

Alienation and Bellow's *Dangling Man*

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ÖZET

Yabancılaşma, sözcüğü tarih boyunca delilikten Tanrıyla yek vücut olmaya kadar farklı anlamlarda kullanılmıştır. Onsekizinci yüzyılda ise malların, paranın ve özellikle hakların transferi anlamını kazanmıştır. Jean Jack Rousseau, Karl Marx, Hegel, Durkheim, Kierkegaard ve Heidegger gibi filozoflar da sözcüğün gelişimine katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Edebiyata gelince, Sartre, Kafka, Becket, Camus, Dreiser, Algren, Hemingway, Joyce ve Ellison gibi yazarlar eserlerinde yabancılaşma temasını işlemişlerdir. Bellow bu terimi toplumu ve uygarlığı eleştirmek, insanlığın kafasını hep meşgul etmiş sorulara cevap bulabilmesi için hayal gücünü harekete geçirmek, çözümünü kaçışta aramanın nelere mal olacağını göstermek ve kendi sentezini yaratmak amacıyla bir anti-tez oluşturmak için kullanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: yabancılaşma, anomi, belirsizlik, normsuzluk, kültürel yabancılaşma, güçsüzlük, anlamsızlık

ABSTRACT

The word alienation has had a wide range of meanings like insanity and union with the divinity until the fifteenth century. It began to mean the transfer of goods, money and especially rights in the eighteenth century. Many philosophers like Jean Jack Rousseau, Karl Marx, Hegel, Durkheim, Kierkegaard and Heidegger contributed to the development of the term. In literature, writers like Sartre, Kafka, Becket, Camus, Dreiser, Algren, Hemingway, Joyce, and Ellison have used the theme of alienation in their works. Bellow uses the term to criticize society and civilization, to stimulate the imagination to provide answers to man's ever-existing questions, to show what escapist solutions can lead up to and to create an anti-thesis upon which he can build his own synthesis. To him, man is the measure of everything. Therefore, the truth, the solution to man's problems, is to be searched not in alienated selves but in true selves.

Keywords: alienation, anomie, uncertainty, normlessness, cultural estrangement, powerlessness, meaninglessness

Alienation, an archetypal theme in life and history and a catchword lending itself to many interpretations, has become one of the major issues of concern in all disciplines and especially in literature in the twentieth century. Saul Bellow stands distinct among the writers who treated the theme of alienation. Some writers saw alienation as an insoluble problem, thus seeking private escapes and glorifying escapist solutions, while /some others maintained their faith in man's potential to overcome this state of alienation in their novels.

This paper aims to analyze the theme of alienation in one of Bellow's early novels, *Dangling Man* and his use of the theme. To provide a definition, a criterion of alienation against which this analysis can be made, a multi-disciplinary and multi-perspectivist definition of alienation will be provided in the first part, which will trace the concept from its inception to its contemporary use. In the second part, the theme of alienation in Bellow's novel will be analyzed in further detail under the headings, the theme of alienation and its use in the novel in question.

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There are different views about where the word "alienation" originated. Some sources say it comes originally from French where it meant to transfer, to spoil, insanity. The word was used to mean insanity for it was used for the insane in the French and Spanish cultures. The subject of alienation was the person made insane by someone else, especially by evil spirits, but today machines, objects and modern social structures (Rotenstreich, 77) are alienating man. Yet, some sources say, the

word first appeared in Latin referring to a "state of being transported or rapt out of one's self" (Rotenstreich, 3).

