

**Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A
Humanistic Perspective**

Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

English

By

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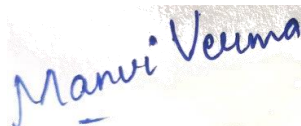


LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PUNJAB

2026

Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled, “Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A Humanistic Perspective” submitted for Ph.D. English, degree to the Department of English, Lovely Professional University, Punjab is entirely an original work and the ideas and the references have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has not been made for the award of any other degree. The thesis is free from any plagiaristic material, and it does not violate the rights of other researchers and authors. Additionally, the researcher confirms that she has obtained permissions from all the copyright owners whose reading material has been consulted and utilized in the thesis.



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Certificate

This is to inform that Miss Manvi Verma has completed the Ph. D. English titled “Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A Humanistic Perspective” under my guidance and supervision and submitted to the Department of English, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is a record of original and self-reliant research work conducted by Manvi Verma (41800794) under my guidance. The candidate has pursued the prescribed coursework of research, and she has incorporated all the suggestions given by the Departmental Board of the University during her annual presentations.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dr. Sukhvinder Kaur". Below the signature, the number "12324" is written.

Prof. (Dr.) Sukhvinder Kaur

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Abstract

The thesis entitled *Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A Humanistic Perspective* proffer and imparts a coherent analysis and interpretation of Philip Milton Roth's six novels *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, *The Anatomy Lesson*, *American Pastoral*, *I Married a Communist* and *The Human Stain* in the light of Humanistic Psychology. Concepts like subjectivity, free-will, need, motivation and self-actualization are the core motifs of the Humanistic Psychology. Through the literature review on the novels of Philip Milton Roth, the study confirms that the characters in all the select novels undergo several vicissitudes. They underwent a range of experiences, and these experiences influence their character and continually transform them until they achieve a sense of contentment and fulfilment. The select works examine the developing consciousness of Roth's protagonists as they confront personal and social discord. The study endeavours to reinterpret Roth as a figure not limited to portraying American psychological complexities, but rather as a profoundly humanistic author grappling with the ethical uncertainties and psychological predicaments prevalent in the contemporary society.

So far as the structure of the thesis is concerned, it has been divided into the following points:

The **Introduction** of the thesis provides an overview of the whole study plan, detailing the researcher's approach and attempts to analyse various aspects of it. Apart from it, Philip Milton Roth's life, works, achievements and his contribution to English Literature have been discussed succinctly. Further, it establishes a close link between Roth as a humane writer and his characters in the select novels who embody the universal struggle for dignity, freedom, and understanding in an often indifferent world. Moreover, it elucidates how the applicability of the theory gives new dimensions to the works of Philip Milton Roth.

Chapter I, Humanistic Psychology: The Third Force is an introduction of the theoretical framework. It consists of background of Humanistic Psychology, its evolution, characteristics and relevance. This chapter deals with the relationship

between psychology and literature. The criticism that the theory faced has also been added in this chapter. The accusation directed against Maslow have been referred to in the chapter. The main points of this chapter includes the statement of the problem, the main objectives, the research methodology, the literature review, the unpredictability of the characters and the theory on the six novels are the main points of this chapter.

Chapter II, Subjective Journey of the Protagonist deals with the subjective nature of the characters. In this chapter, the select characters have been seen as positive and enthusiastic beings who are capable to realise their talents and potentials. Creativity in terms of a successful businessman, a famous writer, and a successful professor have been portrayed in the chapter.

Chapter III, Traits and Paradigms of the Personality deals with the self-progression of the characters. This chapter will focus on the self-acceptance and self-awareness of the characters. The characters are seen as focused on the innate capabilities and talents. They tried to portray their talents and capabilities to the utmost extent. They are seen as goal oriented beings who experienced a lot many things in their life but still managed them all.

Chapter IV, Hierarchy of Needs and Social Groups tends to emphasize on the unmet needs of the characters and their struggle in achieving them all. The unmet needs of the characters motivate them and they struggle hard to achieve them and finally become self-actualized personalities.

Chapter V, Self-actualization and Design focuses on three different aspects: representation of the select characters as unique and active beings, fulfilment of the particular needs; barriers and obstacles in achieving them, and finally revealing their self-actualization.

The **Conclusion**, which summarizes the thesis, enumerates all of its key ideas. Select novels by Philip Milton Roth have been re-examined and re-analysed, and an attempt has been made to determine how the current study adds something novel to the body of existing research. In addition, the primary focus is the opportunity or the scope for the future research.

The bibliographic entries have been included at the end of the thesis. For analysis, both primary and secondary sources have been incorporated. In this section; book reviews, anthologies, research papers, articles, interviews, critical texts and web entries have been included.

Reappraisal or revisiting of Roth's literary works from a Humanistic standpoint yields significant insights into his moral outlook and philosophical richness, which may be obscured by his contentious themes or metafictional elements. This method enables us to perceive Roth not merely as a satirist iconoclast but as a deeply human author whose characters embody the universal quest for dignity, liberty and comprehension in a world that frequently disregards these values. In an age marked by polarization, dehumanisation and cultural disintegration, Roth's literature, when view humanistically, echoes with renewed relevance. By reassessing Roth's select works through this perspective, this research adds to the ongoing reassessment of literary humanism in contemporary fiction. It offers a comprehensive understanding of Roth's works, shedding light on authentically and ethically living in the modern world.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank God Almighty for giving me the opportunity, strength, and guidance in achieving my goal and to be successful in this part of my life's journey so far. It is a genuine pleasure to express my deep sense of thanks and gratitude to God for letting me through all the difficulties. Secondly, a special thanks to the Lovely Professional University, Punjab for helping me in finding my footing as I started this process. It not only provides the best facilities but also the good environment to obtain better knowledge.

I would like to acknowledge and give my warmest thanks to my supervisor, my path- finder, Prof. (Dr.) Sukhvinder Kaur; Department of English, Lovely Professional University, Punjab; who made this work possible. She has been a backbone in moulding my academic enhancement. I owe a deep sense of gratitude to her for her patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge for guiding and helping me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis, I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor for my Ph. D study.

I am extremely grateful to Dr. Pavitar Parkash Singh, the Head of the School of Social Sciences and Languages, Dr. Sanjay Parsad Panday, the Head of the Department of English. I am equally thankful to Dr. Balkar Singh and other faculty members for their scholarly suggestions. I am thankful to the members of the Doctoral Research Board of Lovely Professional University who have immensely contributed to my professional growth. The panel has been a great source of knowledge, and inspiration for asking me pertinent and apt questions which led me to the right track of research. I would like to convey my special thanks to the librarians of the Lovely Professional University for providing me the research books, journals, and articles that helped me in my research work.

I would then like to pay my special thanks to my mother, Mrs. Chanchal Verma for her tireless efforts and support in every path I take to achieve my dreams and ultimate goals. A sincere thankfulness to my father, Mr. Satpal Verma, for his encouragement and belief in me that has kept my spirits and motivation high during this process. Everything I have and everything I am, I owe it all to you both.

You both are the lifelines who supported me unconditionally. Thank you is a very tiny phrase to convey my gratitude towards you, but I am still using it to say how lucky I am to be raised by you. I am also highly indebted to my sister, Miss Nidhi Verma, for her motivation, love, care, and support throughout the process. Thank you, for helping me to shape my life with positivity and passion. Without you I'd never been the person I am today. I would like to express my profound gratitude to Mr. Kashish Gupta who continuously supported me, sacrificed his time, and always believed in me.

It would not have been possible for me to complete this research work without the extensive support of all the above-mentioned advisors, panellists, librarians, friends, and family members.

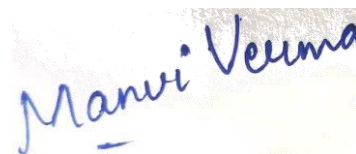


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Introduction

Every individual desire and crave for a happy, prosperous, satisfied, and a complete life. In order to have a happy and complete life, an individual works really hard with his best efforts to earn such a life he is dreaming of. Discovering the true meaning and significance of life has always been a matter of great importance. An individual has a complete control over his life and he can express his self without any doubt, fear, and apprehension. Every individual strive to fulfill his needs to attain satisfaction. Life is full of experiences and such experiences motivate an individual to realise and recognise certain needs at different times. Optimism in an individual directs him to pursue and reach their ultimate goals. Individuals sometimes take a different path or a drastic U-turn in order to discover the true meaning and essence of life but at one point of their life they realise something really very important is missing in their life.

Goals do vary from individual to individual. Some individuals want basic physiological needs to fulfill whereas other want respect, safety, freedom etc. to attain. Every human being set a particular goal in life to achieve and it becomes an ultimate passion of an individual to meet that goal. A person feels contented only when his needs are fulfilled. Every individual has the right to become self-fulfilled by meeting all his needs. Self-fulfilment or self-realization or self-actualization occurs in every individual, it does not matter whether an individual is rich or poor. Attaining self-actualization is not always in the form of material, it could be in the form of self-expression, self-love or self-freedom. It could also be in the form of exploring new things, and to live freely without any stress or control by anyone.

Life is full of challenges, new experiences, and a life without it is impossible. Depression, stress and anxiety are very common problems being faced by every individual in his day to day life. Modern life is full of tensions, frustration and stress. It is evident that an individual cannot avoid all kind of stress or tensions in his life. Everyone tries hard to lead a healthy lifestyle. Problems are an integral part of an individual's life and no one can easily run away from this. Such problems can cause serious and intense effects on an individual and if not resolved properly a person can

easily be plagued with several issues. Unhealthy events have the ability to negatively impact the lives of human beings then whether that event would be a war, stress or anything that disturbs the usual lifestyle of a man. Such events not only affects the physical being but the emotional and mental health as well. It has the capability to cause the psychological as well as the emotional strains for an individual.

The introductory part of the thesis will provide a bird's eye view of the title of the thesis, the statement of the problem, the research objectives, the research methodology, the applicability of the Maslowian theory of Hierarchy of Needs in the select works, and a glimpse of the research gap. The present thesis entitled “Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A Humanistic Perspective” aims at individual’s potential and capabilities and stresses the importance of growth, development and self-actualization. It focuses on the creative as well as on the active nature of individuals. Rather than focusing on pathological dysfunction, the “Third Force” in psychology emphasizes the innate goodness and creative potential of the human being. This branch of psychology evaluates an individual as a whole rather than looking at them through a smaller aspect. This perspective relates to the idea that individuals are entirely unique. Psychologists under this perspective believe that an individual acts in a particular way is because of his extremely important needs. The Humanistic Perspective looks at the way people perceive their future and their hopes and aspirations for the future.

Philip Milton Roth stands as one of the most acclaimed and awarded American writers of his generation. His fiction centres on semi- autobiographical themes that address the intricate connections between the authorial voice and his fictional alter- egos. Roth is considered a pivotal figure in the transition from modernism, with works that provide intense insight into the relationship between reality and self- construction. His characters are frequently seen struggling with their self- identity, caught between personal aspirations and the expectations of society.

Statement of the Research Gap

While Philip Roth’s oeuvre has been extensively analysed through the lenses of Postmodernism, Jewish- American identity and traditional psychoanalysis; there

remains a significant research gap regarding the application of Humanistic Psychology to his protagonists. Existing scholarly works often emphasize the neurosis and emotional distress of Roth's characters; however it fails to sufficiently account for their proactive struggle towards conative growth and self-actualization. This study address that void by shifting the critical focus from pathology to potential.

The Comprehensive Aim of the Study

The aim of their research is to evaluate the extent to which Philip Roth's protagonists function as subjective agents rather than mere products of environment or neurosis. By methodically connecting the exploration of Maslow's theoretical framework within the narrative analysis of the select novels, the study seeks to prove that the Rothian hero engaged in a universal, humanistic quest for self-actualization despite the presence of formidable socio-psychological barriers.

Problem of the Study

According to the title of the thesis, "Re-reading the Select Works of Philip Milton Roth: A Humanistic Perspective", the researcher addresses the central problem of the study through the following scholarly inquiries:

1. In what ways are the leading characters in the select novels presented as unique subjective entities?
2. How do these characters demonstrate a drive towards realising and recognizing their inner potential and talents?
3. How does the struggle for unmet needs serve as a primary motivator for character development?
4. What specific barriers and obstacles do these character encounter in their pursuit of self-actualization?

Objectives of the Study

To resolve the research problem, this study sets forth the following objectives:

1. To trace the roots of Abraham Maslow's Humanistic Theory

2. To explore the aspects of personality, self-actualization, and subjectivity
3. To analyse the select novels of Philip Milton Roth
4. To formulate the analytical outcomes

Significance of the Study

Both theoretically as well as practically, the analysis of the thesis is to provide significance to the readers. Theoretically, the significance is to explore the concept of subjectivity, free-will, need, motivation, and personality aspects of an individual. Practically, it demonstrates how literary characters navigate the struggle to satisfy unmet needs. Moreover, this study provides a model for future researchers to focus on the ways of improving individual's self- image.

Scope of the Study

The researcher has to limit the scope of study to avoid wider analysis; it is important to keep the study in order to make the thesis more specific, determined, and well-managed. In this analysis the researcher would like to analyse how the leading characters are portrayed uniquely having a bent on their talents and capabilities, how they struggle to satisfy their unmet needs and attain self-actualization.

Method of the Research

This research uses qualitative methodology, specifically employing narrative analysis. This method focuses on understanding processes, meaning and human experiences. The researcher identifies various events and occurrences within the texts to interpret the behavior of the characters through the principles of Humanistic Psychology. The research is done in various stages. Firstly various actions, events, and dialogues of the characters are interpreted to know whether they are subjective beings or not. Then it is being analysed by the researcher that how characters' subjective being make them a creative and an active being who emphasised on their growth patterns and development. Secondly, using Abraham Maslow's theory of Hierarchy of Needs, the characters' needs are being located and analysed. How their unmet needs motivate them and how these characters with their self-expression become able to fulfil their needs. Thirdly, using that descriptive analysis, the

problems of the main characters are being explained. How fulfilment of their needs make them self-actualized beings. What are the obstacles and barriers they faced while becoming self-actualized? Finally, concluding the result of the analysis.

In modern psychological discourse, a multitude of theoretical frameworks address the therapeutic interventions required for individuals who have endured distressing or deleterious life events. While traditional clinical approaches often characterize these interventions as arduous or unpleasant experiences, humanistic paradigms advocate for a societal shift towards compassion and psychological resilience.

Humanistic Psychology distinguishes itself by positing that the human essence is inherently constructive and that individuals possess an innate drive towards the fulfilment of their fundamental needs. Rather than fixating on pathological dysfunction or maladaptive behavioural patterns the Third Force in psychology emphasizes the actualization of creative potential and the proactive nature of the psyche. By prioritizing the mechanisms of autonomous agency specifically free- will and inherent personal worth – this perspective identifies these elements as the primary catalysts for holistic growth and development.

The Humanistic perspective investigates the unique way into the individual's phenomenological field, evaluating how subjective self- perception and the pursuit of existential purpose govern behavioural trajectories. Within this theoretical framework, the constructs of individuality, the self- concept and the creative agency emerge as the paramount motifs. These elements facilitate a model of psychological growth that focus on actively thriving and feeling fulfilled rather than just being free from psychological problem.

Humanistic model is completely different from medical models which assist that physical tensions cause issues in emotions and behaviour and it can be treated only medically. Mental health issues can be treated medically only. Humanistic psychology focuses on the very uniqueness of an individual. The humanistic model believes that the nature of human beings cannot be reduced to mere numbers, instead it uses the participation of the participant or client where he is not lead towards any particular answer in fact it uses client's analysis for his treatment.

Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow are considered as the pioneers of Humanistic Psychology. Gordon Allport, James Bugental, Charlotte Buhler, Rollo May, Gardner Murphy, Henry Murray were the other major contributors to the development of the Humanistic Psychology. Rogers and Maslow contributed a lot in this field and believed that human beings have free-will and they should be responsible for their self-growth and fulfilment. They believed that all behaviour is not determined and in fact individuals develop and grow if they are provided with suitable conditions. The most important assumption of Humanistic Psychology which makes it different from the other medical models is that it believes that each individual is unique, and so is his experience, so psychologists should treat their client individually rather than analysing and interpreting group studies.

Medical models assume that physical problems result in emotional, behavioural and psychological issues and this can be treated only medically. Whereas, Humanistic Psychology believes and focuses on the uniqueness of an individual. Rather than focusing on groups of individuals having similar characteristics it tends to focus on an individual. Supporters of other branches of psychology view an individual who is having mental health concerns as patients and his illness can be diagnosed and cured after the recognition of symptoms. However, Humanistic psychologists believe that each individual is a valuable social being and his illness can be treated only through interpersonal relationships. The supporters of humanistic approach emphasise on the self-growth and positive regard with an aim of assisting and treating each individual in a unique way. Several significant contributions were made in the field of Humanistic Psychology like- Hierarchy of Needs, person-centered therapy, free-will, peak experiences, fully-functioning beings, and self-actualization.

In Humanistic Psychology, Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs play a vital role in understanding what individuals require. His psychological theory consist of a five-tier model of what human beings want. His psychological theory is applicable in almost all domains of life. This theory takes consideration on human nature. This approach has given a new direction to look at an individual's needs. Unhealthy and problematic circumstances can affect the life of a person and can

cause him to fixate on a particular order of needs which can ultimately affect his future goals.

To track the growth patterns and development of an individual, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs play a vital role. When basic physiological needs are not met by an individual he or she may die or become extremely sick. When safety and security needs are not met, post-traumatic stress may occur. Anxiety and loneliness may occur if an individual is lacking love and belongingness needs. Lack of esteem needs and self-actualization may cause depression. Human beings are full of needs and the psyche of an individual is inherently complex and dynamic that plays hide and seek with the self and always remain charged up with a number of dreams, aspirations, and wants. The destructive thoughts emerged in a person when he is not under the favourable environment. Maslow believed that creativity is something very crucial that a person is born with.

Maslow's theory in Humanistic Psychology is a complete theory describing how the personality develops overtime and it happens only because of the motivating factors. Such motivating factors shape the entire personality of an individual. Once an individual start fulfilling the needs, the character and the personality of an individual starts developing. The Humanistic approach is quite remarkable as it studies the human behaviour holistically and it even views an individual as the master of his own fate and in a complete control of his self rather than being a product. An individual is not just an organism but a subjective being who is completely immersed in his self and experiences.

There are many writers who take a psychological approach towards the characters in their novels. This research work intends to focus on Philip Milton Roth and the psychological development of the characters in his novels from the Humanistic point of view. The characters selected for this research work are Nathan Zuckerman; Roth's alter-ego from *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman Unbound, *The Anatomy Lesson*, and Seymour Swede Levov from *American Pastoral*, Ira Ringold from *I Married a Communist*, and Coleman Silk from *The Human Stain*.

This research work intends to focus on the theoretical rationale that attempt to discuss the works of Philip Roth in the light of Humanistic Psychology. Application

of this theoretical model in the works of Philip Milton Roth will address a distinctive view of complete psychological growth and development of characters. The characters can be seen from different motifs of Humanistic Psychology in order to analyse their heights of psychological growth to which these characters always aspire for. The select works of Philip Roth are an expression of deep insight. When Roth's select works are intensively analysed in the light of Humanistic Psychology, the researcher finds that it is not enough just to be free of any emotional problems but to fully grow and develop beyond these emotional problems is the ultimate step to become self-fulfilled. In the light of Humanistic Psychology, Roth's works emphasize the uniqueness of individuals, their quest for self-fulfilment. Each character have their own picture of life which is meaningful and very important that everyone must develop.

When the select works are being analysed in the light of Humanistic Perspective, the researcher recognised that each select characters for study not only becomes solely responsible agent in his life but also have a unique spirit to realise his needs and meaning in life. The characters view things as they really are; and are optimistic for their personal as well as social progress. All these characteristics make in these characters a sense of self-identity and a different way of perceiving the reality.

This research work is based on four different characters- Nathan Zuckerman, Coleman Silk, Seymour Swede Levov, and Ira Ringold who had different lifestyles and attitudes. A correlation is formed among these characters explaining how Humanistic Psychology is universal and has a paramount importance for depicting and understanding the human behaviour. The select characters are pretty aware of what they actually need and it is their healthy conditioning and environment that pave a way for their consciousness. These characters had a tough life in their own way, they lost their connections, become morally weak and sometime lost their esteem. Their connections with some optimistic people and awareness of their needs gave them stability which helped them during their process of growth and development. These characters focus on positive and healthy life pattern. These characters had a slightly different lifestyle. Nathan belonged to a well-to-do family

but lacked unconditional positive regard from his father. This lack created a void in his life and everything that later came in his life.

Humanists always believe that the basic nature of a person is good and he will always walk in the positive direction to become the best version of himself. The lives of these characters is a journey to self-actualization. They went through series of experiences and these experiences affect their personality and continuously change them till the point where they feel contented and fulfilled. In their process of growth and development, they became matured beings to take their own decisions. Whatever happened to them or whatever psychological thought that emerged in them was a direct result of their interpersonal relationships and environment. Sometimes these characters reacted actively and optimistically and sometimes passively like what Nathan did in *The Anatomy Lesson*. Ultimately, they managed to find their path that lead them directly towards self-actualization.

The quest for self-actualization was emphasized by humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. The characters in Roth's work, particularly Nathan Zuckerman and David Kepesh are always trying to figure out who they are in spite of expectations from their families, society, and religion. In *The Ghost Writer*, young Zuckerman finds himself torn between his Jewish community's moralistic demands and his own creative aspirations. The humanistic conflict between individuality and social conformity is reflected in his struggle.

Characters in Roth's works frequently struggle with the necessity of living true to oneself, even if it means facing up to painful realities. Coleman Silk, for instance in *The Human Stain*, conceals his racial identity for most of his life, which results in both psychological suffering and personal success. The cost of hiding one's actual self is fundamental humanistic concept that is echoed in his eventual unravelling.

According to the Humanistic Psychology, human dignity depends on one's ability to make their own decisions. The freedom to choose how to live, whom to love, and what to believe is something that Roth's characters consistently assert or suffer consequences for doing so. For instance in *American Pastoral*, political and

personal decisions clash which results in the conflict between the chaotic reality that confronts Seymour “Swede” Levov and the life he chose is the source of his tragedy.

Roth portrays his characters as profoundly flawed yet capable of development rather than as completely good or bad. Their desires, guilt and neuroses are all a part of what makes them human, and occasionally what drives them to become more self-aware. An individual’s inner world is valued in Humanistic Psychology. Roth immerses the reader in the character’s mind through the use of metafictional devices, internal monologue and the stream of consciousness.

Literature Review

Zhan Simin in her paper, “*Postmodernist Rewriting of Classics: A Study of Philip Roth’s Metafiction The Ghost Writer*” in International Journal of Languages, Literature, and Linguistics, has talked about the feature of metafiction in the novel *The Ghost Writer* by Philip Milton Roth. The reflexivity in the novel represents Roth’s intensive outlook into the relationship that exist between fictional and the real world. The paper presents the hard times of the Jewish immigrants. Through the novel, *The Ghost Writer* Roth tries to present the existing trauma of the post-war Jewish people.

Lovelina Singh in her paper “*Multiple Versions of Jewishness: An Analysis of Philip Roth’s The Counterlife*” in Panjab University Research Journal (Arts) has presented the various factors of Zionism, Jewish ideology, and the variety of Jewishness in Philip Roth’s *The Counterlife*. B.S. Korde in his research work “*A Critical Study of the Novels of Philip Roth*” dealt with the themes and motifs presented in Roth’s novels. He presented the conditions of Jews in America. Korde portrays the theme of sexual disillusionment as treated by Philip Milton Roth in his novels and represented artist’s relationship with art as well as with the society. Roth severely criticized American society.

The research work “*Alienation and Accommodation in the Novels of Philip Roth*” by Wilson, R dealt with the Jews in America. Philip Roth in his fictions dealt with the Jewish family, parent-child relationship, education, and the society. This research work deals with the artistic creations of Philip Roth’s novels, Jewish society,

and tries to expose the various foibles of that society. The wide portion of Roth's novels deals with the theme of one's self and how the protagonists feel alienated in one way or the other. The alienated protagonists undergo transformation as they have accommodate themselves to their situations.

Jyotsna Joshi in her research work "*Human Psyche in the selected novels of Philip Roth*" has analysed the various phases in Roth's life. Literature and Psychology have been studied through a comparative analysis. "*The Problem of the Disintegrated Self in the novels of Philip Roth; A Thematic Study*" by N. Sajan tries to present an individual subject, the disintegrated self. The select novels in this thesis represent Roth's early phase of his life, his literary career, and the psycho-analytic encounter. The conflict between self and the state has been looked upon. The novel, *The Counterlife* has been examined from two different perspectives: Self-effacing Jew and Self-effacing text. Nathan Zuckerman; mouthpiece of Philip Milton Roth narrates about Jews and Jewishness in the first segment. In the second segment, with the aid of metafictional features, the relationship between narrator's self and the text has been analysed.

Rani Shanmugavadivoo in her research work "*The Oeuvres of Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Philip Milton Roth: A Critical Comparative Study of Identity Freedom, Racism, and Americanism*" compares the different novelists Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Philip Roth and identifies their creative as well as their imaginative mind, their ability to connect inspiration with expression. They have been extraordinary Jewish American artists who explored Jewish culture effectually. They demonstrate Jewish sensibility persuasively. The major theme and motif of alienation has been analytically examined in this thesis. The five different multiform have also been discussed in this thesis like powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement.

The thesis is comprised of five different chapters. The very first chapter entitled, "Humanistic Psychology: The Third Force" is an introduction of the theoretical framework. It consists of background of Humanistic Psychology, its evolution, characteristics and relevance. This chapter deals with the relationship between psychology and literature. The criticism that the theory faced has also been

added in this chapter. The accusation directed against Maslow have been referred to in the chapter. The second chapter entitled, “Subjective Journey of the Protagonist” deals with the subjective nature of the characters. In this chapter, the select characters have been seen as positive and enthusiastic beings who are capable to realise their talents and potentials. This particular chapter paves the way to the third chapter entitled, “Traits and Paradigms of Personality” which deals with the self-progression of the characters. This chapter will focus on the self-acceptance and self-awareness of the characters. The characters are seen as focused on the innate capabilities and talents. They tried to portray their talents and capabilities to the utmost extent. They are seen as goal oriented beings who experienced a lot many things in their life but still managed them all. The unique personality traits in these characters made them capable to realise their needs in the fourth chapter entitled “Hierarchy of Needs and Social Groups”. This chapter tends to emphasize on the unmet needs of the characters and their struggle in achieving them all. The unmet need of the characters motivate them and they struggle hard to achieve them and finally become self-actualized personalities. The fifth chapter, “Self-actualization and Design” focuses on three different aspects: representation of the select characters as unique and active beings, fulfilment of the particular needs; barriers and obstacles in achieving them, and finally revealing their self-actualization.

The introductory part has established the theoretical and literary groundwork for a humanistic reading of Philip Roth’s select works. By identifying the research gap – namely the lack of growth- oriented psychological analysis in current Rothian work; this thesis sets out to prove that the struggle for self- actualization is the singular comprehensive goal that unites Roth’s diverse protagonists. Through the qualitative narrative analysis, the following chapters will demonstrate that despite the tensions, frustrations and stress of modern existence the characters remain resilient, subjective agents capable of profound psychological development.

Chapter I

Humanistic Psychology: The Third Force

Literature and psychology function as complimentary disciplines in the rigorous investigation of human consciousness. While psychology utilizes theoretical frameworks to determine the causes of human behaviour, literature explores the phenomenological experience of being through narrative. This research posits a symbiotic relationship: literary works serve as the empirical building blocks that illustrate psychological truths, while psychological theory provides the diagnostic tools to decode the mental processes of the characters. By engaging with the psychological dimensions of an individual's reality; literature transcends mere storytelling, offering a profound correlation between the internal soul and the external body.

There exists a significant intersection between literature and diverse fields such as sociology, history and psychology; where language serves as the primary mediator of human existence. Both literature and psychology deal with the intricacies of human perception, worries and social concerns, they offer a unified lens to analyse the human condition. A writer presents a subjective perception of the world but leaves the work open– ended, allowing readers to discover a sense of meaning. Consequently, literature acts as a comprehensive storehouse of human experience, while psychology provides the structural methodology to understand the emotional and cognitive processes behind those experiences.

David Lodge in his work entitled *Consciousness and the Novel Connected Essays* has described the actual meaning of literature as, "...literature is a record of human consciousness, the richest and most comprehensive we have. ... The novel is arguably man's most successful effort to describe the experience of individual human beings moving through space and time" (Lodge 69). For Noam Chomsky in his Theory of Knowledge, literature is one of the most significant means to obtain knowledge regarding an individual– his life and experiences: "... We will always

learn more about human life and personality from novels than from scientific psychology” (Chomsky 10).

The major literary genres of literature— short story, poetry, and novel all are used to communicate and convey ideas to man by means of distinctive styles and structures. The novel is a type of fictitious prose writing that has an Italian etymological context— novella. The novel is the most suitable genre to express a man’s existence and experiences; in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* M.H Abrams and Geoffrey Harpham; Abrams described the novel, “is characterized as a fictional attempt to give the effect of realism by representing complex characters with mixed motives who are rooted in a social class cooperate in a highly developed social structure, interact with many other characters, and undergo very plausible and everyday modes of experience” (Abrahams 119). *Psychology and Literature*; an essay by Carl Gustav Jung explains novel as a perfect genre to employ psychological approach towards the existence of a man: “The novels which are most fruitful for the psychologist are those in which the author has not already given a psychological interpretation of his characters, and which therefore leave room for analysis and explanation, or even invite it by their modes of presentation” (Jung 219).

The understanding of the novel is not about comprehending the plot structure, setting, characters or locating any rhetorical devices in the novel. It basically requires an active analysis and interpretation which is comprised of psychological, historical, political and sociological approaches which will provide an intensive understanding and new perspectives to the reader. It happens only by critically analysing the choice of words used by the novelist, particular events, making connections evaluating fears, desires, anxieties, finding the hidden behind the surface, and discovering what has not been portrayed directly— like unconscious desires, wishes, and instincts. A writer encodes several overt or covert quotes in his work and this can only be decoded by a reader itself. So, there always happens an interaction between the text and the reader. Through literature human nature, behaviour, and curiosity can be understood. Literature has always remained the most fundamental means to understand human instincts by representing numerous themes, motives, add notions that are related to man and his existence.

The term Humanism in the study refers to the Third Force of psychology which emerged as a holistic alternative to the deterministic models of Psychoanalysis and Behaviorism. While critics often point to a presumptive notion of potential within this approach, this study defines the humanistic self as a dynamic construct. Rather than narrowing the 'self' down to innate talents alone, this research acknowledges that the self is a biopsychosocial entity- a product of the interaction between internal potential and other probable factors such as biological predispositions and socio- cultural environments. By framing the approach as truly inclusive and holistic, we move beyond the inherent goodness of individuals to examine the phenomenological field- the unique way an individual perceives their world. This perspective asserts that while each individual possesses the agency for self- realization, this process is perpetually mediated by the complexities of their social and physical existence.

Humanistic Psychology surfaced in the 1950s as a critical alternative to the two dominant paradigms of the early 20th century: the Psychodynamic approach and Behaviorism. While the Freudian model sought to explain behaviour through unconscious drives and early childhood trauma, and Behaviorism emphasized deterministic environmental conditioning; Humanism introduced a paradigm focused on personal agency and conscious experience.

Human development should not be explained only in terms of natural or inborn potential; instead humanistic approaches highlights a biopsychosocial perspective that understands individuals through the interaction of biological, mental and social influences. This approach recognises that while the drive for self-realization is a primary motivator; it is perpetually mediated by biological predispositions, socio- economic factors and environmental constraints. By acknowledging these factors, the humanistic approach maintains its claim of being truly inclusive and holistic, viewing the individual not as an isolated agent but as a being existing within a complex and multifaceted reality.

The Psychodynamic approach emphasizes mostly on the psychological factors, without taking into consideration the genetic factors that impacts the mental being and all the feelings, conduct, and contemplations are controlled by our

childhood encounters and oblivious mental cycles. The weakness of this approach portrays that people are not having conscious free-will over their conduct. The behaviourist approach is too deterministic as it stresses that behaviour is expressed only by environmental reverberations. Humanistic psychologists consider that behaviourists are over concerned with the logical examination and investigation of the actions of individuals as organisms and that a lot of effort is required in laboratory research- a practice that assesses and diminishes the behavioural pattern of human beings into different components. Humanists additionally disagrees with the deterministic aim of psychoanalysis, which hypothesizes that one's initial encounters and drives decides one's conduct and behaviour.

When an individual has cold, he or she sneezes, and when an individual suffers with sunburn he or she turns red but when a person is psychologically not healthy he or she inhabits some changes in personality patterns, feeling of disconnection from the outer world and the other normal activities. Psychoanalysis can help in treating emotional disorders where the patient is encouraged to talk to his therapist in an open and direct way regarding his personal experiences especially childhood experiences and dreams. It deals with the unconscious mind. He believed that mind has two different parts- conscious mind and the unconscious mind. The conscious mind includes everything we are aware of. It includes that very things which we can easily bring to our awareness. The unconscious mind include all those things which are outside of our conscious awareness. It includes early childhood memories, secret fantasies, and hidden desires etc. It includes those elements that are unpleasant and socially not acceptable. All these urges are out of our awareness but still they influence are behavioural patterns. These urges are buried deep inside because they cause pain and conflict to individuals, but it can be brought to our awareness. Further, Sigmund Freud studied personality having three main components- id, ego, and superego. This approach opened up a new way to psychology to study mental illness that helps in elevating an individual's psychological distress. Along with the strengths, this psychological approach has some weaknesses too like it overemphasized the unconscious mind, sex, and childhood experiences. Moreover, the concept proposed by this psychological

approach are difficult to quantify. Most of his ideas are based on observations rather than scientific research. It over emphasised the concept that childhood experience becomes the ultimate basis for adult personality.

Sigmund Freud observed that his patients exhibited psychological symptoms and they failed to stop their symptoms despite their conscious efforts. Freud observed that if these symptoms cannot be prevented by the conscious will, they must arise from the unconscious mind. Such symptoms are the ultimate result of the unconscious will which is opposing the conscious will. This psychological approach was also being criticised because of its ignorance and denial of individual's personal agency. It focuses much on the unconscious patterns of mind and also on the predetermined nature of behaviour. It is difficult to test this theory as it relies much on the single case being observed by the therapist in his process of therapy.

Psychodynamic theories incorporates all those approaches that maintains that the functioning of human being relies on the association of psychological factors and urge within an individual, the interrelationship among various forms of personality and the various unconscious facets. The original psychodynamic theory was of Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis that was later on modified by Jung, Adler, Erikson, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Sullivan. The basic assumptions of psychodynamic theory are that all behaviour has a fundamental cause and it is usually unconscious and that unconscious motive influences our behaviour dynamically. Our feelings including mental issues as adults are deep rooted in our childhood events. Therefore, behaviour is determined. The external as well as internal processes contribute to adult's personality. This personality is shaped as the instinctual drives are changed by various conflicts. Moreover, personality is made up of three components; id- the unconscious level; the very primitive part of the human psyche containing aggressive and sexual desires, ego- located mostly in the conscious part of the personality with rationality and vitality principles and acts as a moderator between id and superego, and superego- located in both the conscious as well as unconscious part of the personality. It contains internalized morals and values and our behaviour is motivated by two different instincts- life instinct, Eros; the sex drive and the other is the Thanatos; the aggressive drive and the death instinct.

Hypnosis, Dream Interpretation, Freudian slip, Transference and Free association were some of the tools and techniques that were a part of the psychodynamic theories. Sigmund Freud in *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1917) thus asserts, “The dream becomes the object of psychoanalytic research- again an ordinary, little considered phenomenon, apparently of no practical value, like the errors with which, indeed, it shares the character of occurring in normals. But otherwise the conditions are rather less favourable for our work” (Freud 69).

The Psychodynamic theory has been criticized for its psychic determinism, which implies that individuals lack conscious free- will over their conduct due to the influence of the unconscious mind. Moreover, the Psychodynamic approach is very deterministic in nature as it highly focuses on sexual issues. Freud tend to rely much on sexual issues by discarding the actual importance of social factors in giving rise to and maintaining mental disorders. In most of the cases the client cannot freely express to his therapist his deepest secrets and time required for such therapeutic techniques is quite high. Freud’s study was biased one as he took a biased sample to study. He worked on middle class Viennese women having emotional problems. His sample does not represent the general population. Moreover, for the development of psychosexual theories, he studied just one child again not representing the general sample at all. In Psychodynamic approach physical causes do not stem the behaviour of an individual but psychological causes do. Early childhood experiences, unconscious drives and conflicts in the mind of an individual are the three main causes of abnormal behavioural patterns. Moreover it focuses on psychosexual stages and the use of defence mechanisms is there in this approach.

Like the Psychodynamic approach, the Behaviourist theory too have some limitations as: Behavioural theory tend to discard the idea of genetics that have an impact on the behaviour of an individual and for vulnerable kids having anxiety issues, depression, and the other mental concerns; behaviourism is harmful for them. It discards the mental processes by maintaining that an individual can learn only through experiences. Moreover, it is a one-dimensional approach as it does not rely on the internal influences like feelings, moods, and free-will. It is too deterministic as

operant and classical conditioning determines the behaviour. It also neglects the amount of free-will that an individual has. Behavioural approach to psychology focuses on how an individual is developed and affected by environment and external stimuli. With this approach, human mind is being studied through scientific methods. It emphasizes on the observable behaviours and stated that all behaviours are learned through interactions with the outer world through a process called as conditioning. In the Behaviourist approach, behaviourists asserted that behaviour should be studied in a scientific way but only under controlled conditions, behaviour should be studied. Classical and operant conditioning are the only basic laws of learning behaviour and there is no distinction of learning exists between animal and human forms.

Humanistic approach is different from other approaches in a way that Humanistic theorists believed that behaviourists tend to focus too much on the behaviour of animals, whereas psychoanalytic theorists relied on the unconscious setup of mind. The Humanistic theory believed in the uniqueness of an individual by suggesting that people are innately good. The founder of Psychoanalysis; Sigmund Freud and his theories stressed on the experiences of childhood in forming one's behaviour whereas Humanistic approach focuses on the holistic perspective, empathy, and goodness of an individual. Humanistic theorists argue that studying human behaviour requires an integrated view point.

Psychodynamic approach focuses on the unconscious drives; psychic determinism of human beings whereas Humanistic Perspective suggests that individuals are capable of controlling and changing the environment. Psychodynamic approaches urges that innate drives shape the behaviour of an individual however early experiences of childhood also help in shaping the behaviour. The Humanistic perspective suggests that individuals do have innate drives to reach their ultimate goal, and environment, and different events provide a shape to this journey.

The Humanistic Approach is a therapeutic approach or the holistic approach where every individual is considered as unique. It stresses on the influence of free-will on the behaviour of an individual. Rather than relying on the unconscious patterns of the mind, it studies the behaviour of an individual. Client- centered therapy by Carl Rogers stresses on person's very situation and that person can fulfil

and achieve an ideal self. In terms of thought, rationality; there is a difference between human being and an animal. It explores present and future more than past.

The Humanists are more concerned about the fullest development of the person in the aura of satisfaction, self-esteem, love, and self-governance. There was a practical and a logical reason for the development of this approach as the event of Second World War created an immense requirement for counselling that even includes therapies. The psychological trauma faced by returning veterans necessitated a therapy that focused on immediate needs, hope and love rather than an exhaustive search for childhood origins. This historical necessity provided a rational foundation for the work of key thinkers like Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Rollo May and Erich Fromm were the other prominent and influential Humanistic thinkers, Humanistic psychologists; Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers started rejecting the dehumanizing and the dysfunctional ideas and approaches of Behaviorism and Psychodynamic respectively and offered a new approach in psychology by studying healthy people rather than people having mental issues. In 1960s, Carl Rogers (1902-1987); a Humanist Psychologist who focused on the significance of genuineness, respect, and love in stimulating human growth. Rogers in *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (1961) asserts "... a person is a fluid process, not a fixed and static entity; a flowing river of change, not a block of solid material; a continually changing constellation of potentialities, not a fixed quantity of traits" (Rogers 122).

Rogers; the founding member of humanist movement was also considered as the founding fathers of psychotherapy research and the person-client approach. Humanistic Psychology places stress on the very active role of the people in forming their inner and outer world. With Rogers' progression over to this field, he focused that an individual is a functioning, and an imaginative being who embraces the present and reacts subjectively to the current insights, connections, and experiences. Rogers introduced the actualizing tendency- the inherent strive to maintain and enhance the experiencing organism. By focusing on the self- concept and personal growth this research work creates a space for analysing how individuals navigate their unique potential while remaining rooted in a highly developed social structure.

This perspective allows for an investigation into characters who are not merely governed by unconscious instincts, but are actively engaged in the process of becoming. For Rogers, the Self is not a narrow definition of individual talent but a dynamic, creative entity that subjectively interprets and reacts to social connections and external insights. Rogers in *Client-centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory* (1951) comments: “The organism has one basic tendency and striving- to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organism” (Rogers 487)

Rogers expressed that each individual could accomplish their objectives, wishes, and wants throughout their life. When, or rather they carried out self-actualization took place. He denied the very deterministic approaches of both Psychoanalysis and Behaviorism. He began his career by working with children and later on with adults and started expressing his therapeutic approach. In order to understand what really Rogers’ ideas were, it’s mandatory to analyse what he really believed about human nature. An educational psychologist, Dale H. Schunk in his notable work, *Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective*, explored that Humanistic Psychology which is constructivist is based on two assumptions. His assumptions were that considering individuals should be done through an integrated viewpoint by taking their feelings, and behaviours into consideration and study should emphasize on individuals and not on animals as people are psychologically functioning and try to be more creative. Rogers’ main concern was on the self or self-concept.

The school of Behaviourism faced high criticism by Existentialists and Humanists; the other groups of psychology that was created as a reaction to the school of Behaviourism. The behaviourists did not regard behaviour as an active reactor to the environmental stimulus and did not even embrace or append the very vital notions related to ‘self’, ‘motivation’, and ‘free-will’ by discarding the ascendancy completely of the cognitive pattern on an individual’s behaviour

After Behaviorism, there developed another school of psychology- Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalytical approach who

stressed on the influence of unconscious pattern of mind and on the behavioural patterns of an individual. The term Psychoanalysis was used by him in three different aspects: as a procedure to deal with people having mental illness, as a theory of personality, as a distinctive subset in the field of psychology. In reaction to the earlier two forces in psychology- Behaviourism and Psychoanalysis; Humanistic Psychology came up as the third force in psychology. As a movement, it not only focuses on the subjective circumstances but also on the potential and growth of human beings.

Humanistic Psychology began as a movement against the two other school of thoughts- Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud and Behaviorism by B.F Skinner in the mid- twentieth century. Humanistic psychologists believed that these school of thoughts have sidelined the conscious patterns of mind and lessened the fuller growth and development of individuals to mere unconscious drives and urges. Humanistic Psychology have never denied or rejected the contributions of these two school of thoughts, in fact the humanistic psychologists incorporated the viewpoints of these school of thoughts into a wide phenomenological orientation. The early humanistic psychologists try to restore the importance of conscious mind and try to offer a more holistic view of human beings.

During the first half of the 20th century American psychology was first dominated by Psychoanalysis and then by Behaviorism. Both these school of thoughts have not provided the meaning of human existence. There was a dire need of a new paradigm that can study human beings in a holistic way and provide a meaning to the human existence. The basic tenants of Humanistic Psychology are- to understand the meaning of life, to develop a greater sense of empathy, fostering greater capacities for self-awareness, personal freedom and choice. It emphasizes on looking at an individual as a whole. It believed that people have free-will and are motivated to achieve whatever they desire for. This approach focuses on the personal worth and values of an individual. The creative and the active nature of individuals are being focused on. There was a practical reason for the development of this approach as the Second World War affected human beings more than any other violent event ever happened in the history.

An event which is deadly, scary, shocking, and dangerous can affect an individual emotionally. Various traumatic events can be faced by individuals during war which can actually raise the issue of mental health problems. Such mental health issues grow slowly and can further give birth to several other serious illness like-post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, fear, and anxiety. During world wars many children were forced to separate from their families and communities in order to participate in the battle field. These children then become a part of the armed forces and they had to witness killings and other traumatic events. These children who became soldiers at the very young age had to face not only physical injuries and mental health issues but they became helpless by facing rejection from family and community after these deadly experiences. Wars always have a catastrophic effect on the health and well-being of nations. In addition to destruction of families and communities because of war, it often halts the growth of a country's social and economic structure. Individuals can suffer long term physical and psychological suffering as a result of war. Both material and human capital face loss. Other effects include malnutrition, widespread poverty, illness, economic and social degradation and psychosocial disorders. The fear and horror caused by wars disrupt the basic lifestyle of individuals and ruin relationships with families and communities by leaving them all emotionally distressed.

Rollo May, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow have contributed a lot in the field of Humanistic Psychology. They were the most influential personalities in this respective psychological approach. May pointed out that there is a need of human model in order to study, understand an individual. A series of meetings held for the growth of Humanistic Psychology including Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Abraham Maslow, Clark Moustakas, and other American Psychological Association members. They all tried to explore themes like- the nature of self, creativity, individualism, subjectivity, human potential, and self –actualization. With such series of meetings, Journal of Humanistic Psychology (JHP) was launched. Erich Fromm, Kurt Goldstein, Rollo May, Lewis Mumford, Anthony Sutich, Andras Angyal, and Clark Moustakas were the prominent members of the JHP's editorial board. James Bugental in 1943 published an article, "*Humanistic Psychology: A New*

Breakthrough” which was further amplified in 1964 in Bugental’s, “*The Third Force in Psychology*” in the Journal of Humanistic Psychology which stated the basic postulates given by him as human being should be treated as a whole and cannot be reduced to mere parts. They have a unique context both in the human and cosmic ecology. They have free-will, can aim at their goals and are aware of their future goals (Bugental 19-25).

Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, and Carl Rogers became the intellectual and the most influential leaders of this movement. These intellectuals did not intend to reject the scientific aspirations; rather they worked in this field to rectify the biased nature that the psychological science was having at that very time. “*Humanistic Science and Transcendent Experiences*” by Abraham Maslow, “*Some Thoughts Regarding the Current Philosophy of the Behavioural Sciences*” by Carl Rogers, “*Intentionality, the Heart of Human Will*” by Rollo May were some of the papers that emphasized the scenario of Humanistic Psychology.

Humanistic Psychology aims to focus much on the full growth pattern of human experience. It seeks to develop a systematic, coherent, and rigorous methods of analysing and interpreting human beings. It heals the fragmentary characters of Humanistic Psychology with an intensive, comprehensive, and integrated approach. The uniqueness in the human dimensions and creativity in the individuals were highly focused on in the field of Humanistic Psychology. The fullest growth of human beings in the areas of love, fulfilment, creativity, and autonomy was highly emphasised by the humanists. Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist is considered as one of the leading personalities in the field of Humanistic Psychology. The concept of self is the ultimate motif of humanistic psychologists.

Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow; the dignitaries of Humanistic Psychology focused on the conscious pattern of mind, free-will, and self of an individual rather than emphasizing on the unconscious, and on the influence of stimulus in the surroundings. Humanistic Psychology not as a singular system but as a movement came into being when American psychologist Abraham Maslow along with his followers considered analysing and interpreting an individual as a whole. Taking into consideration the complete life experiences of an individual, the various actions and

behavioural patterns were studied. Humanism deprecate both Behaviourism as well as Psychoanalysis as Humanists were of the view that Behaviourists did not take the holistic view of a human being whereas Psychoanalysis for considering an individual in a domain having subsets of fantasies and conflicts and it highly emphasized on the abnormal behavioural patterns of human beings and were least focused on.

Abraham Maslow was not satisfied with way that other psychologists viewed individuals. Behaviourists tend to rely on the concept that an individual's behaviour can be determined through punishment and accomplishments. They viewed individuals as a product of conditioning which states that if an individual got rewarded for doing something, then an individual would keep on doing it again and again and if he got punished, then he'll never repeat his action again. Behaviourists believed that this reward and punishment shape the behaviour of an individual. Individuals are mere slaves to their urges and desires was believed by psychoanalysts. They viewed that an individual's subconscious desires shape his feelings and behaviour. Abraham Maslow did not like these views on human beings. He believed that human beings have great potential. He believed that there must be something else for humans rather than simply rewards, punishments or mere subconscious urges and desires. Maslow believed and viewed an individual in a holistic pattern. He worked for humanistic psychology that focuses on the capabilities and talents of individuals.

Abraham Maslow proposed his theory of Hierarchy of Needs that focuses on the potential of individuals to become whatever they desire for. He developed his theory of Hierarchy of Needs which is represented in the form of a pyramid. The seeds of his theory were planted when Maslow was working on his research on monkeys where he noticed that if a monkey was thirsty and hungry too, it will quench his thirst first. Monkeys (and human beings too) can survive for longer periods without food but they will die very quickly without water. So, this need of quenching thirst becomes the motivating factor which all the time motivates a monkey or an individual to satisfy this particular need. An unmet need always motivates an individual. In the Hierarchical model, five different needs are being included by Maslow. As an individual moves up in the hierarchy he feels his survival

needs lesser in impact and more about becoming the best version of oneself. Maslow specifically addressed to move psychological studies beyond its excessive reliance on healthy individuals.

Maslow came up with the third force in psychology by focusing not only on the man's innate capabilities and potential but also emphasized on the growth patterns of an individual in order to reach the ultimate goal of self-actualization. Maslow believed that the Behaviourism and Psychoanalysis were too pessimistic by relying on the negative and dull aspects of human beings. Humanistic Psychology on the other hand considered an individual as a whole by focusing on the potential of human beings, free-will, spirituality, and self-actualization.

Abraham Maslow, along with his followers tried to keep creativity, inner potential, individuality, and self-actualization as the central motifs of Humanistic Psychology by late 1950's. The influential personalities of Humanistic Psychology were: Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, and Erich Fromm. By the year 1961, The American Association of Humanistic Psychology was officially established.

Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist known as the spiritual father of psychology. He contributed a lot for the third force in psychology. The concepts like motivation, personality have been intensively focused on by Abraham Maslow in order to understand the basic nature of human being. *Towards a Psychology of Being* (1962), *Motivation and Personality* (1954), and *The Father Reaches of Human Nature* (1971) are some of the most notable works of Abraham Maslow. Maslow believed that humans are born with a nature that is innately optimistic; he was the strong believer of an individual's optimistic nature. He believed that the innate nature of an individual is good which is meant to grow continuously throughout his life. He further believes that environment plays a crucial role for the development of a character and it is because of the suitable environment a character grows to his fullest. Humanistic Psychology revolves around this idea. If an individual's innate nature is not optimistic, it is only due to the absence of convenient environment. This negative environment ultimately leads to the suppression of the inherent qualities and a person becomes pessimistic in his course of life.

The basic assumption of the Humanistic Psychology by Maslow relied on the belief that every individual; provided he is put in an appropriate environment has an inherent need to reach the maximum. An individual is a motivated being who is meant to reach his maximum potential; a potential wherein a person has the capability to analyse and take full advantage of his own potentials and talents. This maximum potential for which an individual is being motivated is called as 'self-actualization' by Maslow. An individual needs to actualize his talents and potentials in order to reach the full actualization of the self. Self-actualization means to reach at the ultimate peak experience of a human being and creative self; only then he will become a fully functioning person.

Maslow described self-actualization as a motivational process and it is a need having the highest value and place in the life of a human being. In order to reach at the self-actualization, some certain basic needs are required to be fulfilled. Maslow by describing self-actualization a motivational process further explained proper arrangement of needs of an individual from the very basic to the higher most level. In *Towards a Psychology of a Being* (1962) Maslow views, "Self-actualization is not altogether general. It takes place via femaleness or maleness, which are prepotent to general humanness. That is, one must first be a healthy, femaleness fulfilled woman or maleness fulfilled man before general human self-actualization becomes possible" (Maslow 177).

By describing such a hierarchy, Maslow viewed motivation in a person in which the basic lower needs need to be partially or completely fulfilled in order to reach the ultimate higher order level. These needs are inherent and are properly arranged in an ascending manner. Maslow's theory is called as the theory of Self-actualization or the Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

In constructing a robust theoretical framework, motivation must be understood as a holistic and systematic process. Maslow's fundamental postulate is that motivation does not reside in isolated biological subsystems but involves the entire organism. For instance, a drive whether physiological or psychological is not merely a localized event but a response of the integrated self. Furthermore,

motivation is characterized as a perpetual state; the satisfaction of one need does not result in stasis but rather shifts the individual towards a new set of requirements.

Sometimes it becomes difficult to intensively understand the concept of motivation as it develops from the unconscious mind. Maslow believed in unconscious motivation and its existence. He was of the view that motivation ultimately was an outcome of unconscious desires and most people fail to recognize their desires and cannot identify motivational needs of their own. The unconscious desire differ from person to person but there are some needs that are common to everyone to a great extent like physiological needs. The desires in the hierarchy will remain same for the individuals although the environmental conditions for individuals may be different.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is one of the best theories of motivation that states that an individual's actions are motivated by psychological as well as physiological needs that progress from the very basic to the complex. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is important because individuals are being motivated because of their unmet needs. There are five different levels of motivational needs and all the needs have been properly arranged in a hierarchal order. The hierarchal order comprises of lower as well as higher level needs. The lower level needs should be met before the higher level needs. If the basic needs or lower order needs are not fulfilled then the higher level needs will no longer motivate an individual. The five needs in the hierarchy have been described by Maslow are:

Physiological Needs

Safety Needs

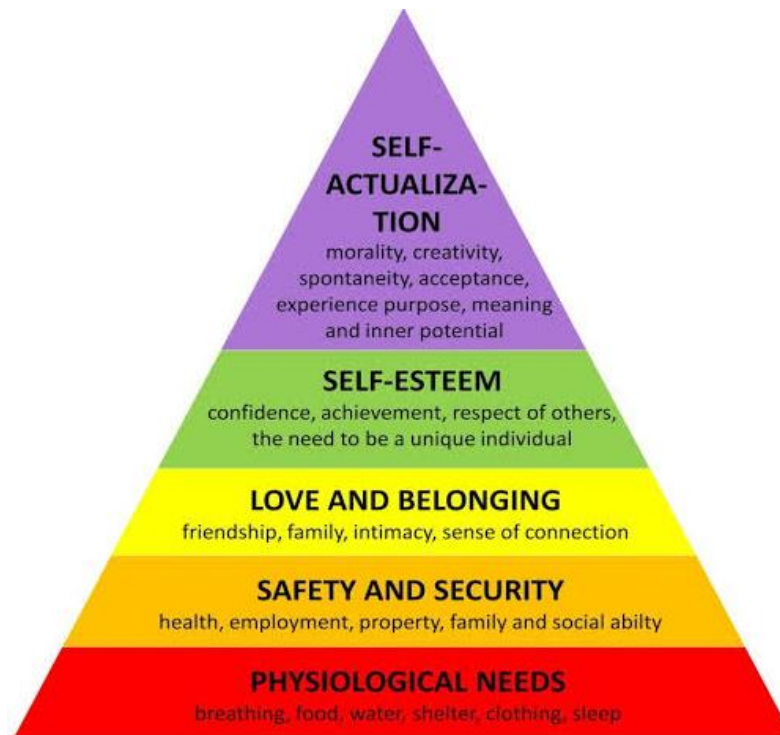
Love and Belongingness Needs

Esteem Needs

Self-actualization Needs

Abraham Maslow in *Motivation and Personality* (1954) comments, "It can be seen upon closer analysis that the hunger drive is more a special case of motivation than a general one. It is more isolated than other motivations; it is different from

other motivations in that it has a known somatic base, which is unusual for motivational states” (Maslow 20).



The needs that marks the starting point for motivation theory are called as physiological needs. Physiological needs consist of oxygen, water, and food. These are the most essential of all other needs. These needs lie at the most basic level that must be fulfilled by individuals. These needs are concerned about the survival of an individual and therefore are necessary and must be satisfied. Physiological needs are the biological demands for the survival of human beings. If these needs are not satisfied the human body cannot function properly. Maslow considered these needs as a very essential as all other needs will become secondary until the basic physiological needs are met. Physiological needs are recurring in nature and tend to develop again and again. These needs are the only needs that can be fulfil completely.

“Physiological needs are the most prepotent of all needs. What this means specifically is that in the human being who is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion, it is most likely that the major motivation would be physiological needs rather than any others. A person who is lacking food, safety, love, and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else” (Maslow 36-7).

The second basic level lies at Safety needs that is the needs for security which must then be fulfilled. They are present and to be fulfilled after physiological needs have been completely met. This need at the second level of pyramid include the desire to feel safe and secure. If an individual need to lead a healthy and peaceful life and avoid danger and pain, he should be kept in an environment that is secure. These needs can never be fully fulfilled as there exists no place in the universe that is completely safe. So, its partial fulfilment can direct to the development of the higher order needs. Maslow asserts in *Motivation and Personality* (1954) “Practically everything looks less important than safety and protection (even sometimes the physiological needs, which, being satisfied, and now underestimated). A man in this state, if it is extreme enough and chronic enough, may be characterized as living almost for safety alone” (Maslow 39).

Abraham Maslow in *Towards a Psychology of Being* (1968) asserts, “I may say that B-love, in a profound but testable sense, creates the partner. It gives him a self-image, it gives him self-acceptance, a feeling of love-worthiness, all of which permit him to grow” (Maslow 47). The need for love and belongingness is necessary and prerequisite that motivated individuals to have love, care, friends, and affection for their family and for others. Every individual needs love and to be loved and adored. Love and Belongingness needs is the third level of the human needs after physiological and safety needs have been satisfied. It comprises of interpersonal relationships which motivated behaviour. This need for love and belongingness include the desire to feel accepted and adored and also the desire to live in a secure place. These needs may be termed as “social needs”. Only when the aforementioned needs are fulfilled the needs for belongingness and love will occur. When two needs before it are partially or completely satisfied an individual can feel the essence of the need for love and belonging. Maslow believed that without love and affection, it's impossible for an individual to fully grow. To become a fully functioning being, people are required to satisfy the need for love. Some people become cynical, pessimists only because they are not given the proper conditions that are mandatory for the growth and development of an individual.

“Love, safety, belongingness, and respect from other people are almost panaceas for the situational disturbances and even for some of the mild character

disturbances. If the individual known that he should love, respect, self-respect, etc., he can consciously seek them out. Certainly everyone will agree that seeking them out consciously will be better and more effective than trying to make up for their lack unconsciously” (Maslow 262).

The fourth need in the pyramid is the Esteem needs which includes confidence and achievement of an individual. Maslow asserted in his work *Motivation and Personality* “Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness” (Maslow 45).

Maslow divided this need into two different categories as follows:

Esteem for oneself: it includes dignity, achievement, and independence.

Esteem for others: it includes status and prestige.

When the aforementioned needs are satisfied, there arises the esteem needs in an individual. It comprises the needs for being independent, strong, and confident. Only that individual whose physiological needs are to be secured and safe and finally need to love and to be loved are fulfilled can think of having a desire to gain appreciation for themselves as well as for others. When esteem needs are properly fulfilled; bring in the desire for the importance of a being and this importance imparts the overall growth and personality of an individual. In *Motivation and Personality* (1954) “The most stable and therefore most healthy self-esteem is based on deserved respect from others rather than on external fame or celebrity and unwarranted adulation” (Maslow 46).

The pyramid includes the ultimate higher order need which is the self-actualization needs, “Self- actualizing subjects... have a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience, or disgust” (Maslow 165). The term self-actualization is mostly associated with Abraham Maslow, but it was originally introduced by Kurt Goldstein, a German neurologist and a psychiatrist who was prominently known for his holistic theory of the organism. He described self-actualization as the ultimate goal of every individual.

Goldstein viewed that organisms behave in accordance with the overarching motivation. In his book *“The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man”*, Goldstein argued that self-actualization is not an ultimate goal only to be fulfilled or to be achieved but an individual’s innate desire to analyse his potential at any moment. Maslow asserts in *Motivation and Personality* (1954), “Self- actualizing subjects... have a deep feeling of identification, sympathy, and affection in spite of the occasional anger, impatience, or disgust” (Maslow 165).

It lies at the very top where an individual realizes his potential, his talents, and capabilities. A desire “to become everything one is capable of becoming” (Maslow 46). The need for self-actualization lies at the very top of the pyramid. It is a desire to transform ourselves into a fully functioning being by realizing our talents and potentials. This need emerge only when the other needs are being satisfied either partially or completely. Perfection, beauty, wholeness, and truth are some of the qualities being possessed by a self- actualized person. Self-actualized people are free from the prejudices and they are having their own view regarding the world. They believe in their self-image and they do not involve in self-harming behaviour. They work with spontaneity and are more natural in leading their lives. They relate themselves with the problems of the world and try to work on it to find appropriate solutions for it.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is based on three different assumptions being described in his work *Motivation and Personality* that are: Needs that are unmet motivate an individual, needs are hierarchical in nature beginning from the very basic to the complex and finally in order to move to a higher order need, lower needs must be satisfied. Maslow divided the pyramid into two different types of needs: Deficiency Needs (D- cognition) and Growth Needs (B- cognition). The first three needs namely physiological, safety, and love and belongingness needs fall under the category of Deficiency needs as they are at the most basic level and their deficiency would not direct an individual to the higher level needs. The needs of the basic level have to be partially or fully satisfied before an individual move towards the other needs. These needs are the most basic ones to fulfil that’s why they are called as Deficiency Needs.

The Growth Needs comprises of esteem and self-actualization needs as they assist in individual's growth and overall personality development. In order to build character, the need to respect own selves and others and achieve the self-actualization must be fulfilled. These needs are known as Growth needs as they help a person to develop and grow. The self-actualization needs are further classified into cognitive needs to experience the truth and aesthetic needs to have an appreciation for beauty and form. These needs are referred as meta-needs. Once a person fulfil all the needs the character as well as the personality of an individual flourishes.

Initially, Maslow (1943) stated that people must fulfil the lower level needs before moving forward towards the higher order needs i.e. growth needs. He later on stated in *Motivation and Personality* that fulfilment of a need is not an "all-or-none" phenomenon, he further argued that his earlier assumptions may have postulated "the false impression that a need must be satisfied 100 percent before the next need emerges" (Maslow 53)

If Deficiency needs (D-needs) are more or less fulfilled it will move away, and people are motivated towards the next order need that is yet not fulfilled. B-needs are continue to become stronger as they don't arise from the lack of something but a wish to grow and develop as a perfect being. Every individual has the capability to move forward to achieve the highest level of pyramid- self-actualization. This progression of achieving the highest level is often disrupted if the lower level needs are not fully satisfied. Therefore not every individual is able to move in a uni-directional manner but regularly moves to and fro to satisfy his needs. In *Motivation and Personality*, he comments "Self-actualizing people have the wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy" (Maslow 162).

The original pyramid comprises of five stage model but Maslow continued to redraft his theory of Hierarchy of Needs over several decades in 1943, 1962, and 1987. He stated in his work *Motivation and Personality* that the structure of the pyramid "is not nearly so rigid" (Maslow 51). After refining his theory he stated that the order of the needs is flexible based on the circumstances of an individual as for some people self-esteem plays a crucial role than the need for love and belongingness. In nutshell

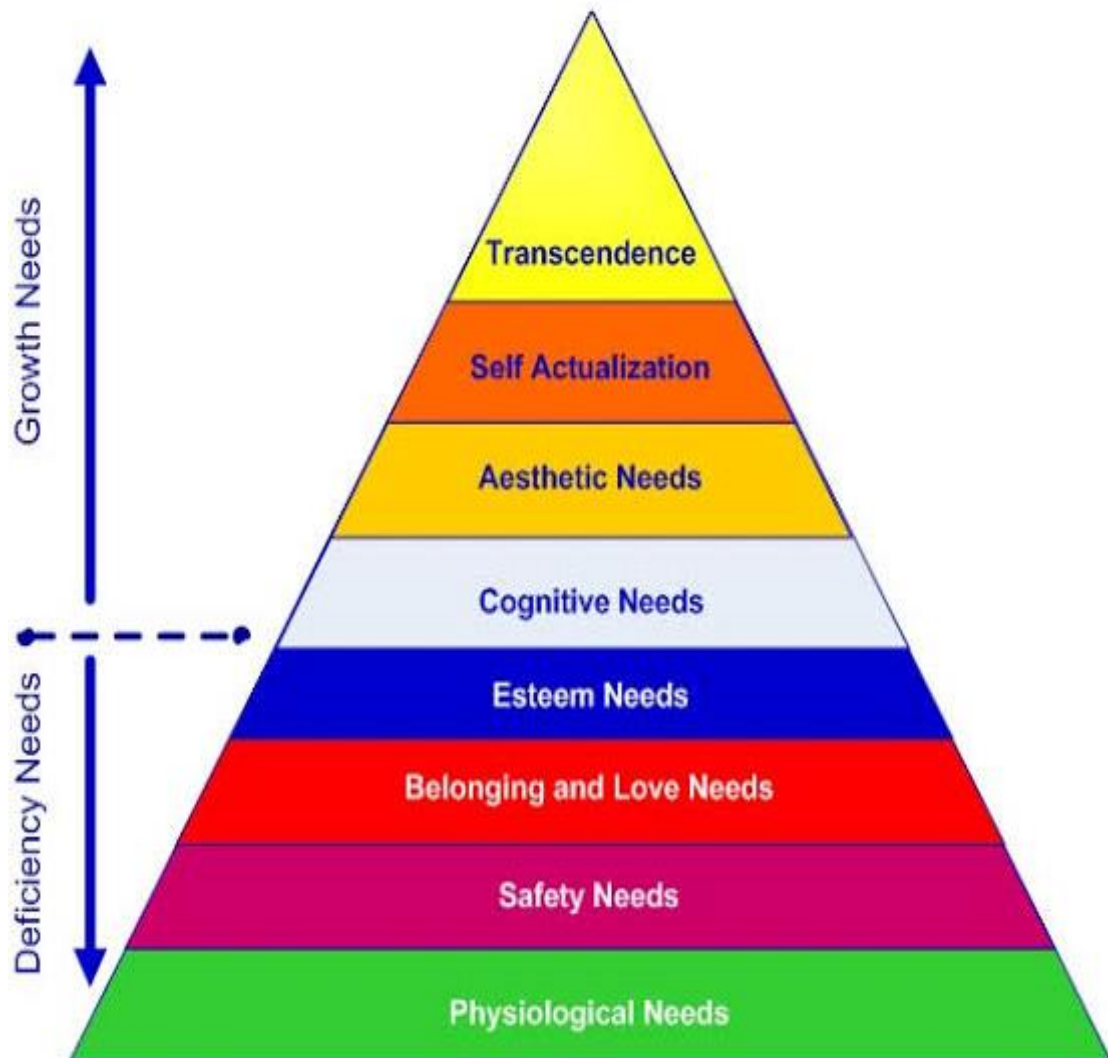
the Hierarchy of Needs follows: Individuals are motivated because of their needs. Needs are organised in a pyramid/ hierarchical structure in which basic needs must be partially or completely fulfilled prior to the higher needs. The order of the needs is flexible and is based on the various circumstances of an individual. In the earlier five-tier model, Maslow expanded the model by adding Cognitive and Aesthetic needs and later transcendence needs into the original five tier model by Maslow. The model was expanded up to eight tier model by adding three new needs to it.

Cognitive needs includes knowledge, curiosity, understanding, and need for meaning. It includes acquiring knowledge through experience and thought. Maslow believed that humans have an urge to increase their knowledge and intelligence. This need in the pyramid represents a natural expression of an individual to explore, learn, and can have a better understanding of the self and the outer world. When individuals are unable to fulfil this set of need they face chaos, confusion, and crisis in identity.

Aesthetic needs includes an appraisal for beauty and form. It is a higher level need in the pyramid. Maslow believed that in order to completely appreciate and extract the beauty that the world has to offer, humans need to renew themselves in the presence and beauty of nature. In this level, an individual interacts with environment in a beautiful way which leads to the beautiful feeling of intimacy. This order of need in a pyramid allows an individual to become one with the beauty of the nature and refresh oneself in order to analyse the beauty of nature which is the underlying motive of this need.

Transcendence needs includes mystic experiences, aesthetic experiences, service to others, sexual experiences etc. It includes all those values that are beyond the personal self. It is the top most need in the pyramid which is sometimes also referred as spiritual need. An individual is motivated by values which are beyond the personal self. It is placed above the self-actualization. Self-actualization refers to the realization of one's needs and to become the best that one desires for. Whereas self-transcendence refers transcending the self. Individuals can achieve this level by focusing on the things that are beyond the self like altruism, unity of being, liberation from ego etc.

MASLOW'S MOTIVATION MODEL



Rather than taking psychopathology into consideration which prioritizes the dysfunctioning in human being, Maslow's framework emphasizes the study of psychological health and the actualization of human potential. Rather than asking what is wrong with the individuals, this approach seeks to identify the conditions under which the self achieves its most integrated state. Maslow posits that self-actualized individuals are characterized by a continuous drive for development and growth, often evidenced through peak experiences- moments of profound insight, harmony and transcendence. Maslow in his work *Motivation and Personality*, identified a set of common attributes among individuals he considered self-actualized:

They efficiently perceive the actual reality and can bear uncertainty

Accept themselves and others as well

Their actions and thoughts have spontaneity

They are not self- centered but problem oriented

Different sense of humour

Objectively look at the life

Creative beings

Peak experiences

Have a deep appraisal of basic life experiences

Need of privacy

Develop interpersonal relationships with a few people

Appreciation for the welfare of humanity

Have democratic attitudes

Strong moral standards

Unaffected by enculturation

The Hierarchy of Needs remains a cornerstone of motivational theory due to its dynamic nature and cross- disciplinary relevance. The theory has some significant empirical limitations as critics frequently highlight the difficulty of quantifying need fulfilment and the theory's reliance on western ideas and philosophy. Furthermore, the fluidity of the hierarchy suggests that satisfied needs may still operate as motivators in complex social structures. This study moves beyond a static interpretation of Maslow, engages with the critical discussion of how these needs are mediated by other factors like socio- economic status and biological predispositions.

Carl Rogers was also considered as the forerunners of the Humanistic Psychology. Many people associate his name as the founder of Humanistic

Psychology. But he did not establish this field of psychology as Freud did for Psychoanalysis. His approach towards psychology was extraordinary that focuses on the concept of individuality. Rogers' career was similar to that of Sigmund Freud. He felt a need to establish a humanistic approach to psychology. He was being employed as a therapist for children. He valued and respected each and every individual he met. With such respect for all and belief that individuals are innately good and can grow and develop to their fullest. He applied a distinct humanistic approach to psychotherapy that later on came to known as client-centered therapy. He believed that individuals can achieve self-actualization– that they can achieve whatever they desire for. When these two approaches- client centered therapy and self-actualization are taken together, they represented a more positive aspect for the growth of individuals. Rogers' client-centered therapy grew out of the desire to assist his clients to move forward in their lives.

He applied a humanistic approach to psychology and Maslow was the one who used the term Humanistic Psychology. A meeting was held by Maslow along with his friend; Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, and Karen Horney which led to the formation of The American Association for Humanistic Psychology. Rogers attended a Sunday morning group of students at the time of his very first year of his college led by Professor George Humphrey; was an influential personality who encouraged them all to make and follow their own decisions.

Rogers was of the view that we are living in a world that is changing constantly and he termed that as experimental field. An individual exists at the centre of this experimental or private field and this field can be best understood from an individual's own perspective. Individuals react to their experimental field as an organised whole and this is what their ultimate reality is. In this process, an individual becomes one with his own experimental field which is quite different from Freudian perspective where only a trained psychologist can understand and analyse his client's unconscious impulses. An individual's perception of this experimental field is limited and therefore, this experimental field is not really a true reality but an individual's potential reality.

The ultimate tendency of human beings is to actualise themselves, grow, maintain, and experience. He borrowed this term self-actualization from Kurt Goldstein. The tendency of a normal life is to move towards progress. For a person who is sick, the only form of his actualising tendency is to maintain himself to get better. This however, does not happen in the case of a person who is perfectly fine. For Rogers, self-actualization was a tendency of human beings to move towards activity, maturity, and self-responsibility. This sort of growth and development in an individual happens throughout his course of life both biologically and psychologically.

Rogers was having an optimistic view regarding self. He believed that with relation to others, self is formed. It includes our interactions with the environment and its experiences. These experiences are then incorporated within the structure of self and the behaviour of an individual relies on how an individual's behaviour gets fit into that structure. Our psychological adjustment will be quite healthy if our idea of self is developed enough to encompass all of our perceptions and experiences and we will be able to assimilate those experiences symbolically into our self. People who struggle to integrate new and unusual experiences, particularly those that endanger their sense of self, will grow more and more rigid. Healthy individuals will take in new experiences, their self-structure will continue to evolve, and they will become more capable in understanding and appreciating others as unique individuals.

Rogers agreed with the assumption led down by Abraham Maslow. However, he added that for individuals to grow and develop, they need an environment that provides them with self-disclosure, openness, empathy, and acceptance. Without these aspects an individual cannot grow as he or she could. He asserted that each individual can achieve his or her goals, aspirations, and desires in life. Whenever an individual becomes capable to achieve them, self-actualization took place. His client-centered therapy tries to create a non-judgemental environment by providing openness, acceptance, and empathy to individuals. The ultimate goal of the client-centered approach is to assist clients to find their own answer to their questions. The client-centered approach is also called as non-directive because in this approach a client himself comes up with the solutions to the problem rather than being forcefully

accepting the therapist's way. The therapist tries to motivate the ultimate optimistic outlook of the client.

Alongside Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers was considered as one of the forerunners of Humanistic Psychology. He was not only famous for his client-centered therapy but also for his theory of personality that put emphasis on individual's belief system and perception about himself. Humanistic theories by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers emphasize on the importance of personal growth and personal responsibility. Humanistic psychologists believed that human beings are themselves responsible for whatever happens to them. They believed that individuals are not merely an object being driven here and there because of some dark forces present in our personalities. Humanistic psychologists do not deny the past experiences of an individual. They believe that individuals can be influenced by their past experience, or any traumatic event, but they should not allow these events to shape their current personality. Individual should not permit these events to shape their present, in fact they must be capable enough to deal with them, overcome these events and must go on which is both powerful and realistic. Humanistic psychologists believe that individuals need not to stop after satisfying their current needs, in fact, they should wish to progress towards bigger goals- to become the best version of themselves. This process of development of individuals can stop only when they face some obstacles.

Rogers believed that individuals show several positive characteristics in course of their lives for becoming full-functioning beings. Rogers asserted that these people tend to experience their life to the fullest extent and trust their own feelings. Such individuals do not allow any society's so-called standards to shape their personality. These people are quite sensitive for the right of others and even for their own set of needs. They experience their life more intensively and their actions are dominated by constructive impulses. Such persons value their own feelings and actions. Carl Rogers significantly advanced the Humanistic movement by shifting the focus towards the concept of individuality and the subjective experiences. Unlike the Freudian model, which requires a specialist to decode unconscious impulses, Rogers

posited that the individual is the ultimate expert of their own phenomenological field—the sum total of their internal and external reality.

Rogers contributed majorly to the thoughts of self by emphasizing on the personality of a psychologically healthy individual. For his contribution in psychiatry and therapeutic treatments he is majorly remembered. *A Way of Being, On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*, and *Client-centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications and Theory* are some of his most notable works. The innermost qualities of an individual is innately good according to Rogers.

Rogers' theory of personality relied on Humanistic Psychology. Rogers believed that the universe is full of experiences and we are an integral part of it. These experiences help us in shaping our reactions to internal and external objects, thoughts, and people as well. This is known as phenomenal field; an individual's reality, behaviour, thoughts, and objects. Rogers was of the view that an individual's behaviour is motivated by self-actualization in order to achieve the maximum potential. During this phenomenon the concept of self or self-concept is built in an individual. Carl Rogers being a humanistic psychologist supported the views of Maslow and added that for a person to grow, an environment with acceptance, authenticity, and togetherness is needed. Humanistic Psychology stresses on a person's role in shaping his internal as well as external world.

Rogers' theory highlighted the concept of free-will as Rogers believed that human beings are the creative people who live in their present and are concerned about the relationships and situations of the present time only. Rogers was of the view that if people have a positive self-concept they may feel good and secure otherwise they will feel unsafe if they are having negative self-concept. Carl Rogers divided the concept of self into two different categories: Ideal Self and Real Self

Real self is the person who you really are whereas the ideal self is the person who you really want to be like. The difference between the ideal self and the actual reality is called as incongruence and congruence occurs when our ideal and real self are similar and our self-concept is true. In order to understand Rogers' theory its three main components need to be understood first intensively viz; The Organism,

The Self– includes Self-concept and Ideal self and Self-actualization– includes Positive Regard and Self Regard.

In terms of biology and ecology, an organism is a creature that is made up of organs or organelles that work together in order to sustain life. According to Carl Rogers organism represents the sum total of the experiences that is happening inside the organism at one particular interval of time. Organism is the central point of all the internal as well as the external experiences. The sum total of all the experiences happening at a particular moment consist of two types– conscious experiences and the unconscious experiences. All the experiments constitute the experimental/perpetual field and all the experiences in this field are internal that can't be understood by any other person. These experiences can only be known by the self and not outside the self. An individual who is going through it can feel and understand the essence of such experiences. Rogers in *On Becoming a Person* (1961) asserts that, "The good life is a process, not a state of being. It is a direction, not a destination. The direction which constitutes the good life is that which is selected by the total organism, when there is physiological movement to move in any direction" (Rogers 186-7).

The concept of 'self' arises from the phenomenal field as whenever an experience is being described with the help of the words "I", "me", the self arises. Self emerge with or without any awareness of an individual. Its awareness helps in differentiating between good and bad or regarding positive or negative experiences. Rogers believed that self is an integral part of our personality. Rogers in *A Way of Being* (1980) asserts that, "As a person understands and prizes self, the self becomes more congruent with the experiencing. The person thus becomes more real, more genuine. These tendency, the reciprocal of the therapist's attitudes, enable the person to be a more effective growth- enhancer for himself or herself. There is a greater freedom to be the true, whole person" (Rogers 116-17). Rogers further classified the self into self-concept and ideal self.

The most important contribution of Carl Rogers is his 'self' theory. His major focus was on the process of psychotherapy. Rogers' theory of personality is majorly

centered on the notion of self and this self-concept can be defined in so many different ways as person's capability to act differently that actualize himself. He relied much on the client-centered therapy and personality in order to explore the concept of self.

Real Self is also called as self-image which includes the influence of our body image like how we see ourselves which is essential to a better psychological health. We sometimes see ourselves as right or wrong, beautiful or ugly. This self-image has a direct influence on how a person perceive himself and acts accordingly in the world. The 'Real Self' is initiated by the actualizing tendency by following needs, values, and receiving self and positive regard. Rogers believed that real self is owned by us all and is related to our inner personality. It is the self that truly explores to what and who we actually are.

Ideal self portrays individual's trying and aiming to achieve ultimate goals in life. By ideal self, Rogers (1961) believed that there are some things that are beyond our reach which might result from the gap between ideal and real self. The self is borne out of the outside influences that we think we should be. It is not a conscious decision of following the values of others but a process of osmosis. Ideal self consists of characteristics, attributes, and qualities that a person aims to acquire. The more the gap between ideal and self-concept, the more will be the incongruity thereby making an individual unhealthy. The three selves– the organismic self, the self-concept, and the ideal self need to be in a congruity with each other, thereby making a person fully functioning being. Rogers in *A Way of Being* (1980) asserts that, "Congruence is probably the most important element. Congruence, or genuineness, involves letting the other person know "where you are" emotionally. It may involve confrontation and the straight forward expression of personally owned feelings- both negative and positive. Thus congruence is a basis for living together in a climate of realness" (Rogers 160).

The self arises from all the experiences that an organism has and for a healthy being the experiences should be the same of the self as well as of the organism. If the experiences are not same, the person will feel anxious and will feel the distortion which will ultimately makes a person to misinterpret his experiences. Not only the

distortion; the person will opt for a denial and the person will not be further fully aware of all the events, resulting anxiety in people and a personality which will be completely unorganised. These people will then be treated with psychotherapy in order to bring congruity between self-concept and the organismic self. Rogers in *On Becoming a Person* (1961) asserts that, “During therapy the concept of the self becomes more congruent with the concept of ideal self; during and after therapy the observed behaviour of the client becomes more socialized and mature; during and after therapy the client increases in attitudes of self-acceptance, and this is correlated with an increase in acceptance of others” (Rogers 228). Rogers asserted that an individual faces congruence if his ideal and real self are similar and his self-concept is accurate. An individual faces incongruity when his ideal and real self are not in a perfect alignment. He further believed that self-worth increases in an individual only when he has a great congruence between his ideal and real self. The greater the gap between ideal and real self the more will be maladjustment which ultimately leads to unhealthy life patterns.

Maslow in *Towards a Psychology of Being* (1962) views self-actualization as “Self-actualization is not altogether general. It takes place via femaleness or maleness, which are prepotent to general humanness. That is, one must first be a healthy, femaleness fulfilled woman or maleness fulfilled man before general-human self-actualization becomes possible” (Maslow 177). Rogers believed that every individual could aim to achieve his goals, desires, and wishes and when they do so, self-actualization takes place and this is one of the most important contributions by Carl Rogers. He in his work *Client-centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory* (1951) views “The organism has one basic tendency and striving— to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organism” (Rogers 487).

For a person to be basically good according to humanists he or she needs to reach their highest potential to become a fully functioning being. Like Maslow, Rogers was also of the view that the tendency to actualize one’s own potential is inherent and self-actualization is in a continuous state of flow and it includes not only the biological growth but the psychological growth as well. It is a never ending

driving force as individuals who partially achieved their capabilities will always be in a continuous state of flow, moving forward to reach the highest potential. There are two needs that are related to the self-actualization: Positive Regard and Self Regard.

Along with the ideal and real self, Rogers focused on the importance of unconditional positive regard in developing self-concept. This concept of unconditional positive regard was initially developed by Stanley Standal in "*The Need for Positive Regard: A Contribution to Client- centered Theory*" in 1954 and later on expanded in 1956 by Humanistic psychologist Carl Rogers. Rogers believed that unconditional positive regard acts as a therapeutic component for the healthy development of an individual. With this component therapists under humanistic psychology assist their clients to accept and take their responsibilities. This component helps an individual to find solutions to his problems. With the help of this component, the therapist shows an overall acceptance towards his client by leaving aside his own opinions and viewpoints. Under conditional positive regard, the therapist need to represent his complete acceptance for his client no matter whether good or bad behaviour the client represents.

Positive regard or unconditional love is an essential feature for the development of self. Rogers believed that for a healthy development unconditional positive regard plays an essential role. Rogers tried to establish this unconditional positive regard as a therapeutic technique to help their clients by providing the conditions for their personal development. Unconditional positive regard is accepting people as they are.

By unconditional positive regard, it does not mean that each and every action need to be accepted. In terms of therapy, it helps to build a positive relationship between a client and a therapist. Unconditional positive regard is not about accepting the actions but it's about respecting the clients of who they really are. Having this regard for a clients can encourage them to share their wishes, feelings, emotions, and desires openly with their therapist. A client who seem to be afraid will not share his opinions and thoughts with the therapist and with this half information of theirs will have a negative impact on their therapy. Rogers believed that those who lack such

sort of regard are more likely to have low self-worth and will have less chances to reach their maximum potential. Rogers in his work *A Way of Being* (1980) views, “attitude of importance in creating a climate for change is acceptance, or caring, or prizing- but I have called “unconditional positive regard” (Rogers 97). When the therapist is experiencing a positive, acceptant attitude toward whatever the client is at that moment, therapeutic movement or change is more likely to occur. The therapist is willing for the client to be whatever immediate feeling is going on– confusion, resentment, fear, anger, courage, love, or pride. Such caring on the part of the therapist is non-possessive. The therapist prizes the client in a total rather than a conditional way” (Rogers 116).

Rogers believed that each and every individual lies at the centre of the phenomenal field and that field can be explained intensively and understood from the perspective of an individual. For that field to be understood, individual’s behaviour must first be understood as a reaction to that experimental or phenomenal field. People react to this field as an organised whole, only the individual can understand his experimental field. According to Freudian perspective, only a trained and well versed psychoanalyst can understand his patient’s unconscious impulses. Rogers believed that the experimental or the phenomenal field is not the true reality but an individual’s own perspective. It is because only some impulses enter into the conscious field under certain circumstances.

Rogers believed that self-actualization is a tendency to move towards maturity, and self-responsibility. Such tendency to be independent and move forward toward occurs throughout life both biologically; when a fertilized egg develops into several organs and finally into an organism and psychologically; self-responsibility, self-governance, choosing ultimate goals in life etc. Individual’s emotions, feelings, values, and thoughts are all a part of this experimental field. Therefore, an individual’s self determines the nature and course of self-actualization.

Self-regard comes from self-worth. To become a fully functioning and a psychologically healthy being it is important to consider the self as worthy and essential. The self-worth will in turn helps an individual to analyse his ultimate goal

to reach at the continuous state of self-actualization. An individual having high self-worth can make his own decisions and accepts his achievements and failures too with utmost confidence but on the other hand an individual having low self-worth will always rely on someone else's opinion regarding himself and will always have a negative image about self. Self-worth is developed in early childhood. A child acquires more self-esteem and self-worth when he is raised in a positive unconditional environment. A person having high self-worth, self-esteem leads up a good life, he is more open to new experiences and are less influenced by failures. Such people value each moment of their life, have confidence in their personality and do not rely on others to make their decisions. They make their own lives by not imposing any societal pressure over themselves. They make conscious efforts to display a high level of creativity.

Client-centered therapy, developed by Carl Rogers during the 1940s and 1950s. It is also termed as person-centered therapy or Rogerian therapy. It is a non-directive form of talk therapy where a client acts as an equal partner in the process of therapy as the therapists do not pass any judgment source solutions on the feelings of a client. Rogers believe that individuals themselves are the best experts of their own lives and events. Rogers suggested that individuals have potential to achieve anything they desire for. This approach and tendency of individuals must be included in the process of therapy to allow clients to fulfill their desires by relying on their own talents and potentials. Client-centered therapy can help people who are experiencing anxiety, psychosis, dementia, depression, mood disorders, and negative thoughts related to any traumatic event.

Rogers' Client- centered or person- centered therapy revolutionized clinical practice by creating a non- judgemental environment founded on three core conditions: Genuineness, Unconditional Positive Regard and Empathetic Understanding .With the involvement of these techniques, a therapist can assist a client to become more self-efficient, and more self-aware. With these techniques the client grows psychologically in his own self-directed way. During this therapeutic process, the client feel secure and free from any kind of personal judgments and business. In this process, Rogers deliberately use the word client instead of patient.

He believed that the word patient implies that an individual is sick and needs a cure from his therapist. By using the word client Rogers stressed on the importance of an individual seeking assistance to get rid of his difficulties.

By referring to the individual as a client rather than a patient; Rogers emphasized personal agency and the capacity for self- governance. This shift is critical for literary analysis; it allows the researcher to view characters as active participants in their own development rather than objects driven by dark forces or environmental conditioning. In the context of the disintegrated self, therapy acts as a mirror, assisting the individual in integrating new, unusual or traumatic experiences into a more flexible and self- structure.

A congruity is being shown by the therapists for their clients which allows clients to share their thoughts, feelings, in an open, direct, and honest way to their therapist. With this in the therapeutic process, there builds a strong and a healthy relationship between a client and therapist. A trust starts building which contributes a feeling of security and safety to a client so that he or she can engage in the therapeutic process in a complete way. In this process, a therapist tries to teach his clients the interaction between internal and external experiences. In the therapeutic process, a therapist will act as a mirror of a client's feelings and thoughts. The therapist try his utmost to understand his client and his experiences and can maintain an awareness and sensitivity for it. Its ultimate motif is that the client will have a strong bond with his therapist.

Rogers in 1957 published an article: "*The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change*" lays down a few points:

"There must be a psychological contact between a client and a therapist.

The client must be in a state of incongruence, an anxious or a helpless being.

The therapist must be in a state of congruence.

There should be an unconditional positive regard being experienced by a therapist for his client.

There must be an empathic understanding of client's experience by a therapist.

The therapist's unconditional positive regard must be perceived at least to a minimal degree by a client" (Rogers 95-103).

Rogers believed that apart from all these six points nothing else is required. There will be a constructive personality change if these conditions are met. The client-centered therapy is an approach where an individual is made aware of his own attitudes and perceptions rather than relying on therapist's perceptions. This interaction is established in such a way between a client and his therapist so that the client himself becomes aware of his experiences, opinions, thoughts, and wishes and the therapist tries to impose minimum possible forces, conflicts, and thoughts over his client. Rogers in his work *A Way of Being* (1980) comments, "The fact that in dealing with human beings, a certificate does not give much assurance of real qualification. If we were less arrogant, we might also learn much from the "uncertified" individual, who is sometimes unusually adapt in the area of human relationships" (Rogers 246).

As a psychologist, Rogers developed his theory of self or person-centered theory to help his clients to become a fully functioning being who is aware of his own experiences and is open to new experiences as well. A fully functioning being is the one who is aware of his capabilities and aims at achieving them in the best possible way. Such people are well aware of the social world and are capable to differentiate between their opinions and of others. Rogers also believed in the greatest and the ultimate potential of an individual that is achieved when the desires of an individual are completely fulfilled. Rogers constructed his theory with an assumption that the clients who come for their psychological help understand the imbalance, know about their pain and suffering but are unable to fix them up. This imbalance is caused because of the incongruity in the mind between perceptions and the reality. The client is aware of the perceptions as well as of the actual reality but is unable to accept it so the psychotherapy provides assistance to the clients to interpret, accept, and differentiate between perception and reality. There is an innate capability in an individual to grow and be a psychologically healthy being. The need for self-actualization is present in all the living beings and it can be suppressed only when an

individual is not given a favourable environment to grow. That unfavourable environment cannot make this need of self-actualization die in any organism. It comes to an end only when an individual's life came to an end.

The ultimate goal of the Rogerian framework is the emergence of the fully-functioning person. Such individuals are characterized by an openness to experience, existential living and a trust in their own organismic processes. However, a truly inclusive and holistic view must acknowledge that the actualizing tendency is not a solitary biological drive. It is a process that can be suppressed or enhanced by the suitability of the environment.

For the characters in the works of Philip Milton Roth, the drive towards self-actualization often encounters severe environmental and social obstacles. This study utilizes Rogers' theory to explore how these characters navigate the gap between their Real self and Ideal self when faced with the unpredictability of a changing world. By moving away from a presumptive focus on innate potential, we can critically examine how social class, historical trauma and biological reality dictate the course of an individual's self-actualization.

