CHAPTER II

BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

The elemental conflict of parent and child. It won't ever end (SD:67).

Icarus! Icarus! - as if he had fallen some great distance from his father's heart (TWC:53).

2.1.0. Bellow and Cheever share a common interest - a great skill at examining various conflicts that can exist within families. The "metaphysical tensions" at home, that they discern, is the result of conflicting ideas between parents and children, between husband and wife and common rivalry between siblings. The novels of Bellow and Cheever depict "the elemental conflict of parent and child" (SD:67). Weiss says "World literature abounds in those situations in which David destroys Absalom and Rustum, Shorab than those in which Theseus succeeds Aegus and Prince Hal, King Henry" (1967:54). In Jewish literature family closeness has always been emphasised right from the beginning. We see close relationship of father and son in the biblical lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The tradition maintains that son would follow in his father's
footsteps to maintain continuity. Jewish literature is always concerned with "the rights of the father". Most of the modern Jewish American fiction deals with the father-son relationship as in Bellow's Seize the Day, Malmud's The Assistant etc. A Jewish child's first commandment from his parents is "Be a mensch" - "Be an ethical, caring human being". Bellow's heroes try to be that. They search for the answer to the question "How should a good man live? Yet they are not 'good' men" (Goldman 1984:58). Even when sons asserted their "rights", the kinship of father and son reasserted itself: "O my son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son" (II Samuel, 18:33). This brief sketch suggests reasons - biblical - for our two novelists' concern with fathers and sons in their novels. The fictional families of Bellow and Cheever reflect the Biblical/archetypal "first family".

2.1.1. The novels of Bellow and Cheever overtly deal with 'father-son relationship'. In their fiction, we have archetypal "dominant" patriarch sometimes even tyrannical, and 'obedient sons'. The patriarch lays down the law and watches over his orders. The sons follow their fathers' footsteps, which is well illustrated in the first three novels of Cheever. The father is the kind teacher and the
son the obedient student and there is good relationship established between these two. The fathers are possessed by a desire to pass on to their sons usable and substantive values even though the sons are not ready to imbibe these values which are inoperable in the modern world where they live. But the sons do look up to their fathers for guidance and direction. They are sometimes overwhelmed by their fathers' skills in doing things with grace and majesty. All of them remember their childhood and recollect the times when the fathers ruled their houses as kings. The best example is of Moses Herzog remembering his childhood in Napoleon street, Montreal: "All he ever wanted was there" (H:146).

2.1.2. There is a clear cut difference in the depiction of 'father-son relationship' in their fiction. Bellow always seems to affirm the world of the son whereas Cheever doesn't take any sides as he presents a balanced picture of this relationship. It may be because the protagonists of Cheever are ordinary men and not controversial intellectuals like Bellow's. While Bellow's "son-heroes" are sympathetically portrayed, the world of the 'father' is less sympathetically presented (Wilson 1985:77). Cheever seems to be more traditional in affirming the world of the "father" though he is not against the
"sons" as such. Cheever's world is more traditional-conventional and ordinary than that of Bellow's.

2.1.3. This kind of attitude of these two novelists to the two different worlds of 'father' and 'son' is due to the narrative techniques that the two novelists adopt for their novels. Bellow seems to sympathize with his 'hero-sons' because he employs a technique where the whole novel is narrated by the protagonist who is passing through an existential crisis. Bellow's novels are much character studies of protagonists. Accordingly, Bellow's works are almost always written in first person. So "Bellow's artistic technique imposes some limitations on his portrayal of "fathers", women characters, as we perceive them though the minds of his male protagonists who often overshadow them" (Aharoni 1989:99). As the heroes of Bellow fight a mental battle with the world around them Bellow presents the world of "sons" more sympathetically. His novels are written almost exclusively from the protagonists' point of view reflecting their inner world.

2.1.4. While Bellow tends towards a more introspective handling in his presentation of material, Cheever adopts a broad, almost sociological and mythical approach in depicting the lives of his protagonists. And so it is inevitable that Cheever has to adopt third person -
omniscient - narrative technique for his novels. This is where he differs much from Bellow. Cheever's novels present the everyday details and concerns of American family life as well as the topics and themes of enduring interests. Bellow's heroes are more concerned with personal survival in a chaotic contemporary world than with the larger society that has excluded them. For Cheever's WASPs, themselves components of the failed system, individual and society are linked together. So, Cheever is more a social-historian depicting the deterioration of a society at a given time.

2.2.0. As Bellow wants to affirm the world of the "sons", father or parent figures obviously represent limitations, hard-heartedness, the "adult" and business world. They are 'against love' whereas the sons strive for 'freedom'. Wilson observes, "Ultimately on one side is the big daddy of business of America and on the other is the "childlike" world of the soul" (1985:77). This is beautifully pointed out by Tommy in Seize the Day. "How they love money, thought Wilhelm. They adore money. Holy money! Beautiful money... That is what it was. The World's business" (SD:41). On the other hand, in the case of Cheever, 'sons' seem to represent more the material world than "the world of the soul", except Farragut, the
protagonist of *Falconer*. Coverly, the protagonist of *The Wapshot Chronicle* tries his best to build a bridge between these two worlds and he seems to have achieved limited success. The heroes of Cheever are not extreme men of "inner world" as those of Bellow. The former are more or less ordinary, down-to-earth men. Hence, they do not come into conflict much with their fathers. Here also, the only exception is Farragut who is very much obsessed with the idea that his father wanted to kill him in his mother's womb.

2.2.1. Critics like Maxwell Geismer and Leslie Fiedler have emphasised the recurrence of fathers and sons in Bellow's fiction. Geismer says "In this uneasy relationship of father and son we reach the psychocenter of *Seize the Day*" (1969:19). Fiedler states that Bellow is concerned with "emotional transactions of males inside the family: brother and brother, son and father - or father-hating son and Machiavellian surrogate father" (1967:7). These two critics just hint at the relationships without analyzing the causes, effects and parallels. Bellow's protagonists are not rebellious sons but "suffering, tormented and the conforming sons" (Geismer 1969:19). This image of the son continues throughout his fiction. In *Seize the Day* we have almost a "castrated" son confronting the tyrannical father.
2.2.1.2. The Bellow hero seeks out a paralysing relationship against his own better interests. He likes to be directed, looked after and told what to do. As he cannot seek the help of the father, who remains all the time indifferent to his needs, Bellow hero turns to some kind of father figure: elder brothers like Simon (in Augie March), Will (in Herzog), Julius (in Humboldt's Gift); cranks like Dahfu (in Henderson the Rain King) or Tamkin (in Seize the Day) or criminals like Joe Garman (in Augie March) and Rinaldo Cantible (in Humboldt's Gift). These father figures seem to offer to the hero a release from the domination of a mother figure, mainly wife. These father figures are "reality instructors" who teach the hero what life is and how to encounter it and the importance of human dignity. Schlossberg in The Victim is the best example of this category. He speaks with the power of Jewish tradition and sets this traditional tone against the dehumanization of life in contemporary America. He educates Asa in human dignity:

It's bad to be less than human and it's is bad to be more than human. What is more than human?... So here is the whole thing. Good acting is what is exactly human... This is my idea. More than human can you have any use for life? Less than human, you don't have either (TV: 112-13).
2.2.1.3. Another important father figure who serves as a "reality instructor" is Tamkin in *Seize the Day*. He asks Tommy to 'seize the day' and recommends "here and now" mental exercises to compose himself when he is driven away by his real father, Dr. Adler. Tamkin tells Tommy, "Nature knows only one thing, and that's the present, eternal present. And say to yourself here and now, here and now, here and now... Grasp the hour, the moment and the instant" (*TV:QB*). Tommy wonders for a while whether Tamkin is "trying to hypnotize or con me" (*TV:QB*). Whatever it is such an advice never comes from any of the real fathers in Bellow's novels. When the hero is forsaken by everybody it is this "surrogate father" who saves him from damnation.

