

Different Attitudes to American Jew's Life in the Early Works of  
Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth

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## Introduction

What kind of meaning does the concept of Jewishness have for the modern Jewish Americans? The Jews have wandered all over the world for about four thousands years from the time of Abraham. Suffering under such wandering condition, Jews desperately tried to seek a place for peaceful living, and they finally reached the new safe world called the United States. However, according to the commonly accepted idea that man has to sacrifice something to make his dreams come true, the Jews also had to sacrifice their identity as Jews to acculturate themselves to the American society. In addition, as time goes by, the number of intermarriage between different races have increased, and Jewishness have been becoming a concept of little significance for the contemporary American Jews. However, when the Jews consider their identity he cannot escape from recognizing both their Jewishness and Americanism. Thus Jews cannot eliminate their racial trace existing in their blood as Jews no matter how many years pass by.

At the beginning of immigration to the United States, the Jews were directly and deeply distressed by the necessity of keeping their Jewish identity and becoming American citizens. Abraham Cahan, a pioneering authority on Jewish American

literature, describes a Jew who wavers between Jewishness and Americanization in The Rise of David Levinsky. The protagonist, David Levinsky, suffers hardship upon hardship, but he finally rises to a millionaire from a poor peddler. However, in spite of his social success, David Levinsky cannot content himself, and he confesses as follows:

David, the poor lad swinging over a Talmud volume at the Preacher's Synagogue, seem to have more in common with my inner identity than David Levinsky, the well-known cloak-manufacturer. (530)

Cahan represents the crisis of Jewish identity that accompanies the difficulty of coexistence of Americanization and Jewishness through the protagonist's liking and longing for the good old days. Not all authors who are called Jewish writers choose the Jews as main characters, and pick up the problem of Jewishness. However, the tendency to choose Jewishness as a theme continues after Abraham Cahan's The Rise of David Levinsky (1917), and Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth deals with this problem in more sophisticated ways after the World War II. Both Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth are famous contemporary Jewish American writers, and especially the latter produces challenging works which later caused much discussion among the Jewish American society. Philip Roth satirically exposed in Goodbye, Columbus and Five Short Stories (1959) the inside of Jewish American society, that the American Jews had desperately kept from the Gentiles. Roth's

keen description of the Jews brought him under a vigorous attack by the conservative Jews who cling to the tradition, and who organize the Jewish establishment. For instance, one rabbi says that Roth's works create "the distorted image of the basic values of Orthodox Judaism" (Reading Myself 149). In addition, there are people who called Roth as "anti-Semitic and 'self-hating,' or, at least, tasteless" (149), and who protested objection to Roth as "'Why don't you leave us alone? Why don't you write about the Gentiles?--Why must you be so critical?--Why do you disapprove of us so?'" (150). Facing such public reproach, Roth frankly says "I had informed on the Jews" (161), without any hesitation. At the same time, he reveals his real intention of his challenging works as follows:

Not only do they seem to me often to have cramped and untenable notions of right and wrong, but looking at fiction as they do--in terms of "approval" and "disapproval" of Jews, "positive" and "negative" attitudes toward Jewish life--they are likely not to see what it is that the story is really about. (150)

Bernard Malamud, the writer who is almost contemporary with Philip Roth, also describes the details of the American Jew's life. Unlike Roth, Malamud obtains readers' sympathy and support to his works that Roth cannot obtain though he describes the suffocated atmosphere in the Jewish slums. For instance, comparing the works of Malamud and Roth, Jefferey Helterman (1978) points

out the depth of Malamud's fiction that Roth's fiction lacks, and he admires Malamud's fiction as follows:

"While Malamud does not have the intellectual range of Bellow or command of Roth's verbal pyrotechnics, his moral vision reaches depth unproved by either his peers." (291)

In Malamud's fiction, a cynical atmosphere, that almost of Roth's works have, does not exist at all. Though the protagonists are doomed to live in sufferings, they affirmatively try to live, sympathizing with other Jews who are in more needy circumstances. Being impressed by such attitudes of Malamud's protagonists toward others, many readers highly value Malamud's warm-hearted fiction. Nevertheless, Roth coldly reacts to Malamud's works:

The Jews of The Magic Barrel and the Jews of The Assistant are not the Jews of New York or Chicago. They are Malamud's invention, a metaphor of sorts to stand for certain possibilities and promises, and I am further inclined to believe this when I read the statement attributed to Malamud which goes, "All men are Jews." In fact, we know this is not so; even the men who are Jews aren't sure they're Jews. But Malamud as a writer of fiction has not shown a specific interest in the anxieties and dilemmas and corruptions of the contemporary American Jew, the Jew we think of as characteristic of our times. (Reading Myself 127)

Though both Malamud and Roth handle Jewishness in their works, the ways of approaching to Jewishness are completely different from each other. Roth sharply cuts in Jewish American society, and shows his realistic, cynical, shrewd observation. On the other hand, depicting the pictorial suggestive scenes like the painting by Marc Chagall, Malamud creates his unique fictional world that is filled with humanity. How on earth Malamud and Roth came to create such different fictional world? Where did they want to go with completely different ways of approach? Are there anything in common between the two? Keeping these questions in mind, the writer of this thesis study The Assistant (1957) and The Magic Barrel (1958) by Bernard Malamud, and Goodbye, Columbus and Five Short Stories by Philip Roth, because the features of each writer are clearly expressed in these early works.

In the first chapter, the writer of this thesis focuses on the essence of Jewishness, and then this writer tries to analyze the different types of settings in the second chapter. In the third chapter, examining Malamud's humor and Roth's satire, this writer seeks the each writer's intention.

## Chapter I

### The Essence of Jewishness

#### 1. Bernard Malamud and Jewishness

Most of the main characters of Bernard Malamud's fiction are schlemiels or schlimazles who are honestly living in poverty, confronting sufferings which attack them one after another. Manishevitz, in "Angel Levine," is one of the typical main characters who follow suffering lives. "Angel Levine" opens with the tragic atmosphere that surrounds a tailor Manishevitz who overnight lost all he had by a fire that broke out in his workshop. Tragedy continues further, and at almost the same time of the disastrous fire, his son who would have had a promising future was killed in the war, and his daughter disappears after her marriage with a lout. Besides, his wife Fanny, who used to take in washing and sewing, also suffers from advanced hardening of the arteries, and she comes to be confined to bed. As a result, Manishevitz has to work as a presser--the only work which he can do now--bearing the pain in his back to make their living. Being involved in these successive misfortunes, Manishevitz responds as follows:



Throughout his trials Manishevitz had remained somewhat stoic, almost unbelieving that all this had descended upon his head, as if it were happening, let us say, to an acquaintance or some distant relative; it was in sheer quantity of woe incomprehensible. It was in a way an affront to God. Manishevitz believed this in all his suffering. When his burden had grown too crushingly heavy to be borne he prayed in his chair with shut hollow eyes: "My dear God, sweetheart, did I deserve that this should happen to me?" Then recognizing the worthlessness of it, he put aside the complaint and prayed humbly for assistance: "Give Fanny back her health, and to me for myself that I shouldn't feel pain in every step. Help now or tomorrow is too late. This I don't have to tell you." And Manishevitz wept.

(Magic Barrel 44)

Confronting sufferings, Manishevitz first tries to endure them as the ordeals from God, and after being at a loss, he complains to God about his ordeals, and finally he comes to warn himself who is blaming God for sufferings. This self-restrained attitude of Manishevitz expresses his fundamental patience, that is, the Jew's patience. He seems to be a mere poor feeble old Jew, but actually he is mentally a strong person because he has a less flexible mind that is not easily discouraged by difficulties. The more his hopes are miserably defeated, the stronger he

becomes spiritually. However, such a succession of misfortunes make Manishevitz suspicious of life, and he cannot believe Levine who claims that he is an Jewish angel even though he is a black. Instead of trusting Levine's words, Manishevitz distrustfully asks him "'So if God sends to me an angel, why a black? Why not a white that there are so many of them?'" (47). In addition, he refuses Levine, insulting him as "'I think you are a faker'" (48). After sending Levine away, the situation that surrounds Manishevitz turns worse--the condition of Fanny becomes serious, and Manishevitz himself suffers from terrible pain in his back. Being anxious about their lives, he finally decides to trust Levine, and he can manage to escape from the worst condition by Angel Levine's help. Manishevitz's words to Fanny in the last scene "Believe me, there are Jews everywhere'" (56) bring the story a faintly warm atmosphere, and it moderates a tragic atmosphere that penetrates into the story. It can be said that Malamud is intentionally introducing such a warm atmosphere to soften a miserable atmosphere that is spread over the story. There is a worthy of special mention that readers can feel Malamud's warm vision toward human beings that lies in the bottom of his heart.

