

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**

**Fractured Heroes in Roth's *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the Fanatic"**

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of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

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**LETTER OF APPROVAL**

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## **Abstracts**

This research work has analyzed Roth's use of dedoublement irony to show Prufrockian characteristics of the protagonist. Neil and Eli, the protagonists of *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the Fanatic" respectively are the operators of the irony. They suffer from religious and cultural crisis. Due to this, Neil and Eli cannot reconcile their thought and understanding with their feeling and will. Because of insensitivity and cowardice the heroes cannot fulfill their dreams and their life becomes aimless and confused. Both of them are deeply ambivalent about their history and identity due to which their life gets fractured. Thus the heroes work as the operators of irony and reveal the double movement of Jews living in America in which irony also redounds to the heroes themselves conditioning them to laugh at their own miserable conditions.

## CONTENTS

	Page No.
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Introduction	1
I.I. Neil and Eli in Goodbye, Columbus and "Eli, The Fanatic:	1
II. Methodology	9
II.I General Introduction of Irony	9
II.II The Classical Concept of Irony	11
II.III Deconstructive Notion of Irony on De'doublement	15
II.IV Prufrockianism & De'doublement	19
III. Textual Analysis	22
III.1 Neil and Eli in Ironic Dedoublement	22
IV. Conclusion	42
Works Cited	

## Introduction

### Neil and Eli in *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the Fanatic"

This research study is for studying Roth's use of ironic de'doublement to excavate Neil's and Eli's religious crisis, nervous breakdown and fanatic activities rather than to show how they attain/gain their emotional equilibrium and Christian faith. Neil's sense of social inferiority is because of his middle class status that does not help him fulfill his dream of pacific island and succeed his love affair. Eli also suffers a lot having double ironical self with cross cultural identity. Their fractured selves are mental as well as social. Due to the reason that the heroes cannot reconcile their thought and understanding with their feeling and will, they show considerably retardation for reconstruction of their Jewish American identity. Eli deals with the fanatic person who himself performs a fanatic activities due to religious crisis. Similarly, Neil feels inferior and insecure in Patimkins house and cannot perform his work properly in the library which shows they are failure heroes and they work as the operators of irony which does not only reflect the American materialistic culture but also their fractured life . Roth also ironizes the protagonists themselves and presents their split ironic personality at which they laugh at themselves.

*Goodbye, Columbus* presents Neil as a narrator who tells his story the way he lives and about summer holidays. His limited sensitivity and his desire to escape obvious responsibilities comprise a failure of his insight and his recognition while living at Brenda's house that he loses his self identity. Also Neil does not have any future plan. His defensiveness and passivity illustrates us that Neil is a person who forces himself to live the life of a piece of human clay to be molded by different persons and forces. He proposes diaphragm instead of marriage to Brenda and becomes a dreamer of Columbus but never can fulfill his dream. Neil is not a good

planner. For him religion is also an unattainable dream. He is not a good Jew although he lies to himself about it. Neither can he be a Christian nor a good Jew. To him religion is a joke and God, a joker.

Similarly in the short story, "Eli, the Fanatic," one of Philip Roth's early pieces, we find the prototypes of Roth's later characters, a Jew deeply ambivalent about his history and identity. The story is about cultural interpretation of Jewish man living in America troubling a lot with cross cultural identity. Protagonist Eli is dominated by the white people in America. He has the relentless tenacity of his opponent that ultimately he will lose. He feels insecure and uncomfortable in a Jewish community, too. He feels himself threatened and persecuted ironically by vulnerable children. In this way, Eli is divided self protagonist having double an ironical identity being failure of self-invention. Characterization of Eli represents the suffering life of Jews in the story. Eli is frustrated youngman who all the time attempts to reconstruct him in uneasy situation but never can construct it throughout his life.

In such a way both the characters: Neil in *Goodbye, Columbus* Neil and Eli in "Eli, the Fanatic", live fractured life. Neil's desire to escape obvious responsibilities shows us that he is not ambitious in his job at Newark. All the time he is forced by impetuous motives and desires. His life is aimless and confused. Eli is also deeply ambivalent about his history and identity a Jew living in America and following its culture. Both the characters feel insecure and uncomfortable in American community and try to escape their responsibilities. They are spiritually exhausted people living in modern city and they cannot reconcile their thought and understanding with their feelings which resemble the Prufrockian characteristics, one of the character in Love song of *J. Alfred Prufrock* Poem by T.S. Eliot. So they attract Roth's ironic ire of

de'doublement. In one way Neil and Eli are the escapists who are trying to run away from their problems Neil leaves Brenda alone in the hotel and Eli also does not want to listen his wife's problems. At the time of pregnancy also he does not take care of her. Eli is not serious with his responsibilities and duties upon his family. He is totally frustrated with his life and comically attempts for neurotic activities. Here, Eli is one example of a people suffering in Nazi's medical experiment during the war. This is how; both the heroes are frustrated socially and mentally.

However, many critics since the publication of the works have failed to see Roth's use of ironic dedoublement. Nilsen finds that *Goodbye Columbus* is about the protagonist Neil Klugman and his involvement in a struggle to develop and preserve his identity. Nilsen finds that Neil's love Brenda Patimkin and his attempt to find a role in society correspond to what he regards as his own, unique self. In this process he loses Brenda, but he refuses to compromise and surrender what he regards as his integrity. Peter L. Rudnytsky views the novel in relation of Neil with another character Brenda Patimkin as an interpretation of the encounter of Neil with people of color. In their first telephone conversation, after Neil has held Brenda's glasses at the swimming pool of the Green Lane Country club, she still does not know who he is, his description of his swarthy appearance leads her to ask him, "Are you a Negro?" (7). This equation of the middle-class Jew with the black reinforces Neil's sense of social inferiority, as when he later feels even more out of place amid the opulence of the Patimkin's home with their "Navaho faced Negro" maid, Carlota (21). Like the protagonist of Roth's other early stories, Neil is a man of Jewish establishment. Just as Brenda experiences her own more privileged life as a "Hundred year's war" with her family, especially her mother (26). Roth develops the motif of Neil's "blackness"



above all through his identification with the "small colored boy" who comes to the library one day to look at the art books (31).

Similarly Hana Wirth Neshet, believes that the readers identification with a character or a situation often block critical reading while he analyzes "Eli, the fanatic. Readers the critic says, identification with a character may often block critical reading more than facilitate it. If it is the teacher's or the critic's work to minimize the gap created by temporal and spatial distance, by history and geography, what happens when the teacher travels in time and in space? How does this affect the reading? Neshet's immigration to Israel in the mid 1980s had just this unsettling that becomes all too familiar:

Any reading of this story will have to offer an interpretation of this "blackness" that is located so deeply within Eli that it is immune to the "treatment" that his American society administers. If we borrow from the discourse of identity politics, it appears to be an essential identity that he has recovered, one that has been there all along. It merely required a serious engagement with the greenie to reinstate it as a core identity for Eli. How is this achieved? And of what is this blackness constituted? (Neshet 105)

Another critic Thomas H. Frank in his essay "The Interpretation of Limits: Doctors and Novelist in the Fiction of Philip Roth" claims that throughout his fiction, Roth dramatizes social, cultural, psychological, or physical events that either have contingent, or no discernible causes at all. To the characters experiencing the consequences of such events-whether comic, lurid or brutal. Because Roth's protagonists inevitably end up developing, or trying to develop, explanatory

interpretations of these situations, the problem of making sense of the ineffable lies at the heart of nearly all of Roth's work (Frank 67).

In "Eli, the Fanatic," a young Jewish lawyer and father-to-be, Eli peck is faced with the task of ridding his community of an orthodox teacher at a yeshiva school for displaced Jewish orphans from World War II. ... other world illness of religious experience, but are rather the manifestation of the bizarre and irrational-- "Goddam fanatics"-- loose in the modern world ("Eli, the Fanatic" 258).