Looking back in history to trace the genesis and development of the concept, one can see that the concept of estrangement, outcastness and loss is an ancient one and "an archetypal theme in human life and history" (Kenniston, 32-33). Saint Augustine and Plotinus were also commentators on the concept

We may conclude that, like Plotinus, Augustine conceived of alienation as a state in which contemplation and ecstasy is identical; the human soul or spirit is elevated and reaches its goal, which is the union with the divinity. In this use of the term, no note is taken of the negative aspect of man's being rapt out of himself, or at least no negative evaluation of this aspect is implied. (Rotenstreich, 3-4)

Alienation had rather religious meanings until the fifteenth century and well into the eighteenth century when it began to be used to mean the transfer of goods, money and especially of rights. Alienation is therefore characterized by the universal extension of "salability" (i.e. the transformation of everything into commodity); by the conversion of human beings into "things" so that they could appear as commodities on the market (in other words the "reification" of human relations), and by the fragmentation of the social body into "isolated individuals" who pursued their own limited, particularistic aims in servitude to egoistic need, making a virtue out of their selfishness in their cult of privacy.

The middle of the eighteenth century marked a turning point in the various approaches to the problems of alienation. In the previous period, the concept of alienation had been used with regard to socio-economic and political phenomena in a thoroughly positive

sense, insisting on the desirability of the alienation of land, political power, etc., on the rightfulness of producing interest without alienating capital, on selling one's labor, on reifying one's person, and so on. This one-sided positivism could not be maintained, however, once the crippling effects of the capitalistic mode of production based on the general diffusion of alienation started to erupt also in the form of unrest that did not shy away from the violent destruction of the much glorified and idealized "rational" machinery of increasingly large-scale manufacture. Therefore, the crisis of the time was, above all, a social crisis caused by a drastic transition from the antiquated feudal-artisan mode of production to a new one.

A figure of critical importance, in the sense that contributed to the concept of alienation's straying from its theological focus to a secular focus is Jean Jack Rousseau who

transliterated the explanation of man's loneliness and despair to his relationship with nature than with God. His conception was that, man was separated from his innate goodness not through Original Sin but through living in denaturalizing social milieu. (Johnson, 14)

Another important figure in the history of alienation is Karl Marx. Being given an economic interpretation, alienation first became an empirical and sociological, rather than a metaphysical or theological concept with him.

Marx argued that when men engage in activities that have no inner meanings for them as individuals, but are merely a part of the productive process, they become alienated from their deepest passions. Work comes to be

something out there, its products bearing no recognizable relationship to the individual effort of the worker. The worker's only awareness of the state of alienation may be the recognition that their work might become meaningless beyond their vision (Weiss, 581).

Marx pictures the relationship among man, nature and industry in the form of a threefold interaction among its constituent parts. Productive activity is, then, alienated activity when it departs from its proper function of humanly mediating in the subject-object relationship between man and nature, and tends, instead to make the isolated reified individual to be reabsorbed by nature. This can happen even at a highly developed stage of civilization if man is subjected to a natural law based on the unconsciousness of the participants (Marx, 574-652).

Hegel, a German Ideologist, first used alienation as a philosophical concept. To Hegel, it refers to awareness on the part of the individual that has become separated from something from which he is not essentially different and with which he was formerly unified. For Hegel, alienation represented a transitional state- the ultimate state being one of return, or "alienation from alienation". Alienation is necessary because it is a state in which a) the objective contents of History and Enlightenment are created; and b) the Bildung of man is formed by those contents (Rotenstreich, 8).

With the developments in sociology and psychology, alienation or anomaly turned out to be major issues of concern and study. In connection with alienation, some other cases such as rootless ness, anomie, joblessness, fragmentation, and identity, sense of continuity and sense of belonging were also studied and somehow related to alienation in various directions.

Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, introduced the concept of "anomie" in his book *The Division of Labour in Society*. Durkheim saw anomie and the breakup of integrated communities as the distinguishing figure of modern society. He noted that society guides, influences, and regulates behavior via morals, and in time, these social facts may go beyond the individual's comprehension. He used "anomie" to describe a sense of anxiety, alienation, uncertainty, loss of shared values, normlessness, and a condition of deregulation that was occurring in society.