A technique of introducing a touch of salvation in a dismal atmosphere is effectively used in "The First Seven Years" as well as in "Angel Levine." Feld, one of the main characters of "The First Seven Years," is a poor shoemaker. He works with his

assistant Sobel whom Feld hired for the reason that Sobel is a Jew. Feld always dreams a bright future of his daughter Miriam, who refused to receive a college education when the opportunity arose. His dreams are to marry his daughter to someone who is highly educated, and to let her lead a "better life" (5) than that of her parents someday in the future. For the realization of his dreams, Feld dares to choose a diligent college student Max, whom he usually watches from the inside of his workshop, as a future partner of Miriam. By frankly asking Max to meet Miriam, Feld succeeds in getting Miriam acquainted with Max, and Miriam and Max begin to go out together. Looking at the young couple for whom he acted as an intermediary, Feld satisfies himself by thinking "They made . . . a first-class couple" (10). However, Sobel's blood boils with indignation at Feld's such acts as he has secretly loved Miriam for five years. Sobel, therefore, runs away from Feld's store, and Feld's mental wound opens since then. In place of Sobel, Feld hires a new assistant, but he has to work more than ever because his new assistant is less skilled in shoe-making than Sobel, and besides, the assistant steals some sales from the till. In addition, Miriam's breaking off with Max after their second dating terribly beats Feld, and he breaks down from overwork and worries. By the persistent persuasion of his wife and daughter who worry about both Feld's health and Sobel, Feld, consequently, is obliged to go to Sobel's rooming house to persuade Sobel to return to the former work. There, Feld

unwillingly admits Sobel's love toward Miriam, by forcing to postpone making a proposal to Miriam for two years, till Miriam becomes twenty-one year-old, and Sobel accepts it. In this patient attitude of Sobel, who has worked for five years as an assistant without any complaints, Sobel's spiritual strength that has been nourished through repeated sufferings is emphasized. It seems that Malamud is admiring Sobel's patience through describing Miriam's moderate favor with Sobel. At the same time, it is also said that the spiritual growth of Sobel who longs for escaping from his tragic past is implied in the description of Sobel's patient attitude toward obtaining Miriam's love. As it were, it is a transformation of Sobel's attitude from passive one to positive one. On the other hand, Feld hates Sobel who has secretly expressed his love in the comments written on the pages of the books which Miriam borrows from him. Feld harshly insults such Sobel as "'She[Miriam] will never marry a man so old and ugly like you'" (14). It is because Feld does not want to marry his daughter to a poor man like Sobel. However, at the same time, Feld is contented with the point that his daughter will marry a Jewish man, not a Gentile. The contentment of Feld is expressed in his "stronger stride" (15) on his way home from Sobel's rooming house. Though Feld, who has experienced sufferings, fails to marry his daughter to a highly educated bright man, he will be rewarded by the marriage of his daughter with a Jewish man in future. Sobel's strong affection for Miriam is, as it

were, a redemption for Feld whose dreams toward his daughter's bright future will not be realized. There, too, readers will feel the warm vision of Malamud toward the good character like Feld who lives in poverty, and who is enduring sufferings.

"The Magic Barrel" that is comprised in the collected short stories The Magic Barrel also has the similar taste of redemption with love. At the beginning of this short story, Leo Finkle, a student in the Yeshiva University, to find an ideal bride without any efforts, makes a contact with Pinye Salzman, who is a Jewish marriage broker. Salzman recommend Leo to meet Lily Hirschorn, and the meeting with Lily Hirschorn is arranged by the marriage broker. Through the conversation with Lily Hirschorn, Leo suddenly realizes the fact that his belief in God is mere doctrinal one that lacks love for God, and that how empty spiritual life he has led as a human being:

This terrifying insight he had deprived as a result of his meeting and conversation with Lily Hirschorn. Her probing questions had somehow irritated him into revealing--to himself more than her--the true nature of his relationship to God, and from that it had come upon him, with shocking force, that apart from his parents, he had never loved anyone. Or perhaps it went the other way, that he did not love God so well as he might, because he had not loved man. (Magic Barrel 204-05)

Thus, Finkle experiences spiritual sufferings, and finally he

hopes to revive himself as a person who can love God by loving someone from the bottom of his heart. Here, readers can see a new view of life that is brought by his self-awareness. Finkle's hope of reviving is intensified by watching a picture of Stella who is a daughter of Salzman:

Her face deeply moved him. Why, he could at first not say. . . . It was not, he affirmed, that she had an extraordinary beauty--no, though her face was attractive enough; it was that *something* about her moved him. Feature for feature, even some of the ladies of the photographs could do better; but she leaped forth to his heart--had *lived*, or wanted to--more than just wanted, perhaps regretted how she had lived--had somehow deeply suffered: it could be seen in the depths of those reluctant eyes, and from the way the light enclosed and shone from her, and within her, opening realms of possibility: this was her own. Her he desired. . . . Leo brewed some tea in a small pot and sat sipping it without sugar, to calm himself. But before he had finished drinking, again with excitement he examined the face and found it good: good for Leo Finkle. Only such a one could understand him and help him seek whatever he was seeking. (203-04)

It is because Finkle penetrated Stella's past from her picture which impressed her agony and regret for her life, that he

chooses Stella as his partner. In other words, he recognized Stella as his sort. Though Finkle first falls into the abyss in life by encountering Lily Hirschorn, finally, he can spiritually be a mature person who can touch the truth of life through real love by the experience of spiritual suffering.

Bernard Malamud tells about the theme of his works in the interview with Ji-moon Koh as follows:

I like what might be called a sense of growth, a sense of, if you will, escape from the lowest levels of selfishness into a kind of generosity of spirit that makes one aware of the needs and the interests of other human beings, and perhaps even incites one to of help to other human beings. (Conversation 105)

Malamud's successful novel, The Assistant, is considered as a developed form of "The First Seven Years." In The Assistant, the spiritual growth of Frank Alpine and generosity of spirit of Morris Bober are described. The grocery store of Morris Bober in the non-Jewish residence zone is suffering from a serious slump because a new delicatessen has recently opened near Bober's store. In spite of being in such a serious condition, Morris Bober keeps showing his natural generosity and mercy on the regular visitors to his store. For instance, he opens his store early in every morning for a Polish woman who usually comes to Bober's store before it opens. In addition, he sells some foods on credit to a girl whose mother is alcoholic, and furthermore, he secretly

reduces the accumulation. To Breitbart, a bulb peddler, whose wife ran away, Bober offers a cup of tea to let him rest before Breitbart goes out to peddle. Even though being under such depressed and poverty-stricken condition, Bober thus keeps his honest and sincere attitude toward people. However, once he was captured by the evil idea that misfortunes should attack Julious Karp's prosperous liquor store, he soon straightens up his wrong idea with his morality like a secular tzaddik:

God bless Julious Karp, the grocer thought. Without him I would have my life too easy. God made Karp so a poor grocery man will not forget his life is hard. For Karp, he thought, it was miraculously not so hard, but what was there to envy? He would allow the liquor dealer his bottles and gelt just not to be him. Life was bad enough. (25)

In this Bober's affirmative attitude toward life, his patience, generosity and goodness are revealed. However, an enormous suffering attacks him one day. Frank Alpine is a twenty-five-year-old Italian who was brought up in an orphanage as a Catholic. At first, Frank appears as a spiritually unsatisfied and immatured person who has experienced loneliness and misfortunes. Frank's spiritual immaturity is implied in his words as "I don't understand myself. I don't know what I'm saying to you or why I am saying it" (37). In addition, it is said that Frank's behavior in peeping Helen when she is in the bathroom and pocketing part



of the sales of Bober's store are obviously caused by his spiritual immaturity. In short, Frank cannot control himself because his reason has not developed to the state that can control his desire. Frank, therefore, continues to waver between regret and lust. Being moved by conscience, Frank voluntarily begins to support Bober's wife and Helen after Bober's death, and he devotes the rest of his life in letting them survive. Working in the daytime at Bober's grocery store, and in a coffee shop at night, Frank gives every spare moment to make money that is necessary for Bober's wife and Helen. So to say, it is a succession of the role as a giver from Bober to Frank. The succession of the role is symbolized in Frank's attitude toward the regular customers. Frank opens Bober's store early in the morning for the Polish woman who complains as usual. To Breitbart who drops into the store, Frank makes tea as Bober has done. In addition, the circumcision of Frank also expresses the fact that Frank substantially and spiritually became a successor of Morris Bober. The interesting thing is that Frank Alpine's effort is rewarded by the softening attitude of Helen toward him, and the change of Helen's attitude toward Frank seems to be a prize for Frank who chose the life of suffering.