S. Lilian kremer explores Philip Roth's novel as self-reflexive fiction. In her opinion, "self-reflexivity and exploration of their own nature and status as fiction which is vital concerns of postmodern novels that are recurrent themes in Philip Roth's fiction" (Kremer 57). This novel is a thoroughly metafictional work engaging the problem of the artistic mode that best transforms private experience into art. Roth tries to understand himself as a man and a writer by telling the story of his failed marriage through his own fictive novelist, Nathan Zuckerman, Roth demonstrates the writer's difficulty in achieving detachment from his material. Another critic Michel, Pierre in the essay "What Price Misanthropy Philip Roth's Fiction' discusses Philip Roth's satirization of Jews. Roth's affirmation in some characters in his novel *Goodbye, Columbus*, reveals the existence of a moral strength which he sees as admirable. He further adds:

Roth satirizes a number of Jews so sharply that they almost become caricature (the Patimkins, Grossbart the rabbi, Ozzie's mother), not because they are Jews, not even because they have become assimilated, but because they are Jews,...lust for material well-being or egotistic advantages. But the forced of the stories in the *Goodbye, Columbus* volume is that Roth, while deploring this state of affairs, still affirms in

some character the existence of a moral integrity, Eli rejects the pseudo-values of his suburban milieu, Ozzie teaches the community a lesson, and Neil Klungman returns (or retreats) to his library, where at least he does not risk contamination by the sterility of the Patimkin world. ("Eli, the Fanatic" 233)

In this way, the above cited critics have touched many issues of the fictions. However the issue that I have raised is totally different from other critics. Nobody has raised the concept of irony in Philip Roth's *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the Fanatic". It is about the protagonist Neil and Eli and about how they work as the operators of irony. Representing them as means Roth ironizes the protagonist themselves and shows their fractured life. A twenty-three year old librarian, a college graduate, and a resident of the Newark ghetto makes a love affair with Brenda Patimkin, daughter of an upper middle class family. Neil's sense of social inferiority being middle class Jews cannot fulfill his dream and succeed his love affair with Brenda. Neil suffers from contradiction to contradiction. He all the time tries to be happy with external thing that gives him pleasure such as Brenda's perfection and beauty but never achieves his own perfection. But when he is forced by Brenda to declare his intention, he lies to himself and to her: "I 'm not planning anything. I'm not a planer. I'm a lover" (36). Because of his impetuous motives and desires most important plan that of bullying Brenda into being fitted for a diaphragm backfires and causes an end to the affair.

Similarly, Eli, the hero of "Eli, the Fanatic," has a divided self having double cross culture identity. In one way Roth wants to ironize the Jewish people living in America troubling with cross culture identity. In other way Roth also shows some defensiveness and insensitivity among protagonists themselves. As we know the irony is a double movement, the ironist unknowingly invents his mad self and

proceeds to reflect on his madness and thus objectified. This world, in de Man's opinion, is the madness of writing. Similarly, Roth's protagonist performs comically neurotic attempt to transfer themselves in and out of their Jewishness are both provoked and undermined by Roth's ironic ire and self reflexive narrative intrusions. The narrative voice, which both of the heroes speaks with neurotic self- consumption and through parody shows the ironic limitations of its own perspective. In this way, Roth's heroes show the Prufrockian characteristics, who suffered with religious crisis and a nervous breakdown before regaining their emotional activities and Christian faith. Their fractured self cannot reconstruct the Jewish American life, so they attract Roth's ire and becomes the ironic butts.

The essence of laughter in which the author's emphasis falls upon the ability to laugh at himself because of an ironic de'doublement. The ironist is always conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self. Neil and Eli also have empirical self and observing self, one as an operator of irony and another as their ambivalent position in society being a Jew in multicultural America. Neil is represented as narrator telling his own story as an author to what de Man calls de'doublement. Here, de Man's concept of irony of de'doublement and permanent parabasis is an outright rejection of Booth's concept of stable irony which is a classical concept. Irony cannot be closed off; it will impose its indirections in all directions. The dissembling which it connotes does not merely work toward the stupid alazon but also redounds to the narrator/eiron and even to the spectator/ reader. In same way, Neil and Eli are also presented as the operators of irony but it also redounds to themselves and even to the Jewish people.

In order to have detail study of the above raised issue, the research work is planned into four chapters. The first is an introduction of the text, *Goodbye, Columbus*

and "Eli, the Fanatic" in reference to the issue that Roth's heroes show Prufrockian characteristics; their fractured self considerably retard their pace for reconstructing the Jewish American life, so they attract Roth's ironic ire. I am applying the short applicability of ironic dedoublement and short survey of other critic's views. The discussion of tool is in the second chapter that includes the deconstructive notion of irony on dedoublement in contrast to the classical concept of irony. In this chapter concept of Prufrockianism is largely discussed connecting his concept with Paul de Man. The third chapter is about textual analysis in which the texts are analyzed in relation with hypothesis and tools. Lastly in conclusion, the findings about the life of Jews American that considerably retard for reconstructing Jewish American life are drawn and shown there ways of life falls into double movement of ironic ire.

## Methodology

### General Introduction of Irony

The term 'irony' basically refers to the contrast between the statement of what is said and what it means actually. The importance of irony in literature is beyond question. One need not accept the view that all art, or all literature, is essentially ironic or the view that all good literature must be ironic. In short, irony, in literature, is a statement or action whose apparent meaning is underlain by a contrary meaning. *Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary* defines irony as; "The amusing or strange aspect of a situation that is very different from what you expect; a situation like this: the use of words that say opposite of what you really mean". Likewise, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines it from the point of view of its literal implication. It defines irony as "either speech (verbal irony) in which the real meaning is concealed or contradicted by the literal meaning of the words, or a situation (dramatic irony) in which there is an incongruity between what is expected."

Since irony as a word and concept came to the attention of ancient Greek culture, there have been arguments about how irony works and what its scope is or could be. Does "irony" refer to a word with implied different meanings or is it an entire manner of speaking? In other words, is it a trope or a figure? It is not a limited rhetorical trope or as an extended attitude to life, but as a discursive strategy operating at the level of language (verbal) or form (musical, visual, textual). This choice of discourse as the scope and site of discussion is also intended to ensure a consideration of the social and interactive dimensions of irony's functioning, whether the situation is a conversation or the reading of a novel.

There are the participants in this social act called 'irony'. There is an intending 'ironist' and her/his intended audiences--the one that 'gets' and the one that doesn't 'get' the irony. Similarly, there are ironies we might intend, as ironist, but which remain unperceived by others. Irony's indirection complicates considerably the various existing models of inter subjective communication between a speaker and a hearer. With irony, there are, instead, dynamic and plural relations among the text or utterance ironist, the interpreter, and the circumstances surrounding the discursive situation.

As mentioned earlier, 'irony' has ever been a very subtle and widely used literary device. It is noteworthy to have a brief glimpse on the historical development of it. The ancient Greek and Roman philosophers like Aristotle and Cicero made several attempts to define and classify the concept of Irony. Even in Homer's *Odyssey*, the situations and utterances are found that can be termed ironic. But no one seems to have called it irony until the late eighteenth century. Irony comes from the Greek eiron, which itself derives from eironeia meaning "dissembling." In Greek drama, the eiron was a character who, although weaker than his opponent, the braggart alazon, nevertheless defeated him by misrepresenting himself in some way. The eiron often acted foolish or stupid, for instance, in order to fool the truly foolish and stupid alazon.(Murfin177). The word 'eiron', in a sense of irony is first recorded in Plato's *Republic*. The term irony, then, indicates a technique of appearing to be less than one is, which in literature becomes the most common technique of saying as little and meaning as much as possible. In most of the modern critical uses, the term 'irony' remains the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case; not, however in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. (qtd. in Enright 8)

Tracing out the definitions, we come to know the very basic meaning of Irony as a situation in which 'what is' always differs from 'what appears'. We come to know that the creative writers use irony as a literary device to show the gap between what is expressed and what is intended. The expressed meaning is for the concerned person or whom it is addressed and intended meaning is for the privileged reader. Thus, irony, in its simplest form can be defined as a mode of speech, which brings a meaning contrary to the words. This concept of irony would be a fitting one in Greek comedies. However, such a simplified definition itself sounds ironical since irony in its concept and function is quite varied, dynamic and broad in its present uses. Nowadays, irony has got a significant space in literature as a prominent tool for writers even to reveal existence, life and death. Irony is a contradiction or incongruity between appearance or expectation and reality. This disparity may be manifested in a variety of ways. A discrepancy may exist between what someone says and what he or she actually means between what someone expects to happen and what really does happen, or between what appears to be true and what actually is true. Furthermore, the term irony may be applied to events, situations, and even structural elements of a work not just to statements.

