinks Wilhelm experiences baptism in funeral scene and heads for a kind of peace, getting over the lament(90). Herbert Gold writes about *Seize the Day* like this: " there is a redeeming power in self-knowledge, and a redeeming pleasure(69). Julius Raper says Wilhelm experiences " collective mind " (83) and " through this realization,

free[s] himself of their destructive personal influence ” (83) by watching other people’s coffin. Gilbert Porter thinks Wilhelm experiences a “possibility of communion ” (70) and goes to regeneration.

Although there are not so many studies of tragic ending or tragic theme, L.H. Goldman says Wilhelm “ has still perverted selfhood with self-centeredness and self-pity(82) in funeral scene and he has “ not been able to seize the day ” (82). Wilhelm “ sees what is in front of him: today’s problem, the rent bill, money for his wife and children, the tears that are flooding his eyes ” (83). He thinks this is the reason for Wilhelm’s tragedy.

Robert Kiernan writes about Wilhelm tragedy, touching on narrator and quotation of poem in this work.

...because the narrator must still be understood as imitating Wilhelm’s sensibility, the parallel to *Lycidas* should be understood as Wilhelm’s own contrivance and the passage should be understood as mocking Wilhelm’s sense of himself as a drowning man. His sense of histrionics rather than instinct for regeneration causes Wilhelm to embrace the destructive element he otherwise avoids. (75)

Furthermore, Brooks Bouson says about the final scene though he hints the future-expecting factor.

While the closure can be viewed as reparative gesture derived from Bellow's need to rescue the troubled self of anti-hero, it also can be read as a reaction formation against his covert desire to "kill off" his hapless character.(97)

Bouson thinks that Wilhelm "kill[s] off" himself and "abandon[s] Wilhelm" (97), so he reaches to the pure ending which does not contain future factors.

Michael Shields concludes the last scene as "left unstated" (61) and explains as follows.

The narration brings Tommy[Wilhelm] "toward" a consummation, but reader is not made privy to its achievement, nor, indeed, to whether such a consummation takes place or to take place.(61)

As mentioned above, there are many kinds of interpretation about the last scene or theme, but the aim of this thesis is to prove *Seize the Day* is a work of tragedy. If we think of the social environment where

*Seize the Day* was published, I must say this work is dealing with the mental crisis of contemporary human and gives some message to society by representing tragedy.

The title of this work, *Seize the Day* has a impression of powerful and active words, but a careful reading and analyzing of the work enables us to notice a lot of contradictory factors of protagonist Wilhelm. Wilhelm prays in the final paragraph of chapter 1.

“ Oh, God, ” Wilhelm prayed. “ Let me out of my trouble. Let me out of my thoughts, and let me do something better with myself. For all the time I have wasted I am sorry. Let me out of this clutch and into a different life. For I am all balled up. Have mercy. ” (22)

This is certainly a symbolic utterance meaning tragedy by Wilhelm, because the utterance represents “ mercy ” in contrary to “ seize ” of this work’s title. Title hints the active and positive nuance, but “ mercy ” is passive and negative nuance. This utterance implies about Wilhelm’s impossibility of decision-making at his will by showing the opposite concept to the title. Bellow tells us that *Seize the Day* includes, as it were, naturalistic



factor by showing protagonist's impossibility of decision-making in the first chapter. Wilhelm admits that "there's really very little that a man can change at will" (21). Wilhelm "can't change his lungs, or nerves, or constitution or temperament" (Kiernan 60).

I want to clarify the meaning of time of *Seize the Day* by proving that this is not the work of future-expecting, but the work of tragedy. In four chapters, I carry about the aim above. In chapter 1, I show that Wilhelm is in the tragedy by explaining his external and internal environment. In chapter 2, I explain about the father concept in this work. In chapter 3, I point out the money function of the work. In chapter 4, I discuss the disputable final scene of funeral and connect to the conclusion.

## Chapter 1

## Wilhelm's external and internal environment

The external environment of Wilhelm must be crisis in itself and of itself. He has no job even though he is in mid-forty. He lives away from wife and children, but does not divorce. He can not pay even for the room rent of hotel where also his father lives. He can not expect the desirable result of seven hundred dollars investment which is all he has. His wife always requests for money payment. His father Adler doesn't help him although Adler is a rich and excellent gentleman.

In addition of these present crisis, his life so far has been series of failures. Maurice Venice who is an actually pimp tempted Wilhelm to take camera test, but the result was not suitable for him. His quit of college and going to Hollywood was also a big mistake. Wilhelm admits that his change of name to Tommy Wilhelm was "mistake" (21). He had made up his mind not to get married with Margaret, but eventually got married after elopement. As these, Wilhelm "After[after] much thought and hesitation and debate he invariably took the course he had rejected innumerable times" (19). "Ten such decisions made up the history of his life" (19).

These serial failures and external crisis have influence on Wilhelm's mental condition. He thinks of himself as a social loser. Wilhelm sympathizes with Venice who was indicted for mediation of prostitution and "often thought that he might write him a letter to say how sorry he was" (20) and experiences the "great sympathy" for Venice, overlapping Wilhelm himself as a "obscure failure" (17) with Venice.

He looks "much younger than his years" (3) and in his college days, he "could charm a bird out of a tree" (3) and even now he can do that. He is in fact "very attractive", but how about his own estimation of himself?

You had no allow for the darkness and deformations of the glass, but he thought he didn't look too good. A wide wrinkle like a comprehensible bracket sign was written upon his forehead, the point between his brows, and there were patches of brown on his dark-blond skin. He began to be half amused at the shadow of his own marveling, troubled, desirous eyes, and nostrils and his lips. Fair-haired hippopotamus!-that was how he looked himself.(4)

Although he is actually very attractive, Wilhelm thinks of himself as these mentioned above. Wilhelm is not only a social loser, but also a mental loser who despises oneself as worthless.

Keith Opdahl says that one of the theme about *Seize the Day* is “ fulfillment of personal needs on strangers ” (86). Wilhelm asks for foundation of heart on others, but this is a one-way asking, not reciprocal and heart-to-heart exchange with each other. Wilhelm who is a mental loser can not have mental capacity which enable him to accept other's demand of heart. He only wants to ask, but does not want heart-to-heart exchange. By this characteristic, he can not build the desirable relationship with others. As Gold says, Wilhelm is “ grasping wildly for significant relationship with himself and with others ” (86). The reason why Wilhelm can not have reciprocal relationship with others is external factors of failure mentioned above, such as age, unemployment, wife, children, money, father, frustration of dream, dropout of college, failure of marriage, and so on.

Wilhelm can not have reciprocal relationship with others and by this, he heads for inner and inner world of himself. Consciousness of Wilhelm who is a mental loser

is inevitably about self-pity. Goldman says that “ only feeling he displays is that of self-pity ” (72). Wilhelm continues to appeal to Adler for his plight. The clearest action of appeal is this scene. That is, Wilhelm grips up his own neck in front of father and explains about his miserable condition. He explains he is Margaret’s “ slave ” (45) and continues this extraordinary action until his face becomes red to blue and breathing becomes fierce. He despises himself as this, explaining he has no “ free ” (45) and citing courtroom which is authority concept.

The court says, ‘ You want to be free. Then you have to work twice as hard-twice, at least! Work! You bum. ’ (46)

Furthermore he admits himself that he “ has to sweat it out until he drops dead ” (46). But it is clear that this is not honest feeling but this is self-pity which turns to appeal to Adler. An appeal to Adler is also brought about by self-contempt. Adler says to Wilhelm who has pity on himself. “it[It]’s entirely your own fault. You don’t have to allow it ” (46). Wilhelm “ could not speak for a while ” (46) and felt shock until he

“ struggle[d] for breath and frowned ” (46). He expects for the words of sympathy but actually he is told the words of criticism on the contrary. Wilhelm’s lament becomes larger because this criticism points out the truth of himself. Wilhelm “ lost his head ” (46) and confided his heart to Adler with panting.

“ Oh, Dad, don’t give me that stuff, don’t give me that. Please don’t give me that sort of thing ” (46)

Adler can not understand Wilhelm’s trouble and “ never had any like them ” (46). Adler come[comes] from a different world “(46) and emphasizes on the difference of position from Wilhelm. Wilhelm doesn’t want to admit this truth though what Adler says is purely true. Wilhelm explains about Margaret’s defects desperately, referring to his dead mother, so to speak, an unreality.

“ Oh, how can you compare Mother, ” Wilhelm said.  
“ Mother was help to you. Did she harm you ever? ” (46)

Adler calmly rejects Wilhelm’s desperate entreaty,

saying that “ It[it] is only your side of things ” (46) and never be persuaded by Wilhelm. Although Wilhelm uses the word “ truth ” (46), he makes his appeal on basis of unreality which is dead mother and past impression about her. Wilhelm expects for sympathy, showing self-pity, but can not translate his desire into reality.

One point we must pay attention to about the action of gripping neck is conversation with Margaret on telephone in the final chapter. Here, Wilhelm explains about his economic and social plight to Margaret, but she does not accept his appeal. Wilhelm asks for love, saying the impossibility to pay the expense of child-brining, but can not get any sympathy from his wife. He tries to persuade her.

“ You must realize you’re killing me. You can’t be as blind as all that. Thou shalt not kill! Don’t you remember that? ” (109)

Wilhelm uses the word “ blind ”, but it’s he himself who is blind. He explains about his plight desperately, but he doesn’t try to get rid of his plight. As Margaret says, if he asks his former company to accept his employment again, the condition may turn to desirable

state. He is utterly “ blind ” about his own effort and doesn't help by himself.

Bellows uses the word “ kill ” in order to mean criticism on Wilhelm who uses this word for an accusation to Margaret.

The action that is forbidden by the commandment is murder, the premeditated taking of life. Killing, at times, is sanctioned, such as animals for food. . . .Margaret is interested in her own sustenance and the sustenance of her two sons. The term “ kill ” is appropriate because Tommy is no longer her husband, only an animal that provides for her.(Goldman 74)

Although what Wilhelm tries to explain seems to be sound, but that is nothing but the groundless appeal. He tries to persuade Margaret to admit her mistake by using the concept of God because he can not gain sympathy from Margaret with his showing self-pity.

