

The 'Oy' of Loyalty:

The Writer and the Community in Philip Roth's Later Fiction

by

Jamie Josephson

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Abstract

This thesis addresses Philip Roth's novelistic explorations of the Jewish-American writer's relationship with the community. In light of the criticism he received early in his career alleging his "anti-Semitism" and "self-hatred," Roth allows such attacks to fuel his later fiction--most dramatically in The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock. Such critiques bespeak the community's mandate that the Jewish writer must demonstrate his loyal spokesmanship through his fiction. In these texts, Roth creates two different writer-protagonists who experience a nearly identical arc of response to this mandate. I argue that both Zuckerman and "Philip Roth" endure a cycle of rejection, response, and return. Initially, these narrators resist the mandate's infringement on their artistic freedom. Next, these writers fantasize an escape into pure art, which proves problematic. As such, these narrators inevitably return to the notion of Jewish loyalty. Yet I contend that Roth complicates this return. Rather than entirely submerge his narrators to communal pressures or ignorantly allow them to pursue fantasies of complete artistic freedom, Roth occupies an intermediate space. I contend that through these fictional mouthpieces, Roth reveals his own relationship to Jewish history, loyalty, and community as a continuous, chaotic, and unstable process.

The introduction begins with a description of the various attacks Roth endured after publishing Portnoy's Complaint. This section continues into a discussion of how these criticisms expose the Jewish-American community's post-World War II survivalist obsessions. I also include an analysis of Irving Howe's famous critique of Roth's estrangement from the immigrant tradition of the genre. Finally, the introduction concludes with a discussion of the value in analyzing Roth's textual responses to the writer's predicament as read through both the lens of Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of "dialogic" discourse and a psychoanalytic interpretation.

The second chapter traces Zuckerman's rejection, response, and return in The Ghost Writer. I begin with a discussion of how Zuckerman's parents and Judge Wapter incorporate survivalist fears in their attacks on the writer's betrayal. Upon a description of Zuckerman's rejection of such communal obligations, I turn to an analysis of Lonoff's model of the socially unrestrained Jewish writer and the nuances of this alternative. I then explore Zuckerman's path of return through his re-imagined narrative of the surviving Anne Frank. Though Anne Frank initially appears to signal Zuckerman's return to Jewish duty, I conclude with a discussion of how Zuckerman complicates his return through defacing the sacred martyr.

In the third chapter on Operation Shylock, I first discuss the novel's higher stakes in these questions due to the text's primary setting, Israel, and narrator, "Philip Roth." I argue that Pipik serves as the living embodiment of the community's mandate. This discussion also involves an examination of "Diaspora" theory and the link between anti-Zionism and the charge of self-hatred. After discussing the narrator's initial rejection of Pipik's call to duty, I explore his return to Jewish loyalty through the Mossad mission. Nevertheless, I argue that Roth complicates this return through the novel's celebration of both Zionist and Diaspora loyalties.

In the conclusion, I argue that Roth has not only used the fictional space to offer his most profound responses to critics but also to interrogate his own recorded contentions negating his Jewish spokesmanship. After focusing the majority of the thesis on the consequences of the writer's drama, the conclusion revisits the causes of the predicament. Ultimately, I conclude that through his later fictional explorations, Roth actively engages this mandate for the writer's Jewish loyalty through a constant process of re-imagination and revision.

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Short Titles

GW: Roth, Philip. The Ghost Writer. New York: Vintage, 1995.

OS: Roth, Philip. Operation Shylock: A Confession. New York: Vintage, 1994.

PC: Roth, Philip. Portnoy's Complaint. New York: Vintage, 1994.

RMAO: Roth, Philip. Reading Myself and Others. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975.

“It’s what I have instead of religion. Some people believe in God, and I believe in the reader.”¹
-- Philip Roth

¹ Qtd. in Esther B. Fein, “Philip Roth Sees Double. And Maybe Triple, Too,” The New York Times 9 Mar. 1993: C18, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 23 Jan. 2007 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text as “Sees Double.”

I. “*Literature got me into this and literature is gonna have to get me out*”: An Introduction

Rabbis revile him. Mothers detest him. Scholars debate him. And each group yearns for Philip Roth's answer to one question--where do his loyalties truly reside? After publishing a handful of somewhat obscene, somewhat perverse fictional works, Roth came under a round of fire in the 1960s from a Jewish-American community bent on preserving its mythology. Roth's critics have combed his biographies, deciphered his interviews, analyzed his essays, and even interrogated his former teachers for insight into the author's true allegiances. While Roth's antagonists have exhausted these avenues, they tended to overlook the author's most telling mode of response--his novels. Instead of merely examining Roth's direct answers to critics that question his writerly responsibilities to the Jewish community, I will allow Roth to speak through the very form that landed him into such hot water in the first place--his fiction.

Two of Roth's later works, The Ghost Writer (1979) and Operation Shylock (1993), specifically explore these debates more than a decade after the author first found himself in the thick of controversy. By examining Roth's fictional treatment of the Jewish-American writer's predicament between the artistic desire to explore creative freedom and the external pressure to demonstrate “Jewish loyalty,” these novels prove to offer unique insight that simple question-answer interviews cannot. In light of the exorbitant amount of literature previously written in testimonial to Roth's Jewish background, Jewish upbringing, and Jewishness in general, I will offer a treatment of the infamous “bad boy” of Jewish writers that deliberately omits such a detailed discussion of the author's biography. Rather than continue to focus on Roth's personal role and responsibility as a Jewish individual, my emphasis shall remain on Roth's novelistic exploration of the role and responsibility of the *Jewish writer*.

As certain background information is significant, I will offer a brief biographical

discussion that begins not with Roth's birth into the world but rather with Roth's authorial birth into the world of critique. After his first novella, Goodbye, Columbus, achieved acclaim from literary and Jewish circles alike--it received the National Book Award in 1959--many members of the Jewish-American community expressed disgust at Roth's other publication in the Goodbye, Columbus collection, "Defender of the Faith." Even before Roth introduced Jewish audiences to the masturbatory Alex Portnoy, rabbis vehemently condemned Roth's "anti-Semitic" depiction of an adulterous Jew in "Defender of the Faith." For instance, an article from The New York Times quotes Rabbi David J. Seligson's sermon to a synagogue that condemned Roth's fiction for its "'vulgarization of Jewish traditions.'" ² The article also notes that the rabbi viewed Roth's neglect to offer a "'balanced portrayal'" (qtd. in "Rabbi Criticizes" 58) of Jews as evidence of the author's deliberate distance from his Jewish history and identity. ³

In Reading Myself and Others, Roth discusses the vein of response he endured after publishing "Defender of the Faith." He quotes one letter that he received: "'With your one story, 'Defender of the Faith,' you have done as much harm as all the organized anti-Semitic organizations have done to make people believe that all Jews are cheats, liars, connivers.'" ⁴ Beyond charges of anti-Semitism, rabbinical critics also accused Roth of participating in the vein of Nazi hatred. Roth cites a letter he received from a rabbi in New York City: "'You have earned the gratitude of all who sustain their anti-Semitism on such conceptions of Jews as

2 Qtd. in "Rabbi Criticizes Jewish Writers," The New York Times 30 Jun. 1963: 58, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text as "Rabbi Criticizes."

3 Even more so than the critical plea that Roth offer a "balanced portrayal" of Jewish characters, some scholars took this request further. A New York University English professor and literary critic, David Boroff, intimates that Jewish writers like Roth must recognize that Jewish audiences "'[favor] an organized silence'" in regards to the insecurities, faults, and idiosyncrasies of the Jewish people (qtd. in "Two Jewish Writers Oppose Restraint," The New York Times 23 Jun. 1963: 22, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>).

4 Qtd. in Philip Roth, Reading Myself and Others (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975), 160. Hereafter cited in the text with the prefix, "RMAO."

ultimately led to the murder of six million in our time” (qtd. in RMAO 161-162).

The controversy surrounding “Defender of the Faith” proved just the beginning of Roth’s uphill battle. In 1969, Roth’s notorious novel, Portnoy’s Complaint, launched him into the national spotlight of debate. The infamous text follows Portnoy’s narration of his trials and tribulations as an adolescent grappling with his Jewish obligations amid transgressive desires for non-kosher food, masturbation, and--most unforgettably--*shiksas*.⁵ With each fantasy of escaping the shackles of the “good Jewish boy,” Portnoy relapses into a depressed, self-loathing state created by the oppressive force of “Jewish guilt.” In particular, Portnoy continually exposes the single source of this ubiquitous, all-consuming guilt as the most typical of all stereotypical sources: the domineering, over-protective, emasculating Jewish mother. More tellingly, he views his mother as the mouthpiece for the religion’s emphasis on repression and restriction. Portnoy laments, “The watch-its and the be-carefuls! You mustn’t do this, you can’t do that--hold it! don’t! you’re breaking an important law! *What* law? *Whose* law?” (PC 34). Roth’s cutting satirical portrayal of American Jews memorably inspired a vicious backlash.

Several members of the Jewish-American community found little humor in the fact that a Jewish author wrote Portnoy’s Complaint.⁶ Rabbinical authorities especially expressed contempt for Roth’s offensive depiction of Jews. For example, The New York Times cites Rabbi Robert

5 For instance, Portnoy admits the most abominable thing he has ever done--“I fucked my own family’s dinner” (Philip Roth, Portnoy’s Complaint (New York: Vintage, 1994), 134. Hereafter cited in the text with the prefix, “PC”). After purchasing a piece of liver from a butcher shop for his family’s home-cooked dinner later that night, Portnoy uses this very piece of liver to masturbate on his way to a Bar Mitzvah lesson. Portnoy guiltily confesses to violating the very piece of meat that his “poor innocent family” (PC 134) would later consume.

6 This is not to say that many readers did not celebrate Portnoy’s Complaint as a comical masterpiece. Its taboo-breaking comedy led many critics to laud the novel as forcefully as it had been attacked. For instance, Geoffrey Wolff concludes his book review, “This is more than a book about Jews. Roth has composed what for me is the most important book of my generation” (Geoffrey Wolff, “An Event, A Yardstick,” The Washington Post 10 Feb. 1969: B1, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>). In addition, Edmund Fuller praises, “It is a vulgar, comic masterpiece, a glittering virtuoso performance. It is laughing-out-loud funny, the real belly laugh” (Edmund Fuller, “Alex Portnoy’s Jokes: Belly Laughs and Pain,” Wall Street Journal 21 Feb. 1969: 16, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 30 Oct. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>).

A. Hammer blatantly referring to the film adaptation of Roth's novel as "anti-Semitic filth."⁷

Hammer continues, "The fact that these films are almost always produced, written and sometimes acted by Jews is a fascinating instance, not only of self-hatred, but frequently of self-justification for their own abandonment of Judaism" ("Complaints" D24). As a result, Hammer spoke on behalf of the rabbinical majority who viewed Portnoy as a mouthpiece for the author's undeniable "self-hatred." Hammer's condemnation relies upon two main assumptions that he and other rabbinical readers transformed into weapons of attack--that the fictional cannot be separated from the autobiographical and that Jewish fiction must promote Judaism.⁸

Roth also received a backlash from one of Portnoy's Complaint's most notable target groups, Jewish mothers. In an article from The New York Times entitled, "Some Mothers Wonder What Portnoy Had to Complain About," Judy Klemesrud begins, "Jewish mothers have had it. They are sick and tired of being portrayed as nagging, overprotective shrews in nightclub acts, plays, television shows--and especially in such books as Philip Roth's best seller, Portnoy's Complaint."⁹ As a result of such expressed frustration, others anticipated a complete revolution in the consciousness of Jewish mothers. Art Buckwald's article cites Bess Myerson, New York City's Commissioner of Consumer Affairs at the time and former Jewish Miss America,

7 "Complaints About Portnoy's Complaint," The New York Times 10 Sept. 1972: D24, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text as "Complaints."

8 Many literary critics also jumped on the "anti-Semitic," "self-hating" bandwagon. In his scathing review of the novel as "the sickest book of the year," Robert Kirsch demonstrates an inability to distinguish Roth from Portnoy. He asserts, "For Roth is no authentic Jew . . . and neither is Portnoy. Both are infected by a syndrome far more complicated than 'Portnoy's Complaint,' a meld of obsessive self-hatred" (Robert Kirsch, "Roth Novel: More of His Sour, Limited Statement," Los Angeles Times 16 Feb. 1969: T1, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>). Marya Mannes also confirms, "'Philip Roth's novel succeeds brilliantly in generating revulsion against the Jewish novel and the Jewish faith'" (qtd. in Geoffrey Wolff, "Portnoy Phenomenon," The Washington Post 24 Mar. 1969: D1, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>).

9 Judy Klemesrud, "Some Mothers Wonder What Portnoy Had to Complain About," The New York Times 31 Mar. 1969: 42, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>.

predicting ““a Jewish mother’s backlash””¹⁰ in the wake of Roth’s publication of Portnoy’s Complaint. Myerson continues, ““With all these attacks on them, Jewish mothers are going to stop calling their sons to find out how they feel, stop asking them to visit, and stop taking their grandchildren on weekends”” (qtd. in Buckwald C9). Responses like Myerson’s suggest that many Jewish readers received Roth’s text as a weapon of callous violence rather than a creative work of fictional artistry.

Marie Syrkin, a staunch Zionist and social critic of Jewish life in America, instigated one of Roth’s most famous standoffs upon the release of Portnoy’s Complaint. Ranen Omer-Sherman labels Syrkin as the first to vocally charge Roth with “self-hatred.”¹¹ In her response entitled, “The Fun of Self-Abuse,” Syrkin berates the “vicious character”¹² of Jewish life that Roth offers in Portnoy’s Complaint. She holds little back in comparing Roth’s portrayals of the *shikse*-chasing Portnoy to the propaganda of prominent members of the Nazi Party. Syrkin asserts, “The scene in which [Portnoy] gloats at the contrast between his swarthy body and that of the fair Nordic patrician maiden he possesses is straight out of the Goebbels-Streicher script.”¹³ She continues to utilize references to Nazi ideology in order to charge Roth with Hitler-esque anti-Semitism.¹⁴ As Portnoy says he could “Conquer America” (PC 235) through lusting after blonde *shiksas*, Syrkin likens such a description to “what the Nazis called

10 Qtd. in Art Buckwald, ““The Year of the Mother’ May Be Hard on Them,” Los Angeles Times 4 Mar. 1969: C9, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text.

11 Ranen Omer-Sherman, Diaspora and Zionism in Jewish American Literature: Lazarus, Syrkin, Reznikoff, and Roth (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2002), 196.

12 Marie Syrkin, The State of the Jews (Washington, D.C.: New Republic Books, 1980), 332. Hereafter cited in the text as “State of the Jews.”

13 Marie Syrkin, “About Philip Roth,” Commentary 55:3 (1973): 8-9. Hereafter cited in the text as “About Philip Roth.”

14 Benjamin Epstein, National Director of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith in 1972, echoes Syrkin’s sentiments in his response to the film adaptation of Roth’s text. Epstein articulates that the ‘Jewish mother jokes’ that Roth employs actually participate in the “Streicher-type” (“Complaints” D24) vein of abuse by mocking Jewish stereotypes for humor’s sake.

rassenschande (racial defilement)” (“About Philip Roth” 8).¹⁵

Though the criticisms Roth endured originated from multiple points of view--from rabbinical authorities to Jewish mothers to literary critics--certain underlying themes unite each attack. These critiques bespeak the larger preoccupations of the Jewish-American community with the question of survival in the aftermath of the Holocaust. As Roth’s later fiction explores the ways in which the figure of the Jewish *writer* becomes implicated in the community’s survivalist anxieties, a brief analysis of the history of this discourse of survival is necessary. Nathan Glazer’s discussion of the “survivalism” consciousness of post-war Jewry offers a valuable starting point. In the second half of the twentieth century, Glazer bluntly states, “The Jewish religion, Judaism, has become the religion of survival.”¹⁶ Anxiety about the physical survival of Jews surfaced in the institutionalization of the memory of the Holocaust through literature and monuments. Yet Glazer suggests that this “survivalism” ideology not only revolved around the safety of Jewish individuals but, more significantly, the preservation of Judaism itself. Glazer explains that the project of survival became a “rallying cry” (xx) for the Jews; “survivalism” became the dominant definition of Jewishness.

Though Glazer offers a useful introduction to this survivalist terminology, Peter Novick provides a deeper analysis into how such a “rallying cry” of survival became problematic. Novick claims that the Jewish-American conception of a Holocaust-defined collective identity resulted from the failure of other markers of identity. Jews could neither unite around distinctive religious beliefs nor distinguishing cultural traits because both were virtually non-existent,

15 Roth chose to directly respond to Syrkin’s charges. He facetiously reacts, “Hitler, Goebbels, Streicher. Had she not been constrained by limitations of space, Syrkin might eventually have me in the dock with the entire roster of Nuremberg defendants” (RMAO 244).

16 Nathan Glazer, American Judaism, 2nd Ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), xxi. Hereafter cited in the text.

according to Novick. As a result, the memory of the Holocaust emerged as the central facet uniting the community of Jews in America. Novick explains, “The ‘culture of victimization’ didn’t *cause* Jews to embrace a victim identity based on the Holocaust; it *allowed* this sort of identity to become dominant, because it was . . . virtually the only one that could encompass those Jews whose faltering Jewish identity produced so much anxiety about Jewish survival.”¹⁷

This collective victim identity took hold of American Jews, who used the victimization legacy of the Holocaust to indoctrinate themselves with a common “‘honorary survivorship’” (qtd. in Novick 190) despite their removal from the actual historical event. Roth’s later fiction will explore such problematic temporal and spatial distance of those identifying their Jewish selfhood in America with the Holocaust.¹⁸

With the independence of Israel declared in 1948, the memory of the Holocaust transitioned into the Jewish fear of a *future* Holocaust in Israel. Questions over the physical survival of Israel became the dominant preoccupation in survivalist discourse, especially through the late 1960s. Just as Hitler’s Nazis constructed Auschwitz and other concentration camps in a horrific attempt to decimate the Jewish population, the Six-Day War in 1967 seemed to threaten a similar devastating effect on Israel.¹⁹ The fear of a second Holocaust gripped the new state;

17 Peter Novick, The Holocaust in American Life (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), 190. Hereafter cited in the text.

