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Seeking rapport: Self vs. society in "Demian" and "Dangling Man"

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San Jose State University, 1992

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SEEKING RAPPORT:

SELF VS. SOCIETY
IN DEMIAN AND DANGLING MAN

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of the Department of
English
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By
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ABSTRACT

SEEKING RAPPORT: SELF VS. SOCIETY IN DEMIAN AND DANGLING MAN

by Younsook Na

This thesis examines the enigmatic relationship between the inner self and the society outside as embodied in Hermann Hesse's Demian and Saul Bellow's Dangling Man. Since both Hesse and Bellow are interested in the establishment of an authentic self and the reason for social commitment, the thematic approach of this paper is grounded on Martin Buber's philosophy--the recovery of personal meaning requires involvement with the world as a whole.

Throughout the novels, the protagonists, Sinclair and Joseph, attempt to crystallize a personal ethos in the passage between isolation and contact. The purpose of this thesis is not only to make some thematic analogies between Demian and Dangling Man but also to establish each novel as a human quest for the solution to an eternal dilemma: the mutuality between self and the world outside that confronts it.

이 논문을
아버님, 어머님께
바칩니다.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Self Vs. Society.....	9
Chapter Two: Freedom.....	25
Chapter Three: The War-Stricken Youth.....	50
Conclusion.....	71
Bibliography.....	78

Introduction

Modern man has suffered from alienation in the wake of the two World Wars. He wrestles for self-understanding while lacking the awareness of communion between that self and the given world that confronts it. This problem is personal, but, as Charles I. Glicksberg asserts in his book, The Self in Modern Literature (1963) that "there are few modern writers who have not . . . been influenced by this pronounced alienation of the self" (12), it is also a mirror of society as a whole. In the works of such novelists as Hermann Hesse and Saul Bellow, who search for the autonomy of self in a harmonious relationship with society, their common belief in the ultimate meaningfulness of life is an antidote to the dismal contemporary view of human relationships.

Both Hesse and Bellow try to bridge the gap between a private region and an external reality, in other words, between an awakened self that feels isolated and a society that is indifferent to the desires of the individual. Therefore, the enigmatic relationship between the inner self and the society outside, as embodied in Hermann Hesse's Demian (1919) and Saul Bellow's Dangling Man (1944), is a key to solving the modern individual's alienation as well as

to examining the novels' artistic worlds. Although an attempt to connect these two works by the same theme may seem far-fetched, a number of similarities between the central protagonists, Sinclair and Joseph, show the common interests of Hermann Hesse and Saul Bellow. Both books concern themselves with the protagonist's relationship to society, focusing mainly on attitudes toward the mutuality of the personal and public world, which is ultimately based on humanity and love. The purpose of this thesis is not only to make some thematic comparisons between Demian and Dangling Man but also to establish each novel as a human quest for the solution to an eternal enigma: the mutuality of self and the world.

Hesse's early novel Demian deals with the agony of the young in their search for self in an age of identity crisis. Throughout the novel, we become aware of a blending of external reality with Sinclair's inner psychological world (Field 45). In Sinclair's life, there run two diverging rivers; one flows between the light and dark worlds in himself, while the other flows into the unknown ocean just named "outside." This is the reason that, within the heart of Sinclair, lie confusion and destructive self-pity. He murmurs to himself: "I was in the hands of fate and it was useless to try to escape. . . . I was surrounded by too much that I didn't understand" (Demian 29, 34). This

perplexity leads him to a situation in which "the demands of his own life come into the sharpest conflict with his environment" (Demian 41). However, he embraces the conflict with the exercise of a sensitive meditation on nature, feeling his mysterious connection between the inner and the outer worlds, as "the endorsement of creative activity as an instrument of self-realization" (Stelzig 140): "That is the way leaves fall around a tree in autumn, a tree unaware of the rain running down its sides, of the sun or the frost, and of life gradually retreating inward. The tree does not die. It waits" (Demian 56).

Hesse himself states his life-long quest with a composed attitude in one of his autobiographical writings:

I had no less task than to carry through to the end my scrutiny of chaos, with the now soaring, now sinking hope of rediscovering beyond chaos, nature and innocence. Every human being who has been awakened and really achieved consciousness has on one or more occasion walked this narrow path through the wilderness. (Autobiographical Writings 53-54)

Hesse knows, in the deepest sense, that he who breaks out from the shell, like the sparrow hawk, to perform his "scrutiny of chaos" must find his "narrow path through the wilderness" in his own heart. The process of awakening shatters "the realms of day" and opens "the way within" and

this way leads at once and the same time to the freedom of the self and the accompanying responsibility.

Likewise Bellow, in his first novel, Dangling Man, focuses on modern man's essential loneliness as a state that leads him to rediscover his identity. The hero, Joseph, is "dangling" because he has given up his job and is waiting to be called up. He fills the vacuum thus created in his life by supposedly deep self-examination. As Bellow himself explains in his article "Some Notes on Recent American Fiction," the protagonist, Joseph, puts in question "the meaning of survival, the meaning of pity . . . and of the importance of being oneself, the individual's consciousness of his own existence" (23).

Standing back from himself, Joseph ironically tries to examine himself through the use of third-person narrative: "Joseph, aged twenty-seven, an employee of the Inter-American Travel Bureau, a tall, already slightly flabby but, nevertheless, handsome young man, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin . . ." (DM 26). Accordingly, Joseph soon falls into a condition of painful self-torment and paralysis of the will to do anything creative with his freedom. As he confesses in a diary on December 16, "the more active the rest of the world becomes, the more slowly I move, and that my solitude increases in the same proportion as its racket and frenzy. . . . I grow rooted to my

chair" (DM 13). He has no incentive to action, no desire to see people, and yet he cannot put up with being completely alone. In a word, he suffers from, what Alberto Moravia has termed, "a lack of contact, not only with things, but with himself" (14).

Joseph is passive, inert but extraordinarily sensitive about life. Having reached the "danger of being cut off" (DM 120), he seeks finally for a temporary stopgap by asking to be drafted as soon as possible. He anticipates the regimentation of army life as a blessed exit from his closed self, rejoicing in "freedom canceled. Hurray for regular hours! . . . Long live regimentation" (DM 191). However, this is not an act of "throwing himself away" which is "to avoid thinking and feeling for [himself] and to become a mass man," rather it is "giving himself away" to join "the human brotherhood" (Clayton 117).

Since both Hesse and Bellow are interested in the establishment of an authentic self and the reason for social commitment, I will support my thematic approach to Demian and Dangling Man by grounding it in Martin Buber's Between Man and Man (1948) and I and Thou (1958). Buber's basic theme is that the recovery of personal meaning is really possible through involvement with the things and beings of the world, not by withdrawing from society, since the most quintessential part of our lives as individual human beings

is the innate craving for relation, the impulse toward the other, which Buber named, "the inborn Thou" (I and Thou 27). We, accordingly, do not have to fall into the annoying dilemma of choosing between the genuine life of the individual and the life of the public in which personal life crumbles and is absorbed in the life of the crowd. Instead, as Buber asserts that "the fundamental fact of human existence is man with man" (Between Man and Man 203), fully personal life is always life in community.

Throughout the novel Demian, Hesse also envisions the mutual life which Buber suggests. Sinclair, at first, firmly believes in his doctrine that "each man's life represents a road toward himself" (Demian 4), without comprehending Demian's remark that "genuine communion . . . is a beautiful thing" (Demian 115). Through the meeting with Frau Eva and the experience of the war, Sinclair learns to "share the very personal matter . . . with so many others, with the whole world in fact" (Demian 137). Finally, he comes to have a "life in the community," according to Buber, in which a man can reconcile his individual self with demands of society in such a way that the personal life grows not deteriorates.

In the beginning of the novel Joseph is also the type of person who "is all fenced around" (DM 54) because he feels offensive toward the people who "seem satisfied to

settle down to a long life of taking in each other's laundry" (DM 55). As the story goes on, Bellow leads the protagonist to experience "the other side," which in Buber's terms "means to feel an event in another's place as well as from one's own side (Between Man and Man 96). Given Joseph's situation of being "pushed upon oneself entirely" (DM 190), his "hurray for regular hours" (DM 191) is an inevitable step in the achievement of his ultimate goal: "goodness is achieved . . . in the company of other men, attended by love" (DM 92). Joseph is joining not only the army but the community as a whole.

Sinclair and Joseph are each "concerned with keeping intact and free from encumbrance a sense of his own being" (DM 27) and insist that human destiny must be pursued through "icy and lonely spheres" (Demian 58). However, it is to taste love--an irresistible attraction to mankind--which is the highest good but the fatal evil to the autonomy of self. Throughout the novels, each protagonist struggles to solve the problem of "the gap between the ideal construction and the real world" (DM 141), by being "strange, lonely and silent, wandering . . . like a separate planet, surrounded by an aura all his own" (Demian 42). Since the ideal constructions allow them to deal only with the objects of their own theory, Sinclair and Joseph each defeat themselves by strongly adhering to the alienated

self. Martin Buber asserts in his book, Between Man and Man:

[M]an's essential life is not to be grasped from what unrolls in the individual's inner life nor from the consciousness of one's own self . . . but from the distinctiveness of his relations to things and to living beings. (199)

Thus, man can become whole only in relation to another self. This thesis will be particularly applicable to my view of each novel as an incipient step toward self-declaration, which is the act of Sinclair's "bending over that dark mirror to behold [his] own image" (Demian 141) and Joseph's "unlocking the imprisoning self" (DM 153) at the end of each novel.

Chapter One: Abstract Self vs. The World

Tragically enough, in the beginning, both Sinclair and Joseph want nothing but an abstract self, which Buber describes as a solitary self without "the mutuality of acceptance, of affirmation and conformation . . . by the other" (The Knowledge of Man 71), because each is still "an apprentice in suffering and humiliation" (DM 67). And if they feel lonely, it is not only because they find it hard to communicate with their fellows, but because they have lost touch with an authentic definition of themselves. In another book, I and Thou, Buber goes on to say that "the two primary metacosmical movements of the world--expansion into its own being and turning to connection--find their supreme human form . . . of their struggle and adjustment, their mingling and separation, in the history of the human relation" (116).