## 2. Philip Roth and Jewishness

Most of the main characters Philip Roth describes are both socially and mentally modernized Jews who have position and money. In Goodbye, Columbus (1959), the Patimkins are described as the typical modernized Jews who live in a fashionable suburbs, not Newark. Mr. Patimkin, a successful proprietor of Patimkin Kitchen and Bathroom Sinks, seems to be a Jew because of his beaklike nose which his daughter also has. However, he has already escaped from Newark where suffocative Jewish atmosphere exists, and now he has become one of the materialists in the United States. He, therefore, willingly payed for his daughter Brenda when she hoped to have an operation on her nose with a projection. In such Mr. Patimkin's behavior, there is no attachment for Jewishness. Instead, what controls Mr. Patimkin is a prevalent materialism that attaches the importance to superficial gorgeousness or beauty. Materialism that influences the Patimkins is implied in the description of their gorgeous dinner, the basement that is filled with liquors, medals, photographs, etcetra, and various kinds of sporting goods that are spread in the back lawn. Unlike Mr. Patimkin, Mrs. Patimkin has an antipathy against Brenda because Brenda prefers the unrestrained modern life to the traditional Jewish life. Among the Patimkins who are enjoying their lives as Americans rather than as Jews, Mrs. Patimkins is the only person who tends to stick to the fact that she is a Jew. She hopes Brenda to behave as an prudent Jewish woman, but Brenda

never obeys her mother; therefore, Mrs. Patimkin has an antipathy against Brenda. It seems that the conflict of them over the purchase of a cashmere sweater implies the conflict between a traditional Jew who always minds how he[she] looks and an Americanized Jew in modern American society. One of the traditional Jews, Mrs. Patimkin, is a person who believes that she is an Orthodox good Jew because she is engaged in charitable work in Hadassah. She, therefore, dislikes Neil Klugman who does not show much interest to Judaism, but Mrs. Patimkin is also one of the secular Jews as well as her husband, her children and Neil Klugman. In the conversation with Neil, Mrs. Patimkin asks Neil only formal matters like his religious movement or whether he is interested in B'nai Brith, but she never shows her interest to talk about the essence of Judaism that Neil tries to discuss by mentioning Martin Buber. Thus, Mrs. Patimkin's secularity is symbolically described by her attitude toward superficial matters.

In "Epstein," Jewish people who have been influenced by economical prosperity are described. Lou Epstein, a fifty-nine year-old man who runs Epstein Paper Bag Company, has felt an emptiness of his life in spite of his economical stability because his only son who was to be his successor died young. In addition, his daughter Sheila calls him a capitalist with her socialistic conscience, and his wife Goldie never understand his loneliness. During the unsatisfied days, however, Lou happens to pick up Ida Kaufman, a widow who lives across the street, and he feels relief

in the conversation with her. Since then, they become intimate, and they come to enjoy their secret meeting. However, a rash that comes out on his crotch raises a doubt on his behavior in both Goldie's and Shiela's mind, and as a result, he is looked down by them.

Generally speaking, what people long for after economically being satisfied is to gratify their spiritual emptiness. Such is also the case with Lou Epstein since he is starved of warm contact with others in spite of his economical prosperity. How Lou Epstein's mind is thirsting for warm contact with others is expressed in the conversation with Ida Kaufman in his car:

Epstein roared. It was long since he had been with a woman who had a sense of humor; his wife took everything he said seriously. Not Ida Kaufman, though--she laughed so hard her breasts swelled over the top of her tan dress. They were not cups but pitchers. The next thing Epstein knew he was telling her another joke, and another, in the middle of which a cup screamed up alongside him and gave a ticket for a red light which, in his joy, he had not seen. (Goodbye, Columbus 211)

For Jews, adultery is considered one of the great sins, but Epstein steps into the prohibited region of pleasure, throwing away his morality in a modern unrestrained atmosphere about sex in which his daughter and nephew enjoy themselves, and consequently, Epstein loses strong paternal authority and family ties

of Jewish tradition. A tragedy of a Jew, who suddenly falls into a trap which is set in the economically stable life, is satirically described in "Epstein" by Philip Roth.

Roth's doubt about the crooked mental state of the modern Jews is seen in "The Conversion of the Jews" and "Eli, the Fanatic." In "The Conversion of the Jews," contradictions that modern Jews have, are pointed out by Ozzie Freedman whose mind is filled with doubts on perfunctory Judaism. Rabbi Binder who is in charge of Ozzie Freedman at Hebrew School, teach his students the doctrine of Judaism, but he cannot give the reasonable answers to the different questions that are asked by Ozzie. Why does Rabbi Binder call the Jews "The Chosen People" in spite of the fact that all men's equality is declared in the United States? Why does his mother regard a plain crash that killed eight people who have Jewish names as a tragedy? Why could not God make a woman as a person who can have a baby without having physical relationship? These are piercing questions that have possibility to shake the heart of modern Judaism. Through Ozzie's observation of a typical old Jew, Yakov Blotnik, Judaism without substance, of the degenerated Jews is implied as follows:

At the rear of the room Yakov Blotnik, the seventy-one-year-old custodian, slowly polished the large window, mumbling to himself unaware that it was four o'clock or six o'clock, Monday Wednesday. . . . To Ozzie the mumbling had always seemed a monotonous, curious prayer;

what made it curious was that old Blotnik had been mumbling so steadily for so many years, Ozzie suspected he memorized the prayers and forgotten all about God.

(144)

Here, Roth makes a cynical remark on the degenerated Jews who superficially believes Judaism, and who stop to contemplate the essence of Judaism.

In free-discussion time, Ozzie and Rabbi Binder conflict with each other over the contradiction in the Creation. As Rabbi Binder oppressively tempts to put Ozzie to silence, Ozzie's distrust toward Binder grows, and he finally insults Binder as "'You don't know! You don't know anything about God!'" (146) Ozzie, therefore, is slapped on his nose by Binder who is in a rage, and then, Ozzie escapes to the synagogue roof. After locking the trapdoor in Binder's face, he comes to himself. Looking down the crowds who are watching over him from the synagogue roof, Ozzie sees Binder who is ordering him to come down. Ozzie, however, does not fear Binder's order like "the writing on the scroll" (148), if it is written. On the other hand, witnessing Ozzie on the roof, Yakov Blotnik shows an extremely stiffened way of thinking:

Yakov Blotnik's old mind hobbled slowly, as if on crutches, and though he couldn't decide precisely what the boy was doing on the roof, he knew it wasn't good--that is, it wasn't-good-for-the-Jews. For Yakov

Blotnik life had fractionated itself simply: things were either good-for-the-Jews or no-good-for-the-Jews.

(150)

This is, in a sense, a severe reproof by Roth toward the Jews who have been influenced by the less flexible way of thinking.

Ozzie Freedman is a thirteen-year-old Jewish boy before receiving bar-mitzvah, who revolts against adults. A turning point comes to him just before he is formally accepted as a member of Jewish society through bar-mitzvah. On the synagogue roof, he has to decide whether he should jump and come down where his peers are waiting for him. It can be said that this occasion is, as it were, bar-mitzvah for Ozzie because he begins to live as an independent person. At the end of this short story, after letting all the crowds convert to Christians, Ozzie finally decides to come down, and jumps into the net which is spread for him. The conversion of all the crowds is a prize for Ozzie Freedman who kept his faith from the others. By the glow of the net that Ozzie jumps into, Roth's admiration for Ozzie is more clearly emphasized.