### **The Classical Concept of Irony**

Irony is a contradiction between appearance or expectation and reality. It can be "manifested in a variety of ways" (Murfin 176). Its function is quite dynamic and mobile. Etymologically, the term irony is derived from the Greek *ieron*, a dissembling character in Greek comedy by Aeschylus, to denote a mode of behaviors and expression wherein the *ieron* "more plausibly pretends to be saying or doing one thing while really conveying a quite different, often opposite message" (Muecke 33). The term irony then indicates a technique of appearing to be less than one is, which in



literature becomes the most common techniques of saying as little and meanings as much as possible. In most of the modern critical uses the term 'irony', remains the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case; not, however in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Today 'eironia' is used as a figure in rhetoric. One can be blamed by ironical praise and praised by ironical blame. The Roman word ironic does not have the abusive meaning of the Greek word. Cicero explains it simply as "saying one thing and meaning another. Though the term is applied early in ancient Greek comedy, it took a long period of time to make a permanent room in literature" (Thomson 4).

In England, as in rest of the Europe, the concept of irony developed very slowly. We do not get the use of irony in English literature till 1950s. Spensor had used the term irony for the first time in English literature in *Shephard's Calender* and was followed by Dryden. The term irony, however, was not employed up to the seventeenth century. It was gradually introduced in literary texts with the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards with broader meanings. Dryden, Pope and Swift became the successful users of irony in literature. Though the concept of irony developed late in Europe, authors and thinkers used it frequently and gradually supported it with various new meanings. The more important of the new meanings that the word 'irony' has emerged out of the ferment of philosophical and aesthetic speculation that made Germany for many years the intellectual leader of Europe. To this day, irony often depends on understatement, which requires the audience to recognize that the author, speaker, or character has purposely described something in a way that minimizes its evident significance.

Irony should not be confused with sarcasm and satire. Although both sarcasm and satire frequently employ irony, the terms are all distinguishable. Sarcasm, which

often involves an exaggerated form of irony, is at once more obvious, blunt, and nastier; "a sarcastic remark is typically directed at a specific person", with the intent to wound and to ridicule (Murfin 177). Irony must also be distinguished from satire, which ridicules human weakness in order to spur reform. The satirist divides humanity primarily in an effort to better it. Satire may involve irony, but irony typically lacks satire's ameliorative intent. In such a way, several types of irony exist, all of which may be classified under one of three broad headings: verbal irony, dramatic irony and romantic irony. Verbal irony arises from the ostensible use of language intending a sharp contrast between the expressed meaning and the implied ironic meaning. In case of verbal irony, the speaker who provides some clues makes the sharp ironic undercutting of the ostensible meaning inevitable. The ironic intensity of the verbal irony depends on the ironist's pretension to "aim of achieving maximum plausibility for his/her ostensible meaning" (Muecke 45). In this sense, ironist and ironic pretences are the basic features of verbal irony, which is

a game for two players, the ironist, in his/her role of naïf, proffers a text but in such a way or in such a context as will stimulate the reader to reject its expressed literal meaning in favour of an unexpected 'trasliteral' meaning of contrasting import . . . (in which) the basic technique as either that going with the ironic butt and placing him/[her] in high relief or that of depreciating oneself, which as the countersinking ontaglio method. (Muecke 35-36)

The quote further underscores the point that the verbal irony depends on the author's ironic intention that is shared with the reader--a bond that allows for playing a verbal game of irony to take place. Verbal irony, however, is most often "confused with

sarcasm as the latter, too, has its surface meaning undercut by the intended meaning".  
(Muecke 17)

Dramatic irony occurs in a wide variety of words ranging from the comic to the tragic. Tragic irony is a type of dramatic irony marked by a sense of foreboding. As with all dramatic irony, tragic irony involves imperfect information, "but the consequences of this ignorance are catastrophic, leading to the character's tragic downfall". The reader or audience experiences a sense of foreboding while anticipating this downfall (Murfin 179). The next type of irony is dramatic irony that involves spoken words. The ironic effect of the dramatic irony depends on the author's ironic intention shared with the audience. However, unlike verbal irony, it involves character's action in a particular situation, unlike Socratic, the characters' misinterpretation is not based on pretension but on the ignorance of the characters about the actuality. Therefore, dramatic irony is a situation in which the reader or audience knows more about the immediate circumstances or future events of which a character is ignorant. The audiences come to detect a discrepancy between characters' perceptions and actions and the reality they face Characters' beliefs and actions become ironic within that dramatic situation because they are very different from the reality of their actions. The ironic intensity in dramatic irony, therefore, is achieved by lending its *alazonic* (ignorant) "characters' maximum conviction over what they believe and act" so that the inevitable reversal of the situation or the recognition of the reality generates intense tragic or comic irony (Muecke 45).

Next type of irony is romantic irony. Romantic irony, as defined by nineteenth century German philosopher Friedrich Schlegel , is present in poem and prose works whose authors or speakers reveal their narration to be the "capricious fabrication of an idiosyncratic" and highly self-conscious creator (Murfin 181).

Romantic irony is also called paradoxical irony. Romantic irony has emerged out of the philosophical and aesthetic speculations about the paradoxical relationship between nature and human beings. For ironologists such as Friedrich Schlegel, August Withered, Ludwig Tieck and Karl Solger, Nature is an "infinitely teeming chaos –an overflowing exhaustless vital energy" being in "process of becoming" with a dialectical process of continual creation and decreation," while human being is "the created [and] soon to be decreed" with limited "thought" and "fixed language" and becomes unable to "acquire [any] permanent intellectual experimental leverages over "the world (Muecke 23). However, irony lies in the structure of human existence since despite his/her limited consciousness, human life is "programmed" to grasp the "inherently elusive and protean" Nature to "reduce it to order and coherence," which is inevitably conditioned to be a failure (23). Irony, then, becomes the true vision of Nature and human life: "The world [has become] an ironic stage and mankind as merely the players" under this unavoidable irony of Nature where human being as a creation (life) is inevitably undercut by the necessity of duration (death) (19). Irony implies itself in the incessant paradoxes of life versus death, finite versus infinite, meaning versus meaningless, success versus failure, and so on. In this context, no human being can be an ironist in a true sense except as one who builds up of the illusion of reality.

### **Deconstructive Notion of Irony on De'doublement**

The deconstructive irony is based on the theoretical concepts of Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida that exposes the impossibility of univocal and stable meaning.

Its

overt production of meaning through deferral and difference has been seen to point to the problematic nature of all language: from a purely

semantic point of view, the ironic situation of plural and separate meanings- the said together with unsaid held in suspension might challenge any notion of language as having a direct one-to-one referential relation to any single reality outside itself (Hutcheon 57)

Classical concept of irony is to perform one thing giving to understand contrary. It happens what a person say and what he/she does or pretends to be saying or doing one thing but really conveying opposite message. But at present the definition of irony is changed and deconstructive notion of irony deconstructs the entire definition. In de Man's, concept, irony is a double movement. It is dynamic and mobile. Its indirection imposes to all direction. The ironist unknowingly invents his/her mad self and proceeds to reflect on his/her madness thus objectified. In de Man's writings, irony is a keytheme. Irony, to him, "is not a trope, a mere device which is in principle interpreted in accordance with the speaker's intention or the truth claim but the disrupting language poses to understand" (Pandey 51). Discussion of de Man's deconstruction of Irony cannot be complete without a reference to allegory, a highly privileged term in his critical lexicon. De Man takes it as a demystifying trope that challenges the valorization of the symbol which Derrida calls transcendental signified. But de Manian allegory undermines the concept of truth by rendering the relation between referential and figural meaning are ambivalent and problematic. The relation between sign and sign within an allegory is a matter of distance, difference, and discrepancy. Meaning includes spatial and temporal aspects; meaning is never itself in the same place as itself but is always just along the line, as meaning is by virtue of that from which it differs. "Signified concept is never present. Every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other concept by means of the systematic play of differences" (Derrida 139).