Critical Evaluation

If people grew up in an environment where their needs are not met, they will not function properly and will not be well-adjusted individuals as stated by Abraham Maslow. Although Maslow's theory of Hierarchy of Needs well explained the difference between growth and deficiency needs but also explained it well that not all individuals are capable to satisfy their higher level needs. While Humanistic Psychology offers an optimistic framework for understanding human behaviour, it is subject to rigorous academic critique. As noted by Greenberg and Baron (195), the model's efficacy is often limited when applied to individuals whose growth needs are not high, potentially failing to account for their physiological reactions within structured environments like the workplace.

The empirical validity of Maslow's research has been questioned due to its reliance on a statistically small and socio- demographically biased sample. Critics point out that the original study focused on highly educated prominent males such as

Einstein, Lincoln, and Beethoven- which restricts the theory's generalizability across different genders and socio- economic classes (McLeod, 2016).

It is difficult to test Maslow's theory of Hierarchy of Needs (Taormina & Gao 2013). Maslow's theory of Hierarchy of Needs; a theory of human motivation has a great deal of interest, but being a controversial theory it received both criticism as well as support. It was culture centered and was being criticised for it (Yang 2003). It is gender biased as claimed by some critics (Gullen & Gotell 2002), while some critics have claimed that it is applicable to both the genders (Coy & Kovacs Long 2005). Maslow in 1970 asserted that "Each of us is endowed at birth with a complete, and, to some extent, unique complement of needs that allowed expression by our environment, will foster our growth in a healthy direction" (Maslow 77-104). Some psychologists would not agree that lower needs like hunger, need for love and belongingness and so on are inborn, but some other psychologists believe that the higher needs in general are innate like intellectuality and esteem needs as claimed by Maslow. Maslow's tendency to discard the influence of environment in shaping the psyche of individuals has been noted by critics in their research articles (Aron, 1977; Daniels, 1982; Geller, 1982; Smith, 1973).

Maslow in 1970 stated in his work *Motivation and Personality* that our needs work in a hierarchical pattern, so that our basic needs of water, food, and shelter are predominant, these basic needs must be fulfilled before an individual can feel "free" of all of them, and progress towards the fulfilment of higher-order needs. (Maslow 35-51). The very first two steps of Maslow's need pyramid; physiological and safety needs are often satisfied in advanced societies, but the other next steps- need for love and belongingness and need for self-esteem create obstacles for a lot many individuals. The situation is completely opposite in the case of simpler societies because individuals may feel hungry and may suffer from illness periodically (Turnbull 1974). Individuals in such simpler societies exhibit social ties and an essence of self. At their most vulnerable points, the psychoanalysis and behaviourism were being criticised by Maslow and he truly deserves credit for his such accomplishments. He motivates us to devote our attention to the psychologically healthy people.

Besides all popularity of the concept of self-actualization that is linked with positive regard in psychology and motivation, it does not cease itself to draw various criticisms. Self-actualization is all about self-expression which is relied on that good feelings need to be pursued (Berne 2016). Critics claimed that the self-actualizing tendencies not only lead to positive approach towards human beings but non-relational approach as well (Thorne 1992). It is easy to shift one's focus from striving to actualize one's self to merely striving to create an appearance of self-actualization which can be confusing (Perls 1992). The psychological concept of self-actualization has turned into a moral norm by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. The self-actualizing tendencies have come to be seen as an extra-special benefit for a few individuals (Vitz 1994).

Philip Milton Roth was an American novelist and a short story writer and became one of the most awarded American writers of his generation. His work centres around semi-autobiographical themes that explores the impact of world wars and other national issues on people. Roth was raised in Jewish faith by his second generation Eastern European immigrant parents. His style of narration is amazing and most of his novels are in first person narrative. His use of controversial tones, and wide range of expressions represent his expressive values through which readers can easily correlate with. Through his fiction, he expresses shame, embarrassment, and secrets that easily represents the social, cultural as well as political issues where the protagonists used to represent their deepest thoughts and ideas. The protagonists are shown as struggling with themselves as well as with the society that ultimately expresses their agony, heartbreak, and miseries. The characters that he produced in his fiction have a lot many similarities, some of them are either writers, professors or scholars and those who are not- actually speak as if they are.

The events like Holocaust, assimilation, the Second World War had a great impact on the Jews and they started opposing their own Jewish heritage. Works by them are considered different from other writers because it portrays pain, torment, and hatred for their own religion. Roth became an integral part of such works which later on placed him among the most acclaimed and renowned writers. Through his fiction, he tried to expose the pain, sufferings, and fears of marginalization of Jews

for being considered as outsiders, intruders, and newcomers in American culture. In his fiction he exposed Jews and Jewishness that make his works portraying anti-Semitism.

His fictions made him a celebrity that placed him unstoppable and esteemed writer in the minds of the people. He was not only appreciated but was also criticized and severely attacked many a times. Real life became an integral part in Roth's fiction. He has done astounding job with around twenty-nine books which makes him an acclaimed writer and was no more than a celebrity. He faced continuous criticism for his opposition regarding Judaism. Roth is a skilled writer who possesses imaginative genius, courage, exploring truth, and his daring treatment of cultural, political, and sexual aspects. He was having a great source of knowledge, true understanding of pain, humour, and agony of people. The characters produced by Philip Roth are always striving and struggling with themselves to develop their self-esteem. Among other American Jewish writers, Roth was one of the most acute and inventive writers whose works speak loudly about pain. Social issues were presented by Roth to solve the contemporary problems. He possessed the unique sensibility for projecting his characters in an amazing way that readers can feel one with them.

Roth always considered himself as an American writer and not a Jewish writer. For him both American and Jewish experiences were same. The Jewish-American literature represents the dreams and aspirations of immigrant Jewish people who desperately seek for a place of their own. The Jewish-American literature describes the struggle of the people who are caught between past and present, religion, and freedom. It expresses individual in the face of history, pain, suffering, and ultimately achieving transcendence in life. It deals with the sufferings of individuals and transformation of their self and the major themes and motifs are comprised of Zionism, Holocaust, anti-semitism, religion, identity, and freedom. Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, and Philip Roth; the trio of Jewish literature made a remarkable shift in the Jewish American literature.

This study recognizes that the actualizing tendency is perpetually mediated by other probable factors, specifically the historical and biological realities of the subject. In the case of the Jewish- American experience, the self is not merely an

innate vessel of potential but a site of profound conflict shaped by the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and the presence of assimilation. The genocide of nearly six million Jews by the Nazi party in the 1930s and 1940s created a global trauma that fundamentally altered the Jewish psyche. For writers like Philip Roth; the quest for self-actualization is inextricably linked to this legacy of pain, marginalization and the struggle for identity.

The main theme of the thesis is to understand Jewish American Society, Jew's protecting their identity and culture in America, their dream to restore their self-image and self-esteem in realizing their ultimate talents and potential to achieve the excellent and the ultimate that they had lost through the lens of Philip Roth's select novels. The select novels for the present study throws light on the significant elements of the characters that formed the basis of their evolution of self-fulfilment and self-actualization. Motif of this thesis is to understand the pain and agony of the characters and how this suffering bring them closer to their truth and reality. Through Roth's select works and humanistic approach, a coherence has been rebuilt in the characters. Through the application of Humanistic approach in the select works, personal worth, creativity, and active nature of the characters have been analysed. The approach selected for study is optimistic and focuses on the talents and capabilities of characters in order to overcome fear, worries, despair, and hardships. It can only be achieved when characters have free-will, efficiency, ability to realize their potential and ultimately achieving self-actualization. The characters in the select novels are seen as maximizing their potential by focusing on their creativity and free-will which is the ultimate goal of the humanistic psychology.

The select novels of Philip Milton Roth when studied under the light of Humanistic perspective, the researcher incorporates in different chapters that characters in the select novels are unique and their free-will influence their behavior. They are seen as creative beings who appreciate their actual reality of life and have strong moral attitudes. The characters in the select novels are seen as independent beings who wanted to become something of their own. Such want to become something motivates them in their process of growth and development. Their

unsatisfied need motivates them to achieve their ultimate goals and finally becoming a self-actualized personality.

It is not mandatory that the Humanistic approach can only be applied to the works of an author in fact it is still used today to treat people having depression, anxiety, personality and panic disorders. The failures that people face in their relationships can be treated through this approach by empowering individuals and pushing them forward to fulfil their goals. It not only promotes active growth and development of an individual but it enhances awareness of an individual regarding his self-understanding and self-realization. The positive effects of this approach are continuously growing. There are a lot many tensions in human life like money, fears about job, experiencing discrimination, hate, and abuse and this humanistic approach asserts on creating an environment that can make people comfortable and safe. It focuses on each individual's potential and talent which can be used as a tool for self-discovery and thus reaching and attaining self-actualization.

There were different occasions that occurred in the first half of the 20th century that modified the situation of numerous nations and furthermore influenced America on a large scale. The consequences of these events were tremendous as warfare modified the mind-set of the society, making them defy the standards. In this thesis the psychological concepts of free-will, motivation, self, and self-actualization will be studied. By incorporating these concepts the characters in the novels of Philip Milton Roth as a whole will be studied by giving emphasis on human potential, personal responsibility, and self-actualization. The characters will be examined and how they would walk towards the direction of attaining self-actualizing tendencies; a motivating factor.

Philip Roth stands as a pivotal figure in Jewish- American literature, alongside Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud. His fiction serves as a narrative laboratory for exploring the phenomenological field of the individual. Roth's protagonists often scholars, professors or writers- struggle with the disintegrated self that is caught between past religious heritage and a modern desire for freedom.

By applying a Humanistic Perspective to the select novels, this thesis analyses how Roth's characters navigate their real self (marked by shame, embarrassment and historical agony) in pursuit of an ideal self (marked by autonomy and creative transcendence). Rather than viewing these characters through a lens of psychopathology, the humanistic approach highlights their agency and free- will, creative resilience and search for self- actualization.

The ultimate motif of this research is to understand how suffering and agony bring characters closer to the truth. This is not an idealistic pursuit of good feelings but a rigorous psychological effort to rebuild coherence within a fragmented identity. This study addresses that humanistic framework is utilized not to ignore the trauma of the past, but to empower an understanding of how individuals can overcome historical obstacles to maximize their creative and active nature.

Chapter II

Subjective Journey of the Protagonist

Since the time when the term humanism came into being it has undergone through several transformations and alterations. Various philosophical, social, and political advancements have led the modifications in this term. A man's inner world and his experiences are being portrayed in the literary works, it has expressed humanism in many different aspects. Therefore, humanistic aspects mark an eminent presence in literature. Several writers have incorporated humanistic views and ideologies in their works in one way or the other based on their experiences and understanding. Abraham Maslow has been considered as the father of humanistic psychology; his theory relied on the concept that in order to study and understand the human learning and behavior, experience has the primary phenomenon. He focused on an individual's subjectivity, free-will, creativeness, and self-actualization and placed more emphasis on subjectivity and meaningfulness rather than objectivity. The ultimate concern for Maslow is an individual's potential, talent, worth, and dignity.

The idea of self has gone through different developmental stages on the epistemological planes of psychology and philosophy. The innumerable implications and secrets of existence can to some degree, be interpreted, resolved, and settled within the framework of self. There is no comprehensive episteme that could be named as self of man. Two individuals can never have same self. Self could really be a profoundly tricky thing within one individual. The presence of a man is normally riddled with quandaries, possibilities and idiocies. Man; as a social being is ceaselessly confronted with decisions and afflictions of connections, on a physiological level, he is entrapped in a labyrinth of fears and interests. Individuals, may be alone among all the creatures of the universe, who have the ability to ponder and assess their considerations, feelings, actions and emotions. This ability for self-reflective actions, or in general; is the real essence of philosophy.

Subjectivity within a rigorous psychological framework, is not merely a philosophical abstraction of consciousness but a dynamic phenomenal field through

which the individual structures reality. Moving beyond the optimistic subjectivism of early modern philosophy, humanistic psychology specifically through the lens of Carl Rogers- defines subjectivity as the internal frame of reference that dictates an individual's behaviour. This psychological subjectivity is inherently linked to incongruence: the tension between the perceived self and the actual experience. Rather than an idealistic state of pure being, subjectivity is the site of a constant struggle where the individual deciphers their own reality against the weight of social and biological limitations.

The historical concept of subjectivity of a particular subject differs in the radical modern trends within the modern philosophy. The term subjectivity cannot be reduced to one specific definition just like other terms in science. Subjectivity cannot be explicated as a disintegrated taxonomy of categories incorporated in human beings but quite used in terms of social context in which the subject is developing. To be embodied means to be an integral part of the normal world. How we experience this world and how we decipher the peculiarities that engraves itself by means of our faculties we call it as reality. Since we are bodies, we are never liberated from being available to ourselves.

Subjectivity– as people experience this inward, indispensable truth of being- is the major truth of human life. As persons, individuals experience the truth of their own life in manners that no other animal would be able. For example, we know about the progression of time and how this affects our arrangements, yearnings and mortality. Beyond being a theory, we feel our subjectivity as an existential classification that cannot be copied in the universe. As individuals we experience our lives from the back to front. This implies that we experience ourselves in the entirety of being, within the sight of items, occasions and different individuals and figure out how to develop reflection on the idea of my-self. This existential acknowledgement is dazzling, yet freighting to individuals who endeavour to abstain from choice.

While subjectivity enables an individual to participate in being; this participation is not inherently harmonious or positive. A realistic frame of reference acknowledges that human subjectivity is frequently characterized by existential

anxiety and the burden of choice. As an existential category, subjectivity involves the recognition of one's own mortality and the limitations of the physical world. Subjectivism, therefore, is not a simple gauge for morality that leads to easy fulfilment; rather, it is the fraught arena where individuals must decide their values in the face of a world that often contradicts them. This realistic subjectivity accounts for the idiocies and quandaries of existence, recognizing that the human subject often operates within a state of the Daimonic- where internal urges for power, sex or anger complicate the path towards growth.

Rene Descartes and Priest Berkeley communicated the central idea of subjectivism. Descartes recommended that brain is different from body and world and is a domain of its own. Berkeley in his theory of subjective idealism communicated that the world is as I perceive it. My discernment does not address the world. Rather, the world is a declaration of my subjectivity. The cycles and standards of my subjectivity decides how I see the world; the world does not impact my impression of it. The direction is altogether from inside my psyche to the rest of the world. Immanuel Kant likewise suggested that subjectivity can't have the foggiest idea about the world on the grounds that the two are discrete areas. Subjectivity contains its own inherent regulations, for example, moral standards, that structure one's view of the world.

Subjectivity is pervaded by social substance, it's not a self-contained domain. This follows from the way that subjectivity is situated towards the world and weighed down with common substance. Subjectivity improves the living being's understanding of the world and its capacity to design compelling activity inside it. An independent subjectivity that made itself *ex nihilo* with no premise in or with respect to the world, would be of little support of the living being. Subjectivism adds to our understanding to interpret human subjectivity as it stresses the critical role in generating behavior. Subjectivism keeps us from seeing individual as mechanical, void responders to improvements— as behaviourism, positivism, and man-made brain power assume. Subjectivism amends the far reaching precisely relate free and ward factors, with no thought for subject's dynamic understanding, cognizance, and expectation. An equilibrium can be accomplished by recognizing the action of

subjectivity alongside social limitations that frame it. For instance, in shaping individual's personality people are exceptionally dynamic during the process of self-forming, however, the materials accessible for framing one's own tale are a component of our shared thoughts of personhood.

Development of subjectivity mirrors the social cycle which comprises us as subjects. A subject is not born however is changed into one from a substantial being by drenching into culture. Subjectivity is definitively the state of our being which empowers us to perceive ourselves as subjects or people. Subjectivity is something in us by which we get our general surroundings. Subjectivity and personality are accepted especially in social investigations, as socially built ideas. Social examination marks subjectivity as social development as opposed to fixed and immortal element. When we allude somebody as a subject, we exactly implied that the individual is definitely not a confined substance however a part of some bigger framework.

Individuals with higher levels of self-worth leads to subjective well-being. Self-worth alludes to an individual's faith in their ability to execute ways of behaving necessarily to produce the explicit staging fulfilments. It portrays confidence in the capacity to reflect command over one's own inspiration, conduct, and social surrounding. Personality and self-worth work on various levels; i.e. attributes and qualities of personality that might be viewed as portraying the innate personality of a character. Whereas self-worth portrays how the individual controls their way of behaving while interfacing with the surroundings. Self-worth determines what ultimate goals a person choose to fulfil, how to go about pursuing and accomplishing those goals and a character reflect upon his own presentation. Self-worth also affects productivity as a character having low self-worth fails to realize and accomplish his goals.

Humanistic psychologists argue that subjective perception of an individual plays a vital role and is more important than objective reality. Humanistic psychologists believe that personality is studied from an individual's subjective experience and that's why humanistic approach is sometimes called as

phenomenological. Carl Rogers maintains that the focus of psychology is not behavior, the unconscious mind, and thinking as given by Skinner, Freud and Wundt respectively but how an individual perceives and analyse different events. Rogers played an essential role in humanistic psychology as he redirected this to the study of self. Humanistic approach believes that healthy psychological attitude is dependent on: the importance of subjective experience that individual's behavior is relied on taking personal responsibility and his behavior is best understood from his own perspective and the subjective experience of an individual is the ultimate indicator of behavior. Humans have free-will that an individual has an ability to make choices of his own and are not determined by biological or external forces.

In the humanistic psychology free-will is an essential tool for self- discovery, yet it is rarely a path towards simple enthusiasm or unalloyed positivity. For a fully functioning being, the free- will often involves confronting the darker aspect of self. To avoid the complex psychological realities, it is necessary to view self-actualization not as a state of perfection, but as a process of integrating flaws, internal conflicts and moral ambiguities. Roth's characters, for instance, often exercise their free- will in ways that are self- destructive or socially defiant. Thus, a humanistic interpretation should go beyond the traditionally optimistic view linked to Maslow and instead emphasize the capacity to persist and affirm one's existence even in the face of failure. The capacity for choice does not guarantee a happy outcome; rather it guarantees that the individuals continue to shape their own intricate – and at times tragic- psychological experience.

Maslow and Rogers, the two eminent personalities of Humanistic Psychology emphasize on self-determinism. They argue that without having self-determinism and improving oneself; attaining self-fulfilment is not possible. As self-actualization is the highest level in the hierarchy where an individual has an accurate perception of reality, is spontaneous, and creative, this all becomes possible only when an individual will realize his potential, talents and will become one with his needs. Maslow and Rogers assert that behavior of an individual should not be determined otherwise he will never change to improve and take responsibility. But free-will allows a person to act and improve by taking responsibility of his own actions.

Ignoring free-will lead towards the negative impact on human progression. Free-will in the humanistic psychology tend to focus only on self-improvement and values independence and individualism. Maslow in his work *Towards a Psychology of Being* asserts that a child tends to grow in a process of normal development, "In the normal development of the normal child, it is now known that, most of the time, if he is given a really free choice, he will choose what is good for his growth. This he does because it tastes good, feels good, gives pleasure or delight. This implies that he "knows" better than anyone else what is good for him" (Maslow 168).

Free-will is necessary for an individual to become fully functioning human being. Free-will is defined as how we decide to act and how we wish to accomplish our objectives throughout everyday life. Our decisions cannot be pre-decided by the external forces or biological powers. The concept of free-will acts as a core concept in humanistic psychology. Humanistic psychology assumes that each and every person has the power of free-will to choose how to act and behave. It means that an individual has the right control and influence over his destiny. There is a constant debate between free-will and determinism that plays a vital role in humanistic psychology as free-will deals with taking decisions and act upon them freely whereas determinism includes both internal as well as external forces that shape the behavioural patterns of an individual.

The humanistic approach asserts that human beings inherently have free-will which later on helps an individual in realizing his true self to lead a healthy and fulfilling life. Free-will is an idea in Humanistic psychology wherein an individual becomes able to have some choices in how to act. When an individual is free to choose, he becomes solely responsible for his own actions. Maslow was inquisitive about the motivational patterns of mankind. Maslow believed that in order to achieve certain needs people get motivated and this portrays his belief in the power of free-will. He views human responsibility in a very optimistic manner.

Abraham Maslow in his work *Motivation and Personality* asserts about creativity as "a universal characteristic of all the people studied or observed. There is no exception. Each one shows in one way or another a special kind of creativeness or

originality or inventiveness that has certain peculiar characteristics” (Maslow 170). He further adds to creativeness that, “it seems to be more a fundamental characteristic of common human nature- a potentiality given to all human beings at birth. Most human beings lose this as they become enculturated, but some few individuals seem either to retain this fresh and naive, direct way of looking at life, or if they have lost it, as most people do, they later in life recover it” (Maslow 171).

Maslow asserted in his work, *Motivation and Personality* that creativeness appears and is projected out in whatever activity an individual is engaged in. Whatever an individual does, it can be done with appropriate attitude and spirit. People who are creative “seem to see the true and the real more easily... these individuals are less inhibited, less constricted, less bound, in a word, less enculturated” (Maslow 171). Maslow further asserts that individuals who are creative are more spontaneous, natural, and more human. The behavior of creative people is marked by simplicity and are less affected by the artificialities of life. Maslow believed that the creativity in individuals is fresh and natural, is present at the very time of their birth, but the curtailment and hindrance in most cultures lead to its repression and quashing. Creative individuals lead towards self-fulfilment, it is possible that self-actualized being still face obstacles in life and this happens only because they resist being enculturated.

In the process of self-actualization, self-knowledge and self-renewal play a vital role that directs the self from one state of consciousness to the more optimistic and advanced state. For Maslow self-knowledge not only asserts an individual to make better choices but also leads him towards the awareness of human nature. To attain self-actualization, it is very important to recognize one’s potential, needs, and talents and to fulfill one’s needs an individual must be self-sufficient to succeed in a particular situation. Self-efficacy in a person leads to produce desirable effects and has a powerful impact on how individuals behave and act including the motivation they need to fulfill their targets. It imparts in determining which goals an individual should choose to attain. Creativity, self-efficacy, spontaneity, and free-will makes an individual a subjective being who tend to view his challenges optimistically. Instead

of feeling depressed and demoralized a subjective being views his hurdles of life as an opportunity to learn new skills and grow and develop to the fullest.

While hurdles and complications are inevitable, the humanistic perspective does not suggest that the subjective being merely overcomes them through a positive spirit. Instead, the realistic subject is one who experiences the full weight of these hurdles. Creative and self-actualizing individuals are often marked by a profound sense of isolation or social friction because they resist being enculturated. Their growth is not a linear movement towards excellence, but a recurring cycle of self-renewal and crisis. By acknowledging the role of faults and failures as central rather than incidental to the process of becoming, the study provides a psychological framework capable of embracing the significant flaws and internal conflicts that define the human existence.

For Maslow, to become a subjective being, it is very important for an individual to embrace new experiences as an individual who is creative and open minded enjoys learning new ideas and thoughts. Such openness makes an ordinary being a fully functioning being by brushing and freshen up one's personality. A fully functioning being is fully aware of his present moments rather than pondering in the past or overthinking about future events. Trusting one's thoughts and views is another aspect of a fully functioning being. A person becomes self-actualized only when he visualizes his actions and their outcomes in a particular manner.

The process of becoming a fully functioning being is a journey and not an ultimate destination where an individual is forced to follow certain steps to attain self-fulfilment. Infact, this journey continues throughout the life that helps in maintaining openness, self-awareness, creativity and living life to the fullest. The path of becoming a fully functioning being is not at all about realizing and understanding one's strengths and talents but also the weaknesses, faults and flaws.

Maslow believed that people who are creative and have a passion to become self-actualized accept themselves as they are. They accept their faults and failures in an optimistic manner. They accept the differences between their own personal image and ideal image. They are bothered about their personal faults and try to improve

their habits that are unhealthy to their personality. The lives of such creative and spontaneous people are marked by simplicity. Spontaneity is found not only in their inner self like thoughts and their viewpoints but is also found in their outward behavior. Such people are not generally whimsical, on the grounds that they can undoubtedly acknowledge the requirements of society and discover some ways to fit in without being false to their own self and identity.

People who are subjective are problem centered, and are not ego centered. The issues they centre around are normally not their own, in fact, they centre around issues outside themselves and they focus on the significant causes they would portray as necessary. Tackling with such issues is taken as their obligation or responsibility, instead of as something they believe should accomplish for themselves. While social withdrawal is many a times seen as mentally destructive, subjective individuals are seen as enjoying their privacy. They remain calm and try to separate themselves from the situations that are troublesome and complicated, thus staying away from the problematic and panicking situations. With such healthy detachments and separation, they remain dynamic, mindful, responsible, and disciplined people throughout their lives. Maslow accepted that the tendency of free-will is much more in such people than in an average being.

Individuals who are subjective beings and are creative tend to be autonomous, and independent. Such individuals are growth motivated. They do not need the company of any person to be creative, spontaneous, and autonomous. They do not rely on the approval of others. For an individual who is self-actualized, self-development and inner growth become much necessary than the love, warmth, and esteem bestowed by others. Such individuals tend to appreciate all aspects of life whether negative or positive. Maslow believed that “self-actualizing people have the wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy” (Maslow 163).

Maslow devoted a great deal of attention towards the peak experiences. He believed that these experiences are not just restricted solely to self-actualized people, in fact, all people are capable of having such moments, but self-actualized people tend to feel it more often. Peak experiences involve simple as well as intense

movements. Maslow in his work *Towards a Psychology of Being* described peak experiences of self-actualized people as,

“self- actualizing people are more able to perceive the world as if it were independent not only of them but also of human beings in general. This also tends to be true of the average human being in his highest moments, i.e., in his peak experiences. He can then more readily look upon nature as if it were there in itself and for itself, and not simply as if it were a human playground put there for human purposes. He can more easily refrain from projecting human purposes upon it. In a word, he can see it in its own Being (“endless”) rather than as something to be used, or something to be afraid of, or to be reacted to in some other human way” (Maslow 75).

To become a subjective being, Maslow suggests that individuals need to use and believe their power of self-determination for becoming stronger, fully volitional, and fully conscious so that they can discard and neglect their self-criticism, fears, and distress. Such spontaneous personalities have the power of expressiveness and have naturally flowing conduct, their free and open mind let them to be more creative towards new thoughts and ideas. To become a self-actualized being, the peak experiences are considered as important goals of life and such experiences of an individual allows him to perceive himself and the outer world in a new and exciting way. Such a person starts viewing himself as meaningful and his life in a more positive way. Peak experiences in the life promotes positive growth and development by maximizing one’s innate capabilities and potential which is the ultimate goal of an individual’s existence.

This chapter examines the select works of Philip Roth by analysing how the protagonist, Nathan Zuckerman, constructs his own reality through a complex and often fractured subjectivity. Zuckerman’s personality develops through a series of existential collisions with his environment. While he seeks admiration and acceptance, his growth is marked by what humanistic psychology identifies as incongruence- the painful discrepancy between his ideal self as a serious artist and the social self perceived by his family and the public. By applying a realistic frame of

reference, this study explores how Zuckerman's strong emotions and evolving understanding of life are forged not through ease, but through the internal conflicts and moral ambiguities that define the Rothian subject.

Throughout the trilogy, Nathan Zuckerman faced transitions throughout various developmental stages, yet this journey is not a linear path towards a strong headed or confident ideal. From a humanistic perspective, Nathan's subjectivity is a site of intense psychological struggle. While he attempts to satisfy his needs and move towards self-actualization, he is simultaneously plagued by the daimonic forces of shame and guilt. His matured being is not defined by the absence of flaws, but by his increasing capacity to acknowledge his own internal contradictions. His struggle for unconditional positive regard- first from his father and later from the public reveals that his subjectivity is deeply entwined with his vulnerability and neuroticism, making him a far more complex figure than a standard positive protagonist

The emergence of Jewish- American literature in the late 20th century, led by the figures like Bellow, Malamud and Roth provides a critical landscape for examining the individual's identity and a sense of self which are not formed in isolation, but are heavily shaped- often constrained – by the social world they are born into. For Philip Roth's protagonists, Jewish identity is not an idealistic or static inheritance, but an ideology of intense psychological friction. Nathan Zuckerman's subjectivity is defined by the conflict between his organismic self – which seeks artistic freedom, sexual exploration and the ethno- religious self- demand by his family. Nathan, as Roth's alter ego, does not simply portray Jewish life; he struggles against the monolithic expectations of his community, illustrating the humanistic belief that authenticity is often won through a painful rebellion against one's own cultural origins.

Roth's characters in the select novels- Nathan Zuckerman, Coleman Silk, Ira Ringold, and Seymour Swede Levov are the protagonists in the select novels of Philip Milton Roth which described a complete outlook of their life. The characters framed by Roth are set free to be analysed and interpreted by the readers in their own

way. Their character is dynamic in nature. The process of development is outstanding and noticeable in each and every character. Nathan symbolizes a journey of life when close interpretation of the character of Nathan is analysed. In his journey of life, there is a constant development towards maturity to be an awakened man. An introvert Nathan Zuckerman becoming a responsible and a matured being is being witnessed. Through his character, Philip Milton Roth explains how character affects his surrounding or environment, and vice-versa. There exists a harmony between his character and his surroundings.

Nathan Zuckerman; Roth's alter ego in the novel *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound* and *The Anatomy Lesson* is seen as a spontaneous, independent, and a creative being. The story of Nathan starts in the winter of 1956 when he visits his artistic icon Emanuel Isidore Lonoff who is an eminent writer and is leading an anomalous and detached life along with his wife Hope Lonoff in New England. Zuckerman writes of Lonoff's "celebrated blend of sympathy and pitilessness (monumentalized as "Lonovian" by Time – after decades of ignoring him completely) (Roth 14). Lonoff's wife depicts his literary and artistic values, and his life is one of "Purity. Serenity. Security. Seclusion" (Roth 5).

Nathan has escaped to Lonoff when he is censured by his family and the Jewish community in his native Newark for composing a novel on a family embarrassment which is associated Meema Chaya's will. Nathan's father was a doctor who could not understand the artistic creation of his son that finally led him in a serious trouble, "he was so be-wildered by what I had written that he had gone running to his moral mentor, a certain Judge Leopold Wapter, to get the judge to get his son to see the light. As a result, after two decades of a more or less unbroken amiable conversation, we had not been speaking for nearly five weeks now, and I was off and away seeking patriarchal validation elsewhere" (Roth 10). The heart of the story is Nathan's everlasting want, both sentimental as well as touchingly recognizable, for his father's approval for his writing.

The conflict between father and son takes the form of an argument where both of them have their genuine convictions:

“You make everybody seem awfully greedy, Nathan.”

“But everybody was.”

“That’s one way of looking at it, of course.”

“That’s the way you looked at it yourself. That’s why you were so upset that they would not compromise.”

“The point is, there is far more to our family than this. And you know that. I hope that today reminded you of the kind of people we are. In case in New York you have forgotten”

“Dad, I had a good time seeing everybody. But you didn’t have to give me a refresher course in the family’s charms” (Roth 86).

The conflict between Nathan and his father Victor represents a fundamental crisis of unconditional positive regard. In humanistic terms, Victor’s love is conditional-contingent upon Nathan’s willingness to suppress the darker side of the Jewish experience in his writing. This rejection creates a profound fragmentation in Nathan’s subjectivity. His journey to E.I. Lonoff is not merely a sentimental search for a mentor, but a desperate psychological attempt to find a spiritual father who can provide the validation necessary for Nathan to integrate his artistic identity. Nathan’s suffering is not just spiritual exile but a realistic psychological trauma caused by the threat of being cast out from the phenomenal field of his family. His longing for Lonoff’s moral support is an act of self-preservation, as he attempts to reconstruct a sense of self-worth that his biological father has systematically dismantled through mental censure.

“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. Of course, I had a loving father of my own, whom I would ask the world of any day of the week, but my father was a foot doctor and not an artist, and lately we had been having serious trouble in the family because of a new story of mine” (Roth 9-10).

Nathan feels dejection from his father that leaves him unable to identify his own self, prompting him to find connections elsewhere. The warnings of Nathan's father had no impact on Nathan and the rejection of his father leads him to look elsewhere for a Jewish link, which is where he finds E.I. Lonoff, "I discovered E.I. Lonoff, whose fiction seemed to me a response to the same burden of exclusion and confinement that still weighed upon the lives of those who had raised me, and that had informed our relentless household obsession with the status of the Jews" (Roth 12). His actions are motivated by his need to prove to his family that he is a good Jewish personality who is concerned about Jewish people.

Subjectivity, a cornerstone of humanistic psychology, is a consistent thematic force throughout Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson*. Each novel reflects a different phase in Nathan Zuckerman's evolving consciousness, illustrating how his internal experiences, desires, and conflicts shape his identity and worldview. In *The Ghost Writer*, Roth introduces a youthful Nathan Zuckerman, whose understanding of the world is filtered through an idealistic and highly imaginative lens. In *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman's emerging subjectivity is characterized by a subjective distortion of reality. His fascination with Amy Bellette and his fantasy of her as Anne Frank is not merely a creative act but a psychological mechanism that justifies his own controversial art. This highlights a key humanistic tension: Nathan's inner drives lead him to construct an alternative reality to escape with his familial disapproval. Here, subjectivity is an active relationship with the material world where the subject attempts to resolve his identity crisis by projecting his own psychological needs onto others, thereby illustrating the realistic complexity of a mind attempting to navigate guilt through imagination.

In the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan is being portrayed as a being who is immensely affected by the unexpected demise of his father. Nathan faced a dejection and unacceptance from his father in the novel, *The Ghost Writer* and is now in *Zuckerman Unbound* feels the lack of love, warmth, and affection in his life and finds it difficult to tackle. His own success ruins him and he returns back his roots once again. *Zuckerman Unbound* is all about Nathan's tenuous relationship with his art. The protagonist, Nathan Zuckerman; a simulacrum of Roth himself, is a creator

who turns into a millionaire by his blockbuster. He is an everyman with everyman's concern. Like Roth's Portnoy's Complaint, Nathan faces appreciation and impugning for his crazy work, *Carnovsky*. *Zuckerman Unbound* deals with two different stories- the main story manages the creator, Nathan Zuckerman whose blockbuster novel *Carnovsky* turns into a hit. Ultimately, Zuckerman shows up as an insane onanist in the public domain. The other story manages the passing of Nathan's dad Victor Zuckerman in Florida and the emotional fall out after it.

Nathan although becomes a superstar also battles with his blockbuster life, in the wake of disturbing four different books and living through three unsuccessful and ineffective relationships. He finds it hard to manage his riches, uniqueness, and popularity. The author keeps on living like a schlub, incapable to move over his old antiquated life, and eating in modest shops. *Zuckerman Unbound* is a portrayal of Nathan's life after achieving some fame. The artist's battle with his art as seen in this novel, *Zuckerman Unbound* is actually a boon of getting better and gaining some new and useful knowledge. He became one with his art and in this artistic process he received acclaim and denunciation simultaneously as success itself became a threat for Nathan. He struggled a lot in having an equilibrium between a celebrity life and a common man's life. The chapter *Look Homeward Angel*, offers a portion of Roth's ideal and most moving composition, in which he portrays Henry's responses to *Carnovsky*. His own brother Henry accuses him for double crossing his own dad and, surprisingly, killing him with his creative composition. Nathan in *Zuckerman Unbound* is seen as an aspiring being.

As Zuckerman in the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound* navigates fame and public scrutiny following the release of his controversial novel *Carnovsky*, his subjective experience becomes more complex and conflicted because of his public vs. private identity- Zuckerman becomes increasingly aware of how others interpret his work and, by extension, his character. This tension between public perception and personal truth is a major source of psychological conflict. The dissonance between how he sees himself and how the world sees him leads to a sense of alienation and his isolation through misrecognition. He is trapped in the persona the public has projected onto him, which undermines his authentic sense of self. Subjectivity in

relationships- Nathan's interactions especially with women like his ex-wife Laura reveal the disconnect between individual experiences of shared events. Misunderstandings stem from each character's internal narrative, emphasizing how subjective interpretation governs relationships. Roth presents memory not as objective fact but as a filtered and often unreliable internal record, shaped by emotion, bias, and time. This reflects humanistic psychology's emphasis on personal perception over empirical truth.

Nathan in *The Anatomy Lesson*, is seen as leading a life of pain, suffering, and misery. *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman Unbound tells the story of an artist's journey from nothing to everything, from accomplishments to non-fulfilment. This novel is all about Nathan writing's and its intense effects on him. This novel is a story of illness that Nathan is suffering from and his struggle in dealing with his physical health. Nathan is again facing a battle with his own self as his life is completely disintegrated with his own subjective being. He started to believe that his own artistic creation is the ultimate reason for his pain and suffering.

In *The Anatomy Lesson* Nathan's chronic, undiagnosed pain serves as a physical manifestation of his psychological disintegration. Within a realistic humanistic frame, this ailment represents the total collapse of his self- efficacy. Nathan no longer views his subjectivity as a tool for growth, but a source of torment. His attempt to abandon writing for the medical profession is not a positive step towards a new goal, but an existential flight from a self he can no longer tolerate. This illustrates the humanistic beliefs that when the actual self is completely alienated from the ideal self; the result is not just boredom, but a profound existential crisis where the body itself revolts against a fragmented identity.

The boredom and inactivity in his life makes him unable to write. With this inactivity he discarded his writing and started consoling himself by indulging with women. Torment assumes a huge part in the novel. Aside from the actual impact, the suffering, pain, and aggravation hits the Zuckerman mentally that makes him unable to write and compose new artistic creations. However, women attempt to help Zuckerman; but he observes himself agreeable just when he finds himself on his playmat. The pain which Nathan is suffering with could not be diagnosed properly.

Due to this undiagnosed physical pain, he started indulging himself in vodka, marijuana and, percodan and grows into addiction with it. He wanders here and there in search of a perfect doctor who will diagnose his mysterious ailment. In *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan deals with his accomplishments. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Zuckerman decides to live with a fantasy which is completely unrealistic to become a doctor and explain this to his friend Bobby. Nathan is now at that very stage where he is doubting everyone and starts leading an amazed life. Zuckerman attempts to divert himself by engaging with different ladies. He feels that his own lecherous novel, *Carnovsky* is the ultimate reason of the loss of his parents. He attempts to whatever conceivable from treatment to electric shocks: “he set the timer, put two moistened electrode pads above and below the site of the pain, and six times a day gave himself a low voltage shock for five minutes...” (Roth 432).

Nathan is being described as having higher levels of self-efficacy which leads to the subjective well-being. Nathan’s subjectivity is the insight or experience of the inward and is a fundamental pathway to knowledge. This state of Nathan empowers him to perceive himself as subject that mirrors the cycle that comprises him as a subject. Nathan’s subjectivity refers to his own judgment which is shaped by his own personal feelings and opinions instead of any external influences. It was only because of his subjective being that he progressed from an ordinary being to an artist. The importance of subjective experience is that an individual’s behavior is dependent on taking personal responsibility and his behavior is best understood from his own viewpoint.

In the final novel of the trilogy, *The Anatomy Lesson*; Roth deepens his exploration of subjective experience through Zuckerman’s physical and existential crisis. Pain and inner reality of Nathan- Zuckerman’s chronic pain lacks a clear medical cause, emphasizing that suffering is as much psychological and emotional as it is physical. His experience of illness is deeply subjective and resistant to external understanding. The body as a site of meaning: his physical decline becomes symbolic of his internal struggles—his fading creativity, his fears of mortality, and the erosion of identity. The body, in this context, is not just flesh but a projection of the self.

Creative identity and self-worth- as Nathan loses the ability to write, Zuckerman confronts the fragility of his self-concept. His career, once the anchor of his identity, becomes a source of doubt and anxiety, reinforcing the humanistic view that self-worth is internally generated. Fantasy as psychological escape- His elaborate daydreams, including conversations with imagined figures and a desire to abandon writing for medicine, highlight the mind's power to create alternative realities as a coping mechanism. These fantasies are less delusion than expressions of his need for meaning and reinvention.

Zuckerman's trilogy is an arc of evolving subjectivity- through Zuckerman's psychological journey, Roth intricately portrays the many dimensions of human subjectivity—how individuals perceive, remember, relate, and imagine. From the naive projections of a young writer in *The Ghost Writer* to the public scrutiny and fractured selfhood in *Zuckerman Unbound*, and finally to the embodied distress and existential re-evaluation in *The Anatomy Lesson*, Roth shows how personal experience defines reality. This progression mirrors key tenets of humanistic psychology, particularly the belief that individual meaning, perception, and the pursuit of authenticity are central to human development.

Nathan Zuckerman is shown as exceptionally dynamic in the process of self-formation. Nathan was not at all subjective from the very beginning but he becomes a subjective being by changing his form from an erotic man to a matured being. Subjectivity is something in us by which we get from our general surroundings and so the Nathan did in the novels- *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson*. He is not shown as a confined being but a part of some bigger framework. It was his inner sense and understanding that he depicted in the novels.

When Nathan showed his inclination towards E.I. Lonoff to learn artistic values, he can be seen as a subjective being which alludes to how Nathan's judgment is formed by his own personal beliefs and sentiments rather than outside impacts. As an individual he experiences his life from back to front. Subjectivity empowers him to take part in being. The world that he created becomes the mode of self-understanding for him. He had a very warm, and loving relationship with his mentor,

shared a common place to stay in, food, and a secure environment to develop his artistic values.

Subjectivity stresses the critical role in generating behavior. At Lonoff's place, he received unconditional love, care, and affection from his mentor which helped him to become confident. The path he chose for him provided safety and security from E. I. Lonoff that directs him towards the artistic path. With this feeling of being secure and safe with his mentor, he becomes a confident, a sensitive, and a matured being. This level of maturity and understanding arises only when an individual's subjectivity includes his projection of self. It can clearly be understood why Nathan developed into a secure being by walking over the path of experience, development, and growth.

The decision taken out by Nathan to choose the path of E. I. Lonoff and considering him his mentor to produce artistic creation describes his confidence and command over his own actions. Although he struggled a lot, lost connections with his loved ones but he stayed calm and can be viewed as portraying the innate personality of his character. Publishing one book after another describes well his mastery experience. He worked very hard on his own individual's performance and became the one who is fit for accomplishing his tasks he set out for himself. Being a Jewish son; it takes courage to write stuff that is against Jewish ideologies and get critical remarks from his father and Jewish community as well. But it was his inward sentiments that he portrayed in his creation. He projected his own self in the novels- *The Ghost Writer and Zuckerman Unbound*- a picture of his own community.

Nathan had a firm belief in his capabilities that leads him to become a subjective well-being. The experience he had has been clearly mentioned by him in his own artistic creations and this experience of Nathan is the ultimate indicator of his behavior. Nathan, as an individual perceived, analysed, and interpreted different events and wrote them down in his creation as an artist. This is what Humanistic psychologists believe that personality is studied only from an individual's subjective being. The essential element of subjective being is that individual's behavior is completely dependent on how well he takes his own responsibility. This is clearly

mentioned in Nathan's characterization as how he had chosen a path for himself without any influence of some external agency. With this essential element of subjective being the behavior of an individual is clearly indicated.

Nathan rose as a strong headed personality. His self; went through different developmental stages and confronted several afflictions of connections but at last we see Nathan as an awakened being. His decision for writing and to become a unique artist and make his father proud evokes his own community to raise questions on him. This journey of Nathan although is difficult but it affects his surrounding and environment in turn helps him in grooming his personality. This is what subjectivity is about- having a harmony between a character and his surroundings.

The real essence of subjectivity is- the ability to have self-reflective actions. Nathan Zuckerman's self-motivation and his subjective being made him to become what he actually desires for. The arch of Nathan Zuckerman's life, when analysed through a humanistic lens, reveals a journey defined by ongoing struggle rather than ultimate arrival. He does not reach a static state of awakening; instead he achieves a more realistic form of subjectivity that acknowledges his own limitations and failures. His mastery as an artist is inextricably linked to his social rejection and personal loss. Ultimately, Zuckerman exemplifies the humanistic subject who despite total social persuasion being him, continues the process of becoming. This process is marked by a harmony between his internal sentiments and his external surroundings, but it is a harmony born of dissonance and the persistent courage to remain volitional in a world that consistently challenges his worth.

As a subjective being he is well aware of the true reality of medical profession to which he is having no relation but he wants to choose it anyway just to console himself and to get rid of his own perception that he is the reason behind his parent's death. Although he takes one more step for himself of taking doctor as a profession on one hand, but on the other side he is also very much aware of the difference between his writing and the profession of medicine. His actions of taking an active step for his writing- shapes his behavior and this behavior later on grooms his personality. But after his parent's death he suddenly saw a downfall in his writing.

He started taking negative feedbacks from his community and from his brother Henry in an intensive manner that left him alienated in the world where he is now feeling himself as a murderer of his own parents.

His subjective being intensifies more later on when he poses as a pornographer. His achievements that was only because of his subjectivism started shattering that lead to his own annihilation. In the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound* he receives positive feedback for accomplishing complex task that persuades him to maintain a firm belief system that he has abilities to succeed. It is not a mandatory part of a subjective being to always receive positive feedback from the audience. Negative feedback, critical outlook of Henry modifies his personality to finally become one with himself.

Under the influence of some optimistic people and environment Nathan grew to his fullest but within the same environment his personality faces disintegration. As a subjective being he experiences all strong emotions and finally grows into a healthy being with full understanding of life. In this novel, *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan recalls his memories and finds himself as his creation to be solely responsible for his parent's death. He is now looking for acceptance and admiration and he works for it by selecting and opting the path of becoming a doctor; the profession that is having no relation with his art.