The exclusive movement to a defiant person, that is seen in the relationship between Rabbi Binder and Ozzie Freedman, is also focused on in "Eli, the Fanatic." In this short story, the modernized Jewish people hope to exclude the Super Orthodox Jews of Yeshiva because there is a possibility that the Super Orthodox Jews' behavior will incite Gentiles' hostility against Jews. As

a negotiator, a lawyer Eli Peck is sent to the Yeshiva of Woodenton, where Leo Tzuref works as director, to persuade Tzuref to leave the town on the plea of law. However, Tzuref claims to Eli as "'What you call law, I call shame. The heart, Mr. Peck, the heart is law! God!'" (266). Eli feels something significant in what Tzuref says, and furthermore, he is shocked by the fact that "the greenie" (256) who is always wearing black clothes of Super Orthodox, and who often makes the modernized Jews feel disgust by his appearance, had been performed medical experiment on his body by Nazis. In addition, because of his pregnant wife's hysteria, and the duty of letting the Super Orthodox Jews leave the town, Eli's mental state gradually becomes unstable. Wavering between the Jews who cling to a peace-at-any-price and the Super Orthodox Jews, Eli gradually falls into mental derangement, and he wears black clothes which "the greenie" gave him. By wearing black clothes of Super Orthodox, Eli suddenly feels revelation, and he begins to wander the town, seeking for his identity:

He knew what he did was not insane, though he felt every inch of its strangeness. He felt those black clothes as if they were the skin of his skin--the give and pull as they got used to where he bulged and buckled. (293)

Through his fanatic behavior, he can finally recognize the essence of Jewishness. However, his wife and friends who regard



Eli as fanatic try to give him a seductive shot to calm his mental state down.

Both Ozzie Freedman in "The Conversion of the Jews" and Eli Peck in "Eli, the Fanatic" cannot continue to defend their faith because Ozzie has to come down sooner or later, and Eli is given a seductive shot. Here, what readers have to give an attention is the fact that their seeking for faith is interfered by the Jews who surround them. These works are written to give to the modern degenerated Jews who have the stiffened views a warning not to forget the essence of Jewishness, and there, readers feel Roth's strong sense of responsibility as one of the modern Jews.

## Chapter II

### The Closed Setting and the Emancipated Setting

#### 1. Bernard Malamud and the Closed Setting

In Bernard Malamud's works--especially limited to the works in which New York is chosen as the settings--the main characters live in poverty and oppressive atmosphere. They are good Jews who are honestly making poor livings under the narrow and closed houses. However, in spite of their honest attitudes toward life, they are doomed to suffer from the continual unexpected troubles. In "The Bill," Mr. and Mrs. Panessa are poor old Jews who run a small delicatessen like "a hole in the wall" (Assistant 145). One day, Willy Schlegel, who manages the apartment near Mr. and Mrs. Panessa's delicatessen, makes some purchases there on his wife's advise. Willy loses himself in the conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Panessa in their store, and he orders articles more than he can pay for them. Mr. Panessa, therefore, offers Willy to buy articles on credit, and to pay the bill whenever Willy wants to. Willy is surprised by Mr. Panessa's such a warm offer because he has experienced the harsh realities in his life. After the incident, Willy willingly visits the delicatessen to buy articles,

which actually are not necessary for him. At first, Mr. Panessa welcomes Willy who dares to drop in his delicatessen. He gradually becomes anxious, however, about the increasing bill of Willy's, and Mr. Panessa finally refers to it when Willy comes to his store as usual. Facing the change of Mr. Panessa's attitude, Willy, who was once moved by Mr. Panessa's generosity, comes to hate Mr. and Mrs. Panessa as much as he trusted them:

He felt for Panessa and his wife a grating hatred and vowed never to pay because he hated them so much, especially the humpback behind the counter. If he ever smiled at him again with those goddam eyes he would lift him off the floor and crack his bent bones.

(Magic Barrel 149)

Willy avoids Mr. and Mrs. Panessa on purpose after the incident, and then a letter that asks Willy for repayment of money for reason of Mr. Panessa's sickness, is sent from Mrs. Panessa.

Mrs. Panessa says in her letter that she needs just ten dollars, and the rest of the bill can wait for later, but he ignores the claim because he has a dream to pay the whole amount at a time instead of paying bit by bit. Such nonsensical obstinacy of Willy's is a product of his stiffened pride that has been formed in the absurdity of his life. The crooked spirit that has been formed in poverty is described in Willy's imagination:

Sometimes when he was trying to think of the different ways there were to get money his thoughts ran ahead and

he saw what it would be like when he paid. He would wrap the wad of bills with a thick rubber band and then go up the stairs and cross the street and go down the five steps into the store. He would say to Panessa, "Here it is, little old man, and I bet you didn't think I would do it, and I don't suppose nobody else did and sometimes me myself, but here it is in bucks all held together by a fat rubber band." (151)

By encountering Mr. Panessa's funeral later, Willy comes to feel guilty about Mr. Panessa's death because of his cruel attitude toward Mr. and Mrs. Panessa. As a result, helplessly dark atmosphere, that is emphasized by Mr. Panessa's death and Willy's remorse, is spreading over this story. At the same time, the karma of human beings is also implied by depicting Willy, whose nonsensical obstinacy brings him a mind torture, in the following quotation:

He tries to say some sweet thing but his tongue hung in his mouth like dead fruit on a tree, and his heart was a black-painted window.

Mrs. Panessa moved away to live with one stone-faced daughter, then with the other. And the bill was never paid. (153)

Like "The Bill," "The Loan" also has a dark suffocated atmosphere. Lieb, who used to be a penniless immigrant, is a baker who recently obtained stability as a baker by baking breads and

rolls that let the customers run miles to buy. One day, his old friend, Kobotsky, with whom he once experienced hardships when they came to the United States, appears after their long separation. On the contrary to Lieb, who is now a grey-haired plump person, Kobotsky is depicted as a frail, gnarled one whose face is glittering with misery. Thus, the difference of their appearance implies Lieb's stable life and Kobotsky's unhappy life. The reason why Kobotsky visited Lieb in spite of their long separation, that was caused by Kobotsky's repudiation of debt which he owed to Lieb, was to ask Lieb for a loan of two hundred dollars to build a stone on his wife's grave. Kobotsky awkwardly begs money from Lieb, and Lieb forgives him because he is moved by his piteous begging. Forgiving Kobotsky who once disgusted him, Lieb hopes to lend him money. However, Lieb's wife, Bessie, stubbornly refuses to lend money to Kobotsky because of her tragic experience in East Europe. There, she lost her father and former husband one after another. Besides, her older brother, who sent her to the United States by his desperate effort, ended himself in one of Hitler's incinerators with his wife and daughter. As a result of her bitter experiences, she has become suspicious about the matters that have possibilities to ruin her life. Bessie never changes her mind to the last, and Kobotsky is obliged to leave Lieb's shop without being lent any money.

In "The Loan," the tragic atmosphere grows more as the story advances, and it leaves a strong impression by the description of

burned loaves:

Tears streaming from her eyes, Bessie raised her head and suspiciously sniffed the air. Screeching suddenly, she ran into the rear and with a cry wrenched open the oven door. A cloud of smoke billowed out at her. The loaves in the trays were blackened bricks--charred corpses. (191)

Here, Malamud emphasizes sorrow of Jewry by connecting the image of the burned loaves with six million Jews who ended themselves in Hitler's incinerators, and readers find Malamud's talent as a creative writer in the technique.

Cruel trials that the Jews have experienced are described in both "The Bill" and "The Loan." There, the oppressive atmosphere exists in each work because the main characters, Mr. Panessa and Lieb, are living in their store or shop, that is the limited space. Like these works, "The First Seven Years" also has a similar atmosphere since one of the main characters, Feld, also has spent his time in his small store. Peering through the window of his store at falling February snow, Feld remembers the snowy Polish village where he spent his youth. A stretch of his remembrance emphasizes the closed situation of present under which he lives. In addition, his assistant's fanatic hammering that resounds in a small store and Feld's anxiety about his health are intensifying the unusual gloomy atmosphere.