18 Since the post-war Jewish-American community lacked continuity in language, rituals, and interpretation of scripture, questions arose regarding this survivalist plea. Leonard Fein articulates this paradox: “If the group, as group, had no logic behind it, no theory under it and if, at the same time, the religion were in disarray, if none could say what it was that connected Jews to one another as they were not connected to all others, why the desire to survive?” (276). Glazer offers a response with telling circular reasoning: “The answer is Jews survive . . . in order to survive” (xx).

19 The conflict began when President Nasser of Egypt conducted a threatening maneuver through closing the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping in 1967. Fein explains that, unaware of how resourceful, tough, and skilled the Israelis had become, the surrounding international community prepared for what appeared to be imminent annihilation of the Jewish community. (Leonard Fein, “Failing God: American Jews and the Six-Day War,” The Impact of the Six-Day War (1988): 273-274. Hereafter cited in the text). The Jewish fear of a second Holocaust in Israel increased with the following announcement from Egypt Radio: “‘The existence of Israel has continued too long. . . . The great hour has come. The battle has come in which we shall destroy Israel’” (qtd. in Hasia Diner, A New Promised Land: A History of Jews in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 117. Hereafter cited in the text).

anticipating the looming war in Tel Aviv, citizens prepared some 20,000 graves to receive the estimated Jewish victims (Fein 274). The anxiety over an imminent genocidal event in Israel specifically shook American Jews, who, for instance, frantically located gas masks that Israel requested to counter the poison gas that Egypt planned to use (Fein 273-74). In sum, “The fear was precise, and ‘Another Auschwitz’ was its name” (Fein 274).

Thus, when Israel not only survived but completely overran Arab forces in just six days, the victory shocked the fear-ridden international Jewish community. Suddenly Jews held the title of “victors” instead of “victims.” Fein discusses the significance of the Six-Day War on the Jewish survivalist psyche: “But it was, in the end, less the stunning victory than the weeks of terror that preceded it that made the month from the closing of the Straits to the silencing of the guns so memorable an experience” (274). The emotional rollercoaster of the war, from the fear of “another Holocaust” to the jubilant victory, especially affected Israel’s relationship to American Jews. Diner explains, “The Six-Day War brought the fate of Israel and that of American Jews closer together” (118). In other words, the rallying cry of survival turned the Six-Day War into the focus of newfound Jewish solidarity in America.²⁰ It is precisely this movement from Holocaust-centered to Israel-centered “self-definition”²¹ that Roth will respond to in The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock.

With the fear of the external “Other” somewhat assuaged in the aftermath of Israel’s profound victory in the Six-Day War, Jewish survivalism transformed into a question from within. Into the 1970s, the fears of intermarriage and assimilation dominated the discourse of Jewish survival, especially in America. Emil L. Fackenheim suggests, “‘In ancient times, the

20 Nathan Rotenstreich, “Zionist Ideology in Time of Change,” in The Impact of the Six-Day War, ed. Stephen J. Roth (London: The Macmillan Press, 1988).

21 Shirli Gilbert, “Jewish Life in Postwar America,” Ann Arbor, M.I., 30 Nov. 2006. Hereafter cited in the text as “Gilbert, ‘Jewish Life.’”

unthinkable Jewish sin was idolatry. Today, it is to respond to Hitler by doing his work” (qtd. in Glazer 186). The comparison of marrying a non-Jew to furthering Hitler’s plan of annihilation became a commonplace motif.²² Thus, it is no wonder that a text released immediately after the Six-Day War like Portnoy’s Complaint--in which the protagonist fantasizes about *shiksese* in an attempt to escape his Jewish birthright--suffered such scrutiny. As a result, Roth’s antagonists internalized this post-war survivalist discourse--Jews from within promoting the anti-Semitism from without--into their criticism. Here the survivalist anxiety targeted not the temptress *shikse* but rather the Jewish writer as the “Other” threatening the community’s survival. I will demonstrate how Roth uses his later fiction to explore the writer figure’s label of “victimizer.”

Many critics clearly viewed Roth as failing to fulfill his particular role in upholding this doctrine of Jewish survival. Of course they conceded that Roth could not be held responsible for his post-World War II historical positioning that remains both spatially and temporally outside the Holocaust. He is somewhat exempt from responsibility due to his “accident of birth”²³ that allowed him to escape the European experience of persecution with other American-born Jews. Nonetheless, critics maintained that Roth’s *moral* failure to honor Jewish survivalism is ultimately problematic. The attacks on Roth stemmed from both the perception that the author’s fiction confirmed “the fear that Jews might have colluded with their persecutors by . . . passivity” (“Retaliation” 53) as well as damaged the overall image of American Jewry. These critics condemned Roth’s seeming indifference to either the physical or spiritual survival of the Jewish community, as evidenced by his portrayals of Jewish characters desiring complete estrangement

22 Intermarriage became a major concern beginning in the 1960s. Marrying outside the Jewish faith and assimilation in general launched an increased concern regarding a decline in Jewishness in America (Gilbert, “Jewish Life”).

23 David Brauner, “‘Getting in Your Retaliation First’: Narrative Strategies in Portnoy’s Complaint,” in Philip Roth: New Perspectives on an American Author, ed. Derek Parker Royal (Westport: Praeger, 2005). Hereafter cited in the text as “Retaliation.”

from the religion. In the end, Roth's critics held the author at fault for his ethical negligence as a Jewish writer.

Such survivalist dogma in the post-war Jewish-American consciousness not only led to a new era in Jewish self-definition, but it also spawned a trend in labeling those who chose *not* to identify with this vein of self-designation as "self-hating Jews." Susan A. Glenn posits, "the preoccupation with Jewish self-hatred in the United States both reflected and helped constitute growing concern among Jews about the effects of assimilation and the prospects for continued group 'survival' in the aftermath of the Holocaust."²⁴ Glenn argues that among the convergent intellectual streams that brought the concept of self-hatred to the center of Jewish-American social discussions, the "Jewish Cold War" is most significant.²⁵ She describes the "Jewish Cold War" as "a contentious public debate revolving around the question of Jewish group loyalty, Jewish group 'survival,' and Jewish nationalism" (100). Glenn proposes that this "intra-Jewish war of words" rested upon such tropes as Jewish loyalty, commitment, and survival that mirrored the tensions of the American post-war political landscape (107). Where questions of responsibility and loyalty meet, so do notions of "Jewish" and "American."²⁶

Although most of Roth's critics condemned him out of their self-definition of "survivalism," the most damning review of Roth's work avoided this vein of attack. The

24 Susan A. Glenn, "The Vogue of Jewish Self-Hatred in Post-World War II America," Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society 12:3 (2006): 97. Hereafter cited in the text.

25 Glenn goes on to describe the other two intellectual streams that brought the concept of Jewish self-hatred to the American forefront. She explains that the first stream constituted the increased influence of psychological thinking on American public life in the 1940s and 1950s (Glenn 99). The influence of Jewish émigré intellectuals and social theorists from Berlin, Frankfurt, and Vienna composed the second related stream (Glenn 100).

26 Glenn continues her discussion with the problem of "non-conforming individuals" and their right to speak as Jews (107). According to Glenn, Roth came to occupy the center of this post-war American obsession with "Jewish self-hatred" because he rejected such "pressures for groupism" (116), refusing to yield to the communal expectation that he characterize his Jewish characters in the limited vein of innocence and victimization. As a result, Glenn contends that it is of no surprise that the Jewish-American community entrenched in their "survival anxiety" (97) would bombard Roth with an onslaught of criticism.

infamous critique from Irving Howe--a Jewish writer, editor, and critic whom Roth very much admired--arguably delivered the most cutting blow to Roth. Rather than continue to focus on the supposed obscene, anti-Semitic, or self-hating elements of Portnoy's Complaint, Howe undermined Roth's status as such a radical innovator altogether. Howe simply stamped the end of the Jewish immigrant novel of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Abraham Cahan with one name: Philip Roth. According to Howe, Roth's work in Portnoy's Complaint effectively murdered the tradition of the Jewish immigrant novel. Howe initially regarded works like Goodbye, Columbus as effectively working within the long-standing trend of "Jewish self-criticism and satire."²⁷ Yet after Roth wrote Portnoy's Complaint, Howe articulates this revisionist critique in his article, "Philip Roth Reconsidered":

But now, from the vantage point of additional years, I think it clear that Roth . . . has not really been involved in this tradition. For he is one of the first American-Jewish writers who finds that it yields him no sustenance, no norms or values from which to launch his attacks on middle-class complacency. . . . When we say, consequently, that a writer betrays a thin personal culture we mean, among other possibilities, that he comes at the end of a tradition which can no longer nourish his imagination or that he has . . . chosen to tear himself away from that tradition. ("Reconsidered" 73)

According to Howe, with only ink in a pen, Roth stained his hand with the ultimate transgression of writing himself out of the very tradition that nourished him. Howe thus pointed to Roth's publication of Portnoy's Complaint as the moment in which the Jewish-American novel moved

27 Irving Howe, "Philip Roth Reconsidered," Commentary 54:6 (1972): 73. Hereafter cited in the text as "Reconsidered."

past its apex.²⁸ He viewed Roth's rejection of the Jewish immigrant experience in his work as a denial of the sole criteria that defines Jewish-American fiction.²⁹ Timothy Parrish articulates Howe's critique: "To Howe, Portnoy's Complaint celebrated a rootless, transitory, assimilated American culture over a backward, provincial, immigrant tradition."³⁰ Howe brutally concludes his attack, "The cruelest thing anyone can do with Portnoy's Complaint is to read it twice" ("Reconsidered" 74). Though Roth historically dismissed most of his critics for 'missing the point' of his work, he could not ignore Howe's allegations. Roth admits the following about Howe: "'Not that he's the only reader in the world, but he was a real reader.'"³¹

Roth, indeed, offered some direct responses to the criticism he endured. Yet his answers rest upon a defense of literature rather than upon a claim for his work's authentic Jewishness. On the particular charge of "anti-Semitism," he explains, "For however much I may loathe anti-Semitism . . . my job in a work of fiction is not to offer consolation to Jewish sufferers or to mount an attack upon their persecutors or to make the Jewish case to the undecided."³² Roth also argues that the function of fiction is not to demonstrate "approval" or "disapproval" of a

28 On the other hand, some critics contend that Roth represents a continuation of the literary tradition of Jewish immigrant fiction. Elaine B. Safer, for instance, discusses Roth's use of a *schlemiel* character in Portnoy's Complaint as a similar technique used by other renowned Jewish-American writers, including Malamud, Bellow, and Singer--the very writers Howe contends that Roth distances himself from (Elaine B. Safer, Mocking the Age: The Later Novels of Philip Roth (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 4. Hereafter cited in the text). Still others argue that Roth represents the beginning of a new literary tradition in Jewish-American fiction. Paul Zakrzewski identifies Roth as the founder of "'a new breed of Jewish-American writers'" (qtd. in Safer 165).

29 Like Howe, Isaac Bashevis Singer describes a similar definition of a Jewish writer that leaves out Roth. Singer characterizes the Jewish writer as "'a man immersed in Yiddish and in Hebrew who knows about the Kabbala and Chasidism, and who also understands Jewish history and life'" (qtd. in "What a Jewish Writer Reads," The Washington Post 25 Jun. 1972: BW3, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text). In regards to his view of Roth, Singer implies that the author simply does not fit this definition. After reading Portnoy's Complaint, Singer bluntly admits, "'I don't take Philip Roth too seriously'" (qtd. in "What a Jewish Writer Reads" BW3).

30 Timothy L. Parrish, "Imagining Jews in Philip Roth's Operation Shylock," Contemporary Literature 40.4 (1999): 577, Proquest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text.

31 Qtd. in James Atlas, "A Visit with Philip Roth," in Conversations With Philip Roth, ed. George J. Searles (Jackson: The University Press of Mississippi, 1992). Hereafter cited in the text.

32 Qtd. in Alan Finkelkraut, "The Ghosts of Roth," in Conversations With Philip Roth, ed. George J. Searles (Jackson: The University Press of Mississippi, 1992). Hereafter cited in the text.

culture or group of people; he insists that fiction liberates both the writer and reader from such restraining categories of judgment. He counters, "The world of fiction, in fact, frees us from the circumscriptions that society places upon feeling; one of the greatnesses of art is that it allows both the writer and the reader to respond to experience in ways not always available in day-to-day conduct" (RMAO 151). Though he explicitly defends fiction as an imaginative space liberated through creative artistry rather than restrained by social forces, I will propose that Roth's later fiction challenges this notion of complete artistic freedom.

Such past accusations supposing Roth's "self-hatred," "anti-Semitism," and positioning at the "end of a tradition" relied upon on the mandate that the writer must be a loyal, representative spokesman for the community. Roth's attackers insisted that as a Jewish-American author, Roth must uphold a sense of obligation to the community through the character portrayals and messages in his fiction. Critics deemed any violation of this mandate a demonstration of the writer's irresponsibility. In response to such attacks, Roth contends, "When the 'unfair critical treatment' has been associated with charges too serious to ignore--accusations against me, say, of anti-Semitism--then, rather than fuming to myself, I have answered the criticism at length and in public. Otherwise I fume and forget it" (RMAO 104-05). Nonetheless, I will argue that Roth's later novels clearly incorporate, play with, and fictionally respond to an array of former allegations questioning his Jewish loyalty, proving that he has hardly "forgotten" these long-standing charges. In the creative space of fiction, Roth allows this tension between the artist and the community to fuel the very substance of his work.

Roth's decision to stage his responses to his critics in the form of the novel represents a deliberate choice to utilize the possibilities such a narrative space allows. For instance, the novel form permits Roth to play with various conflicting voices on issues of Jewish loyalty,

responsibility, and identity. In this way, Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of "dialogic" novelistic discourse provides a useful lens through which to view Roth's fictional strategies. In the 1930s, Bakhtin coined the term, "heteroglossia," to portray the "linguistic contention"³³ and multiple voices that the genre of the novel permits to speak. In "From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse," Bakhtin explains that the language of the novel is a "system of languages that mutually and ideologically interanimate each other" (Bakhtin 333). As a result, Bakhtin explains in "Modern Stylistics and the Novel" that such multiple and varying voices "may be juxtaposed to one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically" (Bakhtin 348). I will later demonstrate how in voicing the multitude of perspectives and ideologies within the Jewish community through a variety of fictional mouthpieces, Roth can be productively read through the Bakhtinian lens of "heteroglossia." For as a rule, Roth's characters are rarely at a loss for words.

In addition, Roth's fictional projects can be viewed through Bakhtin's description of the novelistic form itself. Bakhtin defines the novel as "the sole genre that continues to develop, that is as yet uncompleted . . . and therefore it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding."³⁴ Roth's choice to use such an open-ended, constantly developing narrative form in order to mirror the continuous unfolding, shaping, and molding of the Jewish self can be read through a Bakhtinian lens. Such a malleable genre as the novel provides the ideal form in which Roth can explore questions regarding the writer's developing attempt to locate his role within the greater community.

As a result, I will propose the ways in which Roth's later novels offer case studies of

33 Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "From The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays," in Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach, ed. Michael McKeon (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2000). Hereafter cited in the text.

34 David K. Danow, The Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin: From Word to Culture (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 52.

Bakhtin's novelistic theories through playing with overlapping voices and perspectives in his fictional explorations of the writer's responsibilities. Yet I will also expose the limitations of a Bakhtinian reading of Roth's novels, as the author's novelistic portrayals of the *individual's* cyclical struggle amid this dialogism lends what might be called a "psychoanalytic" interpretation. Due to Roth's exploration of the individual's internal development in the face of this social dialogism, the author's emphasis on subjectivity in his later novels lends this alternative reading. Thus, I shall argue that Roth's later fiction necessitates both Bakhtinian and psychoanalytic readings, as his narrators confront the need to mediate these collective voices within their individual psyches.

In the sections that follow, I shall explore how Roth positions writer-protagonists negotiating between divided loyalties to their community and to their craft in The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock. Whether it is Zuckerman or "Philip Roth," both novels launch these artists into an endless cycle of responses to their writerly predicament. Though these texts demonstrate important discrepancies in terms of genre, narrators, settings, and stakes, I will contend that Roth's protagonists experience a nearly identical narrative movement--rejection, response, and return. Amid the community's pressure on the Jewish-American writer to serve as a loyal spokesman, these narrators initially resist this mandate. An escapist fantasy into pure art typically follows this refusal of responsibility; nevertheless, this alternative model of free art ultimately proves problematic. As a result, these writers find themselves, however reluctantly, pulled by an inevitable force of return to the community's mandate for the artist's Jewish duty. Still these protagonists resist such a straightforward response, complicating their returns through a constant process of re-imagination. As the author of such a fictional model, Roth, too, places himself in and among these fictional doubles. Rather than simply resign to the communal

pressures of obligation or ignorantly escape into the world of pure art, Roth allows his fictional explorations to demonstrate his ability to continually revise his personal--but no less chaotic--relationship to the community's mandate for his responsible spokespersonship. Alan Cooper advocates that Roth should listen to the response of his novelist-creation, Peter Tarnopol, from My Life as a Man.³⁵ For once, Roth follows through with a critic's advice--"Literature got me into this and literature is gonna have to get me out'" (qtd. in Cooper 3).

35 Alan Cooper, Philip Roth and the Jews (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 3. Hereafter cited in the text.

