

Disintegration of American Dream: A study on Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman and Saul Bellow's Seize the Day.

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ABSTRACT: *With the declaration of American Independence in 1776, there emerges a new spirit namely 'American Dream'. This paper intends to show the consequences of hankering after the 'American Dream' in the lives of Willy Loman and Tommy Wilhelm in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman and Saul Bellow's Seize the Day respectively. These two persons find themselves under a constant pressure of obtaining social positions through business prosperity. The dream, which they pursue, creates a disillusionment within themselves that gradually makes them comprehend the crude realities of a disintegrated society. Creed for recognition, lack of familial bondage and the reactions of two bewildered individuals to their circumstances and the ultimate effect of American Dream have been explored here. This article also demonstrates how the two individuals face up the difficulties in their lives and how they respond to their situations and meet up with their dreams.*

KEYWORDS: *American Dream, Success, American society, Disintegration, Materialism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Death of a Salesman (1948) by Arthur Miller and *Seize the Day* (1956) by Saul Bellow are the most acclaimed literary pieces that portray the after-effects of the Depression of 1930s ; focusing the confrontations of two individuals with their society and with their own selves, and the ultimate result of nourishing the American Dream of success. American Dream, in its truest sense includes "home ownership, medical care, higher education- the real promise of improvement and mobility up the ladder of social status" (Ford 290). Since materialism advances rapidly in the society, the dream gets diverted from its true meaning, causes distress in different spheres of human life. The disintegration of the dream leads Willy Loman to doom and Tommy Wilhelm to suffer for a long period. Willy and Tommy are essentially Americans and the stories show how the values of the 'American Dream' influence these two individuals' lives. Willy and Tommy accept 'success myth' as an ideal which pushes them to make a new identity in their cultures. This ideal is "peculiarly American in origin and development-seed, flower and fruit" (Porter 128). The texts explore the consequences of running after a mirage that form and distort the individual and family. In American society "success is a requirement Americans make of life. Because it seems magical and inexplicable" (128). Their cultures require achievement and eminence, a customized system that turns men into machines. It denies humanistic approach and judgment rather idealizes capitalism and profit making. The two individuals find themselves in a place where success is the ultimate virtue of human life. On their way of landing into the 'acres of diamonds' they face many predicaments which make them different in their actions. Bearing the dream into the bottom of the heart and having a great desire to achieve it, eventually both of them have become burdened with the evil sides of the American Dream. Having failed to distinguish between appearance and reality both the heroes fall themselves into the great disillusionment. Miller depicts Willy's destruction resulting from the false American values which Willy is powerless to restrain. On the contrary, Bellow presents us a hero, Tommy who flouts the implications of a mechanical society. Keeping the society aside, Bellow emphasizes individual potentialities to overcome the plights of life. Willy and Tommy belong to a society which is indifferent towards their distresses but it is a powerful background in their livelihood. Being disintegrated from the American Dream, Willy reacts to his situation in a very pathetic way where Tommy's response is admirable. The latter has the power to overcome the difficulties in rising above the indignities the situation imposed upon him. Bellow's resolution shows us what should be dreamed of.

II. DEFINING THE 'AMERICAN DREAM'

America stands on the concept of the land of Democracy, Equality and Opportunity which contribute it greatly to be a utopia to all. People appear to believe that American society is structured on these idealistic

concepts and so they start to come to an unexplored continent with new hopes and aspirations since its discovery. Subsequently, this idealistic and large vision comes up with a short phrase 'American Dream'. American Dream as noted in the Oxford Dictionary implies "the ideal by which equality of opportunity is available to any American, allowing the highest aspirations and goals to be achieved." The dream epitomizes the social, economic and political stability for all and an American system that ensures success for every individual. James Truslow Adams, an American historian first forges the phrase 'American Dream' whose utterance has been regarded as the first characterization of the idea: "[T]hat dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability and achievement" (Laitinen 20).