In other words, irony like allegory reveals the illusion of time, a truly temporal predicament which Derrida names a "mirror" (Pandey 52). In this mirror, as Gellrich says, "One strand of signifying reflects another", thereby paying the way for a plethora of meanings. De Man, however gives irony precedence over allegory because irony "comes closer than allegory to the pattern of factual experience and recaptures some of the factitiousness of human existence as a succession of isolated movements lived by divided self" (52).

De Man's analysis of irony is based primarily on Baudelaire's essay. The essence of laughter in which the author's major emphasis falls upon the poet-philosopher's ability to laugh at himself because of an ironic dedoublement. The ironist is always conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self. This is "multiple consciousness, this reflective disjunction between two selves is rendered possible only through language" (Pandey 53). But language is just a play of words without final meaning. It is just an endless chain of word. Derrida's "Differance" is a coined word which refers to at once the differing and the deferring of signs. Every word is different in itself and its meaning and there is no ultimate meaning in language. All the time there is delay and postponment for final meaning. In such a way, de Manian ironization of allegory underscores the "paradoxical existence of the gap within a failed language" (Krieger 222). He argues that irony is "a consciousness of madness from the inside of madness itself. Thus irony, which remains inherent in language, opposes the view that linguistic object carries the subjectivity of the speaker:

If deconstruction opposes itself to the view that objects are constructed to carry consciousness and intentions in there, the mark of that opposition occurs in its insistence language as an ongoing proliferation

of understanding, explanations, and references that does not merely fail to saturate a context but makes the context in principle infallible.

(Ferguson 117)

De Man's concept of absolute irony invokes Friedrich Schlegel's concept of irony as permanent parabasis. The term comes from Greek dramatic literature and as Mantner says, "referred to the convention in ancient Greek Attic comedy when the play's mid – point, the chorus would approach the audience . . . commuting on the drama" ( Pandey 53). Dwelling on the features of parabasis, Humphries points out that it

. . . is doubly ironic, a self- conscious distance from both text and source which undermines the integrity of both as totalizable presences. Parabasis allows the text to confront its own textuality but only at the cost of textualizing the author the source of text parabasis is the illusion of presence within an illusion of presence, illusion' Masquerading as 'reality' within a context of 'illusion', but fully cognizant of its illusories . . . (the) paradigm, for the purposes of non-dramatic narrative would translate as Author, Narrator/ Text, Reader, with identical implications. (59-61)

De Man refers to Wordsworth's "A Slumber Did My Spirit Seal" in order to drive home the concept of irony as parabasis, reflecting upon the 'she' of "She seemed a thing that could not feel" in the poem. He writes: "Wordsworth is one of the few poets who could write proleptically about his own death and speak, as it were, from beyond their own graves" (Pandey 54). Thus the first stanza of the poem presents the poet/narrator's blissful obliviousness to morality, and the second, his tragic wisdom . . . The process of parabasis, thus produces a text's greatest irony, for to reveal oneself

as author or narrator carries with it the danger of inscribing oneself as a character and thereby leading to the splitting of the self of what de Man calls de'doublement. Here author is presented as author and also as narrator having his/her empirical self and his separated observing self and makes double movement to which de Man calls absolute irony. Thus, irony becomes the motor of the entire rhetorical system. So, in de Man's concept of irony as de'doublement and permanent parabasis, he deconstructs Booth's concept of stable irony. An irony cannot be closed off; it will impose its indirection in all directions. The dissembling which it connotes does not merely work toward the stupid alazon but also redounds to the narrator/ eiron and even to the spectator/ reader.

### **Prufrockianism & De'doublement**

Prufrock is a name of a character in T.S. Eliot's poetry '*The Love Song of J.A. Alfred Prufrock* (1919). Eliot is a unique innovator in poetry and "*The Waste Land*" (1922) stands as one of the most original and influential poems of the twentieth century. As a young man Eliot suffered a religious crisis and a nervous breakdown before regaining his emotional equilibrium and Christian faith. His early poem "Prufrock" deals with spiritually exhausted people who exist in the impersonal modern city. Prufrock is a representative character who cannot reconcile his thoughts and understanding with his feelings and will. Especially, the poem centers on the feelings and thoughts of the persona, J. Alfred Prufrock, as he walks to meet a woman for tea and considers a question he feels compelled to ask her (something along the lines of "will you marry me?"). In fact, in this poem, he never arrives at tea, let alone sings to the woman. The poem is composed of Prufrock's own neurotic – if lyrical-associations. Indeed, over the course of the poem, he sets up analogies between himself and various familiar cultural figures, among them is Hamlet. This establishes a connection with Hamlet's famous soliloquy "to be or not to be?" is for Prufrock "to



be what?" and "what or who am I to ask this woman to marry me?" (Miller 2). Here the poem moves from this specific situation to explore the peculiarly modernist alienation of the individual in society to a point where internal emotional alienation occurs and soliloquy in which a man speaks with his thought.

In this way, the poem displays several levels of irony, which grows out of the vain, weak man's insights into his sterile life and who has lack of will to change that life. The poem is full of images, such as the evening is described as "etherized" and immobile. Prufrock understands that he has lack of authenticity. One part of himself would like to startle out of their meaningless lives and later part of the poem captures his sense defeat for failing to act courageously. So Prufrock is ironized several times in the poem. In the text *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli the Frantic" both of the heroes Neil and Eli show similar Prufrockian characteristics as Prufrock in *J. Alfred Prufrock*. Both the heroes cannot fulfill their dream. Neil falls in love with a girl but cannot get success in it. Eli suffered from a religious crisis and later gets a nervous breakdown before regaining his emotional equilibrium and Christian faith. Both Neil and Eli are spiritually exhausted. In the poem, *J. Alfred Prufrock*, Prufrock works as the operator of irony, but Eliot's ironizes the protagonist himself and shows the meaninglessness of life that and paralyses him. To which, De Man calls such situation as ironic de'doublment in which the author's major emphasis falls upon the character's ability to laugh at himself. Here the ironist is always conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self:

The ability to laugh at oneself or the capacity for irony . . . comes with the knowledge of one's own vulnerability (susceptibility to falling), and thus constitutes a kind of wisdom in relation to a have past self which

though of itself incapable of falling, a wisdoms which also provides a painful insight into the postlapsarian human condition. (Lang 51)

In this way, Prufrock unknowingly invents his mad self and imagines about a girl but never can meet her in reality. Firstly the poem presents the poet/narrator thought and understanding with his feeling and will and secondly the tragic end of him. In such a way the author's production of the text's greatest irony for revealing oneself as author or narrator carries with it the danger of inscribing oneself as a character and thereby, leading to the splitting of the self of what de Man calls de'doublement.

## Textual Analysis

### Neil and Eli in ironic De'doublement

The research analysis explores the deconstructive irony of de'doublement in his texts *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the Fanatic". By exploring deconstructive notion of irony of dedoublement, Roth criticizes the American culture and modern way of life. In de Man's concept, irony is a double movement, it is dynamic and mobile, and its indirection imposes to all direction. In *Goodbye, Columbus* Neil as a narrator tells his story the way he lived and also works as the operator of irony that makes a double movement. Neil, unknowingly, invents his mad self and dreams about the pacific island. Eli in "Eli, the Fanatic" also performs a similar character having a double ironical identity and shows fanatic behaviour and works as the operator of irony.