“ . . . you are committing a crime against me. Before God - and that's no joke. I mean that. Before God! Sooner or later the boys will know



it. ” (110)

Wilhelm emphasizes his legitimacy, lining God and himself in the same place. This “ Before God ” is very remarkable. Wilhelm seems to say that Margaret is committing a crime from the point of God which is the absolute truth. But it's Wilhelm himself who speaks on the phone before Margaret. By using “ Before God ” , he tries to show that Margaret is talking with God and Wilhelm himself is the same as God. This is a purely unreasonable argument itself. My interpretation is not irrelevant because Wilhelm uses the phrase “Before God ” immediately after saying “ committing a crime against me ” .

This is the obvious scene which shows Wilhelm's irrelevance because he compares himself to God in the same line. He can not be accepted his self-pity, so he tries to line himself to God. In the final scene of chapter 1, and here chapter 7, he uses the mercy of God by making himself become God. This is the same concept of God's mercy in chapter 1 and here chapter 7.

Porter explains about these Wilhelm's plight and tries to show the water symbolism, using the definition of poetic image by Ezra Pound.<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm calls himself

hippopotamus which is an ugly water creature and thinks of himself as trifling (109). Venice who deceives Wilhelm into ruinous camera test is also the man suggesting water, because the name is the same spell of Italian city Venice, a water city (111). Venice is actually a wrongdoer who speaks painfully with the fatty voice and he is a drowning man. Wilhelm himself is also a drowning man who has quit college and eventually was cheated by Venice (111).

Wilhelm and water image appears in the first scene where he takes the elevator.<sup>4</sup> The elevator “ sank and sank ” (1) and Wilhelm notices the carpet “ billowed ” (1) to his feet in the lobby and “ drapes like sails ” shuts the sunlight. Passing through these water image, Wilhelm goes to Rubin’s shop. Rubin says about Wilhelm’s shirt as “ real knocked-out ” (3) and he praises Wilhelm as “ pretty sharp today ” (4). But in fact Rubin has “ poor eyes ” (4) and can not see the truth. Although Wilhelm feels comfortable by Rubin’s remark, his pleasure must be certainly groundless and temporary. Rubin knows that Wilhelm is in trouble about his investment only after Wilhelm tells him the closing price of former month which is shown on the newspaper *Tribune*. Rubin has “ poor eyes ” and can not know the truth. Rubin’s eyes are “ slack and lid-blinded ” (5) and his eyes are “ turned

elsewhere ” (5) during talking with Wilhelm.

We must pay attention to this Rubin's shop because we can find the land conception which functions as a help to Wilhelm who has water image or a drowning man.

Wilhelm who has no job goes “ out, out, out to attend to business ” (2) and “ getting out had in itself become the chief business ” (2). The present job Wilhelm does is buying in Rubin's shop and talking with him. Rubin's shop functions as a land which can save Wilhelm mentally.

Rubin's shop is a mental power which gives Wilhelm a sense of belonging to business. Without this shop, there is no job for Wilhelm who is a drowning man. Furthermore, Rubin's shop is also a land for Wilhelm who comes from hotel which has a water image.

Wilhelm is dependent on Rubin's shop as a mental rescue or land rescue, but how about in fact? Although Wilhelm finds a temporary pleasure after conversation with Rubin, eventually he comes to think of himself as a drowning man and a broken man. He concludes by himself that Rubin knows everything about him and knows his miserable condition.

“ That doesn't sound so good, ” said Rubin. He meant to be conversationally playful, but his

voice had no tone and his eyes, slack and lid-blinded, turned elsewhere. He didn't want to hear. It was all the same to him. Maybe he already knew, being the sort of man who knew and knew. (5)

It is interesting that this quotation is told in represented speech. Rubin's judge "That[that] doesn't sound so good" might not point out the reality though Wilhelm thinks Rubin sees through the fact. Rubin only talks with him as a clerk and for Rubin, Wilhelm is only a customer. Rubin only fits his talking to Wilhelm who says that he doesn't want the newspaper because he knows the closing price of lard. It is Wilhelm's arbitrary judge that Rubin knows everything about him. Wilhelm's judge of "being the sort of man who knew and knew" is from the mental condition as a drowning man. Wilhelm depends on Rubin's shop as a mental rescue, but in fact he can not find a mental rescue or a land rescue.

I can show that Wilhelm himself who is in trouble has a drawback, after these explanation mentioned above. Wilhelm who is a man of mental loser and a man of self-pity, must be "far from a blameless son" (Porter 110). Wilhelm has a image of loser in contrast of Adler who has

a image of honor.

Wilhelm changes his name into Tommy Wilhelm. What meaning does the change of name bring about to Wilhelm ? Of course Wilhelm changes his name so that he can change the image of a loser. Eventually this brings about no change, but he must want to only change the outer “ gesture ” (21). “ gesture[Gesture] ” is important. Wilhelm wants to change, but in fact, it’s only a “ gesture ” . He explains about himself who has changed his own name.

Wilhelm had always had a great longing to be Tommy. He had never, however, succeeded in feeling like Tommy, and in his soul had always remained Wilky. When he was drunk he reproached himself horribly as Wilky. (21)

Wilhelm doesn’t want the change at the back of his mind. Father has continued to call Wilhelm “ Wilky ” in more than forty years. This word “ wilky ” must mean the child conception of Wilhelm. Wilhelm is an adult, but he continues to call himself a name which associates a child. Wilhelm is, as Jonathan Wilson shows, an overgrown child (97).

We can find the meaning of this overgrown child in coke which Wilhelm loves very much. Coke has a lot of sugar and is a very sweet drink, so that many children love that. Coke associates children. Wilhelm orders a large size coke during breakfast with Perls and father. Perls is surprised at Wilhelm because he orders a large size coke in stead of orange juice. Wilhelm orders what he wants to drink and never thinks about circumstance, in addition, he orders a lot of quantity heartily. This behavior must be nothing but a child action.

Furthermore Adler explains that Wilhelm dealt with small chair, rocking horse, table, jungle gym, chute, swing, seesaw, and other child tools. This implies Wilhelm's state of overgrown child.

The action of participating in war also means the mental juvenility of Wilhelm. Because Wilhelm had family, he could have exemption of military service. But he participated in war and did the job which " clerk could have done " (50) and played a role in " Pacific theater " (50). As if Wilhelm wanted to say, the war could not be fought without him, he shifted his temporary passion and excitement into action. It is clear that this simplistic and no-result behavior represents the childish element of Wilhelm.

Rafael Behr says that “ humour is one of the cultural traits of which Jews are proud ” . This means that Wilhelm’s participating in war which he did with great seriousness turns out to be nothing but a black laughter and an ironical action eventually. Grown-up Wilhelm only did the job “ clerk could have done ” (50). At this point, Bellow gives an example of Jewish culture of humour, but he, at the same time, prepares for an irony. Wilhelm’s serious behavior only brings about a black humour with dark laughter.

Wilhelm who is an overgrown child especially emphasizes that he is a child of father. He says that he “ loved ” (47) his children and explains to Adler like this: “ I didn’t abandon them ” (47) and “ I’m your son ” (49). Wilhelm desperately wants his father to do the same attitude to him.

“ What do I expect ? ” said Wilhelm. He felt as though he were unable to recover something. Like a ball in the surf, washed beyond reach, his self-control was going out. “ I expect help ! ” (30)

We can speculate that “ something ” means his position as a son or an attribution of child. Wilhelm says to his

father, “ If[if] you outlive me, that’s perfectly okay by me ” (51). This utterance represents Wilhelm’s consciousness that he is a child of father during his lifetime and his hope of a continuous state of child. Bellow shows in his works that a lot of protagonists hope to return to childhood (Hyland 4), <sup>6</sup> and we can find the same structure in this protagonist Wilhelm.

It is obvious that Wilhelm’s obsession with child contains a kind of self-deception if we pay attention to present condition of Wilhelm. He is actually an adult, but pretends to be a child and tries to cling to that image. He deceives himself unconsciously.

His lie is not only for himself. He tells a lie even to others in order to keep his position. He deceives people around him and pretends to work though he has no job and lives idly. He tells a lie about his career of Rojaks. Even to Tamkin whom he asks for help, Wilhelm pretends to trust. Wilhelm continues to doubt Tamkin whom he gives his all money. After giving 1000 dollars check to Tamkin, he takes a defending means against Tamkin that he advances his receipt of check by one day before in advance of Tamkin. This behavior must show that Wilhelm pretend to trust in Tamkin. This is a symbolic action of deceit to others. Wilhelm doubts Tamkin like this.



It was conceivable that Tamkin was everything that he claimed to be, and all the gossip false. But was he a scientific man, or not ? If he was not, this might be a case for the district attorney's office to investigate. Was he a liar ? That was a delicate question. (54)

Bellow does not connect the screen industry of Hollywood with Wilhelm by chance. Hollywood and Jews are related deeply from the point of immigrants and wish for assimilation. Jews hoped for the assimilation and acceptance as immigrants and minority, and as Neal Gabler explains that “ the Hollywood Jews used their movies to promulgate to a genteel American vision—a powerful wish fulfillment. ” Not only from these historical background, in the real scene of Hollywood, Jews have a great influence on it. A famous actor Marlon Brando says in TV show of 1996 like this.

Hollywood is run by Jews; it is owned by Jews and they should have a greater sensibility.

There are a lot of examples which stand for the

relationship between Jews and Hollywood like this, but What does Hollywood or actor mean for Wilhelm? Wilhelm tried to become an actor and went to Hollywood to make that dream come true. Maurice Venice wheedled him into a despair. The end of dream is a part-time movie actor, an extra actor. What does the job mean for Wilhelm?

Wilhelm's past job also symbolizes the deceit to himself and others. He is a cinema actor. Job of actor is pretending to be true and value of this job lies in the realistic performance. If I use the rude representation, actors deceive audience or viewers, like what they are performing is perfectly true. They tells a lie to audience and viewers. It is clear that performance and deception have a similar meaning. "When it came to concealing his troubles, Tommy Wilhelm was not less capable than the next fellow" (1). This sentence of chapter 1 implies Wilhelm's deception to himself and others: he tries to cover his trouble and pretends to trust in others. This is a symbolic representation.