II. “*The rest is the madness of art*”: Artistic Responsibility in The Ghost Writer

Written ten years after the publication of Portnoy’s Complaint, Roth’s The Ghost Writer (1979) perhaps most directly of all his novels responds to the relationship between the Jewish-American writer and the greater community. By positioning fictional writers in the imaginative space of this first book in his Zuckerman quartet, Roth effectively stages the critical debates about his artistic loyalty and responsibility emerging from the publication of Portnoy’s Complaint. For instance, Roth incorporates the previous accusations he received from rabbinical figures about writing “anti-Semitic” and “self-hating” fiction that fails to provide a “balanced portrayal” of American Jews. In addition, through Zuckerman, Roth interrogates his critics who relied upon an obsessive Holocaust consciousness in their attacks. Through the creative freedom that the novel permits, Roth personifies these critical debates in the fictional characters he locates throughout the text. Though Roth claims that he “forgets” (RMAO 404-405) most criticism he received, his work in The Ghost Writer counters this sentiment. Roth utilizes the novel to comically respond to and seriously complicate these attacks. As I will demonstrate, Roth uses the dialogic arena of The Ghost Writer to respond to the critics who attempted to position him either “for” or “against,” inside or outside the Jewish community. Through Zuckerman as a mouthpiece, Roth implodes these narrow binaries altogether.

Roth first voices his critics’ viewpoint that he, like all Jewish-American writers, has a responsibility to speak on behalf of the Jewish people through the fictional agents of Mr. and Mrs. Zuckerman. Looking back on his life as a 23-year-old writer in hot water with his family and community, Zuckerman narrates his encounter with the oppressive forces of obligation. The protagonist’s parents demand that their writer-son has a duty to uphold a sense of Jewish loyalty as he pursues his craft. Zuckerman flashes back to the events surrounding his parents’

disapproval of his most recent short story, "Higher Education." The story's plot borrows from Zuckerman's real-life familial experiences, most notably a quarrel over inheritance money. As a result, Zuckerman's parents and other members of the Jewish community view his fictional portrayal as reinforcing negative Jewish stereotypes, such as greed. His father understands these instances as "the most shameful and disreputable transgressions of family decency and trust."³⁶ Mr. Zuckerman expresses to his son the danger of presenting a story in which Jews become associated with greed, namely that such a correlation confirms the attitudes that anti-Semites already hold. Zuckerman's father makes no distinction between "'ordinary people'" (GW 91) and full-fledged anti-Semites, however, assuming that every Gentile will read his son's story as a testament to "'kikes and their love of money'" (GW 94). Roth recalls his own rabbinical critics who made the similar assumption and thereby accused Roth of fueling anti-Jewish prejudices in Portnoy's Complaint.³⁷ These critics charged Roth's fictional portrayal as an act of disloyalty no different than Zuckerman's "inexplicable betrayal" (GW 96).

Zuckerman's father grounds his anxiety in the quintessential memory of hatred for the Jews--the Holocaust--not as a distant episode of the past but as a lurking, dangerous force in the present. He explains to Zuckerman, "'I wonder if you fully understand just how little love there is in this world for Jewish people. I don't mean in Germany, either, under the Nazis. I mean in run-of-the-mill Americans'" (GW 92). Conversely, Zuckerman vehemently rejects his parents' ingrained conception of anti-Semitism as merely an example of the community's propensity for

36 Philip Roth, The Ghost Writer (New York: Vintage, 1995), 81. Hereafter cited in the text with the prefix, "GW."

37 Roth implies that many of his rabbinical critics make no distinction between Gentiles and anti-Semites. He further posits that many such rabbis hope to gain a sense of Jewish unity through this exaggerated fear of a ubiquitous Gentile hatred. Roth argues, "The cry, 'Watch out for the goyim!' at times seems more the expression of an unconscious wish than of a warning: Oh that they were out there, so that we could be together in here! A rumor of persecution, a taste of exile, might even bring with it that old world of feelings and habits" (RMAO 165).

“entrenchment in the past.”³⁸

When Zuckerman’s mother offers that “‘what happened to the Jews’” (GW 106) could very well occur in America today, Zuckerman counters, “‘In Europe--not in Newark! We are not the wretched of Belsen! We are not the victims of that crime!’” (GW 106). Thus, Zuckerman responds to his parents’ Holocaust-dominated anxieties by exposing their compulsive recall of a history that they don’t personally own. As a result, Zuckerman serves as a mouthpiece for Roth’s exposure of the cultural obsession with anti-Semitism as a fantastical, exaggerated concern rather than an imminent threat in the American landscape. Zuckerman possesses a writerly language to distinguish between the past and present that his parents do not--or rather refuse to. By exposing the absurdity of his parents’ fanatic insistence that his contentious short story would instigate a Holocaust sequel in Newark, Zuckerman rejects their mandate that his writerly duty demands the prevention of this ‘second coming.’³⁹

Zuckerman continues to resist his parents’ conception of the writer’s responsibility by subjecting their notion of “loyalty” to interrogation. When Zuckerman’s mother threatens him with the possibility of his fiction inspiring anti-Jewish violence in Newark, Zuckerman responds by revealing a much more widespread practice of Jewish betrayal in America--plastic surgery. Zuckerman contends that the growing trend of Jewish adolescent girls obtaining ‘nose jobs’ is a much more dangerous, though subtler, example of disloyalty to Jewish origins. Zuckerman explains, “‘That’s where the Jewish blood flows in Essex County, that’s where the blow is

38 Sophia Lehmann, “‘And Here [Their] Troubles Began’: The Legacy of the Holocaust in the Writing of Cynthia Ozick, Art Spiegelman, and Philip Roth,” *Clio* 28:1 (1998): 45, Proquest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 31 Oct. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text.

39 Steven Milowitz further claims that Zuckerman understands that his parents’ insistence that he create only pure, innocent Jewish characters in his fiction colludes in the spirit of Nazism rather than rejects it. He explains, “Zuckerman understands what his parents cannot, that to portray Jews as only paragons of virtue and only as passive victims of injustice is, in effect, to classify and categorize Jews much in the way that the Nazis did. Its implication is that Jews are all this and only this, that Jews are not individuals, not humans” (Steven Milowitz, *Philip Roth Considered: The Concentrationary Universe of the American Writer* (New York: Garland, 2000), 44-45).

delivered--with a mallet! To their bones--and to their pride!’” (GW 106). With this allusion to Brenda Patimkin’s nose job in Roth’s Goodbye, Columbus, Zuckerman’s violent and grotesque language suggests that betrayal can more readily be seen in this practice of covering up stereotypically ‘Jewish’ flaws.⁴⁰ He envisions such surgical operations as self-inflicted abuse onto Jewish identity and a much steeper crime than his “informing” (GW 110) that Jews, from time to time, squabble over money. Zuckerman thus undermines his parents’ attacks through demonstrating the fluid resistance of “betrayal” to a stable definition; through the voice of his protagonist, Roth proposes that “betrayal” itself is a loose category. Using The Ghost Writer to talk back to his critics who positioned him in this grouping, Roth renders his placement unstable.

The figure of Judge Wapter in the text speaks not only to the writer’s obligation to speak *for* the Jewish people but also to the writer’s indebtedness *to* the Jewish people. Roth seems to depict his own public ‘trial’ when Wapter, a prominent member of the neighborhood’s Jewish community, symbolically calls Zuckerman to judgment. The judge transcribes a letter to the young writer, calling him forth to testify to the sin of betrayal as though before the Gates of Heaven. Roth clearly voices the collective judgment he received from rabbinic figures in 1969 in the hyperbolic sentiments of the judge. Yet of note is that Judge Wapter is a *secular* Jewish figure, who nevertheless creates himself in the image of sacred rabbinical authority. Wapter grounds his criticism of Zuckerman in the religious terms of anti-Semitism not unlike many of Roth’s secular reviewers. In this way, Roth satirizes his own critics who evaluated his fiction as if they possessed the divine powers of judgment. Roth’s representation of Wapter also comments on how secular and Judaic laws have combined into a singular, enormous doctrine of constraint for the writer figure.

40 A longer treatment would include further analysis on Roth’s conception of Jewish loyalty and betrayal in Goodbye, Columbus.

The issue of artistic responsibility takes center stage in Wapter's correspondence. The judge charges Zuckerman as a fugitive of the Jewish community, who considers himself "beyond the mores of the community in which he lived" (GW 101). Though he admits that some of the greatest artists and thinkers in history have been considered "enemies" (GW 101) of their people, including Socrates, at the same time, writers do not have free creative license to consciously betray the community they choose to represent. Wapter posits in the letter, "I do believe that, like all men, the artist has a responsibility to his fellow man, to the society in which he lives, and to the cause of truth and justice" (GW 101). Furthermore, Wapter begins articulating artistic responsibility in the language of indebtedness in order to elicit Zuckerman's guilt. As he previously wrote Zuckerman a letter of recommendation to the University of Chicago so that he could pursue his artistic ambitions, Wapter expects that the writer somehow pays up for such a favor. His letter demands, "with great talent come great responsibilities, and an obligation to those who have stood behind you in the early days so that your talent might come to fruition" (GW 102). Wapter implies that he expects Zuckerman to fictionally represent his people in a positive light in order to repay those who aided him in his quest to be a writer. He views the relationship between the artist and community as a financial transaction between a borrower and a lender, in which the former must repay his loan. Roth thus casts the judge in the complicated role of a morally conscious banker, to which Zuckerman now owes a certain 'debt' of gratitude.

Enclosing a seemingly harmless "questionnaire" about Zuckerman's story, Wapter forces Zuckerman into the witness stand to face questioning. Nonetheless, the proposed dialogue is merely a disguise for a brutal interrogation of Zuckerman's Jewish infidelity. Wapter tellingly titles this section of the letter, "Ten Questions For Nathan Zuckerman" (GW 102). The symbolically significant number, ten, clearly alludes to the "Ten Commandments." Here Roth

revises the biblical allusion into the ten inflexible mandates (disguised as “questions”) that the Jewish writer must uphold. Posing as a secular God, Wapter improvises on the sacred doctrine to call back the straying Zuckerman to his Jewish origins of responsibility.

Similar to the “entrenchment in the past” demonstrated by Mr. and Mrs. Zuckerman, Wapter resembles Roth’s critics who internalized the survivalist dogma of post-war American Jews. In his “questionnaire,” the judge inverts this survivalist obsession with external threats into a fear of threats from within the community--epitomized by Zuckerman, the controversial writer. For instance, Wapter’s final question likens Zuckerman’s apparent disloyalty to the Jewish community to that of Nazi propaganda. His letter challenges, “Can you honestly say that there is anything in your short story that would not warm the heart of a Julius Streicher or a Joseph Goebbels?” (GW 104).⁴¹ Not only does the judge imply that Zuckerman is indifferent to the plight of the Jewish people, but he explicitly delivers the verdict of Zuckerman’s guilt as a Nazi sympathizer. Comparing Zuckerman to the ultimate victimizers of the Jews, Wapter accuses Zuckerman of having agency in his betrayal. The judge conjures up the memory of the Holocaust to suggest that Zuckerman’s fiction somehow implicates him in this historical narrative of persecution. Roth’s inclusion of the Streicher/Goebbels/Zuckerman comparison directly echoes Syrkin’s condemnation of Portnoy’s Complaint’s “Goebbels-Streicher script” (State of the Jews 332). There can be little doubt that Roth’s choice to satirize Wapter’s excessive Holocaust-preoccupied language of critique is a deliberate response to the exaggerated

41 Joseph Goebbels, Hitler’s minister of propaganda, stayed with Hitler until his death and was reported to have shot himself and his wife upon the Führer’s suicide (Doris L. Bergen, War & Genocide: A Concise History of the Holocaust (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), 42. Hereafter cited in the text). Goebbels’ responsibilities included overseeing public book burnings (Bergen 66). Wapter’s comparison of Zuckerman to Goebbels positions Zuckerman as an anti-artist, suggesting that his fictional propaganda similarly threatens to ‘destroy’ the genre of Jewish American fiction. In addition, the Nuremberg Trials of October, 1945, found Julius Streicher--the editor of a vehemently anti-Semitic newspaper, *Der Stürmer*--guilty as a war criminal (Shirli Gilbert, “Origins of the Holocaust,” Ann Arbor, M.I., 14 Nov. 2006). As Streicher represents the abusive writer, Wapter hints at Zuckerman’s exploitation of narrative freedom to the detriment of the Jewish people.

survivalist discourse of his own critics.⁴²

Rather than submit to the conception of artistic loyalty offered by his parents and Wapter, Zuckerman views these voices of responsibility as antagonistic rivals. He suggests that his artistic emergence depends on his very resistance to such external mandates from the Jewish establishment. He contemplates, “but still, writers weren’t writers . . . if they didn’t have the strength to face the insolubility of that conflict and go on” (GW 110). Thus, Zuckerman recognizes the community’s insistence on his Jewish duties as an obstacle that he must somehow overcome in order to achieve artistic greatness. In perceiving the struggle with his parents and community as his artistic rite of passage, Zuckerman initially rejects their obligatory mandate that he must serve as the loyal spokesman for the Jewish community.

After declaring his separation from his family and community--“I am on my own!” (GW 109)--Zuckerman turns to the infamous Jewish writer, Emanuel Isidore Lonoff, as his--misguided--guide.⁴³ Zuckerman perceives Lonoff as an author unshackled by either the responsibility to speak on behalf of the Jews or the gnawing obligation to uphold a sense of Jewish loyalty. Lonoff seems to provide Zuckerman with an example of the unrestrained Jewish-American writer due to his exile-like status; Lonoff married a Gentile woman from a wealthy New England family and made a home with her in the country. Roth characterizes this reclusive location as the “goyish wilderness” (GW 4), suggesting a correlation between Mother Nature and Gentile America. By bestowing Christian holiness onto the rural environment, Roth implies that Lonoff trespasses this sacred space in a revolt against his immigrant Jewish roots.

42 Roth created the judge and Zuckerman’s parents to represent the critics who attacked his work for neglecting the memory of the Holocaust. Lehmann contends that it is this very fear of forgetting that has come to “represent and replace the loss of the rest of Jewish tradition and collective memory” (40).

43 Many literary scholars claim that Lonoff symbolizes Bernard Malamud. Roth even explains that the two are nearly the same age, live in New England, teach at local liberal arts colleges, and are both “‘deeply skeptical of the public world’” (qtd. in Atlas 109). As this comparison has been exhausted, it seems of more interest to view Lonoff through Zuckerman’s lens--as a model of the free, unrestrained Jewish-American writer to which he aspires.

Scorned by parents that seek to repress his authorial freedoms, Zuckerman yearns to mold Lonoff not only into his tutor but, more significantly, into a surrogate father figure. Zuckerman narrates, "For I had come, you see, to submit myself for candidacy as nothing less than E. I. Lonoff's spiritual son, to petition for his moral sponsorship and to win, if I could, the magical protection of his advocacy and his love" (GW 9). Just as Mr. and Mrs. Zuckerman effectively sentence their son to parental abandonment as a result of his artistic act of disloyalty, Roth echoes this judgment imagery in Zuckerman's plea for Lonoff's paternity. Such legal diction as "candidacy" and "petition" suggests Zuckerman's formal attempt to bring his case for son-ship before a different judge, the great artistic arbiter, Lonoff.

Roth's obsession with fathers and sons permeates The Ghost Writer with Zuckerman's desire to seek renewed paternal approval in Lonoff. According to Cooper, this "father principle" (182) works in conjunction with the writer's mandate to uphold Jewish loyalty. Cooper suggests that the motif of patriarchy in Roth's novels symbolizes "Jewish authenticity as measured by the bond to fathers" (182). Nevertheless, Zuckerman perceives Lonoff's fatherhood as representative of the patriarchy of *art*, not of Jewish loyalty. For Zuckerman, Lonoff is the "'Jew who got away'" (GW 50) from the religious community's patriarchal shadow over the writer; Lonoff escaped cultural responsibility. Furthermore, Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky compares Lonoff's parental powers to that of a pseudo-secular rabbi. Rubin-Dorsky argues that Lonoff "bar mitzvahs Zuckerman into authorial manhood by confirming with approval his irreverent fictional persona, a self that his father misperceives as unfeeling and irresponsible and therefore condemns as hostile to the welfare of the Jewish community."⁴⁴ Lonoff initiates Zuckerman into artistic adulthood, a world in which creative license reigns. Then again, Lonoff's model of free

44 Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky, "Philip Roth's The Ghost Writer: Literary Heritage and Jewish Irreverence," Studies in American Jewish Literature 8:2 (1989): 169. Hereafter cited in the text as "Literary Heritage."

art will prove problematic. In the end, Roth will restore Cooper's "father principle" of Jewish loyalty with the realization that Lonoff represents the patriarchal reminder of Jewish duty much more so than Zuckerman initially perceives.

Zuckerman casts himself not only as Lonoff's surrogate son, but he also submits his candidacy for one of Lonoff's fictional protagonists. Zuckerman's personal predicament mirrors that of Lonoff's typical fictional hero: "more often than not a nobody from nowhere, away from a home where he is not missed, yet to which he must return without delay" (GW 14). Zuckerman's displacement as a result of his disloyal artistry suggests a similar sense of exile. By offering Lonoff the creative powers of authorship in terms of his own person, Zuckerman submits his narrative for revision. Though his family condemned him a traitor, Zuckerman seeks Lonoff's creative faculties to rewrite his supposed fate of communal betrayal. However, Zuckerman's initial escape will ultimately culminate in an inevitable return to which the Lonoffian protagonist is similarly prey.

Zuckerman appears to find his means of escape through the seeming embodiment of complete artistic freedom in Lonoff. As Rubin-Dorsky explains, "Zuckerman . . . does declare independence from the family and community that would entrap his imagination with their self-righteous ethical constraints" ("Literary Heritage" 168). Zuckerman perceives Lonoff as the alternative of artistic freedom to the "entrenchment in the past" (Lehmann 45) that his parents and Wapter embody. In simply observing the liberated, unshackled environment in which Lonoff lives, Zuckerman muses, awe-stricken, "Purity. Serenity. Simplicity. Seclusion. . . . I looked around and I thought, This is how I will live" (GW 5). The freedom that isolation offers initially seems the ideal refuge for Zuckerman to explore the fullest extent of his writer's imagination.