Securing equality and democracy in the society, the dream expands the path of opportunity for all which enables them to restore the 'better, richer and fuller' life than the past. The phrase 'American Dream' can be articulated in various ways but to be concrete, the substance of the dream is deeply rooted in the familiar words of Abraham Lincoln uttered in the Declaration of Independence- "a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all man are created equal" (Lincoln). The Declaration of Independence expands the credence "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (King). Thus, American Dream becomes an apparition for which every American quests to make a day better than yesterday. It entices every individual to build a better life irrespective of his/her origin. By nourishing the dream every American shares the benefit of the nation's prosperity. The dream enterprise is a chance to all Americans.

But, the matter of regret is that the basic paragon of the dream is exploded. A number of reasons are to be considered in regard of this break. The land was economically unstable and it had experienced an Economic Depression in 1929 "which caused a number of changes and chaos in the fabric of American society in the thirties" (Oikawa). During the World War 1 farmers had to produce more crops to provide food to the armed forces. The surplus victuals were remained unsold when the War was over. Farmers went bankrupt unable to pay the lent money. Factory owners manufactured a large number of goods borrowing money from banks. People were in meager of money and "by 1928 products were harder to sell" (Crothers 200). As a consequence the stock market had been crashed and the Economic Depression of 1929 took place. Moreover, "[t]he dream has been overshadowed by slavery, segregation, racism, homophobia and insufficient women's rights" (Laitinen 22-23). This is why the dream with its real essence no longer exists in American society. Some of these visions may have their appearance in life but to a large extent, the dream is merely an illusion. The prevailing images are also in the verge of extinction since the dream is not available to all equally. The dream, with the punch of time appears as an illusion to all. The dream, therefore, is dead.

III. WILLY LOMAN: VICTIM OF AN ILLUSION

In *Death of a Salesman*, American middle class sentiments, ideas, dreams and beliefs are projected very closely by Miller. The play presents the conflict between an individual's capability and limitation to grip a place in the world of trade, and the requirements of a capitalistic society. It shows the disillusionment of Willy Loman resulted from misinterpreted notions of success. Willy Loman, an ordinary, sensitive individual is trying to ascertain his identity in a world where rapid urbanization and crumbling human values corrode his soul continuously. Amidst growing materialism human spirit incessantly craves for a fine and beautiful dream. Willy has found himself in a society where beautiful dream means the dream of having success at hand. It is fully reluctant to embrace the ill-fated people. Moreover, the success oriented society undermines its unproductive inhabitants: "Willy, but there just is no spot here for you. If I had a spot I'd slam you right in, but I just don't have a single solitary spot" (Miller 62).

Willy's hardships are due to the nature of American society. In this highly commercial and competitive society, Willy can not turn down the false vanity that is imposed upon him. He believes the norms for success in salesmanship are 'personality', 'being well liked', making a good appearance and having contacts with others. He highly evaluates these propositions and put all these into action but fails to reach into the ultimate goal because of his misinterpretation of the concept of success. It is a matter of great regret that Willy imprisons himself with his self created illusions and at the end of the day he finds that his illusions comes into nothing and there left only one "way he can make his life pay off is by self-destruction" (Porter 149).

Since the meeting with Dave Single man, Willy decides to build up his career as a salesman because of Singleman's flourishing career in salesmanship. Emphasizing on Singleman's 'personality' and 'well liked look', Willy pleads to die a death as memorable as that of Dave Singleman: "When he died, hundreds of

salesman and buyers were at his funeral” (Miller 63). Dave Singleman’s death becomes memorable because he may prove some exemplary traits in his service and that’s why all were remain present even in his interment. Willy is incomplete as a good orator, a key facet of salesmanship through which he can impress the buyers to have the goods. Other than this to carry out the samples in different cities and get the buyers interested to buy the products become too hard for Loman at this age. Willy belongs to a time when “people quickly lost their optimism about the future. They stopped buying things that they could not afford” (Crothers 201). Thus, the buyers do not know him anymore. Willy loses the touch and contacts with those people who once knew and liked him and were ready to help him in his bad time. The hopeless cry of Linda: “But where are all the people he knew” (Miller 110) affirms that the dreams of Willy Loman to be a Dave Singleman, is now in excess of. If he paid least heed to the philosophical ideal of Socrates- ‘Know thyself’ he would never wish to be a salesman rebuffing his talent in craftsmanship.