2.2.1.4. Such "surrogate fathers" or "reality instructors" are very rarely seen in Cheever's work because the real fathers are there to take care of their sons, guiding and controlling them. They try to teach them lessons of life. Leander initiates his sons into life and the "rite of initiation" is started by him. He teaches them some substantive values of life. Some of his values have no relevance in modern context but he applies the norms by which he has lived and he laments the loss of such values in the present day America. When he cannot survive in the world he chooses to disappear into the
elements which gave him his last grain of self respect, the sea, leaving behind a letter of advice to his two sons.

2.2.1.5. Another father in Cheever's novels who appeals to us with his parental love is Eliot Nailles in *Bullet Park*. His only concern in life is to see his son, Tommy, does well in school and so he is very much worried when his son shows signs of disinterest in his studies. He takes all pains to make his son a good student and above all a devoted son to loving father. But Tommy refuses to be governed by his father as he tries to drift away from his parents. Herein lies a contrastive affinity between the son in *Bullet Park* and Tommy Wilhelm in *Seize the Day*. Tommy longs for parental love but he is not given that love by his hard hearted father, Dr. Adler, whereas in Cheever's novel, the father, Nailles, longs for his son's love and he is always worried that his son is going away from him. Tony is trying to assert his adulthood and escape from the clutches of his loving father, but the middle-aged son, Tommy wants to be destroyed in the hands of his punishing father in order to retain his love. At the end he is saved by his all comprehensive love of the world, humanity. Eliot Nailles saves his son at the last minute when Hammer is about to immolate him in the chancel.
2.3.0. After a general discussion of the treatment of "father-son relationship" by Bellow and Cheever, a detailed analysis of the respective novels will lead us to a better understanding of this problem of elemental 'conflict between parent and child'. The Jewish tradition has certain rigid requirements of fatherhood and sonship. The son has to leave his father's house in search of a livelihood and to be free from the father's control. Departure is an important obligation for each protagonist. This involves the archetypal search for a father. The father is more often "absent" (Augie March), "estranged" (Dangling Man) or "uncaring" (Seize the Day). In Bellows' novels one parent is invariably missing and the hero often thinks of that missing parent. And this forces him to become dependent on the living parent as in Seize the Day. As the fathers are 'missing', 'estranged' or "uncaring", the role of "surrogate fathers" becomes relevant and significant in his fiction.

2.3.1. In Bellow's first novel Dangling Man (1944) we have just hints about the "father-son relationship", but this remains as a regular pattern throughout his work. The protagonist, Joseph, a twenty seven year old American of Canadian birth, is "dangling" between civilian and military life. Like all Bellow heroes he too opts for a life of
introspection and spends his time talking to himself and keeps a journal. He rejects "the code of the athlete, of the tough boy" of Hemingway novels (DH:7). He does "not feel guilty of self-indulgence in the least" (DM:7) — a frontal attack on modernism by Bellow in his very first work. Joseph rarely leaves his room and spends much of his time as a bachelor while his wife Iva works and supports him.

2.3.1.1. As Joseph makes progressive alienation from family, like every other Bellow hero, reminisces about his past and childhood. He recalls his childhood in St. Dominique street in Montreal, Canada. He chronicles in his journal "the very breezes in the narrow courses of the street, have remained so clear to me that I sometimes think it is only the place where I am ever allowed to encounter reality" (DM:70). Whatever he wanted was there in that place. His father takes all the blame for the poverty that forces him to bring his children up in a slum and worries that his son will see much of the poverty around him. But Joseph remembers vividly all the life of poverty in that street. Yet, it is his "ghetto-Eden" which he is trying to regain.

2.3.1.2. In the present of the novel, Joseph mentions only two occasions when he has met his father. On their
wedding anniversary he and his wife visit his father and step-mother. As is the pattern, one parent is missing here like in all novels of Bellow. He receives a gift cheque which he accepts without much protest. He is glad enough to have escaped the usual interview with his father, which begins as a rule, with his taking him aside and saying, "Have I told you about Gartner's boy, the youngest, the one who was studying chemistry? He has an excellent job in a war plant. You remember him?" (DM:103). He realises what it means - "I too should have been a chemist or physicist or engineer. A non-professional education is something the middle class can ill afford" (DM:103). But Joseph has disappointed his father by not becoming a chemist or engineer and fallen far short of his expectations of him like all other Bellow heroes, particularly, Tommy Wilhelm in Seize the Day. The patriarch's law is not obeyed by son.

2.3.1.3. Joseph, like all Bellow heroes, is overwhelmed by his father's capabilities and intelligence. His father "never went to college, yet he can keep up his end of a conversation with a quotation from Shakespeare - "pause now and weigh thy values with equal hand', 'A loan oft loses both itself and friend', the passage beginning with 'yes, young boy' from King John" (DM:103). Joseph's father knows that his son's accomplishments are wider than his; "my
opportunities were greater. But bread and butter came first. Besides, professional men are also sometimes cultured" (DM:103). His father’s justification is that Joseph has prepared himself for the kind of life which he will never be able to lead. It may be correct in the old man’s view. But Joseph is not a son to be governed by his Jewish patriarch and he wants to choose his life.

2.3.1.4. When finally his drafting orders comes, Joseph feels "universal relief" and his father says, "At least, you don’t have to wait any more" (DM:155). Thus we see in the first novel, Bellow hints at the father-son relationship which is going to become a serious conflict in other novels, particularly Seize the Day. May be, the father is disappointed at the son’s performance in life. He has not become a chemist like his neighbour’s son. He thinks that only professional success makes a man in America somebody in life. So he is a symbol of that ‘big business America’, ‘success myth’ and ‘America Dream’. But his son remains "a man of the soul" refusing to be governed and directed by the "man of the world". So in the very first novel the father-son relationship is clearly presented where the son thinks that his father treats him less considerably because he is not become what he wanted him to become. He says "My own father, I must say, treats
me less considerably in that respect (DH: 19). We see the seeds of "elemental conflict between father and son" are sown here which grows into a huge tree in Seize the Day.

2.3.2. Asa Leventhal, the protagonist of The Victim (1974) is a family man who has a real sense of family. In fact, Asa's family sense is stronger than any other protagonists. Like Joseph, he is a "bachelor", rather leading a bachelor life during the time of the novel as his wife Mary has gone to visit her family in south. Asa assumes the role of a father to his brother Max's family as he is a travelling salesman, all the time on the road. He serves as an "ideal father" to that family. But his relationship with his own father is estranged and strained. Once again we have a "tyrannical father" in Senior Leventhal, who simply dismisses his wife's death as "gone away".

2.3.2.1. Elder Leventhal, the father of Asa Leventhal, is a typical Jewish father who is a "representative man" of the society. He is so tyrannical and frightening that his son Asa cannot face him. Asa remembers his harsh and bitter father fondly, sometimes quoting the old man's satirical maxims, but he does not like his father's scorn of non-Jews and people who work with their hands. Asa carries this guilt of his father with him and later Albee
accuses him of a racial prejudice.

2.3.2.2. Asa's dead father, "who owned a small dry-goods store, was a turbulent man, harsh and selfish towards his sons" (TV:17). Asa's mother died when he was eight and he describes the situation thus, "At the time of her disappearance from the house the elder Leventhal had answered their (sons') questions about her with an embittered 'gone away', suggestive of desertion (TV:17). Later Asa calls him "a stern, proud old fool with his savage looks, to whom nothing mattered save his advantage and to be freed by money from the power of his enemies" (TV:94-95). His father walled himself off with contempt. Although Asa "rejected and recoiled" from this view, he was wrongly influenced by it. "And who were his enemies?" (TV:95) he asks about his father. "The world, everyone. They were imaginary" (TV:95). This is his main source of his insecurity. His father's only business is to make money. The old man used to say, "Call me Ikey, call me Moe, but give me dough" (TV:94).

2.3.2.3. Such thoughts of his father pain Asa; he tries to stop thinking about him. But episodes keep his memory alive. He remembers how the old man used to move about:

He carried on like a merchant prince among his bolts and remnants, and was willing to be a pack
rat in order to become a lion. There was no advantage; he never became a lion. It gave Leventhal pain to think about his father's sense of things (TV:95).