Feld in "The First Seven Years" is, as it were, a person who

has been waiting for the appearance of an ideal bridegroom of his daughter, staying in his store. Moreover, Manishevitz in "Angel Levine" and Leo Finkle in "The Magic Barrel" are also of this sort of persons who leave the future to others. For instance, Manishevitz implores the mercy of God upon him accepting a succession of sufferings. In the case of Leo Finkle, he does not make effort to find his future bride, but instead, he waits for a matchmaker to come in his rooming house. However, they finally go out of their places. For example, Feld goes to Sobel's rooming house, and then he succeeds in bringing Sobel back to his store. Manishevitz goes to Harlem to meet Levine, and after their meeting, his wife who has been laid at death's bed recovers her health. As for Leo Finkle, who begins to love Stella at first sight, makes desperate effort to get contact with Salzman who left Stella's picture, and he manages to meet her. Thus, all of these characters--Feld, Manishevitz and Finkle--obtain quiet happiness by going out of their places.

On the other hand, Malamud also depicts the Jews who never try to go out of his place. In "The Mourners," Kessler, who has led an uneventful life in a small cheap flat, is suddenly attacked by sufferings. Kessler is described as a stubborn man who lives alone on social security. Though Kessler has quietly lived, a janitor, who has a hostility toward Kessler, gives Kessler an one-sided notice which the landlord suggested. However, Kessler locks himself in, and he does not obey the notice, and then,

Gruber, the landlord, brings the matter to court, and finally, the marshal appears with his brawny assistants, and Kessler is thrown out of his flat with some meager furnitures by them. Kessler's pride as a human being is hurt by being thrown out like one of the meager furnitures, and following quotation conveys Kessler's misery and grief:

Kessler sat on a split chair on the sidewalk. It was raining and the rain soon turned to sleet, but he still sat there. People passing by skirted the pile of his belongings. They stared at Kessler and he stared at nothing. He wore no hat or coat, and the snow fell on him, making him look like a piece of his dispossessed goods. (22)

Though Kessler is excluded from his flat, the tenants who take pity on this evicted man carry him into the flat from which he has carried out, and then Gruber comes rushing to the flat to persuade Kessler. However, Kessler withdraws into himself, and he becomes a dweller of his inner world.

Malamud's fiction has a stagnant image, as it is symbolized by the phrase in "In a store you were entombed" (Assistant 9). At the same time, Malamud's characters lead eventful dramatic lives even though they live in the limited spaces. Here, Malamud tries to gain a deeper insight into human nature by choosing closed setting (a sort of extremity) in his fiction.

To describe the characters as more humane people is one of



Malamud's intention, and he says "My problem is how to invent a human being. Whether he is Jewish or not is not important. I want to create a character who lives" (Conversation 76). In addition, Malamud shows his interest in love that greatly influences human nature, and he deals with love in "The First Seven Years" and "The Magic Barrel." It seems that Malamud's warm view of love is reflected in the fruition of love between Miriam and Sobel, and between Stella and Finkle. Malamud makes clear his opinion on love as "Man must consider love a gift of nature which he must use as a gift" (72). That is why love is counted as one of the significant matters as well as sufferings in his fiction.

Though Malamud depicts the Jews, who live in suffocated conditions, with tragic vision, there is something more than tragedy in his works. Malamud is penetrating universality in the Jew's life in poverty and oppressive conditions. He expresses his view of the Jews as follows:

I try to see the Jew as universal man. Every man is a Jew though he may not know it. The Jewish drama is prototypic, a symbol of the fight for existence in the highest possible human terms. Jewish history is God's gift of drama. (30)

The amazing thing is that Malamud creates dramatic fiction which have depth by using his peculiar imagination and a broad view of life even in short stories, and therefore, readers of Malamud's fiction cannot stop admiring his creativity.

## 2. Philip Roth and the Emancipated Setting

Unlike Bernard Malamud's works that depict the Jews who live in poverty and suffocated atmosphere, there are the Jews who live well and comfortable in Philip Roth's works. For instance, the Patimkins in Goodbye, Columbus and the Pecks in "Eli, the Fanatic," are rich people of this sort. They are successful immigrants who rose from the gutter, and now they belong to the bourgeoisie. When Roth wrote these works, he was in a transitional period from the second generation to the third generation. Under such situation, the Jews were trying to enter the center of the American society, seeking for social success. Witnessing the change of the times, Roth realistically and sometimes grotesquely describes the changing consciousness of the American society. For example, in Goodbye, Columbus, the encounter of Neil Klugman and Brenda Patimkin at the swimming pool in the Green Country Club symbolizes the existence of the rich Jews. In addition, the young Jew's unrestrained and modernized view of love is expressed in Neil's behavior. For instance, Neil quickly tries to extract from Brenda a promise to go out with by telephone before Brenda forgets him. Neil and Brenda boldly embrace each other in a swimming pool, and furthermore, they have a physical relationship in Mr. Patimkin's house. The fact that they dare to have physical relationships in such places where people may witness them implies their desire to get thrills by letting themselves be in danger of being witnessed. They enjoy their relationship as

follows:

Later that night, Brenda and I made love, our first time. We were sitting on the sofa in the television room and for some ten minutes had not spoken a word to each other. . . .

The television set was on and though the sound was off and the house quiet, the gray pictures still wiggled at the far end of the room. . . . We sat there for some while and did not speak. Then she went into the kitchen and when she came back she said that it sounded as though everyone was asleep. We sat a while longer, watching the soundless bodies on the screen eating a silent dinner in someone's silent restaurant. . . .

But she looked lovely, my Brenda, anyway, and we folded it carefully and held each other close and soon there we were, Brenda falling, slowly but with a smile, and me rising.

How can I describe loving Brenda? It was so sweet, as though I'd finally scored that twenty-first point.

(Goodbye, Columbus 45-46)

Turning the television set on, and regarding the people on the screen as the audience, they have a sexual intercourse. It might be said that they dares to turn the television set on because they want someone to recognize their existence by exposing their behavior. In short, by having a sexual relationship, Neil and

Brenda try to have a feeling of living that they cannot have in the ordinary life. In addition, the description of Neil who feels as if he scored twenty-first point when he remembers his behavior, implies the fact that Neil is regarding their relationship as a sort of game rather than as an expression of love. Thus, it can be said that Neil's state of mind symbolizes the young people's modernized sexual morality.

Young people's pursuit of the unrestrained sexual relationships influences not only the other young people but also the adults. For instance, in "Epstein," Lou Epstein is one of the victims of such current of the times in a sense. Epstein spends sleepless nights because his daughter brings her boy friend and his nephew brings in his girl friend to his house in succession, and they flirt with each other in the downstairs. Then, being stimulated by the young people's bohemian sexual acts, Epstein secretly enjoys love affairs with Ida Kaufman, but a rash comes out on his crotch, and his wife and daughter doubt about Epstein's behavior. Besides, his wife, Goldie, positively seeks divorce because she believes that his rash was given by adultery. Epstein, therefore, tries to soften his wife's stubborn attitude as follows:

He[Epstein] leaned across the table to his wife.

"Goldie, Goldie, look at me! Look at *me*, Lou!"

She stared back into the newspaper, though she held it far enough from her nose for Epstein to know she

could not see the print; with everything else, the optometrist said the muscles in her eyes had loosened. "Goldie," he said, "Goldie, I did the worst thing in the world? Look me in the eyes, Goldie. Tell me, since when do Jewish people get a divorce? Since when?"

She looked up at him, and then at Sheila. "Syphilis makes soft brains. I can't live with a pig!"

"We'll work it out. We'll go to the rabbi--"

"He wouldn't recognize you--"

"But the children, what about the children?"

"What children?"

Herbie was dead and Sheila a stranger; she was right.

"A grown-up child can take care of herself," Goldie said. "If she wants, she can come to Florida with me. I'm thinking I'll move to Miami Beach."

"Goldie!" (223-24)

Contrary to Epstein who tries to smooth things over in some way or other, Goldie talks him down with the reasonable answers. As Epstein loses his authority as the head of the family, Goldie and his daughter gradually gain power in the family. This phenomenon symbolizes the spiritual change of the modern Jew because it is a man who has the authority in traditional Jewish family. By introducing the quite non-Jewish element, that is, the rise of woman, Roth succeeds in adding modernity to his works.