Furthermore, Wilhelm is not a real actor, but an extra. He can not find his position even in performance. We can notice the double deceit of Wilhelm. He does not even have a talent of pretending to be true. He thinks by himself that "he knew what acting should be" (1). He

works as a fake actor, but he fondly imagines that he can understand what an action should be though he does not actually put himself in this work. Here, we can find the Bellow's suggestion of double deception by Wilhelm.

I made clear what external circumstance of Wilhelm was and how this outer circumstance brought about on his mental condition. I explained that an external plight caused Wilhelm's self-pity and he was a drowning man who deceived himself and others, and also I showed the water image in this work. As mentioned above, it is clear that Wilhelm is in a miserable condition, if we thinks about outer and inner state of himself. Wilhelm is a lamentable protagonist. He is a sad actor in the tragic theater of *Seize the Day*.

## Chapter 2

## A Nature of father and paternity

A lot of critics point out that father and paternity play a important role in *Seize the Day*. This is proved by the fact that the conversation with Adler takes up many pages in this work. How about the relationship between Wilhelm and Adler? Wilhelm continues to appeal to his plight to his father, but Adler does not care about at all. He even despises his son. It is clear that the relationship between father and son is no desirable.

Adler is respected by many people as a doctor. Now he is away from a clinical position, but lives a graceful life as an old gentleman. His position is in contrast with Wilhelm. This is the second reason why Wilhelm feels antipathy with Adler, in addition of the reason why Adler does not help him.

The Hotel named Gloriana where Adler lives at present after his retirement implies the incompatible situation between father and son. Certainly the hotel living is in a sense convenient when an old man lives by himself. There is no need for worrying about meals, cleanup, and washing. Furthermore hotel staffs play a important role when troubles happen for an old man, so that anxiety seems

to decrease. Hotel Gloriana is, as it were, a first-rate nursing home for Adler.

But when we think about the hotel living from the point of oneness of family, there occurs a question. Although Wilhelm lives in the same hotel, hotel is the place where strangers share with each other. We can not put a hotel living and family feeling together. Hotel is the least place to give birth to a family concept. As I will explain in this chapter 2, Wilhelm is a character who puts emphasis on family. There seems to be a unburiable ditch between Adler and Wilhelm. Adler likes the place where the family feeling seems not to occur, and Wilhelm, on the contrary, emphasizes the family values. Although they live in the same place, they are living under different principle. Wilhelm feels antipathy toward Adler who doesn't help him and also feels a difference about the idea of family. Perhaps Wilhelm lives in the same hotel in order to approach Adler and share the family feeling with him. Wilhelm pays his hotel rent by himself. The reason why Wilhelm lives in the precious hotel where Adler lives must be clear: Wilhelm wants to be near father and wants to feel a family binding or wants to make Adler feel that feeling. Actually, he is in a plight about money. He sacrifices his money toughness so as to feel a family

binding. Wilhelm tries to bury the ditch between father and himself, but his effort seems not to bear fruits actually.

Julius Raper shows that the antipathy of Wilhelm to Adler is Oedipus complex. He explains Wilhelm continues to challenge Adler, but continues to be under the influence of father (75).<sup>7</sup> Oedipus complex is a psychological conception relating with mother. How Wilhelm and Adler respond to the dead mother, or what is their sentiment toward her?

In chapter 2, Wilhelm feels depressed when Adler can not answer the day of mother's death.

Yes, it was age. Don't make an issue of it, Wilhelm advised himself. If you were to ask the old doctor in what year he had interned, he'd tell you correctly. All the same, don't make an issue. Don't quarrel with your own father. Have pity on an old man's failing. (24)

This is the obvious scene that clarifies that Wilhelm feels a strong affection for the dead mother and his antipathy with Adler who doesn't feel anything about the dead wife.

But we can not say that Wilhelm only feels hate to Adler. Wilhelm also feels love to him. It is not because Adler doesn't help him but because Adler is indifferent toward him that Wilhelm reacts with father. If I use the other expression, Wilhelm is afraid of father's indifference. Love's opposite conception is not hate, but indifference. Hate is near to love, because the sentiment is concerned with the object. Wilhelm is " apt to lose control of himself " (26) when he talks with father because he feels father " forgot " (26) him and " like[liked] to get rid of " (26) him. Although Wilhelm continues to suffer, Adler " seemed unmoved " (26).

Wilhelm feels hate and love with father at the same time. It is called an ambivalent feeling in psychological term. This is a considerable fact. What is the Wilhelm's love toward father? Is this the power of father or a protection by dignity? It seems to be different.

It is mother's love that Wilhelm asks for Adler. Wilhelm says that he inherited the sensitive and tender heart, and broad-minded love from his mother. He expects this love to father. Wilhelm doesn't want money itself but love that is brought by money. A family love and parental love is much important to him than the money itself which enable Wilhelm to pay for the rent and

expense of bringing up children. Wilhelm wants the sense of belonging as a family.

This feeling is near to mother's wrapping love which he explains he inherited from his mother, and this is not the love of father which is represented by respect and dignity.

When mother died and a member of family disappeared, it was "the begging of the end" (25) to Wilhelm. When he lost the gentle, wrapping mother's love, such as the love of child-holding by Blessed Virgin Mary, "the begging of the end" starts for him. Wilhelm asks that lost maternity for father.

Daniel Fuchs explains about mother's love, referring to Erich Fromm's definition of love. He says that mother's love is "by its nature unconditional" (83). Wilhelm asks the unconditional love for Adler, but in fact he can not acquire it. He gives a condition to the love by money, but he can not get it.

A critic describes that Bellow shows the strong family sentiment in his works (Goldman 65), this trait is true of the protagonist of *Seize the Day*. Adler says that because of his great effort he could get success in his life and expects the same effort for Wilhelm. In fact, Adler was a son of nameless family which sold clothes. Adler



criticizes Wilhelm because he doesn't strive all his might, he can not get the chance. Wilhelm resists with Adler like this.

“ If anything, I tried too hard. I admit I made many mistakes. Like I thought I shouldn't do things you had done already. Study chemistry. You had done it already. It was in the family. ”  
(47)

He justifies his conduct giving his family. Needless to say, this is the symbolic scene which clarifies that Wilhelm's main sentiment is family. His love for children, his seeking of love for father, and his inherited love from the dead mother can be considered from the point of family concept. As Goldman says, Wilhelm has a strong family affection which Bellow shows in other work's protagonists (65). Wilhelm seeks for the broad-minded and wrapping love of dead mother, so to speak, maternity love as mentioned above, but he can not get this love. It is because this love is on the basis of dead people. An ideal brings about the ideal and Wilhelm makes the image of Blessed Virgin Mary about his mother. There is no reality about her, and only there is a romantic and

ideal image about her, as it were, the recollection of unrealistic mother.

We can not find the mother's name in this work. The recollection of dead mother doesn't tie in the reality. Wilhelm asks for this unreal love and seeks for this maternity love for his father. It is useless effort for him to do because he seeks for the basis of love which doesn't actually exist.

Here is a scene which displays Wilhelm's useless effort to get a maternity love from his father. Although it is a little bit long citation, I think this scene shows Wilhelm's uselessness very well.

Then Wilhelm had come back from the cemetery angry because the stone bench between his mother's and his grandmother's grave had been overturned and broken by vandals. " Those damn teen-age hoodlums get worse and worse, " he said. " Why, they must have used a sledge-hammer to break the seat smack in half like that. If I could catch one of them! " He wanted the doctor to pay for a new seat, but his father was cool to the idea. He said he was going to have himself cremated.(30)

“ the[The] stone bench between his mother’s and his grandmother’s graves ” is broken. It is the interesting expression, “ between ” . The stone which connect mother’s grave and grandmother’s grave is broken. This broken bench which is connected between mother’s and grandmother’s graves shows the disconnection of maternity. Mother and grandmother are representative of maternity. That is to say, the broken bench is the motif of Wilhelm. Wilhelm can not connect himself to maternity. This broken stone bench implies that he can not become the bridge to maternity.

Adler says he doesn’t pay the money to repair the bench. He is indifferent to repairing the bench which needs money. It is clear that this is near to Wilhelm’s situation to need money. The stone bench must be the motif of Wilhelm. Furthermore, Adler want to cremate himself, so that stone bench which is motif of Wilhelm has no relation to Adler. This implies Adler’s indifference to Wilhelm. As I said above, Wilhelm can not get the maternity love which is asked to his father.

It is Tamkin whom Wilhelm depends on because he can not get a true love. Wilhelm himself thinks of Tamkin as doubtful man, but he doesn’t leave from Tamkin. Tamkin plays a role of surrogate father in this work, as a

substitution of true father. A critic finds a kind of element in Tamkin's name itself. Tamkin is Tam-kin, that is to say, kin of Tom. This represents that Tamkin has blood reflection with Wilhelm (Kiernan 59).<sup>8</sup>

In fact, Tamkin is a mental basis for him, although that basis may be very unstable. The money which Wilhelm needs to get love from father has connection with the investment which he asks to Tamkin. If Tamkin deceives Wilhelm, he certainly becomes penniless literally and there is no hope for him. Wilhelm thinks of Tamkin as doubtful, but he can not leave from him. This sentiment is akin to the sentiment toward his father Adler. It is the ambivalent feeling.

Tamkin is a never reliable man. It is clear from the background which Tamkin explains about. He says he was a member of Detroit Purple Gang, psychiatrist in Spain, inventor on a unsinkable ship, technical consultant in the field of television, Greek teacher, stockbroker, analyst of psychology and others. He describes himself as he imagines freely.

The poem which Tamkin made represents his imagination most clearly. He makes the word hism and impresses himself as an imaginative man for the readers. He is a man of imagination and uses words skillfully. He lives in

the imagination world. Wilhelm is attracted to Tamkin because Wilhelm himself is a man of sentiment. Sentiment and imagination are near concepts. Tamkin is, as it were, an embodiment of heart power which Wilhelm depends on (Dutton 86). Wilhelm is also a dreamy person who has faith in this imaginative Tamkin. Tamkin had many kinds of jobs and his image is diversity and uncertainty. Wilhelm belongs to nothing and his image is also an uncertainty. Wilhelm relies on the uncertainty about his whale life.

This imaginative Tamkin gives an advice to Wilhelm in the contrary of his image of fancy. Here is that scene.