He is amazed at the old man's cold behaviour and treatment of others. The old man is filled with contempt for the foreign children dying of malnutrition and sickness. "He was amazed at the size of the families, at the numbers born and dying" (TV:151) recollects his son. The old man would have been more amazed had he known that "a son of his was a workingman, indistinguishable from those who came to the store to buy socks, caps, and shirts. He would not have understood it" (TV:151).

2.3.2.4. According to the pattern we have an "ideal father", a "reality instructor", Schlossberg, who tries to help the son, Asa to adjust and survive. He may be a "surrogate father" but he is the one who gives the sermon on human principle. He asks Asa to be firm, not to be humble one day and proud the next. He asks him to have "dignity... choose dignity. Nobody knows enough to turn it down" (TV:113). The message may be a bit superficial, but Asa follows the 'spirit' not the "law". Such advice comes only from the "father figures" in Bellow, may be because the fathers' in Bellow represent the realistic business world where their sons are misfits. Hence, the "eternal
conflict" between the parent and the child continues.

2.3.3. In *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953) Augie, the protagonist, remains a son lacking a 'real family sense'. In the beginning of the novel, he says, "My own parents are nothing to me" (*AAM*:7). And the adventures of Augie prove this. Though the three widening references of the novel within which the plot moves are the Jewish family, the big city (Chicago) and the spirit of American culture of mid-century, the first impression we get of the Marches is that of a broken family. Though section one of the novel, chapters 1-7, deals with Augie's childhood and his boyhood in Chicago, there is little mention of his father, inspite of the fact that family influence is one of the wide references of the novel. Once again, we have only a few hints about the father's personality and we don't get a real picture of the father in this novel.

2.3.3.1. Augie's father deserts the family and remains out of the picture. All that we see of him is a just an old photograph on the wall. In the first chapter we are introduced to the "dead" father. Augie's father has disappeared leaving his mother with three illegitimate children. The sons have never seen him and they never mention him except when Grandma Lausch becomes passionate about money. All of them wonder just what he was? - a
sailor, soldier or truck-driver? And their mother never talks about their father. Grandma instructs the boys: "Where is your father? You say, 'I don't know where, miss" (AAM: 13). So, the father simply disappears and we don't know anything about him as the protagonist himself doesn't have much to talk about his father. According to the pattern in Bellows' novels, one of the parents, here the father, is absent. Augie never reminisces about his father. For him he has simply "disappeared". So much for the father-son relationship in this novel.

2.3.4. Talking about "father-son relationship" in Seize the Day, Bellow, in an interview in Tri Quarterly said, "In that short book I examined a man who insisted on having a father, who demanded that his father BE a father to him. But Wilhelms' father had no use for the failed "father" ideology embraced by his son the seedy ingenu son" (1984: 29). So, Seize the Day offers a complete dramatic confrontation of father and son. Bellow's Jewish heritage compels him to see "metaphysical tensions" at home in this novel. The father in Jewish literature has always been a "patriarch" who is almost tyrannical in his dealings with his sons. Dr. Adler, in this novel, is one such "old patriarch of a father" (SD: 62) who is a representative of the tyrannical world of money and success. "The eternal
same story" (SD:61) between "father" and "son" is at the heart of Bellows' novel. Hassan says "... the drama of the story derives from close, ugly duel between father and son" (1961:312).

2.3.4.1. The dramatic conflict between father and son begins at the very beginning of the novel when the narrator says, "Wilhelm's father, old Dr. Adler, lived in an entirely different world from his son" (SD:4). And so, they belong to two different worlds: "the world of money and success" and "the world of the soul". Wilhelm feels bitter that his father speaks to him with clinical detachment about his welfare. He feels he is not able to communicate with his father and receive his love:

His own son, his one and only son, could not speak his mind or ease his heart to him. I wouldn't turn to Tamkin, he thought, if I could turn to him" (SD:14).

There is not only a generation gap but also a communication gap between the father and the son. This is a novel where the son tries to establish contact with his father by communicating with him on all levels but the patriarch remains stubborn and doesn't respond to his son's appeals. Wilhelm believes that his father behaves towards him as he had done formerly towards his patients. He cries out of grief and desperation, "Couldn't he see- couldn't he feel?
Had he lost his family sense?" (SD:15)

2.3.4.2. Tommy Wilhelm may be considered as a case of "arrested development" (Geismar 1967:58) a state brought on by a painful relationship with his father. Tommy is very much aware of this and he says, "It is time I stopped feeling like a kid towards him, a small son" (SD:95). But he cannot overcome this state of dependency. Ruined by Tamkin, 'a surrogate father', a 'Reality Instructor', Tommy is subject to his father and he agrees with his father, "I should have listened to you ... I could not agree with you more... You are so right father" (SD:118). Like a child playing with matches, Tommy gets "burned again and again". So he returns to his father seeking both financial and spiritual support which the old man is not ready to extend.

2.3.4.3. Tommy seems to be an antithesis of his father. In the battle between father and son, they are made for each other. The father is a successful physician, wealthy, immaculately dressed and neat and the son is a college drop-out and an unsuccessful Hollywood actor, shabbily dressed and untidy. Tommy shows a typical Jewish strength in suffering whereas Dr.Alder has no religion at all. But the old man says, "I uphold tradition. He is for the new of course" (SD:18). As a 'successful' diagnostician he cannot diagnose what is wrong with his own family relationships.
Despite Wilhelm's reflections that his father considers himself the only "right kind of Jew" (SD:93), Dr. Adler is only outwardly associated with Jewishness. He is very much an embodiment of the American work ethic. Wilhelm's familial sense and suffering grief show that he is upholding the Jewish tradition more than his father. Though Wilhelm's thoughts are occupied with the pursuit of money, really his mind and heart are concerned with relationships.

2.3.4.4. Dr. Adler lives by rule to the exclusion of heart, he has no human feelings. When Tommy comes to him for help, he says, "I have set up a rule" and he goes by it. He tells his son very openly without any kind of hesitation "You want to make yourself into my cross. But I am not going to pick up my cross. I'll see you dead. Wilky, by Christ, before I let you do that to me" (SD:117). What Tommy needs now is not money alone, he needs parental sympathy, concern, affection from his father and he appeals to him:

It is not all a question of money - there are other things a father can give to a son... I have never asked you for very much. But you are not a kind man Father. You don't give the little bit I beg you for (SD:117)

He begs his father "just one word from you, just a word, would go a long way" (SD:117). But still the father does
not have that single word to give to his son. But son's moving thought is about his father: "When he dies, I'll be robbed, like, I'll have no more father. Of course, of course, I love him. My father" \((SD:82)\).

2.3.4.5. Dr. Adler has a clean upbringing but his son is always untidy in his behaviour and dealings. Dr. Adler is a slim old man, immaculately dressed whereas his son "mountainous" \((SD:47)\) and shabbily dressed. Dr. Adler likes to take Russian and Turkish bath and he feels, "there is nothing better than hydrotherapy... Simple water has a calming effect" and advises his son that it would do him "more good than all the barbiturates and alcohol in the world" \((SD:49)\). But the son thinks that water cure is only for lunatics. This shows their different attitudes to life and its problems. They do not see eye to eye in any thing. Dr. Adler is worried that his son looks rather ugly and untidy. He is worried "what a dirty devil this son of mine is. Why can't he try to sweeten his appearance a little? And he makes himself so IDEALISTIC" \((SD:47)\).

2.3.4.6. We see Dr. Adler with no sentimental attachment to his family. He is passionless, detached and indifferent to his children and wife. Tommy is sentimental, temperamental, passionate and is very much human and involved. He claims he has gotten sensitive feelings from
his mother, "a soft heart, a brooding nature, a tendency to be confused under pressure" (SD:29). One important incident in the novel presents the father and son in good contrast. Dr. Adler doesn't even remember the date on which his wife died and he is not bothered to replace the stone bench between Tommy's mother's and his grandmother's graves. Tommy wants his father to pay for a new seat but his father is cool to the idea. This difference in their attitudes shows their idea of success and failure.