Nonetheless, Zuckerman misreads this separatist life as an ideal to be pursued (Safer 22). Lonoff criticizes this very haven that Zuckerman so exalts, expressing that his seclusion has cut him off from the outside world. His sole companions are the words on the page, besides his hopelessly estranged wife bearing the ironic name of "Hope." Lonoff discusses the monotony of his isolated artistic routine in a redundant diatribe: "I turn sentences around. That's my life. I write a sentence and then I turn it around. Then I look at it and I turn it around again" (GW 18). Though Lonoff evokes an exhausted tone in relating his habitual writing, Zuckerman misinterprets Lonoff's description of his reclusive life as nothing short of "paradise" (GW 18).

The text's literary allusion to Henry James' "The Middle Years" offers Zuckerman additional insight into Lonoff's regretful life of the unlived author, though the young writer overlooks such a lesson. Zuckerman observes an index card pinned to the bulletin board beside Lonoff's desk that alludes to the famous phrase, "the madness of art" (GW 77). The quotation refers to James' character, Dencombe, when he is near death. Dencombe expresses regret in regards to his idle life that revolved solely around a devotion to art (Safer 22). Roth's characterization of Lonoff parallels James' protagonist, as the former similarly denies all human relationships and singularly commits himself to the enslavement of the writing process. Just as Zuckerman misinterprets Lonoff's isolated life as a dream world, he also fails to read the significance of James' words. Zuckerman ponders, "I would have thought the madness of everything but art. The art was what was sane, no? Or was I missing something?" (GW 77).

Zuckerman precisely 'misses' the pitfalls of Lonoff's "historically unburdened" (Lehmann 45) position as an artist. Lonoff, himself, even exposes this alternative model of pure art as problematic. For instance, Lonoff challenges the utility of relying solely upon the imagination as a subject for his writing. He explains, "If your life consists of reading and

writing and looking at the snow, you'll wind up like me. Fantasy for thirty years'" (GW 30).⁴⁵

Lonoff explains that a writer's *entrenchment* in pure art is no less dangerous than the community's entrenchment in history. Lonoff's alternative example of free art renders him completely separate from, rather than full of, life. Hope even explodes in a lecture on her husband's artistic detachment from reality: "'There is his religion of art, my young successor: rejecting life! *Not* living is what he makes his beautiful fiction *out of!*'" (GW 174-175). Hope suggests that Lonoff sacrifices the art of living for the sake of his art.⁴⁶

Though Zuckerman may not be aware of these limitations of pure imagination, Roth certainly presents them to the reader. He suggests that artistic freedom, alone, may not be the solution to the predicament of the socially constrained Jewish writer. For instance, Lonoff actually pays homage to the value of an "'unruly personal life'" (GW 33)--a turbulent personal and religious history--as a subject for Zuckerman's fiction. Lehmann suggests that though Lonoff is imaginatively uninhibited and historically unburdened, he lacks any substance of which to write. Rather it is the very communal history that Zuckerman attempts to break free of that can provide him with the richest of fictional content. Lehmann posits, "Thus, history, though it constantly threatens to suffocate art, is simultaneously the source of art when fused with, rather than replaced by, the imagination" (46). Realizing the impossibility of complete

45 The last scene of the novel depicts Lonoff chasing after Hope, who left him in a torment over his un-lived life and the un-lived life she, too, suffers. As Roth describes, "[Lonoff] started off after the runaway spouse" (GW 180), he suggests that reality has caught up with Lonoff. His fantasy of artistic escape fails.

46 Mark Shechner argues that Roth adopts an indifferent attitude toward Lonoff's lifeless artistic choice. He claims, "Lonoff has chosen the perfection of the work over the perfection of the life, and Roth looks on the consequences with detachment" (Mark Shechner, *Up Society's Ass, Copper: Re-reading Philip Roth* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 71. Hereafter cited in the text). Nevertheless, Lonoff represents the private, devoted writer that Roth--who is already a noted reclusive artist at this point in time--could choose to be in the face of his Jewish critics. As a result, whether or not Roth's authorial voice seems indifferent to Lonoff's lifeless existence, Lonoff's artistic model is not so far-fetched for a writer as uninterested in and resistant to the public limelight as Roth.

escape from historical origins, Zuckerman will later discover that his role as a writer is to transpose his imagination onto this history in order to make it his own.

On the other hand, Lehmann overlooks the fact that, in the end, it is Lonoff who provides the model for this acknowledgement of the inescapability (and the desirability of this inescapability) of history for the Jewish writer. Though Zuckerman views Lonoff as the “Jew who got away” (GW 50), Lonoff inevitably returns to the Jewish subject in his writing. Zuckerman comments on Lonoff’s predicament: “Away from all the Jews, and a story by you without a Jew in it is unthinkable” (GW 51). The Jewish writer, however entrenched in fiction, art, and “fantasy,” never attains complete freedom. As a result, despite his attempt to resist the sense of indebtedness or obligation to Jews, Lonoff cannot help but return to these very tenets that Zuckerman originally celebrates him for shunning. Through this description of the writer’s imaginative return to the Jewish subject despite attempts to escape, Roth positions himself among these characters. While Roth’s novels challenge the mythological frameworks of the Jewish historical psyche, they also cannot help but return to the Jewish subject.

Zuckerman, too, will prove to imitate Lonoff’s return in his own inevitable cycling back to the notion of Jewish loyalty that he so vehemently rejected earlier. Such returning begins when Zuckerman eavesdrops on a sexually-charged, late-night conversation between Lonoff and the young student staying in his home, Amy Bellette. It appears that Amy desires to seduce Lonoff and replace his wife, but the great writer continues to resist her advances. Roth describes Amy, a displaced person who came to America after World War II to study under Lonoff’s tutelage, as having large, pale eyes and marked disproportion between her body and head. Shechner suggests that these physical characteristics imply early injury, misfortune, and deprivation --“hinting of the camps” (70). Because he only receives fragments of the narrative

between Lonoff and Amy--including Lonoff's description of Amy as "'the great survivor'" (GW 118)--Zuckerman utilizes his imaginative capacities to finish the story. He rewrites Amy as the surviving Anne Frank.

Through his imaginative revision of Amy's narrative, Zuckerman positions himself for readmission into the Jewish community that ousted him.⁴⁷ Zuckerman's fictional fantasy re-imagines Anne Frank as his perfect Jewish wife. He envisions bringing home this mythological figure of Jewish innocence, martyrdom, and loyalty as his ideal fiancé. Zuckerman even conceives his father pleading, "*Oh, how I have misunderstood my son. How mistaken we have been!*" (GW 159). The writer fantasizes about presenting Anne Frank as his wife in order to be relieved of his guilt for betraying his Jewish family and community and to prove, once again, that he is still a "good Jewish boy." Debra Shostak suggests, "He authenticates his Jewish identity by absorbing the primary historical trauma into a selfhood otherwise innocent of that history."⁴⁸ Thus, Zuckerman's initial escape from his family to Lonoff's recluse comes full circle in Roth's portrayal of the artist's symbolic return to Jewish loyalty. Perhaps such a wild imagining represents Roth's own simplistic fantasy of absolution.

Zuckerman's fictional marriage proposal to Anne reveals his desperate attempt to return to the symbolic womb of the Jewish community. He exults, "To be wed somehow to you, I thought, my unassailable advocate, my invulnerable ally, my shield against their charges of defection and betrayal and reckless, heinous informing! Oh, marry me, Anne Frank, exonerate me before my outraged elders of this idiotic indictment!" (GW 170). The diction in

47 In his letter to Zuckerman, Judge Wapter even hints at Anne Frank being the key to the writer's re-purification. At the end of the letter, Wapter underhandedly suggests, "P.S. If you have not yet seen the Broadway production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, I strongly advise that you do so" (GW 102).

48 Debra Shostak, *Philip Roth--Countertexts, Counterlives* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 127. Hereafter cited in the text as "*Countertexts*."

Zuckerman's proposition, including "exonerate" and "indictment," paints him as a vindicated "war criminal."⁴⁹ After Judge Wapner compared Zuckerman to Julius Streicher, a Nazi war criminal sentenced to death at the Nuremberg Trials, Zuckerman now appeals for a re-trial based upon the legendary status of his new wife.

This marriage fantasy thus quickly transforms into Zuckerman's revenge fantasy of reproving his Jewish loyalty and simultaneously disproving the accusations of his family and community. He vehemently questions, "Heedless of Jewish feeling? Indifferent to Jewish survival? Brutish about their well-being? Who dares to accuse of such unthinking crimes the husband of Anne Frank!" (GW 171). Zuckerman assumes a vengeful tone to expose the utter absurdity of the charges brought against the loyalty of the future husband of the most infamous Jewish martyr of all-time. Despite his earlier attempts to reject such ingrained Holocaust consciousness, Zuckerman now finds himself a willing participant. His initial retreat from his family's home, dramatized by the literal abandonment of his father at a bus stop, seems to ultimately prove futile by the end of The Ghost Writer. Zuckerman, like Lonoff's fictional characters, finds himself rebelling against the very home into which he desperately seeks re-entry by the novel's conclusion. Despite his resistance, Zuckerman is utterly entrapped in the "good Jewish boy" predicament.

As critics like Shostak primarily focus on Roth's treatment of Anne Frank as a signal of Zuckerman's return to a sense of Jewish duty, I maintain that this return is nevertheless--and significantly--nuanced. Though Zuckerman seems to return to a symbol of Jewish loyalty by re-inventing Anne Frank as his significant other, he weds a radically-altered Anne Frank. Roth

49 Aimee Pozorski, "How to Tell a True Ghost Story: The Ghost Writer and the Case of Anne Frank," in Philip Roth: New Perspectives on an American Author, ed. Derek Parker Royal (Westport: Praeger, 2005). Hereafter cited in the text.

exploits the liberating space of fiction by offering readers a multiple-layered narrative in The Ghost Writer--a story within a story--in order to rewrite Anne Frank through Zuckerman's exploratory imagination.⁵⁰ Zuckerman offers an alternative narrative of the infamous saint, subjecting the sacred Anne Frank to defilement. For instance, when Amy/Anne explains to Lonoff, "I have a corpse on my conscience" (GW 119), Zuckerman interprets this sentiment as Amy's/Anne's admittance that she staged the killing of herself in order to achieve prominent influence as a martyred Jewish writer. Zuckerman imagines Amy/Anne convinced that her diary could foster the work she wanted it to do only if she were believed to be dead. She posits, "But dead she had something more to offer than amusement for ages 10-15; dead she had written, without meaning to or trying to, a book with the force of a masterpiece to make people finally see" (GW 145-46). By faking her death, Amy/Anne could achieve infamy as a writer.

Zuckerman thus rejects the responsibility to preserve the pristine figures of Jewish history by demythologizing Anne Frank into an egoistic version of her saintly self. Through Zuckerman, Roth re-imagines Anne Frank not as a victim but as a selfish, motivated *writer* contemplating her own obligations to her Jewish family and community--not so unlike Zuckerman and Roth. Amy/Anne demonstrates the possibility of liberating herself from the shackles of her personal and communal history--which are both inextricably linked to the concentration camps of the Holocaust--for the freedom of re-inventing herself as an artist. Zuckerman imagines her thinking, "If she was going to be thought exceptional, it would not be because of Auschwitz and Belsen but because of what she had made of herself since" (GW 132). Amy's/Anne's demand for self-determination fosters her egoistic hope that her readers admire

50 Such layering of narratives in The Ghost Writer is notably absent in Portnoy's Complaint. While critics seem to have pegged Roth within Portnoy's singular point of view, the author liberates himself from the shackles of perspective in The Ghost Writer. By occupying the lenses of Amy Bellette/Anne Frank and Zuckerman, Roth traverses between multiple perspectives, attitudes, and ideologies.

her talent as a prodigious author. She praises herself, “Why, what eloquence, Anne! . . . what deftness, what wit! How nice, she thought, if I could write like this for Mr. Lonoff’s English 12” (GW 136). She yearns to exist as an individual artist rather than as a symbol of victimization.

Through Zuckerman’s rewriting, I argue that Roth even seems to re-invent Amy/Anne as a version of Alex Portnoy. In her diary, she famously proclaims, “the time will come when we are people again, and not just Jews” (GW 142). Such a statement recalls Portnoy’s emphatic outburst, “Jew Jew Jew Jew Jew Jew! It is coming out of my ears already, the saga of the suffering Jews! . . . *I happen also to be a human being!*” (PC 76). The comparison between these two seemingly incomparable figures not only suggests Amy’s/Anne’s desire to somewhat distance herself from the historical image of victimized Jewry, but it also legitimizes Portnoy’s excessiveness. Perhaps Roth includes this parallel proclamation to challenge his critics’ previous indictment of Portnoy’s Complaint. Roth suggests that if the community celebrates Anne Frank’s declarations of humanity, Portnoy should earn equal accolades.

Furthermore, Zuckerman’s conception of this revised Anne Frank serves as a reminder of the infamous martyr’s muted Jewishness. In Roth’s text, Amy/Anne explains that besides lighting Shabbat candles on Friday night, little other examples of religious observance made it into her diary. However, Amy/Anne suggests that such an artistic oversight served as a purposeful and meaningful gesture to further her aims as a writer. She explains, “that was the point--that was what gave her diary the power to make the nightmare real” (GW 144). Amy’s/Anne’s subtle Jewishness in her diary and theatrical adaptation received a warm reception, though she is nevertheless regarded as the quintessential *Jewish* martyr.

Though initially Amy/Anne expresses her role as a writer in light of the responsibility to honor the Holocaust victims, she reverses this sentiment in place of a commitment to her growth

as a writer in the guise of “Amy Bellette.” She describes the freedom such a disguise offered her: “The Amy who had rescued her from the memories and restored her to life--beguiling, commonsensical, brave, and realistic Amy--was herself. Who she had every right to be! Responsibility to the dead? . . . There was nothing to give the dead--they were dead” (GW 148-49). She allows the identity of Amy, the young, promising writer unburdened by the past, to engulf her former identity of the hopelessly martyred symbol of persecution. Anne Frank shirks her Jewish “responsibility” with “no atonement” (GW 149).

Through Zuckerman’s re-invention of Anne Frank as alive and well, deceiving her father and the world, Roth undermines the collective victim identity that American Jews obsessively clung to in the post-Holocaust era. Anne Frank, the quintessential symbol of innocent victimization here suffers desecration--and with her, the Jewish-American community’s victim-centered self-definition. Emily Miller Budick suggests, “Roth interrogates the community’s Holocaust-inflected script of itself, which the novel presents as a melodramatic and hysterical expression of misplaced and rather absurd Jewish tribalism.”⁵¹ Through Zuckerman, Roth rewrites this historical moment that has been defined in utterly limited terms by expanding the possibilities of its events and figures through fictional creativity. In such a project of revisionist history, Roth proposes a challenge to the critics whose charges dripped with the nostalgia of this narrow historical narrative.

Thus, Zuckerman refuses to return to a mythologized conception of Jewish loyalty. He resists participating in the vein of post-war Jewish-American theatergoers, who often transformed Anne Frank into a symbol onto which secular Jews could attach a sense of

⁵¹ Emily Miller Budick, “The Holocaust in the Jewish American Literary Imagination,” in The Cambridge Companion to Jewish American Literature, eds. Michael P. Kramer and Hana Wirth-Nesher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Hereafter cited in the text.

sacredness. Lehmann confirms this “manipulation of the Holocaust by audiences who derive a warped sense of self-righteousness from watching the tragic story of Anne’s courage and hope in the face of death” (7). She became an iconic figure of Jewishness through which secular Jews in the U.S. could affirm their own Jewish loyalty by ‘identifying’ with her character on the Broadway stage. Wapner even suggests this notion to Zuckerman earlier in the text. He explains that seeing the Broadway production would afford Zuckerman an “unforgettable experience” (GW 102) and effectively absolve him of his guilt of betrayal. Roth exposes the tendency of American Jews in the post-World War II era to manipulate the legacy of the young Holocaust victim into a demonstration of their own desire to sustain a connection to the sacred.⁵² Zuckerman, however, rebuffs participating in this historical manipulation.

Pozorski claims that though Zuckerman’s parents and community accuse him of ignoring the historical persecution of the Jews, Zuckerman actually comes to represent a much more “historical position” (90). Through rewriting the narrative of Anne Frank out of its mythological status, Pozorski contends, “Zuckerman imagines Anne Frank as alive in order to destroy her as an icon of Jewishness, thereby allowing a truer account of Jewish experience to arise” (90). Through Zuckerman, Roth manipulates history to reverse, rather than perpetuate, the hyper-mythologizing propensity of the Jewish-American community. He refuses to return to a sense of Jewish loyalty that is based upon either a limited Holocaust consciousness or the singular Jewish cultural narrative of victimization and innocence; Zuckerman’s version of Anne Frank no longer embodies these motifs. By demythologizing Anne Frank through artistic

⁵² Even more so, Roth seems to interrogate the Jewish-American community’s exploitation of the Anne Frank myth in order to assuage their “Holocaust guilt.” Pozorski acknowledges, “millions of Americans idealized Anne Frank as a way to assuage their passivity during the Holocaust” (98). David Brauner explains that such guilt stemmed from two sources: “the fact that American-born Jews escaped, by accident of birth, the fate of their European brethren; and the fear that Jews might in some way have colluded with their prosecutors by submitting without resistance to the systematic oppression that began with the enactment of the Nuremberg Laws and ended with the death camps” (“Retaliation” 53).

revision, Zuckerman serves as Jewish history's more loyal son.