“ You have to pick out something that’s in the actual, immediate present moment, ” said Tamkin.

“ And say to yourself here-and-now, here-and-now, here-and-now. . . .You have to narrow it down, one item at a time, and not let your imagination shoot ahead. Be in the present. ” (85-6)

A man of imagination and fancy gives an advice to Wilhelm so that he must see the reality. The lard’s price is decreasing, but Tamkin doesn’t care about anything at all and says “ lard will go up ” (77). Tamkin says

Wilhelm must see the reality, but Tamkin himself doesn't see the reality. We can know the unreliable and powerless nature of Tamkin here.

As I said in chapter 1, Jewish culture has a strong attachment to humour. Mark Mietkiewicz says in *Canadian Jewish News* that “ There's [there's] a holy power to humor ” , but humor only causes a black laughter for Wilhelm who must rely on an unreliable man. Even if I admit the idea by Mietkiewicz that “ when something bad happens, humour keeps us from feeling that the bad is the only reality ” , that idea is based on the preface that there is actually “ something bad ” . In order to overcome the bad , there must be humor. If this attitude is looked on from other point of view, there is actually a disadvantage which needs humor. Bellow shows the latter idea. Wilhelm is actually in the disadvantage that he must rely on an unreliable Tamkin. This situation seems to readers a black laughter and black humor.

Tamkin cannot be relied on. Adler seems to find out the fact about Tamkin and makes a comment on him for Wilhelm.

“ Wilky, perhaps you listen too much to this Tamkin. He's interesting to talk to. I don't

doubt it. I think he's pretty common but he's a persuasive man. However, I don't know the reliable he may be. " (8)

Adler advises his son to be careful of this uncertain Tamkin though he is talkative and imaginative. This is Adler's intuitive utterance about Tamkin's nature as a respected man who is a doctor and gentleman for his son. Tamkin may be a doctor, but it is not a certain reality. Adler has the image of dignity, certainty, and reality, but Tamkin contrarily has the image of uncertainty, diversity, and imagination. Jonathan Wilson explains that Wilhelm and Tamkin mainly stand for sentiment, but Adler mainly stands for logic (96). It is reasonable and thinkable that Wilhelm is attracted to and depends on Tamkin who has the similar nature of sentiment.

I said in this chapter that Wilhelm seeks for maternity love to Adler. Wilhelm can find the same nature of sentiment as Wilhelm's in Tamkin. Wilhelm who can not get the maternity love is attracted to a man who is a man of heart and sentiment. This is the proof that Wilhelm expects for Tamkin to play a role of father. Wilhelm can not get the love from his true father, so that he depends on a surrogate father named Tamkin for acquiring that

love. Wilhelm asks for maternity love to Adler and he is attracted to Tamkin from the point of sentiment. Sentiment is usually a trait of women. Wilhelm can not get the maternity love which has a trait of female, and unconsciously depends on Tamkin who has a female trait of sentiment and who at the same time is a surrogate father. There seems to be few critics who study about Perls from the viewpoint of paternity. Perls is an old gentleman and lives in the same hotel of Adler as a friend. It is interesting hypothesis that Wilhelm feels some kinds of paternity to Perls or Bellow makes him feel that sentiment. Brooks Bouson says that Wilhelm feels the self-hatred when he met Perls because Perls's appearance seemed for him to be Wilhelm himself (88). I quote the Wilhelm's first impression of Perls.

“ Who is this damn frazzle-faced herring with his dyed hair and fish teeth and this drippy mustache? . . . How can a human face get into this condition. Uch! ” (28)

It is a terrible representation. This is nothing but hatred. Bouson describes this is Wilhelm's self-assessment, so from the interpretation of Bouson, I want



to pay attention to the relationship between Wilhelm and Perls.

Bouson explains about the first impression of Perls by Wilhelm, but he doesn't delve into the mental relation between them. We can find the mental relation between them. Perls's job is wholesaler dealing with clothes and Wilhelm's job was seller dealing with kid's playthings. Their job is selling commodities to others and they have the same trait of merchants. This is their first common characteristic.

Second is this. Wilhelm feels a special impression about Perls's teeth. Here is that scene.

Each of those crowns represented a tooth to the quick, and estimating a man's grief with his teeth as two per cent of the total, and adding to that his flight from Germany and probable origin of his wincing wrinkle, not to be confused with the wrinkles of his smile, it came to a sizable load. (28)

Wilhelm piles his own image on Perls's teeth. Wilhelm who is in lament also finds out the lament in Perls's teeth. Wilhelm tries to overlap himself with Perls by

interpreting Perls as having “ a sizable load ”

The third relationship between them is money. Wilhelm has a great hardship about money now and his day is moving from the point of investment on Tamkin. It is very obvious for us that money is the main interest for Wilhelm.

Perls's voice “ grew eagerly sharper ” (32) when Adler told a lie to him that Wilhelm's income reaches to five figures. As Wilhelm says, Perls wants to know the accurate income “ with a sort of hugging relish ” (32). Perls must be interested in money. But there is a difference between Wilhelm and Perls. Wilhelm is devoid of money, but for Perls money is the thing to deal with, so to speak, the means dealing with business, though Perls is interested in that. Although there is the different attitude toward money between them, it is a clear fact that both of them have the money-oriented interest in common.

Furthermore, We can find the relationship between them in the role of Perls. Adler deceives about son's background and tries to make himself look better, on the other hand Wilhelm tries to adapt to Adler's talking. Perls doesn't notice about the lie of them. He, rather, sympathizes with their story. Perls is made to know by

Adler's explanation that Wilhelm experienced any kinds of things, and says to Wilhelm that " I[he] can understand how you feel " (34). Perls who doesn't notice what is going on in front of him, that is a reality, is very similar to Wilhelm who doesn't see the reality, making self-deceit. Perls can not understand the truth, and Wilhelm doesn't try to see the reality. This is a similar condition for both of them.

We can know Perls's unreality in his story of leave in Florida. He suggests to Wilhelm that he should get a leave because he thinks it is very needed to get that for life. He explains that mangoes are delicious and it is like in India. What he describes about the land as " fairyland " is remarkable. " fairyland[Fairyland] is a imaginative land and we can trace from his story the nature of unreality of himself symbolically.

I explained of Perls's job, appearance, interest for money, and unreality as mentioned above. It is remarkable that other element of job and unreality are both products of Wilhelm's imagination. There are incidental relationship from the imagination by Wilhelm. Wilhelm's internal mind is reflected on Perls's assessment and this mental relationship appears between them.

Bouson studied that Wilhelm read Perls's appearance as

self-assessment of Wilhelm himself. From Bouson's study, I explained about other relationship between Perls and Wilhelm. In the first place of this chapter, I made a hypothesis that Perls plays a surrogate father in this work from the facts that he lives in the same hotel as Adler and he himself also is a gentleman and friend of Adler. Wilhelm disgusts at Perls as at Adler. If you consider this fact and relationship between Perls and Adler, my hypothesis must be right, for Wilhelm have the same antipathy and hatred toward Perls as toward Adler.

I said relationship between Perls and Wilhelm is considered from Wilhelm's inner mind. What can I describe about Perls in a word? That is an unreality. Mental relationship between Perls and Wilhelm is traced from Wilhelm's own speculation, but this speculation is found on the unreality. Perls as a surrogate father is unreal and he is a product of Wilhelm's speculation and sentiment of inner mind, so that Perls has a nature of unreality which is from Wilhelm's internal mind.

In this chapter, I have advanced my argument from the point of paternity about three men, Adler, Tamkin, and Perls. Wilhelm has ambivalent feeling toward Adler and he requests for the maternity love to the true father, but he can not get that love. Wilhelm is attracted to Tamkin who

lives in the opposite world of Adler, that is the world of heart and sentiment. This is similar to maternity love and Wilhelm hopes him to play a surrogate father. But a surrogate father is not a real father and that is eventually a unreal existence. Wilhelm and Perls have some things in common, but the relationship between Wilhelm and Perls is from Wilhelm's inner sentiment and also it has a trait of unreality.

I must conclude the paternity of this work in a word. This is an unreality. I don't say again the unreality of Tamkin and Perls. Wilhelm wants for the maternity love to Adler and this love is traced from his dead mother. Wilhelm asks for that love, but actually he can not acquire it. He asks for it, but can not get it. This is unreal. That is to say, the paternity toward Adler is also explained by this concept: unreality.

## Chapter 3

## The image of money

Jews gravitated toward finance and trade centuries ago, when more highly valued in agrarian societies, land owner and warrior, were denied to them. Early Christians were banned from loaning money at interest to fellow Christians, but they needed loans and Jews took on that role. (Burling)

This is a historical explanation that helps fix the image of Jewish money-lender. Jew and money are typically overlapped with each other. Jews as money-lender are a representative stereotype of money.

Furthermore, from the misreading of Bible, Jews have been unjustly thought as people obsessed with money. In the New Testament, there are twelve disciples of Christ, and one of them is Judah. Judah is the person to take leave from the group of Christ at the Last Supper. He was told by Christ to do what he meant to do. Actually Judah was a betrayer for Christ. In the group of twelve disciples, Judah took a role of accounting and he was thought to embezzle the money to sell Christ in exchange for thirty pieces of silver coins to Christ's enemy.

Judah is known as a name for a traitor. Also in the Old Testament, there appears the same name of Judah, so that the misreading of Bible that Jews betrayed for money and Jews are obsessed with money spreads for centuries.

In the Old Testament, Judah is Jacob's son and the origin of Jews after the Babylonian conquest. Judah in the New Testament and Judah in the Old Testament are different characters. Christ's disciples are twelve people and also Jacob's sons are twelve people. Furthermore, they have the same name Judah, so that the false interpretation that Judah as the origin of Jews betrayed Christ in exchange for silver coins spreads in the world. The accord of number twelve and the accord of the name Judah brought about a misreading that Jews are people obsessed with money.

The history of money-lender and biblical misreading eventually caused Jews to have the stereotype of money-oriented people. As a Jewish American writer, Saul Bellow gives his character Wilhelm who is also Jewish something of a money characteristic and a money relation. This supposition is not far from groundless. Here, I want to think about the function of money in this work.