2.3.4.7. Dr. Adler is ashamed of his son because he is the only member of the family who has no education. His sister, Catherine has a B.S. degree. His mother was a graduate. This is another sore point in their relationship. The father is very much ashamed that his son doesn't have a steady and good income. But in public the father sometimes brags falsely about his son's earning power as a salesman, yet in private he rejects all his son's claims on his sympathy and wealth. Tommy thinks that he is not the right kind of Jew as he doesn't go to the synagogue. He occasionally performs certain devotions, according to his feelings. He reflects "In Dad's eyes I am the wrong kind of Jew. He doesn't like the way I act. Only he is the right Jew. Whatever you are, it always turns out to be wrong king" (SD:93). It shows that he is very desperate.
2.3.4.8. In spite of his best efforts to restore his relationship with his father, Tommy is unable to make his father see his perspective and make him realize the familial sense. Dr. Adler thinks that his son makes too much of his problems: "You make too much of your problems. They ought not to be turned in to a career. Concentrate on real troubles - fatal sickness and accidents" (SD:50). This means that the old man has a right to be spared and he doesn't want to be disturbed by the silly complaint of his son. But Tommy thinks that his father hates him because he has no money. He complains, "The money makes the difference. Then we would be fine father and son, if I was a credit to you - so you could boast and brag about me all over the hotel. But I'm not the right type of son" (SD:60). Dr. Adler says he can't give him any money as there will be no end if he starts. He finally declares "I want nobody on my back. Get off. And I give the same advice. Wilky. Carry nobody on your back" (SD:60). In a very detached way he dismisses his son when Tommy makes his last appeal, "Father listen! listen!" he shouts back with disgust. "Go away from me now. It's a torture for me to look at you. You slob!" (SD:117). Tommy's blood shoots up madly, in anger equal to his father's, but it sinks down and leaves him helplessly captive to his misery. He leaves his father's place saying,
"Okay, Dad. That's all be enough. That's about all, we should say" (SD:118). He goes out and joins a funeral procession to find his father and himself - humanity - in the coffin.

2.3.5. The most successful Bellow "hero" is Eugene Henderson, the Gentile protagonist of Henderson the Rain King (1958). Henderson's relationship with his father is once again the same sort of relationship that we see existing between the Jewish heroes and their fathers - the tyrannical and authoritative father and the "obedient son". The fifty-five year old Henderson reminisces about his father and the picture that we get of Willard Henderson is one that is perceived through the mind of Henderson. He feels that he is guilty of not sharing his father's grief when Henderson's brother was drowned in water. But Henderson is proud of his father's scholarship and he unashamedly admits that he has been admitted to his alma mater just because he happens to be a son of Willard Henderson: "If I hadn't been a Henderson and my father's son they would have thrown me out (HRK:8). He has that sense of pride and dignity to be identified as "a Henderson", unlike Tommy Wilhelm who has changed his name from Wilhelm Adler to Tommy Wilhelm to be free from his father's clutches. Henderson has married according to his
father's wishes though the marriage turned out to be a failure: "When it came time to marry I tried to please him and chose a girl of our social class" (HRK:8).

2.3.5.1. Henderson reminisces how several years ago he spent his boyhood in the south of the country, near the town of Albi, where my old man was busy with his research ... My father was a big man, solid and clean. His long underwear was made of Irish linen and his hat boxes were lined with red velvet and he ordered his shoes from England and his gloves from Vitale Milamo, Rome. He played pretty well on the violin.... Gone those times. Closed, sealed and gone (HRK:25).

Later this violin becomes a connecting symbol between father and son. He says he has done many things to please his father and one such thing is: "I got an M.A. to please my father" (HRK:25). But he feels that he terribly failed his father when he had not shared his grief at Dick's death, Henderson's brother.

2.3.5.2. To overcome his present anguish and chaos, he takes up the old violin that his "father used to play" (HRK:27). When he dusts it and starts scrubbing on the strings: "harsh cries awoke.... Then I began to recall my old man. May be he would deny it with anger, but, we are much alike" (HRK:27). His father could not settle into a quiet life either. He remembers that his father "was a very
strong man, too, but as he declined in strength, especially after the death of my brother Dick (which made me the heir), he shut himself away and fiddled more and more" (HRK:27).

2.3.5.3. He works very hard to learn violin by taking lessons and starts playing the violin in the basement of his house. He tries to establish contact with his dead father by playing the old man's violin. He feels that he is pursuing his father's spirit. He wants to capture the audience of his dead father and thereby establish a contact with him: "Oh, Father, Pa. Do you recognise the sounds. This is me Gene, on your violin, trying to reach you," and he says, "I have never been able to convince myself the dead are utterly dead... I played in the basement to my father and my mother" (p.32). He plays the violin "with dedication, with feeling, with longing, love-played to the point of emotional collapse" (HRK:32). But he fails to establish contact with his dead father, "Clutching the neck of the little instrument as if there were strangulation in my heart. I got cramps in my neck and shoulders" (HRK:32). He could not reach his father. He thinks, it is due to the fact that he has left his father in his mourning and gone away. And this guilty feeling haunts him through out until he returns from Africa.
2.3.6. For Moses Elkanah Herzog, the protagonist of Bellow's most accomplished novel *Herzog* (1964), his Jewishness gives him his sense of family. Herzog is a Jew and many of his values grow directly from his Jewish immigrant background. He, like his creator Bellow, was brought up in a religious family. So he repeatedly refers to his Jewishness and reveals strong family ties both in the present and past. Herzog's Jewishness is the basis of his ideas and his standard is the Jewish family as he knew it in his childhood. But he has not lived up to his Jewish, nineteenth century idea of a man and this becomes the basis of his self-examination. He examines and admits that "he had been a bad husband twice... To his son and his daughter he was a loving but bad father. To his own parents he had been an ungrateful child" (*H*:11). But he never severs his relationships with his family and throughout the novel we see him trying to establish a contact with them.

2.3.6.2. Herzog not only derives his standards from his childhood, but he also longs to return there. It is a golden age for him. He fondly recollects his childhood days and longs to return there:

*Napoleon Street, rotten, toylike, crazy and filthy, riddled, flogged with harsh weather - the bootlegger's boys reciting ancient prayers. To this Moses's heart was attached with great power.*
Here was a wider range of feelings that he had ever again been able to find. The children of the race, by a never failing miracle, opened their eyes on one strange world after another, age after age, and uttered the same prayer in each, eagerly loving what they found. What was wrong with Napoleon Street? thought Herzog. All he ever wanted was there. His father was desperate and frightened, but obstinately fighting (H:146-47).

Herzog is the bootlegger's boy still; he still recites the ancient prayers if not in synagogue. As he has grown up he has been ripped away from that past. He is disturbed by his personal guilt and by the modern times and he feels alienated. Now he is "Moses-in-exile" (Clayton 1968:203). He knows that his childhood self is the real one, not his present, alienated, scholarly self. So his ideas are derived from those Jewish values but "we see that Moses Herzog, the defender of Jewish family values, feels himself a renegade to those values" (Ibid:204). He learns his values of life first from his father who was "a sacred being, a king" (H:154).

2.3.8.2. Herzog remembers a day in childhood when his father returned home after being beaten up by hijackers and robbed of his money. Herzog, the child, could not bear that anyone could lay violent hand on his father. He says, "a father, a sacred being, a king. Yet he was a king to us. My heart was suffocated by this horror. I thought I would die of it. Whom did I ever love as I loved him" (H:154). He
remembers the whole story of his father's life. It was a story of suffering, poverty and hunger — thrown out of his house at the age of four, half-starved, working in various places as a young man in Europe and then the escape to America. Once again starvation in the new country. He was always in debt, shadowed by police. He came home often with bruises and torn clothes. And this picture of his father is always present in his mind and he sums up, "So we had a great schooling in grief" (H:155).

2.3.6.3. Herzog's belief in dignity of the individual is derived from the "father-king" image of his father. He says that personal histories, old tales from old times may not be worth remembering and moral suffering is denied in modern times: "Personalities are good only for comic relief. But I am a slave to Papa's pain. The way Father Herzog spoke of himself! That could make one laugh. His "I" has such dignity and his sense of Jewishness" (H:155). Clayton says, "Herzog's standard - and Bellow's - would appear to be the majestic nineteenth century individualist combined with the religious Jew" (1968:202).