Humanistic psychologists believe that individual himself perceive and analyse different events. The same happens with Zuckerman as first, he perceived artistic knowledge through his mentor even when his father was against his composition. Then becoming a superstar by publishing a novel which becomes the best seller and receiving both fame and dejection at the same time. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan is now feeling to be solely responsible for his parent's demise. He gave up on his writing and now wants to become a doctor. Again, in this series of events, Nathan acts as a subjective being who possesses conscious experience that mirrors the social cycle which comprises him as a subject.

An individual's subjectivity includes his projection of self, or a picture of himself, as well as the consciously picked activities and worries that forms the actual

identity. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan becomes a new man through his own actions. As a subjective being, he chose a path for himself and that path brought worries later on as his father dejected him and his mother died. But once again he chose the path of subjectivism by experiencing himself in this tough aura where he ultimately relates to himself one more time.

In Philip Roth's *American Pastoral*, Seymour Levov initially appears to embody the peak of the American archetype- a triple letterman and successful businessman whose outward life suggests total self-actualization. However, a humanistic analysis reveals that this veneer of decency is actually a rigid social self that masks a profound internal fragility. He is not merely broken by his daughter Merry's radicalism; he is destroyed by the total collapse of his ideal self-concept. His American vision remained an idealised construct, one that overlooked the concrete realities of social unrest and the imperfections inherent in human nature. Consequently, his subjectivity is characterised by a passionate suppression from reality; he clings to a post-war Newark identity that no longer exists, illustrating how a rigid self-concept can collapse into severe psychological disintegration when confronted with external turmoil.

Philip Roth composed this novel to show how despite the fact that an individual can accept that they have all the bliss on the planet, this is not generally the situation and their life can be flipped around without any problem. Despite the fact that individuals have a veneer of decency, each takes an interest in incendiary way of behaving and can never get reality with regards to an individual in view of their outward direct. The contention and turmoil introduced all through the original brought about a significant cultural and individual change that cannot be dismissed.

The problem of subjectivity in the construction of historical narratives remain central throughout the novel. *American Pastoral* and the central motif of subjectivity becomes quite obvious where it deals with the questions of reality. Swede's views are highly subjective that makes him to focus on his personal growth, achievement, and happiness. His attitude is non-objective and prelogical. In this novel, Swede can be considered as a subjective well-being as he placed emphasis on himself in achieving

the goal of American Dream, worked very hard in getting it through life satisfaction, and positive effect in his life. He improved his social status, struggled a lot in maintaining it that leads to enhance his subjective well-being.

While Sweed's journey from rags to riches suggests a high level of life satisfaction, his subjective well-being is ultimately revealed to be a precarious construction. From a humanistic perspective, his focus on income, status and social connection served as external determinants of worth rather than internal authenticity. His views, described as non-objective and prelogical, represent a desperate attempt to maintain a sense of order. When Marry's actions disrupt this order, Sweed's optimistic perspective is exposed as a defence mechanism against the darker daimonic forces of reality. His failure is not one of effort, but a failure of congruence; he could not reconcile his American dream and subjectivity with the unsettling reality of his daughter's life, leading to a complete emotional and psychological collapse.

In *American Pastoral*, Philip Roth weaves a profound exploration of human subjectivity, using the unravelling life of Seymour "Swede" Levov to examine how personal identity, internal conflict, and moral uncertainty define individual experience. Drawing from the principles of humanistic psychology especially the theories of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow; Roth illustrates how perception and internal meaning-making shape a person's reality, often in ways that are unstable and deeply personal. The key dimensions of subjectivity in *American Pastoral* are: Narrative structure and the lens of Zuckerman- the story is not told directly by Swede, but through the imagination of Nathan Zuckerman, who constructs Swede's inner life based on limited external information. This narrative technique highlights the idea that identity and experience are always filtered through subjective interpretation. Zuckerman's speculative storytelling emphasizes that personal truth is constructed, not discovered—a core idea in humanistic psychology. The breakdown of the ideal-self- Swede initially appears to embody the perfect American archetype—successful, admired, and well-integrated into society. However, the violent actions of his daughter Merry force him to confront a world that no longer aligns with his ideals. This growing conflict between who Swede believes himself to

be and what he experiences echoes Carl Rogers' concept of incongruence, where internal self-image clashes with ultimate reality.

The search for moral meaning- faced with Merry's radicalism, Swede becomes consumed by the need to understand her motives. His attempts to find moral clarity in the chaos mirror the humanistic notion that individuals are constantly engaged in the creation of personal meaning. Roth doesn't offer concrete answers, instead emphasizing how each person must grapple with complex realities from their own internal vantage point. Empathy and the barriers of perspective- Swede's desperate desire to empathize with his daughter and understand her choices reveals the humanistic emphasis on empathy and emotional connection. Yet, his inability to bridge the gap between their worlds underscores the limitations of truly understanding another's inner life. This difficulty reinforces the idea that each person's experience remains uniquely their own, often inaccessible to others. Loss of authenticity and existential crisis- as his carefully constructed life disintegrates, Swede begins to realize that the roles he has long performed like a dutiful father, loving husband, respected businessman may have masked a deeper absence of authenticity. This existential reckoning aligns with Maslow's theory of self-actualization, in which personal fulfilment is only possible when one moves beyond superficial roles and embraces an honest sense of self. Swede's failure to do so results in emotional and psychological collapse.

Through the character of Swede Levov, Roth presents a striking examination of how identity is shaped not by objective reality but by subjective interpretation. *American Pastoral* becomes more than a critique of American idealism—it transforms into a deeply psychological study of how human beings make sense of themselves and the world around them. Roth's portrayal of Swede's fall from grace reflects the core concerns of humanistic psychology: the fragility of selfhood, the struggle for authenticity, and the power and limits of individual perceptions.

The novel *I Married a Communist*, is an American misfortune which portrays the rise and downfall of Ira in obscurity of betrayal and blacklisting. The novel starts with Zuckerman living alone in the Berkshire Woods, who is excited by the visit of

his old secondary school English instructor, Murray Ringold. Zuckerman portrays his educator more as a dried up, reckless, bald headed fellow, not so tall as Ira but rather rangy and athletic, who used to drift over their heads in an interminable condition of mindfulness, an individual normal in his way and stance, verbally abundant in his discourse, and mentally threatening. Murray is an ideal instructor, who could impact their students with his incredible insight and resolution. Murray who is now in his nineties spent nights on Zuckerman's couch, "he slept on the couch for two nights" (Roth 54).

In *I Married a Communist*, Ira Ringold's subjectivity is shaped by a rigid adherence to ideology, which function as a psychological shield. His transformation from a menial labourer to a radio superstar illustrates a drive for self-actualisation, yet his socialist responsibility becomes a substitute for true inner adaptability. Within the humanistic framework, Ira's decline can be understood as an exploration of the strain between his outward persona and his inner fragility. His subjective well-being is compromised by intense negative affect-shame, anger and the trauma of betrayal. Roth suggests that Ira's identity was forged through an external dismantled by Eve Frame's expose.

Memoir of Eve entitled *I Married a Communist*, wherein she censures Ira as a horrendous man and an ambitious communist who married Eve since he was ordered to by the Communist Association. The book makes Ira be boycotted, and that implies that he can never again perform on the radio. Ira experiences progressively some pain that makes him to get admitted to a hospital. Some of Ira's friends also feel betrayed because of the criticism about them in Eve's book.

Ira was completely a subjective being who worked so hard and rises from a menial labourer to a radio actor because of his confidence, impressive stature, and his capability to imitate of Lincoln at Union Rallies. Ira finds his inner abilities that helped him to move from a menial worker to a radio superstar. There are some positive as well as some negative effects of subjective well-being. The negative and positive affect depends on whether the emotions, moods, and feelings are pleasant or unpleasant. Pleasant moods is having joy, affection, love etc. whereas negative affect having unpleasant experience consist guilt, anger, shame etc.

Philip Roth's *I Married a Communist* places subjectivity—a fundamental concept in humanistic psychology—at the heart of its narrative. The novel examines how individuals form personal meaning through memory, emotional experience, and inner conflict. Through the lens of Nathan Zuckerman's recollections and the tragic fall of his mentor Ira Ringold, Roth investigates how identity is shaped within a volatile world marked by ideological clashes and personal betrayals. Narrative perspective and recollection- the novel unfolds through Zuckerman's retrospective narration, influenced by his own memories and discussions with Murray Ringold. This narrative device underscores the humanistic notion that meaning is subjectively constructed. Events from the past are not presented as objective truths but are filtered through personal perception, emphasizing the individualized way people interpret experience and emotion.

Moral complexity and human motivation- Roth avoids presenting characters as wholly virtuous or villainous. Instead, he delves into the psychological intricacies that drive their actions. This moral ambiguity reflects the humanistic perspective that human behavior is guided by personal history, emotional needs, and internal reasoning, not rigid moral codes. Ira and Eve's decisions, shaped by their subjective viewpoints and past wounds, highlight how motivations are often multifaceted and emotionally grounded. Self-making and authenticity- Ira Ringold's transformation from a blue-collar worker to a respected intellectual and media figure illustrates the humanistic emphasis on self and authenticity. However, as his public image drifts from his internal reality, the tension between appearance and true self becomes apparent. Roth shows how constructing a persona based on external ideology rather than personal truth can lead to psychological fragmentation and eventual collapse.

Betrayal and the power of personal narratives- Eve Frame's expose on Ira plays a crucial role in dismantling his reputation, symbolizing how subjective stories—emotionally charged and possibly vindictive can alter public opinion and private identity. Roth uses this betrayal to explore how personal narratives, even if biased or untruthful, can hold immense sway over collective memory and individual destiny. Growth through reflection and mentorship- Zuckerman's interactions with Murray, along with his reflection on Ira's life, trigger his own process of self-

assessment. These moments of introspection reveal the humanistic principle that personal growth arises through examining one's values, choices, and emotional development. Zuckerman's evolving understanding of himself is portrayed as a deeply internal, subjective journey.

Subjectivity is a shaping force in *I Married a Communist* as Roth presents a rich exploration of how individuals interpret the world through their own lenses—shaped by emotion, ideology, and memory. The novel aligns with humanistic psychology's view that identity is dynamic and constructed through internal experience rather than fixed by external labels. Roth portrays the inner life as both powerful and vulnerable, emphasizing the essential human drive to make meaning amid personal and political chaos.

The novel, *The Human Stain* presents the existence of a man searching for American promise of freedom projects of his past by looking for mystery and creation. *The Human Stain* manages the issues of self, racial personality, human instinct, and class. The novel deals with a self-transformation and mystery that decides human personality. It presents a venturesome mission for opportunities splitting away from history. The story spins around the relationship of two individuals and their self-designed characters.

Nathan Zuckerman in the novel presents the tale of Coleman Silk, a pro boxer. Coleman Brutus Silk is the protagonist of the novel, a professor of classics and a former Dean who quits his job because of some false accusations of using some racist remarks within the classroom. He is forced to quit his job for asking the two African-American students, whether they are "spooks". He used such term as the students were not attending their class on a regular basis. This story is portrayed as a discussion between Silk and Zuckerman and also presented with some important information given by Silk's sister, Ernestine.

The whole tale is narrated by Nathan Zuckerman. It begins with his meeting with Silk who is seventy-one years old and is engaged in a love affair with a thirty-four years old woman, Faunia Farley who is an illiterate college janitor,

“it was in the summer of 1998 that my neighbour Coleman Silk- who before retiring two years earlier, had been a classics professor at nearby Athena college for some twenty odd years as well as serving for sixteen more as the dean of faculty-confided to me that, at the age of seventy-one, he was having an affair with a thirty-four years old cleaning woman who worked down at the college” (Roth 1).

Silk's wife Iris died because of the exposure of Silk's racist allegations and now his new relationship with Faunia revitalizes his life. Because of this love affair with Faunia, he experiences crisis and criticism when he is being targeted by his enemies for exploiting the janitor's life. However, the genuine story lies somewhere down in Silk's past that he is a fair looking African-American who drifted across the American racial gap and has effectively passed as a white Jew in fifty years. Silk chooses to pass as a white Jew in his twenties after the death of his father.

The novel portrays a man attempting to escape from his own race, by concealing his actual character. Roth manages the subject of bigotry which is an unpreventable evil of the general public. The account of Silk is somewhat similar to the 1998 sex outrage of American President Clinton with his secretary Monica Lewinski which made furore across the world. Like the reprimand of the American president, Silk is compelled to resign on an announcement that he is a big word.

Silk acquires achievement both in private life as well as in his professional life. He weds a Jewess, and has four children having an agreeable existence. He turns into a main figure in Athena, the scholarly world and rise himself to a very respectable position of dean of faculty at a liberal arts college. He commits his life to improve his institution, changing the school from a sluggish headed state establishment into a lively school. He plays a vital role in the appointment of young and talented faculty by replacing the old faculty by forcing them to take a retirement.

The main motif of the novel is the role of self-invention in creating one's identity. Coleman acts as a subjective being who worked hard to achieve the best in his professional life. It is a story not just about his individual life but also represents the moral ethos of America. Even he was misunderstood in the college for his racist

remarks but in this course of life he worked really hard to lift his institution from nothing to the best in the country. He was shown as an active being not only in his personal aura but also in his professional one. At last, he dies in a tragic car accident but he lived his life with utmost respect and dignity except that misunderstood event.

Subjectivity, a central tenet of humanistic psychology, plays a significant role in Philip Roth's *The Human Stain*, particularly through its exploration of individual identity, personal experience, and the ongoing quest for self-definition. Rooted in the theories of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, humanistic psychology emphasizes the importance of personal agency, authenticity, and the internal experience of reality. Roth's character Coleman Silk exemplifies these ideas through his decision to construct his identity based on personal values rather than societal classifications. Coleman Silk vividly embodies the humanistic ideal of radical self-authorship, yet his reinvention comes with a heavy existential price. By erasing his African-American background, Coleman exercises extreme personal agency, but this self-fashioning creates a permanent state of incongruence. He lives in a subjective reality that is constantly threatened by the truth of his past. Roth complicates the humanistic pursuit of self-actualization by showing that Coleman's mastery of his life requires a systematic suppression of his origins, leading to a profound alienation and isolation. His tragedy lies in the fact that even the most successful self-designed character remains vulnerable to the world that uses political correctness and radical categorization to strip away the individual's lived dignity.

Critique of societal constraints- Roth interrogates the pressures of social institutions such as academia, political correctness, and racial categorization that seek to confine identity within rigid boundaries. Humanistic psychology challenges these constraints, asserting the dignity of each person's lived experience. Authenticity and alienation- as Coleman reflects on the consequences of his chosen identity, the narrative delves into the tension between living authentically and coping with isolation. This duality mirrors humanistic concerns about the emotional weight of self-authored existence. Ultimately, *The Human Stain* serves as a meditation on how individuals navigate their subjective realities within a world eager to define them.

Roth's portrayal of Coleman Silk underscores the humanistic ideal that personal truth and self-understanding are vital, even when they clash with societal expectations.

By applying Abraham Maslow's theorization of subjectivity to the select novels mentioned, the researcher concludes that Roth's subject and its subjectivity is a complete entity of enlightenment. The protagonists in the novels come into full charge of their self and subjectivity. Individual's subjectivity has been portrayed and treated in a serious and intense conviction and not as merely in an apathetic and frivolous way. Philip Milton Roth affirms the conviction that subjectivity is continually shaped and forged in the domain of interhuman. It is the ultimate subjectivity that makes an individual unique. Humanistic theories focus on personal responsibility. Fate of an individual relies mostly in his own hands, whatever happens to an individual- he is solely responsible for it. An individual is not at all a piece or a fragment driven to and fro by dark forces within his own personality. Humanistic psychology relies on the concept that traumatic events may trigger and influence an individual but such events do not have to form one's entire life. There relies an utmost need and exigency to overcome such events and to become one with the self which is both powerful and real. Individuals should emphasize on their personal growth and development. It is not merely satisfying, realizing and recognizing the traumatic events that bothers the self of an individual, rather an individual should progress towards optimistic, real and active goals of life and becoming the best he or she can be.

Philip Roth's protagonists—Nathan Zuckerman, Seymour Levov, Ira Ringold, and Coleman Silk are rendered as intensely subjective figures whose personal journeys resonate deeply with the tenets of humanistic psychology. Influenced by thinkers like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, this psychological perspective highlights individual's freedom, personal growth, authenticity, and the ongoing pursuit of self-actualization. In Roth's novels, these characters are presented as complex individuals navigating inner conflicts, social pressures, and existential dilemmas as they attempt to define themselves in a chaotic and judgmental world. Nathan Zuckerman in *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, *The Anatomy Lesson*, Roth constructs a portrait of a man consumed by inner dialogue, caught between the

pursuit of artistic truth and the burdens of expectation. In *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman is a young writer searching for his own narrative voice while contending with familial disapproval and cultural tensions. His imagined connection with Anne Frank symbolizes his longing for literary significance and self-affirmation which actually are the core elements of the humanistic search for authenticity. In *Zuckerman Unbound*, the pressures of newly found fame distort his sense of self. The conflict between how he is perceived and how he sees himself illustrates the humanistic concern with the disparity between the “real self” and the “ideal self.” Only through self-examination Zuckerman can hope to bridge that divide. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Zuckerman is rendered physically incapacitated and creatively blocked. This period of crisis pushes him to confront the emptiness beneath his former identity, embodying the humanistic ideology to find renewed meaning and purpose when one’s previous definitions of self are stripped away.

Seymour “Swede” Levov in *American Pastoral* is seen as a symbol of American success and assimilation, but his life unravels as personal and political turmoil disrupts his idealized world. His daughter's radicalism and the moral chaos it brings dismantle the order he has clung to. Swede’s inability to reconcile his internal image with external events exposes a profound crisis of identity. Narrated through Zuckerman’s speculative voice, Swede’s story becomes a meditation on the illusion of control. Trapped in a life designed to please others, he is ultimately unable to construct a meaningful or authentic self—a poignant failure of self-actualization. Ira Ringold in *I Married a Communist*; a radio actor and political activist, represented as a man defined by ideology and public persona, yet privately driven by emotional scars and unresolved needs. Roth unveils Ira’s fierce convictions as a mask for inner vulnerability. His activism is inseparable from a personal need for recognition, dignity, and moral certainty. His tragic fall resulting from betrayal and rigid adherence to dogma highlights a humanistic tension like the need for a flexible evolving identity rather than one confined by fixed roles. Ira’s downfall reflects his failure to reflect inwardly or allow space for personal transformation.

Coleman Silk in *The Human Stain*; most vividly embodies the humanistic ideal of radical self-authorship. By erasing his racial background and reinventing

himself as a white Jewish intellectual, Coleman exerts extraordinary control over his personal identity. His choice represents the highest form of personal agency, echoing Maslow's idea of self-actualization through deliberate life choices. However, Roth complicates this agency by showing that such reinvention comes with profound emotional consequences. The secrecy of Coleman's past becomes a burden, and the societal forces he tried to escape ultimately contribute to his ruin. His life story underscores the humanistic tension between self-determination and the external world's capacity to judge and punish. Through these richly developed characters, Roth explores the depths of subjective human experience. Zuckerman, Levov, Ringold, and Silk each face the universal challenge of becoming their true selves in environments that demand conformity or impose identity. Their internal struggles mirror key themes in humanistic psychology that are the pursuit of authenticity, the conflict between public roles and private selves, and the desire to live meaningfully in the face of existential uncertainty. Roth's narrative style and psychological insight consistently present his characters as deeply individualistic, reflective, and morally complex. Rather than offering clear resolutions, Roth honours the ambiguity and contradiction at the heart of personal identity. In doing so, he affirms the humanistic belief that the journey to understand and define oneself is central to the human condition—even when that journey is messy, incomplete, or painfully honest.

Interruption hits in the process of growth and development of an individual when obstacles like traumatic events rejection, pessimistic outlook become the obstacles. Individuals need to trust their own feelings and should experience their life to the fullest. In order to have an amazing personality, one should be having free-will to change things with his own efforts and skills, and should be positive to their own desires and rights and as well as for others. Their subjective being will not let any society's standard to shape their conduct and personality. The actions of subjective beings throughout their course of life are dominated by their constructive and productive impulses. They experience life in an intensive manner and will always remain in close touch with their own feelings and thoughts.

Maslow's main focus was on free-will and conscious experiences. Humanistic psychologists believe on an individual's own capabilities to change his or her attitude

and the way of conduct. Humanistic Psychologists emphasize on the internal locus of control that individuals need to focus on their personal responsibilities and growth patterns. Maslow asserted that the ultimate goal of humanistic psychology is to become a fully functioning being and it is possible only when an individual is creative and have free-will. It is not mandatory that all people reach to their fullest and become self-actualized, some people do not reach their full potential and it happens only when they lose focus of the pursuit and just strive for meaningless goals in life.

The characters of Roth- Nathan Zuckerman, Coleman Silk, Seymour Swede Levov, and Ira Ringold are seen as having self-awareness. They accept themselves and have open and spontaneous nature. They were not seen as being paralyzed by the opinions and thoughts of others. Each and every character in the select novels enjoy their work and see it as a mission of their life to fulfill. They are seen as problem-centered rather than self-centred and tend to drain their energy on specific but useful and meaningful tasks. They are seen as having few intense relationships rather than having superficial ones. An individual is like a seed which needs water, sunlight, and other basic nutrients to grow- an individual in order to become a fully functioning being needs acceptance, empathy, and genuineness to grow and develop.

Roth's protagonists- Zuckerman, Levov, Ringold and Silk are not enlightened in the sense of reaching a final , peaceful destination. Instead, they are intensely subjective figures who experience the full weight of the humanistic struggle. Their journeys are marked by incongruence, distortion and crisis, serving as a reminder that the path to a fully functioning being is often messy and incomplete. By applying a realistic frame, we see that these characters do not simply overcome trauma; they are formed by it. Their personalities flourish and disintegrate in direct relation to their environment, proving that while free-will is a powerful tool for growth, it must operate within the complex, often tragic boundaries of the human condition. In alignment with the principles of humanistic psychology, particularly those advanced by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, these characters embody the idea that growth stems from self-awareness, authenticity, and the ability to choose one's own path. Roth uses their subjectivity as a driving force in shaping their personalities, revealing

how self-perception can lead to transformation, fulfilment, or collapse. Nathan Zuckerman's personal growth is fuelled by his deep reflection and creative self-expression. His internal struggle centres on maintaining artistic integrity while facing societal and familial pressures. Across *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson*, he increasingly recognizes the emotional and ethical costs of living truthfully. His recurring battles with guilt, physical decline, and the consequences of fame become material for his art and milestones in his evolution. Zuckerman transforms from a conflicted son into a self-directed writer, capturing the humanistic view that authenticity and creative autonomy are vital in realizing one's full potential. Swede Levov initially builds his identity on ideals such as social respectability, familial harmony, and success. However, these external achievements prove fragile when his daughter's extremist actions unravel the orderly life he cherishes. Rather than adapting to this upheaval, Swede clings to his polished image, unable to reconcile his internal disillusionment with the chaos around him. His failure to reorient his sense of self in light of changing realities stunts his emotional and psychological growth. Roth uses Swede's unravelling actions to highlight the danger of living according to imposed ideals rather than an honest engagement with one's inner world.

Ira Ringold is portrayed as a man of unwavering conviction, outwardly defined by his political beliefs and rugged masculinity. However, beneath this strong exterior lies emotional pain—stemming from rejection, personal insecurities, and a longing for belongingness. While his passionate activism gives him a purpose, it also becomes a shield that prevents emotional growth. Ira's inability to reflect or adjust, a key component of personal development in humanistic psychology, renders him rigid and vulnerable. His identity, forged through ideology rather than introspection, ultimately leads to his downfall when he is betrayed and exposed. Coleman Silk undergoes the most deliberate and dramatic transformation. His decision to conceal his black identity and live as a white Jewish intellectual represents a powerful act of self-determination. This choice grants him freedom and professional accomplishment, demonstrating the humanistic ideal of shaping one's own identity. Yet, Roth complicates this empowerment by showing the psychological cost of such

concealment. When controversy and scandal later confront Coleman with his past, the unresolved trauma resurfaces. Still, his pursuit of love, freedom, and nonconformity; even late in life marks him as a figure who strives to live on his own terms, embodying both the strengths and struggles of the self-fashioned individual.

Roth's characters exemplify how deeply personal experiences shape the unfolding of identity. Zuckerman's evolution is driven by introspection and creative freedom; Coleman's by a radical reinvention of self; Ira's by unyielding belief, but without inner adaptability; and Swede's by clinging to ideals that ultimately fail him. Through their stories, Roth affirms a core belief of humanistic psychology: that personality is not static, but continually shaped by the individual's efforts to find meaning and authenticity in an often chaotic world.

The process of growth patterns and development is a never ending process. It is not as simple as it seems to be. It is not enough for an individual having free-will, creativity, and subjectivity for becoming a fully functioning being. It requires unconditional love from our loved ones and other social group to form a full-fledged personality. For having a wonderful personality, an individual must be having genuineness- being open and transparent with his own feelings. Humanistic psychologists evaluate one's personality by looking at self- concept. Rogers and Maslow both believe that self-concept is at the centre of one's personality. An individual tend to act and perceive the world in a certain way depending on whether his self-concept is positive or negative. Nathan in *The Anatomy Lesson* and Coleman Silk in *American Pastoral* experience incongruence and distortion because their own self- concept were threatened. The next chapter will further explore the specific role of creativity and environmental pressures in shaping their fragmented identities. Moreover, the researcher will tend to focus on how subjective beings' free-will and creativity shape their personality. What are the distortions, congruence, and incongruence faced by the characters in the select novels? How their personality flourishes and how environment plays a crucial role in grooming their personality.

Chapter III

Traits and Paradigms of Personality

Carl Rogers in his work; *On Becoming a Person* stated that “A person is a fluid process, not a fixed and static entity: a flowing river of change, not a block of solid material; a continually changing constellation of potentialities, not a fixed quantity of traits” (Rogers 122). Personality alludes to the difference of individuals in thought process, feelings, and patterns of behaving. The characteristics of personality centres around two broad aspects: one is the ability to understand the difference of an individual especially personality traits and the other is the ability to understand how the different aspects of an individual meet up all in all.

Subjectivity is not merely a philosophical abstraction of the inner self but an active psychological structure. Although it is frequently interpreted in an overly optimistic way that emphasizes complete personal control, a more grounded humanistic perspective recognizes that subjectivity operates within the limits of an individual's phenomenological field- shaped by both inner motivations and external pressures. Consequently, personality traits are not merely latent possibilities; rather they are the cognitive and emotional tools an individual uses to navigate a reality that often challenges their ideal sense of self.

Personality is a bigger set and individual's behaviour, cognitions, thought process are its subset. There are many theories that define what personality is. To analyse these theories effectively, it is vital to distinguish between self-progression and the subjective journey. Self-progression refers to the observable, linear development of skills or social milestone as explained in the previous chapter. Conversely, the subjective journey examines the internal, non-linear shifts in an individual's perception. This distinction ensures that the study of personality traits moves beyond mere behavioural growth and instead explores the psychological paradigms that dictate how a character interprets their own existence.

The Psychodynamic theories of personality include various theories propounded by Sigmund Freud, Erick Erikson, and Alfred Adler. Sigmund Freud

(1856-1939), the very famous and the most controversial psychological theorist. It is very important to remember before understanding Freud that he was not a psychologist but was a doctor. He became the first psychological theorist to systematically study the unconscious mind. In the very beginning he worked with a famous Viennese physician; Joseph Breuer and continued to work on the theory of personality.

Freud worked on conscious and unconscious experience and compared the mind with an iceberg and alludes that it is only one-tenth part of the mind that is conscious, whereas the rest is unconscious. According to Freud, our mental activities, desire and urges of which we are unaware is referred to as unconscious mind. He propounded that personality flourishes from a conflict between biological aggressive and pleasure-seeking drives versus our socialized control over these drives. Our personality develops with an active effort to maintain an equilibrium between these two forces. There are three different interactive systems within our mind: id, ego and superego.

Freud in his work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* believed that id seeks for immediate gratification and it works on “Pleasure principle” (Freud 276-77). The superego acts as our conscience and it develops when a child interacts with other individuals, learn social rules, and can differentiate between good and bad. It tells us how we should behave. The ego tries to make a balance between id’s immediate gratification and superego’s moral control. Ego is the rational part of our personality that balances the instinctual id and rule-based superego. The ultimate task of self or ego is to balance the demands of id; immediate regardless of the consequences and superego; that an individual must behave in socially acceptable ways. Therefore, ego finds out a middle ground in order to make a balance by satisfying the id’s urge in a very rational way that will not lead to any sense of guilt.

An individual having a strong ego has a healthy personality. Absence of balance between id and superego leads to neurosis, anxiety, or unhealthy behaviour. When this conflict happens, the ego tries to restore its balance with the help of defensive mechanisms. When an individual suffers with some anxiety, he tries his utmost to reduce it, his unconscious mind uses ego as a defence mechanism to reduce

anxiety. Then an individual uses his ego defensive mechanism, he is unaware that he is using it. Freud propounded that we all use defence mechanisms in order to restore the balance and they are unconscious protective behaviours that help to reduce yearnings and anxiety.

Freud further alludes different stages of psychosexual development and believed that personality flourished during childhood. An individual's childhood experience forms his personality as well his behaviour as adult. He expressed that an individual's personality undergoes several different stages. If an individual is not being nurtured properly in his childhood stages, he will be stuck, or fixated in a particular stage, even as an adult. So, a proper sort of nurturing and parenting is necessary for the personality to be developed.

In the psychosexual stage of development, a child's pleasure-seeking urge directly coming from id which is centred on different parts the body, called as an erogenous zone. There are five different stages: oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital in psychosexual stage of development. Freud's psychosexual development theory is quite controversial. For him this stage is comprised of universal events in early childhood.

The very first stage, oral stage (0-1 year), pleasure is completely focused on the mouth. A baby's first year of life plays a vital role as his pleasure is focused on sucking nipples, pacifiers, and thumbs. This stage can cause trouble if not handled positively. Babies are weaned from the bottle around this one year. According to him, an adult who smokes, drinks or bites his nails is fixated in this oral stage.

Anal stage is the second stage of psychosexual development that ranges from 1-3 years. At this psychosexual stage, a child experiences pleasure in his bladder movements. The conflict in this stage is toilet training. If this stage is not handled properly by parents, the child become fixated and such anal-expulsive personality will become messy, disorganized, and disgusting.

Phallic stage; the third stage (3-6 years) is the stage where a child becomes aware of his body and starts differentiating between a boy and a girl. Conflict in this stage occurs when a child's urge is for his opposite-sex parent, hatred for the same-

sex parent. For boys, this is called as Oedipus Complex and failure in this stage results in fixation that might be overly ambitious. Girls experience Electra Complex; concept proposed by Freud's protégé Carl Jung. Girls get angry with their mothers according to Jung for not providing them with a penis.

Latency period (6 years to puberty) is not considered as a stage; as a child is focused on other pursuits like his friendships, hobbies, school, and sports. Genital Stage (beyond puberty) the final stage, where there is sexual reawakening. Individuals in this stage have mature sexual urges and desires and they redirect these urges to socially acceptable partners.

The neo-Freudians were psychologists who also followed Freud's theory like Alfred Adler, Carl Jung, Erikson and Karen Horney. They focused on the social environment that effects an individual's character. These Neo-Freudian approaches were criticized as they tend to be more philosophical rather than scientific. One of Alfred Adler's vital contribution to personality was that our birth order forms and grooms our personality and even suggested every individual has a sense of inferiority complex, and superiority complex. His theory expresses his belief that each individual's personality is unique. Erikson's theory consists of eight different stages in which the personality of an individual grooms and it provides a holistic overview of an individual's personality throughout the entire life span.

Behavioural theorists view personality as essentially formed and affected by the outcomes and reinforcements outside of a living being. B.F. Skinner the famous behaviourist alludes that we show steady and some consistent ways of behaving in light of the fact that we have fostered specific response or reaction inclinations. Mischel stresses on how in the process of self-regulation, individual's objectives assume a vital role. Bandura said that one's current circumstances can decide conduct, and yet, individuals can influence the environment with both their contemplations and ways of behaving which is known as reciprocal determinism. Bandura additionally stresses on that we learn by watching others. He felt that this sort of learning likewise has an impact in the advancement of our personality. Bandura discussed the self-efficacy as our level of utmost confidence in our own capabilities. Later on, Rotter propounded the concept of laws of control which

alludes to our convictions about the power we have over our lives. He said that individuals fall along a continuum between an absolutely innate and a purely outer and exterior locus of control.

Psychodynamic theory of personality is deterministic which actually states that behaviour is predetermined and therefore individuals don't have the options of free-will. Moreover, psychodynamic approach lays much emphasis on childhood experiences to find abnormalities in a human being which is not necessary to work in all the cases. There are a lot many chances of transference and counter-transference as the client needs to reveal his deepest, darkest secrets, urges and desires to his therapist. This process of therapy is completely dependent upon therapist's analysis and this process may include therapist's biases and his belief system. The therapy involved in dealing with the clients requires a great deal of time, and sometimes it may continue over a period of years.

Behavioural theories of personality discards the idea of genetics of having an impact on the behaviour of an individual. Moreover, behavioural theories reject the cognitive patterns of human psychology. Behaviourism cannot explain individual differences in understanding and analysing any life patterns. Skinner discounted the concept of free-will by neglecting individual's personal freedom. Skinner was of the view that a person acts in a particular way and an individual's personality is reflected by his own behavioural conduct.

The Humanistic perspectives of personality are developed mainly as a response to Freud's Psychoanalytical and Skinner's Behaviouristic approaches to personality. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow intensively worked on the development of humanistic perspective on personality. In Humanistic Psychology, Rogers and Maslow stressed on the importance of free-will and assert that human beings have free-will and actively determines how they behave. Accordingly, it also emphasizes on the subjective experiences of individuals that determines their behaviour.

Humanistic psychology is promoted as a response both to the sceptical determinism of psychoanalysis, with its accentuation on mental aggravation and to the behaviourists' perspective on people pessimistically and latently responding to

the environment, which has been condemned as describing individuals as like robots, lacking any kind of independence to influence their reality. It does not propose that psychoanalytic, behaviourist, and other different perspectives are wrong yet contends that these viewpoints do not perceive the profundity and importance of human experience, and neglect to perceive the intrinsic capability with respect to independent change and changing individual encounters and experiences.

Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers see a human being as an active, creative, and an experiencing individual who lives in the present and reciprocates to current situations, observations, perceptions, and relationships subjectively. Such individuals discard the pessimistic outlook of Freud's psychoanalytical approach but in fact focus on the brighter and the optimistic outlook of humanistic theories. It emphasizes on human being's capability to grow and develop optimistically. Self-progresses all the time and will always remain as a locus point of the world that is constantly changing. That constantly changing world will in fact influence the self but not really confines it. The self undergoes several events and encounters that helps it to mould.

Humanistic psychologists emphasized on the growth patterns and development of an individual. They stress on the concept of free-will, subjectivity, and self-determination of each individual aspiring to become the best version they can become. Humanistic psychologists tend to have an optimistic outlook over human nature. They emphasized on the concept that individual's ability to think rationally, critically, and consciously and to have a control over their biological urges and desires in order to realize the full potential of individuals. Individuals are themselves responsible for their actions and their ultimate consequences, they've the power of subjectivity and free-will to change their actions, attitudes, and behaviour accordingly.

Two humanistic psychologists, Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow became well known for their humanistic theories. Abraham Maslow stated his viewpoints on personality of healthy individuals. The transition from deterministic psychodynamics to humanistic paradigms marks a shift in how we interpret the significance of specific traits. From humanistic perspective traits like resilience or openness are not just

biological accidents; they are developed as the individuals' attempt to maintain congruence between their ideal self and real self. These traits are significant because they represent the mechanics of existential agency- illustrating both how a person responds to his surroundings and why an individual move in the direction of self-actualization.

Personality under Humanistic psychology relates to individual's uniqueness, free-will, and experiences. Humanistic psychologists believe that individuals have freedom of choice and self-determination and they do not need to behave in a defined and determined way all the time. Humanistic psychology asserts that personality of individuals must be studied and analysed according to his own subjective experience and it is nothing but his conscious experience– the way he perceives the outer world. The approach towards personality in Humanistic psychology asserts that individuals are generally good and have an innate desire of making themselves and the outer world better. This approach focuses on the creative nature of human beings and their capabilities to deal with their odd times, pain, sufferings, and agony optimistically.

Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow; the two eminent personalities contributed to the development of humanistic aspect of personality. The very vital idea of a fully functioning person was propounded by Carl Rogers. He asserted that personality develops because of the motivating factor of fulfilment. Individuals try to portray their abilities, talents, and potential to their utmost extent. There is an innate capability of human beings that directs them to actualise their innate nature.

Two different assumptions were made by Rogers related to human behaviour. One of which is; that human behaviour is goal-oriented and individuals who are inherently good will always go for adapting the self-actualising behaviour. He proposed his theory from the experience that he had with his clients. He interpreted that self plays an important role while examining his clients. That's why his theory revolves around self which asserts that people are engaged in exercising their true self.

Rogers alludes that personality development is a continuous process. It not only involves oneself but mastering over our development of self-fulfilment, self-

growth, self-respect, and self-realization. He emphasizes over the role of social impact in the process of development of self-concept. The self-concept and self-fulfilment becomes high when these social influences are positive and individuals having high self-concept are more open and flexible to new events and experiences that help them to grow and self-actualise. Whereas the self-concept becomes extremely low when social influences are negative and ultimately individuals will not adapt new experiences.

Carl Rogers' theory of personality development was relied on an approach that every individual is an integral part of the world which is full of experiences. Such experiences builds our reactions that is comprised of people, external objects, and internal thought, and objects as well. This is called as phenomenal field that alludes to an individual's reality, behaviour, attitudes, thoughts, and emotions.

Rogers believed that an individual's behaviour and outlook are being motivated by self-actualizing tendencies in order to reach that very potential he is desiring for. An individual's motivations and his surroundings act on his phenomenal field of which he is an integral part. An individual constantly interconnects with his environment and with such interactions he builds a structure of self or self-concept. An individual who will be having an optimistic outlook, and have a positive self-concept will always feel happy about who he is and will feel good for others too. With a negative self-concept an individual will always have a pessimistic personality and will always be unhappy.

In Rogers' concept of personality development, he divides the self into two different categories: the ideal self and the real self. Rogers' concept of self is primarily conscious. The very essential determining factors of behaviour are those which are actually conscious or they are capable of becoming completely conscious. Real self is who you really are whereas the ideal self is the person you would aspire to become. The ideal self is the ideal that is being created through the demands of the society. Real self is also called as the self-image that involves the influence of our body image like how we see ourselves which is very important for a better psychological health. We see ourselves as right or wrong, beautiful or ugly. This real self or the self-image has a direct influence on how a person perceives himself and

acts accordingly. Rogers asserted that this real self is owned by us all which is actually linked to our inner personality. This inner personality of an individual clearly states to what and who we actually are. Whereas ideal self actually portrays an individual's trying and aspiring to achieve ultimate potential in life. It is borne out of the external impacts and influences that we think we should be. Infact, ideal self is comprised of thoughts, actions, beliefs, and qualities that a person aims to acquire in his course of life. It is the conscious efforts of following attributes and qualities of our ideals.

The incongruity is not merely a failure of will but a realistic response to the conditions of worth imposed by society. From a humanistic standpoint, the ideal-self often becomes a rigid construct influenced by external demands- such as family expectations or cultural norms- which can suppress the real self. As a result, the tension that emerges is not merely theoretical imbalance but a deeply felt experience of alienation, in which an individual's inner reality remains in a continual conflict with their social identity.

Apart from ideal and real self, the concept of organism plays a vital role in his personality development theory. According to Carl Rogers, an organism represents the sum total of all the experiences that is happening inside him at one particular interval of time. An organism is the focal point of all the experiences whether internal or external. Such experiences can be conscious or unconscious and can be known only by the self and not outside of self. These three selves- ideal self, real self, and the organismic self need to be in congruence with each other. The personality of an individual grows as self arises from all the experiences that an organism has and these experiences should be same of the self as well. Otherwise, it will cause anxiety, and distortion in an individual who will ultimately misinterpret his experiences.

Rogers stated that an individual should aim to achieve his goals, wishes, and his desires and when they do so, self-actualization takes place. For a person to have great personality, he needs to reach the highest potential in order to become a fully functioning being. Self-actualization is a continuous process that an individual strives for it all the time in his life. There are two different needs under this continuous

process of self-actualization: positive regard and self-regard. Both are an essential feature for the development of an individual's personality.

Positive regard is also called as unconditional love and it is the acceptance of people as they are. By unconditional positive regard, it does not really mean that each and every action of an individual should be accepted. In terms of therapy, unconditional positive regard encourages the client to share his emotions, urges, and desires very openly to his therapist. Lack of positive regard leads to low self-worth that will ultimately decrease the chances of an individual to reach to his maximum potential. Self-regard comes from self-worth. In order to reach the maximum potential and to become a psychologically healthy being, it is necessary to consider the self as worthy and essential. When self-worth is taken as worthy, it helps an individual to analyse the ultimate goal of his life in order to become a self-actualized being.

An individual having high self-regard can make his own decisions and accepts his achievements, failures, and its consequences with confidence whereas an individual having low self-worth will always be dependent on others and will always have negative image of self. Self-regard flourishes right from the very childhood of a person. When a child is raised in a positive unconditional environment he will acquire much self-worth and self-esteem. He will be more open to his experiences and will be less influenced by failures. Such sort of individuals will always look at their lives in an optimistic outlook, have confidence in themselves and will never be dependent on others for their decisions. They will never allow any societal pressure to bother them. Conscious efforts are made by them that signify their highest level of creativity.

Rogers discussed life in terms of principles and these principles do not exist in static states. He believed that only a fully functioning being is able to realize and work upon his ultimate goals in order to become a self-actualized being. That person would permit his personality and self-concept to emerge from his own experiences. Rogers further added that fully functioning beings having flourished personalities have some aspects and tendencies in common: that they have an ability to be open to their experiences and deal with them with utmost confidence and try to move away

from defensiveness and they live every moment of their life rather than living in distortion that ruins their life. Individuals must trust their own judgements and they should trust even their ability to choose their conduct that is appropriate and up to the mark and individuals are free to make their own choices rather than relying on others. They must have freedom to take their decisions and there should be no incongruence while making choices. Individuals are solely responsible for their conduct. Individuals must be creative. They should adapt new situations and circumstances. Such adaptive nature of individuals need not to follow any standardized rules and patterns. Life is full of intensive as well as extensive experiences- love, pain, heartbreak, joy, courage etc. So an individual must act constructively.

Abraham Maslow, a humanistic psychologist illustrated in his theory of Hierarchy of Needs that individuals have strong cognitive reasons to perform different actions. Maslow, along with his followers tried to keep free-will, subjectivity, and individuality as the central motifs of Humanistic Psychology. He believed that human beings are born with a nature that is inherently optimistic. He illustrated that innate nature of a human being is good which is meant to grow and develop throughout the course of his life. He further added that environment plays a vital role for the development of a character and it is because of the appropriate environment that helps an individual to grow to his fullest. If an individual's innate nature is not good enough, it is only due to the absence of the convenient environment. Such negative environment leads to the suppression of the inherent qualities and a person becomes pessimistic throughout in his course of life. He asserted in his work *Motivation and Personality* that: "There is a difference between expressive behavior and copying behavior (functional striving, purposive goal seeking). An expressive behavior does not try to do anything; it is simply a reflection of the personality. A stupid man behaves stupidly, not because he wants to, or tries to, or is motivated to, but simply he is what he is" (Maslow 55-56).

Maslow propounded the theory of Hierarchy of Needs which states that human beings are born with certain needs and the fulfilment of these needs allow them to move further to accomplish complex needs. The lowest level in the hierarchy is of physiological needs or survival needs such as thirst, oxygen, hunger, and sleep.

These are the very basic needs that one should first meet before accomplishing the higher level needs. After meeting the physiological needs, an individual strives for his safety and security. An individual needs to feel stable, safe, and protected within an environment that is free from any harm. The third level in the pyramid includes the need to be loved and accepted. In this stage, an individual starts focusing on his friendship, groups, relationships, and love just to experience a sense of belonging. The fourth need in the pyramid is of self-esteem, where individuals try their best to attain accomplishments, gaining respect, admiration, and acceptance from others. In this stage, an individual becomes confident and competent who is now focusing on climbing the final step of the ladder- self-actualization which represents an extensive realization and understanding of the self. Individuals at this stage feel comfortable to reach their maximum potential. At this stage of the pyramid an individual accepts the world and finally has found his unique position in it.

Motivation; a process that brings about guides and maintains goal-oriented conduct. Motivation is the driving force behind- why a person does something and it involves the social, biological forces that initiates and activates our conduct. It not only involves the forces but also the factors which lead individuals to realize and to reach their ultimate potential. Psychologists proposed numerous theories of motivation to know what exactly lies behind human motivations and how they act accordingly. Motivation acts as a guiding agency for every individual and their conduct. Anyone who has ever had an objective in life immediately analyses that simply having the urge to achieve something is not enough. In order to achieve targets in life, one should have the ability to stay and persist through impediments and barriers and having determination to keep going in spite of obstacles in life. Motivation assist in improving the capabilities of people so that they can work efficiently to achieve their goals. It not only encourages people to do the best but also help them to adapt maladaptive and unhealthy behaviours that later on become an obstacle in achieving their targets.