Hesse starts the novel with Sinclair's early period. Beginning in the state of not having a concrete sense of self, Sinclair, the unfledged son of a middle-class family, becomes awoken to "the forbidden world" (Demian 7):

It [is] dominated by a loud mixture of horrendous, intriguing, frightful, mysterious things, including slaughterhouses and prisons, drunkards and

screeching fish wives, calving cows, horses sinking to their death, tales of robberies, murders, and suicides. (Demian 6)

In other words, he conceives of the dichotomy of light and dark worlds in himself. The title of the first chapter, "Two Realms," vividly presents Sinclair's dilemma of conflict between good and evil .

In the first chapter, Sinclair feels himself wholly domesticated to the "light" world as is represented by such words as "duty . . . confession, forgiveness . . . love, reverence . . . wisdom and orderly life" (Demian 5). While playing with the boys who attend "the public school," Sinclair invents a story of stealing some apples "out of sheer nervousness" (Demian 9). This gives Franz Kromer a chance to take advantage of him. Inevitably, Sinclair lets Kromer intimidate him with the threat of exposure. When Sinclair arrives at home after the fateful meeting with Kromer, his father reproaches him for having wet shoes. The thought that he is being scolded like a child at the very moment when Kromer might be reporting him to the police, according to Theodore Ziolkowski, gives Sinclair "a strangely ambivalent feeling of childish security and superiority to his father" (96). Since Kromer is not just the emissary of the "dark world," as most critics have claimed, but also the catalyst which makes in Sinclair "the

first rent . . . in the columns . . . which every child must destroy before he can become himself" (Demian 15), the involvement with him, Sinclair says, is "the most significant and lasting of the whole experience" (Demian 15). Through Kromer, Sinclair experiences the fatal fact that the world is not as simple as he has thought, but as enigmatic as the Sphinx. Therefore, Sinclair "for the first time in [his] life . . . [tastes] death and death [tastes] bitter, for death is birth, is fear and dread of some terrible renewal" (Demian 16).

A new boy, named Demian, who comes and enrolls in the school, is described as "superior, detached and in every respect different from all the others" (Demian 23). Sinclair believes that Demian is "a strange mixture of gratitude and awe, admiration and fears, sympathy and inward resistance" (Demian 36). The moment that makes Sinclair more "baffled than [he] had ever been in [his] life" (Demian 26) is when Demian challenges his intellectual callowness, saying that:

People with courage and character always seem sinister to the rest. . . . The strong man slew a weaker one. . . . Ultimately all men are brothers. So a strong man slew a weaker one: perhaps it was a truly valiant act, perhaps it wasn't. At any rate, all the other weaker ones

were afraid of him from then on, they complained bitterly and if you asked them: 'Why don't you turn around and slay him, too?' they did not reply 'Because we're cowards,' but rather 'You can't, he has a sign. . . . Cain a noble person, Abel a coward! Cain's mark a mark of distinction (Demian 26).

Sinclair's unthinking acceptance of the conventional teaching is jolted by Demian's gnostic interpretation of the story of Cain and Abel (Field 44). As Sinclair admits, "a stone had been dropped into the well, the well was my youthful soul" (Demian 27). At the age of fourteen, however, Sinclair is not developed enough to live by this revolutionary idea of good and evil.

Demian relieves Sinclair from "Kromer's clutches" (36), but in doing so, as Ziolkowski asserts, he "deepens the rent already torn in the fabric of the younger boy's innocence" (97). When Demian frees him from Kromer, thus removing his enforced contact with the other world, he quickly reverts to his former state. At the end of chapter 2, after a series of violent oscillations between the fatal attraction to the "dark" world and the childlike security of his own "light" world, Sinclair wants to return to childishness in a desperate attempt to ignore his predicament. "An odd urge prompted me to play once more the childish games of my

earlier years . . . the part of someone younger than myself . . . still good and free, innocent and safe" (Demian 19-20). This is the beginning of his alienation, for despite of his strong impulse to recapture the innocence of childhood "amid the ordered peace of [his] house," Sinclair lives "shyly, in agony, like a ghost" (Demian 21).

Since it is natural for the individual to fall back into the accustomed routine and to accept the standards of his group, Sinclair is apparently back where he started. He feels "extricated from a demonic labyrinth" and sees again "the world bright and joyful." But this is a temporary relief from "fits of suffocating fear" (36). The seed has been sown already and "the childhood world within [him] was falling apart" (Demian 41); only on the superficial level is he still an innocent child. Now he has found himself in the state of "the sharpest conflict with his environment" (Demian 41). Sinclair soon realizes that nothing is more difficult than to be oneself; it is a road that means loneliness, alienation and separation from the community. So far, Sinclair has oscillated between his movement away from the community and his irresistible reversions into the place "where [he] had been happy and content . . . the lost paradise" (Demian 36-7). In a positive sense, however, his self is still a potential to be realized, even an experiment; it is open to the way forward.

Another story that influences Sinclair's world of "light" is Demian's reinterpretation of the unrepentant thief. Demian objects to the penitent thief: "At first he was a thorough scoundrel, had committed all those awful things . . . and now he dissolves in tears and celebrates . . . self-improvement and remorse!" (Demian 50). Accordingly he prefers the other thief, who is ironically the one that a man could trust and in whom one could have confidence, for he has remained true to his convictions to the bitter end: "He's a man of character . . . he follows his destiny to its appointed end and does not turn coward" (Demian 50). This serves as an opportune provocation that accelerates Sinclair's resolve at a time when he needs it most. Sinclair now grasps the meaning of the self and realizes that true happiness and security lie only in fidelity to one's own inner principles, as in the case of the unrepentant thief (Ziolkowski 124). This realization, however, cannot be a joyful one, because it implies "responsibility and no longer being allowed to be a child; it [means] standing on one's own feet" (Demian 52). His confidence is challenged by self-doubts, which leads to the personal crisis and the conflict with society later in the novel. In this way Sinclair is early announced as being ambivalent and tinged with ironic self-contradiction.

At the beginning of the following chapter, "Beatrice," Sinclair reports that he perceives "the remarkable emptiness and loneliness" during the vacation after his communion. He painfully relishes "the humid fragrance of decay and dying to which something within [him responds] with greeting" (Demian 58). And he begins the long ordeal which drives him into the excesses of debauchery at school. While keeping company with "those friends who sat with [him] in the lowest dives among beer puddles and dirty tables" (Demian 62), Sinclair falls into the dilemma that "the more [he] realized that [he] was to remain perpetually lonely and different within [his] new group of [his] friends the less [he] was able to break away" (Demian 63). This apparent lack of connection, however, between the faceless, formless, nameless "crowd" and the "one," according to Buber, is the preliminary situation which must be overcome for self-being to be attained (Between Man and Man 178).

Even though Sinclair is "amused with remarks of unprecedented cynicism," yet in his inmost heart, he "was in awe of everything [he] belittled and lay weeping before [his] soul" (Demian 63). The loneliness he depicts is the inner loneliness of his own chosen life, of his particular self which is to develop (Newton 536). His childhood has been destroyed, but since there is no adequate replacement for the vacuum left, he plunges into the opposite extreme:

In this unpleasant fashion I [am] condemned to become lonely, and I [raise] between myself and my childhood a locked gateway to Eden with its pitilessly resplendent host of guardians. It [is] a beginning, an awakening of nostalgia for my former self. (Demian 64)

From this point on, Sinclair's story is no longer a pendulation between extremes, but an intensification of his search for himself with the concomitant alienation (Ziolkowski 99). Now he must learn, by the progressive acceptance and rejection of ideals, that the true meaning of his life lies not only within himself but also in exterior reality.

From the start of Dangling Man, Joseph shows a deep interest in "inner life" (9). The first "record of [his] inward transaction" (9) is replete with his outcries against "an era of hardboiled-dom" (9):

[D]o you have feelings? . . . Do you have an inner life? . . . Do you have emotions? . . . Most serious matters are closed to the hard-boiled. They are unpracticed in introspection, and therefore badly equipped to deal with opponents whom they cannot shoot like big game or outdo in daring . . . they fly planes or fight bulls or

catch tarpon, whereas I rarely leave my room. (DM 9, 10)

While Sinclair is "afraid of being alone for long" (Demian 63), Joseph regards himself as a man of feeling and emotion who seeks happiness within his own in the hard-boiled world which imposes its inhibiting "code" upon him. He wants to take his dangling period as a "short reprieve" to analyze what he is. According to Martin Buber, "whenever a man enters the stillness . . . he experiences the depth of solitude, and confronted with the ground of his existence experience the depth of human problematic" (Between Man and Man 158). But, in fact, as Joseph's mother-in-law, Mrs. Almstadt chatters about him on the phone that "he isn't working now, he's waiting for the Army, so he has all the time in the world" (DM 22), he just indulges in his "dangling" state as a "friendly alien."

As the outside world becomes more active, Joseph's solitude increases. A letter from Tod's wife, saying that he has flown to North Africa, worsens Joseph's feeling of being "rooted to [his] chair" (DM 13). At this point, he does not realize his Achilles' heel which brings him "a narcotic dullness" (DM 18): it is his inability to reconcile himself to the inescapable continuum of everyday life. On December 17 he records a passage from Goethe's *Poetry and Life*:

This loathing of life has both physical and moral causes. . . . All comfort in life is based upon a regular occurrence of external phenomena. The changes of the day and night, of the seasons, of flowers and fruits . . . that come to us. The more open we are to these enjoyments, the happier we are. (DM 18)

Goethe goes on to say that "nothing occasions this weariness [of life] more than the recurrence of the passion of love" (DM 19). But Joseph's feeling of imprisonment can be viewed from a different angle: his mental state is too dense to differentiate between the insignificant and the profound, the temporal and perpetual. Compared to Sinclair's innocence of the "dark" world, in the beginning of the novel, Joseph knows the reality itself deep in his heart, but he does not want to accept it as it is. Therefore, Joseph makes "mistakes of the sort people make who see things as they wish to see them" (DM 39).

As he admits to himself that "'common humanity' and 'to bring [himself] to concede' [are] completely absent from [his] mind" (DM 26), his detachment from life narrows his vision, especially when his sense of identity is concerned. In his December 18 diary Joseph recalls his "older self" who was "concerned with keeping intact and free from encumbrance a sense of his own being, its importance" (DM 27), yet not

cold or egoistic. His older self was also one who "tries to strike a balance between what he wants and what he is compelled to do, between the necessity and the wish" (DM 28, 29). Furthermore, he was proud of his "Machiavellian skill" to deal with both, and everyone thought that "Joseph has a close grasp on himself" (DM 29). The old Joseph, the preinduction Joseph, was mainly a "creature of plans." His life had been devoted to solving the inexplicable question that he had posed for himself: "How should a good man live; what ought he to do?" In recalling the past, he cannot avoid a feeling of strangeness, "of not quite belonging to the world" (DM 30). Here, appositely enough, Martin Buber's contemplative remark on "past" and "present" shows the reason why Joseph feels "all up in the air" (DM 38):

In so far as man rests satisfied with the things that he experiences and uses, he lives in the past, and his moment has no present content. He has nothing but objects. . . . The present is not fugitive and transient, but continually present and enduring. The object is not duration, but cessation, suspension . . . absence of relation and of present being. True beings are lived in the present, the life of objects is in the past (I and Thou 2-3)

This sense of strangeness "accounts for the alienation, the bad temper, the compulsive action, the fear or the dependency which are the major issue" (Opdahl 20).