Rootless ness is also considered in very close connection with alienation. It seems clearly to be associated with a decline in satisfying group activities, a decline in mutual trust, a decline in psychological upset and distress (Packard, 240-41), and deviant behaviors as in the case of alienation. It encourages shallowness in personal relationships and a relative indifference to community problems. It produces a loss in one's sense of personal well-being along with an increase in both personal and social malaise (Packard, 228-29).

From a sociological empirical/analytical perspective, the most important definition of alienation came from Melvin Seeman, his article "On the meaning of alienation" in 1959. Seeman distinguished five and later six variants of alienation from the personal standpoint of the actor- that is, alienation is here taken from the social-psychological point of view. The six variants that Seeman classified are: powerlessness (the individual feels s/he won't be able to attain his goals or get others' support); meaninglessness (the individual cannot give meaning to his own activities and cannot decide what to believe); normlessness (the individual may resort to illegal methods to reach goals); value isolation or cultural estrangement (insufficient approval of participation in the norms of community); social isolation, self estrangement (the individual gets alienated from himself and cannot manage to perform satisfying activities).

Existentialism of the 1800's and 1900 has provided new perspectives for the problem of alienation. The Existentialists Jean Paul Sartre, Soren Aabye Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger saw some measure of self-alienation and powerlessness over one's destiny as an inevitable part of the human condition. While Heidegger thought the individual split from authentic existence destroyed authenticity with the others, Sartre believed that man is completely free and responsible for his actions that his freedom implies. To Sartre, only by facing the terrible knowledge of his total responsibility and isolation may one climb out of inauthentic existence and achieve some sort of self-affirmation, instead of self-alienation.

While psychology and social sciences have developed a dedication to the chronicling or documentation of the seeming imposition of society upon the self and the problem of alienation, it is in the world of art, and perhaps especially in the novel, that alienation has been

confronted as a problem, and that attempts have been made to deal with the serious issue of man's alienation and his essential nature and its relationship to the forces acting upon it. Through the art of the novel the readers are seized and transported into the private inner world of the alienated, a world otherwise inaccessible to them. While the data of the social disciplines give ascertainable facts about alienation, the novel recreates an immediate subjective state.

Because approaches to the attempt to define alienation vary, authors have reached notably different resolutions, or non-resolutions, of the conflict. The reactions of their heroes are significant, not merely within the context of the story itself, or even as indicative of the author's attitude toward the problem, but as presenting serious possibilities for the reader's consideration. They must be examined and investigated to determine their relevance to the readers as individuals if they are going to carry on their own search.

The self, in Sartre's novels, is constantly in a state of becoming unique and incommensurable. There is no maker and therefore no pattern for all humanity to follow. Since there is no God, man is the master of his own fate. "Each one formulates his own imperatives in the chaos of nothingness ... Unable to escape the horror of life's absurdity, man has reached a dead-end. To be alienated-that is to be human" (Glicksberg, 8).

The sense of not being at home in a world that must be adjudged pointless and meaningless and that is absurd, and so should be rebelled against has been powerfully expressed in such works like Kafka's *The Castle* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. However, in contrast to European alienated heroes such as the heroes of Kafka and Camus, who seem to be more resigned to being inexorably trapped by the world and whose responses are mental or verbal rather than physical, the American alienated heroes portray distinctively American responses to finding themselves alienated. "The alienated individual recurs in American literature almost as a gesture of defiance against the democratic urge toward conformity" (French, 232). Blanche H. Gelfant asserts that the modern literary tradition that uses alienation as one of the major themes starts with Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. Dreiser's work was one of the first important American novels to portray the self-alienating effect of the modern city. The flight from reality, a form