Persistence, activation, and intensity are the three major components that are required in the process of motivation. Activation is a process of initiating one's conduct whereas persistence is the process of continued struggle to realize and work

for our ultimate goals. Although having a lot many obstacles in this process; an individual has to maintain his efforts and this can be achieved only through strength, resources, and struggle. Intensity is the degree of efforts that an individual is devoting in order to pursue his goal. The process of activation requires an individual to start pursuing a goal. Persistence and intensity will determine a person to continue his efforts to a greater extent. Fluctuations are being experienced by individuals in their process of motivation. Sometimes people feel highly driven to reach their ultimate goals but sometimes they may feel unsure and unconfident of what they desire of and how to achieve it. Our instincts, drives, and needs motivate us to act in order to become a fully functioning personality. Maslow in his work *Motivation and Personality* stated different layers and depths of personality that “The human personality is organised into layers, or depths. That which is unconscious and that which is conscious coexist, even though they may contradict each other. One is (in one sense); the other also is (in another deeper sense) and could one day come to the surface, become conscious, and then be in that sense” (Maslow 273).

It is the motivation that pushes an individual to realise, and achieve his goals from the very basic to the higher order needs, which ultimately improves the overall quality of life of an individual. It is the motivation that puts human resources into action, improves the level of efficiency that leads to the achievement of goals. Motivation is the process that initiates and maintains goal oriented behaviours- it is what that makes an individual to act and finally becoming a fully functioning personality. Motivation is not a one way process that develops the personality; but in fact a flourished personality itself that becomes a source for an individual to further realise his needs, work on them in order to reach his maximum potential.

Motivation and personality are complimentary to each other. Motivation is a never ending process as needs always motivates an individual and assists in individual's growth and overall personality development. A fully functioning personality is always motivated because of his needs. Personality development is a continuous process which not only includes that unmet needs motivates an individual but also involves mastering over our efforts to grow continuously without depending on others and can face the peak experiences of life. The phenomenal field of which

we are an integral part changes after some interval of time and only a fully functioning being is able to cope up and adapt the incongruity. Life is full of intensive and extensive experiences. Individuals must have the capability to deal with any experiences with utmost confidence and always try to move away from distortion. Life is not at all about static states and experiences. It changes with time and only a few functioning beings are able to realize such circumstances and motivate themselves with self-concept— who he really is and the person he would aspire to become. Maslow asserted that unpleasant experiences produce maladaptive behavior that lead to enduring personality changes:

“When an effective stimulus, a traumatic experience let us say, impinges upon the personality, there are certain consequences of this experience. But these consequences practically never bear a one-to-one or a straight-line relationship to the original casual experience. What actually happens is that the experience, if it is effective, changes that whole personality. This personality, now different from what it was before, express itself differently and behaves differently than before” (Maslow 301).

When different aspects of personality are applied on the novels of Philip Milton Roth, the reader gets to know two different perspectives- one is the characters' differences in the novels and the other is how the various personality traits of the characters meet up all in all. When all the novels are taken into consideration, the reader will analyse that how characters' free-will determines their way of conduct. The major characters are being shown as subjective being who are very much active, creative, and who live in the present and act according to the current situations, relationships, and perceptions subjectively. The characters in the novels choose an optimistic path for themselves by discarding the very pessimistic outlook of life. The characters to be analysed under this chapter have shown growth patterns and development in order to become the best version they can become. They tend to emphasize on their own ability to think rationally, critically, and consciously.

In the select novels the characters are themselves responsible for their actions and its outcomes. They have the power of subjectivity, and free-will to direct their

actions, attitudes, and behaviours accordingly. Nathan Zuckerman, the protagonist in the novels *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson* is mentioned as a capable being who enjoys his work and consider it as a mission to fulfil. He focused on his own attitude and development. Some peak experiences hit him so hard but he remained focused on his own innate capabilities. He has shown a remarkable display of his capabilities, talents, and potential to his utmost extent. He fulfilled all the assumptions as made by Rogers that- behaviour of human beings is goal directed and people who are innately good tend to adapt any odd situations that direct them to actualize their needs.

Nathan Zuckerman, is seen as Roth's alter ego in the select works. In *The Ghost Writer* (1979), he is seen as a young artist from Newark who is talking about his visit to his artistic icon, E.I. Lonoff who is an eminent author. He is being censured by his family for composing a novel on family embarrassment that is associated with Meema Chaya's will. He is neglected by his father for writing a book about the negative image of Jewish people which is actually unacceptable for his father. Such neglect of his biological father let Zuckerman to urge the support of his spiritual father Lonoff. Zuckerman could not win his father's support as long as he implement his choice of creation, like Amy Bellette. She is a young, and a talented artist like Nathan and the student of Lonoff.

Nathan is seen as a subjective well-being and his subjectivity is the insight and a fundamental pathway to knowledge. This state of Nathan empowers him to perceive himself as subject that mirrors the social cycle. Zuckerman's transition from an ambitious young man to an established writer is not simply a straight forward progression marked by career achievements; rather it represents a nuanced inner journey of personal recalibration. His sense of self is not just a collection of private emotions, but a phenomenological conflict in which he seeks to affirm his artistic authenticity against the conditions of worth imposed by his father. This trajectory is important because it highlights the humanistic pursuit of autonomy, even when such independence results in isolation and tension within the family.

The importance of subjective experience is that an individual's behaviour is dependent on taking personal responsibility and his behaviour is best understood from his own viewpoint. Zuckerman in *The Ghost Writer* turns into his very own comic victim of his own obsession once he faces a challenge of selecting between his father and his art. He seeks solution in his own fantasies and join the main story as it develops with despair and meticulousness. His visit to his mentor makes him to learn lessons about the relationship between art and an artist, the role of imagination in art and life, and the difference between realism and imagination. The similitudes between the Nathan Zuckerman and E.I Lonoff infer that the author's inclination for the aesthetic choice represents his personal limitation.

Nathan feels dejection from his father that leaves him unable to identify his own identity, prompting him to find the connection elsewhere. Because of the argument he leaves his father in the snow as he boards the bus back to Quahsay (Roth 90- 91). His father blames Nathan as he has made, "everybody seem awfully greedy" (Roth 86) and to which he replies that "everybody was" (Roth 86). Lastly his father's warning has no impact on Nathan at that very moment and this rejection of his father leads him to look elsewhere for a Jewish link, which is where he finds E.I Lonoff. Zuckerman narrates, "I discovered E.I Lonoff, whose fiction seemed to by a response to the seemed burden of exclusion and confinement that still weighed upon the lives of those who had raised me and that had informed our relentless household obsession with the status of Jews." (Roth 12). His actions are motivated by his need to prove to his family that he is a good Jewish personality who is concerned about Jewish people.

When Nathan showed his inclination towards E.I Lonoff to learn artistic values, he can be seen as a subjective being which alludes to how Nathan's judgement is formed by his own personal beliefs and sentiments rather than outside impacts. As an individual he experiences his life form back to front. Subjectivity empowers him to take part in being. The world that he created becomes the mode of self-understanding for him. He had a very warm, and loving relationship with his mentor, shared a common place to stay in, food, and a secure environment to develop his artistic values.

At Lonoff's place, Nathan receives unconditional love or positive regard from Lonoff that plays an essential role in his personality development. This unconditional love he received from his mentor allows Nathan to share his thoughts, emotions, and feelings very openly to his spiritual father. Nathan not only receives the positive regard from his mentor but he considered his self as worthy and essential part of his overall personality. After his father's rejection he analyses and interpreted as to what his ultimate goals are and how to grab them to become a fully functioning being. He not only received appraisal and acceptance from the external agency; E.I. Lonoff but he himself treated his own self as vital and capable to attain his maximum potential.

An individual having high self-regard can make his own decisions, acts on them, and accepts his achievements and failures too. Such individual is ready to deal with his own actions and its consequences in a very rational way. Such type of individuals are more open to their experiences. Nathan was having a great self-regard for himself as he is neither dependent on any other person to rectify him nor he is having a negative outlook for his self. He is shown as a confident personality, has free-will to take his own decisions and he has never allowed any societal pressure to bother his art and his artistic creations.

Nathan permits his personality and self-concept to grow and develop from his own experiences. Nathan, a flourished personality has the capability to deal with the obstacles of his life with utmost confidence and he always tries his best to move away from defensiveness. He would not have become a developed personality if he had listened to what his father actually desired for. But Nathan in fact lived every moment of his life rather than living in distortion which later on ruins his life. He is being shown as individual who is free to make his own choices and judgements rather than relying on his father's choices. He trusted his own judgements, tend to choose his own conduct which is appropriate and up to the mark.

After composing a book which is against Jewish sensibility according to his father, Nathan constructively handled it rather than destroying his creation. As Maslow discussed that environment plays a crucial role for the development of an individual and it is because of the environment that helps an individual to grow to his

fullest. Nathan after facing dejection from his father leaves him unable to find himself as an integral part of the world. So, he finds a connection elsewhere and the path that he chose for himself makes him a completely subjective being and directs him towards his artistic path. When Nathan is with his mentor Lonoff, he feels more secure and safe than when he is with his father and his Jewish cousins. This shows Nathan's healthy psychological mechanism.

Nathan's life is all about intensive and extensive experiences but he acts throughout constructively. The environment that he choose for himself could not last that long as his father died and he once again feels the lack of warmth, care, and affection in his life and find it very much difficult to tackle. Nathan's success ruins him and sends him back to his roots once again. Nathan becomes so famous because of his composition that becomes a blockbuster. Nathan not only receives appraisal but also faces harsh criticism for his composition *Carnovsky*. Nathan's dual personality can easily be seen as he not only is dealing with his blockbuster composition but at the same time he is immensely affected by the unexpected demise of his father and his emotional fallout after it.

The decision taken out by Nathan to choose the part of E.I. Lonoff and considering him his mentor to produce artistic creations describes his confidence and command over his own actions. Although he struggled a lot, lost connections with his loved ones but he stayed calm and can be viewed as portraying the innate personality of his character. Publishing one book after another describes well his mastery experience. He worked very hard on his own individual performance and became the one who is fit for accomplishing his task he set out for himself.

In *The Ghost Writer*, we see the early formation of Zuckerman's personality through a humanistic perspective. Pursuit of self-actualization- Zuckerman, still in the early stages of his literary career, is driven by an intense desire to become a great writer. His visit to E.I. Lonoff is part of this journey—a step toward discovering his identity and potential. There are some tensions between the ideal and the real self- the contrast between Zuckerman's idealized vision of the writer's life and the reality he encounters at Lonoff's home underscores a central theme in humanistic

psychology. His romantic infatuation with Amy Bellette serves as a projection of his aspirations and imagined self. Nathan has a strong belief in innate goodness as despite his inexperience, Zuckerman is portrayed as curious and well-mannered individual, sincerely seeking wisdom and guidance. His admiration for Lonoff reflects a hopeful view of human potential and moral integrity. His interactions with Lonoff and Amy, though disillusioning, mark an essential step in his personal growth, shaping his evolving self-awareness, value of formative experiences and understanding of identity.

The artist's battle with his art is seen in the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound* which is actually a boon of getting better and gaining some new and useful knowledge. He became one with his art and in this artistic process he received acclaim and denunciation simultaneously and his own success itself became a threat for Nathan. Being an American Kunstleroman; he struggles a lot to maintain an equilibrium as a celebrity without getting indulged into controversies. Treachery is one of the significant topics in *Zuckerman Unbound*. Nathan gets threatening emails that reminds him of his treachery to his own Jewish people. He gets likewise venomous calls from a stranger expressing that he would kidnap his mother. The author gets scared of all these and started interpreting that his own exotic fiction could be the reason for the abhorrence. The fiction takes a disastrous turn when Zuckerman and his sibling fly down to see their father who is on his death bed in Florida. The chapter, "*Look Homeward Angel*", offers a portion of Roth's ideal and most moving composition, in which he portrays Henry's responses to *Carnovsky*. Henry blames Nathan for double crossing his own dad and, surprisingly, killing him with his creative composition. He transparently stands up to Zuckerman saying that *Carnovsky's* creator is answerable to their dad's demise.

In this novel, *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan is shown as an aspiring being aspiring for fame and fortune. He aspired for this part and this judgement and choice of his, is formed by his own personal choice and beliefs. His own choice to become a great artist and to prove this to his father is completely based on his own personal sentiments. No one poked his idea of consciousness. Nathan's own self chosen path helps him in developing and to become an integral part of the normal universe.

Nathan's subjectivity empowered him to take part in being. The outside world and the struggle that Nathan is going through become a mode of his self-understanding.

Personal preferences and choices made by him are dependent on his moral subjectivism. Descartes recommended that brain is different from body and world as is a domain of its own. The novels that Nathan wrote depicts his own understanding regarding a particular subject. This is what the major and the ultimate goal of subjectivity is- that it improves the human being's understanding of the world. It is Nathan's subjectivity that compelled him to perform innate activities of artistic creation and to become the best version of himself. Nathan wanted to prove his father of his aesthetic creation by giving his erotic novels a cosmic value; which clearly portrays that subjectivity adds to our understanding to interpret other person's subjectivity critically.

He had a firm belief in his capabilities that leads him to become a subjective well-being. The experience he had has been clearly mentioned by him in his own artistic creations and this experience of Nathan is the ultimate indication of his behaviour. Nathan, as an individual perceived, analysed, and interpreted different events and write them down in his creation as an artist. This is what Humanistic psychologists believed that personality is studied only from an individual's subjective being. The essential element of subjective being is that individual's behaviour is completely dependent on how well he takes his own responsibility. This is clearly mentioned in Nathan's characterization as how he had chosen a path for himself without any influence of some external agency. With this essential element of subjective being the behaviour of an individual is clearly indicated.

The novel shows a journey of Nathan's life having several ups and downs but he managed to maintain a constant development in his personality. The path of self that he has chosen for himself has gone through various developmental stages- from an erotic being to a famous writer. This path of self brought fame as well as notoriety for Nathan but his self was firmly bound which is the ultimate motif of subjectivity. Being a central character in the novel, Nathan faced different situations in his life but he managed to overcome when he stated to walk on the path of subjectivity. He started realizing his needs at different stages of his life that make him a matured

being, a confident being who is taking a stand for himself, his passions, and his desires.

Nathan rose as a strong headed personality. His self undergoes through different developmental stages and confronted several afflictions of connections but at last we see Nathan as an awakened being. His decision for writing and to become a unique artist and make his father proud evokes his own community to raise questions on him. This journey of Nathan although is difficult but it affects his surrounding and environment which in turn helps him in grooming his personality. This is what subjectivity is about- having a harmony between a character and his surroundings.

The real essence of subjectivity is- the ability to have self-reflective actions. Nathan Zuckerman's self-motivation and his subjective being made him to become what he actually desires for. The complete outlook of Nathan's life when analysed is seen as a journey full of struggle with his own self and finally becoming a subjective being and an awakened personality. Lonoff has a direct influence on his self but not in a complete way. His sense of self is completely different from that of Nathan and this is what makes Nathan a unique man. He tried really hard to satisfy his self which reflects in his accomplishments. He has a higher level of self-efficacy that affects his productivity level. His command over his inspirations, conduct and social environment made him a self-efficient man by rehearsing again and again on his different aspects of personality through his aesthetic creations.

Nathan completely fulfilled the concepts of ideal and real self. He becomes not only what he wants but also he considered his own self as worthy and important. He wanted to become a very eminent personality and in order to become such he trusted his power of free-will. This trust of Nathan over his decisions made him a flourished personality who is having an ability to choose his own conduct that is very much appropriate. Congruity is the main component in the process of an individual's personality development. Nathan completely satisfies the ideal as well as the real self. His real-self made him to see himself as who he really is and ideal self makes him capable to achieve what he really desires for. Both ideal and real self has a direct impact on how an individual perceives himself and acts accordingly. While it may appear that Nathan achieves his potential, a closer humanistic analysis reveals a

persistent existential tension. The trait of artistic obsession is important because it operates both as a means of self-actualization and a defense mechanism against the pain of interpersonal rejection. Zuckerman's fully functioning status is therefore not a static state of happiness, but a dynamic and often painful process of maintaining congruence in a world that consistently penalizes his subjective choices.

Nathan is a complete organism who represents the sum total of all the experiences happening inside him. He becomes the focal point of all the experiences whether internal or external. Nathan is again shown as having high self-regard who can make his own choices and can follow his own planned actions. Nathan did the same; although after facing dejection he keeps on publishing one book after another that becomes a blockbuster. He did not stop anywhere in between, in fact he keeps on going- on his own planned track. His life is full of intensive as well as extensive experiences. At every point of his life he is receiving acclaim, and appreciation from the public but the other side of his life is in dark as he lost his connections, feel isolated because of his father's death and because of the blame that his creation has killed his father.

Nathan as a subjective being is shown as creative who is not following any standardized rules and patterns but in fact he is dealing with his life in a very constructive manner. Fluctuations are being experienced by Nathan in the process of his personality development but he deals with all in a very optimistic way. He is enjoying his every moment of life by leaving beside all the distortion that brings incongruity and later on bothers his personality. Nathan becomes an integral part of the phenomenal field which is full of experiences.

Nathan's personality is not static but it grows and flourishes with time. It is a continuous process. In this process he is not only understanding his self but also works hard for self-fulfilment, self-realization, and self-growth in order to reach his maximum potential. He is having a positive perspective of his life, feels happy, and good about who he is and this all happens because he has a positive self-concept. He is continuously shown as growing and developing all the time which indicates that his innate nature is good enough.

Nathan's life is surrounded by ups and downs. The troubles and difficulties from which Nathan is going through do not end here but it takes now a new form. He is now facing pain and suffering because of his own subjective being. He chooses the path of free-will, decided his own environment to become a well acclaimed artist but this path went through several loopholes like criticism, loss of relations, and many more. Earlier he became an eminent personality- from nothing to everything but now he is leading a life of misery and rejection.

As Zuckerman grapples with sudden fame in the novel *Zuckerman Unbound*, new layers of his personality are revealed, offering deeper insight into humanistic ideas. The public's response to his novel *Carnovsky* alters Zuckerman's self-image and represents the influence of environment on his identity. He struggles of being mistaken for the fictional character he created, showing how external perceptions can challenge self-acceptance and personal development. There is a quest for authenticity as a growing disconnect emerges between Zuckerman's inner self and how others see him. This inner conflict mirrors Carl Rogers' concept of incongruence, highlighting the psychological toll of a fragmented self.

Zuckerman begins to reckon with the consequences of his choices—both as a writer and as a person that represents his freedom and responsibility. Humanistic psychology's focus on agency and personal responsibility is evident as he confronts the effects of his decisions on his relationships and identity. Nathan's journey of self-discovery is an ongoing process as despite these pressures, Zuckerman continues to reflect on his life and seeks meaningful connection, suggesting an enduring drive toward growth and understanding.

In *The Ghost Writer* and *Zuckerman Unbound*, we see Nathan as a fully functioning being, he becomes the one he is aspiring for. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, we see Nathan's downfall- a downfall of his confidence and a downfall of his strong personality; but he manages to overcome this by actively dealing with peak experiences. In this novel the humanistic perspective is challenged by the reality of bodily sufferings and distress. Zuckerman's undiagnosable pain serves as a physical expression of incongruence- a realistic limit to the idealistic notion of the fully

functioning person. His turn towards medicine is not merely a shift in profession, but a desperate inner attempt to locate a framework where his real-self is no longer viewed as a symbolic destroyer of his parents. This situation underscores the tragic aspect of humanism, revealing how the pursuit of self-actualization can be obstructed by unresolved trauma and the burden of subjective experience.

When taken a glance over Nathan's life, the reader can feel his struggle- a struggle with his own self, a struggle with the family, and a struggle with his own Jewish community. Earlier it was his self-motivation, and self-regard that inspires him to do the best in his life and to prove every one of his artistic creations. He becomes a fully awakened personality when he meets Lonoff and learns artistic values. But when he faces absurd comments from the public, his family, later on loses his father; he starts blaming himself as solely responsible for his father's demise.

He is now suffering with some undiagnosable pain and now wants to relieve himself from this disease. He gets himself entangled between his own art and his undiagnosable pain. He is now not only facing failure in his family and friends but also in his marriage. A fully functioning personality does not only demands to take a stand for oneself but one should be ready always to face the outcomes of their chosen actions. Nathan in this case is dealing with his achievements and failures simultaneously without depending on others. But this mysterious ailment of Nathan is breaking him in parts and suppressing his confidence. Henry; Nathan's brother accused Nathan for their father's death and this breaks him down so hard and Nathan feels inactive, bored, and completely tormented. The trauma of his father's untimely death haunts him and this trauma becomes more intense when he loses his mother and later on he indulges in sex, alcohol in order to get rid of his disease but all go in vain. The boredom and inactivity in his life makes him unable to pursue his career, he discards his writing and starts indulging with women.

Because of this undiagnosed physical pain he started indulging himself in vodka, marijuana, and percodan and finally grows into addiction with it. He wanders here and there, in search of a perfect doctor who will diagnose his mysterious

ailment. In *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan deals with his own accomplishments. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Zuckerman decides to live with a fantasy which is completely unrealistic to become a doctor and explain this to his friend Bobby. Nathan is now at that very stage where he is doubting everyone and starts leading an amazed life. Zuckerman attempts to divert himself by engaging with different ladies. He feels that his own lecherous novel, *Carnovsky* is the ultimate reason of the loss of his parents. He attempts whatever conceivable from treatment to electric shocks: “He set the timer, put two moistened electrode pads above and below the site of the pain, and six times a day gave himself a low voltage shock for five minutes...” (Roth 432)

As a subjective personality, he took a decision for himself of becoming a gynaecologist. The audience can clearly see his actions as the subject after pondering here and there even if his actions are passive in nature. Zuckerman wants to pursue the career of medicine but soon realizes the difference between writing and opting the career of medicine. He positions medical school; career of medicine as everything and above all writings.

As a subjective being he is well aware of the true reality of Medical profession to which he is having no relation but he wants to choose it anyway just to console himself and to get rid of his own perception that he is the reason behind his parent's death. Although he takes one more step for himself of taking doctor as a profession on one hand but on the other side he is also very much aware of the difference between his writing and the profession of medicine. His actions of taking an active step for his writing shapes his behaviour and this behaviour later on grooms his personality. But after his parent's death he suddenly saw a downfall in his writing. He started receiving negative feedback from his community and from his brother Henry in an intensive manner that left him alienated in the world where he is now feeling himself as a murderer of his own parents.

His subjective being intensifies more later on when he poses as a pornographer. His achievements that was only because of his subjectivism started shattering that leads to his own annihilation. In the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound*, he receives positive feedback for accomplishing complex task that persuades him to

maintain a firm belief system that he has abilities to succeed. It is not a mandatory part of a subjective being to always receive positive feedback from the people. Negative feedback, critical outlook of Henry modifies his personality to finally become one with himself

Under the influence of some optimistic people and environment Nathan grew to his fullest but within the same environment his personality faces disintegration. As a subjective being he experiences all strong emotions and finally grows into a healthy being with full understanding of life. In the novel *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan recalls his memories and finds himself and his creation to be solely responsible for his parent's death. He is now looking for acceptance and admiration and he works for it by selecting and opting the path of becoming a doctor; the profession that is having no relation with his art.

Humanistic psychologists believe that an individual himself perceive and analyse different events. The same happens with Zuckerman as first he perceived artistic knowledge through his mentor even when his father was against his composition. Then becoming a superstar by publishing a novel which becomes the best seller and receiving both fame and dejection at the same time. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan is now feeling to be solely responsible for his parent's demise. He gives up on his writing and now wants to become a doctor. Again in this series of events, Nathan acts as a subjective being who possesses conscious experience that mirrors the social cycle which comprises him as a subject.

An individual's subjectivity includes his projection of himself and as well as the consciously picked activities and worries that forms his actual identity. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan becomes a new man through his own actions. As a subjective being he chose a path for himself and that path brought worries later on as his father dejected him and later on his mother died. Ultimately he relates to himself when the toughest situations are going on in his life by walking on the path of subjectivism.

He satisfies both the concepts of ideal as well as of real self. He is aware of who he actually is- not that famous artist but he wants to become an eminent

personality whose works will become blockbusters. Environment plays a crucial role in the development of an individual's personality. Earlier he considered himself as worthy and was receiving unconditional positive regard from his spiritual father but as the time passes, he loses his parents, faces failure in marriage etc.– this all leads to low self-worth that decreases the chances of him to realize his maximum potential. Nathan again is shown as having high self-regard who is now again taking decisions for himself. Although the new track on which he is working is passive but even after having peak experiences he still gathers his courage to take actions of his own. Incongruence is there in Nathan's life as his ideal self and real self are not now coherent. He wants to become a famous and well-acclaimed writer but because of traumatic experiences he chooses a different profession for himself having no realistic vision that matches with his artistic aura. But as a subjective being he trusts his decisions and works hard to achieve it.

There is a shift that has been seen in Nathan's personality development. Such shift does not stop him in between but he continues to walk further. Personality development is a continuous process. Nathan is heading towards his maximum potential in his own way whether intensively or extensively but he is heading. Humanistic psychologists believed that it is very important to realise what one actually wants and work on it actively. The journey of Nathan from *The Ghost Writer* to *The Anatomy Lesson* is amazing, his growth from nothing to everything is remarkably shown. Nathan is shown as a subjective being, very confident, persistent who is well aware of himself and accepts himself in all odd situations. Although having a lot many obstacles in his life he has always maintained his efforts to work hard with utmost strength and sacrifices in life.

Nathan Zuckerman in *The Anatomy Lesson* faces a personal and creative crisis that brings his psychological journey into sharp focus. Zuckerman's physical pain and creative paralysis in writing are intertwined, highlighting the humanistic view that psychological and physical states are deeply connected. His inability to write threatens his core identity. It all portrays the holistic understanding of the self. Nathan Zuckerman in this novel searches for meaning as he is feeling aimless, Zuckerman fantasizes about becoming a doctor which is a symbolic attempt to

reclaim purpose. This aligns with the humanistic emphasis on the need for meaning and contribution.

Despite his suffering, Zuckerman's imagination remains active. His internal dialogue and efforts to cope reflect the human capacity for endurance and psychological recovery that shows his human resilience. There is a subjective experience and identity in this work as Zuckerman's unique, personal perspective on his crisis reinforces the humanistic belief in the importance of individual's experience. His attempt to redefine himself illustrates the dynamic, ever-changing nature of the self.

In Zuckerman's Trilogy, Roth uses Zuckerman's journey to examine the essence of personality through a humanistic lens. From youthful ambition to existential doubt, Zuckerman's story captures the complexity of self-discovery. Roth portrays a character continually shaped by experience, struggling to balance public image with private identity, and searching for purpose amid personal challenges. Through this narrative arc, the trilogy illuminates the core humanistic ideas that are growth, authenticity, resilience, and the profound individuality of the self.

While Nathan strives for a fully functioning state, his journey reveals that subjectivity can be both empowering and destabilizing. The real essence of his subjectivity is not a perfect alignment of the ideal and real self, but the ability for self-reflective action amidst total disintegration. By the conclusion of *Zuckerman Trilogy*, his awakened personality does not signify a triumphant resolution; instead it reflects a grounded recognition of his own constraints. This distinction ensures that his subjective journey is understood as a process of endurance rather than a simple narrative of getting better; thereby distinguishing it from the earlier chapter's emphasis on progressive growth.

American Pastoral a 1997 novel stands as one of Philip Roth's most significant works, offering a powerful elegy for the shattered promises of twentieth-century prosperity, domestic harmony, and civic stability. Its protagonist, Seymour Swede is initially presented as the embodiment of success- an exceptional high school athlete, a devoted husband, and the prosperous heir to his father's Newark

glove factory. He comes of age in the optimism of post-war America, appearing to fulfill the ideals of the American Dream. However, this carefully constructed image conceals a more fragile psychological reality. The novel gradually exposes how such an idealized personality, grounded in order and control, is vulnerable to disruption. When his daughter Merry commits an act of political violence in 1968, Swede's world collapses, revealing not only the limits of his idealism but also the presence of suppressed anxieties, emotional rigidity and an inability to confront disorder- traits that complicates his otherwise constructive personality.

When Seymour Swede Levov is viewed from an external perspective, he appears to excel in every domain- an accomplished athlete, physically attractive, married to a former beauty queen and a successful businessman. Yet this outward perfection masks a significant inner limitation. Swede constructs an idealized vision of American pastoral life, rooted in harmony, discipline and moral clarity. His deep emotional investment in this imagined order results in a form of psychological detachment, where he avoids confronting complexity and conflict. Consequently, when Merry's act of terrorism shatters this illusion, his inability to process contradiction and chaos becomes evident. This reveals that alongside his admirable qualities, Swede's personality is also marked by passivity, denial and emotional repression demonstrating how constructive traits can coexist with and even enable destructive tendencies.

American Pastoral is a twenty-second book of Roth and winning exceptionally acclaimed Pulitzer Prize which explores the nature of community, father-daughter relations, and Jewish assimilation, political fanaticism, familial faithfulness, and double-crossing. It is a novel that depicts the time period of Vietnam War, and its impact on the Americans. Roth began composing the novel when Vietnam War ends which was one of the destructive national event of his life. Through the novel, Roth examines the course of American history from 1940's, the abhorrence of the 1960's, and the staggering impacts of a nation portioned over the Vietnam War.

American Pastoral spins around Seymour Levov, the hero of the novel, a Jew who moved to America and get settled in New Jersey. The book gives a record of two

different generations of Levov's family, descendants of immigrant Jews, who experience the pursuit of happiness. The Levov's went through a lot many sacrifices over the course of years to achieve success. Misfortune strikes the Swede's life who focuses on the ideal American life and faces a downfall because of his girl's scary monger activities. Roth depicts the victories and the hardships of the Levov's in building their family business for more than two different generations.

While Swede represents a personality shaped by discipline and idealism, Merry embodies the darker and more unstable dimensions of subjectivity. Her transformation from an affectionate child into a radicalized adolescent reflects the emergence of destructive psychological traits such as alienation, extremism and moral absolutism. Importantly, the novel does not present her merely as a deviation but as a product of the same social and familial environment that shaped Swede. This contrast complicates the earlier emphasis on exceptional and successful personalities by demonstrating that subjectivity can generate both constructive and destructive outcomes. Moreover, Roth's portrayal implicitly includes the presence of ordinary individuals- those who neither achieve extraordinary success nor descend into extremity thereby suggesting that personality exists along a continuum rather than within fixed categories

Philip Roth composed this novel to show despite the fact that an individual can accept that they have all the bliss on the planet, this is not generally the situation and their life can be flipped around without any problem. Despite the fact that individuals have a veneer of decency, each makes an interest in incendiary way of behaving and can never get the reality with regards to an individual in view of their outward situations. The contention and turmoil introduced all through the original brought about a significant cultural and individual change that cannot be dismissed.

Merry's choice to leave her family put the Levov's lives essentially out of joint and the family never truly recuperates. Swede and his wife Dawn separates after several years of a fruitless relationship and unsuccessfully trying to restore the ideas of the American Dream, that William James once broadly portrayed in his work *The Varieties of Religious Experience* published in the year 1902 represents the American

as “middle class paradise” (James 863). The existence of Swede similarly as with a large number of Roth’s protagonists keeps on breaking down and decaying: he fosters a metastasizing type of prostate malignant growth and dies after his surgery. The novel ends with Merry’s return to old Rimrock, a “landscape that for so long now has been bound up with the idea of solace, of beauty and sweetness, and pleasure and peace” (Roth 421).

Later on he gets to know about his wife Dawn’s love affair with Orcutt but even after knowing this he remains in a state of passivity and is not infuriated by this. All that Swede can do is just lament that: “it was beyond understanding not only how Merry could be living in this hovel like a pariah, not only how Merry could be a fugitive wanted for murder, but how he and Dawn could have been the source of all this. How could their innocent foibles add up to this human being” (Roth 238).

When Swede finds that his girl has been dependent upon inappropriate conduct and assault, he says in a condition of mental irresoluteness. From one viewpoint, he is truly moved and cannot avoid the sensation of pity and the longing to help Merry out of her hopelessness. Yet, then again, he likewise portrays distanced bewilderment coming about because of the understanding that his girl has destroyed the exemplarity of his life. It subsequently becomes obvious that Seymour Levov’s focal concern is just to some degree the destiny of his girl. What annoys him more is that it is absolutely impossible for him to fix his own concept of carrying on with a decent life and the bunch of ideologies important to maintain and approve such a life style. Disrupted by the inadequacy of his clarifications, Swede in an expression of most extreme exasperation, declares in the novel *American Pastoral*, “I do not understand. Merry, I do not understand. How did you get from Lyndon Johnson to this? How do you get from point A to point Z, where there is not point of contact at all? Merry, it does not hang together” (Roth 245).

The problem of subjectivity in the construction of historical narratives remains central to the novel. However, it is important to distinguish between a subjective journey and self-progression. While self-progression suggests a linear movement toward growth, fulfilment, or self- actualization, a subjective journey

refers to the individual's internal engagement with experience, perception and meaning regardless of whether this leads to development or disintegration. Swede's perspective is deeply subjective, shaping how he interprets his life, achievements and failures. His commitment to the American Dream is not merely a goal-oriented pursuit but a psychological framework through which he understands reality. This distinction prevents his narrative from being reduced to a simple story of personal growth and instead positions it as a complex process of negotiating identity amidst disruption.

Although Swede's life appears to move between phases of success and decline, his experiences challenge conventional assumptions about subjective well-being. While factors such as financial stability, social status and material comfort are often considered indicators of fulfilment, the humanistic perspective emphasises authenticity, self-awareness and internal congruence. Swede attains many external markers of success; however, his inability to reconcile his idealised self-image with the complexities of reality reveals a lack of psychological integration. His journey demonstrates that subjective well-being cannot be reduced to material or social achievements but must be understood as a deeper alignment between one's experiences and one's sense of self.

Swede Levov is seen as an active, creative and experiencing individual who lives in the present and reciprocates to current situations, circumstances subjectively. He develops and grows optimistically. Self-progression in his case is seen as the focal point of his life. He undergoes several events and situations like facing of World War but these events in fact influence him to constantly change and grow. He focused on the concepts of free-will, subjectivity, and self-determination and always aspired to become the best version he can become.

Seymour is well aware of himself which is the main characteristic of a healthy personality. He realised and interpreted his ultimate goals of his life and worked really hard to achieve them without depending on others. He faced his peak experiences of life and always try his best to get better. He is completely focused on his innate capabilities, personal responsibilities and on his development process. As

Carl Rogers stated that personality develops because of some motivating factor of fulfilment. The hardships, loss, and atrocities that he has faced in his life during World War make him capable to realise and focus on what and how to achieve his ultimate goals of life in order to become the fully functioning personality.

His self plays a crucial role in his personality development process and he always engages himself in exercising his real true self. His personality does not include learning and understanding his self only but also involves the efforts that he devotes to acquire what he actually desires for. The impact of war, hardships in life, and wish to achieve American Dream all make him conscious and confident. Such positive influences were present in his life that makes him to emphasize on his goals. He is shown as having an active personality who is flexible and open to new experiences and that makes him capable to become the best version and to grow continuously.

He experienced a lot many things in his life. He is an integral part of the experimental field where he is surrounded with events and experiences. As Rogers believed that an individual's behaviour and outlook are being motivated by his self-actualising tendencies. Seymour's behaviour in the same way is being motivated by his self-actualising tendencies –to achieve American Dream. Rogers further believes that environment plays a very important role in shaping one's overall personality. Seymour continuously interact with his environment and with such interactions he builds a structure of self or self-concept.

At first glance, Swede appears to fulfil Carl Rogers' concept of congruence between the ideal and real self. However, a closer analysis reveals a more complex reality. Rogers emphasizes openness to experience, adaptability, and psychological flexibility as essential features of a fully functioning personality. Swede's rigid adherence to an idealized vision of life limits his ability to engage with conflicting experiences. Rather than achieving true congruence, he maintains a fragile alignment that collapses under pressure. This suggests that his personality is not fully integrated but is instead sustained through denial and selective perception, challenging the notion that he represents a genuinely self-actualized individual.

Seymour has an ability to be flexible and open to his experiences and deal with them with his utmost confidence, and always trying to move away from distortion that portrays himself as having a fully-functioning personality. He is free to make his own choices and is not dependent on others which shows congruity in his personality. He is active, and creative who adapts the very new environment positively that depicts his optimistic outlook of his conduct. He, as a subjective being actively realises and interprets his needs which ultimately makes him a self-actualized being. But on the other hand, his daughter chooses a different path that is sheer passive to become a self-actualized being. Both father and daughter are seen as subjective beings in their own different ways. Seymour chooses an optimistic path to lead his life whereas Merry chooses the very darker outlook of life- to become fully-functioning personalities in their own ways.

Although *American Pastoral* does not overtly engage with the psychological frameworks found in Roth's *Zuckerman Bound* trilogy, it profoundly reflects many core ideas central to humanistic psychology, particularly through the life and disillusionment of Seymour "Swede" Levov. The novel subtly explores fundamental concepts such as self-actualization, personal agency, and the search for meaning; the tenets that are deeply embedded in humanistic thought. A foundational idea in humanistic psychology is that individuals are intrinsically good and driven by a natural desire to grow and reach their highest potential marks a belief in human potential and inherent goodness. At the outset, Swede appears to exemplify this idea. As a celebrated athlete, loyal husband, and successful businessman, he seems to have built a fulfilling, morally centered life. His public persona represents a life of purpose and achievement that closely mirrors the humanistic ideal of the self-actualizing individual.

Carl Rogers emphasized the importance of an individual's self-concept and the congruence between one's perceived self, ideal self, and experience. Swede begins with a stable sense of identity, rooted in traditional American values and personal accomplishments. However, when his daughter Merry becomes radicalized and disrupts the peaceful life he believed he had built, this sense of congruence collapses. The conflict between his envisioned world and the painful realities he

faces leads to a profound inner rift. Humanistic psychology underscores the deep human urge to live a life of meaning. Swede initially finds purpose in his family, career, and moral clarity. But when Merry's violent actions undermine everything he values, he is forced into a crisis of meaning. His efforts to understand her transformation and to reconcile it with the image he held of her and of himself become a desperate attempt to make sense of a world that no longer aligns with his beliefs.

Although Roth's novel acknowledges the force of social and historical circumstances, it also explores free-will, individual choice and the extent to which individuals act with personal agency. Swede, despite the chaos around him, continues to make choices and trying to repair his family, stay true to his values, and reach out to his daughter. These efforts reflect a belief in human freedom and responsibility, even if the outcomes remain tragically out of his control. The novel ultimately underscores both the power and limitations of personal agency. Humanistic psychology values a comprehensive understanding of the person within their unique environment. Roth crafts Swede as a fully round character whose identity is deeply tied to his roles as a father, husband, businessman, and an American citizen. His unravelling personality cannot be viewed in isolation but must be seen against the backdrop of the societal shifts of the 1960s and 70s. This holistic portrayal aligns with the humanistic psychology that emphasizes on placing an individual within their social and historical context. According to humanistic theory, a nurturing and understanding environment is essential for self-actualization. Swede initially thrives within the stable world he has created, believing that it will offer the safety needed for personal and familial growth. However, as societal unrest and Merry's estrangement take hold, the environment becomes increasingly hostile. This deterioration undercuts his emotional well-being and challenges the possibility of fulfilment. Roth's depiction of the collapse of Swede's world critiques the fragility of the so-called "*American Pastoral*" and its failure to support genuine human flourishing in times of crisis.

While *American Pastoral* is not a direct study of psychological theory, it resonates strongly with key humanistic principles. Through Swede Levov's decline

from an idealistic achiever to a man haunted by loss and disillusionment; Roth explores essential humanistic concerns- the drive toward potential, the fragility of self-concept, the hunger for meaning, and the complex role of personal agency and environment. The novel ultimately serves as a sobering reflection on the challenges of sustaining humanistic ideals amid the unpredictable forces of life and history.

I Married a Communist presents the dramatic rise and eventual downfall of Ira Ringold, a working-class man who transforms himself from a ditch digger in 1930s Newark into a prominent radio personality in the 1940s, only to be destroyed during the McCarthy era of the 1950s. While his trajectory initially appears to exemplify ambition, determination, and social mobility, Roth complicates this narrative by revealing the underlying tensions within Ira's personality. His ascent is driven not only by constructive traits such as confidence and commitment but also by an emerging ideological rigidity and an intense need for recognition. These traits, shaped by his socio-political environment and personal insecurities, ultimately contribute to his downfall, suggesting that personality development is not purely progressive but deeply conflicted.

An individual's level of subjective being is influenced by internal factors like innate personality and as well as external factors like society in which they live. Ira's subjective well-being is also influenced by internal as well as external factors. Ira was a tall man with a speedy sort of attitude. He served in the military in the Second World War, functioning as a stevedore. There he met another stevedore Jonny O' Day, who acquainted him with communism. It turned into Ira's life mission to help the working class individuals. His socialist responsibility additionally prompted his defeat, when in 1955 he was boycotted from radio as an entertainer for being a socialist.

Memoir of Eve entitled *I Married a Communist* wherein she censures Ira as a horrendous man and an ambitious communist who married Eve since he was ordered to by the Communist Association. The book makes Ira to be boycotted, and that implies that he can never again perform on the radio. Ira experiences progressively some pain that makes him to get admitted to a hospital. Some of Ira's friends also feel betrayed because of the criticism about them in Eve's book.

Ira can be understood as a deeply subjective individual whose identity is shaped through both internal drives and external influences. His rise from manual labour to radio stardom reflects qualities such as determination, charisma, and self-belief. However, these constructive traits are accompanied by less examined tendencies, including emotional impulsiveness, ideological absolutism, and a tendency to conflate personal identity with political belief. From a humanistic perspective, Ira's subjectivity does not simply lead to growth; rather, it reveals how an individual's internal world can both enable and distort their development. His strong identification with communism, for instance, provides him with purpose and direction, but also narrows his capacity for self-reflection and adaptability.

The interplay between positive and negative emotional states plays a crucial role in shaping Ira's personality. While feelings such as ambition, passion, and commitment contribute to his rise, emotions like anger, resentment, and betrayal significantly influence his decline. These contrasting affective states illustrate that subjective well-being is not a stable condition but a fluctuating process shaped by lived experiences. From a humanistic standpoint, such emotional complexity is essential to understanding personality, as it highlights how individuals negotiate meaning, identity, and self-worth in response to both fulfilment and adversity.

The trajectories of Ira Ringold and Nathan Zuckerman reveal important similarities, yet they diverge significantly in terms of their subjective engagement with experience. Both characters encounter criticism, isolation, and personal disillusionment; however, their responses differ in crucial ways. Nathan's subjective journey involves self-reflection and an ongoing negotiation with his inner conflicts, whereas Ira's trajectory is marked by a rigid adherence to external ideology. This distinction reinforces the difference between a subjective journey and self-progression. While Nathan's experiences, though painful, allow for moments of introspection, Ira's inflexibility limits his capacity for growth. His inability to reassess his beliefs or detach from his ideological identity ultimately leads to fragmentation rather than integration.

In the novel, *I Married a Communist*; Philip Roth continues to probe themes of identity, autonomy, and personal evolution through his fictional counterpart,

Nathan Zuckerman, and the downfall of the fervent idealist Ira Ringold. While the novel is immersed in political turmoil and ideological conflict, it also closely aligns with central ideas in humanistic psychology particularly in its exploration of individuality, self-perception, responsibility, and the factors that shape or hinder personal development. Humanistic psychology posits that individuals possess an inherent drive toward growth, authenticity, and self-actualization. Ira Ringold's transformation from a labourer to a celebrated public figure initially appears to reflect this trajectory. However, his development complicates this assumption. While he seeks purpose and meaning through political commitment and public recognition, his increasing ideological rigidity constrains his individuality. Instead of fostering authentic self-expression, his identity becomes subsumed within a fixed belief system. This suggests that the path toward self-actualization is not guaranteed, even in the presence of strong motivation and ambition. Ira's character thus demonstrates how the failure to maintain openness, self-awareness, and flexibility can hinder genuine psychological growth.

According to Carl Rogers, psychological well-being depends on the congruence between one's self-image, ideal self, and lived experience. In Ira's case, this congruence gradually deteriorates. He perceives himself as strong, principled, and morally justified; however, public exposure through Eve's memoir disrupts this self-image, creating a sharp disjunction between his internal identity and external perception. This incongruence generates psychological tension and contributes to his downfall. From a humanistic perspective, Ira's experience illustrates the importance of adaptability and self-reflection in maintaining a coherent sense of self.

Humanistic theory prioritizes the unique, personal experiences that shape one's identity. Roth's novel largely unfolds through Zuckerman's subjective narration as he attempts to reconstruct Ira's life and character. This narrative approach reinforces the humanistic belief that understanding a person's behavior and motivations requires engaging with their inner world, not just their public labels. The story becomes an investigation into memory, perception, and the emotional truths that define personality. Humanistic theory emphasizes the role of a supportive environment in facilitating personal growth and self-actualization. Ira's decline

occurs within the oppressive socio-political climate of McCarthyism, where suspicion, censorship, and ideological persecution dominate public life. This hostile environment not only restricts his professional opportunities but also intensifies his psychological rigidity. However, while external forces contribute to his downfall, they do not fully account for it. Ira's inability to critically examine his own beliefs or adapt to changing circumstances highlights how internal limitations can interact with external pressures to produce destructive outcomes.