Willy trances for recognition as a being in the society, an individual who has his own home and business and thereby respected and loved: “someday I’ll have my own business and I’ll never have to leave home any more” (23). Willy presumes that Ben has attained the ultimate goal in life and he strives to follow Ben in the dream to be a successful salesman. Ben says: “William, when I walked into the jungle, I was seventeen. When I walked out I was twenty-one. And, by God, I was rich!”(40-41), yet Willy never finds the diamonds and adopts a ‘low man’s’ life. Willy is disgruntled in his professional life where “Ben’s promise is the promise of all the self-help prophets of the nineteenth century” (Porter 144). In comparison with Ben, Willy is an unsuccessful being in that society. The society shapes Willy’s thought and imbues a sense of attaining success at any cost. However the society does not show him the way of accomplishment and relatively the strain of cost-effective escalation in the society makes Willy bewildered at his situation: “[t]he pressures of economic growth in urban society created the salesman mystique and these same forces punish the unsuccessful inexorably” (144-145). Willy is entrapped by the Economic Depression of 1929. Having failed to achieve the diamond from selling, he becomes a victim of the American success myth.

Working for the same farm for 35 years, he becomes useless for the farm: “I don’t want you to represent us” (Miller 65). He has been discharged with no pension as he is outdated and unsuccessful. Willy’s provision exhibits the Marxist view that “[c]apitalism alienates us from the products of our labour, from the things that we make, because they are not ours” (Woodfin, Zarate 62). Willy’s extinction from the farm draws his disintegration from the cherished dream. The elimination makes Willy to fall into disillusionment and he creates a false world around him. Willy gives artificial impressions about himself to his family: “[t]hey don’t need me in New York. I’m the New England man. I’m vital in New England” (Miller 10). He makes us believe that he is very happy in his job and certainly this is another illusion of Willy that he has created for himself. Conflict between the American values and Willy’s own values leads him to the path of self destruction. Thus the dream is so forceful that it diminishes one’s own identity.

Willy’s excessive value on personal attractiveness and ‘being well liked’ works against his dream: “[b]e liked and you will never want” (25-26). Consequently, the dream becomes a mirage. He spends his whole life in worshipping the goddess of success but flops to clasp it as “he found himself in economic difficulties because of the increasing cost of maintaining his family with his two sons remaining as do-nothing he hopes to turn the corner” (Mittapalli, Gorlier 204).

Loman’s self destruction involves his family as well. He desperately tries to transpose his dreams and ambitions to his sons. He wishes them to bring about a great success which he himself is unable to do. Willy’s excessive concern about his sons restrains him to let them find out their own ways of success and get them identified in the society. Willy, though unintentional, tries to bring up Biff and Happy with the values which he himself nourishes in his entire life but the two sons never endeavor to explore their father’s yearning for them. Thus the gap between two generations is apparent. With the progress of materialism in the society, there is a distortion of relationship among the family members.

To train up his sons, Willy adopts a vacillating method as of his own career. His “commitment to the success ideology directed the education of his sons” (Porter 136). His blind faith on his sons tiles their ways slippery: “you’re both built like Adonises” (Miller 25). The susceptible philosophy of life- ‘being well liked’ does not lead Biff to a great fortune that can be measured as an achievement from the materialistic point of view. Biff remains far away from success and magnificence. Undoubtedly Willy lives for his family since he

commits suicide for the betterment of his family. He calls for humanistic and kind atmosphere in the American business world which he is deprived of.

It seems to Willy that Biff and Happy are a kind of good material to fulfill his dream by achieving success in salesmanship. The sons make Willy disappointed in their dealings of lives. At the very early stage of life, Biff shows his extraordinary talent at sport. The ordinary performance of Biff in the school can be mitigated by this heroic achievement on the sports field. Biff pays little attention in his prospect rather constantly reiterates on his father's self created 'being well liked' philosophy. At the age of thirty four, he feels aimless and suffers from identity crisis. He spends the most valuable times of his life in vain in searching job after job in the country: "I stole myself out of every good job since high school!" (104). To this assessment, Biff consumes much time to respond and thus gets far away from the dream. The dream, Willy nourishes in respect of Biff has been traumatized.