In conclusion, a Bakhtinian lens helps illuminate Roth's creative use of the novel's incomplete and dialogic form as the ideal backdrop for this narrative exploration of the artist in conflict with his community. Roth allows multiple voices on various points of the ideological spectrum to speak--Zuckerman's parents, Judge Wapter, Lonoff, Hope, Amy Bellette/Anne Frank, and Zuckerman himself--and exposes each one as comically outrageous on the one hand and gravely serious on the other. Nevertheless, the Bakhtinian model somewhat breaks down in exploring Zuckerman's individual psychological responses to the multitude of talking heads that demand his ear in the novel.

I contend that the narrator's "Bildungsroman" (GW 3) of cyclical rejection and return in the novel can also be read through an internal psychoanalytic model. With his parents and community members demanding that he fulfill the mandate that the fiction writer must responsibly represent his people in a gesture of speaking on their loyal behalf, the psychoanalytic lens exposes Zuckerman's schizophrenic responses. Though he initially rejects this mandate for the freedom of pure art, this seemingly liberating artistic model proves equally problematic. As a result, Zuckerman inevitably returns to the writerly obligation of upholding his Jewish duty. Yet by utilizing his creative faculties to re-define this "loyalty," Zuckerman effectively complicates his return. Through Zuckerman, Roth signals his own tension between resistance to and acceptance of his Jewish responsibilities as an artist. Thus, Roth's fictional explorations in The Ghost Writer lend both Bakhtinian and psychoanalytic readings of the narrator interpreting the meanings behind such dialogic explosions within the individual psyche.

Although critics charged Roth with being either "for" or "against" the Jewish cause, Roth uses imaginative possibility, fictional spaces, and the dialogic language of The Ghost Writer to

effectively destroy the “or.” Though Roth is by no means the first or last author to use the space of the novel to challenge singular definitions--“loyalty,” “betrayal,” and “identity”--Roth performs such definition expansion as a mode of response, of talking back to his critics. Whereas his attackers pigeonholed him into certain notions of disloyalty, here Roth transforms the very source of his apparent betrayal--fiction--into his weapon of response. For instance, Roth performs this act through creating the dual possibility of Anne Frank--the innocent, mythological martyr on the one hand and the deceptive, egoistic writer on the other. By exposing the tension between both identities in the novel, Roth blurs the strict boundaries of “either/or” Jewish identity to suggest that the line is much more fluid. Anne Frank is neither one nor the other; she is inherently both. Identity is doubled and divided. As a result, Zuckerman demythologizes Anne Frank in order to free himself from the oppressive dichotomies of self-definition, such as “good Jew” or “bad Jew” and “loyal Jew” or “disloyal Jew.” Through Zuckerman then, Roth attempts to liberate himself from the rigid categorical claims of his critics, suggesting that he is neither simply a “self-hating” Jewish writer nor an artist that is wholly a loyal spokesman. Rather he positions himself fluidly moving in between these spaces, rewriting the constraining prison of “or” into the expanded possibility of “and.”

The Ghost Writer demonstrates Roth’s celebration of the “and” amid the Jewish-American writer’s struggle between history and imagination. Budick suggests that Jewish-American fiction writers are locked in a “no-win bind” (218). She explains, “Forget the past and the Jewish component falls away. Remember the past and you write European rather than American fiction” (Budick 218). Though Budick poses a somewhat Zionist argument that the Jewish-American writer is never free from the historical past, Roth’s re-imagination in The Ghost Writer counters Budick’s claims. By fusing Jewish history with imagination, Zuckerman

discovers a means to intersect a notion of Jewish loyalty with artistic freedom. Zuckerman's revision of Anne Frank's diary conflates history with creativity and loyalty with art so that his return to the communal mandate occurs on his own terms as a writer. Rather than resist the inevitability of the historical subject in the writer's predicament, Zuckerman appropriates this history through an imaginative process of rewriting Anne Frank's diary that only the fictional form allows. By occupying the "and" of Jewish identity and historical possibility, Roth discovers liberation where Budick finds entrapment. Thus, it is through the very process of artistic revision that Zuckerman rewrites his relationship to Jewish loyalty and responsibility.

In another novel in Roth's "Zuckerman series," The Counterlife, Zuckerman expresses this transformation from constraining "either/or" binaries to the liberating space of "and":

The burden isn't either/or, consciously choosing from possibilities equally difficult and regrettable--and it's and/and/and/and/and as well. Life *is* and: the accidental and the immutable, the elusive and the graspable, the bizarre and the predictable, the actual and the potential, all the multiplying realities, entangled, overlapping, colliding, conjoined--plus the multiplying illusions!⁵³

The Ghost Writer, with all its dialogic possibilities of holding multiple voices, realities, and identities in a state of contentious, yet unified conversation, affords Roth the possibility to revise the "or" of his critics into "and." This emphasis on revision demands revisiting Lonoff's laborious portrayal of the writing process. Lonoff's description, "I turn sentences around. That's my life" (GW 17), here rather seems to reveal Roth's argument for the merits of revision. Through Zuckerman rewriting Anne Frank's narrative and subsequently his return to Jewish loyalty, Roth exposes his own constant revision of his relationship to the Jewish establishment.

53 Philip Roth, The Counterlife (New York: Vintage, 1986), 306. Hereafter cited in the text with the prefix, "CL."

At the end of the novel, Lonoff implies that all of Zuckerman's experiences somehow aided his development as an artist. Lonoff lightly suggests, "'I'll be curious to see how we all come out someday. It could be an interesting story'" (GW 179). Roth implies that Lonoff somehow staged the events of the novel specifically for Zuckerman's growth as a writer negotiating between responsibilities to community and art. Zuckerman observes Lonoff's final offering as resembling a "literary bar mitzvah" (Cooper 183) when he narrates, "Then, as though having concluded administering my rites of confirmation, he gravely shook my hand" (GW 180). Though at first Lonoff initiates Zuckerman into the world of free, unrestrained art, in the end, Lonoff concludes Zuckerman's return to the age-old Jewish tradition of initiation into adulthood, the world of Jewish duty, and the patriarchy of Jewish loyalty--the Bar Mitzvah. Then again, this return occurs only after Zuckerman exercised his artistic freedom to stretch the boundaries of Jewish mythology. Through Zuckerman's cycle of rejection and return culminating in the interplay of history and artistry, Roth "ghost writes" his own relationship to Jewish loyalty.

III. “*The incredible drama of being a Jew*”: Jewish Loyalty in Operation Shylock

Though The Ghost Writer presents a unique fictional stage in which Roth responds to the question of the writer’s Jewish loyalty, this central issue remains unresolved for the author.

While Zuckerman discovers that he is not simply the self-hating Jewish writer his parents allege he is or the free, independent artist he originally yearns to be, Roth would also seem to find himself problematically situated amid this middle ground. Such unsettling in-betweenness and cyclical traversing forcefully grips Roth, as exemplified by Zuckerman’s initial rejection of the community’s mandate for the writer’s loyalty and his inevitable return to this duty. Haunted by these questions of loyalty, identity, and community, Roth allows such debates to fuel his writing more than a decade after the publication of The Ghost Writer--most dramatically in Operation Shylock: A Confession (1993).

Roth ambitiously extends these agonizing debates in the pseudo-fictional, pseudo-autobiographical Operation Shylock.⁵⁴ My treatment of Roth’s explorations of the Jewish artist and his responsibility to the community necessitates an analysis of this text because of its primary setting. In Operation Shylock, Roth plays out these questions of duty and obligation in the very place that forces American Jews to confront their divided loyalties, Israel. In the rural American countryside of The Ghost Writer, the issue of the writer’s Jewish loyalty revolves around preserving the memory of the Holocaust. In other words, the Jewish community in The Ghost Writer mandates that the artist must demonstrate loyalty to the Jewish historical past.

54 Unlike The Ghost Writer, Roth intersperses true contemporary historical events and actual autobiographical references in Operation Shylock. For instance, the novel references the 1988 trial of John Demjanjuk--a Ukrainian-American autoworker accused of being the Nazi terrorist known as “Ivan the Terrible.” These allusions to reality should merely be treated as textual backdrop to the core of Roth’s project. For example, questions in the novel regarding how “Ivan the Terrible” could have transformed into a “paragon of virtue in a civilized suburban community” provide a foundation for Roth to explore the “incongruities of the self” (Safer 55). Roth positions the protagonist in the text’s intermediate setting between truth and fiction to stage certain debates about community, betrayal, and identity.

Though Operation Shylock addresses the problem of Holocaust consciousness for American Jews, the central question about the writer's Jewish duty revolves around a subject that The Ghost Writer completely ignores. Jewish loyalty in Operation Shylock mostly refers to protecting Jewish statehood and Zionist interests in Israel. In other words, the Jewish community in this novel mandates that the artist must demonstrate loyalty to a Jewish *future*. With Israel as the central point of contention in Operation Shylock, Roth escalates the stakes for both the Jewish-American community and the writer who chooses to make it his subject.

Through positioning Israel at the center of his exploration of the writer's Jewish obligation, Roth utilizes Operation Shylock to dramatize Shostak's contention: "Israel poses an identity crisis for the Diaspora Jew largely because of its symbolic power as the Jewish 'home.'"⁵⁵ For instance, Shostak points to the Passover Seder as an example of Israel's symbolic resonance for American Jews. At the Seder each year, American Jews, like all Jews, repeat the phrase, "Next year in Jerusalem" ("Impersonation" 742). In addition, the novel makes references to the espionage case of Jonathan Pollard--an American Jew paid by Israeli intelligence to spy against his own country's military establishment. Parrish explains this notion of divided allegiance as "the awful schizophrenia that ensues both when one's 'authentic' identity puts one at odds with one's country and when one's country cannot accommodate multiple identities within its mythology" (Parrish 589). By locating the novel in Israel, Roth explores such divided loyalties, epitomized by the hyphen between "Jewish" and "American."⁵⁶

Furthermore, a discussion of the writer's responsibilities to the community would be

55 Debra Shostak, "The Diaspora Jew and the 'Instinct for Impersonation': Philip Roth's Operation Shylock," Contemporary Literature 38:4 (1997): 742, Jstor, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 17 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.jstor.org>>. Hereafter cited in the text as "Impersonation."

56 Cooper confirms, "The protagonist strives for a balance between the Diaspora that nurtured him and the Zionism that would put all Jews into the modern vortex of their ancient culture" (21).

incomplete without an analysis of Operation Shylock due to the identity of its central protagonist, “Philip Roth.” The novel, part of the “Philip Roth series,” stretches the author’s obsession with doubled characters to its limit with the text’s narrator. Though analyzing the protagonist, “Philip Roth,” would seem a more productive means of deciphering Roth’s own answers to questions regarding Jewish loyalty and responsibility, such casting rather complicates this project. In Operation Shylock, “Philip Roth” hardly expresses an ideological position. The narrator’s vocal usurpation of his imposter’s platform at a dinner event (to be discussed later) remains the sole moment in which the narrator relates an ideological diatribe. Aside from that instance, Roth often positions “Philip Roth” in a state of silence. Whether it is Zee, Jinx, or Smilesburger, the narrator encounters numerous talking heads voicing their ideological platforms throughout his journey in Israel; the narrator, on the other hand, responds as a silent listener.

In contrast, Roth allows a protagonist like Zuckerman to readily express his ideological positions. In The Counterlife, Zuckerman goes to Israel to confront his brother, Henry, who immigrated to the country in order to purify himself of his Diaspora sins. In the chapter entitled, “Judea,” Zuckerman articulates the following position on Israel: “To be the Jew that I was, I told Shuki’s father, which was neither more nor less than the Jew I wished to be, I didn’t need to live in a Jewish nation” (CL 53). Thus, Roth allows the character of Zuckerman to explicitly speak to his ideological beliefs, signaling an affinity with the author. Like Zuckerman in The Counterlife, “Philip Roth” navigates through Israel in Operation Shylock; though unlike Zuckerman, “Philip Roth” spends most of his time being talked at rather than doing the talking.

As a result, though it initially seems plausible that “Philip Roth” would offer Roth an ideal mouthpiece through which to relate his own allegiances, the narrator refuses to vocally stand on either end of an ideological issue. Such fluid movement makes it much more difficult

to determine where the author locates himself. Thus, in order to determine where Roth's own loyalties reside, "Philip Roth's" actions rather than words should receive the primary attention. As will be seen, the narrator often acts in contradiction to how he says he will act. In sum, though "Philip Roth" creates a more problematic narrative perspective than Zuckerman because the former refuses to voice a clear position, in another way, "Philip Roth" is a more effective fictional construction; like every successful writer, "Philip Roth" *shows* instead of *tells*.

In addition, the significance of the text's named protagonist, "Philip Roth," resides in the blended genre of Operation Shylock. Though Roth emphasizes the fictional nature of The Ghost Writer, he insists upon the true autobiography of Operation Shylock. He claims that this "novel" is based wholly on true events that he experienced and that the "Philip Roth" in the text is really himself. According to the author, Operation Shylock is *not* a fictional novel; it is a true "confession." As a result, Roth interrogates 'himself' on questions of loyalty and obligation in Operation Shylock.⁵⁷ Merle Rubin confirms that the book is a manifestation of Roth's "ongoing argument with himself."⁵⁸ After putting Zuckerman on the witness stand to defend his loyalty in The Ghost Writer, here "Philip Roth" is finally called to questioning.

The nature of what Roth supposedly "confesses" in Operation Shylock serves to increase the perplexity of the author's insistence on the text's reality. In "A Bit of Jewish Mischief," Roth confirms the validity of the events he depicts in Operation Shylock.⁵⁹ In the book, "Philip Roth"--the narrator--confronts a man in Israel posing under the name of the Jewish-American author, "Philip Roth." This "other Philip Roth," whose appearance is nearly identical to that of

57 Parrish asserts, "Operation Shylock implicitly contains within it both everything that Roth ever wrote and every critical attack his work has engendered" (579).

58 Merle Rubin, "Ironies Within Ironies," The Christian Science Monitor 29 Apr. 1993: 11, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 20 Dec. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>.

59 Philip Roth, "A Bit of Jewish Mischief," The New York Times 7 Mar. 1993: 71, Proquest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 11 Sept. 2006 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text as "Mischief."

the narrator, admits to impersonating “Philip Roth” in order to promote his anti-Zionist proposal, “Diasporism.” The “other Philip Roth” claims he bases his “Diasporist” theory directly on his interpretation of the author’s novels. Operation Shylock then traces the confrontation between “Philip Roth”--the narrator--and “Philip Roth”--the impersonator of the narrator--through a series of both ridiculously comical and gravely serious scenes in Israel.

Yet rather than attempt to confirm, refute, or debate whether or not Roth--the author--is telling the “truth” or just plain mad, Operation Shylock should be treated as its label suggests--“fiction”; in addition, “Philip Roth,” the narrator, should be treated as precisely who he is--a fictional construction of the author.⁶⁰ Just as Portnoy and Zuckerman may or may not bear resemblance to the author, may or may not be shadowy versions of the author, or may or may not be “doubles” of the author, “Philip Roth” follows suit. Though Roth provides only a small link in the great chain of the historical literary use of “doubles,” Roth’s obsession with this fictional device specifically allows him to respond to the critics of his past on questions of loyalty, self-hatred, and homeland. As the imposter forces the narrator to confront the notion of divided selfhood, Roth suggests that Jewishness similarly suffers from division. Roth’s novelistic ‘onioning’--“doubles” within “doubles,” authors within authors, fictions within fictions--exposes loyalty, community, and identity as similarly doubled and divided. The author’s prevalent use of the literary “double” to examine the development of the narrator’s subjectivity in this text provides yet another Rothian narrative strategy that can be read through a psychoanalytic lens.

Not unlike Amy Bellette/Anne Frank in The Ghost Writer, the “other Philip Roth” is a

60 Though Roth explains in the Preface that Operation Shylock originated from real accounts in his notebook journals, Roth deliberately chose to write a work of fiction. For if nothing else, fiction allows the author to collapse realities, conflate truth and falsehood, and blur the real with the imaginary. The Bakhtinian lens of the dialogic capacities of the novel further reveals Roth’s ability to amplify various voices and perspectives--both Jewish and non-Jewish.

shape-shifter.⁶¹ Shostak explains that he “serves as a device--a *reality*, Roth might assert--that reveals all Philip’s multiple and conflicting selves: at once who Philip is, who he thinks he is, who he wishes not to be, who he is seen by others to be” (Countertexts 94). On the one hand, Roth contends that his real-life encounter with the “other Philip Roth” served as a taste of his own medicine. The author explains, “In him I confronted an impertinence as galling, enraging and, yes, personally menacing as my own impertinence could ever have seemed to [my antagonistic readers]” (“Mischief” 71). On the other hand, Parrish argues that the “other Philip Roth” represents an “inspired misreader of Roth’s work” (582). Still the narrator suggests in the text that this “other Philip Roth” is his “genie of grievance,”⁶² acting as the mouthpiece for voicing the responses “Philip Roth” never gave his critics. As a result, the “other Philip Roth” constantly undergoes metamorphoses, occupying various positions as the “double.”

However, the “other Philip Roth’s” most significant shape is arguably the most overlooked by literary scholars. I contend that Roth seems to have created this “other Philip Roth” as an outward manifestation of the writer’s mandate to Jewish loyalty itself. Roth forces his narrator to confront the writer’s Jewish obligation head-on in the form of his imposter. In their first in-person confrontation, the “other Philip Roth” explains his desire to fulfill the writer’s call to speak and act on behalf of the Jewish people. This living, breathing mandate explains to the narrator, ““Your prestige has been a little wasted on you. There’s a lot you haven’t done with it that you could have done--a lot of good. This is not a criticism, just a statement of fact”” (OS 78). The “other Philip Roth” clearly expresses a sense of regret that the narrator deliberately chose not to serve as a public figure; he deliberately chose fiction over

61 For the remainder of the paper, “Roth” will refer to the author, “the narrator” or “the protagonist” to the fictional “Philip Roth,” and the “other Philip Roth” to the narrator’s imposter.