At its core, *I Married a Communist* is a meditation on how people confront shattered ideals and seek purpose amid loss. Both Ira and Zuckerman must contend with the emotional fallout of betrayal and cultural upheaval. Humanistic psychology stresses that individuals are capable of finding meaning even in adversity. Roth portrays storytelling, introspection, and memory as tools through which his characters attempt to rebuild their identities and understand their pasts. Although the novel is set against a politically charged backdrop, *I Married a Communist* deeply engages with the humanistic view of personality. Roth explores the tensions between public identity and inner truth, the consequences of personal choices, and the enduring quest for authenticity and meaning. Through the rise and fall of Ira Ringold and Zuckerman's reflective lens, the novel demonstrates how individuals strive to preserve their sense of self within a world that often challenges and reshapes it.

The Human Stain explores the complexities of identity, self-construction, and the human desire for freedom within the constraints of social reality. The novel engages deeply with questions of race, class, and the fluidity of the self, presenting identity not as a fixed essence but as a consciously constructed and often conflicted process. Through the character of Coleman Silk, Roth examines how the pursuit of autonomy and self-definition can lead not only to empowerment but also to internal fragmentation. This duality makes the novel particularly significant in understanding personality as a site of both creative self-fashioning and psychological tension.

Narrated through Nathan Zuckerman's perspective, the novel reconstructs the life of Coleman Silk, a classics professor and former dean whose career is abruptly terminated following accusations of racism. While outwardly successful and

intellectually accomplished, Silk's life is shaped by a profound personal secret—his decision to pass as a white Jewish man despite being African American by birth. This act of self-reinvention becomes central to his identity, reflecting both an assertion of personal agency and a denial of his origins. His character thus embodies the tension between self-determination and self-concealment.

The whole tale is narrated by Nathan Zuckerman. The novel, *The Human Stain* begins with his meeting with Silk who is now seventy-one years old man and is engaged in a love-affair with a thirty-four years old woman, Faunia Farley who is an illiterate college janitor:

“It was in the summer of 1998 that my neighbour Coleman Silk- who before retiring two years earlier, had been a classics professor at nearby Athena College for some twenty odd years as well as serving for sixteen more as the dean of faculty-confined to me that, at the age of seventy-one, he was having an affair with a thirty-four years old cleaning woman who worked down at the college.” (Roth 1)

Silk's wife Iris died because of the exposure of Silk's racist allegations and now his new relationship with Faunia revitalizes his life. Because of this love-affair with Faunia, he experiences crisis and criticism when he is being targeted by his enemies for exploiting janitor's life. However, the genuine story lies somewhere down in Silk's past that he is a fair looking African-American who drifted across the American racial gap and has effectively passed as a white Jew in fifty years. Silk chooses to pass as a white and a Jew in his twenties after the death of his father.

The controversy surrounding Silk's use of the word “spooks” becomes deeply ironic in light of his concealed racial identity. What he intends as a neutral reference is interpreted as a racial slur, leading to his professional downfall. This incident exposes the fragile nature of his constructed identity, as well as the limits of his control over how he is perceived by others. From a psychological perspective, it reveals the inherent tension between his lived experience and the identity he has chosen to perform. The moment marks not merely a social misunderstanding but the collapse of a carefully sustained self-concept.

Silk acquires achievement both in private life as well as in his professional life. He weds a Jewess, and has four children having an agreeable existence. He turns into a main figure in Athena, the scholarly world and rise himself to a very respectable position of dean of faculty at a liberal art college. He commits his life to improve the institution, changing the school from a sluggish headed state establishment into a lively school. He plays a vital role in the appointment of young and talented faculty by replacing the old faculty by forcing them to take a retirement. Silk shows his responsibility by resigning so that he can teach classes again in his last years in the institution.

He teaches a class of fourteen students and observes that two of his students never appeared for the initial five weeks of the course. One day he asks for these two missing students: "Does anyone know these people? Do they exist? Or are they spooks?" (Roth 6). His intention of uttering this word spook was completely different but he got misunderstood and was later on charged with some racist remarks. His sense of spook is a ghost and not exactly what the missing students understood. The perfect career of Silk ends in ignominy that made him a helpless being.

The central motif of the novel lies in the role of self-invention in shaping identity. Coleman Silk can be seen as a subjective being who actively constructs his life through deliberate choices and sustained effort. However, this process of self-creation is not purely liberating. While it enables him to achieve professional success and social mobility, it also requires the suppression of his past and the constant maintenance of a constructed persona. This reveals a critical distinction between a subjective journey and self-progression. Silk's journey is marked not by continuous growth but by an ongoing negotiation between authenticity and concealment, suggesting that self-determination can coexist with internal division.

Coleman Silk is portrayed as an active and self-determined individual who exercises agency in shaping his life. From a humanistic perspective, his actions reflect a strong drive toward self-actualization, particularly in his pursuit of autonomy and professional excellence. However, his path complicates the humanistic ideal of authenticity. While he demonstrates independence and determination, his decision to conceal his racial identity introduces a fundamental conflict within the

self. This suggests that self-actualization, when pursued through denial rather than integration, may lead to psychological strain rather than fulfilment.

As a subjective being, Silk is well aware of himself, he transformed his self and became innately good and focused on his innate capabilities to change his attitude and behaviour accordingly. He tends to focus on his personal responsibilities and development. Silk's behaviour is goal directed. His determination and hard work to become a dean and making his institution to achieve great heights and to be the best in the country represents his continuity in his personality development process. He not only realised his self but tried hard in maintaining self-respect in the country. His ideal self and self-regard are coherent in nature that makes him a psychologically healthy being. He has taken his self as vital and very worthy for his overall development. With his self-worth he becomes able to interpret his ultimate goals in life in order to become a self-actualised being.

Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* serves as a powerful exploration of identity, self-construction, and the constraints imposed by society, particularly through the complex and tragic trajectory of Coleman Silk's life. The novel deeply resonates with the principles of humanistic psychology by examining how individuals forge their identities, strive for genuine self-expression, confront societal condemnation, and grapple with the search for personal meaning. The key traits and paradigms of personality within humanistic psychology manifest in the novel *The Human Stain* and that are- the inherent urge for self-fulfilment and transformation as Humanistic psychology posits an intrinsic human drive to realize one's full potential. Coleman Silk's decision to conceal his African-American heritage and live as a white Jewish man represents a profound act of self-determination. While ethically complex, it can be interpreted as his attempt to transcend racial barriers and attain a life he believed was rightfully his. This act of reinvention illustrates the intricate pursuit of self-actualization, while also highlighting how societal limitations can compel individuals to make difficult compromises on their journey toward fulfilment.

Carl Rogers emphasizes that psychological well-being depends on the alignment between one's real self and ideal self. In Silk's case, this alignment is inherently unstable. His ideal self is constructed around intellectual authority, social

acceptance, and freedom from racial limitation, while his real self is rooted in a history he actively suppresses. This creates a persistent state of incongruence, where his external identity does not fully correspond with his internal reality. Over time, this disjunction contributes to his vulnerability, as his identity remains dependent on concealment rather than integration. Humanistic psychology places strong emphasis on personal agency and the responsibility that accompanies individual choice. Silk's decision to redefine his identity represents a powerful assertion of autonomy. However, this choice also carries significant psychological and ethical consequences. While it grants him access to opportunities otherwise denied to him, it simultaneously isolates him from his origins and relationships. His life thus illustrates that agency is not inherently liberating; rather, it involves navigating the complex consequences of one's decisions over time.

Humanistic theory places high value on each individual's unique internal world. Roth portrays Coleman not as a mere representative of a racial category or a subject of political debate, but as a multifaceted individual with his own thoughts, feelings, and experiences that defy simplistic societal categorization. The narrative, largely filtered through Zuckerman's reflections and interpretations of Coleman's life, underscores the importance of empathetic, subjective understanding over detached, objective judgment. The novel also highlights the impact of a restrictive and judgmental social environment on individual identity. Silk's downfall is not solely the result of his personal choices but is intensified by a culture that enforces rigid moral and social boundaries. The institutional response to his alleged misconduct reflects a broader tendency toward moral absolutism, leaving little room for ambiguity or complexity. However, while societal forces contribute to his suffering, they also expose the limitations of a self-constructed through concealment. This interplay between external pressure and internal conflict underscores the fragile nature of identity within a hostile environment.

In the later stages of his life, Silk's relationship with Faunia represents an attempt to reclaim authenticity and emotional connection. Both characters exist on the margins of society, carrying their own histories of trauma and concealment. Their bond reflects a shared desire to find meaning beyond societal judgment and imposed

identities. From a humanistic perspective, this relationship can be seen as a movement toward emotional honesty, even if it does not fully resolve the deeper conflicts within Silk's identity.

The Human Stain profoundly resonates with the central tenets of Humanistic psychology that are the inherent drive for self-actualization, the crucial role of authenticity, the powerful influence of the social environment on personal growth, and the enduring human quest for a meaningful existence. Through the intricate and tragic life of Coleman Silk, Roth offers a compelling meditation on the nature of identity, the destructive consequences of societal judgment, and the persistent human desire to define oneself on one's own terms.

Subjectivity and personality are deeply interconnected, as personality can only be meaningfully understood through the individual's subjective engagement with experience. However, this relationship does not always produce constructive or progressive outcomes. While subjectivity enables creativity, free will, and self-expression, it can also generate conflict, distortion, and fragmentation. The characters discussed in this chapter demonstrate that personality is not a fixed or uniformly positive construct but a dynamic process shaped by internal tensions and external pressures. Thus, subjectivity must be understood as a double-edged force—capable of fostering both growth and disintegration depending on how individuals negotiate their experiences. While many of the characters exhibit traits such as creativity, independence, and self-awareness, it is important not to reduce their personalities to a narrative of continuous self-improvement. Their subjective journeys are marked by contradictions, setbacks, and unresolved tensions. For instance, Swede's idealism leads to denial, Ira's conviction turns into rigidity, and Silk's self-determination results in concealment. These complexities indicate that personality development is not always aligned with growth; rather, it often involves navigating conflicting impulses and limitations. This distinction prevents the analysis from simplifying their experiences into a linear model of progress. Although these characters often appear productive and expressive, their ability to articulate themselves does not guarantee clarity or resolution. In many instances, their expressions reveal confusion, contradiction, or emotional strain rather than coherence. This suggests that self-

expression, while central to humanistic thought, does not inherently lead to self-understanding. Instead, it must be accompanied by reflection and integration to contribute meaningfully to personality development.

Creativity, free will, and subjectivity undoubtedly play significant roles in shaping the personalities of these characters. However, their influence is not uniformly constructive. While these qualities enable individuals to explore possibilities and assert their identities, they can also lead to misjudgment, isolation, or internal conflict when not balanced by self-awareness and adaptability. From a humanistic perspective, this highlights the importance of not only possessing these traits but also integrating them in a manner that allows for psychological coherence. The absence of such integration often results in fragmentation rather than fulfilment. Nathan Zuckerman, Coleman Silk, Ira Ringold, and Seymour Levov are often presented as individuals with distinctive and, at times, exceptional personalities. However, their uniqueness does not necessarily translate into psychological stability or fulfilment. While they exhibit openness, ambition, and intellectual depth, they also reveal significant vulnerabilities, including self-doubt, rigidity, and emotional disconnection. Moreover, Roth's narratives implicitly acknowledge the presence of more ordinary individuals who do not occupy such extreme positions, thereby reinforcing the idea that personality exists along a spectrum. This broader perspective allows for a more inclusive understanding of human behaviour beyond exceptionalism.

Having such exceptional and considerable personality assist an individual in having divergent thinking, self-confidence and self-knowledge. These attributes become the by-products of personality that can help an individual to deal with different situations positively and become adaptive to the future challenges. The characters in the select novels are seen as having a unique personality as they are seen as the risk takers, willing to be different among others, and are impulsive and passionate to their ultimate needs and desires. They are seen as having higher levels of openness to their encounters and experiences that make them more innovative as compared to others. The personality of the characters is not only seen as spontaneous and unique but also they are being portrayed as independent beings who exhibit

higher energy levels, prefer and open to new experiences. Their outlook is seen as dynamic and original. They are well aware of their circumstances and problems and try their utmost to find solutions to tackle with them.

The characters display a range of attributes such as curiosity, sensitivity, and responsiveness to experience. However, these traits function differently depending on the individual's psychological framework. In some cases, curiosity leads to exploration and insight, while in others it results in restlessness or dissatisfaction. Similarly, sensitivity may foster empathy or intensify vulnerability. This variability underscores the humanistic view that personality traits are not inherently positive or negative; their significance lies in how they are experienced, interpreted, and integrated within the individual's subjective world.

Philip Roth's Zuckerman novels—*The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, *The Anatomy Lesson*, *American Pastoral*, *I Married a Communist*, and *The Human Stain*—consistently engage with psychological ideas that align closely with the principles of humanistic psychology. Although Roth doesn't explicitly refer to this psychological school, his detailed exploration of individual consciousness, personal transformation, and the tension between self and society mirrors core concepts such as subjectivity, self-actualization, authenticity, personal responsibility, and the search for meaning. The novel *The Ghost Writer* portrays the central character as a dedicated individual completely indulged in his artistic creations. His biological father did not support him in his journey of becoming a writer and in a dire need of someone's support he takes the help of his alma mater E.I. Lonoff that shows his subjective experience and aspirational identity. Young Nathan Zuckerman's idealization of literary figures like Lonoff and his imaginative projections about Amy highlight his inner world, shaped by longing and artistic ambition. This mirrors the humanistic emphasis on the subjective nature of personal development.

Zuckerman's journey to understand his role as a writer reflects the humanistic focus on the quest for self-discovery and on the search for an authentic self and personal growth. In the novel, *Zuckerman Unbound*; we can easily see the conflict between internal identity and public image- in the backlash Zuckerman's experiences

after publishing *Carnovsky* demonstrates the humanistic concern with how external evaluations can distort one's self-perception. Alienation and psychological disintegration can also be seen in the novel as public attention grows, Zuckerman struggles to maintain a coherent sense of self, revealing the difficulty of achieving congruence in a judgmental world. There is a relational misunderstanding and memory's subjectivity as the novel explores how memory and human connection are filtered through individual perspective, reinforcing the idea that experience is deeply personal and interpretive. In the novel *The Anatomy Lesson*, Zuckerman suffers from physical, mental and emotional strain. He is seen as entangled between the societal expectations and one's own inner thoughts and aspirations.

Zuckerman's chronic pain and psychological breakdown represents his inner experience of physical and existential pain that are portrayed with raw subjectivity, reflecting the humanistic belief that emotional suffering is central to understanding personality. His inability to write strikes at his identity, suggesting that personal fulfilment depends on the ability to pursue meaningful goals. There can be seen an imaginative coping mechanisms as Nathan's surreal inner fantasies become a way to endure existential despair, aligning with humanistic insights into the mind's creative power.

In the novel, *American Pastoral*, the protagonist is seen as a matured being whose personality aligns with the ideal and real self. Seymour "Swede" Levov's life appears to embody the American dream, yet the chaos unleashed by his daughter's radicalism exposes the fragility of that constructed identity thus results in the collapse of the ideal self. Zuckerman's narrative construction of the Swede's life highlights how individual stories are shaped by interpretation, and not an objective fact. The novel illustrates the social upheaval and the erosion of identity and how broader historical forces particularly the political and cultural upheaval of the 1960s can profoundly disrupt individual identity and obstruct self-actualization.

The novel; *I Married a Communist*, the protagonist Ira is seen as a hardworking man who rose himself from a menial worker to a radio pop star. His personality is seen as entangled between ideological identity and personal

suppression. Ira Ringold's passionate commitment to political ideology underscores how external systems of belief can both empower and confine personal expression. The novel delves into the personal consequences of betrayal and how subjective memory informs self-perception. Ira's eventual disillusionment and collapse reflect the humanistic emphasis on reclaiming personal agency in the face of social and ideological pressure.

In the novel; *The Human Stain*, the central character is seen as a strong headed personality who wanted to become an integral part of the mainstream society and for that he hides his original identity to cope up with the challenges and barriers before him like the disjunction between the inner truth and the social façade. Coleman Silk's decision to conceal his racial background and present himself differently reveals the psychological toll of living a life shaped by external judgment rather than internal congruence. Fluidity of identity and perception can be seen easily in this novel as Roth challenges the rigid definitions of race, morality, and identity, showing how these concepts are shaped by context and internal choice.

The novel, *The Human Stain* critiques a culture of moral purism that punishes deviation and complexity, counteracting the humanistic ideal of unconditional acceptance. Coleman's relationship with Faunia becomes a redemptive attempt to recover a sense of intimacy and purpose despite past concealments and societal rejection. Recurring themes across the select works of Philip Roth consistently portray the clashes between expectation and authenticity as his characters struggle with societal and familial pressures that limit their ability to live truthfully.

Identity is portrayed as constructed, shifting, and easily destabilized by personal conflict or societal intrusion that represents the vulnerability of selfhood. Individuals in Roth's fiction must reckon with the long term effects of decisions made in pursuit of freedom, ambition or security. There is an ultimate desire for understanding the intense human connection as despite the flaws and contradictions in their lives, Roth's characters are driven by the need to be known, accepted, and understood for who they really are.

Zuckerman is a sharp-minded and introspective individual whose intellectual prowess and deep self-reflection define his character. His sensitivity to life's ironies and moral ambiguities enhances both his literary genius and his inner turmoil. He has humanistic uniqueness as a character, Zuckerman exemplifies the humanistic ideal of the inwardly focused, evolving self. His tendency to question the external norms in favour of internal alignment echoes Carl Rogers' model of the "fully functioning person" someone who continually seeks self-congruence and personal authenticity. Nathan Zuckerman possesses awareness of needs in *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman searches for creative affirmation and a sense of belonging, wrestling with cultural expectations and personal artistic ambition. In *Zuckerman Unbound*, sudden fame challenges his self-perception, forcing him to examine the dissonance between who he is and how society views him. In *The Anatomy Lesson*, his inability to write due to physical pain triggers a deep crisis of identity, propelling him toward a critical reassessment of his life's direction and purpose. Coleman Silk in *The Human Stain* has distinguished traits as Silk is an eloquent, confident, and determined individual who shapes his life with precision and control. His mastery of reinvention and command of social codes make him a dominant force in academic life. Like Nathan Zuckerman he also possesses the humanistic uniqueness. Coleman embodies the humanistic focus on personal agency and existential freedom. By choosing to conceal his racial background, he asserts control over his identity- an act that, while fraught with ethical complexities, reflects the pursuit of self-definition and personal growth in a restrictive world. He is well aware of his needs- recognizing the societal constraints of his racial identity, Silk reconstructs his public persona to pursue autonomy, professional recognition, and self-actualization. His intimate bond with Faunia later in life reflects his yearning for emotional truth, connection, and healing beyond societal labels. Ira Ringold in *I Married a Communist* is commanding and forceful, driven by strong convictions and a charismatic presence. His unwavering dedication to political causes makes him both inspiring and ultimately tragic. Humanistic uniqueness is also possessed by him as though outwardly powerful, Ira struggles to reconcile his public ideology with his inner emotional needs. His identity becomes entangled with his beliefs, and in doing so, he drifts away from the personal authenticity championed by Humanistic psychology. Ira seeks purpose through

political activism, craving justice, recognition, and belonging which unveils that he is quite aware of his needs. However, his rigid ideological stance blinds him to the necessity of emotional balance and self-awareness, leading to personal disillusionment when betrayal and political backlash dismantle his sense of identity. Seymour “Swede” Levov in *American Pastoral* is outwardly perfect, gracious, accomplished, and admired. He is the embodiment of American success, holding firm to the ideals of order, decency, and moral clarity. Swede represents the tragic fallout of living solely through an idealized self-image. His refusal to acknowledge the emotional chaos in his daughter and himself places him at odds with Humanistic psychology, which encourages self-integration and acceptance of human complexity. Initially focused on maintaining societal and familial harmony, Swede later confronts a devastating rupture between appearance and reality which represents his awareness regarding needs. The collapse of his orderly life forces him to face suppressed needs for understanding, emotional truth and authentic selfhood that he had long ignored in favour of surface ideals.

Across these narratives, Philip Roth presents characters whose personalities are shaped by a complex interplay of aspiration, conflict, and limitation. While they often appear exceptional in their intellect, ambition, or conviction, their experiences reveal that such traits do not guarantee fulfilment or self-actualization. Instead, their lives illustrate the distinction between a subjective journey and self-progression. A subjective journey involves the continuous negotiation of identity, meaning, and experience, which may or may not lead to growth. In contrast, self-progression implies a more linear and constructive movement toward fulfilment. Roth’s characters frequently inhabit the former space, where endurance, contradiction, and fragmentation are as significant as development. This perspective aligns with a nuanced humanistic framework that recognizes both the potential and the limitations of human personality.

Motivation and personality are closely related, as the recognition and pursuit of individual needs play a crucial role in shaping behaviour. However, this relationship is neither straightforward nor uniformly progressive. While the characters attempt to identify and fulfil their desires, their journeys are often marked

by misinterpretation, conflict, and shifting priorities. From a humanistic perspective, the process of recognizing one's needs is as significant as fulfilling them, as it reflects an ongoing engagement with the self. Thus, personality development should be understood not as a final state of self-actualization but as a continuous and often imperfect process of negotiation between desire, reality, and self-awareness. In the next chapter, the characters who are having a unique personality are seen as identifying, recognizing and realizing their needs and desires. In order to become a self-actualized personality, it is very important for all the characters to recognize their needs within the pyramid. They can face fluctuations while realizing their needs but at the last they are seen as self-determined beings following their own chosen path that directs them to become self-actualized. As Maslow asserted in his work *Motivation and Personality* "The organisation of personality is to be understood in terms of problems facing it and what it is trying to do about them" (Maslow 305). When an individual starts recognising his needs and desires his personality enhances. Personality helps an individual to realize his needs and needs infact after recognition portrays an individual in a different and unique way. In this way personality and motivation are complimentary to each other.

Chapter IV

Hierarchy of Needs and Social Groups

In *Motivation and Personality*, Abraham Maslow observes that human desires are typically instrumental, functioning as means toward broader ends rather than ends in themselves (Maslow 21). A need can therefore be understood as a psychological condition that generates inner tension and directs behavior toward its fulfillment. This tension produces motivation, which initiates and sustains goal-directed action. Rather than being a single impulse, motivation operates as a dynamic process that organizes behavior, enhances efficiency, and guides individuals toward the realization of their broader aims.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs remains one of the most influential frameworks for understanding human motivation. It conceptualizes motivation as a process that not only initiates action but also regulates and sustains goal-oriented behavior. This process is shaped by an interplay of biological, emotional, cognitive, and social forces. Consequently, motivation can be seen as the underlying mechanism that explains why individuals act in particular ways, directing them toward improved well-being, competence, and fulfillment.

Motivation functions as a regulatory force that enables individuals to prioritize meaningful goals while strengthening confidence in their abilities. It is shaped not only by internal desires but also by the conditions in which individuals locate themselves. Needs emerge within specific social and cultural contexts, where family structures, institutional expectations, and collective norms influence what is perceived as desirable or necessary. Thus, motivation is not purely an internal state; it is continuously negotiated between personal aspirations and external social environments that validate or constrain those aspirations.

The humanistic theory of motivation, as developed by Maslow, shifts attention toward the growth and development of healthy individuals rather than pathological cases. He distinguishes between deficiency-motivated individuals, who remain

dependent on external validation, and growth-motivated individuals, who demonstrate greater autonomy (Maslow 41). While motivation originates within the individual, its expression is shaped through interaction with the external world. Humanistic psychology emphasizes free will, subjective experience, and the capacity for self-directed growth, while also recognizing that social approval and interpersonal relationships significantly influence the individual's motivational trajectory.

Humanistic psychologists take a gander at human conduct not through the eyes of the spectator but through the eyes of an individual who behaves. They accept that an individual's conduct is related to his inward sentiments and his self-image. They accept that people are not exclusively the result of their environment as behaviorists believed. Humanistic psychologists concentrate on the human implications, and understandings associated with the growth patterns and development. They stress on the attributes that are shared by all the people like anguish, love, care, and self-esteem.

Humanistic psychologists concentrate on how individuals are impacted because of their self-discernments and their meanings and understandings attached to their experiences and encounters. They are not bothered about any instinctual drives, reactions to external stimuli, or experiences of the past. Rather they think about cognizant decisions, reactions to inward necessities, and current conditions to be significant in shaping human way of behaving. Humanistic theory relies on the idea that everybody has a capability to make a contribution to the society and be a decent and amiable individual if their desires and wants are satisfied. Maslow in his work *Motivation and Personality* portrays that "Ability to center upon the world rather than to be self-conscious, egocentric and gratification-oriented becomes the more difficult the more need deficits the person has. The more growth motivated the person is the more problem-centered can he be, and the more he can leave self-consciousness behind him he deals with the objective world" (Maslow 42).

Abraham Maslow believed that satisfying the necessities- coherently and correctly aligned would permit people to become self-actualized personalities. Maslow fostered his theory not by concentrating on deranged clients, but by

concentrating on sound, useful, imaginative persons' lives and vocations. He presumed that there were normal attributes which were shared by effective people-including self-acknowledgement, transparency and regard for others. In addition to Maslow's hierarchical needs, Carl Rogers felt that in order to develop fully an individual needs an environment that would provide acknowledgement and compassion and without such a healthy environment; healthy connections and characters would not be able to thrive.

Abraham Maslow has been viewed as the father of Humanistic psychology whose theory of Hierarchy of needs depends on the idea that experience is the essential peculiarity in the investigation of human learning and conduct. He puts accentuation on decision, inventiveness, values, self-acknowledgement, and believed that subjectivity, and understanding are more important than objectivity. For Maslow, respect and worth are extremely important for the growth and development of human potential. Maslow discarded Psychoanalytical and Behaviorist theories as they are relied on reductionist approaches. Maslow concentrated on the healthy human beings and not on mentally ill patients as Freud did.

Maslow organizes human motivation into a hierarchical structure, beginning with physiological survival needs and progressing toward higher psychological aspirations such as belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. While this model appears linear, the relationship between needs and behavior is deeply influenced by social positioning. Access to resources, cultural expectations, and group affiliations often determine whether individuals can satisfy lower-level needs and advance toward higher ones. Thus, the hierarchy must be understood not merely as a psychological progression but as one embedded within broader social realities.

The very first basic need is the physiological needs that consist of oxygen, water, food. It is an individual's first need for satisfaction. When this first basic need is fulfilled, it will no longer dominates an individual's thoughts, and behaviors, and an individual start progressing towards the second basic need which is safety needs. An individual needs to be free from all sorts of threats whether it would be physical or emotional. Safety needs might be satisfied by residing in a safe and secure place having financial reserves, medical insurance, and job security etc.

Once basic needs are relatively secured, higher-order needs such as belongingness become central. This stage involves the desire for emotional connection, acceptance, and relational stability. However, these needs are fulfilled within structured social systems—family units, peer groups, and cultural communities—that shape both inclusion and exclusion. The individual's attempt to overcome isolation is therefore mediated by these social formations, which determine the availability, quality, and stability of interpersonal bonds.

"The needs for safety, belongingness, love relations and for respect can be satisfied only by other people, i.e., only from outside the person. This means considerable dependence on the environment. A person in this dependent position cannot really be said to be governing himself, or in control of his own fate. He must be beholden to the sources of supply of needed gratifications. Their wishes, their whims, their rules and laws govern him and must be appeased lest he jeopardize his sources of supply. He must be, to an extent "other-directed", and must be sensitive to other people's approval, affection, and good will" (Maslow 39).

When first three needs are being met by an individual, the second need in the higher order motivates an individual by becoming dominant. It involves need for self-esteem and the esteem that an individual receives from his family, friends, and his other social groups. Esteem needs can be internal or external. Accomplishments, and self-respect are internal esteem needs whereas recognition in the society, an individual's social status in the society are categorized under external needs. In this higher-level need, an individual aspires to attain reputation, recognition, attention, accomplishments, and self-respect. An individual feels confident enough after achieving these attributes. He himself feels valuable and an essential integral part of this complicated world. A person feels inferior, insecure, helpless, weak, and worthless if this stage is not fulfilled completely. When all the foregoing needs are completely fulfilled, the need for self-actualization takes place and becomes dominant.

"Motivational progression towards self-actualization in which the basic needs are completely gratified, one by one, before the next higher one emerges into

consciousness. Growth is seen then not only as progressive gratification of basic needs to the point where they "disappear", but also in the form of specific growth motivations over and above these basic needs, e.g., talents, capacities, creative tendencies, constitutional potentialities" (Maslow 32).

In the higher-level needs people tend to accept themselves for who they actually are and admit their weaknesses and failures too and try really hard to improve them. This last necessity is also called as the fulfillment needs which includes the full realization of one's potential and capabilities. In this stage an individual becomes fully active and having attained a healthy personality. Maslow propounded that very few individuals are able to reach this utmost higher level. "If we define growth as the various processes which bring the person toward ultimate self-actualization, then this conforms better with the observed fact that it is going on all the time in the life history" (Maslow 32).

Carl Rogers also agreed with the hierarchical model propounded by Abraham Maslow but he added that if an individual needs to grow and develop, he needs an environment that will provide him with acceptance (an individual should be treated with unconditional positive regard), genuineness (an individual should be open to his experiences and adapt himself as it is), and empathy (an individual's point of view and his thoughts need to be listened, accepted and to be understood). Without these attributes in an environment, an individual will not be able to follow his growth pattern and will not be able to develop as much as he can. Rogers in his work, *Client-centered Therapy: Its Current Practice and Implications* believed that each and every individual can achieve his ultimate goals in life when, or rather they achieved, self-actualization takes place "The organism has one basic tendency and striving- to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organisms" (Rogers 487).

Carl Rogers believed that human beings have one basic strive that is to reach the maximum potential and for that their potential must be unique and they are meant to grow and develop. He believed that the innate nature of human beings is good and creative too. This innate nature becomes distinctive when external constraints hit the healthy growth patterns of an individual. Individuals must be in a state of coherence

or congruence if they need to reach the stage of self-actualization. Congruity occurs only when there is a similarity or coherence between the ideal and real self. Self-actualization is not an end of life's journey but in fact a continuous process that an individual aspires to achieve throughout his life.

There are five different characteristics being identified by Rogers for a fully functioning being in his work *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. The very first characteristic is that a fully functioning being should be open and flexible to his experience whether they are positive or negative, he must accept them all. Negative feelings, outcomes, and experiences can't be denied but in fact an individual needs to work hard to improve them.

"Experience is, for me, the biggest authority. The touchstone of validity is my own experience. No other person's ideas, and none of my ideas, are as authoritative as my experience. It is to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me. Neither the Bible nor the prophets- neither Freud nor research- neither the revelations of God nor man- can take precedence over my own direct experience. My experience is not authoritative because it is infallible. It is the basis of authority because it can always be checked in the new primary ways" (Rogers 23-24).

The second trait given by Rogers is that a fully functioning being need to live and appreciate his present fully and must discard prejudging and preconceptions. He must enjoy the present scenario of his life rather than looking back to his past experience or thinking too much of future events. The third attribute is that a fully functioning being must trust his feelings. He should trust his own decisions. He must be fully aware and trust his own power of free-will. The choices made by an individual must be rational and he should not rely on the decisions made by others. "I have come to recognize that being trustworthy does not demand that I be rigidly consistent but that I be dependably real" (Rogers 50).

The fourth characteristic given by Rogers is that a fully functioning being must be creative. It is not mandatory to be in a safe and secure environment all the time. An individual need to cope up with new events and challenges in his life. He must be

able to adjust with the positive as well as with the negative experience of life. "There is a desperate social need for the creative behavior of creative individuals. It is this which justifies the setting forth of a tentative theory of creativity- the nature of the creative act, the conditions under which it occurs, and the manner in which it may constructively be fostered" (Rogers 347). The final attribute is that a fully functioning being must be happy and contented with his own life. He should always be positive in accepting accomplishments and failures of his life.

Rogers believed that a fully functioning being is fully adaptive and well-adjusted; who always makes an equilibrium in his life. Rogers viewed an individual as having two basic needs- positive regard from others and self-worth. Rogers believed that an individual who is confident enough and positive has considered his own self as worthy and vital. Such a person easily and rationally accepts his strengths and weaknesses, and is very open to his own experiences. An individual who is not a complete fully functioning being can't accept the painful and deadly events of his life. He will always be guided by other people as he himself is unable to accept his life as it is.

Rogers also believed that a person realizes his needs, wants only if he'll receive the unconditional love from the people. Carl Rogers in the very first chapter entitled *This is Me* in the book *On Becoming a Person* asserts that "As individual and as a team, we are aware of our own power and choose to use it by becoming involved in the process each in our own way. We participate not by attempting to control the outcome but by actively responding as whole beings with thoughts, feelings, hunches, and values as each moment unfolds. We are very much present as persons" (Rogers 326). To realize what an individual desires for and to be motivated always, he needs to be valued, respected, and recognized well with utmost love, care and affection. Such an individual is free to try out new things in life, experiences every moment of his life and finally becomes able to realize his maximum potential. On the other hand, if an individual is created with conditional positive regard, will constantly seeks approval from others, relies on someone else's decision and will not trust his own gut reactions and instincts. "The welfare of the total organism, the state or nation, is paramount. Individual autonomy is de-emphasized, and each person is

helped to become conscious of being but one cell in a great organic structure" (Rogers 183).

Philip Roth's fictional universe presents characters who negotiate their identities within complex social and cultural frameworks. Their defiance is not merely personal but emerges in response to the expectations and constraints imposed by their communities. As they confront failure, rejection, and moral ambiguity, their struggles reveal how self-actualization is shaped by both internal desires and external pressures. These tensions, rather than hindering growth, often function as catalysts that compel the characters to reassess their goals and strengthen their sense of agency.

The characters' ultimate goals frequently emerge from unmet needs, which act as persistent sources of psychological tension. These unfulfilled desires do not operate in isolation; rather, they are shaped by the expectations and limitations imposed by their social environments. As a result, motivation becomes both an internal impulse and a socially conditioned response. The pursuit of these goals reflects an ongoing negotiation between personal aspiration and external constraint, where individual choices are influenced by both conscious intentions and underlying psychological drives.

This chapter examines how characters in the select novels construct their identities through self-perception and the meanings they attach to lived experience. Their decisions are shaped not only by internal reflection but also by the conditions in which they exist. Each character's movement toward self-actualization involves negotiating unmet needs that vary across time and circumstance. As one need is addressed, new aspirations emerge, creating a continuous process of adaptation in which personal growth is closely tied to changing psychological and social realities.

Maslow argues that the failure of needs at different hierarchical levels may result in psychological disturbances such as anxiety or instability. Conversely, the systematic fulfillment of both basic and higher-order needs enables individuals to move toward self-actualization. Human behavior, therefore, is not merely reactive but is deeply influenced by internal emotional states and the individual's evolving self-concept.

The central figures—Nathan Zuckerman, Seymour Levov, Ira Ringold, and Coleman Silk—can be read as subjects undergoing complex processes of self-formation. Their lives are marked by moments of crisis and transformation that reveal the instability of identity. Rather than progressing linearly, their journeys involve recurring tensions between aspiration and limitation. These experiences collectively shape their movement toward growth, even when such progress is uneven or interrupted.

Nathan Zuckerman, the central figure in *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson*, narrates his own experiences as an evolving consciousness shaped by influential relationships and environments. His development reflects a gradual expansion of emotional and intellectual awareness. This chapter approaches his character through a humanistic framework, emphasizing the interplay between subjective experience and the conditions that facilitate growth.

Zuckerman's trajectory is defined by a series of personal and ideological conflicts that reshape his sense of self. Rather than presenting a stable identity, the narrative reveals a subject in transition, responding to changing needs and expectations. His movement toward self-actualization is not immediate but emerges through sustained effort, self-reflection, and the desire to assert autonomy despite resistance from familial and cultural forces.

The concept of the “self” has been explored across both psychology and philosophy as a complex and evolving construct. It cannot be reduced to a fixed definition, as each individual experiences it differently. Human existence is deeply intertwined with this sense of self, which is continually shaped by internal conflicts, social relationships, and cultural expectations. As a social being, an individual is constantly negotiating between personal desires and external pressures, often navigating uncertainty, emotional tension, and competing identities.

As Roth's alter ego, Nathan Zuckerman functions as a literary medium through which questions of identity, authorship, and social belonging are explored. His character is dynamic, reflecting an ongoing process of maturation shaped by both internal aspirations and external influences. His development illustrates how

individual identity is formed through continuous interaction with surrounding environments, including familial expectations and broader cultural frameworks.

In *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman's artistic awakening is situated within a network of social and cultural tensions, particularly those related to Jewish identity and literary responsibility. His conflict with his family over the representation of Jewish life highlights the pressure exerted by communal expectations on individual creativity. The visit to E.I. Lonoff introduces an alternative intellectual environment, one that values artistic discipline over social conformity. Within this space, figures like Lonoff and Amy Bellette embody competing models of identity—detachment, reinvention, and resistance—thereby shaping Zuckerman's evolving understanding of himself as both an individual and a writer.

The Ghost Writer is split into four parts as an instance Zuckerman's observation on relationships of Lonoff's family. Through the first point of view, Nathan Zuckerman is both an observer and the narrator of the story. In the very first chapter *Maestro*; Zuckerman gets to discern the actual maestro Lonoff and realizes the contradictions between art and life. Within the second chapter *Nathan Dedalus*; Zuckerman strayed away from his home for writing a book about the negative image of the Jewish people which is actually unacceptable to his father, "Everything undeniably true struck me as transparently false as soon as I wrote it down, and the greater the effort to be sincere, the worse it went" (Roth 8).

The refusal of biological father let Zuckerman long to urge the support of his spiritual father Lonoff. Within the third chapter, *Femme Fatale*; the author changes the narrative perspective to tell the story of Amy by using the third person narrative. Amy confided to Lonoff a year ago that she was actually Anne Frank who had left the classical writing. Anne's diary but not devastated in Holocaust instead she kept exiling after she was found in an attic. Within the last chapter *Married to Tolstoy*; Hope, Lonoff's wife lost her control and forced her husband to stop spending his life of morality and hoped Lonoff to live along with his true love Amy to line this triangle relationship free. But Lonoff insisted on such an abnormal but deviant life and ultimately Hope ran from Lonoff's home in indignation. Zuckerman cannot win his father's support as long as he implement his choice of creation, like Amy Bellette

who cannot reunite along with her father, they both suffered from physically and spiritually exile and searching out for control from Lonoff.

Roth's fiction reflects Jamesian standards by including another component of mission for a significant Jewish personality. The subject of apparition is vital in the novel and the content brings up issues about it; regardless of whether Roth is a professional writer for Nathan, whether Amy is truly Anne Frank, whether Nathan is the professional writer of Amy's story, whether Roth is ridiculing Nathan's dreams about Anne Frank. Roth is surely the authentic professional writer, speaking with the acknowledged voice, behind the accepted voice of the writer. Roth ridicules Nathan's dreams about Anne Frank and Nathan penances his own thoughts before his own hypochondria. "Those were the facts; now to grasp them "Little Beauty" the nurses called her- a silent, dark, emaciated girl- and so, one morning, ready to talk, she told them that the surname was Bellette" (Roth 126).

Roth's Jamesian supplication to his perusers is to be more inventive as they continued looking for the real world. Anne Frank is a Holocaust phantom wherein American Jewish perusers are intrigued and Roth has faced an extraordinary challenge in consolidating the picture of Anne Frank. The Holocaust figure of Anne Frank picked up compassion and charged the novel inwardly. Roth presents the image of Holocaust character as an aesthetic instrument, an image of injury, cudgels the craftsman to control his creative mind for a typical decent. Thus, Roth gives us one of the major Jewish forms of innovation, the centrality of craftsmanship. In this play, Zuckerman made a decent clarification for Anne's endurance from the Holocaust and her changing name for Amy Bellette that she needs to be so far away from what she needs to overlook.

Amy in the book is a resilient lady who needs to be an extraordinary craftsman and put forth incredible attempts for the objective, plus she won't relinquish her aesthetic interest when she is confronting difficulties, disparages or family forces; Amy's picture is like Zuckerman who is seeking after Jewish writing under the weight and protest from his family. Amy Bellette, the champion of the continuation of Anne's Diary, breaks the old picture of mild Anne Frank, now defiant and yearning, and her life venture is much the same as Nathan Zuckerman. She

conceals her name and personality just to achieve her vengeance, she includes in her educator Lonoff's family and endeavours to compensate for her absence of affection. Amy Bellette banished herself from her origin, and she conceals her personality due to her desire of keeping the imaginative impact of the demonstration that describes old Anne Frank's story, in which the character Anne's passing let the others feel blame for the mistreatment of Jewish people group. To stay discreet, Amy can't re-join with her dad. Equivalent to Amy Bellette, Zuckerman cannot win his dad's help as long as he demand his decision of creation, the two of them experienced truly and profoundly outcast and searching for comfort from Lonoff. As Amy Bellette mirrors Zuckerman, the activity of undercutting the conventional picture of Anne in the dream may likewise mirror Zuckerman's longing to break the customary shackles. Zuckerman's cognizance in the dream uncovered the loss of confidence in his continuation and over and over tested the legitimacy of this anecdotal deception. At the point when Amy reported to Lonoff that she was Anne, Zuckerman called attention to the less persuading part regarding Amy's story. The first is the means by which did Amy endure Holocaust alone. Later Zuckerman clarified that the one who has seen Anne's pass on of typhoid may have mistaken her for her sister. In *The Ghost Writer*, Nathan Zuckerman is both the story teller and the onlooker. In this way, Zuckerman present his creative mind and information to frame the anecdotal world intentionally.

By imagining the discussion among Lonoff and Amy, Zuckerman calls attention to the significance of inventiveness in work manifestations. In addition, Zuckerman venture his interest on Amy in the dream to let the envisioned one defy conventional norms. The radical new Amy's stubbornness likewise shows Roth's dismissal of bargain. In the portrayal, Zuckerman additionally brings up the less persuading part regarding his dream intentionally, and this adds more flavour to the associations of virtual and genuine world. Among the ages of Jewish outsiders, young Jewish journalists are confronting considerably harder situation. Caught by conventional Jewish morals and on the opposite propelled by present day American training, the youthful Jewish journalists locate their abstract manifestations that are unsatisfactory to the Jewish media. The contention pictures of Amy Bellette and

Anne Frank in the third part additionally mirror the encounter among life and craftsmanship. Anne Frank was the ideal virtuous holy gentle lady, her picture had a magnificent creative impact, innumerable individuals in the auditorium shed tears for her story, while Amy Bellette is only a delicate young lady who is experiencing the injury of holocaust and in this way shows the clouded side of her character. Considering the picture of Amy who endure the war yet lost the association of her family, Amy's meandering and battling match the truth more.

The transformation of old Anne and new Amy's picture show Roth's contemplations of craftsmanship and life. The radical new Amy's tenacity likewise shows Roth's dismissal to settle. Amy Bellette is only a delicate young lady who is experiencing the injury of Holocaust and in this manner shows the hard side of her character. New Amy deserted her typical life to achieve her specialty and she succeed. Zuckerman imparted diverse insight towards artistic creation with his family. At the point when Zuckerman decides to carry on his concept of aesthetic creation, his life design is going to be disturbed. Zuckerman makes a first step in quite a while composing profession and get the chance to meet his alma master Lonoff on the cost of his original life, and this is only his preferred start. Amy is really carrying on with an unsuitable life after her decision and this is might be the equivalent to Zuckerman. Zuckerman concedes the expense of losing his family's help to improve composing manifestations, yet he is additionally pulled in by Amy's made up character Anne and thinks about that wedding the holy person Anne can eradicate his blame of composing absurd text in his family's eyes. In other words, life in the end is indivisible in any event, when it is negate to workmanship decisions.

The novel traces Nathan's progression from an ordinary being to an artist. The bond he shared with different people, who form an important part of his life will be explored and explained critically. The early part of the novel covers the important time period of Nathan when he becomes an artist. The novel can be divided into three different parts. The first part deals with Nathan's relationship with his father. The second part deals with his fantasies regarding Amy and the third part revolved around his artistic creation. The relationship between Nathan and his father was so intense that it formed the basis of his personality.

Zuckerman's strained relationship with his father reflects a deeper generational and cultural conflict. His father's disapproval is rooted not only in personal disagreement but also in concerns about communal representation and moral responsibility. This rejection intensifies Zuckerman's need for validation, prompting him to seek affirmation from alternative authority figures such as Lonoff. His actions are therefore shaped by a dual motivation: the desire for personal expression and the need to reconcile his identity within the expectations of his cultural community.

Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers the pioneers of humanistic psychology greatly emphasized on the importance of a fully functioning being. Maslow and Rogers were of the view that the ultimate goal of everyone's journey of life is to become the best version of themselves and achieve a state in life which is termed as self-actualization which is the highest state an individual can reach. This can be material, emotional, social, physical or spiritual depending upon the path that a person is following in his life. The experiences and life pattern of every individual are different but the mechanism to reach that potential remains the same, which is to attain self-actualization.