Money plays a important role in *Seize the Day*. The reason why Wilhelm lives a miserable life and has a

feud with Adler is money itself. I want to think about the role of money in this chapter.

Wilhelm continues to ask for money to rich Adler in order to break through the present miserable condition. Wilhelm lives in the same hotel as Adler because he expects for some help from Adler. Wilhelm who is wanting in money too much sometimes expresses a hatred toward money. A Miserable life of Wilhelm is the result of money-lacking, so it's very natural that Wilhelm feels an enmity against money. I give the scene where Wilhelm expresses enmity to money.

Uch! How they love money, thought Wilhelm. They adore money! Holy money! Beautiful money! It was getting so that people were feeble-minded about everything except money. While if you didn't have it you were a dummy, a dummy! (32)

Wilhelm expresses a hatred toward money because he piles his money-lacking image on money itself. He disgusts money very much, but in fact Wilhelm freezes onto money strongly. Wilhelm gives 700 dollars to Tamkin and he cares about the outcome of that investment during whole day. Wilhelm's assessment of money mentioned above is the



result of Wilhelm's interest toward money. If people has no interest toward something, that people has no hatred toward anything. I can conclude that Wilhelm feels the double sentiment to money, so to speak, an ambivalent feeling to money.

What do you remember if you notice about the ambivalent feeling? Wilhelm also feels the ambivalent feeling toward Adler. Wilhelm feels the sentiment of ambivalence both to money and Adler. Wilhelm feels both hatred and ambivalent feeling to money and he feels both hatred and love to Adler at one time. It is not so difficult to suggest that money and father have some relation in common because Wilhelm feels an ambivalent sentiment to both of them.

As I outlined in chapter 2, Wilhelm wants for love from Adler by means of money. That is to say, for Wilhelm the money is the tool to acquire love from father. It is not impossible to say that money is equal to love for Wilhelm. Goldman explains about the relationship between Wilhelm and money like this.

Wilhelm equates money with love. If his father will give him money, it will prove that he loves him. . . .Money is the only things he understands;

he visualizes it as the only salvation to his problems.(69)

Wilhelm declares to his father clearly that money is the means to acquire love in fact. He says “ the money makes the difference ” (51) and if he has money, “ then we would be a fine father and son ” (51). As Wilhelm says, the relationship between father and son depends on money itself.

Wilhelm thinks of money as love in the same meaning, so when Adler rejects to help him financially, Wilhelm emphasizes the relationship of money and love in earnest. He explains of his request for money like this, expressing a fierce anger to Adler who rejects to help him financially.

Granted, he shouldn't support me. But have I asked him to do that? Have I ever asked for dough at all, either for Margaret or for the kids or for myself? It isn't the money, but only the assistance; not even the assistance, but just the feeling.(53)

Here, Wilhelm clarifies that money is the thing which

has the relation with feeling. When Adler says, “ I can’t give you any money ” (51), he repels to Adler saying “keep it and enjoy it yourself ” (51). The word “ yourself ” is a remarkable word. Wilhelm thinks that “ other people with money, while they’re still alive, want to see it do some good ” (53), but to Adler, he repels as using money by “ yourself ” .

I can think of this “ yourself ” as a repel to father, but another meaning behind this expression is “ some good ” which is equal to help of Wilhelm himself. Wilhelm at the bottom of heart wants Adler to use his money for Wilhelm so that they can construct the father-son relationship. According to Wilhelm’s theory, it is possible to construct father-son relationship by money. Wilhelm is rejected the money to help him, at the same time he is rejected the love to help him. The depression of rejection for money appears in the word “ yourself ” which means the disconnection between father and son. Actually Wilhelm utters this word “ miserably ” (51).

Wilhelm was rejected the construction of father-son relationship by the rejection of money. In this point, as I explained in chapter 1, Wilhelm’s defect has a connection to it clearly. It is thinkable that father says to his son that he doesn’t give money because father

wants his son to be independent. Wilhelm cannot understand the hidden meaning of Adler at all, and only thinks of the rejection of money as the rejection of love. If we think from the different point of view, Adler's rejection of money turns out to be the expression of love by contraries, in a sense that it can prompt Wilhelm to be independent, though this expression of love superficially seems severe. Wilhelm doesn't understand it at all, and he lacks his introspection about himself.

In Jewish doctrine, there is Yom Kippur. Here I give a simple and direct explanation of its meaning.

Yom Kippur is not an instant, foolproof salvation day. The rabbis felt that Yom Kippur could only bring atonement for those who truly repent. A person who sins thinking that Yom Kippur will save him cannot be truly penitent. Sincere regret is necessary for atonement. The person who thinks he can use Yom Kippur is incapable of sincere repentance. (Berman)

Jewish saving of Yom Kippur does not apply to Wilhelm who criticizes father as merciless because he thinks of money rejection as love rejection, without regard to his

own fault. Wilhelm is lacking in a sincere introspection. He doesn't look back on his own attitude and keeps on censuring father as the lack of love, so that the help of Yom Kippur does't rescue him in Jewish teaching. From the point of Yom Kippur, Wilhelm is a character who is not saved, which proves of Wilhelm's misfortune and this work's tragic nature I want to explain in this paper. He connects money and love by his lack of true and sincere self-examination.

As explained above, I can say that Wilhelm has an ambivalent feeling toward money, and money is replacement for love between father and Wilhelm. In the next argument, I prove that money is also the cause of agony for Wilhelm besides the substitute for love.

At first, I examine the situation of Wilhelm. He has no job for many months and has no income. He can not pay for the rent of hotel. Wilhelm is in trouble because of the money lacking.

The relationship with Margaret is also bad because of the lack of money. Margaret continues to ask for money as a expense of child-bringing and living. If Wilhelm has money, he can fix on the divorce and live a sound life. Wilhelm feels fear at the Margaret's request of money and says to himself, like " I'm at the end of rope and feel

that I'm suffocating" (110). Wilhelm is suffering because of the money lack clearly.

Wilhelm talks with Margaret on the telephone and he earnestly asks her to have some sympathy on him. Wilhelm explains about her relentlessness to ask for money in this way.

" You've got to let me breathe. If I keel over, what then? And it's something I can never understand about you. How you can treat someone like this whom you lived with so long. Who gave you the best of himself. Who tried. Who loved you. " Merely to pronounce the word " love " made him tremble.(110)

Margaret's request for money is a pain for Wilhelm who dedicates everything he has. The reason why Wilhelm trembles when he hears the word " love " is his fear that the love itself may succumb to the request for money. In fact, Wilhelm feels no love to Margaret, but Wilhelm who believes in love fears that love itself is destructed by the request for money. Therefore, he trembles at the word love.

Wilhelm is a man of sentiment as Wilson explains (96).

It's natural for him to react sensitively to that sentiment, love. I can think that Wilhelm is afraid of the destruction of love by money. He is not afraid of love with Margaret, but is afraid of destruction of love itself. As this explanation, money is also the cause of suffering for Wilhelm.

Money plays the double roles of love and suffering for Wilhelm, and it means at the same time that Wilhelm clings to money and escapes from money all at once. Wilhelm clings to money as a substitute for love and escapes from money which is the cause of suffering. I explained about the ambivalent feeling toward money. This is nothing but the attachment and escape toward money.

Money is the main element for Wilhelm. *Seize the Day* deals with one day from morning to evening and Wilhelm's one day of *Seize the Day* is about the outcome of money. His day starts from a shopping of newspaper and cigars and finishes by losing sight of Tamkin who is a key person of investment. A Shopping is concerned with money and Tamkin is concerned with money of investment, that is to say, Wilhelm's day starts from money and finishes in money. It is natural that money in this work plays a important role.

Now, I change the viewpoint. I proved that money is the substitute of love and the cause of suffering. I

develops this thought of money moreover. What meaning does the money which is substitute for love bring on Wilhelm? Of course, money plays a role of means which enable Wilhelm to have a mental relief. Money enables him to have a sound relation between father and son. Because Wilhelm has no money, he can not actually acquire love from father. But for Wilhelm, money can build the father-and-son relationship. Money is more mental relief and security than the thing which can bring about a comfortable life.

Because Adler thinks of his son as shame and unsuitable, he belies son's work record. Adler tells a lie about son's status and tries to keep his respectability with Perls. Wilhelm also thinks that " style was[is] the main consideration " (32) and fits their talking with each other, trying to deceive Perls.

This reaction of Wilhelm is thought to be temporary means to keep his appearance on this spot, but behind this pretense is Wilhelm's sentiment not to want to bother his father as a son. He at his bottom of heart wants to be admitted as a son. He actually has no money, but pretends to have that with Adler and tries to show Perls that they are genuine father and son heartily. Money must play a role to secure a mind stability as father and son for



Wilhelm.

Wilhelm's little sister Catherine asks Adler to give her money to rent an art gallery, but Adler doesn't listen to her entreaty, Adler says that " she's no painter " (43) and never wants to give her money. Wilhelm reacts against Adler like this.

" I wouldn't go so far as to call her a born artist, " said Wilhelm, " but you can't blame her for trying something worth while. " (43)

Wilhelm protests against Adler and persuades Adler to help her sister, piling himself on his sister who is lacking in money. He insists that of course father help his daughter as a parent. The cooperation of parent is also concerned with money, and money is the means for parental cooperation. A rent of art gallery should be paid by Adler according to Wilhelm. Wilhelm thinks that the cooperation by money help build an intimate relationship between parent and children. It is very clear that for Wilhelm money is the key to secure a mind stability.

How about the money as the origin of suffering? Does money play a role for a mind stabilizer? Actually money

is a key concept of stability, for example, payment for Margaret, rent for hotel, and investment of lard. Wilhelm is in trouble about a money management for Margaret. If he has money, he can clear the relationship with Margaret. Lawyers of Wilhelm and Margaret talked with each other and concluded that Wilhelm should pay the money of child-bringing actually. If he has money, he doesn't have to be in trouble mentally. Like this, money must be the origin of suffering if you consider about the relationship with Margaret, but at the same time it must be a mind stabilizer which brings about a relief. If he can pay for the hotel rent, he is easy, so that a rent can be considered in the same point as Margaret. That is to say, we can say that money about rent is also a mind stabilizer.