This bad temper caused by alienation explodes when he happens to see his old friend "Comrade Jim." He goes to the Arrow restaurant to meet Myron Adler for a temporary job. As soon as he enters the restaurant, he behaves in the manner of a "dangling man," taking "a table toward the back, and immediately [falling] victim to depression" (DM 32). There he encounters his old friend, Jimmy Burns, sitting at a table with another man. Joseph picks a fight with "Comrade Jim" when he does not recognize Joseph. He wants to hear from "Comrade Jim" nothing more than a simple sentence: "Yes, I know you" (DM 36). Joseph takes Jimmy's disregard as an insult to his selfhood and makes a scene to validate his existence in the public. Because as a dangling man he is not an enthusiastic member of any society, "his identity in the community is nebulous" (Porter 12). Thus the more he yearns to join society the more he feels isolated. At least, however, this incident could be a sign that Joseph has a desire to enter into a relation even though it is a distorted one. This also ratifies the possibility of the ultimate communion with other people even when a complete unity may not be possible.

Joseph is overwhelmed by the "treasons" of life after he resigns from the Inter-American Travel Bureau to wait for the induction. To give his hope direction, he seeks to replace the old plan with an "ideal construction" which, he believes, will enable him to come to terms with the actual world and still retain a sense of his own being, that is, a plan that will allow him to reconcile the ideal world with the real world (Porter 24). But, as John J. Clayton says, the ideal construction is held not only at the expense of perceiving reality but at the expense of lived experience (79). Joseph makes an effort to flee from ordinary life by building a protective shell of "ideal constructions" with "a colony of the spirit or a group whose covenants forbade spite, bloodiness and cruelty" (DM 39). It is at a meeting of "the colony of the spirit" that Joseph discovers the falseness of his ideal. Minna Servatius becomes drunk and asks to be hypnotized by her old suitor Abt. Abt takes an action to expose her to shame when she is under his control, but, his hope ends in disappointment. Being "aware of the insult," she suddenly sits up and cries for help to her husband. Joseph then discovers that his own wife, Iva, is drunk. He recognizes "what [is] left of the 'colony of the spirit'" (DM 56):

[L]et us admit the truth. One was constantly threatened, shouldered, and, sometimes invaded by

"nasty, brutish, and short," lost fights to it in unexpected corners. In the colony? Even in oneself. . . . There were so many treasons; they were a medium, like air, like water; they passed in and out of you, they made themselves your accomplices; nothing was impenetrable to them (DM 56).

Accordingly, he doubts the authenticity of the "ideal constructions" which, as Sukhbir Singh explains in his article, "The Pretender Self and the Public Phenomenon in Saul Bellow's Novels," Joseph has drawn from his bookish knowledge to insulate himself from the ordinary realities of life (76).

The protagonist, Joseph, withdraws from the facts of life to an emptiness of the private existence. The reality looks unreal to Joseph because he denies that he is a part of it. Everything known about Joseph's world is filtered through his solipsistic diary. And Joseph writes about others in terms of himself due to the pressure of his self-absorption. As Joseph expected, Myron Adler's effort to find a job for him turns out to be futile. Regardless of the external incidents, however, life repeats itself. Joseph and Iva, as usual, receive some Christmas cards from acquaintances and their neighbor Vanaker keeps drinking heavily, throwing the empty bottles into the neighboring

yard (DM 58). What is worse, they suspect Vanaker is "a kleptomaniac" and Joseph "shall have to start wearing [his] room key on a chain" (DM 59). At this point, however, Joseph does not realize the fact that "man's essence is not to be found in isolated individuals, for a human being's bonds with his generation and his society are of his essence" (Between Man and Man 160). Joseph must lose his selfhood first to be fully human and reconcile himself to the world.

According to Opdahl, Joseph is an American hero who vacillates "between a need to be loved and withdrawal from a world which does not love him as he wishes" (6). Because of his reluctance, Joseph must struggle to establish a relationship with the community. Opdahl goes on to say that "his intense rejection of external reality belies his dependence on it" (14-15). Therefore, once he achieves Augie March's sharing "with other human beings as far as possible . . . and [feeling] a deep dizzy eagerness to begin" (322), he could see, far over the abstract self, the glance of the harmonious self with the world.

Though a substantial constituent of both novels is composed of what appears to be expository reasoning, the reasoning is placed in the tortured self whose propensities to abstraction are habitual, indeed compulsive. The loneliness of the search for the authentic self, and the

self's apparent ignoring of society, recalls the role of public and private virtues. In a realm of private virtues truthfulness is regarded in contrast to the demands of society. But the vices of inhumanity link up with the absence of public virtues. Sinclair confesses in chapter three of the novel: "I have no idea whether parents can be of help, and I do not blame mine. It [is] my own affair to come to terms with myself and to find my own way" (Demian 41). Joseph sits in his room awaiting the day's minor crisis while his wife, Iva, earns their living. He considers himself a moral casualty of a war which denies him the possibilities both of freedom and commitment. Therefore, both Sinclair and Joseph are "harried, pushed, badgered, worried, nagged, heckled" (DM 164), and cannot find themselves in the complex of the natural desires and accumulated judgments which form their personalities. As time drags on and the disparity between the ideal world and the real world becomes more apparent to them, both Sinclair and Joseph grow less confident of their ability to make sense out of the universe and to discover rapport with it. Accordingly, in their state of passivity, the world thrusts its own engagement upon them in the form of the war and the army. Social pressures may unleash the protagonists' inner conflict, but these are resolved only by their spontaneous readiness to comply with social expectations.

Chapter Two: Freedom

Robert G. Olson argues in his book The Morality of Self-Interest (1965) that "the autonomy of the free moral agent is a gift of God which transports him into the society of angels" (135). Apart from its theological dimension, the main idea here is that to have freedom is not to gain a pseudo-autonomy for the self by renouncing the reality of the world outside ourselves. Striving to gain an insight into the meaning of freedom, both Sinclair and Joseph, however, attempt to preserve themselves by inverting their state of being "condemned to freedom" into the solipsistic self. Sinclair confines himself to his own inner world and Joseph shuts himself up in his room in such a way that they divorce themselves from reality and create an artificial world in which they suffer from "a feeling of strangeness, of not quite belonging to the world, of lying under a cloud and looking up at it" (DM 30). Both show a modern man afflicted with the burden of creating meaning on his freedom and alienated from circumstances around him by his fervent interest in freedom and its self-contradictory nature: freedom is personal and must not be forced, but it can be destroyed by being made too private, by too much defense.

The difficulties of attaining freedom are the difficulties of transcending the limit of personal fears and desires by which we are identified. As "a moth confines its search to what has sense and value for it, on what it needs" (Demian 47), both Sinclair and Joseph try to build an "ideal construction" in which they "enjoy a kind of rapture tinged with melancholy, scorn of the world" (Demian 58). They are the equivalents of a dangling man who has no status in existence because his true self is governed not by choice but chance. And death in life, as Joseph feels, is nothing but "the abolition of choice" (DM 148). What they want is to take refuge in a state that rescues them from the dilemma that "nothing is more seductive for man than his freedom . . . but nothing is a greater cause of suffering" (DM 78).

Freedom is the experimental goal of their quest, but freedom forces upon them a latent knowledge of the self they did not anticipate, and the self-knowledge reveals to them the essential truth that "freedom has no meaning when it is separated from its social context" (Aharoni 50). According to Richard Lehan, in his article "Existentialism in Recent American Fiction: The Demonic Quest," "existential choice and freedom are constructed along social lines; existential commitment . . . is a principle of social involvement" (196). In the same context, Buber asserts in Between Man and Man:

[T]he free self is not separated from the world but is only mature and resolute for right existence with the world. . . . The self which has become free certainly does not turn its back on the world, its resolution includes the resolve really to be with the world. (171)

Both Sinclair and Joseph are thus torn between the inclination to live a unique life outside society and the guilt which follows such a choice. In this chapter, my intention is to examine the irony that both Sinclair and Joseph isolate themselves to counter their intimidating sense of freedom, which must be linked with social commitment in the end.

Sinclair's inner process of self-creation no longer coincides with the superficial form of the chapter arrangement after the encounter with the girl in the park, who, according to Ziolkowski, embodies the ideal of Sinclair's lost innocence (99). Sinclair tries to "construct an intimate 'world of light' for [himself] out of the shambles of a period of devastation" (Demian 67), saying that "I have an ideal again, life [is] rich with intimations of mystery and a feeling of dawn that [make] me immune to all taunts. I [have] come home again to myself" (Demian 67). Here, Sinclair's "world of light" is a one-sided world of the abstract as is Joseph's "ideal construction." While

people outside the society "force [them] to recognize that [they] belong to [the] world" (DM 138), both Sinclair and Joseph try to find "some exclusive locus, passionate and engulfing" (DM 141) which can be "a plan, a program, perhaps an obsession" (DM 140). Sinclair is possessed by the figure of Beatrice so intensively and so passionately for a while that he strives to draw her image with "fumblings of [his] subconscious" (Demian 68).

The ideal of Beatrice, however, is more of a synthesis of purity and nobility, "something of the ethereal, soulful" (Demian 66) as Sinclair initially assumes. Astonishingly, the face he finally achieves in the end turns out to be neither Beatrice nor Demian but himself. As Buber argues in I and Thou, "the free man is who listens to what is emerging from himself . . . not in order to be supported by it, but in order to bring it to reality as it desires" (59). Therefore, it can be said that a man can only be what he makes of himself. Sinclair himself admits that "it [is] no longer an escape, no crawling back to mother and the safety of irresponsibility; it [is] a new duty, one I [invented] and [desired] on my own, with responsibility and self-control" (Demian 67). From this point, Beatrice gradually becomes "submerged or, rather, [is] slowly receding, approaching the horizon more and more, becoming more shadowy and remote, paler" (Demian 78). She cannot quench the

thirst for his soul any more because, through Beatrice, Sinclair perceives "what [determines his] life . . . [his] inner self, [his] fate or [his] daemon" (Demian 70).