In *Goodbye, Columbus*, Neil, as a narrator tells his story which is untrustworthy as a purveyor of his own history. Norman Leer suggests that "Neil's limited sensitivity and his desire to escape obvious responsibilities comprise a failure of insight and recognition" (54). The crisis is about American and western, certainly not exclusively Jewish. Neil shuttles from contradiction to contradiction. During his first date with Brenda, he sees her surrounded by shining ethereal leaves and he imagines angel's wings. There Brenda reflects the American culture and Neil as a western. Whenever Neil is forced by Brenda to declare his intentions he lies to himself and to Brenda too. He says, "I'm not planning anything. I'm not a planner, I'm a liver" (36). Here Neil laughs at himself. The important things he tries to plan cause an accident and mistake. His most important plan that of bullying Brenda into being fitted for a diaphragm backfires, causing an end to the affair. In most part, Neil's life is aimless and confused, forced by impetuous motives and desires. Here Neil is

presented as an author and also as a narrator having his empirical self he criticizes himself and makes double movement to which de Man calls as absolute irony. Because of his ironic dedoublement Neil gets frustrated with his life and works as the operator of irony in the novel.

As the operator of irony, Neil holds up to simultaneous ridicules and praise the fructuous life of the Patimkins in Short Hills. Neil rebels against the “Patimkin stereotypes” of bobbed noses, opulence, and social climbing, “not because they are false, but because they prevent him from being true to him” (37). Neil makes fun of the “Brobdingnag” Patimkins and their nouveau riche trappings and morals. At the same time, however, he aspires to be a Patimkin, and on a vacation visits at the Patimkin estate, he thinks: “ ‘Aunt Gladys saw me packing my bag and she asked where I was going. I told her, she did not answer and I thought I saw awe in those red rimmed hysterical eyes. I had come a long way since that day she’d said to me on the phone, ‘Fancy-Schmancy’ ” (40). Later in the novel, he feels himself: “Perhaps I was more of a businessman than I thought. May be I could learn to become a Patimkin with ease” (85). Neil is expressing about himself living in Patimkin's house. In these lines Neil is talking with his empirical self and his separated observing self at the same time that has generated the effect of the ironic de'doublement. The sordid Patimkin ideal of wealth has not corrupted Neil, since he holds no contrary ideal to be corrupted. He is not ambitious at his job in the Newark Public Library; he plays tic-tic-toe and battleship with himself at his post there. Despite his training in philosophy at the Newark colleges of Rutgers University, he has not applied any philosophical idea -- not even nihilism -- to his predicament.

The truth is that Neil does not know how to be true to himself. He is not a particularly sensitive young man who is being put upon by a scheming bourgeois girl.

Although he satirizes the fierce competitive spirit of the Patimkins, he too competes, and often he competes in the most insensitive ways. Here is Neil's comment about his first love-making with Brenda: "How can I describe loving Brenda? It was so sweet, as though I'd finally scored that twenty-first point" (33). Here Roth ironizes his protagonist and shows his double moves in his love affairs in which one cuts another. Such a double-movement is not only limited to his love affair, but also to his daily activities:

But the truth seemed to be that after he'd characterized my appetite that first time, he never really bothered to look again. I might have eaten ten times my normal amount, have finally killed myself with food, he would still have considered me not a man but a sparrow. No one seemed distressed by my presence, though Julie had cooled considerably; consequently, when Brenda suggested to her father that at the end of August I spend a week of my vacation at the Patimkin house, he pondered a moment, decided on the five iron, made his approach shot, and said yes. And when she passed on to her mother the decision of Patimkin sink, there wasn't much Mrs. Patimkin could do so, through Brenda's craftiness, I was invited. (56)

In the above quote, Neil is compared with sparrow and treated as others in Patimkin's house. When Brenda invites him at her house he is afraid with Mr. Patimkin who sees him as a "sparrow, not as a man" (56). The name 'sparrow' used for the protagonist reflects that Neil is ironized here. Likewise he identifies himself with Carlota, Patimkin's black maid. He says that both of them are servants "wooded and won on Patimkins fruit" (55). Here Neil is having an ironic dedoublement by describing his own activity and laughing at himself: "I ate like a bird when invited to dinner I would,

for his benefit, eat twice what I wanted" (56). By using Neil as the operator of irony, Roth also ironizes the Patimkins family and satirizes the modern life in America and shows the ambivalent position of Neil in that society.

Neil's defensiveness, his insensitivity, and his passivity illustrate a prideful egotism that forces him to live the life of a piece of human clay to be molded by persons and forces. Neil here tells his story and explains about his activities living in Patimkins house. His secret sharer, the entity or self that could lay aside his pettiness and pride for the sake of another human being never appears to him except in dreams. Ideally, he, whose better self would propose marriage instead of a diaphragm, would be a planner and a liver, would be Columbus, not a dreamer about Columbus. As he tells us, Neil is drawn to two opposite poles; he is suspended between two extremes. His flaws will not allow him to achieve either extremes. He is attracted to the dream he has of himself and the Negro boy who is fascinated by a book of Gauguin prints in the Newark Library. Neil's dream is of Tahiti, of paradise in an unsullied new world.

Neil's relation with Brenda is fraught with misunderstandings and conflicts that come to a head at the end of the story. There is a dream of Neil about pacific island. The contents of Neil's dream suggests that he is veining to fear the affair with Brenda that connects the last realities of their situation and the power of Patimkin environment which may destroy his goal of love and freedom. As De man's analysis of irony is based primarily on Baudelaire's essay, "The Essense of laughter" in which major emphasis falls upon the poet philosopher's ability to laugh at himself because of an ironic dedoublement, Neil also has an ironic dedoublement. As a narrator he tells his story and is always conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self. Neil is having multiple consciousnesses. His empirical self

is in love affair with Brenda and the observing self is his dream about pacific island.

This irony of dedoublement becomes further explicit when Neil says,

I had a dream and when I awakened from it, there was just enough dawn coming into the room for me to see the color of Brenda's hair, I touched her in her sleep, for the dream had unsettled me: it had taken place on a ship, an old sailing ship like those you see in pirate movies. With me on the ship was the little colored kid from the library-I was the captain and he was my mate, and we were only the crew members. For a while it was a pleasant dream we more anchored in the harbor of and island in the pacific and it was very sunny. Up on to the beach there were beautiful bare-skinned Negresses, and none of them moved but suddenly we were moving, our ship, out of the harbor, and Negresses moved slowly down to the shore and began to throw leis at us and say "Goodbye Columbus ... goodbye. (74)

People are also laughing at Neil because of his dream but he does not know it and keeps on dreaming about the better world and pacific island. But his dream is just an illusion so he laughs at himself which is never fulfilled in his whole life. Here Neil shows Prufrockian characteristics as exhibited by Prufrock in Eliots poem *J.Alfred Prufrock*. Neil's dream of pacific island is Prufrock's dream of his girlfriend which never appears in reality is just an illusion. While the dreams of paradise and religion are impalpable and unattainable, the promised land of temporal wealth and power represented by the Patimkins is not open to Neil, although he often yearns for such a fulfillment. He is unable to accept the shallowness of the Patimkins' life despite it's the novel and is epitomized by the fact that their money is earned by the manufacture and sale of sinks, receptacles of waste and dirt. At the same time, life in Newark--

New York City is no more palatable to Neil than life in the Patimkins' wasteland. He equates life in Newark and New York City with life filled with torture and pain: Lincoln tunnel is "longer and fumer than ever, like Hell with tiled walls," and the plaza fountain "seemed to be bubbling boiling water" on the people who sat at its edge (60). Longer and fumer than ever, like hell with tiled walls and the Plaza fountain seemed to be bubbling boiling that ironizes the people of New York City and their life.

One of Neil's most important comments on these two poles of existence--the Columbus dream of a perfect paradise, and the promise of unrestricted though corrupt opulence in the American upper middle class--is found towards the end of the novella when he says, "Days passed slowly; I never did see the colored kid again. No sense carrying dreams of Tahiti in your head, if you can't afford the fare" (76). What Neil says in the quote is that all is bound to end with a sailing out of port, no matter how intensely one may wish to anchor. Here Neil is deeply disappointed by his own incapacities and by the corruption in society around him. Because of this Neil finally settles in a state of diaspora, a separation from society and self.