62 Philip Roth, Operation Shylock: A Confession (New York: Vintage, 1994), 74. Hereafter cited in the text with the prefix, “OS.”

serving the Jews. Thus, this “other” desires to usurp the public role that critics derided the narrator (and author) for discarding.⁶³

The “other Philip Roth” insists upon impersonating the famous Jewish-American author not only to speak “IN BEHALF OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE” (OS 87) but to essentially *save* the Jews. Upon the narrator accusing his imposter of acting as a fraudulent version of himself, the “other Philip Roth” writes him a damning letter further emphasizing how he views his mission of impersonation. Just as in The Ghost Writer, Roth allows a fictional character to unload his criticisms of the narrator’s artistic responsibility and Jewish loyalty in the specific written form of the letter. In such a correspondence, the “other Philip Roth” portrays himself in light of both Jewish and Christian mythological constructions of the Messiah. He writes, “IT WAS NOT WITHOUT RESISTANCE THAT I ACCPETED MY ROLE: THE NAKED YOU/THE MESSIANIC YOU/THE SACRIFICIAL YOU. MY JEWISH PASSIONS SHIELDED BY NOTHING. MY JEWISH LOVING UNRESTRAINED” (OS 87). The references to a nude, sacrificial martyr clearly allude to Christ’s crucifixion for the sins of man; in the “other Philip Roth’s” case, he submits to self-sacrifice for the sins of the man he impersonates. The “other Philip Roth” willingly offers himself to the public by choosing to emerge from the pages of fiction and plunge into history, unlike the narrator. In addition, the passive connotation of the phrase, “I accepted my role,” suggests that the “other Philip Roth” submits to his Christ-like mission of martyrdom from a higher calling. Finally, the all-caps passage mirrors the wild, unrestrained nature of the “other Philip Roth’s” devotion to the Jews.

63 Shechner argues that the “other Philip Roth’s” claim that the narrator squanders his fame opens an old wound for Roth. He explains that such a wound is “that he has done little more with his art than soothe, cajole, entertain, and aggrandize himself, never making the responsible leap from the American ‘I’ to Jewish ‘we’” (Shechner 136). As a result, the “other Philip Roth” acts as the narrator’s “conscience,” forcing him to confront his own choices (Shechner 136).

Thus, rather than the narrator's alter-ego, the "other Philip Roth" presents himself as the 'extended-ego.' He claims to desire to put into action what the narrator has already put into fictional words. The "other Philip Roth" pleads, "Allow me to be the public instrument through which you express the love for the Jews/the hatred for their enemies/that is in every word you ever wrote" (OS 87). The "other Philip Roth" asserts that he is simply the worldly extension of the narrator's fictional themes of love of and loyalty to the Jewish people.

Nonetheless, the fact that many voices in Operation Shylock--including "Philip Roth's"--label the "other Philip Roth's" anti-Zionist "Diasporism" an "anti-Semitic" proposal complicates the imposter's sense of Jewish loyalty. Such "Diasporism" proposes the return of all Jews of European background (Ashkenazi Jews) to their original homes in Europe. The "other Philip Roth" claims that Europe, and not Israel, is "'the most authentic Jewish homeland there has ever been'" (OS 32). "Diasporism" suggests that due to the violent tensions between Arabs and Israelis, Jewishness can no longer thrive in Israel; Zionism is no longer useful (OS 32). Fearing an imminent "'second Jewish Holocaust'" (OS 32) in the Middle East through either the Arab annihilation of the Jews or the Jewish annihilation of the Arabs, the "other Philip Roth" insists that the only solution to the question of Jewish survival is resettlement in Europe.

Similar to the revisionist history that Roth offers in The Ghost Writer, Roth revisits the historical moment of the Holocaust through the voice of the "other Philip Roth."⁶⁴ The "other Philip Roth" claims that the goals of "Diasporism" include "'a historical as well as a spiritual victory over Hitler and Auschwitz'" (OS 32). As a result, the "other Philip Roth" attempts to reverse the course of history by returning Jews to the European fate that the Holocaust merely

64 The language through which the "other Philip Roth" describes his "Diasporist" platform returns to and revises the painful images associated with the Holocaust. For instance, the "other Philip Roth's" description of the "trainload of Jews" (OS 45) returning to Europe recalls the ghastly image of freight cars transporting Jews back to Auschwitz (Safer 47).

interrupted rather than eliminated. The “other Philip Roth” implodes the post-war notion that Israel is the true land of Jewish salvation. Instead he labels Israel as the problem that forms the ‘Jewish Question’ and Europe as its solution. Such manipulation of the delicate history of the Holocaust allows Roth to call attention to the question plaguing contemporary American Jews: Can a Jew be critical of Israel without being charged with self-hatred?⁶⁵ Roth plays with this live issue amid his novelistic exploration of the anguish of self-definition.

In the initial confrontation between the narrator and the “other Philip Roth” via telephone, Roth re-stages the debates he had with his own critical reviewers. Unlike The Ghost Writer, it is not an enraged father, mother, or judge interrogating the writer; instead “Philip Roth” is the critic. The narrator impersonates a French journalist when he places a phone call to the “other Philip Roth.” In their conversation, the narrator questions the “other Philip Roth” about his “Diasporism” in light of previous accusations surrounding his supposed “self-hatred” and “anti-Semitism” (OS 41). Suggesting that the “other Philip Roth” will be seen as “an enemy of Israel” (OS 41), the narrator’s choice of labels echoes those the author’s own critics have thrown at his fiction.⁶⁶

Roth is by no means the original inventor of this “Diasporism”; he rather improvises upon a long historical pedigree of Diasporist theory already in existence. Simon Dubnow, a Russian-Jewish historian, championed this platform at the turn of the twentieth century.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Glenn suggests that this marriage between critics of Jewish statehood and self-hatred began since the 1940s but picked up speed in the aftermath of the 1967 Six-Day War and 1973 Yom Kippur War. She explains, “Willingness to give moral and financial ‘support’ to Israel constituted what one historian called ‘the existential definition of American Jewishness.’ . . . Criticism of Israel constituted the existential definition of ‘Jewish self-hatred.’” As political scientist Charles Liebman observed in 1973, many American Jews had come to believe that ‘nonsupport for Israel [w]as a greater ‘crime’ for a Jew than the ‘crime’ of intermarriage” (Glenn 122).

⁶⁶ Parrish explains that in order to combat the views put forward by the “other Philip Roth,” the narrator is ironically “nearly forced into the position of defending Israel because it preserves an essential Jewish self that he has abandoned in America” (583). In other words, the narrator adopts the logic of Roth’s critics that the author has condemned in his novels.

⁶⁷ “Dubnow” is also spelled “Dubnov.”

Dubnow insists that a nation need not be defined by territorial space but rather its “spiritual force.”⁶⁸ Dubnow remarks that though the Jewish Diaspora emerged prior to the downfall of the ancient Jewish kingdom, it gained momentum following the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E.⁶⁹ Rather than resulting in the disappearance of the Jewish nation, the Second Temple disaster spawned thriving Diaspora communities that gradually began establishing communal institutions to build a foundation for national survival.⁷⁰ Dubnow explains, “‘The nation is the kernel and the land is but the shell; the shell may be broken but the kernel remains intact’” (qtd. in Weinberg 187). Among other great centers of Jewish Diaspora, Dubnow points to Germany and Poland in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries.⁷¹ In a response to an essay written by Zionist leader Ahad Ha-Am, “Negation of the Diaspora” (1909), Dubnow replies that a Zionist platform that negates the long history of Jewish Diaspora is “bound to destroy with one hand what it builds with the other” (Nationalism 335). He suggests that Zionism is a *part* of the national movement that Diaspora began rather than its adversary. Dubnow explains, “there is an inextricable connection between a strong national existence in the Diaspora and a healthy Jewish Palestine” (Nationalism 57).

Two contemporary theorists, Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin, have built off of Dubnow’s Diasporist theories to respond to contemporary international conflicts. The brothers contend that

68 Simon Dubnow, Nationalism and History: Essays on Old and New Judaism, ed. Koppel S. Pinson (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1958), 79. Hereafter cited in the text as “Nationalism.”

69 David H. Weinberg, Between Tradition and Modernity: Haim Zhitlowski, Simon Dubnow, Ahad Ha-Am, and the Shaping of Modern Jewish Identity (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1996), 187. Hereafter cited in the text.

70 Dubnow emphasizes, “the Jewish national idea consists of the fact that all the politically splintered parts of Jewry compose a unified cultural-historical nation” (Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews - Volume V: From the Congress of Vienna to the Emergence of Hitler (Cranbury: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1973), 698). Dubnow also contends that Jews living in the Diaspora deserve full civil and political rights as well as social and cultural independence, as would the citizens of any nation. He coins this theory, “autonomism” (Weinberg 196).

71 The “other Philip Roth’s” specific emphasis on returning Jews to Poland seems to draw from Dubnow’s analysis. The text notes that the “other Philip Roth” recently visited Walesa, the solidarity leader in Poland, to discuss his plans for “Diasporism” (OS 31).

the current Zionist ideology in Israel has become a “subversion of Jewish culture and not its culmination.”⁷² Instead of Zionism’s insistence on “ethnic specialty” in an Israel where Jews exclusively consolidate power, the brothers maintain that Israel “[reimport] diasporic consciousness--a consciousness of a Jewish collective as one sharing space with others, devoid of exclusivist and dominating power” (Boyarins 713).⁷³ The Boyarins suggest that unlike Zionism, the Diaspora celebrates communal charity and the “mutual fructification of different life-styles and traditions” (Boyarins 711). In other words, Jews living in the Diaspora benefit from the inevitable intermixing of peoples, while the continuation of Jewish culture is preserved without dispossessing others of their land. In light of the historical celebration of Diasporist theory from Dubnow to the Boyarin brothers, Roth uses the critical responses to the “other Philip Roth’s” platform to play out scenarios of different conceptions of Jewish loyalty and betrayal.

In conjunction with his “Diasporist” program, the “other Philip Roth” continues to demonstrate his thirst for fomenting action on behalf of the narrator through founding the program, “Anti-Semites Anonymous” (A-S.A.). The “recovery group” (OS 90) seeks to ‘cure’ those in Europe who remain anti-Semitic so that the “other Philip Roth’s” plan for the Jewish resettlement of Europe can flourish. Wanda Jane “Jinx” Possesski, the “other Philip Roth’s” Gentile lover, credits A-S.A. for changing her life. She speaks in the tone of a recovering alcoholic as if a member of the step-by-step program: “‘I’m a recovering anti-Semite. I was saved by A-S.A.’” (OS 90). The “other Philip Roth’s” religious language of salvation recurs in Jinx’s discussion of her reformation. Furthermore, members of the group swear to “The Ten

72 Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin, “Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Identity,” Critical Inquiry 19:4 (1993): 712, Jstor, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 5 Feb. 2007 <<http://www.jstor.org>>. Hereafter cited in the text as “Boyarins.”

73 The Boyarin brothers also insist that the biblical Jewish narrative has historically been one of exile, further confirming the Jewish celebration of a diasporist culture. They explain that the alternative story of Israel revolves around “a people forever unconnected with a particular land, a people that calls into question the idea that a people must have a land in order to be a people” (Boyarins 718).

Tenets of Anti-Semites Anonymous” (OS 101). As in Judge Wapter’s ten-part questionnaire in The Ghost Writer, the obvious play on the Ten Commandments further portrays the “other Philip Roth’s” belief that his mission fulfills a prophetic duty. Roth clearly pokes fun at the absurd notions behind “A-S.A.” that suggest anti-Semitism can be treated as an addiction. The author also responds to his critics that touted his work “anti-Semitic,” satirizing their claims that his fiction originated from a ‘diseased’ mind. As a result, Roth mocks those critics who contended that Roth must be similarly reformed through a cure such as “A-S.A.” On the other hand, Roth seems to parody his own yearning for this simple remedy to ‘heal’ himself in the eyes of his attackers; he mocks his own fantasy of purification. Such is another example of Roth’s novelistic self-interrogation.

Following the “other Philip Roth’s” pleas for the writer’s Jewish loyalty, the narrator attempts to resist such a mandate in the form of denying the “other Philip Roth.” The protagonist perceives this imposter as unlawfully usurping his identity rather than expressing a deeper sense of his Jewish devotion. The narrator attempts to distinguish himself from this mere poser who “most certainly was not me” (OS 27).⁷⁴ Through this gesture of identity separation, the artist simultaneously demonstrates his refusal to answer the “other’s” mandated call to Jewish spokespersonship. The narrator also attempts to attribute the dream-like existence of the “other Philip Roth” to his post-depression state.⁷⁵ Finally, the narrator tries to use the fictional space to essentially write himself out of this predicament. Nevertheless, the narrator suffers an inability to use his artistic faculties to liberate himself from the “other Philip Roth’s” shackles of

74 Ironically, Parrish suggests that the narrator can only mollify the “other Philip Roth’s” threat through a form of self-hatred (588); such constitutes the very charge that Roth’s critics have historically leveled against him. The narrator’s characterization of his “other” as “his worst enemy, the one to whom the only bond is hatred” (OS 204) provides just one example of his abhorrent and thus nullifying response toward the “other Philip Roth.”

75 The narrator explains that the depression resulted from the Halcion sleeping pills he took after knee surgery. Such events are said to have actually occurred in the author’s life. This represents an example of Roth interweaving autobiography with fiction.

duty. He explains, “But I never did escape from this plot-driven world into a more congenial, subtly probable, innerly propelled narrative of my own devising” (OS 248). Thus, the artist’s escapist fantasy cannot propel him out of the chaotic dilemma of divided loyalties.

It is through the authorial power of naming (or re-naming) that the narrator ultimately attempts to undermine the “other Philip Roth’s” mandate. The narrator’s choice in name, “Moishe Pipik”--“Moses Bellybutton”--is deliberate. Taken out of Jewish folklore as a mildly derogatory Yiddish epithet, the narrator explains the connotations of such a nickname: “the little guy who wants to be a big shot, the kid who pisses in his pants, the someone who is a bit ridiculous, a bit funny, a bit childish, the comical shadow alongside whom we had all grown up” (OS 116). Thus, the narrator attempts to usurp control over his imposter by reducing him to nothing more than a wannabe “Pipik.” In addition, the narrator chooses this name in a gesture of defaming the sacred in order to further belittle the imposter’s status. Similar to Roth’s playing with Anne Frank in The Ghost Writer, here the author continues to twist the sacred object into absurdity. The pairing of the words “Moishe Pipik”--“Moses Bellybutton”--exemplifies this desecration. “Moses,” the prophetic figure who liberated the Jewish people from bondage in Egypt and led them into Israel, is facetiously linked with “bellybutton.” Though Pipik views himself as a modern-day Moses, the narrator undermines his calling by giving him the frivolous surname, “bellybutton.” The narrator uses such demonization of the ‘good’ to defame the “other Philip Roth” and, subsequently, the gravity of his plea to act in the interests of the Jews. Once again, Roth transforms the utterly serious into a farce.

A closer look at “Moishe Pipik,” however, suggests that the real joke is on the narrator. Despite his attempts to turn Pipik into a parody, the narrator nevertheless chooses such a name that evokes an inescapable link to the origins of Jewish loyalty. Derek Parker Royal suggests,

“The bellybutton can be seen as one of our most primitive links to identity. It is the remnant of a connection that once provided us with life and bound us to our (parental and ethnic history).”⁷⁶ This “scar” of Jewish identity (Parker Royal 85) symbolizes historical origin, recalling the invisible umbilical cord to Jewish loyalty that continues to pull back the writer. Thus, by evoking the notion of “bellybutton,” the narrator’s attempt to belittle his imposter further entraps him in this un-ending cycle of identification and rejection. At the same time, Roth emphasizes that the bellybutton cannot be pinpointed in either time or place. The narrator explains that “Pipik” represents “the *thing* that for most children was neither here nor there, neither a part nor an orifice, somehow a concavity and a convexity both, something neither upper nor lower” (OS 116). This suggestion resonates with the bellybutton’s physical release from the umbilical cord upon birth. As such, the individual possesses a degree of freedom in redefining or rewriting his/her relationship to this ethnic identity.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the writer in Operation Shylock will prove bound by the invisible pull of the cord, inevitably returning to the community’s navel.

Pipik, however, is by no means the lone character in the novel who serves as a constant reminder of the narrator’s responsibilities as a Jewish-American writer.⁷⁸ Whereas Smilesburger suggests later in the novel, “‘inside every Jew is a *mob* of Jews. The good Jew, the bad Jew. . . . The lover of Jews, the hater of Jews. . . . He *is* a dispute, incarnate!’” (OS 334), Roth manifests this Jewish divisiveness through the conflicting, dialogic explosions of various characters throughout the novel. In this way, Roth provides his readership with a demonstration project in

76 Derek Parker Royal, “Texts, Lives, and Bellybuttons: Philip Roth’s Operation Shylock and the Renegotiation of Subjectivity,” in Turning Up the Flame: Philip Roth’s Later Novels, ed. Jay L. Halio and Ben Siegel (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005). Hereafter cited in the text.

77 Parrish confirms, “The navel marks the space once occupied by the umbilical cord, which tied one to the womb. Once the cord is cut, though, one’s self must find its way among other selves. When placed in conjunction with the name ‘Moses,’ ‘bellybutton’ at once evokes the origin of Jewish identity and its loss. Pipik therefore represents to Roth the necessary cutting of the cable that enables the invention of his own identity” (593).

78 For the remainder of this section, “Pipik” will refer to the “other Philip Roth.”

Bakhtin's theory of "heteroglossia." Nearly every figure in the novel relates a speech or diatribe on Jewish identity and obligation.⁷⁹ Yet the narrator must negotiate such dialogism in the individual psyche through an internal, cyclical monologue of rejection and return. Once again, I contend that these simultaneous narrative impulses in Roth's fiction necessitate both Bakhtinian and psychoanalytic readings.