Wilhelm invested his money in order to gain money for a hotel rent or child-bringing, but this action is for love from father, meaning of life, means of living, that is the action of a mind stabilizer besides surface and actual purpose of money raising. This is the reaction against the suffering of money. We can find the mind stabilization even in the origin of suffering. That is, money as a substitute for love or money as an origin of suffering has the attribution which brings about comfort

and stabilization.

As mentioned above, Wilhelm has an ambivalent feeling as adherence and escape toward money. If I say in other words, his sentiment is dependent on money. An adherence to money is of course the consciousness to seek for a sense of belonging. How about escape? We can consider of escape in point of belonging. An escape from money is naturally the behavior which is concerned with money. Wilhelm hates and looks down on money because his sentiment is concerned with money. If he has no interest for money he never escapes. An adherence and an escape seems to be utterly opposite, but they have one thing in common: interest for money. An escape is near to an adherence in the point that the escape has connection with the interest. An escape is not the opposite of the adherence. Indifference is the opposite of adherence. If you consider like this, my argument that the escape is also considered from the point of belonging must not be unreasonable.

I explained that Wilhelm's day is moved by money which Wilhelm seeks and detests. The beginning and end of day is considered from money, and Wilhelm, so to speak, finds his meaning of existence in money. It is clear that money is the sense of belonging for Wilhelm. Wilhelm's mind can

be stable or unstable according to money. His fate can be decided by 700 dollars investment which he did by trusting in fraud Tamkin. Wilhelm continues to be in plight by the price decline of lard, and he is dealt by money which has a characteristic of investment. Money is a mind stabilizer which is equal to sense of belonging for Wilhelm.

The sense of belonging is a important concept for Jews. As Giles Coren explains “ Jew, exiled from his home, compelled to live as a stranger in a strange land. ” They are not people who has fixed land and know each other, but they live in strangers, so that they pay attention to the sense of belonging to a great extent. They put emphasis on family concept in order to ascertain the blood connection which is, as it were, a sense of solidity and belonging much more, because they are from strange lands and they are unknown each other. This is a reason why Jews emphasize a sense of belonging.

“ Often in the New Testament the Jews became a name for enemies of God, killers of Jesus ” (Martin). This is a worldwide false misreading of Bible, so that some critic says that “ How[how] awesome and how gruesome the Jews must have seemed to generations of Christian believers ” (Oz). This explanation states Jews as religious

strangers, not only as land strangers. Certainly Jews have religion called Judaism, but America where Bellow and Wilhelm lived was a Christian world and culture. Both of Bellow and Wilhelm would feel awkward feeling in the country because they are strangers about the religious matter. In the Christian culture, both of them are strangers in religion, so that a sense of belonging means much more important meaning for them than other peoples. In this *Seize the Day*, money can give Wilhelm a sense of belonging mentally. Money is a important item which gives a sense of belonging for Wilhelm in this work.

It is obvious that the stabilization and sense of belonging have similar meaning in *Seize the Day*. Money means the stabilization and sense of belonging at the same time for Wilhelm. This role of stabilization can appear in the conversation in chapter 1 symbolically. Wilhelm is praised by Rubin about his shirt when he comes to Rubin's shop to purchase newspaper. Rubin praises like this. "That's a real knockout shirt you got on" (3). Wilhelm answers to Rubin.

"I like this dove-gray color," he said in his sociable good-natured way. "It isn't washable. You have to send it cleaner. It never smells as

good as washed. But it's a nice shirt. It cost sixteen, eighteen bucks. " (3)

Wilhelm who is in trouble about life every day displays his status and stability of job by saying that he purchased a first-rate shirt. In fact, Wilhelm gets that shirt from the president of former company and he didn't buy the shirt. He emphasizes his stability and sense of belonging of his existence by declaring the purchase of shirt. Wilhelm tells a lie at Rubin's shop, and the symbol of high-grade shirt which is concerned with money is Wilhelm's hope for the stability and sense of belonging. This scene implies that money's role in this work symbolizes stability and sense of belonging.

In this chapter, I showed that Wilhelm has an ambivalent feeling toward money as well as toward father Adler. Also, I explained that money is a key for Wilhelm to get love from father and the money is the substitute for love for Wilhelm. At the same time, money is the cause of his trouble, for example, demand from Margaret, result of investment on lard, hotel rent, and so on. Wilhelm takes an action of adherence and escape toward money which is substitute of love and cause of trouble at the same time. The behaviors which seems to be opposite

with each other actually can be explained from the point of the stability and sense of belonging and they are not opposite behaviors. In this work, Wilhelm's day is dependent on money, and money is a key concept for Wilhelm to bring about mental belonging. I want to clarify of money's role in this work in simple words. As outlined above, money plays a role to bring about a stability and sense of belonging for Wilhelm in this work.

## Chapter 4

## Interpretation of final scene

In *Seize the Day*, a lot of critics are puzzled and interpret differently about the final scene of funeral. It is not too much to say that interpretation of this scene decides the work's nature, that is to say, whether this is a tragedy or future-expecting work. The final sentence is this. "He heard it and sank deeper than sorrow, through torn sobs and cries toward the consummation of his heart's ultimate need" (114). This sentence, as Shiels explains, shows work's unsettled nature whether this is a tragedy or future-expecting work.

The phrase "sank deeper than sorrow" may permit the interpretation that Wilhelm finds pleasure getting over sorrow. In fact, there is such critic who insists that Wilhelm experiences baptism in the final scene and gets the peace of mind, getting over his lament (Dutton 90). Although some critics may not build their argument on the phrase "sank deeper than sorrow", there are others who think Wilhelm experience baptism and resuscitation.

But I think that also the final scene shows the tragic nature according to my argument so far. I think this phrase "sank deeper than sorrow" represents the sorrow



deeper than sorrow, so to speak, despair. In my argument of this chapter, I prove that the final scene of funeral represents the tragic nature of this work.

Wilhelm finishes talking with Margaret on the telephone and starts to think about their divorce. He in fact wants to live a new life with Olive. We must be careful about one point. Wilhelm thinks “Olive loves me” (111), but he thinks like this by himself and has no ground to prove that. He has confidence in his thought, but there is no evidence. Does Olive tries to live a new life with a man who has no jobs, or even has debt? Wilhelm’s decision as “I’ll try to start again with Olive” is his empty and vain decision. This decision has no ground and no reality, that is to say, his self-satisfaction.

Wilhelm encounters Tamkin in the last scene and this is his last seeing of Tamkin. We cannot judge whether this sighting of Tamkin is a reality or an unreality. He says “he thought he saw Dr. Tamkin (111) and his thought may not be real. Wilhelm calls Tamkin’s name but he can not talk with him, and Tamkin disappears out of his sight. The condition setting that he can not actually meet with Tamkin symbolizes Wilhelm’s tragedy.

As I explained in chapter 2, Tamkin is a surrogate

father instead of the real father Adler. Wilhelm can not get real love from his real father Adler, so that he depends on Tamkin as the strength of his heart. Wilhelm loses sight of this surrogate father, and “ within a few minutes he had forgotten Tamkin ” (112). This phenomenon implies Wilhelm's loss of love. We can think that when a surrogate father disappears from his sight, he at the same time he loses the strength of his heart. This scene tells us that Wilhelm experiences the loss of his investment, 700 dollars, and far and most he experiences the mental despair by Tamkin's disappearance.

As I showed in chapter 2, Tamkin is a man of imagination which can be proved by his many kinds of jobs, poetry making, talkative nature, and investment. He is a heart-centered man. It is very natural that Wilhelm who is a imaginative man and believes in love is attracted to Tamkin. Tamkin is a man of unreality, novelty, and fluidity in opposite of Adler who is a man of reality, old, and dignity. Wilhelm loses sight of this novelty and future which stands for Tamkin. That is to say, he loses his expectancy and his future is somber. He can not get love from the past which stands for Adler and from the future which stands for Tamkin, so that he lives in the present. He can not find a hope from the past and future

and lives in the lamentable present.

Wilhelm pursues after Tamkin and gets in chapel.  
Here, I give that scene.

But Tamkin was gone. Or rather, it was he himself who was carried from street into chapel. The pressure ended inside, where it was dark and cool.(112)

He pursues after a surrogate father and gets in a “dark and cool” chapel. You can know that this chapel is situated in opposite of outer world which is noisy and confused. Chapel is “dark and cool” sphere and associates with death. Outside of chapel, Wilhelm resists against other people’s stream and tries to stick to his way and position desperately. He says to police officer, “You[you] shouldn’t push people like this” (112) and resists, but he is made to push into chapel eventually.

He can not take his way and be made to enter to chapel which associates with death though he resists against crowd. This action accords with Wilhelm’s fate that he loses in the battle of life and goes to other place. Wilhelm loses in the present battle of his circumstance and goes to death. He is “carried” to finish

unconsciously.

Jeanne Braham says “ Saul Bellow’s novel insists on the possibility of “ navigation by the great stars ” ” (127). <sup>11</sup> I can say that his action of going to other place against his will means this work’s naturalistic nature. Wilhelm who resists against crowd’s stream desperately accords with himself who resists against his day-to-day battle of lamentable circumstance, and Wilhelm who is made to push in other place against his will accords with himself who loses in the life battle and finishes in despair at the mercy of his fate. Wilhelm is nothing but a person who stands for naturalistic nature that people is crushed by circumstance against one’s will. As I mentioned by my citation, Wilhelm is “ carried ” by irresistible power or fate.

What does Wilhelm see in the chapel? That is death. Wilhelm identifies the unknown body with himself. Wilhelm reacts like this by watching body in the coffin.

His brows were raised as though he had sunk into the final thought. Now at last he was with it, after the end of all distractions, and when his flesh was no longer flesh. And by this meditative look Wilhelm was so struck that he could not go

away. In spite of tinge of horror, at the splash on heartsickness that he felt, he could not go.(113)

Wilhelm imagines his death, piling his image on the body of unknown people. He finds out the “ all distractions ” in this body and can't leave from there because he thinks of the present condition of himself. We can find the water image as “ sunk into the final thought ” and this phrase is reminder of drown man as I proved in chapter 1. He arrives at death after much thought and this death is gained by his worry of every day and has no future for him. Description of the death continues like this.