At the end of *Goodbye, Columbus*, Neil, at least, comes to the realization of his dilemma that becomes a part of his fault that makes him an incomplete, even a pitiful, anagnorisis. After the separation with Brenda for the last time, he walks by the Lamont Library at Harvard and sees his image in the glass door of the building:

Suddenly, I wanted to set down my suitcase and pick up a rock and Leave it right through the glass, but of course I didn't. I simply looked at my self in the mirror the light made of the window. I was only that substance, I thought, those limbs, that face that I saw in front of me. I looked, but the outside of one gave up little information about the



inside of me. I wished I could scoot around to the other side of the window . . . to get behind that image and catch whatever it was that looked through those eyes. (135)

In the above quote, Neil leaves hotel room and moves towards the other side of the road after the separation with Brenda. He looks his image in the mirror and creates two self identities where he finds himself different. Outer self and inner self, outer reflects his observing self and inner reflects his empirical self. Here Neil talks with himself and wished to catch the image inside the mirror which shows the protagonist's double movement and splitted self. Here Neil is laughing at himself because of an ironic dedoublement. Being an ironist he is conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self. Having a multiple consciousness he talks with his inner self and satisfies himself.

The dedoublement irony is also used in historical reference too. As the real Columbus also has become disillusioned in his quest for a better world, Neil fears for the affair with Brenda who returns to Radcliffe. However he cannot make marriage proposal instead of telling her to wear a diaphragm. Diaphragm was for his pleasure which is his selfishness. It represents Neil's dream of a classless, creedless hedonism. He aims to break down the barriers of class and religious conventions. Brenda does not feel mature enough to commit herself to such a deliberate action, but for Neil it is imperative that they are both conscious of what they are doing and that they use the opportunity of their love. But later Brenda rejects the suggestion, making him feel that she also rejects him for that. In the novel, the core of the problem is Neil's actual self, with whom Brenda cannot accommodate. He is offered a new identity in a manner of speaking as an employee in Mr. Patimkin's fire to lease some business but he recognizes that he is not suited for such a life.

Helge Norman Nilsen, in his literary criticism, views that Philip Roth's novel *Goodbye, Columbus* mainly focuses on the protagonist, Neil Klugman and his involvement in a struggle to develop and preserve his own love and identity. In this novel the protagonist, Neil Klugman, is involved in a struggle to develop and preserve an identity of his own amid different environment and conflicting impulses within himself. Throughout the story, he makes love to Brenda Patimkin and tries to find a role in society that corresponds to what he regards as his own unique self. In the process of that he loses his girl friend Brenda, but he refuses to compromise and surrender what he regards as his integrity:

At any rate, I called my audience God. God, I said, I am twenty-three years old. I want to make the best of things. Now the doctor is about to wed Brenda to me, and I am not entirely certain this is all for the best. What is it I have, Lord? Why have I chosen? Who is Brenda? The race is to the swift, should I have stopped to think. (100)

Neil struggles to establish his own identity is highly comprehensible in view of his circumstances. He represents the third generation of a Jewish immigrant group that has experienced great changes and transitions. His milieu is basically working class or lower middle class and strongly colored by traditional Jewish ethnic attitudes and customs, but he himself is a librarian with a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a modern assimilating approach to American society. Here his life becomes an irony—a Jewish Man living in America neither he can be a pure Jew nor can he be a Christian. So he shows a Prufrockian characteristic as a Youngman. He suffers from religious crisis and retards his pace for reconstructing the Jewish American life so he becomes the butt of Roth's ironic ire. In Patimkin's house, Neil is regarded as outsider and he responds with comments to the various absurdities of the family and tells crudely that

materialistic and snobbish people are devoted to approach, material and social positions. Neil does not hesitate to characterize the whole family as 'Brobdingnags' who make him feel small and insignificant at their dinner table (22). Neil is not happy with his life that's why he criticizes others life and names Patimkins family as Brobdingnags. Here he is working as the operator of irony and reflects the life of Jewish Man living in America but in fact, Roth also shows some defensiveness within the protagonists themselves and ironizes them and shows their fractured life.

Everything there and the class that he represents reinforce Neil's conviction that this lifestyle does not correspond to the identity that he seeks for himself. Here Neil is a frustrated guy who cannot fulfill his dream. However, Neil is not in a position to foresee that this will be the case, and he commits himself to Brenda and declares his love. But the relation between them becomes a means of escape. Here Neil's love for Brenda is seen as pure escapism. So as a hero, he always tries to escape with his major responsibilities and he becomes alone in his life. His self identity is lost and life is fractured. Also he is not satisfied with his librarian job. So he is a failure hero a Jew living in Newark and following its culture. But his fractured self considerably retards his pace for reconstructing Jewish American life. Neil cannot get success in his work and failure here Roth ironizes him and name him as an escapist.

Neil is a frequent victim of his own infantile resentments. Neil's defensiveness his insensitivity and his passivity illustrate a prideful egotism that forced him to live the life of human clay to be molded by persons and forces about him, which get revealed in this way:

Allow myself unfaithful thoughts to line up with Mrs. Patimkin whole I sat beside Brenda, but I could not shake from my elephant's brain that she still thinks we live in Newark remark. I did not speak, however

fearful that my tone would shatter own post dinner ease and intimacy. It had been so simple to be intimate with water pounding and securing all our pores, and later, with the sun heating there and drugging our senses, but now, in the shade and the open, cool and clothed on her own grounds, I did not want to voice a board that would life the cover and reveal that hideous emotion I always felt for her, and is the conversed of love. It will not always stay the underside-but I am skipping ahead. (26)

Here Neil is talking with his feelings and emotion towards his girlfriend where he performs Prufrockian characteristics. As Prufrock Neil dreams about his girlfriend, tries to express his hideous emotion towards her but he cannot do so in his real life. In his consciousness there is Mrs. Patimkin but in unconscious mind emotional feeling towards Brenda is reflected. This multiple consciousness is reflected through language. Neil sense of social inferiority all the time takes him to unconscious world due to that he thinks more. Most of the time he neglects his work and responsibilities. Neil is escapist, he want to escape with his problem. At hotel room when Brenda tells him the reality, he only thinks that is her mistake and keeps on accusing her for the situation. Only for his pleasure Neil asks her to use diaphragm which was his mistake. The conflict over the diaphragm destroys their relationship. Neil's limited sensitivity and his desire to escape obvious responsibilities compromise a failure of insight and recognition. Because of an ironic dedoublement, Neil is laughing at himself. Thus the laughter that an ironic dedoublement generates is satanic laughter -- an expression of a fallen being's bitter awareness of infinite superiority over common mortals and his infinite inferiority in relation to God. Life is forced by impetuous motives and desirers

but he cannot fulfill it. His life is aimless and confused and he is not ambitious in his job at Newark. This issue gets reflected in the given quote:

But I did stay and after a while waited patiently for that day when I would go into the men's room on the main floor for a cigarette and, studying myself as I expelled smoke into the mirror, would see that at some moment during the morning I had gone pale, and that under skin.... Someone had pumped it there while I was stamping out a book, and so life from now on would be not a throwing off, I began to fear this and yet, in my muscleless devotion to my work, seemed edging towards it, silently, as Miss Winney used to edge up to the Britannica.  
(33)

Neil's coward nature is also reflected in: "The pale cement lions and food unconvincing guard on the library steps, suffering their usual combination.... Then he would straighten up, and shaking his head, he would say to the lion, Man, you a coward.... then, once again, he'd growl" (32). There is a use of irony in above lines. As lion is more coward in front of the little boy. Similarly, Neil is coward than Brenda while living at her house he is dominated by Mrs. Patimkin and treated as her maid Carlotta. In this way in every situation, Neil seems coward and insensitive. He can not fulfill his dream of pacific island and also love affair with Brenda that makes his life aimless. In Patimkin's house also he is dominated all the time and insulted. Because of his ironic dedoublement, Roth reveals Neil's double consciousness. A Jew living in America he can be a Christian nor can he be a pure Jew with identity crisis. Neil, as narrator, tells his story about his insensitivity and defensiveness with what he is not satisfied with himself. He laughs at himself because of his own fate.