2.3.6.4. At the same time, Herzog is aware that he is very un-Jewish in his life and behaviour. Like Tommy Wilhelm he tries to judge himself through his father's eyes. He condemns his un-Jewish behaviour, and remembers
how his father used to punish him with quick slaps as a boy, who threatened to kill him for his "goyische" ways as a man. Father Herzog was always unhappy with the boy for his disorderly life. Herzog feels that he has failed to live up to his father's image of the Jewish family man as he has given over to evil sexuality, to debauchery. He cries "Two marriages, two children, and he was setting for a week of CAREFREE Rest. It was painful to his instincts, his Jewish family feelings, that his children should be growing up without him. But what could he do about it" (H:30). However, he is aware that he is the defender of his father's faith. As Clayton says, he must defend "tradition so strongly because he feels that he has none himself. He must defend the Fathers because of his guilt before his own father" (1968:200-01). So Herzog feels though he has failed to live up to his father's expectations of a Jewish man, he cannot forget his Jewish upbringing and his father's constant reminder that he is unJewish in his behaviour.

2.3.6.5. On his way to see his daughter in Chicago Herzog visits his father's house there. It is a bungalow which belongs to the family where his "very ancient stepmother" lives "as a living dead" (H:253). Herzog returns to his dead father's house after a long time, the prodigal son. Though his father is not there, the father's
presence is strong. Herzog enters the hall "he sat near the very spot where Father Herzog, the year before his death, had threatened to shoot him" (H:254) that was the time when Herzog went to ask his father to underwrite a loan. But the old man was angry that some one told him that Herzog was about to be converted to Catholicism. He could no longer bear the sight of his son - "the look of conceit or proud trumble. The elite look" (H:255). Herzog says "papa couldn't bear such an expression on the face of his youngest son. I aged I wasted myself in stupid schemes, liberating my spirit. His heart ached angrily because of me" (H:255). Herzog is pierced with pain for his father. They go out to buy cigarettes and Herzog realizes that his father is in "the horror of the second birth, into hands of death" (H:256). The old man sinks to his knees and Herzog supports and eases him down on the cement embankment of a lawn.

2.3.8.8. Herzog and the old man have their lunch and then the quarrel begins. It is all about money which Herzog expects that his father would spare to clear his loan. Herzog feels that "he was here as a prodigal son, admitting the worst and asking the old man's mercy, and so Father Herzog saw nothing except a stupid appeal in his son's face - incomprehensible" (H:256). The old man shouts at him "Idiot... go and don't come to my funeral" (H:256).
Herzog now agrees with his father's judgment of him: convert with a "Christianized smile of the long suffering son" (H:257). "Croak in a flophouse" (H:257) says his father and runs for his pistol. Repentant Moses thinks "he should have pulled the trigger" (H:257) and he feels guilty at having possibly shortened his father's life: "He deserved to be spared, in his old age" (H:257). Herzog wonders whether he shortened his life by the grief he gave him. They got reconciled the following year but he died after sometime. Unlike Tommy who is driven away by his father Dr. Adler, Herzog returns to his father and establishes the bondage with the dead father. This is similar to Coverly's attempt to establish a bondage with his dead father, Leander in Cheever's novel The Wapshot Chronicle.

2.3.7. In Humboldt's Gift (1975) Charlie Citrine's childhood is not much revealed to us as it is done in the case of other heroes of Bellow. We know very little about Charlie's parents and his relationship with them. Unlike other Bellow heroes; Charlie doesn't recollect much of his childhood except that he was born in Appleton, Wisconsin and grew up in Jewish Chicago. He tells us that his family was called Tristrine and came from Kiev. He remembers that he spent eight years in the public ward of T.B Sanatorium. His parents used to visit him once a week. His parents
took turns visiting him at the sanatorium every other week. He remembers the vanilla ice cream they brought which was so hard that it couldn’t be cut with a knife. When his daughter Mary asks him whether he loved his parents, especially his mother, he says “Oh, I loved them all terribly abnormally. I was all torn up with love. Deep in the heart. I used to cry in the sanatorium because I might never make it home and see them. I am sure they never knew how I loved them, Mary. I had a TB fever and also a love fever…” (HG:75)

2.3.7.1. This is all that we know about Charlie’s father. But, from what we know it is very clear that Charlie is also an obedient son, like other Jewish heroes of Bellow, with a strong familial sense. He doesn’t indulge in remmiscences of his past nor refer to his childhood like Herzog, in whose case it is necessary to recollect his Napoleon street childhood as it provides him with a sense of order and a sense of belonging. In one sense Charlie resembles Cheever’s hero Farragut in Falconer who remembers only one incident of the past, that is his father wanted to destroy him by aborting the foetus in his mother’s womb. This is narrated by his brother. This is the main incident which Farragut remembers from his past life otherwise he is also like Charlie immersed in “the
comic uncontrollable present".

2.3.8. Thus we see in Bellows' novels there is a tension between the father and the son which reached its heights in *Seize the Day*. In his first novel, Bellow hints to of this confrontation. Joseph refuses to be governed by his Jewish patriarch and he wants to choose his life and this pattern continues throughout Bellow's work where the son remains an individual, not simply an obedient son, though Tommy Wilhelm is an exception who wants to be completely controlled by his tyrannical father. In *The Victim* once again we have a tyrannical harsh, turbulent father who is "selfish towards his sons" (*TV*:17). His only business is to make money and he is another typical representation of the big daddy of business America. We don't have any confrontation as such in *Augie March* as the father is simply a photograph on the wall. Henderson, a Christian, is another obedient son, who marries according to his father's wishes but he acknowledges that he too has failed his father when he has not shared his father's grief. Herzog knows that he has failed to live up to his father's image of the Jewish family man. He is very much aware that he is unJewish in his behaviour. Charlie Citrine is just an obedient son and we don't have any conflict between the father and the son. But all the
heroes of Bellow are proud of their fathers and they revere them though they haven't lived up to their parents' expectations of them.

2.3.8.1. All the heroes of Bellow realize the patriarchal virtues of their fathers and they all feel guilty that they have not imbibed those values. Many of them turn out to be bad fathers to their children as their marriages are generally broken ending up either in divorces or temporary separations. Of all the heroes, Asa Leventhal only seems to be having a family life. All other heroes are estranged from their families and go away from them. It may be due to the times they are living in where all kinds of values are eroded. The familial sense is being lost. At the same time the Bellow hero remains a loving son to his parents and an affectionate father to his children. He is very eager to see that his children do not suffer from the same tensions that he suffered at the hands of his father. He wants to be a loving parent to his children unlike his tyrannical father. In spite of all the tensions and conflicts in his marriage, he tries to establish a good rapport with his children. He wants to be an ideal father to his children. The protagonists of Bellow do have an "ideology of familialism" which makes them endeared to the readers.
2.4.0. In Cheever's *Wapshot Chronicle* (1957) we have typical familial archetypes such as the "grandshire", Ezekiel Wapshot; "patriarch" Leander Wapshot; "loving mother", Sarah Wapshot and "obedient sons", Moses and Coverly. The grandshire, Ezekiel migrated from England aboard the "Arabelle" in 1628 and started the family tree of the Wapshots in Boston, New England. The present Wapshot family is headed by the patriarch Leander, with Sarah as his wife and Moses and Coverly as his "obedient sons". Critics have found parallels between Cheever's parents and the Wapshot parents in the novel. Cheever's childhood provided him with a first hand view of a person, his father, whose nerve was shattered by business reversal and it was precipitated by his wife's success in the world of business and her growing emotional independence. Cheever in an interview in *MS* commented, "I remained deeply disconcerted by the harm my mother's working did to my father's self-esteem" (1977:76). To some extent Cheever's idea and treatment of family relationships are influenced by his own family situation.