The agonizing matter of "personal destiny" is also considered by Joseph. Joseph, in his journal entry for January 6, ponders:

[W]e suffer from bottomless avidity. Our lives are so precious to us, we are so watchful of waste . . . perhaps a better name for it would be the Sense of Personal Destiny. . . . It is a different thing to value oneself and, to prize oneself crazily. (DM 88)

However, as R. R. Dutton insists in the book Saul Bellow, Joseph is not a victim of determinism; he makes the decision to give up his freedom (32). Dutton goes on to say that the ability to choose is not revocable; wherever Joseph is at present, he carries that choice with him (32). Destiny originated from self-will, therefore, is no more than a "true self." The communal relation of self and destiny is put into the context of freedom and necessity by Martin Buber in his essay on "Education": "At the opposite pole of being compelled by destiny of nature or men there does not stand being free of destiny or nature or men but to commune and to covenant with them. To do this it is true one must first have become independent" (91). He continues to say

that as we "become free, the leaning on something is more and more denied to us, and our responsibility must become personal and solitary" (92-3). Being technically free, Sinclair sees his state with a deep-felt agony; he rejects external consequences in favor of self-exploration. His suffering originates, as Peter M. Axthelm defines the condition of man in The Modern Confessional Novel, not "in the chaos of the self but on the chaos within the self" (9). Sinclair must plunge into the abyss of his existence in order to obtain that self-knowledge which is the indispensable constituent of voluntary behavior. "Life lived in freedom", as Buber insists in Between Man and Man, "is personal responsibility or it is a pathetic farce" (92).

Accordingly, the achievement of freedom includes individuation, which is experienced by Sinclair as a symbolic process leading to the birth of a new self. And individuation, according to Buber in his book Knowledge of Man, is "the indispensable personal stamp of all realization of human existence" (84). When Sinclair visualizes this image by painting it, he achieves a more complete development of the central metaphor: "Now it [represents] a bird of prey with a proud aquiline sparrow hawk's head, half its body stuck in some dark globe out of which it [is] struggling to free itself as though from a giant-egg" (Demian 74). As the bird must shatter the egg in order to

be born, Sinclair must destroy the world of his childhood and traditional society in order to reach his goal of genuine freedom (Ziolkowski 115). But the significance of the awakening is far more profound. It is not simply the world that Sinclair shatters, but particularly the world of perilous polarities between the free inner self and so called "outer destiny."

After mailing his "painted dream bird" to Demian, Sinclair receives the startling reply that relates the bird to the Abraxas which is both god and devil and rules over this stage of Sinclair's development: "The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world. The bird flies to God. That God's name is Abraxas" (Demian 76). The spiritual agent of this laborious birth is the "full-frown eccentric" Pistorius (Demian 92), who liberates Sinclair from his old self by helping to create the new. As Sinclair puts it, their conversations encourage Sinclair to break out of the conventions:

[A]ll of them [help] me to form myself . . . to peel off layers of skin, to break eggshells, and after each blow I [lift] my head a little higher, a little more freely, until my yellow bird [pushes] its beautiful raptor's head out of the shattered shell of the terrestrial globe. (Demian 89)

But Pistorius-Abraxas, like every stage, must be transcended, for Sinclair is not seeking an established doctrine on which he can rely, but rather self-knowledge.

As the friendship with Pistorius develops, Sinclair's counteractive efforts to encourage freedom despite the haunting image of destiny linger on in the realm of dreams and transcendent oneness with nature, which are "comforting and rewarding." He whispers:

[T]he surrender to Nature's irrational, strangely confused formations produces in us a feeling of inner harmony with the force responsible for these phenomena . . . it is the same indivisible divinity that is active through us and in Nature . . . mountain and stream, tree and leaf, root and flower, yes, every natural form is latent within us, originates in the soul whose essence is eternity, whose essence we cannot know but which most often intimates itself to us as the power to love and create. (Demian 88)

Here, the communion between the external force and self-directing existence produces as mystical an aura of freedom as we can find.

Sinclair has already freed himself from his family and his childhood. But it is more distressing, he realizes, to release oneself from a leader with whom one has kept a

spontaneous companionship out of both curiosity and respect. He has already tasted much loneliness. Now he senses that "there [is] a still deeper loneliness and that it [is] inescapable" (Demian 108). The parting from Pistorius is the most painful incident that Sinclair has to endure:

[W]here we have been disciples and friends out of our inmost hearts, it is a bitter and horrible moment when we suddenly recognize that the current within us wants to pull us away from what is dearest to us. . . . He [has] given me faith in myself. And now I [become] conscious of gradually beginning to resist him . . . and I [feel] that he [understands] only a part of me completely.

(Demian 104)

To be sure, the meaning of freedom considered here is a largely subjective one. According to Pistorius, it is the only reality: "There is no reality except the one contained within us. This is why so many people live such an unreal life. They take the images outside them for reality and never allow the world within to assert itself" (Demian 96). Robert P. Newton, in his article "Destiny and Hesse's Demian," maintains that "we live in isolated introspection but share our soul-essence with the world, so that in some ontological sense we are not really subordinate to its rude necessities" (531). Sinclair misconstrues the attainment of

freedom as achieving a solipsistic self by rejecting the external reality of the world.

In the two chapters that cover Sinclair's relationship with Pistorius, the symbol of Abraxas gains a significant interpretation--"Abraxas--the necessity of including evil as well as good, the references to the Gnostics, and to the collective unconscious" (Field 53). This is clearly indicated in Pistorius' explanation:

We always define the limits of our personality too narrowly. In general, we count as part of our personality only that which we can recognize as being an individual trait or as diverging from the norm. But we consist of everything the world consists of, each of us . . . so we bear everything in our soul that once was alive in the soul of men. Every god and devil that ever existed . . . exist as latent possibilities, wishes, as alternatives. (Demian 88-89)

If this is the case, Sinclair asks, "what is the value of the individual?" (Demian 89) In his answer, Pistorius points directly to the epistemological role of man: "There's an immense difference between simply carrying the world within us and being aware of it" (Demian 89). He continues to say that a mad man can produce thoughts reminiscent of Plato; a small seminary student can think deep mythological

sequences that occur among the Gnostics or in Zoroaster, but without being aware of all this. Only when the first flesh of cognition dawns does he become a human being (Demian 89).

Hesse's understanding of the relationship of "self" and "destiny" is ambiguous, Newton argues, precisely in failing to recognize the true nature of each and the necessity of their interaction with the world (523-4). This is also the subject which keeps annoying Joseph immensely. When he must decide reality in the "merely neutral environment" (DM 153) of 1943, Joseph's dialogue with "the Spirit of Alternatives" brings up the issue of a separate destiny. If we human beings are united by our quest "for pure freedom," how can we be allowed to have any identity as such? Joseph reaches a conclusion that the demands placed upon the individual are distinctive. One achieves freedom in his own way by an individual act. The circumstances requiring that act and one's response to them are one's separate destiny (DM 154). Buber discusses this matter in I and Thou. To him, destiny and freedom are mutually related to one another. Only when man is free destiny confronts him as the counterpart of his freedom. Therefore, freedom and destiny are linked together in existence (53).

The novel is colored with polemic expressions of fatalism. During the conversation with Frau Eva, Sinclair declares that "I belong to my fate and to no one else"

(Demian 120). While he associates with the "circle" that includes "believers, adherents of certain hopes" (Demian 123), he realizes:

[A]ll men who have had an effect on the course of human history . . . were capable and effective only because they were ready to accept the inevitable. . . . What particular movement one serves and what pole one is directed from are matters outside one's own choice. (Demian 124)

However, the doctrine of fatalism must leave us at least a remnant of freedom to accept or not to approve the destiny (Newton 529). Through Pistorius, Hesse asserts that only one who gazes into himself and confronts the image of his fate is "allowed to desire [himself], only [his] fate" (Demian 109). Perhaps this is a crucial point in all discussions of the free self in Demian. We can freely carry out our "wanting" our intentions, but it is not certain that whether our wanting itself is really free and unrelated to outer circumstances--the world. In this case, it cannot be our wanting, but something happening to us (Newton 526). Demian then tries to solve the problem, explaining that the will is free to carry out commands "from within." Buber broadens the meaning of free self, relating it to the world:

[T]he free self . . . is not separated from the world. . . . The self which has become free

certainly does not turn its back on the world, its resolution includes the reality to be with the world, to act in it and on it. . . . Existence is completed in self-being . . . man's essence is contained in the unity of man with man. (Between Man and Man 171)

Joseph, awaiting induction into the army and dangling in an equivocal state of complete freedom, watches his freedom deteriorate into the isolation. According to Axthelm, "man's solitude enables him to gain the potential of his genuine freedom" (11). Likewise, Joseph assumes that he is to probe deeper into his soul and, at last, to obtain self-knowledge in his "dangling" period. However, instead, he is wrapped up in a state of pain and humiliation: "There is nothing to do but wait, or dangle and grow more and more dispirited. It is perfectly clear to me that I am deteriorating, storing bitterness and spite which eat like acids at my endowment of generosity and good will" (DM 12). Alone and placed to test his absolute freedom, he becomes fastidious, belligerent, irascible and self-absorbed. Yet he continues his quest for "pure freedom" as his suffering is aggravated, anticipating a vision of the external truth; freedom should be the condition of dignity (DM 167). Meanwhile, he does not know what to do with the freedom he has. Yet he is unwilling to admit that he does not know how

to use his freedom. Later Joseph convinces himself through his alter ego, the Spirit of Alternatives, that "it isn't love that gives us weariness of life. It's our inability to be free" (DM 168). Having gained his freedom, he must learn what to do with it, how to live in freedom with dignity.

A hostile influence of external reality thrusts in and forces Joseph to review the principles by which he has lived. His former values break down and cannot protect him from the ruthless reality that threatens to suffocate him. He observes himself dangling, suspended between two worlds, one vanishing, the other resisting to come into presence. In his journal entry for December 18, he records the following:

[T]heories of a wholly good or a wholly malevolent world strike [me] as foolish. . . . For [me] the world is both, and therefore it is neither. Merely to make a judgment of that kind is, to representatives of either position, a satisfaction.