In the short story, "Eli, the Fanatic," one of Philip Roth's early pieces, we find the prototype for many of Roth's later characters such a Jew deeply ambivalent about his history and identity. But in fact, he is not even sure whether he has an identity or a history outside the limited confines of his own unconscious desire to manufacture both. And so, Roth creates his protagonist's double selves -- an ironically insistent reminder of the failure of self invention. Eli, the protagonist, shows Prufrockian characteristics in the story. As a youngman, he suffers a religious crisis and a nervous breakdown before regaining his emotional equilibrium and Christian faith. He returns the dinner -- "the lamps had no bulbs" -- and Eli has realized that all he'd seen was skullcap. Here Eli is ironized as "the crown of his head was missing" tells that he is dominated by the white in the darkness, Eli is afraid, lamps had no bulbs shows lost of his identity. He returns through the dimness because of cross cultural identity Eli gets confused in American society. "Is this what we asked of your, Eli?" (276) In this line Ted an American man is scolding Eli for his innocence and carelessness. Here Americans are ironized by reflecting their dominating nature upon the Jews. Eli operates irony which returned back to himself because of ironic dedoublement. Here he makes a double movement and suffered with religious crisis. Due to this Eli is frustrated with his life and work.

Eli has underestimated the relentless tenacity of his opponent Leo Tzoref that ultimately he will lose. He explains in a fictive conceit characteristic of Roth, Eli has a divided self protagonist who attempts to reconstruct himself in uneasy and often fanatic situation Roth's protagonist has enacted a conscious dialectic, often intertextuality, of reconstructing himself as Jews or not as Jews. This issue gets supported even from Victoria Aarons views:

Roth protagonist comically neurotic attempts to transformer themselves in and out of their Jewishness are both provoked and undermined by Roth's ironic and self-reflexive narrative in torsions. That is, narrative voice, typically in Roth, both speaks with exemplary neurotic self-consumption and, through parody, shows the ironic limitations of its own prospective. And surely, Roth's protagonists too are often. ... Moreover, as revealed, narrative self-reflexivity and the Freudian master narrative of neurotic displacement have been prominent in Roth's fiction from the beginning. In "Eli, the Fanatic, " Roth makes Freudian tropes of neurotic displacement part of an allegory of postwar Jewish identity, much as his later fiction does ... in doubles, making the threat two-fold, increasing the peril the self imperiled by yet another self, it phobias redoubled. (Aarons 7)

Eli Peck is named as Eli, the fanatic, who shows his double identity that inflicts himself on himself. This fanatic character is imposed upon him because of his own fear and conflict within himself. Roth ironizes his protagonist Eli by reflecting his fanatic behaviour in the novel. Eli all the time feels insecure and inferior in front of American man, Leo Tzoref. Roth paradigmatically represents the figure of Eli peck in "Eli, the Fanatic" which reflects the life of postwar Jews living in America. Because of his ironic de'doublement, his identity is inflicting himself within himself. This identity is imposing caricature of his own. Eli has conflict of past and present, past is his Jewish life and present is his Jewish life living in America. Eli's suppressed hostility toward the threatening Tzoref and his unexpressed desires to stay with him and to overcome him is Eli's eventual failed attempts:

Patently Ted said, "Is this what we asked of you, Eli? When we put our faith and trust in you, is that what we were asking? We weren't concerned that this guy should become a Beau Brumel, Eli, believe me. We just don't think this is the community for them. And, Eli, we isn't me. The Jewish members of the community appointed me, Artie, and Harry to see what could be done. And we appointed you. And what's happened?" (276)

Here Eli is frustrated with his life and himself so he is not being responsible to his wife Miriam. "Eli's upset [Miriam] would set about explaining his distress to him, understanding.... the difficulty with Miriam's efforts ,that only upset him more" (254). There is misunderstanding between husband and wife. Many times Miriam tries to maintain the difficult situation but she is not able to do so. Because of Eli's fanatic behaviour his neighbour refers him as a nervous breakdown person.

Eli is surrounded by laws everywhere in which he is suffocating a lot. Being a middle class Jew, he always feels inferior in front of white people. He is frustrated with his work in Woodenton Yeshiva due to his cross cultural identity and whenever he attempts to reconstruct himself in such difficult situation, he remains unsuccessful. So, his fractured self considerably retards his pace for reconstructing the Jewish American life. Eli cannot reconcile his thought and understanding with his feelings and will. So he shows Prufrockian characteristics in the story and also shows the fanatic behaviours:

Eli walked over and sat down on the bed. He was draped not only with his own clothing, but also with the greenish tweed suit, the batiste shirt, and under each arm as shoe. He raised his arms and let the shoes



drop onto the bed. Then he undid his necktie with one hand and his teeth and added that to the booty. (270)

Here, Roth is satirizing post-World War II suburban Jewish American with his reverence for mental health and therapy, and the upper-middle-class assimilation measured by designer labels and color-schemed landscaping, and well-bred protestant in America. In the story Eli undergoes a transformation, a conversion of sorts, when he is faced with the rapid and callous attitudes of his neighbours. His exchange of clothing with his double is the sign of this crossing over to the side of collective memory and responsibility, an act that is diagnosed as nervous breakdown. By presenting Eli as nervous breakdown man Roth satirizes the whole Jews in America.

Fanatic activity of Eli reflects burdened and fearful life. Eli is the perfect candidate to come apart on the grounds of the Yeshiva, an agitated, immoderacy man, who previously in the midst of various breaks down "sat in both of the closet and chewed on [his] bedroom slippers" (27). Irony is used in above line telling Eli a perfect candidate who is a fanatic man. As the danger is fundamentally an inner one, he cannot bring about changes of reality in order to meet it; he has to change himself. And so he does. When Eli stops resisting his fears with himself and moves in "the shadows" of the yeshiva, rather than running from its occupants and their past (30). It is not the lights of Woodenton that he is drawn, but rather back, back to his own deeply defended sense of a mythic Jewish self. Roth reflects:

Eli, we've been through this and through this lie are not just dealing with people - these are religious fanatic is what they are. Dressing like that. What I'd really like to find out is what goes on up there. I've getting more and more skeptical, Eli, and I'm not afraid to admit it. It smells like a lit of hocus-pocus abracadabra stuff to me. (277)

In one sense, Eli is dealing with people who are religious fanatic and afraid to admit about what they think. Eli's own self is an example of religious fanatic who troubles a lot due to his cross cultural identity and cannot reconstruct the Jewish American life. Here Eli is working as operator of irony but Roth ironizes the protagonist himself by characterizing him as fanatic man. It is typical of Roth's fiction that Eli's own dissembling, the sublimation of his own desires ironically brings about their expression, forces Eli to come into the open to "realize" his identity as a Jew and as "the fanatic" (33). Eli finds him ambushed both to his surprise and to his relief by no less than his own feared denial of his belief in his Jewishness. He comes to feel and to borrow a phrase that Alan Berger uses in a related context "the presence of an absence," the very real presence of the missing because repressed part of himself, a Jewish part (139). The presence of an absence refers to Eli's Jewish life although being a Jew he cannot follow his culture and religion. Eli is in the state of dilemma due to his cross identity. Jewish identity is present within him but he cannot follow it is an absent, here irony attacking to Eli himself because of identity crisis.

Eli is afraid of white being I a Jew. "But black soon sorted from black, and shortly there was the glassy black of living the course black of trousers the dead black of fraying threads, and in the center the mountain of black: the hat" (285). Here hat is the symbol of Jewish identity and it was their crown. Eli stands in front of the mirror naked with a hat. Only hat is his own but other dress is not his own that is given by white. Jewish identity is covered with all clothes:

Before the mirror he unbuttoned his shirt, unzipped his trousers, and then, shedding his clothes, he studied what he was. What a silly disappointment to see yourself naked in a hat. Especially in that hat. He sighed, but could not rid himself of the great weakness that

suddenly set on his muscles and joints, beneath the terrible weight of the stranger's strange hat. (285)

As he begins to dress himself in the Jew's clothes his hoped for exhilaration soon dissipates in the face of reality which Eli can hardly deny -- a self-exposure which leaves Eli depleted. Donning the clothes becomes an allegory for the impossibility of embracing the post in any simple or single way. Eli's attempts to step into a new identity are not as easily made as his stepping into the clothes left on his doorsteps. Steps in new identity are de man's concept of irony as dedoublement in which ironist makes a double movement. Similarly, Eli also works as operator of irony and makes a double movement.