In "The Defender of the Faith," too, Roth depicts a quite American theme in his works. In the work, the main characters are obliged to become the tiny cogs of the army establishment during wartime, and it becomes difficult to identify themselves. The protagonist, Nathan Marx, who lived in the severe condition of war, is a victim of such circumstances because he has been forced to identify himself only as a soldier in the army. Marx is a person who is forced to accept the American environment and American conditions of life by the great forth of the war.

Such American problem as the necessity of coexistence with the different races, is implied in "Eli, the Fanatic." As time goes on, the Jews who became rich come out of the slum, and they began their new lives in the suburbs in which non-Jewish people live. Such situation under which the modern Jews live is realistically depicted in Eli's letter to the director of the Yeshivah in this story as follows:

Woodenton is a progressive suburban community whose members, both Jewish and Gentile, are anxious that their families live in comfort and beauty serenity. That is, after all, the twentieth century, and we do not think it too much to ask that the members of our community dress in a manner appropriate to the time and place.

Woodenton, as you may not know, has long been the home of well-to-do Protestants. It is only since the

war that Jews have been able to buy property here, and for Jews and Gentiles to live beside each other in amity. For this adjustment to be made, both Jews and Gentiles alike have had to give up some of their more extreme practices in order not to threaten or offend the other. Certainly such amity is to be desired.

(261-62)

Jewish identity has deeply influenced under the situation that includes economical prosperity, the emancipation of sex, the entry into war, and coexistence with the Gentiles. In the American society, Jews assimilate themselves to modernized society, and they gradually come to pay much attention to Jewish identity. However, in Roth's fiction, there are some Jews who express themselves, seeking for their identities under the prosperous situation. Ozzie Freedman in "The Conversion of the Jews" and Eli Peck in "Eli, the Fanatic" are included in such kind of people who realize their ambiguous identities, and who struggle to express themselves. On the other hand, Neil Klugman in Goodbye, Columbus and Lou Epstein in "Epstein" try to live pleasantly, and they drift about in the current of the times (Neil devotes himself to having sexual relationships with Brenda, and Epstein feels at ease by spending a time with Ida Kaufman). Thus, both of them, Neil and Epstein, find a place where they can freely express themselves.

Though the characters whom Roth creates are in affluent

situations, they are not satisfied, and therefore, they go out of the places in which they have lived. For such characters, going out is, as it were, a means of self-expression. For instance, in Goodbye, Columbus, when Brenda invites Neil to Short Hills, Neil prepare for the vacation without any hesitation in spite of Aunt Gladys' complaints. Neil starts for Mr. Patimkin's house because he is moved by two desires--one is to escape from Aunt Gladys' house, and another is to approach to the rich Jews. On the other hand, as for Ozzie Freedman in "The Conversion of the Jews," he tries to escape from Rabbi Binder who want to put Ozzie to silence in a coercive way. Being persecuted by Rabbi Binder, Ozzie unconsciously rushes out of the classroom, and when he comes to himself, he realizes that he is on the synagogue roof. In the case of Eli Peck in "Eli, the Fanatic," he wanders up and down in Woodenton, after wearing the clothes of the Super Orthodox Jew, and he finally comes to know what he has longed for. Neil, Ozzie and Eli are Jews who cannot completely belong to either the American society or the Jewish society in spite of they are in the emancipated situation. On the other hand, there are Jews who willingly abandon Jewish identity under the Americanized conditions. Roth was sensitively feeling such social conditions, and therefore, he dared to make the characters of his works challenging people in the emancipated setting, and he tried to point out the corruption of the Jewish American society in the economic prosperity.



## Chapter III

### The World of Humor and Satire

#### 1. Bernard Malamud and Humor

There is a similarity between folktales and Malamud's fiction that is timeless and placeless. For instance, the beginning of some short stories in The Magic Barrel are written as follows:

Kessler, formerly an egg candler, lived alone on social security. Through past sixty-five, he might have found well-paying work with more than one butter and egg wholesaler, for he sorted and graded with speed and accuracy, but he was a quarrelsome type and considered a trouble maker, so the wholesalers did without him. (17)

Manishevitz, a tailor in his fifty-first year suffered many reverses and indignities. Previously a man of comfortable means, he overnight lost all he had, when his establishment caught fire and, after a metal container of cleaning fluid exploded, burned to the ground. (43)

Fidelman, a self-confessed failure as a painter, came to Italy to prepare a critical study of Giotto, the opening chapter of which he had carried across the ocean in a new pigskin leather brief case, now gripped in his perspiring hand. (155)

In the above quotations, that the writer of this thesis selected at random, the character's names and careers are written in a concise style. Folktales, that orally handed down to posterity, are also written in a concise style because the explanation of the characters should be simple one which people can easily memorize, and therefore, it might be said that Malamud's works are written in a traditional style. In addition, Malamud does not forget to introduce universal morality, and there, readers find Malamud's technique of following the universal tradition.

In "The Girl of My Dreams," a main character, Mitka, is a writer who lives with Mrs. Lutz who likes to support the young writers. One day, Mitka finds a short story which was written by Madeleine Thorn on the *Grove*, and he feels something attractive in the short story. He writes a letter to Madeleine, and therefore, he begins to associate with Madeleine only through the letters. Though Madeleine avoids to meet him, Mitka desires to see her because he is expecting that Madeleine is a young, whiplashed attractive woman just like a character of her story. After forcibly extracting from Madeleine a promise to meet at a branch public library, Mitka hurries to the library. However, it is a

lone middle-aged woman, Olga, that he finds in the library, and he realizes immediately that this middle-aged woman is Madeleine. Olga confesses that she contributed her manuscript, using her daughters name, and that Madeleine died at twenty. Mitka, who has expected a meeting with a young charming woman, is terribly disappointed, and then his disappointment gradually turns to hatred toward Olga. The description of intensifying hatred of Mitka brings a bitter laughter to readers, and his disappointment is emphasized by the following quotation:

They sat facing each other. He grew increasingly depressed at the thought of spending the evening with her. The irony of it--immured for months in a rat hole, to come forth for this. He'd go back now and entomb himself forever. (37)

The interesting thing is that Mitka, who disliked an older woman like Mr. Lutz or Olga, finally chooses "the old girl" (41) as his bride, and by choosing "the old girl" as his partner, he is contented. It, therefore, seems that Malamud is blessing Mitka, who dares to choose "the old girl," by making him feel joyful. At the same time, it also seems that Malamud is trying to give readers a lesson that it is the substance that counts.

Like "The Girl of My Dreams," "The Last Mohican" is a work in which morality and humor are introduced at the same time. Fidelman, who came to Italy for a preparation of a critical study of Giotto, happens to know Susskind, a Jewish refugee. Susskind

wants Fiedelman's suit, but Fiedelman refuses to give him suit. Instead, Fiedelman gives Susskind a dollar, and then, Susskind disappears. However, a week later, Susskind visits an inexpensive hotel in which Fiedelman stays, and Susskind asks Fiedelman to give him suit again. In addition, Susskind boldly asks Fiedelman for some money to peddle, emphasizing that Fiedelman has to support him because he is a Jew. Fiedelman feels strong aversion to Susskind's impudence, and therefore, he decides to leave for Florence, but he cannot carry out his plan because that night his brief case and the first chapter of a critical study of Giotto are stolen. Fiedelman soon realizes that the thief is Susskind, and he hopes to meet him again, but he does not appear. Fiedelman's dream of the night has not only gloomy and strange atmosphere but also peculiar humor:

He dreamed of pursuing the refugee in the Jewish catacombs under the ancient Appian Way, threatening him a blow on the presumptuous head with a seven-flamed candelabrum he clutched in his head; while Susskind, clever ghost, who knew the ins and outs of all the crypts and alleys, eluded him at every turn. Then Fiedelman's candles all blew out, leaving him sightless and alone in the cemeterial dark; but when the student arose in the morning and wearily drew up the blinds, the yellow Italian sun winked him cheerfully in both bleary eyes.