(DM 29)

Now, he must "begin schooling [himself] in shrewdness" (DM 78). Accordingly, he start to "see that a difficult plan or program like mine had to take into account all that [is] natural, including corruptness. I [have] to be faithful to the facts, and corruptness [is] one of them" (DM 40). Since his state is, Eusebio L. Rodrigues says in the book Quest

for the Human: An Exploration of Saul Bellow's Fiction. "one of demoralization and utter confusion" (15), Joseph cannot understand his eccentric behavior, his unexpected outbursts of temper. Nor can he come to terms with his "diabolic part" that has encroached upon his being. In a desperate attempt to defeat this darkness and to comprehend his condition, he decides to keep a diary. It is his way of talking to himself about himself and a form of release and self-therapy (Rodrigues 15). Through the journal structure, Joseph not only manifests what is inside him but also achieves a scrupulous external appraisal of himself.

Because Joseph places excessive emphasis on his own freedom and individuality, he falls "victim to depression" (DM 32). Through "the pungency and staleness of its stores and cellars, the dogs, the boys, the French and immigrant woman, the beggars with sores and deformities" (DM 86), Joseph is allowed to taste the reality. He is imprisoned in his room, scarcely leaving it. The mental environment of the boarding house itself is a semi-prison for the inhabitants. His free self becomes burdensome to him and he does not even "experience any great pleasure in having won twenty-four hours" (DM 81). People in general, Joseph says, are no longer interested in "inward transactions" (9), they are always intruded upon, still feeling lonely. The superficial relationship between man and man is symbolized

in an incidence when Joseph encounters a stranger on his way home from his mother-in-law's house. There is a block-long gap between Joseph and the man who is "out on some unfathomable business," wearing "a long, soldierly coat which the sun [has] converted to its own color" (DM 23). Even if Joseph and the stranger want to remain alone in their "mental rooms" they cannot: someone knocks, looking for "the usual comfortable anchorage" (DM 99). Yet, they find themselves stuck in their own "six-sided box" which fits their solitary self. At one point we learn this from Joseph: "I, in this room, separate, alienated, distrustful, find in my purpose not an open world, but a closed, hopeless jail. My perspectives end in the walls" (DM 92). In a few cases, some men know exactly where their opportunities lie; they break prisons and cross whole Siberias to achieve them (DM 92). But, "one room holds" Joseph (DM 92) because his own capacity is not enough to hold a self-definition and, therefore, a positive life.

Inconsequential situations sensitize Joseph to be meticulous. His journal entry for January 13 records: "A dark, burdensome day. I stormed up from sleep this morning. . . . Then I rose" (DM 106). Even though Robert F. Kiernan insists in his book Saul Bellow that "Joseph's ability to "storm up" from sleep suggests a healthy vigor" (20), the probability is diminished and his "vigor" is

frustrated by the choice of "what to do first--whether to reach for [his] slippers or begin immediately to dress, turn on the radio for the news, comb [his] hair, prepare to shave" (DM 106). Lacking all positive impulses and constructive initiative (DM 19), Joseph is further strained by an awareness that he can permit himself this "reprieve" only because his wife supports him financially while he lies abed (Kiernan 20). Joseph, wandering "through a ten-cent store, examining the coming valentines, [thinks] of buying envelopes, and [buys] instead a bag of chocolate creams" (DM 107), but Joseph proves to be too feeble-minded to enjoy his freedom. Since his freedom is a void in which he hangs, unable to reach any solid reality (Tanner 19), "the unfamiliar streets . . . [turn] out to be no different from the ones [he] knows" (DM 107). With his freedom from the usual family and social duties, Joseph also experiences a loss of self insofar as the self is pivotal. For, within the void state, there are no comparative values, no directions that usually support an effort and make that effort work. When a man possesses, in action and suffering in his own life, the act of being, he is free and consequently creative (I and Thou 54).

Joseph tries to keep himself "intact" and shut-up. However, as a reverse action, his feelings overly upset him. Joseph's fifteen year old niece, Etta, Amos's daughter, is

an irritation to him. She is a vain girl, Joseph notes, and she closely resembles him. Since Joseph is poor and powerless, he is unimportant to her. When he resists her intrusion in the music room, she insults him, saying that "beggars cannot be choosers" (DM 70). Losing his temper, he spansks her, as he admits to himself, "with an abrupt, raw jerk of anger" (DM 69). In some ways Etta reflects Joseph. Gilbert Porter in his book Whence the Power considers both as dangles, "Joseph between the ideal and the real worlds, Etta between childhood and adulthood" (15). Her immaturity is comparable to his hypersensitive reactions. In spanking her, he is really attacking those flaws in himself which are frustrating his efforts to define his existence. She represent the residues of his past self which still hinder him from gaining "pure freedom," and stopping "living so exclusively and vainly for [his] own sake, impure and unknowing, turning inward and self-fastened" (DM 154).

Buber argues:

As consciousness of one's separateness grows, it becomes more and more difficult to overcome the distance through relation; heightened insecurity and need for decision produce an ever greater temptation to accentuate the distance and take refuge in the pseudo security for the world.

(Knowledge of Man 23)

Joseph, now on the verge of despair and anxiety, tries to keep a modicum of hope in his wife, Iva. Having gone through this humiliating situation at Amos' house, she drops "to the edge of the bed and [bursts] into tears" (DM 74). Joseph then pathetically shouts that "Dearest . . . it's so nice to know that you at least have faith in me" (DM 70).

Joseph dangles between the realistic world of action and the ideal world of thought, that is, between empathy and apathy and between life and death. Tony Tanner analyzes Joseph's state of mind precisely:

Joseph oscillates between corrosive inertia and compulsive self-inquiry, wrestling with irresolvable paradoxes of world and spirit which have a drastically deleterious effect on his character and bring him to the point of futility and exhaustion. (18-19)

Accordingly, he becomes more and more preoccupied with the internal world and isolated from the external world in spite of Eva's will of "enjoying this liberty" (DM 11). Bellow gives a metaphor for Joseph's self-indulgence. Going to his mother-in-law's kitchen for a glass of orange juice, Joseph sees "a half-cleaned chicken, its yellow claws rigid, its head bent as though to examine its entrails. . . . Beside it [stands] the orange juice, a brown feather floating in it. [He pours] it down the drain" (DM 24).

Staring perpetually at his own innards as "the ancients studied entrails for a hint of the future," Joseph is as dead as the fowl, and "the stray feathers spoil the most reliable pleasures of daily life" (Cronin 169).

His dangling has been prolonged and savored for the exploration of the true meaning of freedom that it provides as Joseph finds its progressive transition to larger problems of the spiritual void. The lack of genuine attachment is the antithesis of Joseph's expressed longing for "pure freedom." His touchy relationship with Kitty Damuler proves it. After a two-month affair with her, Joseph resolutely tells Kitty that "a man must accept limits and cannot give in to the wild desire to be everything and everyone and everything to everyone" (DM 101). But being careless about such subtle matters, he continues the affair in order to assure his weary ego that he is "important enough for [his] soul . . . responsible for his own salvation, which is in his greatness" (DM 89). It is a small betrayal of Iva that he lends Kitty a book he has recommended to his wife, but it is a more serious betrayal that he refuses to admit the loan when Iva looks for the book. Rather than confess, he makes a scene with Iva and rushes out of the room, threatening to sleep in a flophouse but planning to meet Kitty. Rationalizing his deception, Joseph tells himself that his decision to spend the night

with Kitty is to "avoid bickering with Iva and going to sleep in raw temper" (DM 102). That Kitty already has a partner for the evening causes him to be "ambiguously resentful and insulted" (DM 105).

He becomes frustrated by the painful paradox that he is incapable of either utilizing or enjoying his freedom. And this can be the crucial element which instigates his existential crisis. After a fight with the landlord, Mr. Gesell, Joseph is pierced by the idea that "our rages are deceptive; we are too ignorant and spiritually poor to know that we fall on the enemy from confused motives of love and loneliness. Perhaps, also, self-contempt. But for the most part, loneliness" (DM 147). In time, he finds out that this new liberty to do whatever he wants is more imprisoning than his former organized and monotonous life (Aharoni 48). In his discussion with the "Spirit of Alternatives," a projection of part of his mind, Joseph complains:

We are afraid to govern ourselves. . . . We soon want to give up our freedom. It is not even real freedom, because it is not accompanied by comprehension. It is only a preliminary condition of freedom. But we hate it. And soon we run out, we choose a master, roll over on our backs and ask for the leash (167-8).

Nothing seems to him the same anymore, and his precarious new situation thwarts his former expectations to the point that he gradually loses his eagerness for life: "I feel I am a sort of human grenade whose pin has been withdrawn. I know I am going to explode and I am continually anticipating the time. . . . Continued life means expectation. Death is the abolition of choice" (DM 147). Joseph wants the freedom into which he is plunged to allow him to see an ideal Joseph whom he can reconcile with the actual Joseph in the real world (Porter 26).

The self he has held so precious is an "imprisoning self," and the end of his pipe dream of "ideal construction" is that the highest form is to unlock "the imprisoning self." The falsified face of freedom is isolation. Near the end of Dangling Man, Bellow hastens Joseph toward concluding isolation when Joseph, because of the insistence of his wife, attempts to cash a check at the bank. Since Joseph has insufficient identification for cashing the check, however, the president of the bank refuses him. Losing his control again, Joseph makes a fuss, and realizes the limits to which he has been pushed: "It was a foolish incident. A year ago I would have accepted this explanation politely and have moved away." (DM 175). The substantial point is that Joseph has no proper identity in the real world; no one can be identified in an empty space. As

Dutton says, "definition requires involvement in which distinctions can be made" (28). Joseph knows this; but, at the time, he is incapable of putting into practice what he knows.

In the face of his intolerable discovery that he cannot use his liberty properly, Joseph feels an acute need to assure himself, and to prove that he is a free man. At the restaurant where he fights with Comrade Joe and at Minna's party, Joseph attempts to assert "pure freedom." All of his attempts turn out to be futile and he comes to the conclusion that his attempts at asserting freedom are not the way to solve his dilemma. Instead, Joseph perceives two important realizations: that he cannot be free except in giving himself away, unlocking "the imprisoning self" (153) that keeps him "impure and unknowing, turning inward and self-fastened" (154): and that his quest is the common human quest; "We are all drawn toward the same craters of the spirit--to know what we are and what we are for, to know our purpose, to seek grace" (154). Recognizing that his "personal destiny" is also the common human destiny, that, as the Spirit tells him, "Everybody else is dangling, too" (DM 165), Joseph decides upon joining the army: "I am grateful for that. I am in other hands, relieved of self-determination, freedom cancelled. Hurray for regular hours!

and for the supervision of the spirit! Long live regimentation!" (DM 191).