For instance, George "Zee" Ziad confuses the narrator for his Diasporist imposter and thus insists that the narrator serve as an anti-Zionist Messiah. Zee delivers a passionate lecture to the protagonist about the "Jewish military state" (OS 132) of Israel. He condemns the "power-mad Jews" (OS 133) who continue to exploit the memory of the Holocaust in order to justify their ruthless aggression toward Zee's fellow Arabs. As a result, Zee views the narrator's "Diasporism" (though it is actually his imposter's platform) as the answer to his prayers. He lectures the narrator on his responsibility to the Jewish people as far beyond that of merely producing fiction: "'Philip, *you are a Jewish prophet and you always have been.* . . . Old friend, we need you, we all need you, the occupiers as much as the occupied need your Diaspora boldness and your Diaspora brain'" (OS 137). Zee determines the narrator's writerly obligation to be performing a Messianic duty on behalf of *both* Arabs and Jews through repairing the Mid-East crisis with a "Diasporist" Band-Aid. Like Pipik, Zee insists that the narrator leave the comforts of his fictional world and infiltrate contemporary historical reality.⁸⁰

79 Robert Alter explains that such character performances resemble the Jewish mode of stand-up comedy in the 1950s, "spritz," in which different performers expressed their opinions on politics and issues of identity. Alter compares this "spritz" to the character performances in *Operation Shylock*: "The various characters express their extreme positions shrilly and uncompromisingly, if also sometimes amusingly. The narrator, a bundle of confusions and ambivalences, works back and forth dialectically between clashing perspectives" (Robert Alter, "The Spritzer -- *Operation Shylock: A Confession* by Philip Roth," *The New Republic* 5 Apr. 1993: 33, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 23 Jan. 2007 <<http://www.proquest.com>>. Hereafter cited in the text).

80 Jinx, Pipik's girlfriend, similarly stakes a claim to the narrator's worldly responsibilities as a writer. After overhearing Pipik's plan to kidnap Demjanjuk's son and send his amputated body parts to his father until he confesses to being "Ivan the Terrible," Jinx insists that it is the narrator's duty to stop Pipik. She echoes Zee's Messianic description of the narrator: "'You are the hero, like it or not!'" (OS 220).

The narrator, however, deflects Zee's notion of responsibility, expressing that he has no interest in his friend's effort to effectively recruit him for the PLO. Yet such lectures in artistic responsibility do not end with Zee. An Israeli bookseller, Supposnik, gives the narrator the supposed original diaries of Leon Klinghoffer--“The defenseless Jew crippled in a wheelchair that the brave Palestinian freedom fighters shot in the head and threw into the Mediterranean Sea” (OS 278). He entrusts the narrator with these diaries because he insists that the writer must sign his name to the introduction to these journals in order to elicit publishing interest beyond Israel's borders.⁸¹ Supposnik asserts, “Only you can bring to these two little travel diaries the compassionate knowledge that will reveal to the world exactly who it was and what it was that was murdered” (OS 279). Unlike Zuckerman's demythologization of Anne Frank in The Ghost Writer, here Supposnik requests that the writer use his authorship in order *to mythologize*. The narrator, once again, refutes this mandated obligation of the artist. He explicitly responds, “I can't be responsible” (OS 279). Yet in the end, the narrator cannot divest himself from the inescapable possibility that he is, somehow, responsible. The protagonist keeps the diaries in his possession, demonstrating his inevitable return to the unyielding pull of his Jewish loyalty.

Roth complicates this notion of return even further when he transforms the narrator into an impersonator of his own impersonator. In the vein of the author's obsession with overlapping identities, the narrator responds to Pipik's identity challenge through an attempt to beat him at his own game. Instances of this irony of all ironies include the narrator sleeping with Pipik's girlfriend, Jinx, accepting a million-dollar-check clearly meant for Pipik from an interested funder of “Diasporism,” and becoming a mouthpiece for Pipik's “Diasporism” when he lectures Zee's family on the *merits* of such a proposal. Aharon Appelfeld describes the narrator's attempt

81 The text will later reveal the fraudulent nature of these diaries. Supposnik is actually a Mossad agent attempting to lure the narrator into the mission of espionage he will eventually accept upon Smilesburger's invitation.

to impersonate his own impersonator as a typical writerly exercise in revision. He explains in the text, ““Because you have a better conception of him than he does. Rabbi Liva started with clay; you begin with sentences. It’s perfect. . . . You are going to rewrite him”” (OS 107).

Appelfeld suggests that the narrator’s fictional instincts will allow him to rewrite the very man attempting to rewrite him, and by doing so, his relationship to Jewish responsibility.

By the novel’s conclusion, the narrator returns to the role of the loyal, Messianic Jew that Pipik originally envisioned for him. Before he learns of this opportunity, Israeli intelligence--the Mossad--captures the narrator and imprisons him in a classroom. In a state of anxious anticipation, the narrator experiences an unusual yearning to hear Pipik’s voice echo his own. The narrator apologizes to Pipik for disrespecting him, hoping to elicit his re-emergence. With no response from Pipik, the narrator realizes what he must do. He acknowledges, “Only when I spoke my name as though I believed it was his name as well, only then would Pipik reveal himself and negotiations commence to propitiate his rage” (OS 320). Realizing that Pipik is somehow linked to the narrator’s physical and perhaps spiritual salvation, he calls out to him with his own name--“Philip.” The narrator seems to confirm their inseparability, conceding the very thing Pipik insisted upon from the start. Almost gushing with regret and apology, the narrator desires “Philip’s” forgiveness for not recognizing him for who he is--an undeniable part of himself. Reversing his initial mission for distinction, the narrator now authorizes their indistinguishable inseparability. Somehow the narrator’s liberation seems dependent upon his acknowledgement that Pipik exists as a part of himself.

However, Roth immediately undercuts the reader’s belief that the text has reached the climatic moment of character reform through Pipik’s silence. The narrator bluntly states, “He did not answer” (OS 320). What the narrator fails to realize at this moment is that the voice he is

waiting to answer his call is not Pipik's, but rather it is his own. Following Pipik's silent response, Smilesburger enters the classroom with a proposition for the narrator. He reveals that he plotted the narrator's capture in order to offer him the opportunity to fulfill a secret mission in Athens for the Mossad. In another ironic twist, the narrator's assignment cannot be fulfilled without Pipik, in a sense. The mission involves exposing those "self-hating" Jews who financially support Palestinian organizations to undermine Zionist interests. Roth permits readers to assume that the narrator will disguise himself as his "Diasporist" imitator in order to gain access into this circle of anti-Zionist bankrollers of the PLO; upon pinpointing such anti-Zionist funders, Smilesburger implies that he may order their killing. In other words, the narrator confronts the opportunity to answer Pipik's call to perform a Messianic act on behalf of Jewry through the very exposure of anti-Zionist sympathizers like Pipik. It is only after the narrator acknowledges Pipik as "Philip"--as an inevitable part of his Jewish self--that the narrator agrees to such a task. Where Pipik's silence leaves off in the classroom, the narrator picks up.⁸²

Upon the narrator's initial resistance, Smilesburger uses an unusual method of persuasion to lure the narrator into the mission. Smilesburger tenderly and rhetorically strokes the narrator, suggesting that he is free from the shackles of Jewish duty; as a Diaspora Jew, he retains the power of choice. In an underhanded tone, the Mossad agent proposes to the narrator:

"Go to wherever you feel most blissfully unblamable. That is the delightful luxury of the utterly transformed American Jew. Enjoy it. You are that marvelous, unlikely, most magnificent phenomenon, the truly liberated Jew. The Jew who is not accountable. The Jew who finds the world perfectly to his liking. The *comfortable* Jew. The *happy* Jew.

⁸² The mission also entails the narrator realizing the meeting with Arafat that Pipik previously tried to arrange (Parrish 590). In addition, the protagonist will essentially act as a spy on behalf of Israel, rewriting the Pollard case to which Pipik speaks to earlier in the novel (Parrish 589).

Go. Choose. Take. Have. You are the blessed Jew condemned to nothing, least of all to our historical struggle.” (OS 352)

Such innocent diction as “unblamable,” “liberated,” and “comfortable” suggests that the narrator maintains his free will as an American Jew to decide where his loyalties reside--to Israel, to America, or to his art. However, Smilesburger’s generous tone in “Go. Choose” is laced with profound irony. For in the end, the narrator is *not* free to “choose,” to “take,” or to “have.” He is anything but “comfortable” or content. He *is* fatally “condemned” to *everything* Jewish, most of all to the Jews’ (his own) historical struggle. By the novel’s end, it will be clear that despite his Diaspora identity, the narrator is inextricably bound to his Jewish origins. Smilesburger’s argument for the narrator’s liberation merely mocks his imprisonment.

The opening of the Epilogue entitled, “Words Generally Only Spoil Things,” suggests that the narrator eventually agreed to the mission. Yet the Epilogue stands where the chapter detailing the narrator’s assignment should have been; the protagonist explains that he deleted this final chapter. Before he recounts what led to this authorial omission, the narrator first discusses why he conceded to the Zionist mission in the first place. He denies that his decision revolved around a sense of Jewish loyalty; instead the narrator simply contends that the assignment appealed to his writerly curiosity. When Smilesburger insists that the narrator “fulfilled a Jewish duty” (OS 384) through the mission, the narrator calmly counters, “Well, I didn’t see it that way then and I don’t now” (OS 384). Thus, if the narrator emerges as an activist for the Jewish people through completing this mission, he is certainly a reluctant spokesman--one driven

by fascination rather than a sense of loyalty.⁸³ The narrator argues that he is merely impersonating a “good Jew.” He suggests, “I had concluded that the best way to serve my professional interest was to act as though it were nothing *but* the good Jew, rising to the call of duty, who was signing on as an Israeli operative” (OS 358). Yet Roth will blur the line between the narrator pretending to be a loyal Jew and genuinely serving as such.

Smilesburger maintains that the narrator must continue to perform his Jewish duty by deleting his final chapter in order to protect the Mossad’s interests. He explains that the Mossad would challenge the narrator’s Zionist loyalty if he were to publish the events of the mission. Smilesburger eventually persuades the narrator to agree to such artistic suppression by exposing the writer’s state of utter denial. In one of the most daring passages in the text, Smilesburger asserts that despite the narrator’s refutations, his Jewish loyalty is his most obvious ‘guilty pleasure.’ The Mossad agent launches:

“Why do you persist in maintaining that you undertook this operation as a writer only, when in your heart you know as well as I now do, having only recently enjoyed all your books, that you undertook and carried it out as a loyal Jew? . . . Why camouflage your Jewish motives like this, when you are in fact no less ideologically committed than your fellow patriot Jonathan Pollard was? . . . but continuing to pretend that you went to Athens only for the sake of your calling--is this really less compromising to your independence than admitting that you did it because you happen to be Jewish to the core? Being as Jewish as you are is your most secret vice.” (OS 388)

83 Cooper contends that the reluctant spokesman for the Jewish people in *Operation Shylock* could not have been given a more appropriate name than “Philip Roth.” Cooper explains that the protagonist is “someone who is suspended in reputation between a Jewish hero and self-hating Jewish enemy, who could be embraced for the wrong reasons by anti-Zionists and employed at the same time by Israeli intelligence. Here would be the tale of the reluctant Zionist spy who came in from the Diaspora cold. What better lead character to play that *schlemiel* than Philip Roth himself?” (253).

Rather than continue in the critical vein of exposing the author's "self-hatred" or "anti-Semitism" in his fiction, Smilesburger reveals "Philip Roth's" hidden "Jewish motives." Smilesburger's diction of permanence, such as "lodged" and "core," suggests that the narrator's Jewishness is elementary to his being. The agent's contention, "Being as Jewish as you are is your most secret vice," implies that the thing that critics have publicly ridiculed Roth for denying is the very thing his protagonist-creation, and himself, most secretly hold dear--his Jewish loyalty.

Smilesburger leaves the narrator with the last sentence of the novel, "Let your Jewish conscience be your guide" (OS 398). With the chapter, "Operation Shylock," deleted from the text and the final "Note to the Reader" labeling the book a "work of fiction," Roth allows his readership to believe that the narrator fulfilled his Jewish loyalty exactly as Smilesburger predicted. The narrator relinquishes the writer's primary "responsibility" (OS 377) that Roth celebrates in his novels--the artist's freedom to write without outside interference. In addition, the deletion of the final chapter also reverses the *loshon hora* Smilesburger warned against earlier in the text.⁸⁴ By suppressing this section of his novel, the narrator refuses to use language to damage the interests of the Mossad; he refuses to speak out against fellow Jews. Parrish confirms, "That the missing episode depicting his spy mission, his chosen silence, becomes the title for the book suggests that Operation Shylock is not so much about the stories that Roth has told, as critics have always complained, but the story he has not told" (592). Constantly derided by critics who claim that he mercilessly 'tells on' the Jews' most idiosyncratic faults, here

84 The rabbinical teaching of *loshon hora* stems from the early twentieth-century Polish rabbinical luminary, Israel HaCohen--more commonly known as the Chofetz Chaim. According to Alter, Chaim "became a household name in the Orthodox Jewish world for his moralizing tracts against the abuses of speech" (33). The Chofetz Chaim developed the laws of evil speech, *loshon hora*, to forbid Jews from making derogatory or damaging comments about fellow Jews. Smilesburger recounts, "Angry disputes, verbal abuse, malicious backbiting, mocking gossip, scoffing, faultfinding, complaining, condemning, insulting--the blackest mark against our people is not the eating of pork, it is not even marrying with the non-Jew: worse than both is the sin of Jewish speech" (OS 332).

“Philip Roth” chooses silence in an apparent act of Jewish loyalty. Tellingly titling the Epilogue, “Words Generally Spoil Things,” the narrator ironically performs the act of censorship that Roth’s attackers have begged him to do.

Thus, Smilesburger ultimately succeeds as the narrator’s reminder of the inescapability of Jewish obligation.⁸⁵ Rubin-Dorsky confirms that Smilesburger “functions as a ‘fantastic’ father figure for him, a magnified superego intent on reminding him of his ‘responsibilities’ to the Jewish people.”⁸⁶ Despite his initial defiant rejections to Smilesburger’s offers to fulfill the mission and delete the chapter, the narrator eventually concedes to both; the protagonist obeys as only the “good Jewish son” would. Zee nearly predicts this submission earlier in the text, positing, “‘They have called you the filthiest names, charged you with the most treacherous acts of betrayal, and yet you continue to feel responsible to them . . . you persist, in the face of their self-righteous stupidity, to be their loving, loyal son’” (OS 136). The narrator proves to be the devoted son despite his instinct for Oedipal rebellion.

Rubin-Dorsky concludes his analysis of Operation Shylock with the following contention: “So, while Philip Roth remains oppositionally irreverent and fiercely individual, his loyalty to the Jews--and to his Jewishness--can no longer be doubted” (“Authenticity” 102). Though Rubin-Dorsky is not alone in acknowledging the narrator’s inevitable and undeniable return to a sense of Jewish duty, he and other critics neglect to observe the complications imbedded in the protagonist’s return. On the one hand, the narrator’s return to his Jewish duty is complicated by the fact that it is precisely art--fiction, for that matter--that provides the narrator

85 Cooper’s argument connecting “the father principle” and the patriarchy of Jewish loyalty resonates in Smilesburger’s symbolic paternity to the narrator (see discussion in Chapter II, page 25). As he represents the father figure to the narrator, he simultaneously symbolizes a reminder of the narrator’s call to Jewish loyalty.

86 Jeffrey Rubin-Dorsky, “Philip Roth and American Jewish Identity: The Question of Authenticity,” American Literary History 13:1 (2001): 94, OCLC FirstSearch, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 17 Sept. 2006 <<http://firstsearch.oclc.org>>. Hereafter cited in the text as “Authenticity.”

with the means to prove his loyalty. Though critics blasted Roth's novels for demonstrating his *betrayal* to the Jewish community, here the narrator's expression of *loyalty* is fiction itself. Pure art, embodied by the "Note to the Reader" at the end of the novel labeling the text a work of fiction, provides the only mechanism through which the narrator could demonstrate his Jewish responsibility. Smilesburger encourages the narrator to do what he has historically done, to fictionalize, in order to protect the integrity of the Mossad. Smilesburger ironically suggests to the narrator to "'do nothing more than you have been doing as a writer all your life. A little imagination, please--it won't kill you. To the contrary'" (OS 387). The "Note to the Reader" becomes the narrator's pinnacle demonstration of his loyalty; fiction is his Messianic sacrifice.

In addition, the most telling aspect of the narrator's nuanced return is the fact that the novel concludes not in the biblical homeland of Israel but with a return to the other homeland--the Jewish Diaspora in America. Roth does not strictly uphold the primacy of Zionist loyalty in the end; the Jewish-American writer is at least one-half American. Statelessness and the Diaspora continue to possess significant resonances for both the narrator and Roth. In the Epilogue, Smilesburger and the narrator reunite in a New York restaurant. Parrish explains, "By removing Smilesburger from Israel to New York in order to give Roth his final lesson about identity, Roth reinforces the point that his Israel novel takes its fullest meaning only in an American context" (598). The New York deli in which the two meet to discuss the fictionalizing of Operation Shylock exudes aromas of traditional Jewish food and echoes of Yiddish voices.⁸⁷ Roth describes the "smells with a lineage that, like these stores themselves, more than likely led

⁸⁷ The 'Jewish joke' that Smilesburger relates to the narrator in the deli further celebrates this Jewish-American culture. The joke recounts a Chinese waiter speaking impeccable Yiddish to customers in a Jewish restaurant. When one of the customers tells the owner of his observation, the owner responds, "'*Shah*, shhh. . . not so loud--he thinks he's learning English'" (OS 385). As a result, this scene allows Roth to return to Portnoy's infamous lamentation--"this is my life . . . and I'm living it in the middle of a Jewish joke!" (PC 36).

straight back through the shtetl to the medieval ghetto” (OS 378-379).