of alienation of self from the world in other words, is seen also in Nelson Algren's *The Man with the Golden Arm*. Some of Hemingway's heroes also separate themselves from the world and go their own ways. Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* expressed a deep revulsion against nineteenth-century standards of conduct and idealization of war. James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, two great works of the twentieth century, dramatizing the opposite poles of alienation-flight and confinement in these two works represent the opposite poles of alienation-influenced and pervaded American fiction. Similar to these two works, many American novels dealing with alienation also employed a rhythm of movement and stasis produced by alterations of flight and confinement, effort and lethargy, or hope and disappointment. They used the imagery of roads, sea, birds to reinforce the theme of freedom; and rooms, walls, fog and windows to suggest the imprisonment of the self. In these novels, "... characters are running somewhere, and then stopping, sensing themselves nowhere. Action is not linear or progressive but circular; and the underlying circular structure of the novel gives mimetic expression to the theme of futility" (Gelfant, 300).

Ralph Ellison is another figure in American literature to use the theme of alienation. In his *Invisible Man*, the nameless hero escapes from the world in such a way that he becomes invisible. His invisibility is in the eyes of society rather than in his substance; however, at the end of the book he decides that he must emerge. This final image of a man rising from underground to life again expresses a universally shared hope that man can be reborn, and that, to use a word from a Malamud novel, he can start "a new life". This perennial hope seems to motivate the fiction of Saul Bellow who used alienated figures and alienation as one of the themes in his novels. Unlike some preceding writers who sought private escapes and private satisfactions, and favored alienation and escapism, Bellow rejects alienation though he uses alienated characters and the theme of alienation in his novels. In the following part of this paper, the theme of alienation and its use in *Dangling Man* will be discussed.

Although Joseph rejects alienation and calls it a fool's plea, it is evident to the objective eye that he is alienated from his society, his family and his own self. His diary

that gives access into the inner struggle in his mind and into the psychological aspects of his alienation reveals that besides the societal forces involved in the creation of his alienation, also his psychology creates this condition. While his alienation stems from sociological and psychological forces, it should be noted as well that his alienation is self-willed and self-centered in the first place. Another point to be noted is that Joseph's alienation is not a new one. Although from a religious point of view everyone is alienated by nature since the Fall; from a secular point of view, Joseph is already alienated well before the story proper because of the societal forces and tensions in the later years of his life. Thus, war is not a direct cause of his alienation, but only serves to its realization; and as he comes to realize his alienation, while trying to restore the balance or order, he gets more and more alienated in a vicious circle. As his alienation stems from two sources, namely sociological and psychological, it manifests itself in various symptoms in these two planes as normlessness, anomie, powerlessness, existential dilemma, identity crisis, isolation, thingness, inauthenticity, lack of connection between past and present, lack of a sense of connectedness and belonging.

Joseph's alienation from society, family and self ends with a reconciliation, a reunion or with a de-alienation for the lack of a better term. Joseph, who separates himself from his society, family, the external world and its order in search of answers to his questions that can lead him to a more meaningful existence with dignity, authenticity, freedom, and in search of his individuation, merges with them again and gives up his quest by symbolically joining the army that represents the external order. He is reconciled with them; however, this time his reconciliation is based upon a more meaningful togetherness and a more conscious existence; it is not imposed, but self-chosen.

At first look, Joseph seems to have failed in his struggle for the preservation of his self and for his individuation by merging his existence and identity into the matrix of society and by surrendering to the deterministic forces of the external world. Yet, he comes out of his struggle_ with absolute defeat according to some critics_ having learned many things with a more complete vision of life and of himself. Thus, his struggle is not without nobility or meaning. His struggle for individuation, for a better self, for dignity and authenticity, for freedom is understandable because almost

everyone, somewhere deep in their hearts, shares this desire. Hence, this prevents the ending from being a defeat. Joseph was man enough to struggle with all his might, and he succeeds as much as anyone would do in such an alienating world and condemned age. While Joseph's struggle shows the sub-angelic impotency of man against the deterministic forces of nature, society and external order, it also shows that it is not a miserable, wretched impotence. It also confirms the fact that in this age of human history isolation and creating a Walden as a solution for individuation and preservation of self is not as easy as it was for some romantic figures in the past.