Maslow and Rogers in their theories critically explained the concept of self-actualization and different ways to attain it. In the theory of Hierarchy of Needs propounded by Abraham Maslow, he has stated that there are different levels and needs in a hierarchal pattern that need to be attained before reaching the ultimate potential. These levels in the hierarchal structure represents the state of fulfilment in an individual leading him to attain higher goals in life to become psychologically and physically a healthy being. Carl Rogers laid emphasis on the environment and situations that influence a person to become a fully functioning being. For Rogers, to achieve the optimal state an individual need to be a fully functioning being. To reach that optimal state, environment plays a vital role and it should be trustworthy and completely acceptable. If the subjects are not trustworthy or acceptable for an individual in an environment, there arises an incongruence and that incongruity restricts an individual's potential to attain self-actualization. There are ample of ways in which the potential to attain self-actualization can be hindered but the process to

reach can never be stopped. Humanistic psychologists viewed that the urge to reach self-actualization cannot be stopped and it cannot die. Infact all the people we encounter, are following the same path of growth to attain self-actualization. The ultimate path remains the same, only the path of learning and growth is different for every individual.

The character Nathan Zuckerman is an embodiment of what humanists are trying to manifest that every person's innate potential is to grow. An inclination towards learning, growth, mental freedom, and development have always been seen in Nathan's life. There are a lot many instances and everything that is associated with Nathan be it be the environment, family, or mentor influenced him by developing personality traits and contributing to become an artist.

The character of Nathan Zuckerman faces a lot many incidents that changes his personal traits. His personality continues to grow and is not stable throughout the book. Everything that is associated with Nathan Zuckerman influenced his personality to become a self-actualized being. Philip Roth portrayed his alter-ego that left readers in amazement. The novel *The Ghost Writer* elucidates the story of an artist whose life was in raw form but he chooses to walk towards self-actualization. Several ups and downs are being faced by Nathan in his life, but his personality finally flourishes at the end.

Zuckerman's association with Lonoff can be interpreted through Maslow's framework as a transition from basic to higher-order needs. While his material conditions are relatively stable, it is within Lonoff's intellectual environment that his psychological needs—particularly belongingness and esteem—begin to be fulfilled. This environment provides not only emotional support but also cultural legitimacy, enabling Zuckerman to develop confidence in his artistic identity.

The fulfilment of safety needs in Zuckerman's case is less about physical security and more about psychological assurance. Lonoff's mentorship offers a space free from judgment, in contrast to the tension present within his family. This shift in environment allows Zuckerman to experience stability and reinforces his movement toward higher levels of self-development.

At a very young age, Nathan's mind was engraved with confidence, physical, and mental freedom, and with safety. Nathan achieved mental freedom from the feeling when he started spending time and discussing literary aspects with his mentor Lonoff. He was surrounded with such an environment that gave him satisfaction, provides him an opportunity to grow and fulfil his curiosity. The influence of Amy and Lonoff over Nathan made him confident which is clearly noticeable.

Zuckerman's need for belonging is complicated by his estrangement from his father and his simultaneous attachment to alternative figures such as Lonoff and Amy. These relationships function as substitute social structures that provide emotional validation and intellectual companionship. His fascination with Amy, as well as his imaginative reconstruction of her identity, reflects both a personal longing for connection and a broader engagement with cultural memory, particularly the legacy of the Holocaust.

It can be evidently seen in Nathan's growth how his basic needs have been satisfied so that he could seek for higher level needs by learning as much as he could from his mentor and environment. It can be clearly understood why Nathan developed into a secure being by walking over the path of experience, development, growth, and fulfilling higher order needs that will lead him towards self-actualization. One can easily locate and find his basic physiological needs, safety and security needs, and need for love and belongingness completely fulfilled that established self-esteem in him.

Rogers' theory also supports the importance of unconditional love and positive regard for the development of a fully functioning being. Nathan and his artistic work was accepted by Amy Bellette and Lonoff. Even Lonoff was highly influential in making Nathan walk in the direction to become a fully functioning being. Only because of unconditional regard that Lonoff assisted to Nathan, he felt safe and secure. Environment that is positive allows an individual to grow and develop. All of Nathan's doubts were being clarified by Lonoff. The bond between Nathan and Lonoff depicts that the image of 'self' and 'ideal self' was aligned. An individual becomes a fully functioning being only when self is aligned with the ideal

self. Nathan was having the same experience when he was with his mentor. He developed into a mentally healthy being because of the acceptance that had been shown towards him by his mentor in spite of the dejection that he faced from his family.

Rogers has always paid attention towards the environment that influences an individual and that's quite evident in case of Nathan. A sense of safety and security stays there in Nathan for a very long time that helps him to become a fully functioning being. The readers are given a chance to peep into the relationship between Nathan and Lonoff in the novel *The Ghost Writer*. Such a relationship had a great influence on Nathan's life that shaped his personality to be a confident, secure, and a mentally fit being.

The novel *The Ghost Writer* also foregrounds the complex relationship between Zuckerman and his father, where affection coexists with ideological conflict. While his father's disapproval challenges his sense of self, it simultaneously contributes to the development of his esteem by forcing him to assert his independence. In this context, both acceptance and rejection play formative roles. The contrasting influences of familial constraint and mentor-based encouragement collectively shape Zuckerman's progression toward a more integrated and self-aware identity.

Nathan encounters a profound psychological rupture when faced with paternal rejection and, later, the death of his father. These experiences destabilize his earlier movement toward self-actualization and redirect his attention to more immediate emotional needs. Rather than progressing linearly within Maslow's hierarchy, his trajectory illustrates regression, as concerns for belongingness and emotional security become dominant. His withdrawal from social interaction and increasing isolation reflect not only personal distress but also the inability of familial and cultural structures to provide the affirmation he seeks. In this phase, alternative spaces—such as transient relationships and self-imposed solitude—temporarily substitute for stable emotional support.

Despite familial disapproval, Nathan's decision to continue writing marks a crucial assertion of autonomy. His resistance to his father's expectations reflects a conflict between individual expression and communal norms. This defiance strengthens his sense of self, allowing him to regain confidence and develop a more self-directed identity grounded in personal conviction rather than external approval.

Nathan's relationship with Lonoff and his emotional investment in Amy contribute significantly to his psychological development. These interactions enable him to engage more deeply with his internal experiences, aligning with Rogers' concept of a fully functioning individual. Through these relationships, Nathan begins to interpret his experiences with greater clarity, demonstrating an increased capacity for self-awareness and emotional regulation.

In *The Ghost Writer*, Nathan's intellectual curiosity drives him toward Lonoff, where he seeks both artistic guidance and personal validation. His ability to articulate complex emotions—ranging from admiration to frustration—indicates a developing psychological maturity. Such clarity of thought emerges from a relatively stable self-image, suggesting that his early experiences contribute to the formation of a resilient and reflective personality.

Lonoff's household functions as a crucial developmental environment, offering intellectual stimulation, emotional security, and creative freedom. In contrast, Nathan's familial space is marked by judgment and ideological rigidity, particularly regarding cultural representation. This contrast highlights how different social environments shape his psychological needs. His attraction to Amy further reflects his search for belonging, while his eventual disillusionment underscores the instability of these substitute emotional structures.

Nathan's conflict with his father represents a deeper struggle for emotional validation. The lack of paternal support intensifies his sense of isolation, compelling him to seek affirmation beyond the family. This shift illustrates Rogers' notion that in the absence of unconditional positive regard, individuals turn to alternative sources to sustain their sense of self. Nathan's development underscores the importance of a supportive environment in fostering psychological growth. The encouragement he

receives from Lonoff and Amy enables him to cultivate traits such as resilience, sensitivity, and creative confidence—qualities associated with a mentally healthy individual.

In moments of vulnerability, Nathan's need for emotional connection becomes more pronounced. His reliance on Lonoff highlights the role of mentorship in stabilizing his sense of self. At this stage, the desire for recognition and respect gradually replaces his earlier focus on artistic growth, indicating a shift toward esteem-based needs.

In *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan's literary success introduces a new set of challenges shaped by public scrutiny and cultural expectations. His achievement of social recognition does not lead to stability; instead, it generates tension between his private identity and public persona. His success becomes a site of conflict, exposing the pressures exerted by both the literary marketplace and his cultural community.

Nathan's development in *The Ghost Writer* can be interpreted through Maslow's framework as an incomplete but significant movement toward self-actualization. While his basic needs are largely satisfied, his emotional and social needs remain unstable due to familial conflict and cultural tension. His imaginative engagement with Amy and his mentorship under Lonoff serve as catalysts for introspection, marking the early stages of a more authentic but conflicted identity.

Zuckerman Unbound starts with a quotation by Lonoff, "Let Nathan see what it is to be lifted from obscurity. Let him not come hammering at our door to tell us that he wasn't warned" (Roth 1). His life is in complete disorder that tend him to realize the drawbacks of his art. Nathan is now once again struggling with his own art. He has published four different novels and becomes a celebrity but is now struggling so hard to deal with it and with his unsuccessful marriages. Two overlapping stories are there in *Zuckerman Unbound* where he is entangled between third and fourth stage in the Hierarchy of needs. He gained esteem when his book *Carnovsky* became the best seller and he longed for his loved ones when he lost his father Victor Zuckerman in Florida.

It becomes so difficult for Nathan to deal with his celebrity lifestyle. At the same time he receives acclaim as well as criticism from the people around him: “He’s the guy who wrote *Carnovsky*. Didn’t you read about it in the papers? He just made a million bucks and he’s taking a bus” (Roth 185). When he is travelling in a bus, he faces a stranger who remarks in the novel *Zuckerman Unbound* as

“You see, not everybody was delighted by this book that was making Zuckerman a fortune. Plenty of people had already written to him off. “For depicting Jews in a peep – show atmosphere of total perversion, for depicting Jews in acts of adultery, exhibitionism, masturbation, sodomy, fetishism, and whore mongery”, somebody with letterhead stationery as impressive as the President’s had even suggested that he ought to be shot” (Roth 187).

Nathan’s transition into celebrity exposes him to conflicting responses from society, ranging from admiration to hostility. The criticism he receives is not merely personal but reflects broader anxieties within the Jewish community regarding representation and identity. His public image becomes a contested space where cultural expectations and artistic freedom collide.

At this stage, Nathan’s position within the hierarchy of needs is marked by tension between external recognition and internal insecurity. While he achieves public acclaim, the simultaneous criticism undermines his psychological stability. This duality illustrates the fragile nature of esteem, where validation from society does not necessarily translate into self-assurance.

Fluctuations are being faced by Nathan as letters, mails from freaks, fans, and creeps hit him so hard. His quick stardom is being judged and tested by people around him. He receives praise from a stranger Pepler. *You’re Nathan Zuckerman*, the second chapter, where Nathan is seen as so concerned about his mother. He receives a phone call from a stranger who threatens to kidnap his mother. He also recalls how her mother is unhappy because he has left his third wife Laura. Nathan feels sorry for his mother and is now in a feeling of guilt that his erotic fiction could be a reason for the aversion. Nathan again recedes to the third stage where concern can be seen in him for his parents. Although he faced dejection and disappointment

from his father, but he still had respect, love, and care for his father who tried his best to provide his son the most appropriate environment. His father was not against his literary zeal but Nathan disappointed his father by writing a literary work that was against his tradition and family.

In the final chapter, *Look Homeward Angel* presents Henry's reaction to *Carnovsky*. Nathan was being accused by his brother and openly confronts that Carnovsky's author is the ultimate reason for their father's death. He accused Nathan of betraying his own father and community. Nathan feels guilty when his father utters his last word Bastard in *Zuckerman Unbound*, "You are a Bastard. A heartless conscienceless bastard. What does loyalty mean to you? What does responsibility mean to you? What does self- denial mean, restraint- anything at all? To you everything is disposable!" (Roth 397). He tries to explain the theories of an ever-expanding universe to his father Victor, but all goes in vain. Henry becomes a good Jewish son whereas Zuckerman a bad one. Henry accuses Nathan for not realizing the aftermath of his writing.

Nathan sees his brother as a typical stereotype of a great Jewish boy. Such dejection has a great impact on Nathan, he suffers a lot. Later on he visits his childhood house and finds out that everything has changed now. The old Jewish places have now turned into dark ghettos, "The Jews had all vanished. So had almost everyone while including the Catholic orphans" (Roth 403). The place where he has spent his early childhood days has also lost its originality and dignity, "A chain fence surrounded a three- storey house and the little garden of weeds out front" (Roth 404). He feels completely alienated on seeing such transformation and his father's demise has a direct impact on Nathan's spirit: "Without a father and a mother and a homeland, he was no longer a novelist. No longer a son, no longer a writer. Everything that galvanized him had been extinguished, leaving nothing unmistakably his and nobody else's to claim, exploit, enlarge and reconstruct" (Roth 446).

Following personal loss and social alienation, Nathan's need for belonging becomes central once again. His sense of isolation reflects the breakdown of key relational structures—family, community, and cultural identity. Despite achieving

professional success, he remains emotionally unfulfilled, revealing that self-actualization cannot be sustained without stable interpersonal connections. His journey thus underscores the fluctuating nature of human needs, shaped continuously by both internal desires and external circumstances. Nathan's journey is full of growth patterns and development. He is a fully functioning being who aspires to become what he actually wants to. His path is a bit difficult but he faced it with utmost confidence and accepts his negative as well as positive experiences and worked really hard to improve them.

Nathan is seen as a creative being. Safe and secure environment was not there all the time for Nathan but he cope up with all the challenges and new events. He managed well to adjust with all the positive as well as the negative aspects of life. Nathan accepts all his accomplishments and failures but he strives all the time for that care, affection, and love that a son receives from his father. Nathan is seen as a subjective being who realizes his needs from the very basic to the higher level. He is seen as a being sometimes moving upwards in the pyramid and sometimes is seen as receding downwards within the pyramid. In *The Ghost Writer*- physiological, and safety needs become important whereas in *Zuckerman Unbound* - love and belongingness needs play a major role in Nathan's life. He longed for love, care, and warmth that a ward usually receives from his parents.

Nathan's trajectory across *The Ghost Writer* and *Zuckerman Unbound* demonstrates that human development is neither linear nor stable. While he initially progresses toward higher-order needs, subsequent experiences of rejection and loss compel him to revisit more fundamental emotional concerns. His enduring desire for acceptance—particularly from his family and community—reveals the persistent influence of social belonging on individual identity, even in the presence of personal success.

Nathan's relationship with his brother Henry reflects a deeper fracture within the family structure. Although Nathan continues to care for Henry, the latter's adherence to conventional expectations positions him as the "ideal" son, in contrast to Nathan's perceived deviation. Henry's inability to recognize the value of Nathan's

artistic work intensifies this divide, reinforcing Nathan's sense of alienation within his own family. This dynamic illustrates how familial roles and cultural expectations regulate individual identity, often privileging conformity over creative expression.

The limited support Nathan receives from his family underscores his unmet need for emotional stability and belonging. His desire for acceptance extends beyond familial ties to include intimate relationships, yet his failed marriages further deepen his isolation. The lack of recognition for his artistic identity reveals a broader tension between personal fulfilment and the expectations imposed by close social relationships. The death of Nathan's father marks a turning point that intensifies his psychological crisis. Overcome by guilt and self-doubt, he begins to internalize responsibility for this loss. This moment reopens unresolved conflicts related to identity and self-worth, pushing him into a renewed confrontation with his sense of self.

In *Zuckerman Unbound*, Nathan's success following Carnovsky complicates rather than resolves his psychological development. While material stability is achieved, his emotional and social needs become increasingly fragile. Public recognition exposes him to scrutiny, misinterpretation, and hostility, particularly from within his own cultural community. This tension destabilizes his sense of identity, as external validation fails to translate into inner security. His struggle reflects the paradox of esteem: recognition from society coexists with deep personal alienation, delaying any stable movement toward self-actualization.

In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan's condition deteriorates into both physical and psychological crisis. His unexplained illness disrupts not only his bodily stability but also his sense of purpose, leading him to question the very foundation of his identity as a writer. This stage reflects a profound breakdown, where creative energy is replaced by paralysis and uncertainty.

As his condition worsens, Nathan attempts to cope through temporary distractions, including relationships and substance use, yet these fail to provide lasting relief. His abandonment of writing and his turn toward an alternative identity—such as the desire to become a doctor—signal an attempt to escape the

pressures associated with his artistic self. This shift reflects a regression within Maslow's framework, where the need for security and stability overrides higher aspirations.

Nathan's estrangement from Henry and his growing dependence on substances further illustrate his psychological decline. His physical pain, compounded by emotional isolation, leads him toward increasingly desperate attempts at relief. These experiences deepen his awareness of human suffering, marking a shift from external conflict to internal disintegration. He introspects himself and interprets, "This is life, with real teeth in it" (Roth 696). He begins taking therapy and then electric shocks to treat himself physically as well as psychologically; "He set the timer, put two moistened electrode pads above and below the sight of the pain, and six times a day gave himself a low voltage shock for five minutes ..." (Roth 432).

At this stage, Nathan's position within the hierarchy reflects a clear regression. Earlier pursuits of esteem and self-actualization give way to more fundamental concerns for safety, health, and emotional stability. His experiences demonstrate that psychological development is not linear but subject to disruption by trauma, illness, and loss.

Nathan's aspiration to become a doctor represents an attempt to reconstruct his sense of purpose within a more stable and socially valued framework. This shift highlights his desire for legitimacy, control, and acceptance—needs that his literary career has complicated rather than fulfilled. His fluctuating trajectory underscores the instability of identity when shaped by conflicting internal desires and external expectations.

The Anatomy Lesson presents the lowest point in Nathan's psychological journey, where both physical suffering and existential uncertainty disrupt his progression. His basic needs are compromised, his relationships deteriorate, and his sense of self collapses. Yet this breakdown also suggests the possibility of renewal, as confronting such disillusionment may lead to a more grounded and authentic understanding of identity.

Seymour “Swede” Levov, the protagonist of *American Pastoral*, represents a contrasting model of selfhood shaped by the pursuit of the American Dream. His life appears stable and successful, yet it is deeply influenced by social expectations surrounding assimilation, family, and national identity.

Swede’s rise from an immigrant background to economic success reflects the promises of American assimilation. However, his identity is constructed within rigid cultural ideals of success, stability, and respectability, which later become sources of vulnerability when disrupted. Several triumphs and difficulties are being faced by Levov to make their family business successful over two generations. Swede appears as an iconic figure and a role model for Nathan in his high school days. Nathan gives an account of Seymour Levov in the novel *American Pastoral*, a star athlete, tall, and an outstanding American hero, pretty confident of his future:

“The Swede. During the war years, when I was still a grade school boy, this was a magical name in our Mewark neighborhood, even to adults, just a generation removed from the city’s old Prince Street ghetto and not yet so flawlessly Americanized as to be bowled over by the prowess of a high school athlete. The name was magical; so was the anomalous face of the few fair-complexioned Jewish students in our preponderantly Jewish public high school, none possessed anything remotely like the steep-jawed, insentient Viking mask of this blue-eyed blond born into our tribe as Seymour Irving Levov” (Roth 3).

He is successfully living the American life. A confident family man, an ideal husband who tries his best to live a peaceful rural life in old Rimrock area of New Jersey:

“After all the effervescent strain of resuscitating our class’ mid-century innocence-together a hundred aging people recklessly turning back the clock to a time when times passing was a matter of indifference-with the afternoon’s exhilarations finally coming to an end, I began to contemplate the very thing that must have baffled the Swede till the moment he died; how had he become history’s plaything?” (Roth 87).

Swede's early life is defined by admiration and social recognition, positioning him as an ideal figure within his community. This external validation forms the basis of his esteem, yet it remains dependent on maintaining a particular image rather than fostering deeper self-awareness. He remains an iconic figure throughout the novel *American Pastoral*:

“The elevation of Swede Levov into the household Apollo of the Weequahic Jews can best be explained, I think, by the war against the Germans and the Japanese and the fears that it fostered. With the Swede indomitable on the playing field, the meaningless surface of life provided a bizarre, delusionary kind of sustenance, the happy release into a Swedian innocence, for those who lived in dread of never seeing their sons or their brothers or their husbands again” (Roth 4).

Swede loves America and worked really hard all his life to achieve the best version of American Dream, played sports, joined the Marines, has glove manufacturing plant, and lives in a big stone house in the country with his beautiful wife Dawn and wonderful daughter, Merry. The collapse of Swede's carefully constructed identity begins with his daughter Merry's radicalization. Her actions disrupt not only his personal life but also the ideological foundation upon which his sense of success was built. This moment exposes the fragility of identities rooted in external ideals. Merry, the only child of Swede has now turned out into a fanatical teenager. Swede initially is seen as a perfect symbol of male hero who is later on trapped in the vicious circle of fate. The characterization of Swede by Roth is amazing. He is not only a good athlete, in fact he possessed the qualities of true Americanism, assimilation and courage. He truly wants his wife and his daughter to be perfect but Merry's transformation and her new outlook shatters Swede's dreams. His cheerful daughter has now turned into a terrorist, discarding his father's wealth.

Merry on the other hand becomes a radical child who tries to evoke Swede's sympathy for those people who are not considered as important part of the society. She gets completely frustrated and starts yelling at her own father: “All you can think about, all you can talk about, all you c-c-care about is the well-being of this f-fucking l-l-little f-f-family!” isn't that all you think about? Isn't that what you are angry about?”...” (Roth 107-8).

Swede himself becomes a self-actualized being by realizing his maximum potential and capabilities. He almost achieves whatever he is desiring for. First, he realizes his basic needs and then worked hard to achieve esteem and self-actualization. He starts from nothing but with time becomes capable to achieve everything. Although his daughter took a complete wrong turn in her life which deserts her father's reputation but he himself worked really hard to become the best in life. He fulfills the basic level needs with great deal. He had a strong bond with family, friends and other social groups. Being an immigrant and finally settles down in Mewark needs a lot of courage to be in a competition with the people around him. He manages to take his family business to great heights that reflects his courage, strength and potential and thus making himself a self-actualized being.

He is a hard-working man, a family man who devotes his time to his family truly. He provides whatever is the best to his family. His own accomplishments are enough to represent that he's truly a self-actualized being. He took almost every step of the ladder to finally reach the ultimate goal which is the self-actualization. He is an epitome of a true man who not only make his own life perfect but also wished the same for his wife and daughter. Although what he really desires for them is completely different from what they actually did but he has made his own life very much polished in his own best possible way. Environment plays a crucial role for him to realize his needs at a particular time. It is the appropriate environment and his own higher level of self-esteem that allowed him to work on his self by improving his weaknesses and inferiorities.

Swede's life initially reflects the successful fulfillment of lower and intermediate needs, including material stability, social recognition, and familial belonging. However, the disintegration of his family reveals the limits of these achievements. His inability to reconcile personal tragedy with his idealized vision of life prevents him from attaining genuine self-actualization. His experience demonstrates that external success cannot substitute for deeper psychological integration.

In *I Married a Communist*, Ira Ringold emerges as a radio star in the 1940s and is portrayed as a committed communist and an American roughneck, often

referred to as Iron Rinn. His personality combines political conviction with intense personal drives. Ira appears to fulfill the needs of love and belongingness as well as esteem within Abraham Maslow's hierarchy. His marriage to Eve Frame, a glamorous Hollywood actress, reflects his desire for intimacy and social connection. As social beings, individuals inherently seek affection, companionship, and acceptance, and Ira's relationship with Eve initially functions as a means of satisfying these interpersonal needs.

Ira's strong bond with Johnny O'Day, whom he meets while working as a stevedore during World War II, further illustrates his need for belongingness. Johnny introduces him to communist ideology, and after the war, Ira relocates to Calumet City, reinforcing their deep friendship. Similarly, his relationship with his brother Murray Ringold highlights familial attachment and emotional interdependence. Through Murray, Ira is introduced to Nathan Zuckerman, thereby expanding his social network. These relationships collectively demonstrate that belongingness is not limited to romantic ties but includes friendships, familial bonds, and community acceptance. At this stage in Maslow's hierarchy, the need to belong and be integrated into social groups becomes essential for psychological stability.

Beyond fulfilling his social needs, Ira also satisfies the requirements of esteem. He attains recognition, reputation, and social status as a successful radio personality, achievements that reflect both his personal capabilities and public approval. His confidence, strength, and sense of competence indicate a well-developed sense of self-worth. However, esteem is shaped not only by internal validation but also by external acknowledgment. Ira's involvement with influential individuals and his participation in political rallies enhance his sense of accomplishment and reinforce his public image. At this level, Maslow distinguishes between self-esteem and the recognition one receives from others, and Ira effectively embodies both dimensions. Nevertheless, his later downfall—triggered by Eve's critical memoir and his subsequent blacklisting—reveals the fragility of esteem that is heavily dependent on public validation.

Within the framework of Maslow's hierarchy, Ira Ringold's psychological trajectory reveals both progression and collapse. His physiological needs are

consistently fulfilled, as his career ensures material comfort and stability. Initially, his safety needs are also secured through professional success and public recognition. However, during the era of McCarthyism, his sense of safety deteriorates as he becomes a victim of political persecution and personal betrayal, particularly by Eve Frame. Although Ira appears to fulfill his need for love and belongingness through relationships and mentorship, these connections ultimately prove unstable and insufficient. His esteem, largely rooted in ideological conviction and public influence, is dismantled once his political identity becomes a liability. Consequently, Ira fails to achieve self-actualization, as he lacks the flexibility and introspective capacity required to reconstruct his identity after his downfall. His character thus exemplifies the dangers of grounding one's sense of self primarily in external validation and rigid ideological frameworks.

In *The Human Stain*, Nathan Zuckerman narrates the tragic story of Coleman Silk, a classics professor who is forced to resign after being accused of making a racist remark. Despite his professional success as a dean at Athena College, Silk's life is marked by deep personal contradictions. Born an African American, he constructs a white identity to pursue the American Dream, channelling his ambitions into academic and institutional success. His achievements—professional recognition, family life, and material comfort—indicate the fulfilment of esteem needs. However, this success is built upon concealment and internal conflict, complicating his psychological development.

Coleman Silk demonstrates a strong sense of self-worth and confidence in his abilities, reflecting the internal dimension of esteem. He perceives himself as deserving of dignity and recognition, and his accomplishments reinforce this belief. At the same time, his efforts are driven by the desire for external validation, as he seeks acknowledgment from his professional and social environment. This dual reliance on internal confidence and external approval highlights the complexity of esteem needs within Maslow's framework.

Coleman Silk also attempts to fulfill his need for love and belongingness through multiple relationships, including his marriage to Iris and his later

involvement with Faunia Farley. His emotional bonds with colleagues and companions suggest a desire for connection and acceptance. However, these relationships are often strained or shaped by his hidden identity. Following his public disgrace and the death of his wife, Silk turns to Faunia as a source of emotional support. This shift indicates a regression from esteem needs to the more fundamental need for belongingness, as his sense of isolation intensifies. Consequently, he becomes increasingly vulnerable to loneliness and emotional instability.

Before all that accusations he is there at the very fourth level in the hierarchy, pretty confident and being valued but when he faces his downfall he immediately recedes towards the third stage; to have someone of his own. The neglect that he is going through adversely affects his ability to stay confident. That is why he maintains emotionally significant relationships in general with Faunia. Humans need to be loved both sexually and non-sexually by others. Coleman Silk becomes susceptible to loneliness, social anxiety because of the absence of love and belongingness.

Coleman Silk's under the framework of Maslow's theory of Hierarchy of needs in *The Human Stain* develops psychologically as his physiological needs are completely fulfilled and throughout the novel Coleman Silk lives comfortably. He has had a long career as a respected professor and dean, earning enough to meet all basic physical needs like food, housing, and health care. His safety needs are superficially met but internally threatened; although Coleman enjoys material and professional stability for most of his life, his sense of safety is undermined by the secret he carries that was his decision to pass as a white man. This concealment makes his identity perpetually vulnerable. Later, the scandal at his college and the threat of public disgrace further destabilize his sense of security.

Coleman's love and belongingness needs are complex and fragmented as his relationships are marked by both intimacy and loss. He severs ties with his family to protect his secret, sacrificing deep bonds for the sake of reinvention. His relationship with Faunia Farley later in life offers him emotional connection and a sense of belongingness, but it's fragile and ultimately doomed by external judgment and

tragedy. He becomes capable to achieve esteem needs that later on shattered as well. At the height of his academic career, Coleman earns recognition and respect, satisfying his desire for accomplishment and status. However, the false accusation that ends his career and the public controversy that follows strips away this esteem. His self-worth becomes entangled with regret, resentment, and the consequences of his hidden past. He partially satisfied the self-actualization needs. Coleman attempts to reclaim agency and authenticity after his fall from grace. In his relationship with Faunia, he experiences a kind of emotional honesty and freedom that he long denied himself. Yet he never fully confronts or resolves the tensions of his constructed identity. His progress toward self-actualization is real but incomplete, hindered by secrecy, guilt, and the burdens of his past choices. Coleman Silk ascends much of Maslow's hierarchy by meeting his basic, social, and esteem needs but remains conflicted at the level of self-actualization. His internal struggle with identity and truth keeps him from fully realizing a life of self-understanding and inner peace.

The theory of hierarchy of needs proposed by Abraham Maslow continues to hold significant relevance across diverse fields, offering insight into human motivation and behavior. It explains how individuals prioritize different needs and how these needs influence their decisions and relationships. Self-actualization, as the highest stage, is not a fixed or uniform state but varies according to individual experiences and aspirations. The journey toward self-actualization is dynamic, often involving progression as well as regression due to challenges in life. Maslow's model underscores that personal growth depends on the recognition and fulfilment of evolving needs, making it a valuable framework for understanding both stability and conflict in human life. Taken together, the trajectories of Ira Ringold and Coleman Silk reveal the limitations of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs when applied to complex, socially embedded identities. While the model provides a useful framework for understanding human motivation, Roth's characters demonstrate that the progression toward self-actualization is neither linear nor guaranteed. External forces such as political ideology, social prejudice, and cultural expectations significantly shape the fulfilment and disruption of needs.

Self-actualization, therefore, cannot be understood as a fixed endpoint but must be viewed as a dynamic and often unstable process. It varies across individuals and is deeply influenced by historical and social contexts. Roth's fiction underscores that the realization of the self involves not only the satisfaction of hierarchical needs but also the capacity to negotiate identity, confront contradictions, and adapt to changing circumstances. In this sense, his characters challenge the universality of Maslow's model and invite a more nuanced understanding of human development—one that acknowledges fragmentation, regression, and the persistent struggle for authenticity.

This chapter reveals that the satisfaction of needs alone does not guarantee the realization of one's fullest potential. External pressures such as social expectations, political forces, and cultural identity, along with internal struggles related to guilt, alienation, and self-perception, significantly influence the individual's capacity for growth. These complexities demonstrate that self-actualization must be understood as a process that requires not only the fulfilment of hierarchical needs but also an active engagement with one's environment and circumstances.

In this regard, the present chapter prepares the ground for the next chapter, *Self-actualization and Design*, by shifting the focus from the conditions of becoming to the process of shaping the self. While the current analysis emphasizes how needs are experienced, disrupted, and negotiated, the following chapter will explore how individuals consciously or unconsciously construct, organize, and design their identities in response to these conditions. The struggles and inconsistencies observed in the characters thus serve as a necessary prelude, illustrating why self-actualization cannot be passively attained but must be actively fashioned.

Therefore, this chapter functions as a conceptual bridge: it identifies the psychological and existential challenges that hinder self-actualization, thereby paving the way for a deeper inquiry into how the self can be deliberately structured, reimagined, and realized despite such constraints.

Chapter V

Self-actualization and Design

While the modern understanding of self-actualization is most explicitly articulated within humanistic psychology, its underlying concerns—identity, purpose, and fulfilment—have long been embedded in literary traditions across historical periods. Literature, as a reflection of human aspiration and conflict, frequently depicts individuals engaged in the search for meaning, even when such experiences are not framed in psychological terminology.

This concern is evident in ancient and classical texts, where the archetypal journey often involves transformation through struggle. In epic narratives such as *The Odyssey*, protagonists undergo trials that reshape their understanding of themselves and their place in the world. These narratives do not present fulfilment as a fixed endpoint but as an evolving awareness achieved through experience. Similarly, the influence of Stoic and Platonic thought in classical literature foregrounds the pursuit of virtue, rationality, and alignment with one's inner nature, suggesting that personal fulfilment emerges through a sustained process of ethical and intellectual engagement rather than immediate attainment.

Eastern literary and philosophical traditions similarly engage with ideas that resonate with, but are not identical to, the concept of self-actualization. In Hindu and Buddhist texts, the emphasis on enlightenment and inner realization reflects a sustained effort to move beyond illusion and suffering. Rather than signifying a final state of completion, these traditions often present fulfilment as an ongoing discipline of self-awareness and detachment.

Likewise, the principles articulated in the *Tao Te Ching* advocate living in harmony with the natural order. The sense of balance and simplicity achieved by those who follow the Tao does not represent a definitive culmination but a continuous adjustment to the rhythms of existence. These traditions, therefore, reinforce the idea that the realization of human potential is better understood as a dynamic and evolving process.

Medieval and Renaissance works also expound the idea of self-actualization where it talks about the spiritual pilgrimage. In the Middle ages, narratives often focus on journeys of faith or quests for divine truth. These stories highlight spiritual growth and purpose, mirroring a deeper human need for self-understanding. Renaissance humanism celebrated the potential of the individual in various fields like arts, science, ethics. The Renaissance person represented the aspiration toward full personal development and self-mastery.

Romantic literature also holds the belief of self-actualization that talks about the emotional authenticity and rebellion as writers from the Romantic age championed the power of personal emotion, intuition, and imagination. Their characters frequently reject social conventions in favour of inner truth, pursuing a path that aligns with the modern sense of becoming one's authentic self. Nineteenth and twentieth century literature also features the psychological depth; as interest in psychology grew, literature began exploring characters' internal struggles, self-doubt, and existential crises. These narratives often centre on the pursuit of identity and purpose in complex social contexts.

Existentialist literature further complicates the notion of fulfilment by situating it within a world that is often indifferent or unstable. In such works, meaning is not discovered but actively constructed, frequently under conditions of anxiety, isolation, and moral ambiguity. The individual's freedom to choose is accompanied by the burden of responsibility, making the process of self-realization both necessary and deeply unsettling.

Modern literary texts similarly depict individuals grappling with fragmentation, alienation, and the erosion of stable identities. Their attempts to achieve coherence reveal not the certainty of fulfilment but its inherent difficulty. In this context, self-actualization cannot be understood as a final state; rather, it emerges as an ongoing negotiation between the self and an unpredictable world. Across literary traditions, therefore, the idea of realizing one's potential consistently appears not as a completed achievement but as a complex, often unresolved human endeavour.

Self-actualization; may be understood as the drive that encourages an individual to engage with and develop their inherent capacities. Rather than functioning as a final achievement, it represents a continuous movement toward realizing one's potential through creative and purposeful activity. A self-actualizing individual is therefore not simply one who has "arrived," but one who remains actively involved in the process of growth.

As Abraham Maslow observes in *Motivation and Personality*, "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write... What a man can be, he must be" (Maslow 46). This formulation emphasizes not completion but the necessity of ongoing expression as central to psychological fulfilment.

The process of self-actualization takes place when an individual is constantly determined to take risks, learn from consequences and move forward in life, thus making full use of his potentials to the highest extent possible. This process refreshes an individual, motivating him to learn from his mistakes, makes an individual confident enough to live life purposefully. It requires enough courage for an individual to realize and interpret one's innate potential in order to take risks in life and be open to new experiences and events. Such readiness of an individual needs an appropriate environment that motivates and facilitates the self-actualizer. An appropriate environment provides suitable opportunities to the self-actualizer to go for self-fulfilment.

Self-actualizers consider themselves as active, integral, and responsible part of the complicated world. They determine their own area of speciality and play their role in their own best possible way. They appreciate and value their own social group but at the same time detach themselves from it to value their personal space as well. The spark in their life enhances their artistic creativity and insight, thereby making their life happy. Individuals are different in every perspective and so does their self-actualization needs. This target needs will in turn makes an individual able to do the best throughout his life.

Self-actualization; the very motivating factor is inherent in every person that eventually makes a person capable of creating something of his own. Such inherent

creativity makes an individual to realize his own ideas and values and make full use of it. Self-worthiness directs an individual to move forward to use inner capabilities and potentials more effectively and assertively. Self-actualizers are independent as well as interdependent. They see the company of other people as valuable but at the very same time detach themselves from people around them to value their personal space. Maslow asserted in *Motivation and Personality*: “Detachment from the culture is probably also reflected in our self-actualizing subjects’ detachment from people and their liking for privacy” (Maslow 173). There always resides an excitement in their life which brings about creativity, spark and discoveries to their own being thereby attaining happiness which is essential for their well-being.

The concept of self-actualization was further developed and popularized by Abraham Maslow, who conceptualized it as part of a broader hierarchy of human needs. In this model, basic physiological and psychological requirements—such as safety, belongingness, and esteem—form the foundation upon which higher forms of growth may emerge. However, this progression is neither automatic nor universally achieved.

Maslow later expanded his framework to include dimensions such as cognitive and aesthetic needs, and, in some interpretations, self-transcendence. Yet these higher stages should not be treated as inevitable outcomes. Instead, they represent potential directions of growth that individuals may approach to varying degrees. The movement toward such states often remains partial, shaped by personal circumstances, limitations, and ongoing struggles, rather than culminating in a stable or final condition.

Various psychological and philosophical theories harmonizes with the views of Maslow’s concept of self-actualization and asserted that individuals are innately self-centred and must move towards selflessness and enable a flourishing society. Maslow further propounded that individuals who are mentally healthy are intensively motivated to follow their growth patterns and there can be seen a shift from self-interest to social interest that results in personal satisfaction.

Even though the concept of self-actualization was popularized by Abraham Maslow but it was originally introduced by Kurt Goldstein, a German neurologist

and psychiatrist during the early part of 20th century. In his book, *The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man*, he pointed out man's desire for self-actualization and viewed this concept as an ultimate goal for each and every organism. He asserted individuals, animals, and plants have an inborn goal to become actualized and they behave accordingly with their overarching motivation. He believed that it is not mandatory to achieve self-actualization in the future but it is an innate quality to realize the maximum potential at any interval of time under certain conditions and situations. Maslow in his work *Motivation and Personality* asserted:

“The motivation of ordinary men is a striving for the basic need gratifications that they lack. But self-actualizing people in fact lack none of these gratifications; and yet they have impulses. They work, they try, and they are ambitious, even though in an unusual sense. For them motivation is just character growth, character expression, maturation, and development; in a word self-actualization” (Maslow 159).

The main focus and objective of this chapter is to understand individuals' self-actualization which is referred to as realizing one's own potential and make full use of their capabilities and strengths in the implementation of activities. Having unmet needs to fulfil, a self-actualized person views his life with an attitude of newness thereby learning from his past experiences. Abraham Maslow described self-actualized individuals as the one who are self-fulfilled, recognize and realize their potential to perform tasks and activities satisfactorily. Realizing one's own potential and capabilities is of utmost significance for the ones who need to achieve their personal and professional objectives.

The concept of self-actualization was first coined by Kurt Goldstein and then originated within Humanistic Psychology in the hierarchical motivational theory propounded by Abraham Maslow and person-client therapy and facilitation by Carl Rogers. Maslow believed that in order to achieve self-actualization two different but important things should be there for an individual and that are the inner exploration and action and these things ultimately generate awareness in an individual to compete for achieving desired goals and motifs. Maslow's and Rogers' views were

very similar in terms of personality aspects of a self-actualized individual. Both of them described a self-actualized being as having personal autonomy and independent to take decisions and make choices. Maslow in *Towards a Psychology of Being* asserted:

“Self-actualizing people, those who have come to a high level of maturation, health, and self- fulfilment, have so much to teach us that sometimes they seem almost like a different breed of human beings. But because it is so new, the exploration of the highest reaches of human nature and of its ultimate possibilities and aspirations is a difficult and tortuous task” (Maslow 71).

Within the framework of Humanistic Psychology, self-actualization is viewed as a distinctive and a deeply personal concept as it relies on individual’s experience and subjectivity. Humanistic thinkers like Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers highlight the importance of each person’s unique inner experience, free-will, and innate drive toward growth. In this view, self-actualization is not a universal or uniform goal. Unlike more rigid psychological theories such as Behaviorism or Psychoanalysis, Humanistic Psychology sees individuals as active participants in shaping their own lives, pursuing fulfilment based on personal meaning and values. It is driven by inner motivation as self-actualization stems from a person’s internal desire to grow, realize their capabilities, and reach a sense of completeness. This stands in contrast to theories centered on external incentives or needs reduction.

Humanistic Psychology believes that the urge for self-actualization arises from a deep, intrinsic longing for purpose and self-betterment. It focuses on a whole-person perspective as this approach considers all dimensions of a person like physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual as interconnected. Achieving self-actualization means nurturing all these aspects in harmony. It's not merely about succeeding in one domain but involves overall personal integration and development.

This chapter is divided into three different parts. The very first part deals with the representation of characters by Philip Milton Roth; hence it is about the way Roth has presented his main characters so that the readers can feel their existence as lifelike as stated in the select novels. The second part deals with how the main

characters fulfil the four levels of needs as stated by Maslow. The last part presents how characters reveal their self-actualization by showing that they have certain attributes of a self-actualized person as theorized by Abraham Maslow. The characters in the select novels have been particularly characterized by Philip Roth in order to make the readers understand who they actually are. The writer focuses on various ways of characterization so that the readers can feel their existence and their realization of self-actualization.

Nathan Zuckerman is represented as a young author in *The Ghost Writer* (1979), gained acclaim, success, and recognition in *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981), and finally suffered with an undiagnosable pain in *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983). The description of Nathan in his novels typically includes the details from his own life, although the version that Roth created is bit exaggerated so that the novels seem to be a parody of his own literary career. The fiction *The Ghost Writer* presents some charges of anti-semitism on Nathan and this can be seen when an infuriated judge Leopold Wapter who wants to shame Nathan with his question: “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?” (Roth 103- 4), he deals with the notoriety of literary success in *Zuckerman Unbound* and in *The Anatomy Lesson*; he responds to his critical attacks.

The charges of anti-semitism and a fight with his parents and the Jewish community lends Nathan to travail in Lonoff’s house. He spends his time with Lonoff, a famous writer whom he idolizes a lot. Emanuel Lonoff became the spiritual father for Nathan as his own biological father protests against him that readers do not read art in fact they read people and what Nathan has written is completely against the Jewish community. But Nathan longs to practice the study of art and for this he sought out for Lonoff.

Nathan’s decision to seek guidance from E.I. Lonoff can be interpreted as an important moment in his developmental trajectory, though it should not be reduced to a straightforward fulfilment of hierarchical needs. His stay at Lonoff’s residence provides not only material comfort but also an intellectual and emotional

environment that affirms his artistic aspirations. This space allows Nathan to distance himself from familial disapproval and to begin articulating his own identity as a writer.

However, this sense of security is provisional rather than absolute. While Lonoff offers stability and encouragement, Nathan's internal conflicts—particularly his desire for paternal approval and his struggle with cultural expectations—remain unresolved. Thus, this phase in his life reflects not the satisfaction of needs in a linear progression, but a complex interplay between support and tension that shapes his ongoing process of self-formation.

Nathan Zuckerman after successfully publishing his first novel has now to cope up with the fame and recognition. He became rich, famous, as well as notorious in the eyes of his family who consider his fiction to be absurd and against the Jewish community. His family believed that his work has a form of psychoanalysis session, in which the protagonist confesses his sexual obsession with his mother. After his success he got divorced, unhappy and this fame brought a lack of privacy in his life. Again the writer characterizes his hero in such a way that readers intensively understands and become one with him.

He became rich, completely safe, stable, and secure and has achieved self-esteem and esteem from his social groups. But with this new found wealth he is facing trouble when he receives an anonymous phone call. The man on the call was demanding a huge amount of money or they will kidnap his mother. Now in this stage his own success has become a hurdle in his life. Later on he got to know about his father's worst condition and Nathan immediately flew to him but he died by uttering a last word bastard to Nathan. This incident has immensely affected Nathan. He again feels the lack of love, care, warmth, and affection of his father and find his situation very difficult to tackle.

Nathan is being portrayed by Roth as an aspiring being. His decision to opt Lonoff represents his confidence and command over his actions. His artistic creations address his mastery experience. The readers can easily analyse his individual's

performance and becoming one with his art. Readers can see his struggle with his art. He aspired for fame and fortune and no one poked his idea of consciousness. As a great son, he wanted to prove his father about his artistic creation that is completely based on his personal sentiments and choices. His own chosen path has made him to grow and develop and become an integral part of this normal universe.

The hostility directed toward Nathan, along with his internal struggles, becomes a crucial site for his developing self-awareness. Rather than leading to a clear or stable realization of the self, these experiences compel him to continually reassess his values, desires, and artistic commitments. His personal choices and subjective inclinations do not simply elevate him into a “better” version of himself; instead, they place him within a complex process of negotiation between ambition, guilt, and the need for validation.

His desire to justify his literary work—particularly in relation to his father’s disapproval—reveals an ongoing tension between personal expression and social expectation. Roth presents Nathan not as a fully formed subject from the outset, but as a character in transition, whose identity evolves unevenly over time. The movement from impulsive expression toward greater self-awareness is therefore not a completed transformation, but a gradual and often conflicted process of self-formation.

Nathan’s evolving sense of self is shaped not only by recognition and success but also by notoriety and emotional strain. These contradictory experiences prevent his identity from stabilizing into a coherent whole. While he demonstrates moments of confidence and self-assertion—particularly in defending his artistic choices—these are frequently undercut by doubt, loss, and unresolved conflict.

His subjectivity is thus marked by reflexivity rather than certainty. He continually reflects upon his actions and their consequences, yet this reflection does not necessarily lead to resolution. Instead, his life unfolds as a sustained engagement with competing impulses, where creativity coexists with vulnerability, and productivity is influenced as much by disruption as by clarity.