The method Willy adopts in bringing up his sons has great flaws; consequently "[h]is path is painfully downward" (Ford 559). We are aware of Biff's tendency of stealing-taking home a football to practice with. Willy takes the matter lightly and laughs at that kind of borrowing. Without showing any disagreement against the stealing Willy stops the dispute between Biff and Happy. He ropes "[c]oach probably congratulate you on your initiative!" (Miller 23). This practice exhibits nothing but the moral deterioration of Willy and consequently Biff. The fragile morality makes their disintegration from the vision a step ahead.

Biff fails to become a star at sports, to do well at the examination and get the scholarship, and to grasp the worldly gain. Therefore, Biff at his early life is far away from the American Dream of success. With the passage of time he comes closer to the dream. It is the closing stage that brings us a new hope about Biff's future which can be reckoned as new dawn in his life. Biff realizes the inner self: "why am I trying to become what I don't want to be?" (105). Soon after his confession "Pop I'm nothing! I'm nothing, Pop. Can't you understand that? There is no spite in it any more. I'm just what I'm that's all" (105). The comprehensions make him a free flying bird in the vast sky. Finally, Biff is able to find the right mode while the salesman tries to make out the way sacrificing his own life. Father is still in darkness where the son is enlightened with new hopes: "I know who I am, kid" (111). This assertion manifests "Biff at least comes out of the experience with enhanced self-knowledge" (Koon 55).

The most despicable character, Happy lacks the sense of morality. To become the proprietor of the farm, Happy wishes his boss to be dead. He denies recognizing his father at the restaurant: "[n]o, that's not my father" (Miller 91). He clutches the false values of Willy forever. Taking no aspiration from the dream of success, Happy loses everything except his father's 'phony dream'. While Biff is enlightened with his self belief, Happy resolves to go on with his father's system of beliefs: "[h]e is a marked-down version of his father" (Koon 37). Thus Happy has gone off track with the forceful blow of American success myth.

Willy wants to afford an improved destiny for his sons by committing suicide. The insurance money turns out to be diamonds for him. We are not shown that Biff/Happy gets the insurance money so Willy has been lost in his purpose. He is deceived by the success myth and "by the society that has boxed him in" (Porter 149). So the dream of a nice and happy family has never come to the surface. Biff although breaks free and somehow makes the way out for himself but it is Happy who carries nothing except his father's empty boasting. Biff's comments: "[h]e had the wrong dreams. All, all, wrong" (Miller 110) and "[h]e never knew who he was" (111) affirm Willy's failure in shaping a better fortune in the American dream society and at the same time it shows Biff's discovery of himself in that society.

The only member of the family who keeps Loman's unsteady family most stable is Linda. She grips the family's sense of identity. Her profound love for Willy is the sole supportive material to precede his life. Excluding these, she never encourages Willy to come out of his shell of illusions. She understands every situations of Willy's life but never let him see the real conditions. Instead of this she glorifies Willy's failure "next week you'll do better" (28) and "[b]ut you're doing wonderful, dear" (28). Linda like a true beloved loves her husband with all his weaknesses. The sympathy and love that she offers to her husband reflect her essential humanity which has no value in a money oriented society. For the sake of happiness of her husband she continues to dreaming of and this continuity of dreaming makes herself a dreamer of success myth. She always estimates Willy Loman as a human being and due to this she emphasizes on the matter: "[a]ttention, attention must be finally paid to such a person" (44). Linda can serve a remedy for Willy if she allows Loman to see the

truth about him rather she binds Willy more to the myth and as a consequence she fastens her own self to the mirage: “by her silence and her support, she unwittingly cooperates with the destructive myth” (Porter 147).

Therefore, the dream, Willy Loman treasures in his entire life comes to nothing rather appears as a mirage. The ‘American Dream’ may find its true shape in the progression of business, industry, technology and so on but “in terms of human happiness in a deeper sense the American civilization has failed to come up to expectations ” (Mittapalli, Gorlier 205). Thus the Loman family except Biff gets no success and is alienated from the American Dream of success.