There are other reasons why the ending of his struggle or merging with the aspects of his life that he was alienated from is not to be taken as a defeat. Even if his reunion is taken as a defeat that does not make his struggle worthless as such a claim would make all sorts of human struggle futile and meaningless, which is too much of an Existentialistic and Nihilistic approach. Furthermore, this type of an ending where Joseph admits that he has not done well enough alone and that the next move is the world's may lack quality and meaning on the part of the reader. Nevertheless, such an ending means a lot for Joseph as it ends his crisis, makes him visible again, puts him in action and ends his alienation at least seemingly. Finally, even if the ending is taken as a defeat, Joseph's defeat is Bellow's victory, which is another conflict in itself like many other conflicts Bellow created throughout the novel. Therefore, judging Bellow's or the novel's success merely by its ending can shade Bellow's success.

Although Joseph may seem to have been defeated in his struggle, he does not come out of it empty handed, but with a more complete vision and understanding of life, with answers to his old-age questions, which again make his final decision not a defeat. His alienation and quest for truth also provide him with a better insight into the true nature and meaning of the concepts that created his alienation. For example, as he gives up his struggle for transcendence, he recognizes his sub angelic position on earth and thus his human limits, his potentials and possibilities of "becoming" all of which gave him more authenticity, freedom and maneuverability. Now, he knows what he can or cannot do; he has a better picture of how much his existence can shape his essence. Another consequence of his realization of his sub angelic nature is the acceptance that he

cannot find or create absolute realities or truths alone; so, he says one should not make a doctrine of his feelings as they may exhaust or finish man like parasites and alienate man from his true nature. Joseph understands that man can have a God-like imagination and a desire to be more than human, even to be God, but he has worldly human limitations; and with these sub angelic limiting conditions, one cannot attain the highest order alone.

Having discarded his reliance on other people's versions of truth and morality and given up his struggle for transcendence to be more than human and having recognized his sub angelic position, Joseph sees that the only absolute reality is disorder which paradoxically is an order too. Moreover, he learns that the irrational, chaotic and unexplainable in life actually make up the underside of a deeper or a higher order and that only with the recognition that a higher order comprises both order and disorder can any true understanding of the reality of a higher order be possible. So, Joseph reaches a more comprehensive and more universal view of existence that encompasses both order and chaos, both his internal convictions and external situation, both his sub angelic limitations and his God-like imagination that can bring about possibilities for transcendence.

His ultimate discovery is that the world is what it is, so it will not fit any construction imposed upon it; therefore, any version of what is real, including his own, is illusory; true reality is found only by an acceptance of the whole, which transcends all of the variant aspects of truth. Joseph's acceptance of the inescapable reality of disorder constitutes spiritual growth. He resolves his conflict and alienation by considering the aspects or realities of life that he was alienated from as the integral parts of an incomprehensible higher order. One such truth Joseph comes to accept with courage is death. At the end of his quest, he admits that death has to be acknowledged and accepted for a complete vision of life, for a true understanding of man and as a prerequisite before one can turn into human. Maybe more important than that, Joseph also understands that he is given only one lifetime to realize himself as a human being, which makes immediate action and participation in society urgent and indispensable for him. At the end of his alienation, Joseph comes to have a better conception of how his individuation should be.

He sets off on his struggle for preservation of the self. However, by the end of his struggle he comes to recognize the difference between an egoistic opportunist, Machiavellian self that isolates itself, excludes the rest of the world, and rises stepping on others and a more humanitarian individualistic self that has a better picture of itself and that accepts the existence of others. Joseph admits that valuing oneself and prizing oneself crazily are two different things. In parallel to this recognition; however, he does not lose his desire for individuation but decides to do it in a more humanly and feasible way. This is because he understands that man is not himself unless he is a member, and he cannot be a member unless he is also someone else alone.