On the surface, the dead man with his formal shirt and his tie and silk lapels and his powdered skin looked so proper; only a little beneath so-black, Wilhelm thought, so fallen in the eyes.(113)

The dead is dressed up superficially, but true figure is “ so-black ” . What do you recall? Wilhelm tells a lie about his life carrier and dresses up his image superficially, but actual figure is a man who is at a loss

and in plight. Can I say that the dead and Wilhelm are in the similar condition? Wilhelm identifies himself with the dead. Raper says that Wilhelm experiences the “ pure intimate self-pity that comes with the thought of one’s own death ” (81) though Raper implies Wilhelm might experience the future-expecting event. If I think oppositely from Raper’s argument, Wilhelm thinks of his end, that is death which has no future, and does not experience the baptism which is resuscitation when he sees the dead man. I can say that he experiences the end of man who loses in the life battle as a social loser.

Here, I rethink about the argument of resuscitation as Dutton, Goldman, Raper, and Porter which I mentioned in introduction. I make a hypothesis that Wilhelm starts a new life after he encountered an unknown dead. In fact, Wilhelm thinks about a new life with Olive at funeral scene. He worries about his children and starts to weep “ from sentiment, but soon from deeper feeling ” (113) after watching the dead. But this behavior does not contain his active self-effort. This is nothing but a selfish sentimentality of his own. Wilhelm thinks about a lot of things when he sees the dead. He says in his mind like this.

What'll I do? I'm stripped and kicked  
 out. . . .Oh, Father, what do I ask of you?  
 What'll I do about the kids-Tommy, Paul? My  
 children. And Olive? My dear! Why, Why, why-you  
 must protect me against that devil who wants my  
 life. If you want it, then kill me. Take it,  
 take it from me.(113)

Here, he depends on father and Olive. He tries to  
 escape from his plight by other man's power, not by his  
 power of his own will. As I explained in introduction,  
 Wilhelm tries to break through the present condition from  
 the passive action of dependence on God in opposition with  
 active action. I can say that at this scene, Wilhelm  
 behaves the same way.

Death of other people may become the prompt of  
 regeneration, but Wilhelm does not have the consciousness  
 to make that prompt into action. If you consider like  
 this, the argument of Dutton, Goldman, Raper, and Porter  
 as Wilhelm experiences the baptism and regeneration which  
 make him into plus state seems to be impossible. If you  
 have no consciousness, you can't change the state at all.

The regeneration experience itself as Dutton and other  
 critics point out is based on the unreality of future, not

on the reality of the present. It ignores the present miserable state and has the minus factor of escape from the reality. This argument emphasizes Wilhelm's lament still more and this is the opposite insistence of passive and escape concept with *Seize the Day* which is active and powerful concept. Wilhelm escapes from a reality.

I can give the scene where Wilhelm weeps from an emotional inspiration. I pay attention to the surrounding of Wilhelm.

Soon he was past words, past treason, coherence. He could not stop. The source of all tears had suddenly sprung open within him, black deep, and hot, and they were pouring out and convulsed his body, bending his stubborn head, bowing his shoulders, twisting his face, crippling the very hands with which he held the handkerchief. (113-4)

Wilhelm is certainly in the midst of emotional inspiration. He is moved "with all his heart" (114). But people around him does not know him. "No one knew who he was" (114). People around him conjectured in many ways about Wilhelm who is moved and weeping.



“ The man’s brother, maybe? ”

“ Oh, I doubt that very much, ” said another bystander.

“ They’re not alike at all. Night and day. ”

(114)

Wilhelm is moved emotionally, but he is never understood by people around him. We can find Wilhelm’s solitude in light of this condition. Wilhelm is moved by himself and people around him can not sympathize with him. Bystanders use the word “ doubt ” and even feel bored and cold toward him. Even in this scene, he can not get true understanding from other people around him and is a lonely man. Even if he is moved by himself, the status of loser never changes for him. This situation that he is not understood truly accords with the present situation that he can not get a true understanding from father. This superficial and shallow understanding around him implies Wilhelm’s lamentable status quo.

A lot of Bellow’s works change for the better about protagonist’s fate by his relationship with others. In *Herzog*, the hero Herzog could get the means of peace by freeing himself from his wife Madeline when he recognizes wife’s devilish nature in the later part of the work.

New sweetheart Ramona emancipates him mentally, and finally Herzog can get the power to overcome the future troubles and recovers from mental disorder.

In *Henderson the Rain King*, Henderson meets Dahfu and gets the wisdom of love from him as a love teacher. Dahfu teaches Henderson about the importance of love not only by words but by expressing love toward world actually. Dahfu says that love is an only important thing when people meet death. He teaches Henderson this by his own death. Henderson can advance himself from the wisdom of charity by understanding and interest with others.

Furthermore, in *A Theft*, finally the heroine goes on walking in the street with severe sobs to all appearances, but she can find her *raison d'être* in a imperfect world. She can realize other people's sympathy and concludes that her children have also this virtue certainly. This work finishes by her understanding toward other people.

These works cause the main character to better up his or her own values from the influence and understanding by others. But in this work, *Seize the Day*, hero Wilhelm is a character who doesn't have an understanding from others. This funeral scene corresponds to Wilhelm's incomprehension from Adler whom he wants to have interest.

James Atlas finds the biographical factors of

Bellow in *Seize the Day*. I give his thought on that.

It is hard not to read it as an elegy to Bellow's father, dead a year before....conjectured that the closing pages of *Seize the Day* was partly inspired by the loss of Rosenfeld...(239)

Like this, it can be said that *Seize the Day* is projected with the death of Bellow's friend Rosenfeld. How was the death of Rosenfeld? There is a book of Bellow which explains about the later years of Rosenfeld. Bellow says about the memoir of his friend.

He followed an inner necessity, which led him into difficulty and solitude. During the last years of his life he was solitary, and on Walton Place, in one of his furnished rooms, he died alone.(266)

We can know that the death of Rosenfeld was not desirable but lonely and miserable and his life was also sequence of difficulty. Lonely death of friend is projected on the work's funeral scene. A Lamentable and lonely death is projected on Wilhelm who is in lament and misery and can not get a true love.

I already explained that other people's death is piled on the image of Wilhelm's death. Furthermore, Bellow's friend Rosenfeld's death is also projected on the death of unknown man at the funeral scene. That is to say, an unknown man at the funeral scene is the projection of Wilhelm and Rosenfeld at the same time. The death of his friend, the death his father, and the death of himself are all projected in this scene. If I consider from the point of Bellow's biographical factors, at the funeral scene Wilhelm feels intuitively the lamentable and lonely death of himself. He does not experience the baptism which means future-expecting experience for Wilhelm. So, the last sentence of "deeper than sorrow" does not mean the pleasure beyond lament but must mean the larger lament and despair as I made hypothesis at the first part of this chapter.

When Wilhelm watches a man of white hair, he feels an inspiration. But this inspiration which associates with death signalizes his lament more clearly. As I explained in chapter 1 and chapter 2, Wilhelm is a miserable and poor man who is in difficulty and can not get a true love. Tamkin whom Wilhelm imagines he watched disappears from his sight, and he goes to funeral by chance. Wilhelm who is a man of failure and defeat must find a kind of meaning

in other man's death.

But the found meaning or behavior to bring about the finding is done by Wilhelm by chance. Lamentable Wilhelm finds his own death in other man's death or regeneration as Dutton or other critics point out. This inspiration can be felt only when Wilhelm is in lament and the inspiration felt by Wilhelm is extremely his own impression. Objectively seen, this inspiration has no meaning in light of others or reality and is nothing but a product of chance and accident. It can never change the reality. From the point of Jung psychology, this is called constellation. Just like some people find swans or dippers in scattered stars in night sky, Wilhelm finds a special meaning in dead people. Objectively seen, he is a middle aged man of lament and despair and lives a life with no desirable future. His own inspiration at funeral can not be understood by people around him, and this situation has relation with Wilhelm's solitude and lonely thought when he participates in the unknown funeral.

As I explained like this, I must say this scene has a tragic factor. Finally, I want to say about the new life with Olive which I showed in the first part of this chapter and concludes my argument. Wilhelm makes up his mind and says like, "I'll get a divorce if it's the last

things I do ” (111). The divorce which Wilhelm wants is collapse of family and this decision is an opposite feeling of his inner potential desire. His inner potential desire must be a respect for family. Wilhelm emphasizes father, paternity, mother, and children. He is a family-oriented man. This family-oriented man hopes for divorce which is a collapse of family. It is a contradicted feeling. Even if by divorce, his life becomes easier, this is a opposite action of his unconscious and potential feeling of family-oriented thinking. Wilhelm's decision of new life with Olive has a contradicted element in itself. Fuch also explains about Wilhelm's family-oriented idealism and says that “ the family is a central ideal in his life ” (91).<sup>12</sup> Wilhelm before he watches the dead or Wilhelm after he watches the dead can be explained from the concept of misery and defeat.

So, in this chapter I explained about seven elements:  
 1. Wilhelm's decision of new life with Olive is groundless his own decision,  
 2. Divorce is a potentially opposite feeling to Wilhelm's desire,  
 3. Disappearance of Tamkin means Wilhelm's mental despair,  
 4. Invasion in chapel of unconsciousness implies the naturalistic nature,  
 5. Wilhelm feels the no-future-making death of his own when he

watches the dead,6.The meaning of Wilhelm's intuition at funeral can be thought from Bellow's biographical date,7.Wilhelm's inspiration at funeral must be nothing but a chance and an accident.

From these seven arguments as I said above, I want to conclude the argument whether the last scene is future-expecting or tragedy. It is very clear from seven arguments as I said above. The last scene must be tragic with no hope. The scene is not a future-expecting plus ending, but a minus and tragic ending.

## Conclusion

Later years in 1950s in America were politically stable age when anti-communism movement was over, so that poverty and problem of unemployment had not yet appeared in surface, as it were, we can say this was a calm and mild age if we generally speaking. Economically speaking, America took up 36 percent in world's GNP. America was nothing but the superpower nation. People were contented with wealth and enjoyed the increase of leisure and purchasing of house, automobiles, and electrical manufactures. America was a cultural model for other nations. America lived a golden age in 1950s. It is this age when rock'n'roll were popular and the rate of college going increased besides the publication of *Playboy*.<sup>13</sup>

But in the midst of these prosperity and stability, some intelligence found a social contradiction and reacted to the society sensitively. Middle class of white collar were under influence of adaptation to system and universalism of science, so to speak, the mass-adaptation. On the other hand, for intelligent class, this age was an anti-individual, inhuman, contracted society. Hip stars like Beatnik and drug addicts appeared from these anti-age movement.