IV. TOMMY WILHELM: “THE ROAD NOT TAKEN”

The plight of an individual in a highly commercial society is explored in *Seize the Day* by Saul Bellow. Bellow’s center of attention is Tommy Wilhelm’s search for the American Dream and its ultimate result. The society where Tommy Wilhelm is living is based on the extreme forces of materialism. With its real and harsh face society constantly pushes Tommy to obtain material success by any means. What is essential in American society is that how much a person is successful and how much he is efficient to represent himself as a successful individual. It always emphasizes on external appearances of the habitants: “when a man is smoking a cigar, wearing a hat, he has an advantage” (Bellow 3). The only surviving aim of each American is the pursuit of money and success. Tommy is imbued with this idea of money making: “[h]ow they love money thought Wilhelm. They adore money! Holy money! Beautiful money!” (36). The financial pressures formed by the society, emotional distance created by his self-centered father and vindictive wife, and finally exploitation of Tamkin push Tommy to be perplexed. Nevertheless, Tommy aspires for an alternate way; like the speaker in Robert Frost’s “The Road Not taken” Tommy chooses the less traveled path still awaits for him: “I took the one less traveled by, / And that has made all the difference” (19-20).

Tommy’s own attractive look steers him to the dream to be a Hollywood star. To turn the dream into reality he has changed his name from Wilky Adler to Tommy Wilhelm but fatefully he has been disqualified in the screen test. The dream is concluded with the seven years’ unsuccessful journey in this realm. Having passed many years in the Hollywood world, it gets too late for him to enter into a new service and thus succeed: “those seven years of persistence and defeat had unfitted him somehow for trade and business, and than it was too late to go into one of the professions” (Bellow 7). Tommy’s failure lies in the fact that he is unable to capture the ‘today’ and waits for a colorful ‘tomorrow’ which proves itself as a mirage. To be a wanderer he beats the days ineffectively and sprints for success in vain. Thus the dream of success in professional life has been wrapped up.

At the commencement of the novel it sheds light on the dissatisfactory relationship between father and son. Because of Tommy’s worthless position, his father Dr. Adler, a rich and successful physician in American money cultured society always repulses Tommy to have a paternal bondage. He could have served as an ointment in Tommy’s sufferings but he “can only see the disappointment his son represents” (Souza 19). He has got sufficient money to supply to his son’s financial misery yet he keeps himself aloof: “I can’t give you any money. There would be no end to it if I started” (Bellow 55). Several times Tommy calls for a filial affection and continuously he is rejected because “there was no place for losers in the American Way of Life” (Souza 11). The changed name of Tommy is never accepted by Dr. Adler and he does not exonerate Tommy for his mistake: “Dr. Adler would not accept the change. Today he still called his son Wilky, as he had done for more than forty years” (Bellow 24). The mistake once done could not be undone now and Tommy acknowledges this so it is really unusual for a father to put further pain in his torment. Dr. Adler, a self-interested father is obsessed with the scheme of success which Tommy opposes, a very close case to Willy and Biff. To this success loving individual affection, emotion and feelings are the insignificant aspects of life and “in his policy of absolute decorum Dr. Adler remains adamantly blocked, either to the display of feeling or the recollection of family history” (Kramer 57). The distant relationship is the result of the fiscal differences existed between them: “[t]he money makes the difference” (Bellow 55). So the refuge Tommy seeks from his father is never found as Dr. Adler “is stingy not only with money, which can help his son out of his financial collapse, but with a sympathetic word, which can meet his yearning for being “any part” of him” (Wu 437). In *Death of a Salesman* Willy Loman commits suicide to furnish a future for Biff and Happy better than his own life. Opposing this Dr. Adler rebuffs his son’s requirements. Tommy’s dream of having a nice family relationship with his father is, therefore, obsolete.