Roth reflects the arrogant and selfish character of white and satirizes them but in this process irony also redounds to Eli himself because of ironic dedoublement. Just as Eli's clothes cannot replace the losses suffered by the man who resides at the Yeshiva, the Jew's suit clothes cannot finally be a replacement for Eli's loss of identity -- absence of history. This dilemma that rests on identity, on a developing Jewish identity, is born from a deeply rooted ambivalence about the possible consequences of refashioning the self in Jewish terms. Such latent anxieties, however, are a deflection of what are perhaps the more insidious consequences of this ironic self-absorption. Here because of ironic dedoublement, Eli is laughing at himself. This simultaneous disavowal of and yearning for a repressed Jewish past that Freud attributes to the Jewish psyche in Eli manifests itself in a tension between his inability to extricate himself from Leo Tzoref and the summons of the Yeshiva and his defensive resistance in the name of progress to a law that would so uncomfortably take him back. Eli retreats, and in this retreat his rejection of Judaism and the attendant of self-punishment that accompany this rejection are the poles of his undoing as a suburban

Jewish. Thus, Eli is plagued from the very start by his ambivalence, his desire constituted to his inferiority complex.

Eli's identification with and replacement of the other that Eli, the fanatic Jew becomes Hasadic Jew which he has represented for so long. But one's repressed impulses are more likely to emerge into consciousness when repression is weakened or when the content of the Fanatic finds a close match in conscious thoughts relationships and situations. It is presented through aggressive nature. Because of ironic dedoublement. Eli also had multiple consciousness. So when Eli feels himself aggressively persuade he can no longer resist; finally he played out his fantasies in equally aggressive and exhibitionistic force.

Eli's confusion of identities disturbingly makes the question later posed to him: "you know you're still Eli, don't you" (297). But what it means to be Eli himself is not so easily answered. For one short moment, Eli suits himself in the clothes of the orthodox Jew and parades through the town. The townspeople, Eli and even the Yeshiva Jew himself believe Eli to be other than what he is, believe him to be the Man whom Eli took upon himself further to displace. Eli dressed as the Jew of course, displaces no one but himself; "Sholom," Eli whispered and zoomed off towards the hill"(288). As we know that irony is dynamic and mobile, Eli is making double movements here. One he is working as operator of irony in which irony attacks to Jewish people and in the process irony also returns to Eli himself. Roth associates deviation from commercial norms not only as madness but as childishness. Even Peck's wife Miriam is not immune from this reductionist impulse, and her solution is a doctor: "Eli, please baby, shouldn't you may be stop in to see Dr. Eckman, just for a little conversation?" (259) And if suggestions fail there is always the recourse of direct threat: "Eli stop this and talk to me. Stop it or I'll call Dr.Eckman" (270). Here

Eli performs fanatic activities and his wife and friends are having problem. Roth ironizes Eli by reflecting his childish nature. When Peck's son is born, Peck shows up at the hospital to pass on his newly found heritage but Woodenton will have none of it. With a newborn involved, Eli's conversion and thus mental breakdown is a direct threat to the American modern way of life. Eli works as operator of irony and ironizes the modern American life. In the hospital Eli is treated by two white interns who seems very rude to him. "In a moment they tore off his jacket it gave so easily in one yank. Then a needle slid under his skin. The drug calmed his soul but it did not touch it down where the blackness had reached" (298). Here also Eli works as the operator of irony in which Eli reflects the Orthodox man's suffering during the war including the Nazis performing a medical experiment on him. Irony attacks the Nazi and their medical experiment upon Jews during World War II. Drug cannot touch that place in Eli Peck where the blackness reached, because the depth of identity is a place where medicine cannot go. Eli cannot forget his Jewish culture but white interns are trying to make him pure Christian not a Jew.

In this text Roth satirizes a number of Jew sharply that they almost become caricatures not because they are Jews not even because they have become assimilated, but because in the process of assimilation they have allowed themselves to last for material well being or egotistic advantages. It is only since the roar the Jews have been able to buy properly here, and for Jews and Eli rejects the pseudo- values of his suburban milieu. When Ozzie teaches the community a lesson to recover his moral integrity. Gentiles to live beside each other in amity. For this adjustment to be made, both Jews and Genitals alike have to give up some of their more extreme practices in order not to threaten or offend the other (262). Eli does not want to loose his moral strength in front of white due to that he struggles a lot and tries to reconstruct his

Jewish identity. But later on Eli gets frustrated with his wife and gets nervous breakdown. Being as an operator of irony, he redounds to himself because of ironic dedoublement.

Thus, Neil and Eli show Prufrockian characteristics suffered from a religious crisis and a nervous breakdown. Both of the heroes respectively work as the operators of irony, Neil living in Patimkins house and in relation with Brenda reflects the American culture, his insecurity, his insensitivity to social slight and inferiority. Eli's neurotic activities and unsuccess in attempts to reconstruct himself in many difficulties show us that he is a failure hero who has the fractured self that considerably retards the pace for reconstructing the Jewish American life.

## Conclusion

This research has critically analyzed Philip Roth's two fictional works; *Goodbye, Columbus* and "Eli, the fanatic" from de Manian deconstructive notion of ironic dedoublement. The analysis shows how Roth has been successful to exploit deconstructive irony to show the double moves and play of identities of the characters with Jewish predicament in American culture. Neil and Eli are fractured heroes in the works. Both of the heroes suffer a religious crisis and show Prufrockian characteristics in which they laugh at themselves. In such a crisis, the characters become the operators of the irony that turns to themselves. So, the characters are the operators and the targets of ironic attack at the same time.

A twenty-three year old librarian, a college graduate, and a resident of the Newark ghetto, Neil has a love affair with Brenda Patimkin, daughter of an upper middle class family. Neil's sense of social inferiority of being a middle class Jew cannot fulfill his dream and achieve success in his love affair with Brenda. Neil suffers from contradiction to contradiction. He all the time tries to be happy with external thing that gives him pleasure such as Brenda's perfection and beauty but never achieves his own perfection. But when he is forced by Brenda to declare his intention, he lies to himself and to her saying he is not planning anything. Because of his impetuous motives and desires most important plan that of bullying Brenda into being fitted for a diaphragm backfires and causes an end to the affair.

Similarly, Eli, the hero of "Eli, the Fanatic," has a divided self having double cross culture identities. In one way Roth wants to ironize the Jewish people living in America troubling with cross culture identities but in other way he also shows some defensiveness and insensitivity among the protagonists themselves. As we know the

irony is a double movement, the ironist unknowingly invents his mad self and proceeds to reflect on his madness objectified. This world, in de Man's opinion, is the madness of writing. Similarly, Roth's protagonists perform comically neurotic attempt to transfer themselves in and out of their Jewishness, who are both provoked and undermined by Roth's ironic ire and self reflexive narrative intrusions. The narrative voice, which both of the heroes speak with neurotic self- consumption and through parody shows the ironic limitations of its own perspective. In this way, Roth's heroes show the Prufrockian characteristics, who suffer with religious crisis and a nervous breakdown before regaining their emotional activities and Christian faith. Their fractured self cannot reconstruct the Jewish American life and becomes the ironic butts.

Thus, the essence of laughter in which the author's emphasis falls upon is the ability to laugh at oneself because of an ironic de'doublement. The ironist is always conscious of the distinction between his empirical self and his separated observing self. Neil and Eli also have empirical self and observing self, one as an operator of irony and another as their ambivalent position in society being a Jew in multicultural America. Neil is represented as the narrator telling his own story as an author to what de Man calls de'doublement. Here, de Man's concept of ironic de'doublement and permanent parabasis is an outright rejection of Booth's concept of stable irony. Irony cannot be closed off; it will impose its indirections in all directions. The dissembling which it connotes does not merely work toward the stupid alazon but also redounds to the narrator/eiron and even to the spectator/ reader. In the same way, Neil and Eli are also presented as the operators of irony but it also redounds to themselves and even to the Jewish people and shows their fractured life.



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