This decision has been a polemic question among the critics. Some critics consider Joseph's joining of the army as a failure--the acme of his despair, and others consider it as a triumph over his passivity--an affirmative act of choice. Dutton claims that "he is out of context, hence lost . . . when he gives up the struggle to live with his freedom and demands that he be taken into the army without any more delay" (18). Likewise, "this final cheer for regimentation," according to Kiernan, "is by implication a borrowed hope for spiritual freedom" (23). However, the optimistic opinions are dominant: "his rejoining of his fellowmen, even in the framework of the army, is the sole way by which he can reassert his freedom" (Aharoni 51); regimentation is the height of his goodness (Fuchs 12); it is "to reaffirm the initial identity and to return to the original community" (Lehan 192); it is "a rejoining of the human race from his position of prideful exclusiveness" (Detweiler 41). Joseph reaches the paradoxical conclusion that it is precisely the detachment from human contact which limits freedom, not attachment to it. And Joseph makes an apposite answer to his decision to enter the army when his friend Steidler asks him how he is using his freedom: "I

[am] preparing myself spiritually . . . I [am] willing to
be a member of The Army, but not a part of it" (DM 133).

Chapter Three: The War-Stricken Youth

Demian reflects the frustrations and urges of postwar youth in 1919, and Dangling Man deals with the problem of the relation of man to a society which, in 1944, has disillusioned him. Ziolkowski says:

[M]uch of the literature and art of the twentieth century is predicated on the assumption that traditional standards of value have collapsed. . . . Many others became aware of the inner disintegration of nineteenth-century standards only after the war had completed the process externally, rendering it symbolically visible. (6)

The impact of disastrous world wars intensified the disillusionment with civilization and man's goodness to the point of despair. But such a spiritual climate can also inspire an apocalyptic vision of hope. Sinclair is shocked at Demian's remark that "Europe had conquered the whole world only to lose her own self. . . . Nothing can be born without first dying" (Demian 123, 131). Joseph also cannot but have "the hope of an impossible rejuvenation" (DM 172). Regarding the circumstantial fact that Demian and Dangling Man are related to World War I and World War II respectively, I will pay attention to the desolate, but

ironically resuscitating spirit of war-stricken youth in general which Sinclair and Joseph embody.

Ziolkowski maintains that the war is "not so much the physical phenomenon of battle that dumbfounded a startled world, but rather the total transformation of a traditional civilization that was externally the result but internally the ultimate cause of the war" (87). The war itself, with its huge and new apparition, comes as an inevitable phase between the life and death cycles of civilization for "death is birth, is fear and dread of some terrible renewal" (Demian 16). This prophetic vision of history influences in the interpretation of the experiences of the self in the novel which is linked with "an obscure and mystifying symbolism of the unconscious that is perhaps as much an index of the disturbed temper of the times--its confused apocalyptic hopes and fears--as it is a record of the psychological fathoming of the 'deep self'" (Stelzig 154). Given Sinclair's remark that "the real spirit will come from the knowledge that separate individuals have of one another and for a time it will transform the world" (Demian 115), Hesse's power of relating an individual spirit to the anima of communal history in Demian is conspicuous.

It is an eminent accomplishment for Hesse to have transformed an otherwise plain, juvenile story into an profound novel about an inner search for self-liberation in

an era of historical upheaval. Franz Baumer insists, in the biographical book Hermann Hesse, that "Demian is closely bound up with the fate of the war and of Europe. In it there are hard words of criticism for a Europe that has grown old and rigid" (53). Hesse has such powerful empathy with the wartime generation that he is able to show the momentous collapse and renewal of whole world without fighting as a soldier in the battlefield. That Sinclair definitely considers his story to be characteristic and representative of the entire history is implied in the introduction:

Every man's story is important, eternal, sacred; that is why every man, as long as he lives and fulfills the will of nature, is wondrous, and worthy of every consideration. In each individual the spirit has become flesh, in each man the creation suffers, within each one a redeemer is nailed to the cross. (Demian 4)

As the story progresses, Hesse's microcosmic view is developed into the embracing cosmopolitanism. Having exchanged a few words with Sinclair, Demian mounts his horse and leaves him to participate in the war. Sinclair, then, walking "through town . . . buzzing . . . at war" (Demian 137), realizes that "the only remarkable thing was

that I was to share the very personal matter of my fate with so many others, with the whole world in fact" (Demian 137).

When the story begins, Sinclair encounters the dichotomy of the world: "The realms of day and night, two different worlds coming from two opposite poles, mingled" (Demian 5). The "realm of day " is that of "duty. . . confession, good resolutions, love, reverence, wisdom; the "realm of night" is "horrendous, intriguing, frightful. . . including slaughterhouses and prisons" (Demian 6). In a larger sense, the invasion of the "realm of night" foreshadows the emerging intrusion of the external reality of the world, especially the First World War, upon the vulnerable individual. This can be related to the biographical situation of Hesse when the First World War broke out. For Hesse the war proved to be "the great moral crisis that forced him to justify anew his entire thinking and his entire work" (Baumer 48). Moreover, it awakened Hesse to a recognition of the reality that exists "beyond all the consolations sought in the appearance of things, beyond all separation and exclusion of the realm of evil from our consciousness" (Baumer 51).

The idea of "two realms," deepened in meaning, appears in Demian as the integration of good and evil in a transcendent unity. Examining his earlier ideals, Sinclair finds them to be inadequate and meaningless. Bewildered at

first by the disparity between his idealistic notions and the relentless actuality of the war, he realizes that the commotion is not only in the world but in himself. When he glances beyond the microcosmic world that he has fabricated for himself into his own existence, he sees that there is as much chaos there as in the outside world--chaos that he was formerly reluctant to confront, defiantly, romanticizing it instead into the nostalgic craving for a childhood. Now, facing the reality--the war, Sinclair feels that "all men [seem] to have become brothers overnight" (Demian 137).

Waiting for his induction Joseph is also caught by the same question. He has a conversation with the Spirit of Alternatives:

[I]t is even more important to know whether I can claim the right to preserve myself in this flood of death that has carried off so many like me, muffling them and bearing them down and down, minds untried and sinews useless--so much debris. It is appropriate to ask whether I have any business withholding myself from the same fate. (DM 166-67)

Sinclair and Joseph, in Joseph's terms, just "don't want to be humped protectively over [their] life" (DM 166). They become aware that they share in a common fate, for theirs are not isolated cases, but rather they are representative of afflicted humanity in general.

In the fall of 1913, the solace for the suffering comes from Sinclair's meeting with Demian's mother, Frau Eva. Sinclair, after quite a long period of separation, encounters Demian in the university town, and is introduced for the first time to her. Sinclair is instantly fascinated with Frau Eva, for she seems to be the embodiment of his "dream image"--"universal mother." Frau Eva shows herself frequently while Sinclair has a conversation on "the collapse of the present world" with Demian. She does not participate in it, but "all thinking" seems to emanate "from her and in the end [go] back to her" (Demian 125). Sinclair experiences an enchanting sublimity of his soul, "sitting near her, hearing her voice occasionally and sharing the rich soulful atmosphere surrounding her" (Demian 125). They--Frau Eva, Demian and Sinclair--share in the vision of a new Europe, a future world in which people who live up to their true selves will arise as leaders of a new world when "a new perhaps dangerous and ominous impulse makes itself felt" (Demian 124).

Sinclair is also accepted into the group of "various other seekers," all of whom concern themselves with the potential rebirth of the individual. They regard the emerging war as a presage of rebirth: "a new birth amid the collapse of this present world [is] imminent, already discernible. . . . The new world has begun and the new

world will be terrible for those clinging to the old" (Demian 124, 135). The war itself serves as an externalized event that symbolizes the immense upheaval taking place beneath the surface: "Deep down, underneath, something [is] taking shape" (Demian 138). Demian and his friends perceive that the entire civilization of Europe in which they have so long believed is decaying. Still entangled in a state of despair, "Demian and his friends look forward to a rebirth of humanity that is portrayed as imminent, but which they have thus far experienced only in their dreams" (Ziolkowski 36).

It comes naturally when Sinclair's interior symbol--the bird--is envisioned on an imaginary screen as an envoy of war. During the summer of 1914 Sinclair experiences an inspiring moment in the midst of a storm:

A loose yellow cloud swept across the sky. . . .
In a few seconds the wind had fashioned a shape out of this yellow and blue-gray mass, a gigantic bird that tore itself free of the steel-blue chaos and flew off into the sky with a great beating of wings. (Demian 129)

When Sinclair tells Demian of this image it becomes evident that the bird now foretells "some shattering event, a move on the part of destiny" (Demian 130). The spiritual fatality of World War I, as Newton says in "Destiny and

Hesse's Demian," is symbolized by the sparrow hawk breaking from the egg and expressed by calling the war a manifestation of divinity (527). Sinclair, on duty in Flanders, regards the war as the external phenomenon of interior metamorphosis being wrought under the aegis of humanity. Something is being developed, he feels, in the turmoil of war:

Something akin to a new humanity. For I could see many men--and many died beside me . . . these objectives and aims were completely fortuitous . . . filled them with the lust to rage and kill, annihilate and die so that they might be born anew.
(Demian 138)

One night when Sinclair stands sentry in front of a farm, his enigmatic vision of scattering clouds as "armies rode on high" (Demian 138) projects "behind the suggestion of a moon." And "the images of [his] life and thought of Frau Eva and of Demian" (Demian 138-9) follow in succession. Now "a mighty, godlike figure" manifests itself "with sparkling stars in her hair, bearing the feature of Frau Eva" (Demian 139). Sinclair's apocalyptic perception of Frau Eva as the anima of history is, as mentioned in Eugene L. Stelzig's Hermann Hesse's Fictions of the Self, "Hesse's portentous myth of Europe in the throes of World War I" (149): soon "she [closes] her eyes and her countenance

[becomes] twisted with pain. Suddenly she [cries] out and from her forehead [spring] stars . . . [leap] in marvelous arches and semicircles across the black sky" (Demian 139).