2.4.1. The present patriarch of the family is reduced to being a captain of 'S.S.Topaze', an old tub that ferries passengers from the mainland to a recreation island. The family wealth is in the name of a childless matriarch,
Honora, a cousin to Leander. Leander, as a true patriarch initiates his sons into life. In one sense *The Wapshot Chronicle* is a novel of initiation and the role of patriarch becomes quite relevant and in keeping with the tradition of initiation of sons by their father.

2.4.1.2. Like all patriarchs, Leander is possessed by a desire to pass on to his sons usable and substantial values of life. He wants to pass on the New England traditional values of honour, independence, self-reliance, thrift, strong familial loyalties and the strenuous life, to his sons. He has no respect for meaningless ceremonies of life. But he evokes a rich life, fully felt. In fact, he celebrates life. His character has also a sensuous side which makes him enjoy all that is there in life and has an ability to accommodate and assimilate all manner of experience. The Journal he keeps is full of rich experiences of all sorts, good and bad. The predominance in Leander’s character of a responsiveness to the sensuous side of life is balanced by a respect for tradition and ritual ceremonies and a desire to pass this on to his sons. Leander would never take his sons aside and speak about the facts of life. They have to just look out of the window for a minute so that they could see the drift of things. The narrator says:
It was his feeling that love, death and fornication extracted from the rich green soup of life were no better than half truth and his course of instruction was general. He would like them to grasp that the unobserved ceremoniousness of life was a gesture or a sacrament toward the excellence and continuousness of things (TWC:53).

2.4.1.3. Leander takes a ceremonious cold bath each morning without using a soap and comes out of the tub smelling powerfully of the sea salts. He hopes his sons would understand and copy down his life style: "The coat he wore at dinner, the grace he said at the table, the fish trip he took each spring, the bourbon he drank at dark and the flower in his buttonhole were all forms that his sons might understand and perhaps copy" (TMC:53). He initiates his sons into life by teaching them important lessons of life, such as how "to fell a tree, pluck and dress a chicken, sow, cultivate and harvest, catch a fish, save money, countersink a nail, make a cider with a hand press, clean a gun, sail a boat etc." (TWC:53-54). Such initiation of sons into life by a father is very rarely seen in Bellow's novels. No son in Bellow's novels remembers such initiations taken up by his father so as to teach him the facts of life. And they learn more and become "good sons" of the earth, each a high philosopher in his own way.

2.4.1.4. Leander decides it is time for the boys to go
for trout fishing in spring. The time has come for the oldest son, Moses, to accompany him to trout fishing near the Canadian border. Leander, like a stern patriarch, takes his son to that border land full of lakes and forests. Moses is all admiration for his father's skill in rowing the boat through turbulent waters and he takes the oars for sometime. In this fishing trip, Moses comes up to his father's expectations of him. Here Hunt says, "fishing trip is a grand sacramental gesture, the rite of initiation that Leander devices for both his sons" (1983:115-18). The eldest son takes the initiation lessons seriously and learns them well whereas the younger son, Coverly, fails his father's expectations of him.

2.4.1.5. Next year, Leander takes his second son, Coverly, with him for the same trout fishing adventure. After an hazardous fishing adventure, Coverly wants to read a cook book, "The Hundred Ways of Preparing Fish". Leander roars, "God damn it to hell" and throws the book out "feeling once more - Icarus, Icarus - as if the boy had fallen away from his heart" (TWC:60). Leander thinks such things like catching fish and cooking them can't be learnt from books. It comes naturally by going out there where they are and living it out. He is not a theoretician, but a practical man who evokes rich life fully felt. So he is
very much disturbed when his son is seen reading a book at that time of adventure. Coverly realises that he has offended his father by bringing the cook book to a fishing camp; and "he had profaned the mysterious rites of virility and had failed whole generation of future Wapshots" (*TWC:* 60).

2.4.1.6. Another rite of initiation takes place when Coverly accompanies his father to a village fair where he watches a naked girl dancing on the stage to the shouts of the farmers around her. Coverly walks out of the tent without telling his father and waits near the car for him. They return to St.Botolphs without a single word exchanged between them. That night Coverly feels:

he had not only jeopardized his own rights — generations of unborn Wapshots were in jeopardy as well as the aged and the blind. He had even endangered that fitting and proper old age to which his parents were entitled and might have imperiled their way of life at least at West Farm (*TWC:* 63-64).

He thinks he is not that virile to perpetuate the Wapshot generation. He often wonders whether he is failing his father and falling short of his expectations. He is the Icarus to his father, he thinks. But we find later in the novel, it is Coverly who succeeds in life and upholds the Wapshot tradition at St.Botolphs and not his father's
favourite son, Moses. As we see later, Moses turns out to be a drunkard and a thorough failure in life as a son. Next morning, Coverly attempts two rituals of purification: swimming thrice in the river and attending the church. There also, he is battered by erotic desire, aware now that "the literal body of Christ Church was no mighty fortress" (TWC:64). Later Coverly learns the importance of filial piety but Moses fails as a son and a man though he too becomes a father of a son like Coverly.

2.4.1.7. Moses is the first to leave home and initiate his quest. His aunt Honora implements the Biblical dictum: "Therefore man shall leave his father and mother be joined to his wife and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis:24). But Leander objects to his son leaving the home at that early age. Honora insists, "Moses has to go out into the world and prove himself ... and all the men of our family went out into the world when they were young, all the Wapshots" (TWC:86). So Moses has to go out into the world first to prove himself so as to become eligible for the inheritance of Honora's property. And Coverly follows him later. Leander has already initiated his sons into life by taking them out for trout fishing and teaching them about the facts of life. So the boys are ready to begin their quest in life. Wherever the boys go, they proudly display
their family pride, tracing out the family genealogy.

2.4.1.8. Leander tries to pass on a sense of tradition and ceremony to his sons. For this Cheever makes use of the archetypal situation of young men leaving home to make their way in an alien world. Leander teaches them everything they require in their pursuit of life. So the two boys journey from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood. Throughout their journey Leander stands by them. He inculcates in his sons a sense of appreciation of outside world in all its reality and understand the mysterious ways of the world. He has a terrible sense of pride: "He is proud of himself, proud of his sons: pride in some part of the calm and inquisitive gaze he gives to the river banks, thinking that all the rivers of world are old but that the rivers of his own country seem oldest" (TWC:17). Leander is nostalgic and longs for all good things of the past and hopes that his sons will inherit all that from him.

2.4.1.9. Leander strongly hopes his sons will inherit and preserve his love of nature, his sense of past and place and the ceremonial style of life. These cohere in the Wapshot name and inheritance and create the central vision in The Wapshot Chronicle. Without this vision, Leander feels life would be spiritual damnation and personal
despair. He is very hurt and disturbed when his cousin Honora, the family financier, decides to sell his boat "Topaze". He very well knows Honora can forsake his family if she wants. The image of his family thinly dressed and standing in a snowstorm rouses in him passionate feelings: "He would defend and shelter them with sticks and stones; with his naked fists" (TWC:81). But he is easily charmed with the appearance of the world.

2.4.2. Moses and Coverly get married after long love affairs with their respective girls, Melissa and Betsey. Moses's wedding is ceremonial and his parents attend it. After his sons' departure from home, Leander maintains a journal where he chronicles everything. His sons write to him once or twice a month seeking his advice and he writes them every week. He longs to go and see them but can't feel like leaving St.Botolphs again. After all he has seen the world. Moses loses his job, he does not write to his father about this but goes on fishing trip and recaptures the pleasures of his trips to Langley with Leander: "Fishing was the only occupation he could think of that might refresh his connosense" (TWC:184-85) and it does.

2.4.2.1. Leander comes to Coverly's rescue when his wife leaves him and goes to stay with her sister as she is not able to get on well in Remsen Park where people aren't
friendly. He writes a long letter consoling his son: "Cheer up son... Man is not simple! Hobgoblin company of love always with us...You think you have trouble... All in love is not lark and fractious. Remember" (TWC:259-80). There is always a conflict going on between father and son and there is no scope for communication. Leander is a father who understands his sons well and gives them the right kind of advice. Though he may not be in a position to help his sons materially yet he is always there to stand by them in their hour of need and has a word of comfort. This is what Tommy wants from his father in Seize the Day but Dr. Adler never bothers to help his son. He not only outrightly rejects him and even disowns him. Leander is in one way an anti-thesis to Dr. Adler in Bellow’s novel.