In this mass conformity and others-oriented society, David Riesman(1909-2002)says in his book about inner-oriented people's conflicts. As he explains, inner-oriented people reflect on themselves strongly than on others. In his work *The Lonely Crowd* (1961), he says about the conflicts of inner people like this.

The characterological struggle that holds the center of the stage today is that between other-direction and inner-direction, as against a background in which tradition-direction gradually disappears from the planet. Now we already discern on the horizon a new polarization between those who cling to a compulsive adjustment via other-direction and those who will strive to overcome this milieu by autonomy. (260)

Under this society where individuals and mass are contrasted or individuals and mass are collided, *Seize the Day* appeared to the world. *Seize the Day* was published in 1956 and we can say that Bellow meant to have something timely meaning in his work.

*Seize the Day* permits a lot of interpretations and there are not clear definitions from future-expecting work

to tragedy. In my argument, I said about Wilhelm's external circumstances and how that has influence on his mental condition in chapter 1. I proved that outer condition cases his self-pity and deceit of himself and others, so that Wilhelm is a lamentable protagonist from both points of inner and outer circumstances.

In chapter 2, I said about father or paternity in this work. Wilhelm has an ambivalent feeling of love and hatred toward Adler and wants for a maternal love from his father. Also I explained about the role of paternity in Perls's function in this work. Paternity of Adler, Tamkin, and Perls have the characteristic of unreality. Wilhelm can not have a true love from paternity and can not have the bosom exchange with them.

In chapter 3, I showed a money function in this work. Money is just the thing which Wilhelm wants. Like toward Adler, Wilhelm has an ambivalent feeling toward money and money brings about mental fulfillment and stability for him more than the thing which enables him to live comfortably. Money plays a role of stability and sense of belonging for him, but actually he has no money, so that he can not have a mental stability and sense of belonging.

In chapter 4, I said about the disputable scene of funeral. New life with Olive is a groundless expectation

and that life in itself is contracted life with his deep psychology. Tamkin's disappearance from his sight and unconscious invasion in chapel implies the work's naturalistic nature. Inspiration caused by watching of the dead is an only accident and chance. Final scene is a defeat and tragedy for Wilhelm from the analogy of Bellow's biographical reality.

From the argument of chapter 1 to chapter 4, it is clear that this work is a tragedy. Wilhelm's lamentable and miserable state, impossibility of acquiring of paternal love, lack of money which enables him to have sense of belonging and stability, and tragic ending. These are the evident proof for tragic nature of this work.

From the point of period, 1950s is called a good age which exists between W.W. II and the Vietnam War, but this age is never a mild age if we check carefully. If we consider about the movement of society, this is not a calm age. Joseph McCarthy (1912-1989) began Red Purge in order to eliminate the Communists in 1950s. The first half of 1950s was a stormy age of MaCarthyism. Paying attention to abroad of America, after W.W. II, iron curtain was drawn between the east and the west in the world and the age of Cold War had begun in this period. Under these background

of age, it is no wonder that Bellow wrote a tragic story rather than a pleasant story of optimism.

From the viewpoints of other writers, there are a lot of writers who wrote pessimistic works in this unquiet trend of times. For example, J. D. Salinger (1914-2010) made up a teenaged protagonist in his best-seller, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951), who had antipathy toward an adult world and who couldn't accept the deceit of society. His unreal, uncompromised, and too pure way of living seems to true of Salinger himself who may not get along with real society at that time.

Ralph Ellison (1914-94) wrote *Invisible Man* (1952) and expressed an American disgrace of racial discrimination by the black protagonist. Ellison made up a character who existed actually, but doesn't exist socially, and made readers recognize the identity of black people. This *Invisible Man* is certainly a question provoking and not a comical work.

Furthermore, Ray Bradbury (1920-2012) wrote in his *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) about his criticism toward McCarthyism which was expressed by burning of books as a symbol of thought control, and also wrote about his criticism toward TV culture to expel print culture. His criticism toward TV culture is caused by rapid change of

human thought by TV's decisive influence. This work's theme must be an antithesis of the society at that time, and its theme must be censure of the movement that times would progress.

I omit further explanation, but there are a lot of other works which doesn't end in simple and optimistic solution, for example, *Howl and Other Poems* (1956) by Allen Ginsburg, *Giovanni's Room* (1956) by James Baldwin, and so on. In the context of other works, this *Seize the Day* has a enough ground to read as a tragic story in the stream of epoch movement at that time.

*Seize the Day* is structured in 7 chapters. This number 7 is the same days of creation of Genesis in Old Testament. So to speak, the structure of *Seize the Day* implies the perfection and ending. We call that the story ends here and by the defeat of Wilhelm, his life ends here, analyzing from number 7. Wilhelm's spell Wilhelm implies will and hell and we can suggest his will in hell, as it were, in despair. Wilhelm's name in itself suggests his nature of defeat and work's tragedy.

Here, I want to answer the question of this paper. What is the meaning of the time of *Seize the Day* dealing with tragedy? That is warning to contemporary people who enjoy the stream of prosperity. This work deals with an

individual named Wilhelm in midst age of mass and anti-individual age. Anti-personal and anti-individual were justly opposite concept with American basic idealism of individual and independence. By describing the individual's tragedy and by describing individual's problem, Bellow makes a warning to contemporary people who forget American basic and original idealism. This work emphasizes the problem of individual strongly. Bellow wants to describe individual's conflict against mass conflict. It is not only in American literature that novelists write about individuals in mass culture. Also in Japanese literature of 1970s and 1980s, writers made up characters whose individual problem has relationship with society. This society was a characteristic of industrialization and city planning, and also had a trait of stereotype culture caused by TV influence which gave birth to young culture such as idol boom or categorization named "Shinjinrui", that is, young generation. Ryu Murakami wrote *Almost Transparent Blue* (1976) and expressed a individual's way of life and young man's trouble and worry. It succeeds in representing a dark aspect of mass and adjustment culture. Saul Bellow, as I explained so far, sought for a individual in the mass adjustment society. He gave a warning by expressing a

individual's tragedy in the optimistic society of economic prosperity. By describing individual's problem, he wants to warn mass and public. This individual problem will be connected to the social and political movement in 1960s which is the age of explosion.

## Notes

1. My argument of *Seize the Day* is based on Saul Bellow's *Seize the Day*, ed. Cynthia Ozick.
2. L.H.Goldman explains about Wilhelm's tragedy from the point of Jewish nature of author, giving Biblical and folkloristic information. For example, Bible is sacred writing for Jewish people and Genesis in Bible takes up family stories of 38 chapters out of 50 chapters. From Goldman's explanation, family concept is very important for Bellow and *Seize the Day* must have an important meaning of family concept. It is very interesting and useful to argue *Seize the Day* from Jewish concept.
3. Importance of imagery in poem is explained by Ezra Pound thoroughly, but about the imagery in fiction, refer to this book. William J. Handy, *Kant and the Southern New Critics*(Austin, 1963)
4. A lot of critics point out the water image and popular manual of *Seize the Day* deals with the explanation. I dare to use this image explanation to develop my argument.
5. Jonathan Wilson develops his argument that Wilson is useless without father from the point of an overgrown child argument.



6. Peter Hyland's explanation on Bellow's biographical information gives kinds of useful data of Bellow's life. For example, Bellow's view of woman, immigration experience, and poor childhood. According to Hyland, they are projected on his works. I think Bellow's five times marriage which stands for his view of woman has influence on *Seize the Day*.
7. Julius Raper makes his argument from the point of Jung's psychology. He makes kinds of Jung approach to Tamkin and he thinks of Tamkin as a projection of Wilhelm. But his approach seems to be a little too detailed to understand, so if readers do not know Jung psychology fully, I have to say we can not trace his argument clearly.
8. It is out of the question that Robert Kierhan's analysis of Tamkin gives a hint to my interpretation of Wilhelm, that is to say will-hell.
9. Brooks Bouson interprets the encounter of Perls as Wilhelm's description of his own and thinks of Wilhelm as a loser of American dream. In this point, we can make other argument of criticism on American dream from Wilhelm's failure.
10. This Adler's neglect on art can be thought as reaction to the conception which stands for

imagination. Adler who stands for reality excludes the alien things.

11. About this thing, Jeanne Braham points out Dostoyevsky's influence. *Dangling man* and *The Victim* can be considered from the point of Dostoyevsky.

12. In order to develop my argument, I have concluded that Wilhelm does not change at all in reality when he faces the dead, and he is nothing but a tragic protagonist. But I give a conceivable opposite idea to my argument. Martin Heidegger says in his work *Sein und Zeit* (1927), like this. "Factically one's own Dasein is always dying already; that is to say, it is in a Being-towards-its-end. And it hides this Fact from itself by recoinng " death " as just a " case of death " in others—an everyday occurrence which, if need be, gives us the assurance still more plainly that ' oneself ' is still ' living ' ." According to Heidegger, people can recognize living when people face death. At this funeral scene, it is a possible idea that Wilhelm changes for the better as in other works when he recognizes his living in the face of other people's death. Citation of Heidegger above is based on *Being and Time* (1967) translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, which was published by Basil

Blackwell.

13. Daniel Fuchs's thought on Wilhelm's view of family is similar to Goldman's thought as I gave in note 2. This argument can be a start point for new theme of family in *Seize the Day* which is not so far considered so much.
14. This information is based on my notebook of college days. I ascertain this data's reliability in general book. I don't give the citation place because this book is not study or treatise.
15. Number 7 conventionally means perfection. Trinity of 3 and season of 4 makes 7. Furthermore, in Genesis of Bible we can find the same episode which is concerned with 7. It is possible that this episode is connected with the concept of completion. For example, there are these episodes that people who try to revenge on Cain who killed Abel are to take 7 times revenge or after the Deluge of Noah, dove is released from Noah's ark 7 days after. 7 is a suitable number which means complete and end.

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