In *The Anatomy Lesson*, Nathan is presented as a figure of fragmentation rather than growth. He appears physically debilitated, emotionally isolated, and creatively paralyzed, marking a sharp departure from earlier phases of his life. Roth constructs this portrayal in a way that invites readerly sympathy, yet also underscores the limits of artistic identity when confronted with suffering.

Nathan's condition complicates any straightforward reading of self-actualization. His creative work, once a source of meaning, now appears entangled with his pain, leading him to question both his purpose and his sense of self. His attempts to find relief—whether physical or psychological—highlight the instability of his identity rather than its consolidation.

Nathan in *The Ghost Writer and Zuckerman Unbound* took a stand for himself and for his art but now in *The Anatomy Lesson* he is facing the consequences of his own stand. His pain is now suppressing his own talent and restricting himself from day to day routine. His brother accuses him as solely responsible for their father's demise which completely tormented and traumatized him. Nathan's trauma further increases when he lost his mother too. Such trauma, boredom, and inactivity in his life makes him unable to pursue his literary career. This results in his indulgence in women, alcohol, and sex but all went in vain.

As Nathan's sense of guilt intensifies, he increasingly withdraws from meaningful relationships, isolating himself from both family and society. His emotional state deteriorates to the point where he begins to seek escape rather than resolution. His desire to become a gynaecologist, for instance, is less an indication of purposeful transformation and more a reflection of his psychological disorientation.

This imagined shift in profession reveals a fractured sense of identity, where he attempts to abandon his past rather than integrate it. Although he appears to exercise agency in contemplating this decision, it is ultimately grounded in confusion and escapism. Thus, this phase of his life illustrates not self-realization, but the difficulty of sustaining a coherent sense of self in the face of overwhelming loss.

Nathan's recollection of past experiences and emotional states suggests an effort to make sense of his fragmented identity. However, this reflective process does

not culminate in a clear or stable resolution. His consideration of an alternative profession and his search for recognition indicate a continued desire for meaning, yet these efforts remain disconnected from his earlier sense of purpose.

Rather than emerging as a fully “restored” individual, Nathan appears suspended between past and present identities. His trajectory reflects an ongoing attempt to reconstruct himself, one that remains incomplete and uncertain. In this sense, his experience underscores the difficulty of achieving psychological coherence, reinforcing the idea that self-actualization, within Roth’s fiction, is rarely attained in a definitive form. Philip Roth’s novels offer a rich examination of self-actualization, portraying characters whose journeys toward personal fulfilment are marked by psychological, moral, and cultural conflicts. Each protagonist’s path is shaped by internal struggles and external pressures, revealing how complex and elusive the pursuit of authenticity can be.

Seymour Levov, commonly referred to as the “Swede,” initially embodies the idealized vision of the American Dream. Raised in a prosperous family and later inheriting a successful business, he appears to achieve social stability, professional success, and familial fulfilment. His marriage to Dawn Dwyer and the establishment of a seemingly harmonious domestic life reinforce this image of completeness.

However, this carefully constructed stability proves to be deeply fragile. The political unrest of the 1960s, particularly in the context of the Vietnam War, disrupts not only the social order but also the internal coherence of Seymour’s life. His daughter’s radicalization and subsequent act of violence shatter his sense of control, while his wife’s emotional withdrawal further destabilizes his domestic world. Roth thus presents Seymour’s life not as a fulfilled ideal, but as a structure vulnerable to collapse under historical and personal pressures.

The main hero Seymour is characterised by Roth in such a way that readers can easily feel for him that he is betrayed by those people who are closest to him. His daughter becomes emotionally unstable who gave a shock to his father by setting off a bomb. Later on his wife got engaged with an architect and leaves Seymour. Seymour is initially seen as a man leading a healthy country life but things do not

work the same way that he planned as his wife cheated on him and his daughter planted a bomb that shattered his reputation and prestige within the mainstream of America.

Each and every character in the novel *American Pastoral* have rebellious attitudes. For whatever reasons, they all make their own choices that change their perspectives and even their life forever. What Seymour's daughter did, ruined the overall personality of Seymour. He is left all alone when his own partner left him and his household thrives in crisis. He is seen as an optimistic person achieving his goals consciously and rationally. He focused on his ultimate goal American Dream and focused on his innate capabilities.

The development of the characters may be interpreted in relation to Maslow's hierarchy of needs; however, such a framework should be applied with caution rather than as a rigid structure. While the characters appear to achieve a degree of material stability and social recognition, these conditions do not necessarily ensure psychological fulfilment. Their experiences suggest that the satisfaction of basic and social needs is often unstable and subject to disruption. Moments of security, belonging, and esteem are repeatedly undermined by loss, conflict, and disillusionment. As a result, their lives do not reflect a smooth progression toward higher fulfilment, but rather an ongoing tension between achieved stability and its subsequent breakdown. Although they faced fluctuations in this stage as well. After gaining respect they lost it too but the way they stood up for themselves was really amazing which make them self-actualized persons When all the foregoing needs within the hierarchy are fulfilled, people are motivated to meet the needs for self-actualization which states to become the one that a person is capable of becoming by making full use of his capabilities and talents. This need becomes the highest in the hierarchy. To explain about self-actualized beings, Maslow discussed some attributes in *Motivation and Personality* that describes self-actualizers which are that the self-actualized individuals have an efficient perception of reality as self-actualized being are able to differentiate between fake and dishonest personalities. Such individuals are more capable to fit in the realistic world rather than getting comfortable in the world made up of beliefs. It is the first characteristic of a self-actualized being to

perceive the objects as well as people efficiently and objectively. Self-actualized people perceive objects and persons around them according to their own judgments. They do not rely on others' perception. They are least bothered about people's opinion. As a self-actualized being, Nathan Zuckerman, Seymour Levov, Ira, and Coleman Silk possess this attribute of looking at the subject objectively. They were not influenced by what others think.

Self-actualizers have an acceptance of self and others as they are more capable to accept themselves with all their strengths and weaknesses without any embarrassment. They also accept others the same way without imposing any control over them. Self-actualized being acquire a general acceptance of self as well as others with all weakness and strengths without even a complaint. As a self-actualized being Nathan accepted his shortcomings and strengths too without getting worried. There were a lot many people in Nathan's family and his few friends who did not like the way he expressed himself after publishing a novel. Swede, Ira, and Coleman Silk worked really hard to become valuable part of the society. Nathan also accepted the nature of people around him. He wanted to prove to his father that he is a good Jewish son. Seymour, Coleman Silk, and Ira all are represented as independent. As self-actualizers, they understood about the harsh realities of life in their own way and they did not worry if they had to go somewhere alone. This represents their acceptance and tolerance of the shortcomings of the people around them.

People who are self-actualized beings have spontaneous nature as such people accept human nature and are spontaneous, simple, and pretty natural. Such people are free to express their emotions, thoughts, and feelings among other individuals. They are capable to form their own belief system and perspectives and this can be done only when they act according to themselves only. As a self-actualized being, these characters behaved in an open and direct ways. They did not hide their emotions but displayed all of them honestly. The downfall that Nathan faced after losing his parents broke him into parts. He became weak physically, mentally, and emotionally. His own creative writing became the ultimate reason of his parents' demise. Seymour in the same way worked hard throughout his life to achieve American Dream and live life happily and with prosperity. Seymour became surprised when he came to know

about the bombing episode being done by his loving daughter. This incident shattered all his emotions. Coleman Silk by working really hard throughout his life was charged with racial remarks that ultimately ruined his personality. Ira, on the other hand, a hardworking man was ruined at his wife's hand. All these characters were so confident, behaved naturally and expressed themselves confidently, and spontaneously. Nathan was engaged with women in order to get rid of his undiagnosable pain in open and direct ways. Spontaneity of these characters appeared when they freely express themselves and their opinions too. Nathan's views regarding Jews and his publication represents his spontaneity.

An individual is always surrounded by problems and self-actualizers are problem centered and have an ability to be alone. He can become a self-actualized being only if he strongly faces them by realizing his innate capabilities. By becoming self-actualized being they are ready to help others by making them capable to get rid of their problems and they try their utmost in alleviating their own problems as well as societal problems. Self-actualized being have the capability to be alone. They positively handle it. Being in an isolation or solitude, they become one with their own self. They start realizing their self and thereby becoming creative. Self-actualized individuals are confident enough to take decisions and perform their task on their own. They possess the capability to be strong and independent enough to take their decisions. Self-actualized people have a need for privacy and independence. They do not rely on others for their happiness they choose their own path, could decide their own decisions. They do not like intervention from others. In order to write and learn artistic values, Nathan choose E.I Lonoff that represents his need for his privacy. Coleman Silk, Ira, and Seymour Levov realized their innate potentials and became the one they were aspiring for. For this they all remained in their own decision to become independent. This portrays how these characters had the ability to reach to their utmost levels and this had been done only because of their self-motivation, discipline and their own decisions. They all were having the autonomous functioning that helped them to realize that fulfilment of growth and development comes from within. They were independent. They did not rely on others to get their growth satisfactions. Their own capabilities became the foundation of

their own development. Nathan was seen as a man who did not rely on the real world and did what his heart desires for. The social group and family of Nathan was expecting something different from him but he did not follow their rules instead made his own and directed his life in his own goal oriented ways. Coleman Silk, and Seymour were motivated by deficiency needs and became the one they were really aspiring for. They also followed their own path and build a lot of relationships. They faced rejection in their life but they did not regard it as a catastrophe which could destroy their life. But in fact remained positive throughout performing their activities.

Self-actualized people have strong opinions, have appreciation for their life and always possess constructive viewpoints for their life as well as for others. They perform necessary tasks and activities with the assistance of the positive outlook they have formed. The life of these characters face several ups and downs in their own way. As self-actualizers, they all were having an appreciation for life. It did not matter for them the frequencies of their experiences or how many time they repeated in their life, they continually appreciate their events and experiences happily.

After undergoing prolonged and often difficult experiences, these characters do not arrive at a definitive state of self-actualization; rather, they demonstrate varying degrees of movement toward it. Their lives are marked by moments of insight, resilience, and self-recognition, yet these are consistently accompanied by instability and unresolved tension.

Maslow's notion of detachment, for instance, can be partially observed in their preference for solitude and independence. However, this detachment does not always signify fulfilment; at times, it reflects isolation and emotional withdrawal. Consequently, these characters illustrate that the pursuit of self-actualization is not a completed achievement, but an ongoing and often fragile process shaped by both internal struggle and external pressures.

The characters in the select works have a wonderful capacity to appreciate their life. They are fully aware of their physiological needs, stability, security and freedom. They do not spend their life in discussing others or impressing others. They are capable of giving love and to be loved by others. These characters have a positive

outlook of their life. They perform their necessary tasks with the positive attitude that they have formed.

The self-actualizers face different experiences that happen in their life, heading off all sort of preconceptions and prejudging. They are able to live their life to the utmost and enjoy their present. They do not constantly consider the past or the future. In other words, they are able to make accurate and honest judgments as they live in that particular moment. They are very sensitive towards deception and dishonest actions. The protagonists of Roth in the select novels- Nathan Zuckerman, Swede, Ira and Silk are seen as spending their life quietly on the run.

Nathan Zuckerman functions as a central figure across *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, and *The Anatomy Lesson*, yet his development across these texts resists any simple or linear interpretation. In *The Ghost Writer*, he appears as a writer in formation; in *Zuckerman Unbound*, he confronts the implications of literary success; and in *The Anatomy Lesson*, he is marked by exhaustion, vulnerability, and disorientation.

Rather than presenting a steady progression, Roth constructs Nathan's trajectory as uneven and conflicted. His artistic ambitions, shaped in part through his admiration for Lonoff, reflect a desire for creative autonomy. At the same time, his subjectivity is deeply influenced by emotional tensions—particularly his fraught relationship with his father and the cultural expectations imposed upon him. His rejection of external constraints does not lead to complete independence but instead situates him within an ongoing struggle to reconcile personal desire with social responsibility.

While facing dejection from his father, he became so confused which leaves him to recognise his own identity. All this prompt him to look out for a connection elsewhere. At Lonoff's place he receives unconditional positive regard which makes him to take part in his being. He faced this critical situation with a great zeal. Nathan took a stand for his own passion to become a renowned writer and this has been achieved by him in *Zuckerman Unbound*. His book became a blockbuster at one hand but on the other side faced critical remarks for the same book for its depiction of

sexuality and sexual obsessions with Jewish mothers. Nathan is seen as a spontaneous being. His decision to flourish his artistic creations by taking the assistance of Lonoff represents his confident nature. Releasing one book after another represents his conviction and faith over his passion. He worked hard to become the one he always aspired for. Lost connection did not stray him away from his artistic path. He trusted his own path of creativity. Whatever he achieved is because of his belief in his own instincts. Nathan's personality is dynamic in the process of his self-formation. From the very beginning of his career he was not seen as a subjective being but with course of time his personality changed from a mere erotic being to a matured being. Initially his personality was somehow confined but later on he became an integral part of some bigger framework. His own understanding of life has been best portrayed by Roth. He has a great deal of courage as being a Jew it requires a great sense of potential to write against his own community.

Nathan's confidence in his creative abilities reflects a sustained commitment to his artistic identity; however, this commitment does not necessarily culminate in the attainment of self-actualization. His development is marked by periods of growth alongside moments of crisis and regression. While he demonstrates resilience in the face of criticism and rejection, his emotional life remains deeply unsettled.

The apparent rise in his career—particularly in *Zuckerman Unbound*—is followed by a significant collapse in *The Anatomy Lesson*, where he confronts loss, isolation, and a profound sense of emptiness. This fluctuation underscores the instability of his trajectory, suggesting that personal growth is neither continuous nor guaranteed. Instead of reaching a definitive stage of fulfilment, Nathan's life reflects an ongoing negotiation between aspiration and limitation.

Nathan Zuckerman's journey to self-actualization in *The Ghost Writer*, *Zuckerman Unbound*, *The Anatomy Lesson* is a tricky yet interesting one. Zuckerman's path centres on negotiating the tension between artistic autonomy and societal expectations. Throughout the trilogy, he gradually accepts his identity as a writer, even when that means being isolated or misunderstood. He lets go of illusions tied to fame, parental validation, and public acceptance, and ultimately embracing the

contradictions of his role as both storyteller and an outsider. Nathan faced several obstacles like the disapproval from his family and culture particularly in *The Ghost Writer*, anxiety over fame and critical reception in *Zuckerman Unbound*, emotional and physical collapse in *The Anatomy Lesson*, deep uncertainty about his moral and personal identity and solitude become the price of his creative authenticity.

Facing such a downfall in life, he is now leading a miserable life having no one to understand. With such pain and misery he started doubting everything even his own creation. Falling from the zenith, now at the bottom line and the loss of all the connections gave him a terrible shock which is unbearable for him. He started behaving like a vagabond wandering here and there in search of connections, love, warmth, and sympathy. The inactivity in his life makes him unable to write and he started consoling himself in the company of women. Such sort of aggravation hit him so hard that he fails to write. The pain he is going through is undiagnosable by anyone. At this stage he along with his needs receded from the very top to the bottom. On losing the loved ones from his life, receiving critical remarks for his creation makes him a different personality and he starts choosing a completely unrealistic profession for himself. This happens when a particular set of need is not being achieved by an individual. The same happens when Nathan Zuckerman who after achieving acclaim falls down from the zenith and now is seen in a dire need of someone who could assist him to get rid of his pain and misery.

Self-actualizers accept their own flawed human nature. With humour and tolerance, they also accept the flaws of other people and the contradictions of human condition. They frequently experience intense excitement, ecstasy, peace, and profound meaning. Self-actualizers have a mission in their life to fulfill. They attempt to achieve objectives and motifs outside of themselves. This sort of characteristic can easily be seen in the characterization of Coleman Silk and Swede Levov. They accepted themselves and the people around them with all their flaws. The protagonist Seymour Levov in the novel *American Pastoral* is represented as a young and aspiring being. In the very beginning of the story Seymour is being portrayed by Roth as the star of Weequahic High School. Character sketch of Seymour is a

dissected one as on one hand he is being picturised by Roth as an athlete and on the other hand his life takes a shift from being a star athlete to a father of a terrorist.

The story not only represents Seymour as a star on the surface level but on the hidden level it picturizes the rise and fall of Newark from an industrial hub to a city engaged in violence which shatters the ultimate dream of many people- the American Dream. Seymour's father was a Jew who had a small glove business but with time the small scale business of globe grew into the most reputable multinational marketing only because of Seymour. He grew himself and his business and finally married to a Catholic girl Dawn. He became rich with his multinational global business. He worked hard all his life to become what he desired.

Merry, Seymour and Dawn's daughter turned the table by putting a bomb into the old Rimrock general store in a protest against the Vietnam War. She made a vacuum in her parent's life and went underground. All this left her parents to deal with the irresistible questions gnawing at them. Several doubts under the surface devastated Seymour- Where Merry was? Where did he go wrong? What lead her towards such deadly attack? These questions shattered him as these have no real answers and is left with no one to answer such questions. Merry becomes the personification of the crushing and ending her father's dream. Beneath the surface Roth tells his readers of the collapse and poverty as the deindustrialization of the Newark starts. Such violence and deindustrialization put an end to the American Dream of a lot of people.

Seymour Levov initially appears to embody the ideals of success, stability, and social integration. His achievements in business, family life, and community standing suggest a form of fulfilment aligned with the aspirations of the American Dream. However, this apparent completeness is ultimately revealed to be fragile and illusory.

The disruption caused by his daughter's violent actions exposes the limitations of his carefully constructed identity. Rather than demonstrating self-actualization, Seymour's experience reveals his inability to fully comprehend or adapt to the complexities of the world around him. His persistent attempt to impose

order and meaning on chaotic circumstances reflects not fulfilment, but a struggle to maintain coherence in the face of disintegration.

Similarly, the trajectories of other characters in the novel indicate that the pursuit of purpose can take divergent and often conflicting forms. Rather than presenting self-actualization as a shared or attainable goal, Roth emphasizes the unpredictability of human choices and the consequences that follow.

Seymour “Swede” Levov’s journey to self-actualization in *American Pastoral* took several ups and downs. Swede Levov begins as the embodiment of the American ideal; accomplished, admired, and seemingly content. However, his world unravels when his daughter commits an act of political violence. Though he begins to grasp the unpredictability and moral ambiguity of life, he remains trapped in sorrow and illusion. Swede edges toward self-awareness but ultimately falls short of achieving genuine self-actualization and faced several barriers like a deeply rooted belief in social harmony and moral clarity, a refusal to acknowledge the underlying tensions in his family, personal devastation caused by his daughter’s rebellion and an inability to align his sense of self with the chaotic reality around him.

Coleman Silk portrayed in *The Human Stain* as a man who is an eminent classics professor at New England's small Athena college. In this novel, he is revealed to be a light skinned black man. His boxing instructor suggested him not to reveal his real race if he needs to pass as a white. Such need of passing as a white Jew motivates him and he worked hard to achieve the reputable position in the society. He changed his fate by rejecting his blackness. He was of the view that his own blackish colour will ruin his future and will not be able to achieve that particular life which he wants to live. Being a black is not wrong but at the at that very moment, Coleman Silk considered it as a burden of his life right from the very beginning when his highly intelligent father mistreated him for his menial jobs. This was unacceptable for Silk. He did not want this to happen to him all the time. He decided to hide his identity and will pass as a white Jew.

He made his college to achieve great heights. He changed its aura from a small college to the most reputable College in the New England. To become an integral

part of the society he worked hard. His achievements did not last that long. He was fired from the college for using racist remarks in the college. After getting fired from the college gave a shock to his wife. It becomes unbearable for Silk as well as for his wife to cope up with such a blame. Silk's wife did not cope up with this particular situation and she died and Silk is left all alone. The crisis that define Silk's later life complicate any straightforward application of hierarchical models of development. The loss of his professional standing and the subsequent death of his wife destabilize both his personal and social identity. Rather than "regressing" in a linear sense, Silk's experience reveals how fragile previously established forms of belonging and recognition can be. His later relationships and choices reflect an attempt to reclaim agency and meaning; however, these efforts remain entangled in unresolved tensions related to identity, secrecy, and social judgment. His life thus illustrates the difficulty of sustaining a coherent sense of self in a context where external validation can be abruptly withdrawn.

Coleman Silk's journey to self-actualization in *The Human Stain* also has various ups and downs like that of Seymour Levov. Silk; a light-skinned black man who lives as white, constructs his identity around personal achievement and reinvention. After a scandal ends his academic career, he reasserts his autonomy through an unconventional romantic relationship and reflection on his past. While he never fully frees himself from the shadows of secrecy and judgment, he does reach a state of partial self-realization by acknowledging his inner contradictions. Like Nathan Zuckerman and Swede, Coleman Silk also faces challenges like shame surrounding his concealed racial identity, fear of rejection and societal condemnation, moral complexities in his relationships, and living in a society which is quick to condemn those who defy clear categorization.

Ira Ringold defines himself through his political ideology and public image as a working class hero. His downfall is prompted by betrayal and ideological conflict that shatters the identity he built. Unlike Zuckerman, Ira is unable to reconstruct himself after his ideological collapse. His story serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of building identity on rigid belief systems and external validation. Ira's journey has ample of barriers like a strong dependency on political identity for

personal meaning, inability to separate self-worth from public recognition, deep personal betrayal and political persecution and a failure to evolve beyond his disillusionment.

Across these novels, Roth's characters grapple with illusions, cultural pressures, and their own limitations. While figures like Zuckerman and Coleman Silk manage to move closer to self-actualization by confronting painful truths and embracing complexity, others like Swede and Ira remain entangled in denial or collapse under the weight of their constructed identities. Roth's work reveals that self-actualization is not a guarantee, but a hard-won process of reckoning with one's self and society.

Self-actualizers have deep love bonds, and have strong interpersonal relationships. They have a fewer number of intimate friends rather than having a bunch of superficial ones. They do care about the interpersonal relationships. The select characters in the novels have been seen as having intense and deep relationships with their loved ones. Nathan Zuckerman in *Zuckerman Bound* trilogy is seen as having deep, sympathetic relationship with his family and friends. In *The Ghost Writer* the readers can easily feel Nathan's longing for his father's love. He truly wants to make his father proud of himself. But as soon as he wrote a book, his parents turned against him for writing such a scandalous stuff in that book. In order to make his father proud, he made one more connection with his mentor Lonoff. With the help of Lonoff, he learned a lot many artistic skills and after that he went on publishing one book after another. At Lonoff's place, he got fascinated by a charming lady Amy Bellette. He wanted to marry her. He made a strong bond with her.

In *Zuckerman Unbound*, he received acclaim as well as criticism at the very same time. In order to make his father proud of his artistic creations, he let his father one more time to hate him. In *Zuckerman Unbound* when Victor Zuckerman is seen as on deathbed and while visiting Nathan's father uttered his last word bastard for his son. Such kind of remarks at the last time broke him completely. Lately, in the novel, *The Anatomy Lesson*, he lost his mother and seen as a miserable being wanting of someone who could handle his failure. At that stage he involved himself with a

couple of women. This sort of relationship with women have no meaning for Nathan yet he had them to get rid of his pain and sufferings.

Nathan's interpersonal relationship with his mentor Lonoff represents an artist's love for his creation. After facing rejection from his own biological father, he turned towards his spiritual father Lonoff who provided him with physiological needs by providing him with food which is the very basic need. Lonoff provided him with safety and security needs by allowing him to stay at his own place. Lonoff and Amy provided him with love, warmth, care, and affection that he is lacking right from the very beginning. He satisfied all his esteem needs by making a reputable position within the society. Although that reputable position did not last that long and Nathan out of guilt wanted to go for a completely unrealistic dream. The remarkable position he went through let Nathan to develop strong bonds with people around him. The esteem needs he developed for himself let him to be recognised by a number of people. His esteem in himself as well as in the eyes of people made him to take further steps of the ladder. His own subjective being made him capable to become self-actualised. The readers can easily feel his growth beyond the emotional barriers. Although the emotional touch that his family puts over him did make him weak but he is never seen in the *Zuckerman Unbound* to take his artistic creations for granted. He worked really hard to achieve his ultimate goals of life. Yet life has some intense painful plans for him.

While facing intense emotional breakdown in life let him to introspect himself on a very deep level. In the novel, *The Anatomy Lesson* he is being seen by the readers as emotionally and physically weak being. He lost his most crucial interpersonal relationships which is with his parents. In this novel, he is seen as having an undiagnosable pain which even his doctors cannot be able to cure. After losing such interpersonal relationships, he starts doubting everyone even his own identity. He started blaming his own creation to be solely responsible for his parents' death. The story can be interpreted on two different ideologies- on one hand he is seen as giving up his artistic skills and on the other hand his subjective being allows him to pursue medical profession. To pursue such unrealistic dream he made one more interpersonal relationship with his old friend Bobby. This friend of Nathan

assist him to pursue his unrealistic desire. Although this path was difficult to follow yet he managed to go for such profession.

According to Maslowian theory, an individual seek for his growth and development only when he sets a personal goal to achieve and satisfy. This ultimate goal is self-actualization, a need of an individual for his personal satisfaction and fulfilment that motivates an individual to change and develop according to what he sees good. A difference can be seen from person to person in case of personal fulfilment. For a self-actualizer, personal goals and achievement attain an apex stage according to Abraham Maslow.

The central characters of the these novels engage in sustained efforts to understand and interpret their own potential, yet this engagement does not necessarily result in the attainment of self-actualization. Their experiences reflect a continuous process of reassessment, where values, beliefs, and aspirations are repeatedly revised in response to changing circumstances. Rather than presenting fulfilment as a stable outcome, Roth portrays it as contingent and often interrupted. Moments of clarity and self-awareness coexist with confusion, loss, and contradiction, suggesting that the realization of one's potential remains an open and unresolved process.

They ooze out from their defying traditional norms and realize and rebelled according to their own norms and values. They preferred the personal over the social ideologies. Their bold choices to take a stand for themselves and live life according to their own rules can be considered as their peak experience. From here, they started their journey towards the self-actualization. They perceive reality in their unique ways. They act differently that make them more powerful by finding their own innate talents and capabilities.

The characters in the select novels demonstrate significant efforts to engage with their abilities and aspirations; however, these efforts do not culminate in complete or definitive fulfilment. Their creativity and determination are frequently accompanied by struggle, uncertainty, and limitation. Rather than emerging as "victorious" self-actualizers, they remain involved in an ongoing attempt to make

sense of their experiences and to negotiate their identities. Their lives illustrate that the pursuit of personal fulfilment is often marked by partial success, reversals, and unresolved tensions.

The characterization in these novels offers a complex exploration of human subjectivity rather than a straightforward affirmation of psychological fulfilment. Roth presents individuals whose lives are shaped by contradictions, cultural pressures, and personal struggle, thereby revealing the instability inherent in the formation of identity. Through these portrayals, self-actualization emerges not as a guaranteed outcome but as a fragile and often elusive possibility. The characters' struggles highlight broader questions about autonomy, responsibility, and the limits of self-knowledge, suggesting that the realization of the self is inseparable from uncertainty and vulnerability.

The study finds the main characters satisfying the four needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. By taking a look and understanding the way Roth has presented his characters in his fiction, the conditions they faced, it becomes easy to analyse the main characters' motivation, self, personality traits, and behavioural patterns in relation to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The main characters in the select novels have satisfied their physiological needs, safety and security needs, love and belongingness needs, and esteem needs in their own ways.

The central characters of the select novels appear to engage with various aspects of Maslow's framework, particularly in their pursuit of stability, recognition, and personal meaning. However, their experiences do not suggest a complete or uniform realization of self-actualization. While they display certain traits associated with self-actualizing individuals—such as introspection, independence, and creative engagement—these qualities remain uneven and context-dependent. Their lives therefore reflect an ongoing movement toward fulfilment rather than its definitive achievement.

In the select novels, these characters have been described as capable of becoming whatever they want by making full use of their efficiency, talents, and capabilities. They make their own choices and decisions. They are free to choose

their own way. These characters are psychologically healthy because during their lifetime they struggled a lot in order to gain full growth and development of human potentials and capabilities volitionally and they become the person whose personality develop dynamically and change them from erotic beings to matured one.

Humans are the individual creatures as well as social beings who have innate capabilities to reach to their maximum potential and actualize themselves. Not all human beings are capable to reach to this potential. The thing that pushed an individual to grow and develop is his unmet needs and his fears to fulfill them. This phenomenon occurs in our everyday life. The process of self-actualization includes the need to gain satisfaction with self-fulfilment and realizing one's potential to become one desires for. As the highest staircase of the hierarchy, individuals strive for this all their time to get satisfaction and fulfilment.

Self-actualization is not an end point of an individual's life, in fact it is a process that requires hard work, dedication, sacrifices, patience and commitment. The process of self-actualization in the main characters of the select novels cannot be separated from Maslow's basic to higher order needs. There is an event in Nathan's life to choose Lonoff- his spiritual father who provided him food and water when he came to learn artistic values; he is seen as satisfying the physiological needs. In fulfilling the need for safety and security, it can be seen in Swede's, Nathan's and Coleman Silk's working hard to get a stable, secure and safe place for themselves. While satisfying the need for love and belongingness, Nathan is seen as longing for love from his biological father, his brothers and from his social groups. He is seen as indulging with women when he wanted to get rid of his pain. While satisfying esteem needs, Nathan, Swede, Coleman Silk, and Ira are seen as getting esteem from others- recognition, acceptance, and admiration from their social cycle. This infact increases their self-esteem, in fulfilling self-actualization needs, these characters are seen as trying hard to find solutions to their problems that they had encountered. These characters are seen as understanding and analysing their innate capabilities and talents to become the one they actually wanted to.

This chapter has explored the idea of self-actualization in the select novels of Philip Roth through the lens of humanistic psychology, particularly the framework

proposed by Abraham Maslow. Rather than treating self-actualization as a fixed or fully attainable state, the analysis has emphasized it as a dynamic, uneven, and often contradictory process shaped by personal struggle, cultural pressures, and psychological complexity.

The trajectories of Nathan Zuckerman, Seymour Levov, Coleman Silk, and Ira Ringold reveal that the movement toward self-realization is neither linear nor guaranteed. While certain characters demonstrate moments of insight, autonomy, and creative assertion, these moments coexist with instability, loss, and fragmentation. Zuckerman's artistic persistence reflects an ongoing negotiation between individuality and societal expectations; Coleman Silk's reinvention of identity underscores both the possibilities and limitations of self-fashioning; Seymour Levov's disintegration exposes the fragility of idealized fulfilment; and Ira Ringold's collapse illustrates the dangers of grounding identity in rigid ideological structures.

Through these varied representations, the chapter highlights a crucial distinction between the pursuit of self-actualization and its attainment. Roth's fiction resists the notion of complete psychological fulfilment and instead presents the self as continually evolving, often under conditions of uncertainty and constraint. The characters' experiences suggest that self-actualization is not an end point to be achieved but a process of ongoing self-examination, adaptation, and, at times, failure.

At a broader level, this study contributes to an understanding of the human condition as inherently complex and unresolved. Roth's narratives foreground the tension between autonomy and external influence, between aspiration and limitation, and between coherence and fragmentation. In doing so, they challenge idealized models of personal growth and invite a more nuanced recognition of the difficulties involved in becoming oneself. Humanistic Psychology is even relevant today because it encourages an individual to analyse his true potential and become a self-actualizing being. It assist individuals to develop and grow for the betterment of the society. It helps an individual to have a better knowledge of himself and provides solutions to his emotional problems and break downs. It is better to live a life of contentment and it is possible only when an individual lives according to his own desires and wishes accordingly.

In conclusion, the chapter establishes that self-actualization in Roth's works operates as a conceptual and experiential framework through which the struggles of identity, meaning, and fulfilment can be examined. It is not a definitive state but a fragile and contingent possibility—one that is shaped as much by failure and contradiction as by growth and realization.

Conclusion of the Thesis

The present research, grounded in close textual analysis, has examined the development, implications, and applicability of Humanistic Psychology within the select novels of Philip Milton Roth. By bringing together literature and psychology, the study demonstrates that both disciplines share a fundamental concern with understanding human behaviour, motivation, and the search for meaning. Humanistic Psychology, emerging as a response to reductionist approaches, foregrounds the individual as a whole being endowed with creativity, free will, and the capacity for growth. This holistic framework has enabled a nuanced exploration of the inner lives, conflicts, and aspirations of Roth's characters.

The application of the theories of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers provides a significant foundation for interpreting the psychological journeys depicted in Roth's fiction. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs offers insight into the motivational structures that guide human behaviour, while Rogers' concept of the self highlights the importance of authenticity, self-awareness, and unconditional positive regard. Together, these theories facilitate an understanding of how individuals strive toward fulfilment and self-actualization.

However, this study also demonstrates that these humanistic models, while valuable, are not entirely sufficient to explain the complexity of Roth's fictional world. Maslow's notion of a linear and hierarchical progression toward self-actualization is challenged by characters whose lives are marked by instability, regression, and contradiction. Nathan Zuckerman's journey, for instance, reflects a continuous oscillation between creative fulfilment and psychological unrest, thereby resisting any fixed or final stage of self-actualization. Similarly, Seymour Levov's life in *American Pastoral* reveals the fragility of the so-called "fulfilled self," as external forces dismantle his carefully constructed identity.

In the same vein, Rogers' idea of a coherent and congruent self is problematized through characters such as Coleman Silk, whose identity is shaped through concealment and reinvention. His life raises critical questions about the

feasibility of authenticity in a socially constrained world. Ira Ringold's ideological struggles further complicate the notion of a stable self, demonstrating how external political and cultural forces can disrupt personal identity. Through such portrayals, Roth emphasizes that selfhood is not a unified or static entity but a fluid and contested construct.

Thus, while Humanistic Psychology offers a productive framework for analysing the pursuit of selfhood, Roth's fiction simultaneously interrogates and extends its assumptions. Self-actualization, in these novels, is not presented as a definitive achievement but as an ongoing, unstable, and often elusive process. The characters are engaged in a continuous negotiation between their desires, failures, and external realities, suggesting that fulfilment is neither permanent nor universally attainable.

Philip Milton Roth is considered as a novelist of great potential. His artistic vision makes him a novelist of great promise. After critically analysing the select works of Philip Milton Roth, the researcher realises his works are at war with his own community and society which is because of unorthodoxy. His works address directly the social problems and evils of the decade. He is seen as a social realist whose works represent the field of reality. Self-realization is underlined in all of his select novels. The proximity seen between Roth and his characters is so authentic. He did not rely on other material to attack his own community and society. He was being charged by his own Jewish community for representing Jews in the negative and lecherous ways. His study and representation of human characters have been underestimated. He is seen as a hard-core realist who represented his characters as active, creative and subjective beings. In every novel, he presents a different picture and life patterns of characters.

Roth's Zuckerman saga have been phenomenal in the field of literature— that has a unified structure with thematic eclecticism. Characters are seen as stable beings at the end of the novels. *The Ghost Writer* (1979), *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981), *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983), *American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), *The Human Stain* (2000) – made a remarkable and significant impression in the

American Literature. These select novels represent the lives of the characters with the finest blend of human needs with fiction. The kaleidoscopic portrayal of the characters is considered as of great importance. These select novels are divided into two different categories – *Zuckerman Bound Series* that comprises of *The Ghost Writer* (1979), *Zuckerman Unbound* (1981), *The Anatomy Lesson* (1983), and *The American Trilogy* series that comprises of *American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), *The Human Stain* (2000). All these works are an exploration of characters' growth, triumphs and failures. Roth fiction represent realism- in terms of a common man's suffering, struggle with his self desires, and obstacles in the process of self- fulfilment. His fiction not only brings a beam of hope for a common man but also address man's struggle in search of reality and truth. He portrayed Jew as an individual in his fiction and not an individual as a Jew. This is what Humanistic Psychology is all about- to consider an individual as human being and not an entity, no matter which culture or religion he belongs to. The characters created by Roth become the mouthpiece of common man. Such magnificent characters seem to be popping out of magician's hat.

The characters depicted by Roth in his fiction bring out the humanistic elements, he is aware of the reality of life which makes the readers to observe the striking moments of the characters. Instead of idealising the Jews in his fiction to sainthood, he represented his characters on the basis of a common man's existence. The portrayal of a common man with his struggle for self, failures, motivation, and success makes him a brilliant writer with humanistic concerns. The characters are seen as travelling towards peace, stability, security, esteem, and a decent fulfilled life. Through his alter-ego Nathan Zuckerman, Roth tries to present a wide variety of themes and an intense relationship between an individual's capabilities and desires and his struggle to fulfill them. His characters in the fiction are almost Jews, but when they are looked from a broader perspective these Jewish characters represent the common man's problem who are entangled between their needs and failures. His works add and represent a new dimension for a common man to work on his self-created journeys, from failures to success, from incomplete life to a self-fulfilled life and from a subdued being to a motivated being.

In all the works taken up for study in this thesis, the researcher finds initially that the characters are at conflict with their self but later on their struggle lead them towards self- fulfilment. The most important determinants– realization of self, and struggle to attain the ultimate goals were attained by the characters. After attaining the self-actualization in life, some characters saw a downfall of their self-fulfilment which is absolutely normal. Attaining self-actualization is an ongoing process. It does not matter how many times an individual has to face odd times in his life. He or she becomes self-actualized beings only if they are capable to accept their failures too. The process of growth and development is a bit tedious but what matters at the end is- an individual becomes strong and capable to accept his fall. Individuals work hard to achieve their ultimate goals but the results do not always come in the favour of an individual. Only a self-actualized being knows the struggle of attaining goals after crossing through several barriers in life.

The central contribution of this research lies in its demonstration that Roth redefines the concept of self-actualization beyond the idealistic formulations of Humanistic Psychology. His fiction presents a more complex and realistic vision of human existence, where growth is accompanied by struggle, ambiguity, and recurring crises. By placing humanistic theory in dialogue with literary analysis, this study not only reaffirms the relevance of Humanistic Psychology but also exposes its limitations in capturing the intricacies of modern identity formation.

Furthermore, the research highlights that individual development is deeply influenced by historical context, social pressures, and personal choices. Roth's characters embody the tension between aspiration and reality, revealing that the journey toward self-realization is shaped as much by external disruptions as by internal motivations. Failure, conflict, and disillusionment emerge not as obstacles to growth but as integral components of it. In this sense, the study broadens the understanding of self-actualization as a dynamic and evolving process rather than a fixed endpoint.

Scope for Future Research

While the present study has focused on select novels, it opens up several avenues for future research. One significant direction would be the exploration of other works of

Philip Milton Roth that have not been included in this study. A broader corpus analysis could further illuminate how the themes of selfhood, identity, and fulfilment evolve across his entire body of work. Additionally, comparative studies may be undertaken by placing Roth alongside other contemporary novelists who engage with similar psychological and existential concerns.

Another important area for future research lies in the application of alternative theoretical frameworks in conjunction with Humanistic Psychology. While this study has primarily employed Maslow and Rogers, future scholars may integrate perspectives from existential psychology, postmodern theory, or psychoanalytic criticism to provide a more layered interpretation of Roth's characters. Such interdisciplinary approaches would allow for a richer understanding of the tensions between individual agency and structural constraints.

Moreover, future researchers may examine the role of socio-political and historical contexts in shaping the process of self-actualization. Roth's novels are deeply embedded in specific cultural and political realities, and a more context-driven analysis could reveal how external forces influence the formation and fragmentation of identity. The intersection of identity with issues such as race, class, religion, and ideology presents another promising area of inquiry.

The therapeutic implications of Humanistic Psychology, briefly touched upon in this study, also offer scope for further exploration. Scholars may investigate how literary representations of trauma, conflict, and recovery can inform psychological practices, particularly in understanding the processes of healing, resilience, and self-discovery. This would strengthen the dialogue between literature and applied psychology.

This thesis paves the way for future research by establishing a critical bridge between Humanistic Psychology and literary studies. It demonstrates that literary texts can serve as rich sites for testing, questioning, and extending psychological theories. By highlighting both the applicability and the limitations of Maslow's and Rogers' models, the study encourages future scholars to adopt a more critical and nuanced approach when employing theoretical frameworks.

The research also contributes to the ongoing discourse on selfhood by presenting self-actualization as a non-linear and evolving process. This reconceptualization invites further scholarly engagement with the idea that identity is not a stable achievement but a continuous process shaped by multiple forces. Future researchers can build upon this perspective to explore similar themes in other literary traditions and cultural contexts.

In addition, the study underscores the importance of interdisciplinary research. By integrating insights from psychology and literature, it opens up new possibilities for examining human experience in a more holistic manner. This approach can be extended to other authors, genres, and theoretical paradigms, thereby expanding the scope of literary criticism.

The researcher has answered all the questions on the problem of study in the thesis in a coherent way. The researcher has answered how Roth's characters in his novels have been portrayed uniquely. They are seen as having a bent on the realization of their needs. These characters struggled a lot in satisfying their needs and in this process they faced several hurdles. All these questions have been answered in the chapters. The characters under study have shown a tremendous growth pattern. They too faced ups and downs in their path but it does not matter how many times an individual falls or faces a downfall after succeeding in life which is also pretty normal, the thing that matters is the self-discovery of an individual again and again. Situations change and so do the needs of an individual. Every new need requires motivation which can be achieved only through self-discovery. There are numerous goals of an individual, they all can be achieved one after the another and ultimately making an individual a self-actualised being. Self-actualization is a never ending process, it goes on and on. After satisfying one need the other need starts motivating an individual. It happens again and again unless an individual dies. It is very important for every individual to have a positive spirit towards life. It's a dire need in today's scenario where an individual is centred around many things— that an individual must realise and recognise his talents and capabilities. After such realization, he needs to work for it until he achieves it and become a self- actualised being.

It is not enough for an individual to have an optimistic outlook of life but the unconditional positive regard and empathy is required to make an ordinary being a fully functioning being. Environment which is up to the mark and is particular plays a crucial role in enhancing the positive personality aspects of an individual. It does not matter how many times a person falls or how many obstacles he or she faces in the process of growth and development but what matters is to rise again and again after a fall with a brighter outlook of life. In the select novels the characters under study have shown a remarkable growth pattern. They faced hurdles- rise again and fall and again try hard to rise. This pattern is an ongoing process until an individual achieves what he wants. There is more scope of research on the other novels of Philip Milton Roth. These novels can also be studied under the light of Humanistic Perspective.

Growth after dreadful events is complex. It is very important for an individual to connect with himself, with his needs, with others and as well as with the world in general. Therapists need to treat such clients with certain transformations– changes in the self or make intense relationship with the self. Such changes in the self of an individual can increase his sense of personal worth which can be possible only if he is ready to accept his sensibilities, vulnerabilities, talents and failures too. Individual who survived dreadful events and healed from it are often moved by their care and sympathy of others and feel better with their interpersonal relationships. Such compassion and awareness makes an individual to appreciate his life in general. The individuals who survived after deadly and ghastly experiences and events need to be motivated so that they can appreciate their life; the more they appreciate, the more they will find pleasure and possibilities in their life.

Any traumatic event or experience forced individuals to questions their existence. Such experiences mark an injury to the existence of an individual that may trigger and force an individual to reflect on the ultimate purpose of lives. This existential awareness lead to fuller appreciation of life although, it can trigger an individual's wound but at the same time also reveal the ultimate meaning of existence. In fact to treat such people, holistic approach need to be adopted that will focus on an individual's free-will, potential, talents and self- discovery. It will aim at

developing a healthy and a strong sense of self through which an individual can focus on his strength and ultimate goals. Humanistic therapy can be much effective for people having anxiety, depression, personality disorders etc. Every individual is unique and so is the experience so he should be treated individually. Every individual has a unique way of perceiving the world and this is the view that can impact the choices and actions of an individual. Humanistic therapy can develop self-acceptance and help in overcoming criticism in life. In fact this approach emphasizes on transformative therapeutic agents which allows an individual to move from a victim to a survivor.

The ultimate motif of this thesis is to understand that the afterlife of an individual after facing deadly and traumatic events is really very important. It cannot be denied what people faced during world wars or other issues whether social or political, the scars these events had given to them cannot be neglected, but life cannot stop at just one absurd moment of life. It goes on. Motivating such individuals, treating their wounds through Humanistic therapy encouraging them to find their real essence of life can help them to move further in life and can become an integral part of the world one more time. Dreadful events and experiences cannot be forgotten in mere days or months. It requires years and years but with these years it also requires unconditional positive regard, and empathy to heal the wound and to encourage an individual to realise his talents, creativity, and work on them to become a self-actualised being. In almost every part of the world, people face religious, racist, political issues etc but they all did not give up their lives for such issues. There is always another problem standing behind so people need to continuously work hard for their goals. Their actions will define their personality. Individuals themselves need to get rid of their pain and suffering by moving on to the path of self-discovery and self-enlightenment.

In conclusion, this research establishes that Humanistic Psychology remains a valuable yet limited framework for understanding human behaviour and selfhood. Roth's fiction enriches and complicates this framework by presenting a nuanced portrayal of individuals who are constantly negotiating their identities in the face of internal and external challenges. Self-actualization emerges not as a final destination

but as a continuous process of becoming—marked by resilience, self-reflection, and the capacity to confront one's own limitations.

By re-reading Roth's select works through a humanistic lens, the study not only deepens the understanding of his characters but also offers broader insights into the nature of human existence. It affirms that the journey toward fulfilment is complex, dynamic, and deeply rooted in the interplay between the self and the world. In doing so, the thesis provides a meaningful foundation for future scholars to further explore the intricate relationship between literature, psychology, and the evolving concept of the self.

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