2.4.2.2. Leander's early death is a great loss to Moses, who becomes a drunkard because of his wife's infidelity. Moses would not have become such a drifter had Leander been alive to guide and direct him. He could have saved his dear son from disaster. Coverly's marriage is saved only because he had his father then to save him from total disaster. In fact, Leander hoped that his first son would prove to be a good son in life. But Moses fails as a son and a man in life whereas Coverly succeeds to build a bridge between Leander's world and the one in which he seeks his destiny.
He is able to understand the value of filial piety and survives.

2.4.2.3. Leander leaves a letter with a very valuable advice to his sons. Opening Aaron's copy of Shakespeare, Coverly finds the place marked with a note in his father's hand:

Advice to my sons: Never put whisky into hot water bottle crossing borders of dry states or countries. Rubber will spoil taste. Never make love with pants on... Bathe in cold water every morning. Painful but exhilarating. Also reduces horniness. Have a hair cut once a week. Eat fresh fish for breakfast when available. Avoid kneeling in unheated stone churches. Ecclesiastical dampness causes prematurely gray hair... Stand upright. Admire the world. Relish the love of a woman. Trust in the Lord (TWC:308-07).

Incidentally, this is the last word in the novel as if Cheever wanted to say that this is all we need to know in the world. This is the best advice that a father can give to his sons. It is a mixture of practical and impracticable, the wise and the foolish, the erotic and the religious. Leander becomes an immortal figure and we can't find such a father figure either in other novels of Cheever or in the novels of Bellow.

2.4.3. In *The Wapshot Scandal* the sequence to *Wapshot Chronicle*, Coverly returns to St.Botolphs to visit old Honora. He learns from her that Wapshot House on Rover
Street, empty now since the death of his parents within two years of each other, is haunted by the ghost of his father. He spends a night in the old farmhouse, where he feels Leander's presence in the dark - "Ch, Father, Father, Father. Why have you come back" (TWS:25). The memory of his father is an inspiration for Coverly, enabling him to reject the chaotic present. Cheever seems to say that without a sense of the past the ceremonies of the present are hideous sacrilege. Hunt rightly points out "The choral voice of Leander, the echo from the age of the patriarchs, is largely absent here, and yet its return always rallies its hearers from despair (1983:128).

2.4.3.1. Coverly comes from the Christmas Eve service in St.Botolphs feeling community with the dead and the living. He arranges to host Christmas Eve dinner for the blind. So he goes from the empty church to the crowded table, from religious to secular ceremonies, which his father would have preferred. The first novel The Wapshot Chronicle deals at length with the natural ceremonies of a coherent, traditional past, where Leander plays a major role in making his sons realise the value of those unobserved ceremonies. The novel idealizes the past with the wish for a coherent present. In the second novel the conflict of the past and present is presented where the individual is more
isolated. Leander's absence is very much felt, where the sons become isolated in spite of their marriages and family lives. Moses takes to drink and disintegrates. Coverly is saved by his faith and by his love. His Christmas dinner becomes a very important ceremony which makes him live and blaze with love and faith.

2.4.4. In *Bullet Park* (1969) we have a typical elemental conflict between parent and child. In Bellow's *Seize the Day* the conflict is between the eighty year old patriarch and his middle aged son. But in Cheever it is between the middle aged father, Elliot Nailles and his teen-aged son, Tony. In Bellow's novel, it is the son who longs for parental love and sympathy and in Cheever's, it is the other way - the father longs for his son's love and worries about his welfare, his health and his growth and progress as a student. Nailles is always worried that his son is drifting away from him and he makes all attempts to bring the boy back into his fold. But Tony is asserting his adulthood and escapes from the clutches of his father. But Tommy, in his "masochistic" necessity to fail, wants to be destroyed in the hands of the punishing father in order to retain his love. Tommy remains a child. In both the novels, the conflict between father and son is the major theme.
2.4.4.1. Nailles' love for his wife, Nellie and son Tony is boundless. "The love Nailles felt for his wife and only son seemed like some limitless discharge of a clear amber fluid that would surround them insulated but visible like contents of an aspic" (BP:25). He expects no distressing foreign bodies to penetrate his protective fluid. He drives the boy to the airport, puts him on a plane and comes home and looks for him in the garden. He just can't miss him for a while. Sometimes he is bewildered: "He never seemed quite to understand that the boy was free to move in and out of his house, in and out of his orbit and his affections" (BP:24). He often wonders whether the boy is going out of his control and becoming independent of him.

2.4.4.2. Nailles is the exact antithesis to Dr. Adler who is shrewd, urbane, selfish, vain and cold. Nailles is conventional to the core: he is a kind, uxorious, a conventional family man, old-fashioned in his values. He loves his wife as he loves their only son possessively and protectively. His life is upset when his son Tony inexplicably takes to bed and refuses to get up. The whole of Part I of the novel narrates the parents' varied efforts to save Tony from his predicament. Finally to their wonderment, he is revived by the ministrations of a crazed Swami. We learn the Nailles is especially anxious to
preserve the boy's innocence and that "there was some preference in the air, some enjoyable and yet self-conscious sense that they were playing out the roles written for them as a Father and a Son" (BP:34). When Naillea goes to his room for a dictionary, he finds more than fifty photographs of naked women dipped inside. This discovery has not dismayed him although what he does not would have. If he had turned on his son's tape recorder, he would have heard Tony's voice saying:

You dirty old baboon, you dirty old baboon. For as long as I remember it seems to me that whenever I am trying to go to sleep I can hear you saying dirty things. You say dirtiest things in the whole world, you dirty, filthy, horny and old baboon (BP:38).

Tony resents the sounds of love-making he hears from his parents' room. He can't tell his father directly that he should not do that. To show his antagonism to his father he goes out and spends a night with a war widow. He brings her home for lunch. The parents are shocked to see their son coming home with a woman as old as his mother but they put on a stoic appearance. When accosted he promises to correct himself.

2.4.4.3. When Tony is bedridden with an unknown disease, the whole routine of Naillea is disturbed. He misses his regular trains, becomes moody and takes to drugs. He feels
that his luck has run out. He asks himself, "Why of all the young men in Bullet Park should Tony have been singled out to suffer a mysterious and incurable disease?" (BP:51). But the same father gets annoyed when his son refuses to stop watching television and do his homework. He is so much disgusted with his son's addiction to the idiot box that he throws it one night. He warns him, "Your are my son, and it is my business to see you do at least what is expected of you" (BP:73). When he is arrested for his quarrel with his French teacher, Nailles rushes to the police station to get him released. The narrator remarks, "Without his son he could not live" (BP:91).

2.4.4.4. Tony announces his desire to leave school as he is "not learning anything" (BP:113) and he wants work in a place for children with disturbed parents. Tony takes to his bed when his father raises his gold putter to him for calling him a phony mouth-wash pusher. Nailles is very much worried and in agony he tells his son, "the only reason I was generous father was because my own father hadn't given me much" (BP:177). But when Tony ridicules him about his profession he goes to the extent of killing him with the golf putter. He wants to run after him and kill him. He says, "I was very angry. I couldn't understand how may only son, whom I love more than anything in the world, could
make me want to kill him" (BP:118). This kind of desire to kill one's own son in a fit of anger is also seen in Herzog, where Herzog's father runs after him with a pistol when the son pesters him for money to clear a loan. Even in Seize the Day Dr. Adler wishes that his son is dead because he is a burden on him. So fathers get disturbed when sons fail to live up to their expectations of them.

2.4.4.5. But the same father, Nailles, who wanted to kill his son, later rescues him from Hammer, who wants to sacrifice his son at the altar of Christ Church. Nailles rushes to the church, breaks open the church doors and saves his son at the last moment when Hammer is about to immolate him in the chancel. The novel ends with the rescue of the son by his father: "Tony went back to school on Monday and Nailles - dragged - went off to work and everything was as wonderful, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful as it had been" (BP:245). So order is restored in the family.