His new individuation is to provide him with an existence both separate and free enough like the tree in the woods, which also gives him the togetherness with the rest of the world. His priority is no longer the "ideal" but the "actual". He is no longer too much preoccupied with the "ideal" and ignorant of the "actual"; as the balance between these two is restored, he lives the actual but still ties to reach the ideal. Living life as it is, he learns that transcendence or perfection may not be possible for one sub angelic man; but still, it can be achieved by humanity along many generations and over long centuries as it happened since the dawn of human history. Having found out that self has no independent existence, that freedom may be meaningless and an illusion, that he cannot maintain a separate spiritual existence unless defined in external terms, and that he can understand himself only in his relationship to the world he lives in, Joseph acknowledges that solutions and high orders cannot be realized in vacuum.

Most important of all, in his alienation, he also learns that human potential cannot be realized in a vacuum, and that if one is to learn how to live a good life, he is to undergo the experiences of his generation, and is to learn it in the company of others. His recognition of the necessity of this togetherness is also an affirmation of the Social Contract. In a condemned age of war and uncertainty where there are not many suitable alternatives, by enlisting in the army Joseph is admitting that alienation is a fool's plea because it is impossible to divorce one's self from the world. He removes himself both literally and symbolically from the alienated position which his disillusionment with his family, his friends, the world has put him in. He finds for himself a

context that gives him some kind of perspective in which human values can be preserved and a context where he can define his human role and unify his chaotic experiences and joins the human race, identifying with the common lot of humanity. Leaving his room that has held him and surrendering his problematic freedom, he sets out on a journey across his own "Siberia" where he will try to sound creation through other means.

As stated above, at the end of his struggle in which he gets more alienated, Joseph recognizes a number of facts that he has ignored. The end of the novel, therefore, is a simple surrender neither to despair nor to a simple reunion but a submission to a higher order, a synthesis that he has reached in his alienation which provides a dialectical growth. In a way, while Joseph's alienation serves a dialectical process, his reconciliation with society, self and family serves as the outcome of his dialectical growth. Only by submitting to a higher order, does he reconcile the conflicts of his life and end his alienation. Although Joseph does not come to a perfect reconciliation with all those around him, he is back in life, in action, not destroyed and is no longer much isolated. What makes this reconciliation significant and more than a mere physical reunion is its nature. That makes it the third stage of the dialectical process, synthesis. In this final stage, Joseph's gain is more than a reunion for he is, thus, saved from thingness, going insane, committing suicide, and he has a new vision of himself, of man, of society and of the world. Although he is nearly destroyed in the difficult process of discovering that reality and coming to a reconciliation, his final decision that both puts him back in life and paradoxically gets him closer to the possibility of death, is an in-life solution rather than an anti or after-life solution. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that all these "althoughs" make his alienation turn out to be a spiritual growth following a dialectical process, and thus his final decision is a victory rather than a defeat in the end.

It is actually Bellow who rejects alienation and calls it a fool's plea through Joseph paradoxically by first aggravating his alienation and then de-alienating him for the lack of a better term. Although many critics think that Bellow drowns his protagonist in his struggle for individuation and preservation of self by joining him in the war and that this contradicts Bellow's theoretical position, the ending of the novel can be understood in a

different light, when Bellow's literary and intellectual formation is taken into consideration. It is no coincidence that Joseph, unlike Dostoevsky's underground man, hails regimentation and joins the human race. An understanding of Bellow's vision of man in a modern urban world, of the literary and intellectual traditions of his time is necessary to see how he used the theme of alienation in his novel.