(170-71)

Even in his dream, Fidelman seems to be a miserable schlimazl because he fails to catch Susskind, and he is finally left all alone without any lights or candles. The description of the glory of the yellow Italian sun contrastively emphasizes Fidelman's miserable state of mind. In "The Last Mohican," readers should direct their attention to Fidelman's dreams since his dreams play vital roles as underplots. One day, Fidelman sees the fresco "San Francesco dona le vesti al cavaliere povero" (181) by Giotto in his dream, and he awakes, feeling uneasiness. In short, by comparing San Francesco and poor cavalier to Susskind and himself, Fidelman is obliged to recognize his intolerance, and then, he comes to feel a sense of guiltiness. Fidelman, therefore, decides to give Susskind his suit by his generosity, and he visits Susskind. There, Fidelman suddenly recalls the first chapter, which he once failed to recall, by watching a flaming sheet of paper with which Susskind lights the candle. At the end of this short story, mentioning Fidelman's manuscript, Susskind says "The words were there but the spirit was missing." Thus, funny impression is added to the ending by letting a mean person like Susskind say such connotative words.

A style of finding humor in sympathy and betrayal is used in "The Prison." Tommy Castelli, who has been spending tedious days in a small candy store, witnesses the girl lifting the chocolate bars from the candy case. Tommy first feels like giving her stockings, but he gradually comes to worry the fact that she is so

young and a thief, and therefore, he writes a letter of warning. When he signs the letters, he wonders whether he should write "A Friend" or "Your Friend" (103), and finally he chooses the latter one. Tommy's goodness is expressed in preferring "Your Friend" to "A Friend." However, the girl steals the candy bars again, and she is caught in the act by Tommy's wife. Toward his wife, who is making a fuss about the girl's stealing, Tommy stands for the girl, and he gives his wife a slap across her mouth expecting the girl's remorse. However, ironically, the girl does not feel a sense of guiltiness at all, and she puts out her tongue at him:

Her[the girls] mother socked her hard across the face. "You little thief, this time you'll get your hands burned good."

She pawed at the girl, grabbed her arm and yanked it. The girl, like a grotesque dancer, half ran, half fell forward, but at the door she managed to turn her white face and thrust out at him her red tongue. (104)

As well as the vivid description of the girl's white face and red tongue which Tommy sees when she turns her face at him, Tommy's pathos is emphasized more clearly at the end, and it symbolizes Tommy's life as a schlimazl. It is an ambiguous expression that is considered as one of the main characteristics of Malamud's fiction as well as humor, symbolism, morality and the style of folktale. For instance, there is something ambiguous in "The Girl of My Dreams." At the end of the story, Mitka decides to

marry a certain woman, and his joyous mental state is expressed in the following quotation:

Spring. It gripped and held him[Mitka]. Though he fought the intimacy he was the night's prisoner as he moved toward Mrs.Lutz's.

He thought of the old girl. He'd go home now and drape her from head in flowing white. They would jounce together up the stairs, then (strictly one-marriage man) he would swing her across the threshold, holding her where the fat overflowed her corset as they waltzed around his writing chamber. (41)

Mitka chooses "the old girl" as his bride, but she is not identified, and therefore, it is possible to say "the old girl" is Mrs. Lutz who has been in love with Mitka. Or, it might be Olga who makes Mitka feel "no pang of hunger" (41) after their first meeting.

In "The Magic Barrel," too, an ambiguous expression have enough power to change the interpretation of the story. When Leo Finkle visits Salzman, a woman who opens the door says he is "In the air" (210). Readers are suddenly obliged to Salzman as a mysterious person by the words. Here, readers wonder whether Salzman is a real person or not, and it will be necessary for readers to read this story over again from the different point of view. Thus, there is much room for various kinds of interpretations in Malamud's fiction, and Malamud wants his readers to

interpret his stories as they like. Malamud says, "For the reader to wonder what could have happened to the characters after finishing the book is exactly what the reader of fiction wants you to do" (Conversation 78).

Malamud effectively uses humor to soften calm the dark atmosphere of poverty and harsh reality, and further, the characters of Malamud's fiction get over the absurdities and contradictions of life with peculiar sense of humor. At the same time, by adding ambiguous expressions, morality and symbolism, Malamud succeeds in creating the universal works that transcend time, and that strongly appeal to people.



## 2. Philip Roth and Satire

Philip Roth makes clear his view of literary works as follows:

The test of any literary work is not how broad is its range of representation--for all that breadth may be characteristics of a kind of narrative--but the depth with which the writer reveals whatever he has chosen to represent. (Reading Myself 156)

Introducing his sophisticated satire, Roth puts his personal theory on his creative writings into actual practice. He intentionally depicts the intellectuals who live in the modernized cities. For example, Neil Klugman in Goodbye, Columbus and Eli Peck in "Eli, the Fanatic" belong to this type of persons. They coolly watch Jewish American society because they are relatively in stable conditions, and furthermore, they have enough intellect to seek for the cause of the social contradictions.

In Goodbye, Columbus, symbolical descriptions that expresses the present condition of the middle-class Jewish American society is done in the scene of Ronald Patimkin's wedding party:

Our table was a tangle of squashed everything: napkins, fruits, flowers; there were empty whisky bottle, droopy ferns, and dishes puddled with unfinished cherry jubilee, gone sticky with the hours. . . . Everything had slowed down now, and from time to time people would come to the Patimkins and Ehrlichs, with them *Mazel tov*,

and then drag themselves and their families out into the September night, which was cool and windy, someone said, and reminded me that soon would come winter and snow. (Goodbye, Columbus 111-12)

Here, the description of various kinds of foods and products on the table symbolize the fact that the Jewish family has reached affluence. In addition, it seems that the description of the dirty sticky dishes and people who sluggishly walk implies the Jews who are increasing the spiritual adhesion to the Jews, and who are in the spiritual dullness. In addition, it can be said that Neil's state of mind is similar to that of Roth who fears the spiritual dullness in the Jewish American society.

For analyzing corrupt spirituality, Roth handles the problem of sex on which people sensitively react. In "Epstein," the process of ruining one's life by committing adultery is satirically depicted. By depicting the inside of the American Jew's life, Roth challenges to the corruption of the Jewish American society. Roth creates cutting satire by depicting a rash which broke out on Epstein's crotch as a symbol of sexual perversion of a Jew, and therefore, Roth's works roused the antipathies among the Jews by introducing the problem of adultery that has been strictly forbidden in the Jewish society.

As well as "Epstein," Roth's acute and satirical style of writing is vividly developed in "Defender of the Faith." Roth tries to make clear an aspect which the secularized Jews have by

describing Grossbart, who cunningly tries to receive some special treatments by showing off the racial consciousness. He comments on Grossbart in Reading Myself and Others as follows:

To me Grossbart is not something we can dismiss solely as an anti-Semitic stereotype; he is a Jewish fact.

. . . He is represented not as the stereotype of The Jews, as a Jew who acts like the stereotype, offering back to his enemies their vision of him, answering the punishment with the crime. . . . Grossbart is not the Jew; but he is a fact of Jewish experience and well within the range of its moral possibilities. (Reading Myself 158-59)

The vital point is that Grossbart is not one of the Jews but a Jew who plays the stereotyped Jew. In short, Roth is analyzing that Grossbart's shrewdness is one of the characteristics which the secularized Jews have. Being under the emergent condition of war, Grossbart makes desperate effort to receive better treatments from Marx. Toward Marx, Grossbart claims that he is a religious Jew, and he hopes to present an evening service at Chapel No.3, but it is a mere excuse to neglect a barrack cleaning. The fact that Grossbart is not a religious Jew is expressed in the description of Grossbart and his peers at an evening service in a Jewish chapel:

I[Marx] took a seat in the last row, which was empty.

Two rows in front sat Grossbart, Fishbein, and Halpern,

each holding a little white dixie cup. Fishbein was pouring the contents of his cup into Grossbart's and Grossbart looked mirthful as the liquid drew a purple arc between his hand and Fishbein's. . . . Grossbart's prayerbook remained closed on his lap; he swished the cup around. . . . From time to time, Grossbart wet his lips at the cup's edge; Fishbein, his long yellow face, a dying light bulb, looked from here to there, leaning forward at the neck to catch sight of the faces down the row, in front--then behind. (Goodbye, Columbus 171)

In the above description, Roth tries to symbolize the estrangement from Judaism by the young Jews. After the incident, Grossbart more boldly tries to receive special treatments from Marx and therefore, Marx questions Grossbart severely the reason why Grossbart demand so much, and Grossbart frankly replies "Because I'm a Jew, Sergeant. I *am* different. Better, maybe not. But different" (188). It seems that Roth is trying to express a degenerated nature of a Jew by describing someone who use the racial consciousness to lead a selfish and comfortable life.