2.4.4.6. In Bellow's novel Seize the Day, none of the special communicative advantages of family and marriage are optional to any of the Adlers or Wilhelms. In this connection Andrew Jafahak observes;

As if compassion and feelings were misty ideas dissolved in day light, each individual drifts
away from the unit, dissolved, admitting that the promise of the family microcosm is much more than its delivery. To achieve unity and love they would have to go out to each other giving up something in order to achieve the cherished intimacy. (Jafahak 1974:301).

The improbability of family closeness is resolved in the last scene in *Seize the Day*, where it is suggested that true feeling can only be generated within one's own self and only toward oneself. But in Cheever's novel the basic unit of society - the family - is preserved though at times it is also threatened. It may be because the Nailles are conventional and ordinary to the core. Interestingly, both the novels end in Churches where the sons are saved.

2.4.5. The protagonist of *Falconer* (1977), Ezekiel Farragut, a college professor, convicted of murder of his brother, shares a cell block with a group of killers and thieves in a prison cell called Falconer. As he is plunged into loneliness and isolation, like Bellow heroes, he reminisces about his childhood in New England, his father, his marriage, his relationship with his brother and eccentric dreams. Farragut's memories are concerned with death and his narrow escape from it and each relates to members of his family. First, his memory goes back to his mother's story about his father calling an abortionist to dinner during her pregnancy in order to stuff out
Farragut's life before birth. Farragut is very much disturbed by this memory and he kills his brother in a fit of anger just because he has reminded him about his father's foeticidal desires. Because of this fratricide he is now serving a life sentence in Falconer prison. He often thinks, "Farragut's father wanted to have his life extinguished as he dwelt in his mother's womb, and how could he live happily with this knowledge?" (F:58).

2.4.5.1. Farragut's second memory of his father is about a fishing trip that most of the fathers in Cheever's work enjoy. His father takes him fishing in the wilderness and teaches him how to climb high mountains. Senior Farragut simply forgets about him after discharging these responsibilities and spends "most of his time tacking round Travertine harbor in a little catboat" (F:58). He simply fulfills his filial responsibilities without much involvement in them. This is what Farragut seems to complain. Senior Farragut is vain and self-loving. But Farragut is all praise for his father's skills in doing things. Like Herzog, he also admires his father's masterly skills: "He was one of those Yankees... He was great with all lines - kite lines, trout lines and moorings - and he could coil a garden hose with an authority that seemed to Farragut princely" (F:59).
2.4.5.2. Farragut’s another clear memory of his father is that of his father’s plan to drown himself off the island of Nagasakit - a plan that his mother announces at the dinner table without any interest. Though not sixteen at that time, Farragut drives to the island and runs down the beach. He sees nobody but the ocean and he wonders: "How could he tell if it contained his father, with pearls for eyes" (F:61). Then he sees his father on the roller coaster and at Farragut’s request the car operators bring his father down, "Mr Farragut saw his son, his youngest, his unwanted, his killjoy. He got out and joined Farragut, as he knew he must. "Ch, Daddy" said Farragut, "you shouldn’t do this to me in my formative years" (F:62). Farragut says that all this is enough explanation to turn him into a drug addict. To escape from his father’s meaningless actions he seems to have taken to drugs. The narrator says: "Opium had helped Farragut recall with serenity the fact that he had not been sixteen the first time his father threatened to commit suicide" (F:80).

2.4.5.3. Another incident in the present brings back memories of his father when Farragut and his friends steal a motor boat. The old watchman shouts at them, "Stop, stop, stop. Why do you have to do this? Why do you have to destroy everything?" (F:136). This Farragut describes to
the three psychiatrists he has employed:

When I heard the old man shouting 'Stop, stop', I understood my father for the first time in my life. When I heard the old man shouting 'Stop, stop', I heard my father. I know how my father felt when I borrowed his tails and went in to lead the cotillion. The voice of this old stranger on a summer night made my father clear to me for the first time in my life (F:137).

He understood that he has disturbed his father much. As a young man Farragut fails to understand his father and his actions such as his attempts to commit suicide. Now as a life convict he can see his father's perspective and feel after all the old man is right in his own way.

2.4.5.4. The last memory of his father is once again the same memory of his father's attempt to kill him in his mother's womb. He remembers how he has killed his brother, Eben. Eben tells him one night: "He wanted you to be killed .. I bet you didn't know that. He loved me, but he wanted you to be killed" (F:198). Then out of sheer anger he hits his brother with a fire iron and Eben's head hits the rails of the fire place and he falls dead. Eben often teases him with this reminder and this time he cannot control his anguish. So he strikes his brother in a fit of rage but as it is willed Eben dies with one stroke and Farragut is thrown into prison. He doesn't want to be reminded often that his father wanted to kill him. So the
first and the last memory of his father is about his foeticidal desires which haunt him through out.

2.4.5.5. Cheever's fiction abounds in foeticidal and fratricidal tensions right from his early story "Good-bye My Brother" to Falconer. In Wapshot Chronicle, Coverly narrates his mother's story how his father wanted to kill him in his mother's womb. In Bullet Park, Nailles almost kills his son when he attempts to hit his son, Tony, for having called him "Soap pusher". And this murder desire culminates in Falconer beginning with a foeticidal desire on the part of the father and ending with fratricide. Sibling rivalry leads to murder of a brother by the protagonist of the novel. Fathers always wanted to kill their sons but they have never done it, may be a temptation having Biblical overtones where Abraham is ordered by God to kill his son Isaac. But Abraham is asked to spare his son by an angel and so he does. The modern day Abraham of Cheever is also tempted and possessed by such a desire. So fathers in Bellow and Cheever wanted to kill their sons but they have never done it. They have only desires to kill but they never do it. But one brother kills another in Falconer, a result of a reminder of the earlier desire on the part of the father. So on the part of fathers it remains either a desire or wish but never put into action.
2.5.0. As in Bellows' novels we do have an "elemental conflict between father and son" in Cheever's novels too. But the conflict in Cheever's novels is not as serious or disturbing as in Bellow's. It may be because the heroes of Cheever are ordinary men with the routine every day problems of life, unlike the intellectual heroes of Bellow who are more concerned with the world than with their daily problems. Bellow's heroes are 'ideal men' reaching out to the world and not just mundane people as Cheever's heroes seem to be. The only exception is Farragut, a college professor, guilty of fratricide. The heroes of Cheever do not get into conflict with their fathers as much as Bellow's heroes do. No doubt there are some tensions and conflicts between the protagonists of Cheever and their fathers, they are not as serious as to disown one's own son as in *Seize the Day*. The sons are generally docile, unrebelling and obedient. They love their father and look up to him for guidance, instruction and initiation. The fathers in Cheever, unlike their counterparts in Bellow take much interest in their sons' affairs. They guide them in their personal, moral and social lives. They do play an important role in their sons' lives. And the sons do not question the authority of their patriarchs and never try to go against their wishes. They accept the authority of the father. But *Bullet Park* offers a dramatic conflict between
father and son as in Bellow's *Seize the Day*. The conflict here is amicably settled and the son is saved. In fact, we don't have a real conflict between the father and the son in Cheever's novels in the real sense of the term. They play out their roles written for them as a father and a son.

2.5.1. The most important difference in their treatment of father-son relationships is that Bellow's heroes reminisce about their fathers as they are mostly dead whereas Cheever's heroes live with their fathers. The fathers in the latter's novels are living characters whereas in the former are mere memories of the heroes. The Bellow hero is a grown up man, mostly a middle aged man, whereas the Cheever heroes in the first three novels are just young men on the threshold of their lives. Only in one novel of Cheever, we have a protagonist with a dead father, i.e. *Falconer*, who reminisces like Bellow hero. Interestingly, he is also a professor like some of Bellow's heroes. As in the early novels of Bellow, there is also a direct confrontation between the father and son in all other three novels of Cheever, particularly in *Bullet Park*. 