The two friends, Demian and Sinclair, are split up by the war and for the last time discover each other lying side by side in a hospital. Sinclair is wounded on the Flanders battlefield by a bombshell. In a deep sense, however, he experiences the burst as a "cathartic revelation, an exhilarating thrust toward self-liberation from conventional shackles" (Newton 520). The war, from the point of view of Sinclair's inner development, must come in order to dissociate the bonds, to cast the individual back upon himself (Ziolkowski 101). Therefore, there is no longer the asymmetric relationship of older boy to younger between Demian and Sinclair: they approach each other as equals since Sinclair has reached the stage of self-realization that parallels Demian's. Sinclair attains, as he admits himself, "the companionship which is possible between people who have tasted complete loneliness" (Demian 122). But even this culminating communion of independent selves is not to last perpetually; man in search of himself is destined to be alone. Sinclair declares that "one day I would waken from these beloved images of beauty and stand, alone again, in the cold world where there was nothing for me but solitude

and struggle--neither piece nor relaxation, no easy living together" (Demian 133).

So Demian dies from his wounds, but before his death gives Sinclair a last kiss from Frau Eva, whispering that "you'll have to listen within yourself, then you will notice that I am within you" (Demian 140). Once and for all Demian leaves Sinclair in absolute solitude and alienation. Sinclair, however, is now independent enough to live out his own life. His death, therefore, is not a finale but rather a prelude. Through it, Sinclair becomes united with his real self: "the self-seeker finally fully emancipated" is "ready to start living himself" (Mileck 96). Sinclair gazes into his soul and sees his "own image now completely resembling him, my brother, my master" (Demian 141). The centripetal force of the story is the emanation of Sinclair's integrated self from his earlier attachment to Demian. To be sure, the ultimate self-realization--the union with Frau Eva--is never achieved. But, Sinclair's significant remark that "the outer world [is] perfectly attuned to the world within . . . a light kiss [of Frau Eva] on my lips . . . never would go away" (Demian 117, 140) suggests at least an ostensible hope.

In Demian Hesse's standpoint regarding the war is more ambiguous than it is generally thought to be. Linking Sinclair's personal problems with the fate of Europe during

the World War I, Hesse, contrary to his reputation as a pacifist, seems to believe that the holocaust of the war is the inevitable provision for the rebirth of the corrupt world. Accordingly, the war becomes the agonizing but inevitable result of man's dying spirit, its end justifying the means. This can be understood as assenting to the necessity and positive role of the very real First World War. In late 1915, a year after the war began, Hesse mentions, in Freedman's rewording, "the warmth of togetherness among people struck by an identical fate" (173), and he, pointedly disavowing pacifism, remarks that "the war, though terrible, had its place as a means to an end" (Freedman 177).

The acquiescent attitude toward the war in Demian has been a controversial matter among Hesse critics. Ernest Rose says, in an attempt to defend Hesse's pacifistic reputation against an apparently consenting attitude toward the war, that the war symbolizes for Hesse the reshaping of the world by the new spirit (55). Despite Rose's effort, however, the novel itself ends affirming the ultimate function of the war. Robert P. Newton vindicates on a symbolic level Hesse's identification of personal destiny with the outbreak of the war. Newton focuses on the emblem of the hawk breaking out of the shell which provides "a smooth *tertium comparationis* between Sinclair's personal

rebellion and the outburst of societal tensions in the war" (533). For all its effort to conceal the external reality in favor of individual spirit, Demian finally comes to embrace the whole human history. And it is war, inexorable war, that enables men to share the experience of the "new humanity."

Dangling Man, appearing late in the Second World War years, shows Joseph's psychological debacle as he strives to preserve his ideals in the materialistic and disintegrated milieu of World War II. In order to appreciate Joseph as something more than a fictional figure in the war novel, it is necessary to study the novelist's intention in using the war as a setting. Seeing that Dangling Man is set during the period in which Joseph awaits induction, the phrase "dangling man" suggests that the novel is a war story about what can happen to a man when he is involved with the crisis of war. Bellow in Dangling Man delineates the atmosphere of spiritual disorder which marks the generation of World War II. Bellow sees, Opdahl argues, the fictive possibilities in at least two facts that tend to accompany the wartime situations in modern society: the draft, with its possible delays, and the removal of self-direction that the military machine forces on the participant (11). The loss of self-direction caused by the delay leads Joseph to eventual alienation in such a way that he is rendered into "a symbol

of modern man caught between peace and war, half civilian, half soldier, unable to adjust to either mode" (Frank 102). Out of place wherever he goes, he no longer has any solid identity; neither his friends, his family nor his familiar environments present any solace. He cannot but lose himself amid the relentless impersonality of the society.

Being "one of the most honest pieces of testimony" of its time, Dangling Man records the increasing disillusionment caused by the failure of political action. At lunch with Myron Adler, one of his few remaining friends, Joseph is unexpectedly reminded of his altered condition when he encounters his former friend and comrade Jimmy Burns, who now ignores him because Joseph is a turncoat in Jimmy's eyes. At this moment, Joseph becomes a nonentity that has neither presence nor personality. Comrade Joe and Comrade Jim are not comrades any more and the proletarian paradise they wished to build is now at war. Joseph's "unusual explosion of temper" is therefore directed not only at his former comrade, but at the shattered ideal they once shared, that man and ideology can together fulfill the "American dream." Dealing with his generation Bellow is able to immerse himself in the consciousness of first-generation America, dangling between the prevalent idealism of new America and the collapse of old European cultures.

Because Joseph believes in his own goodness, he believes also in the goodness of others like him. Consequently, he creates what he calls a "'colony of the spirit,' or a group whose covenants forbade spite, bloodiness, and cruelty" (DM 39). Through fellowship with such noble spirits Joseph hopes to escape from those crude mortals "in whom the sense of the temporariness of life [has] shrunk" (DM 39). But Joseph begins to see that "a difficult plan like [his has] to take into account all that [is] natural, including corruptness" (DM 40). With the urgency of war come the death of the old Joseph and the creation of the new Joseph, whose belief is shaken and yet whose plans for the future are as uncertain as his dangling stance in the present. Even though the idealistic plans have not come true in the chaotic reality, the aspiration that motivated the formulation of the plans is still present. To give his frustrated self some hope Joseph seeks an "ideal construction" that will enable him to make a bridge between the ideal world and the real world, preserving a sense of his own identity. Here the war, ingeniously detached to a distance from the action of the protagonist, becomes the sign of moral bankruptcy of society and personal defeat.

Joseph thinks of himself as "a moral casualty of the war" (DM 13). Being "confronted by the wrongs, errors,

lies, disgraces, and fears" of reality, he is "forced to pass judgment on [himself] and to ask questions [he] would far rather not ask: "What is this for?" and "What am I for?" and "Am I made for this?" (DM 123). His beliefs, proved to be inadequate, do not protect him any more. Regarding his dangling period as a chance for his introspective quest, he asks himself: "Who can be the earnest huntsman of himself when he knows he is in turn a quarry?" (DM 119) With his impending conscription, he feels that his liberty has been dissipated and he loses control of his own self. He finally questions the value of the war: "Will it decide, ultimately, the major issues of existence? No. Will it rescue us spiritually? Still no. Will it set us free?" (DM 168) He therefore decides that he has to go on searching for his own identity, despite the war.

The delay, which completely frees him to reflect on his life, also sets him apart from his busy wartime environment. This intact freedom throws Joseph back on his resources: it tests his ability to live alone. It is an opportunity for him to define his relationship to others (Dutton 19). First, Joseph's relation with his wife, Iva, begins to fade. Iva tries to make an uncertain situation as comfortable for Joseph as possible. She does not question how he spends his time; she does not complain that he is living on her earnings. Rather, she encourages him to enjoy his liberty.

She, however, begins to be irritated when he aggravates her with his growing paralysis. Furthermore, he shows frequent bursts of temper in public and petulant behavior in private. The point of her complaint to Joseph is his indifference: "And it's months and months since you took an interest in me. Lately, for all you care, I might just as well not be here" (DM 94). Joseph's feeble excuse for the accuse is that they are both victims of an impossible situation: "Iva, it's the situation we are in. It's changed us both. But it isn't permanent" (DM 94).

The most irksome figure in his environment is Mr. Vanaker, named "werewolf" by Iva. He tries to look vigorous so much that he "hurries in his black moleskin jacket up the street . . . slams the door and kicks the snow from his boots on the first step . . . coughing widely . . . runs up" (DM 17). Ironically, however, his eccentric behavior proves the fact that he is alienated and discontent with his life. As Joseph seeks a colony of the spirit and yet alienates himself from his friends and family, allowing "nothing better than to see [his] friends singly or in pairs" (DM 40), Vanaker is eager to be a member of society and yet annoys those with whom he seeks contact. His frequent coughing is "a sort of social activity" (DM 16) intended "to draw attention to himself" (DM 16) and make himself known to the world; despite his desire to be

understood, he can show only a twisted form of social activity. Joseph and Vanaker are "figures in the same plot, eternally fixed together" (DM 25). They are, according to Porter, "both trying in vain to change an unacceptable life into an acceptable one" (19). The violence of Joseph's outburst against Vanaker is an acknowledgment of his subliminal awareness of the old man's significance and his resistance to becoming such a person in the future. It is this explosion of temper that impels Joseph in desperation to rush to the draft board. Now he is "available at any time" (DM 184), being "off to the wars" (DM 184).

On March 29, after Joseph has committed himself to the draft board, Mrs. Kiefer dies. She too has been dangling, between life and death for several weeks. On the day of her funeral, the postman delivers the notice from draft board summoning Joseph. Her funeral seems to commemorate the end of Joseph's isolation as a civilian (Saposnik 393). Joseph is driven into the "universal relief" since "at least [he] [doesn't] wait any more" (DM 187):

I must give myself up. And I recognized that the breath of warm air was simultaneously a breath of relief at my decision to surrender. I was done. . . . It would not have hurt me, for I could feel nothing but gratification and a desire to make my decision effective at once (DM 183).

As Saposnik comments on Joseph, "without the self-confidence that Joseph seems to gain, he is very much a study of what Joseph might have remained had not the war come to his rescue" (393).