Though Shechner contends that Operation Shylock’s conclusion clearly demonstrates Roth’s celebration of the Jewish Diaspora (144), I argue that the novel is less a universal affirmation of American Diaspora Jewishness than an exploration of the lingering imperative of loyalty on the Jewish-American writer. The narrator’s nostalgia about his Jewish upbringing in America seems to express his alternative need to affirm a Diaspora consciousness in opposition to the other Zionist voice within him. In response to the voice of Zionist duty that clearly grips the narrator in his agreement to fulfill the mission for the Mossad, Roth gives airtime to the voice of Diaspora freedom as well. Roth performs the role of democratic disc jockey, giving both speakers within the narrator--the Zionist Jew and the Diaspora Jew--the opportunity to express their respective visions of loyalty for the Jewish-American writer. The narrator’s nostalgic return to the New York deli as a quasi-Jewish homeland coupled with his loyal return to Zionist interests in Israel ultimately suggest Roth’s mutual celebration of both Zionist and Diasporist conceptions of Jewishness.

The narrator’s cyclical phases of identification, rejection, and return in Operation Shylock allow Roth to demonstrate the constant, unstable movement that marks the Jewish-American writer’s dynamic world. In the end, Roth appears to occupy some intermediary space between the patriarchal pull of Jewish obligation and the writer’s creative freedom, resisting the move to come down on a particular side.⁸⁸ Although Rubin-Dorsky contends that “what, finally, constitutes Jewish authenticity?” (“Authenticity” 94) marks the novel’s central question, Roth undermines such singular, essentialist notions altogether. Whether or not the narrator and/or

⁸⁸ Shechner argues that attempting to determine where exactly Roth’s loyalties reside is a futile and unproductive endeavor. He explains, “We seldom if ever get closer to the heart of Roth’s fiction by isolating the voice of responsibility. It’s there, but no more important than the voices of terror, of loneliness, of mockery, of skepticism, of rage, of amazement, of comedy, of zealotry, of wild imagining” (4).

Roth are first and foremost Jews or first and foremost artists, more significance resides in how these writers mediate this chaotic relationship between fiction and religion; Roth elevates the *process* of this dynamic dialogue rather than its result. In this way, Roth re-authors his relationship to the mandate that he must uphold his Jewish duty as a writer by allowing his fiction to *engage* this mandate--to talk back to it, to listen to it, to wrestle with it, to concede to it--as a living, breathing entity.

IV. *The “unspeakable truth”*: A Conclusion

On the issue of the writer’s responsibility of spokespersonship, Roth offered a brief statement in his article, “Writing About Jews,” from 1963. He explains, “I did not want to, did not intend to, and was not able to speak *for* American Jews; I surely did not deny, and no one questioned the fact, that I spoke *to* them, and I hope to others as well” (RMAO 168).

Nevertheless, Roth’s later fiction questions his own contention. He uses texts such as The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock to interrogate his own refutation of the responsibility to speak on behalf of the Jewish-American community. Roth provides a fictional stage in these novels for his writer-protagonists to negotiate the tension between art and community. I argue that these narrators experience a cyclical relationship to the community’s mandate that the artist must uphold a sense of Jewish loyalty, beginning with rejection, followed by response, and ultimately concluding in return. Yet this return is nuanced by the writer’s application of demythologization--whether of iconic Jewish figures like Anne Frank or the essentialist Jewish homeland in Israel--which allows these narrators to rewrite their relationship to the community’s mandate. Through these narrative mouthpieces, Roth constantly re-imagines his relationship to such pressures to demonstrate Jewish responsibility. Thus, Roth’s later fiction not only offers his most profound response to the accusations his critics launched at him regarding his abandonment of duty, but Roth also uses the novelistic space to interrogate his own former claims.

Interestingly enough, the newest charge surrounding the “bad boy” of Jewish writers accuses the author of having lost his controversial edge in recent days. Nearly 40 years after Portnoy’s Complaint propelled Roth into notorious fame, outcry from rabbis, Jewish mothers, and literary critics has nearly been silenced. Roth seems to have even made some amends with the Jewish community that originally threatened to disown him. For instance, The Forward--a

national weekly Jewish newspaper--printed an excerpt from Operation Shylock before its release.⁸⁹ Esther B. Fein comments on “the irony that a Jewish newspaper would be excerpting Mr. Roth’s work so many decades later” (C17). As a result, Roth appears to have finally quelled his readership. Yet some critics contend that this newest trend could prove detrimental for the author. David Brauner posits, “If . . . Roth is no longer being read by a fiercely antagonistic audience, then he may have lost one of the most fertile sources for his imagination.”⁹⁰

However, Brauner’s assertion overlooks one of Roth’s most poignant fuels for his novelistic explorations--the antagonistic Jew within himself. Roth’s later fiction clearly stems from the perpetual, internal struggle with the “mob of Jews” (OS 334) inside his being. Throughout his career, Roth’s fiction reveals that the author is plagued, even haunted, by the various inner Jewish voices engaged in contentious dialogue within him. Thus, whether or not the author’s “antagonistic audience” has chosen silence in recent days, the shrill voices inside of Roth--“the good Jew,” “the bad Jew,” “the loyal Jew,” “the disloyal Jew,” “the responsible Jew,” “the irresponsible Jew”--continue to speak. And instead of turning a deaf ear, Roth allows such restless internal dialogism to spark his imaginative enterprises.

Brauner also neglects the fact that readers’ frustrations regarding Roth’s more recent novels have not disappeared; they have merely changed form. Though much of the controversy surrounding Roth’s “self-hatred” or “anti-Semitism” has died down, his readership has become increasingly concerned about the issue of autobiography in his novels. Much of the outcry after the publication of Operation Shylock consisted of irritation about what was “true” and what was not in the novel, what came from Roth’s biographical history and what from his fictional

89 Esther B. Fein, “Book Notes,” The New York Times 17 Feb. 1993: C17, ProQuest, Hatcher Graduate Lib., Ann Arbor, M.I., 23 Jan. 2007 <<http://www.proquest.com>>.

90 David Brauner, “Fiction as Self-Accusation: Philip Roth and the Jewish Other,” Studies in American Jewish Literature 17 (1998): 15.

imagination.⁹¹ Yet according to Roth, Operation Shylock gives his readers exactly what they have desired since 1969. From an interview following the book's publication, Roth offers the following statement:

"The only thing I've told them is that when I wrote Portnoy's Complaint, everybody was sure it was me, but I told them it wasn't. When I wrote The Ghost Writer everybody was sure it was me, but I said none of these things ever happened to me. I never met a girl who looked like Anne Frank. I didn't have some nice writer take me into his house. I made it all up. And now when I tell the truth, they all insist that I made it up. I tell them, 'Well, how can I make it up since you've always said I am incapable of making anything up?' I can't win!" (qtd. in "Sees Double" C13)

Roth playfully contends that while readers claimed novels like Portnoy's Complaint and The Ghost Writer were autobiographical despite Roth's insistence on their fictionality, he concedes that Operation Shylock *is* autobiographical despite his readership's insistence on its fictionality. Such constitutes the updated "no-win bind" (Budick 218) in which Roth now finds himself entrapped.

Despite Roth's undertaking to confirm the truthful nature of Operation Shylock, his experiment in mixing the narrative forms of autobiography and fiction in much of his work (not excluding The Ghost Writer) demonstrates the author's deliberate gesture to explore the Jewish

91 Shechner explains, "By 1993, the days were long past when Roth would routinely be driven out of town by reviews or need a friendly bodyguard of critics to ride shotgun for him, but in 1993, no less than in 1959 or 1969, he needed explaining, and Operation Shylock was an explainer's paradise" (140).

self.⁹² Parrish explains, “By pretending to write a book that is ‘really’ about himself, Roth actually demonstrates how fictive reality is” (580). Even more so, Roth demonstrates how fictive identity is. Roth uses the space of the novel to parallel self-making with fiction-making. Both processes traverse boundaries between history and imagination, allow multiple voices to speak, and remain in a constant state of revision; to write fiction is to write the self. In addition, the process of fictionalization also mirrors the incomplete development of Jewish identity and, specifically, the never-ending, cyclically progressing predicament of loyalty for the Jewish-American writer. A limitless unfolding exists within the paradigm that the writer experiences, as he fluidly moves from Jewish loyalty to artistic freedom and back again. Thus, only the formal embodiment of such incompleteness--the novel--can properly capture the writer’s drama.

Furthermore, Parker Royal discusses the intersection of autobiography and fiction in the context of truth and falsehood. He suggests that fictional autobiography attempts to reveal some hidden truth through a lie. In the text, the narrator hints, “fiction . . . provides the storyteller with the lie through which to expose his unspeakable truth” (OS 58). Parker Royal contends that Roth’s “‘unspeakable truth’--whether it be of the Holocaust, the profound effects of Zionism, the benefits and costs of Diaspora, the place of the Jew in both assimilated and non-assimilated communities, or the very fragmented and decentered nature of ethnic identity itself--is best revealed through a ‘lie,’ and in this case the lie is the text” (73). Thus, despite the critical belief that Roth simply deceives his readership by insisting upon the autobiographical truth of a text like Operation Shylock, such a ‘lie’ represents a cover for Roth’s attempt to divulge a hidden

92 Parker Royal confirms Roth’s obsession with the interrelationship between autobiography and fiction. He maintains that Roth’s collusion of autobiography with fiction demonstrates that identity is “nothing more than a construction” (70). He continues that Roth “brings the postmodern ‘play’ of textual creation into the realm of the Jewish experience and in doing so explores the ways in which Jews in general, and Jewish Americans in particular, have ‘created’ or defined themselves against the backdrop of both their ethnic heritage and the non-Jewish culture at large” (Parker Royal 74).

truth about the issues of Jewish identity and responsibility.

Though my treatment has thus far offered an exploration of the results of the tension between the writer's loyalty to community and devotion to artistic freedom, a re-visitation of the *causes* of such a predicament is now in order. Interestingly enough, The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock tend to diverge on their positions on the origins of this conflict while they seem to agree upon its results--a return to a sense of Jewish loyalty nuanced by artistic revision. On the one hand, the Jamesian allusion, "'the rest is the madness of art'" (GW 77), embodies the underlying causal assumption in The Ghost Writer. In this novel, Roth intimates that it is the seemingly liberating space of art that writes the author into conflict with the community in the first place. The writer (in this case, Zuckerman) mistakes this fictional realm as a free space beyond responsibility and obligation. Nonetheless, Zuckerman's father explains how this apparently pure artistic realm becomes tainted by outside interference. He declares, "'People don't read art--they read about *people*'" (GW 92). Such "non-artistic uses" (Cooper 183) of art inevitably transform a work of fiction into a social document beyond the author's control.⁹³ As a result, The Ghost Writer implies that the fantasy of fictional freedom betrays writers into believing they can produce pure art when, in fact, readership inevitably contaminates such texts.

Thus, the "'madness of art'" (GW 77) misleads writers into the community's wrath of obligation. Roth stepped directly into the readership's fire of duty in his early career, especially with texts like "Defender of the Faith" and Portnoy's Complaint. Roth's initial Jewish audience read his novelistic explorations as both reflections of the author's own prejudices as well as personal attacks on their Judaism (as discussed earlier). Such readership reactions in turn shaped Roth's later fictional treatments of the Jewish writer's predicament.

93 Roth confirms, "'When you publish a book, it's the world's book. The world edits it'" (qtd. in Atlas 111).

Nevertheless, Operation Shylock appears to invert Roth's causal conclusions in The Ghost Writer. Instead of assuming that the apparently liberated space of art deceives the writer into the predicament with the Jewish establishment, Operation Shylock suggests that it is "the incredible drama of being a Jew" (OS 329) that initially spurs such a conflict. Thus, while Zuckerman discovers that the madness enveloping the Jewish-American writer stems from art, "Philip Roth" exposes Jewish identity itself as the source of the chaos. Roth's causal explanation in Operation Shylock resides in the text's emphasis on Jewish origins. The motif of bellybuttons in the novel positions the Jewish writer in a struggle between his communal history and his desire to break free of this history. Pipik--the embodiment of "bellybutton"--as well as other patriarchal symbols like Smilesburger continue to remind the narrator of his innate tie to his Jewish origins. And it is this umbilical cord-like tie to Jewishness that provokes the writer's conflict between community and art. Thus, Operation Shylock seems to reverse Roth's contention in The Ghost Writer. In other words, which came first--the chicken or the egg? The Jew or the novel? Does the fictional novel problematize the writer's state of being a Jew? Or does being a Jew problematize the writer's creation of a fictional novel?

Ultimately, Roth answers, "both." Being a Jew complicates the author's relationship to his craft; being a writer complicates the individual's relationship to his community. Yet while Roth views Jewish fiction and Jewish loyalty as revolving in a cyclic, conflicting standoff, he also indicates the possibility for their harmony. In "Writing and the Powers That Be," Roth claims, "I am probably right now as devoted to my origins as I ever was . . . But this has come about only after subjecting these ties and connections to considerable scrutiny" (RMAO 9). Roth performs such scrutiny through creating fictional doubles who engage these questions of Jewish identity, loyalty, and responsibility. Although critics claimed that Roth's fictional examination

of the Jewish subject jeopardized his loyalty, Roth demonstrates how such explorations allow him to continually re-imagine his relationship to this Jewish responsibility.

Though many critics have attempted to pinpoint exactly what Roth views his Jewish obligations to be, others have simply thrown up their hands. For instance, rather than continue in the vein of taking Roth's "moral temperature" (Shechner 4), Shechner simply concludes, "Roth does what he does because he does what he does" (4).⁹⁴ Shechner contends that such a defense is the ideal justification for the artist figure because it "puts the writer beyond exculpation, beyond extenuation, beyond the need for any principled reasons to commit to the page whatever he or she finally commits to the page" (Shechner 4). Nevertheless, Shechner's analysis of Roth's novelistic explorations is limited; fiction does not simply liberate Roth. However playfully he explores them in his fiction, the issues of Jewish loyalty and obligation seriously disturb Roth. He may do "what he does because he does what he does" in terms of creative exploration and comic humor, but the question of responsibility seems to have a stronger hold on Roth more than he has on it. He is not simply free to do what he wants to do; he is not beyond responsibility. Thus, not unlike his fictional constructions, the overwhelming pull of return preys upon Roth.

Roth cannot help but inevitably revisit the nuanced issues of Jewish loyalty, identity, and responsibility that landed him in the hot water of controversy with the creation of Portnoy's Complaint. Instead of simply allowing such debates to haunt him, Roth permits these questions to fuel his fiction; he transforms the damning accusations he suffered from critics into the rich

⁹⁴ Shechner's defense of Roth recalls Smilesburger's own explanation in Operation Shylock. Smilesburger suggests that if there should be a Palestinian victory one day and he were brought to trial on war-crime charges, he would offer no defense; he would not justify his actions by pleading to the history of anti-Semitism, emphasizing the Jewish claim to the land, or conjuring up the memory of the horrors of the Holocaust. Instead, Smilesburger asserts that his sole defense would be the following: "I did what I did to you because I did what I did to you" (OS 351).

substance of his work. Roth demonstrates this recycling through his repeated novelistic return to these debates, most significantly and problematically in The Ghost Writer and Operation Shylock. In these works, Roth turns restrictive terms on their heads, implodes singular definitions, only to end up negating such rejection. Such is a prime example of the author's infamous interaction with what he touts as his "closest friends . . . Sheer Playfulness and Deadly Seriousness" (RMAO 111).

Thus, above all, Roth is a writer interested in what a writer can do. He is not a theorist and doesn't intend to be; he is a novelist. And as a novelist, Roth exposes how his relationship to Jewish loyalty, identity, and community utterly resists stability. Using both Zuckerman in The Ghost Writer and "Philip Roth" in Operation Shylock as mouthpieces, Roth imagines and re-imagines himself as writer in a constant process of identification with and rejection of the community's mandate for his artistic responsibility. Roth's narrators fluidly move between a multitude of dichotomies--the loyal and the disloyal, the serious and the comedic, the sacred and the profane, the historical and the imagined--as does Roth. The fictional space allows Roth to explore this *movement*--this dynamic instability--among various voices, both internal and external. It is this motion, this process, this flux that grips Roth; and it is the novel that provides Roth with the ideal backdrop to explore such relentless unfolding. As a result, it is the collusion of a Bakhtinian lens with a psychoanalytic reading of Roth's later fiction that reveals the individual writer's cyclical development amid the multiple voices, the various perspectives, and the overall dialogism that surrounds him.

Only the novelistic form permits Roth to playfully engage the writer's ongoing conflict between the burden of communal spokespersonship and the freedom of art. Fiction affords Roth

the ability to navigate *between* these callings rather than simply affirm a particular 'side.' As a result, Roth participates in a continuous, unstable process of revision--constantly rewriting his relationship to Jewish history, duty, and community through his fictional treatments. In championing such authorial powers of revision, Roth ultimately stages his most profound response in these later novels to the critic he most disappointed. With his damning accusation that Roth marks the beginning of the end of the immigrant literary tradition that defines the genre of Jewish-American fiction, Howe's condemnation has clearly haunted Roth. As such, Roth allows his novelistic explorations to re-imagine his role within such a literary history as neither simply rejecting nor conceding to Howe's celebration of the immigrant tradition; rather Roth's later texts demonstrate his constant re-definition of what exactly this long-standing tradition means for the Jewish writer living in contemporary America. In other words, just as Zuckerman stands on top of the volume of Henry James' work in The Ghost Writer to represent his appropriation of the influence of his literary predecessors (Safer 22), Roth follows suit. The author symbolically stands on top of the forebears Howe most celebrates, including Malamud, Cahan, and Singer. Yet Roth performs such a symbolic act neither as a sign of rejection nor a signal of usurpation; his act is one of creative collusion. The newest Rothian trademark to celebrate is not that of perversity, obscenity, or crudity; it is the apex of the writer's *responsibility* in the first place--revision.

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