Marx finally decides to betray Grossbart who is showing off his selfish racial consciousness for his own desire. For example, Marx dares to add Grossbart, who tried to escape being sent to the Pacific by getting acquainted with Corporal Shulman who works at a personnel section of the Camp Crowder, in the members who are to be sent to the Pacific. Thus, Marx cuts off the

secularized spirituality of the Jews by punishing Grossbart, and therefore, Grossbart insults Marx as "You son of a bitch!" Marx, who is insulted like this, looks like Roth who was condemned as a traitor when he published his works. It seems that Roth tries in a satiric way to impeach the Jews who do not realize their corrupt Jewish identity by letting Marx punish Grossbart who plays a role of stereotyped secular Jew.

In "The Conversion of the Jews" and "Eli, the Fanatic," the people, who point out the contradictions which exist in the Jewish American society, are depicted. For instance, Ozzie Freedman often perplexes Rabbi Binder by asking some difficult questions. In this story, Rabbi Binder is seemingly a rigorous rabbi, but he is also one of the Americanized Jews. At the beginning of free-discussion time, Binder says "'Feel free to talk about any Jewish matter at all--religion, family, politics, sports--'" (144). Binder counts "sports" as a Jewish matter here, but "sports" is not a Jewish matter because intelligence has been valued before everything in Jewish society. Rather, it is American society that values sports. Thus, the influence of Americanization upon Jewish society is ironically implied in the description of Rabbi Binder.

Roth is likely to write a work in which a certain Jew is persecuted by other Jews, and the representative works are "Defender of the Faith" and "Eli, the Fanatic." Concerning these two works, Roth says as follows:

Instead of telling of a Jew who is persecuted by a Gentile because he is a Jew--a subject treated variously in *Gentleman's Agreement* by Laura Z. Hobson, *Focus* by Arthur Miller, and *The Victim* by Saul Bellow--each of my two stories["The Defender of the Faith" and "Eli, the Fanatic"] was about a Jew persecuted for being a Jew by *another Jew*.

I did not realize at the time that I had turned the familiar subject of anti-Semitism somewhat on its head, and that, in writing of the harassment of Jew by Jew rather than Jew by Gentile, I was pressing reader to alter a system of responses to "Jewish" fiction to which they had perhaps become more than a little accustomed. (Reading Myself 173-74)

Roth has penetrated the ironical fact that the Jew, who tries to point out the contradictions in Jewish American society, is excluded by other Jews who play the stereotyped Jews, and that the more a Jew degenerates, the more he prospers. Roth, therefore, dared to write his works as indictments against the self-centered and conventional society that allows spiritual corruption. Roth says "Some people are hurt by my work; but some are interested" (168). Thus, Roth never loses his hope toward the Jewish American society. Analyzing Jewish American society in a satirical style, he tries to reveal the corruption of the society to which he belongs. Throughout Roth's works, readers realize that there

are full of the cutting satires. However, it is not because Roth dislikes Jewish American society, but because he is anxious about the future of the society. The more he worries about the society, the more he becomes harsh.

## Conclusion

Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth, the two remarkable writers among modern Jewish American writers, published their works, The Assistant, The Magic Barrel and Goodbye, Columbus and Five Short Stories at the end of 1950s, after the World War II. World War II brought back many returnees to the United States, and the big cities were overflowing with a lot of unemployed people. Even under the economical prosperity brought by the victory of the war, the problem of overflowed unemployed people could not be easily solved. As a result, a sense of not-belonging to the society gradually spread among the young generations who could not find where they belong, and they finally came to lose their definite identities in themselves. The works of Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth were written under such a social situation in the United States. It can be said that a sense of instability, alienation and doubts about life that both Malamud and Roth make their characters feel, are reflecting the atmosphere of the society at that time.

Although both Malamud and Roth center on seeking for the meaning of Jewish identity, their aims are completely different. Malamud thoroughly establishes Jews as "the subject and object of



laughter and pity" (Conversation 37), and describes the Jews who are helplessly unhappy but humane in his fiction. By Malamud's such intention, the readers come to sympathize with the characters whom the writer describes, and feel friendly toward them. That is indeed what Malamud require to the readers. Malamud actually is likely to use Jew as a main character but his real concern is not describing Jew as a Jew. In Malamud's fiction, the focus is on the person who does not forget his pride as one of the human beings even though he is in a terribly cornered situation. Malamud says "I write about Jews because I know them. But more important, I write about them because the Jews are absolutely the very stuff of drama" (3). That is to say, using Jews whom Malamud knows well to describe the life in which the dramatic elements are condensed, Malamud tries to approach the essence of life. In other words, Malamud shows his insight into the human existence through the Jew's life as a filter, and there the readers who can see sublimation from individual into universal. Malamud tries to consider the way of living or the meaning of human existence that transcend races or times, and describes a Jew as a "universal man" (30). Malamud's affection to human beings is presented in the following quotation:

"Let's end it with this: My work, all of it, is an idea of dedication to the human. That's basic to every book. If you don't respect man, you cannot respect my work. I'm in defense of the human. If you want to say that,

that's it." (21)

Malamud uses the technique of choosing Jew as a "universal man," and makes helpless a schlemiel or a shlimazl as a lovable protagonist, and consequently, the readers feel something of humane warmth in the writer.

Contrary to Malamud who thoroughly takes an affirmative attitude toward Jews, Philip Roth realistically, cynically and acutely describes the Jewish American society with the view to meet the contemporary social requirements. Roth's intention in creative writing is to penetrate the corruption which exists in the contemporary Jewish American society. Roth timely describes Jewish identity and the Jews who change their mentality to acculturate themselves to the American society, and he tries to suggest to the public the crisis arising in the Jewish American society. In addition, Roth makes the secular Jews realize the fact that they are blindly believing superficial Judaism, and that they are playing the role of the stereotyped Jews that they have unconsciously created themselves in the assimilation to the American society.

In Roth's fiction, the process of the young Jew's seeking for Jewish identity in the material prosperity is focused on. The mental return from the man in masses to the man as individual is the main theme of Roth's fiction, and these typical returners are Nathan Marx in "Defender of the Faith" and Eli Peck in "Eli, the Fanatic." It is worthy of notice that not only the Jews but

the various kinds of people have to face the identity crisis as well, so long as living in the country of immigrants.

When the works by Roth were published, he was ensured by the Jews surrounding him because his works irritated the conservative American Jews by exploring the contradictions and degenerated mentality in the contemporary Jewish American society. However Roth endured such harsh accusation because he had firm belief to protect essential Jewish identity from the degeneration. Roth comments about his works that led the readers to a controversy in the Jewish American society:

If there are Jews who have begun to find the stories the novelists tell more provocative and pertinent than the sermons of some of the rabbis, perhaps it is because there are regions of feeling and consciousness in them which cannot be reached by the oratory of self-congratulation and pity. (Reading Myself 168-69)

Roth's hope of making the readers aware the corruption of the contemporary Jewish American society is expressed by this statement. It seems that Roth commits a reformation of such a degenerated society to the readers who have interests in his challenging works. Witnessing and feeling the crisis of the Jews who optimistically living in their society without any doubts, Roth tries to give them opportunities to think about Jewish identity. Roth's challenging attitude is not simply caused by cynicism but it is an expression of his affection for the Jewish American

society in which Roth himself had grown up.

Malamud mainly draws the universal way of living that transcend times, while Roth harshly emphasizes the complication of the social situation that the modern Jews are put in. Such differences between Malamud's and Roth's attitudes to the Jewish American society might be caused by the difference of their generations. It is natural that Roth, who belongs to the third generation of Jewish immigrants, has a strong sense of crisis toward the spiritual decline brought by Americanization than Malamud who belongs to the second generation, and who lived in the society in which Yiddish had still spoken as a living language. In the approach to Jewishness, Malamud and Roth show completely different ways--one watches over the Jewish American society with a warm heart, and the other sternly analyzes and gives sharp cuts into the society to which he belongs. Even though both of them carry out their moralistic attitudes in different ways, the motivation that led them to such moralistic creative writing is their deep affection for Jewishness.

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