On the street he repeatedly encounters the Christian Science woman. She talks despairingly about those who "have come back from the jungles and the fox holes, surviving the maiming of fire only because of their faith" (DM 161). But her "sickly face" speaks to Joseph of death: "Her hair is grizzled, her forehead is . . . blazed with a scar that resembles an old bullet wound . . . her skin was the color of brick dust; her breath was sour" (DM 161-2). Because Joseph persistently puts himself in relation to the war, he imagines his end in a wartime situation: "How will it be? How? Falling a mile into the wrinkled sea? . . . cutting a wire? Or strafed in a river among chopped reeds and turning water, blood leaking through the cloth of the sleeves and shoulders? (DM 123). The cruelty of war and the crisis of impending death suggest, paradoxically, Pifer says, "a potentially creative force powerful enough to break through the "inhibitory effect of Joseph's own doubt, dread and skepticism" (39). Joseph prefers not to "worship the anti-life." He determines then to rely on life despite its violence and apparent hollowness, exclaiming that "there are no values outside life. There is nothing outside life" (DM

165). He anticipates, instead, that by enlisting in the Army, he may "sound creation through other means" (DM 191). At this point Joseph's decision to participate in the war and die gives a paradoxically affirmative flavor: "Perhaps the war could teach me, by violence, what I had been unable to learn during those months in the room" (DM 191), he declares.

As the ground for spiritual trauma in the realm of actuality, the war is a central problem for Joseph. He does not wish to profit from it indirectly as Fanzel the tailor has done. Fanzel has an outward confidence of "riding the wave" but actually is in fear since he is "a master only of his scissors and needles, not of the greater fate that makes such changes . . . with wars" (DM 109). He just protects himself "by charging . . . fifteen cents for a button he formerly sewed out of kindness" (DM 110). Nor does Joseph wish to profit directly by seeking a commission that would give him immediate military advantage and have carry-over value for his later civilian life (Porter 24). Joseph asserts to his brother, Amos, that "the whole war's a misfortune. I don't want to raise myself through it" (DM 64). He declares that he would "rather be a victim than a beneficiary of the war" (DM 84), but he also insinuates that he might turn out to be a victimizer rather than a victim: "Yes, I shall shoot, I shall take lives Certain

blood will be given for half-certain reasons, as in all wars. Somehow I cannot regard it as a wrong against myself" (DM 84). That the war finally prompts a removal of the conflict provides for the future concerning the renewed definition of Joseph as a man. Joining the reality, now he has the world and history from which to choose a definition. Instead of being self-indulgent silently, he is ready to cope with the challenge of a new life. He chooses to join the army even though he is not yet ready to live out his new identity.

The consequential influence of Demian is not limited to the immediate postwar situations. The moderns can sympathize with the feelings of Sinclair-Demian: personal redemption is inseparably related to such an outbreak of the historical tensions as war. "The bankruptcy of present-day ideals" leads people to "the reign of the herd instinct" which lacks in "freedom and love" so that the community is only "a society held together by anxiety--inwardly decayed and decrepit and near collapse" (Demian 115). As the world is threatened by the impending war, Sinclair concludes: "This world, as it is now, is intent on dying . . . and it will" (Demian 115). As compared to Hesse's rather cataclysmic view of the war--an apocalyptic vision of World War I as the sign of the rebirth of a decaying humanity--Bellow shows a passive attitude toward war. Bellow

perceives that for his generation the war itself is an anticlimax, that their real experience is the waiting, the dangling, the indecision before the draft. Thus Joseph's diary is more than a personal record; it is the history of his generation, a generation that was suspended between, according to Saposnik, "thirties optimism and forties uncertainty" (394). The novel therefore ends with the protagonist, Joseph, leaving for the war and writing in his journal: "Hurray for regular hours! and for the supervision of the spirit! Long live regimentation!" (DM 191).

Conclusion

Demian is the story of a young man, torn between a submission to "the majority's path" and "the demands of his own life." It is the turn toward an interior world that changes the outward reality into an apparently more puzzling but ironically necessary way of portraying the inner self. Pistorius, who teaches Sinclair "the courage and self-respect" (Demian 92), exhorts that "there is no reality except the one contained within us. That is the reason that so many people live such an unreal life. They take the images outside them for reality and never allow the world within to assert itself" (Demian 96). However, when a man projects himself on the interior world, he tends to fall into the isolated condition. As Fiedler says, "it is not only because he finds it hard to communicate with fellows, but because he has lost touch with any overarching definition of himself" (109). In this sense, Sinclair suffers not from too much self but from a lack of it and his conscious rejection of external reality proves his inevitable dependence on it; he can find definition of himself only in his relationship to the world.

For a while he absorbs himself in such an unreal world embodied in the figure of Beatrice. But soon he confesses

that "I lost Beatrice completely from my sight and mind" (Demian 75). Here the gap between internal and external reality turns out to be imaginary. A short time later, he feels that his inner reality is stronger than external reality: "Images, pictures, desires arose within me, drew me away from the outside world so that I had a more substantial and livelier relationship with the world of my own creation . . . than with the actual world around me" (Demian 79). This impression does not bring Sinclair into the community of the others, nor does it make him "closer to anyone, but it actually [makes him] even lonelier" (Demian 75). Sinclair must expose himself to all that he can meet in order to have "a mystic sense of unity with the whole existence" (Traschtenberg 59). As Buber comments on this matter, we do "not attain to knowledge by remaining on the shore and watching the foaming waves, [we] must make the venture and cast [ourselves] in, [we] must swim. . . . [We] perceive . . . the reality of the being there (Between Man and Man 124-5). Yearning for the sublimity of the completely self-contained existence, Sinclair attempts to counter the influence of the external reality with the ingenuity of his self, but the more he hangs on to his self, the more he feels frustrated.

Sinclair's continuous stages of alienation yield to the realization that the completion of his life lies not only

within himself but also in the external world. Sinclair himself admits: "In the peculiar self-made isolation in which I existed like a sleepwalker, a new growth began to take shape within me. The longing for life grew" (Demian 79). Sinclair acknowledges the turmoil in the world as well as in his soul, hoping that the feelings of guilt and responsibility that he has conceived in his own inner self could be awakened in many hearts (Ziolkowski 12-3). At this stage, Sinclair's interest begins to shift from his persistent self-concern and self-justification to adjustment to a society. This change causes the break with Pistorius: "I was always preoccupied with myself. And I longed desperately to really live for once, to give something of myself to the world, to enter into a relationship and battle with it" (Demian 81). Therefore, it can be said that Sinclair's individuation--turning back upon itself--is a necessary step toward the development of the independent self. And, according to Ziolkowski, this leads beyond the individual back to the whole community (56): "Genuine communion" between those individuals "is a beautiful thing. . . . The real spirit will come from the knowledge that separate individuals have of one another and for a time it will transform the world" (Demian 115). In this way, man is synthesized with the world and comes to attain a harmonious relationship with society.

Joseph begins his journal in defiance of so called American hardboiled-dom--a "curious mixture of striving, asceticism, and rigor" (DM 9) which does not allow "the exhibition of feelings and emotions" of the individual. His whole struggle is for the means by which the self might be preserved in a time of death. Joseph is thus acutely aware of the conflict between an imposing world and man's desire for pure self. Perceiving the threat of the world to his psychological being, Joseph tries to seek a reliable source of value in his inner self. "Only from the depths of insecurity caused from alienation," Buber insists, "a man, overshadowed by despair, can answer with his decision the question about man's being" (Between Man and Man 145). In this way, Joseph comes upon the fact that the self is where felt reality is, and where meaning may be. His ultimate goal is not to do battle with the world but to achieve a harmonious relationship with society in the state of an autonomous self. Here at the very outset of his career, Bellow describes the tendency of modern intellectual man to examine his inner life by subjecting himself to detached analysis (Pifer 26).

His efforts to keep away from ordinary life by defending himself with the shield of "ideal constructions" prove to be unsuccessful. The more he desires to see himself as a solipsistic being, the more he feels that he is

deteriorating in isolation, "storing bitterness and spite which eat like acids at [his] endowment of generosity and good will" (DM 12). The journal entry of January 22 records:

I ate a large breakfast, intending to go without lunch. But at one o'clock, intensely hungry, I tossed aside Abt's pamphlet and went out for lunch. On the way back I bought several oranges and a large bar of chocolate. By four o'clock I had eaten them. Later, at Fallon's, I had a large dinner. And a few hours later, in the movies, I added to all this a whole packages of caramels and most of a bag of mints. Now, at eleven, I am still hungry. (DM 117)

The symptom of physical hunger reveals Joseph's psychological emptiness. As long as he makes vain efforts to complete himself in a vacuum, his hunger for completing his self cannot be satisfied. Since Joseph cannot be an active participant in society as a whole, he wants to be at least part of a "colony of the spirit, a group whose covenants forbade spite, bloodiness, and cruelty" (DM 38). But he cannot not find such an idealistic group of people because it is a community which exists just in Joseph's theoretical world, not in reality.

By giving up the self-persistent ego, or extreme individuality, Joseph can reach the state in which the false

pride and ideals of greatness vanish. Although he claims to be an exceptional man and takes refuge in "self-invented realities," he is finally forced to come out of his "six-sided room" by some accidental incidents in the midst of a crowd of ordinary people. He participates in personal or public meetings before he acknowledges his nexus to the "larger body" of common people. These incidents, the one at the party in Minna's house and the other, unexpected encounter with Comrade Jim at the Arrow restaurant, bring about Joseph's disillusionment with his ideal construction as well as with his solipsistic self. He must face "the truth of ordinary life which dispels his ego and make him aware of his commonality" (Singh 76). Thereafter, Joseph tries to establish a meaningful dialogue with the external world.

Throughout the novels, both Sinclair and Joseph attempt to crystallize a personal ethos in the limbo between isolation and contact. The fallacy they commit is that "to live in accord with the promptings which came from the true self" (Demian 80) is only to live "exclusively and vainly . . . impure and unknowing, turning inward and self-fastened" (DM 154). They mistake the solipsistic self for the autonomous self. That is why Sinclair wonders, "why was that so very difficult?" (Demian 80), and Joseph questions, "aren't you asking too much of yourself?" (DM 137) when they

converse with themselves, searching for self-knowledge. It is true that the self must first have won a certain autonomy before it dares to be in contact with the outside world. However, the ultimate stage of existence, in which the individual lives in complete accord with himself and life, can be achieved only when he is finally able to experience "the genuine communion" with the world. As Joseph cries out, "goodness is achieved not in a vacuum, but in the company of other men, attended by love" (DM 92). Buber makes a conclusive remark about the relationship between the autonomous self and society: "only the man who has become a self, a real person, is able to have a complete relation of his life to the other self. . . . A great relation exists only between real persons" (Between Man and Man 175). Therefore, to achieve their goal of rapport between the self and society, Sinclair and Joseph, in the end of both novels, shift their focus from self-imposed alienation to a life in community.

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