The existing material forces bring alienation in wedded life as well. Margaret-Tommy relationship is the manifestation of the real state of American matrimonial tie. Money, position, success have occupied the place of love, affection and fellow feeling. People get absorbed with the material achievement. The life Tommy is maintaining with his wife Margaret is a place of great torment for him. Margaret, whom Tommy is unwilling to marry initially, keeps the nuptial relationship on to get the economic beneficence only: “[h]is wife Margaret would not give him a divorce, and he had to support her and the two children” (Bellow 29). It seems that Margaret makes up the schemes to destroy Tommy and to ensure the success of her plot she prolongs the divorce case. Therefore it is obvious that “[t]he only connection between Margaret and Wilhelm is money” (Wu 437). Finding out no other remedy of it Tommy tells his father, “I just couldn’t live with Margaret. I wanted to stick it out, but I was getting very sick” (Bellow 51). Tommy’s plain assertion reflects his deep rooted mental infliction. With the push of the social forces these two individuals estrange from one another and become the inhabitants of two different worlds. The companionship Tommy urges from Margaret in his journey towards the dream to be another man of tomorrow has been discarded as we find Tommy is saying “she hates me. I feel that she’s strangling me. I can’t catch my breath. She just has fixed herself on me to kill me” (48). As a man of fancy and imagination, Tommy is deficient in the knowledge of how to be a man of tomorrow. Recognizing the essential fancies of Tommy, Margaret attempts to set up her own part suitably grabbing the capital of Tommy: “[w]henver she can hit me, she hits, and she seems to live for that alone. And she demands more and more, and still more” (47). This barren relationship reports how the connubial relationships in America are breaking down, how commercialism takes the place of love and humanity. Hence, Tommy is once more alienated from his dream- the dream of a contented married life.

Having greatly influenced by the precepts of the American Dream and failed to clutch it Tommy Wilhelm feels out of centre and suffers from forlornness. Because of his breakdown in the world of money and success, Tommy is abandoned by his self-seeking father and spiteful wife. Tommy being deserted turns to a forged fatherly figure: “I wouldn’t turn to Tamkin, he thought, if I could turn to him. At least Tamkin sympathizes with me and tries to give me a hand, whereas Dad doesn’t want to be disturbed” (10-11). He wants to accept Tamkin as true yet he can never put inclusive faith on Tamkin as a consequence falls into a quandary. Considering Tamkin’s true self, Tommy gets himself into a sticky situation: “[w]as he a liar? That was a delicate question. Even a liar must be trustworthy in some ways. Could he trust Tamkin- could he? He feverishly, fruitlessly sought an answer” (57). Tommy is too simple and immature in this shrewd and hard world of business to understand Tamkin’s trickery. His uncomplicated observation allows Tamkin to filch his last means mercilessly. What Tommy aspires for in his whole life are some sort of kindness, sympathy, love, affection and company. He longs for ‘a little steady income’ and requires from Tamkin to show a way of it: “I’d be so grateful if you’d show me how to work it” (10). To execute his own interest Tamkin as an astute supplies these means momentarily. Delivering all these propositions, Tamkin makes Tommy a hand-puppet who blindly believes Tamkin’s fake stories of lunatic patients and receives all kinds of suggestions warmly. His realization has not come until and unless he invests his last capital in the lard business with Tamkin. Tamkin pledges Tommy a world of optimism where success is at the door to grasp only since we get Tamkin is saying “I think about people, just because they have a few bucks to invest, making fortunes. They have no sense, they have no talent, they just have the extra dough and it makes them more dough” (9). Finding out a way of success, Tommy expects “to earn a little sum of money in the commodity market in his forties, he lost all he had” (Wu 439). Certainly it is inconceivable for an easy going personality like Tommy that Tamkin, eloping with his investment can betray him. Mislaying his last savings Tommy becomes helpless and undone. Consequently Tommy Wilhelm falls apart from the American dream of getting material success.

The essential values of human life lost its place in the society where Tommy lives. Dr. Adler, Margaret and Dr. Tamkin all are the representative of the American society. The approaches they have shown towards Tommy are structured by the society. Society has fastened them with its force like American Dream and they get fused on it. Accordingly, we find the dream comes with a full vigor in the American society that makes the habitants crazy to dig it up. Tommy identifies himself into the centre of the inhuman modern world where he feels suffocated by the appearance of materialism.

