

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Crisis of Cultural Identity in Roth's Portnoy's Complaint

A Thesis Submitted

to Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in English.

By

Om Nath Kadariya

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

September 2007

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This thesis titled "**Crisis of Cultural Identity in Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint***"
Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by **Mr. Om Nath
Kadariya** has been approved by the undersigned members of thesis committee.

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Date.....

Abstract

Philip Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969) attempts to delineate varieties of Jewish experience in American land. This novel is also the fine example of 20th century Jewish experience such as self hatred, their trauma of anti-Semitism, their vivid experience of suffering and problem of cultural transgression. Transgression exposes Roth to penetrate resistant domains and to go where he feels excluded psychologically and socially. Roth's characters always try to conserve their Jewishness but get vain result in return. Alex Portnoy has doubly victimized and has become without identity in his own society and mainstream assimilated society in this novel. Alex is a Jewish boy who loves sex, admired by his parents. Later he was brought up in on strict house with good expectations but consequently has strongly clashing feelings regarding the world of sex. Due to such ambivalent feelings, he becomes suffering character and becomes part and parcel of identity crisis and cultural crisis. Thus this novel through the identity crisis of the protagonist reflects the crisis of the cultural identity of Jewish in his own territory and in assimilated domain.

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