Although influenced by the existentialist tenets in literature in an age of heavy Existentialism and defined as a modernist and a post-apocalyptic novelist, Bellow breaks away from many other modern writers who drifted into Solipsism and Nihilism under the heavy influence of Existentialism. In their writings, the individual is devalued. Bellow shares the challenges of an alienating urban world and the discontents of civilization, but he breaks away from these in the non-escapist solutions he brings in that he rejects alienation as a solution, calling it a fool's plea. He believes that man as a creature of potential dignity, achievement, greatness, and possibilities for "becoming" and transcendence is the measure of everything; Bellow values the individual and puts him back in his proper place on earth where he is thought to be condemned and to live and struggle. He repudiates Nihilism, alienation ethics, historicist pessimism and defends the authentic self that is realizing itself and living in dignity and in love with other men. He tries to find new perspectives and new definitions of what it means to be a human being in the twentieth-century and tries to make some sense out of a seemingly senseless, absurd, and alienating world. The world can also be explained by man's belief, his faith in the divine and in the inherent potential and essence of man that cannot be eradicated by any fashion despite his capacity to destroy himself and his civilization. Although he shares the idea that the modern world diminishes the value of the self, he still believes that it cannot manage to destroy the core and persistent value of the great human civilization.

Bellow accuses contemporary writers of continuing to adopt the wasteland mentality, criticizes them for their insincere, phony efforts to become popular, for their pessimism about the plight and possibilities of the modern man. Consequently, he breaks away from these movements and decries most forcefully those attitudes of the existentialists, the apocalyptic nihilists and the historicist modernists with wasteland mentality. He believes that the artist

can use his imagination in creating alternatives in an alienating world and claims that the writer has the responsibility to come up with solutions that are rooted in fellowship of man. By reconciling his protagonist with all those he was alienated from, Bellow rejects alienation and suggests that the self can be realized not in isolation but in the company of other men attended by love. By putting Joseph's struggle rather than the decision itself in the foreground, he reveals that he naturally values efforts and search for truth rather than the discovery of it.

Bellow uses alienation for a number of purposes. To count some, he uses it to criticize society and civilization, to stimulate the imagination to provide answers to man's ever-existing questions, to show what escapist solutions can lead up to and to create an anti-thesis upon which he can build his own synthesis. He uses alienation as one stage of the dialectical development and spiritual growth of his protagonist. For Bellow, alienation represents a transitional stage, the ultimate state being one of return, or alienation from alienation. It is a state in which the hero's Enlightenment is created, and the *Bildung* of him is formed. Thus, Bellow tries to turn the novel into a medium of inquiry, drenching his novel in ideas, speculations and theories, even messages to find the best part of man and to seek ways for a more meaningful life. In this sense, he can be said to favor the existentialist idea that existence precedes essence; however, he does not overlook the sub angelic human limitations of man's existence without the recognition of which can alienate man from his true nature. In a sense, Bellow uses alienation as a device like the alienation effect of Brecht to create disorder and present it to the reader to

start a thinking, a re-examination process rather than using and beautifying it as a solution.

Alienated characters help Bellow diagnose the malaise of contemporary times, seek for ways to cure and foreground social or psychological unrest by providing a heightened consciousness and perception to employ his imagination to the fullest potential and by providing reasons to go against the stream. Bellow believes that true reality is found only by an acceptance of the whole that transcends all of the variant aspects of truth as Joseph comes to admit at the end of his quest. Bellow's alienation contains elements, which the individual might repudiate; however, it also contains germs of new possibilities, the seeds of future and possibly better, adaptation.

As a result, Bellow brings his protagonist to a point of reconciliation where he frees himself from the prison of the ego and acknowledges the existence of others. Hence, Bellow tries to restore man's belief in himself and society, which he believes to have been bankrupt by nihilistic premises; therefore, instead of providing his readers with variations of the wasteland ideology, he points out that the healing power is within the self in the company of others. It is not in the idea that civilization should burn down and rise phoenix-like from the ashes. For Bellow, man, who is the root of all development, is similarly the essence of all development; since man is the root and essence, he is not only the material mover of social progress, but also the norm for these activities. To sum up, man is the measure of everything. Therefore, the truth, the solution to man's problems, is to be searched not in alienated selves, but in true selves.

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