However, Tommy is not lost into the evils of American Dream. It is Dr. Tamkin who unconsciously erects Tommy conscious. Tamkin's soul theory has brought the essential message for Tommy. Tommy stands for the true soul as "[t]he true soul is the one that pays the price. It suffers and gets sick" (Bellow 71). Tommy pays as he confers his last funds to Tamkin and thus becomes bare handed. The true soul can get its real form only when the pretender one is buried: "[o]nly after burying the impostor self can real soul regain strength to face the terror of pure being" (Wu 441). In the burial scene Tommy's assimilation of himself with the dead body accede him to comprehend the true meaning of success in life: "in the end Tommy's operatic mode of being exposes the blandness, the dis-ease of pork-pale civility; his symptoms critique and challenge the cult of (1950s) success" (Kramer 63). The integration helps Tommy "to find out the truth of existence- to live in here-and-now, which is implied in the title *Seize the Day*" (Wu 441). Tamkin through his preaching teaches Tommy how to hold the present that is how to seize the day. Ripping at the funeral scene elevates Tommy to another man of tomorrow. His failure in the success world makes "him to understand that reality alone is what counts, and that dreams, expectations, and hopes warrant no more than to define a man as a disappointed dream, as miscarried hopes, as vain expectations. The reality is life and existence" (441). We come to know that Tommy decides to move out of New York and reside in the countryside which demonstrates the new beginning of Tommy's life.

Eventually Tommy's realization by standing at the same vantage with the dead man suggests that he has not been seized by the day rather he seizes the day. His tears, seeing the dead body brings the metamorphosis of him. This tear is a sort of purification of himself and consequently he gets emancipation from the world of materialisms "[a]nd he plans to outlive himself- simply to exist" (qtd. in Wu 441). Tommy's search for values and identity has come to an end. He realizes that "[p]roblems remain there, no matter soluble or insoluble, because life is like that- being bristling with problems at any time and any place" (441) and what he has to do is to carry out the life amidst these problems. At the end "Tommy rediscovers, recuperates the old (world) system of the heart; and in the process he recovers, in Bellow's ultimate vision of personal success" (Kramer 64). Therefore, Tommy discovers himself as an entity holding a place in the American society who is now able to measure 'his heart's ultimate need'.

V. CONCLUSION

Saul Bellow and Arthur Miller were born in the same year 1915 and consequently both of them have the practical experiences of the depression of the 1930s. The shared experiences bring them a tendency to set their heroes in the adverse situations. Willy Loman and Tommy Wilhelm are estranged from the American Dream. They start their journey with a hope of achieving the dream; unfortunately end up with an empty hand. Their failures bring isolation and incommunicativeness resulting into a big gap into their family and society as well. Willy Loman feels non entity and out of place where Tommy Wilhelm is no exception too. Both of them have the similarities in their situations, families and so on but these resemblances collapse towards the end of the text *Seize the Day*. The conclusion shows the metamorphosis of Tommy as a self recognized individual renouncing the false values of the 'American Dream'. Leaving behind the fake values, he goes ahead and perceives the ultimate need and finally triumphs as a human being over inhumanity. Both Willy and Tommy assume the reality but their reactions towards the reality are different. Willy Loman does not enjoy such kind of purification which Tommy undergoes. We are not shown whether Biff gets the insurance money or not. So it is not certain that Willy's death brings even minimum profit to his sons. The only optimism in *Death of a Salesman* is that Biff comprehends the uselessness of his father's dream as he says "[w]ill you take that phony dream and burn it before something happens?" (Miller 106). Taking an ideal to live by is obviously noble and praiseworthy but being obsessed with it ignoring the fact is unexpected, and we observe this obsession into the persons of Willy and Tommy. American Dream has lost its true meaning exhibited by Willy's disillusionment and committing suicide. His death signifies the drawbacks of an extreme commercial society but certainly this does not impart the message to stop dreaming rather it emphasizes on the necessity of self assessment and recognition exactly where Willy Loman wanes and Tommy Wilhelm wins.

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