

Whiteness and Democracy in Philip Roth's *I Married a Communist*

Lixia Wang^{1,2}

¹School of Foreign Languages, Soochow University, China

²School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University of Science and Technology, China

Copyright©2019 by authors, all rights reserved. Authors agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

Abstract Philip Roth is one of the most well-known and prolific writers in contemporary America, and *I Married A Communist* is the masterpiece of his reflections on American society at large. Set against McCarthyism in the 1950s, *I Married A Communist* displays Roth's contemplation of the relationships among Communism, whiteness and American democracy, and especially that between the latter two. Whiteness, based on racial differentiation and exclusion, exposes the inherent contradiction of American democracy. On the one hand, American democracy strives for equality, liberty and individual rights for all its citizens, but on the other hand, whiteness reveals various inequalities and injustices. To some extent, whiteness is complicit with American democracy, and Communism makes that complicity explicit.

Keywords Philip Roth, *I Married a Communist*, Whiteness, Democracy

1. Introduction

In 1998, Philip Roth (1933-2018), a prestigious and prolific Jewish American writer, published the second novel of his American Trilogy—*I Married A Communist*. In it, Philip Roth blurs the line between fiction and fact. Layered within the talk of the past between high school teacher Murray Ringold and his student Nathan Zuckerman, often considered to be Philip Roth's alter ego, are the roles these two narrators play. Murray Ringold is one of the two narrators as well as a character in Nathan's novel, and Nathan Zuckerman is the other narrator, the audience of Murray Ringold's story, the participant in Ira Ringold's life story and the nominal author of the novel. Like Ira Ringold, whose Communist identity is exposed by his wife Eve Frame in a ghost-written book entitled *I Married A Communist*, Philip Roth was also castigated by his second wife, Claire Bloom, in her *Leaving A Doll's*

House: A Memoir (1996).

I Married A Communist, which was not penned in revenge for *Leaving A Doll's House: A Memoir*, is mainly about Ira Ringold's private life, which is closely entangled with the American political life of the 1950s. Compared with the other two works of the American Trilogy, which are *American Pastoral* (1997) and *The Human Stain* (2000), *I Married A Communist* has not sparked great interest in America or in China, although some American scholars are attracted by the background of the novel. Ross Posnock [1] states that "the novel is meticulous and (largely) sympathetic portrayal of the enthrallingly sentimental, noble, and tawdry populist political culture of the forties and early fifties American Left," and Elaine B. Safer [2] thinks that "an apocalyptic view is offered of the effects of the McCarthyism of the fifties." Portraying Ira Ringold (also Iron Rinn) against McCarthyism, Roth explores the individual existence against particular historical backgrounds. As to Ira Ringold, "history had been scaled down and personalized, America had been scaled down and personalized: for me, that was the enchantment not only of Norman Corwin but of the times. You flood into America and America floods into you." [3]

Furthermore, Roth talks about the survival of ethnic individuals against the tradition of American democracy. Aimee L. Pozorski [4] states that "this novel's background comes from descriptions of Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Paine; it comes from ranting about the founding ideals of the United States." Ira, who impersonates Lincoln on occasions, often rants about "the founding ideals" expounded by Lincoln, which are as follows:

with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations. [3]

Till the 1950s, the "founding ideals" put forward by

Lincoln remained only ideals. For centuries, American democracy had been trapped in a dilemma. On the one hand, American democracy had been seeking equality, liberty and individual rights for its citizens, but on the other hand, its racial problems testified to various inequalities and injustices. As to the relationship between democracy and race, some American scholars consider it to be contradictory, so the study of race is often separated from that of democracy. On the contrary, other scholars negate the antagonistic relationship between democracy and race, and they think they are closely related, or even “mutually constitutive.” [5] In this view, American democracy is accompanied by racial oppression. To a large extent, *I Married A Communist* is “Roth’s vision of the US democracy as inherently and irredeemably flawed.” [4] In essence, “American democracy is a white democracy, a polity ruled in the interests of a white citizenry and characterized by simultaneous relations of equality and privilege: equality among whites, who are privileged in relation to those who are not white.” [5] American democracy in the 1950s was greatly influenced by whiteness, which is neither white supremacy nor white skin, and according to Ruth Frankenberg [6],

first, whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege. Second, it is a ‘standpoint,’ a place from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society. Third, ‘whiteness’ refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed.

Obviously, whiteness is an abstract category constructed on the basis of the differentiation and exclusion of “others,” but it is of unrivalled significance in American society. Generally, whiteness is invisible, and race has become the explicit representation of whiteness, so whiteness is at the root of race. The essay analyzes *I Married A Communist* with regards to American politics, citizenship and class struggle, to anatomize the complicity between whiteness and democracy.

2. Whiteness and American Politics

In Nathan Zuckerman’s reminiscences of his earlier “political and artistic consciousness,” [7] “the Ringolds were the one-two punch promising to initiate me into the big show, into my beginning to understand what it makes to be a man on the larger scale.” [3] In *I Married A Communist*, Philip Roth sketches “the large scale” of the tradition of American liberalism featured in populism by those people young Nathan Zuckerman admires—Thomas Paine, Abraham Lincoln and Norman Corwin. Having read Howard Fast’s *Citizen Tom Paine*, Nathan feels that there seems “no way other than Paine’s for a man to live and die if he was intent on demanding, in behalf of human freedom...the transformation of society.” [3] As an heir to Paine’s ideas about freedom, equality and natural rights,

Abraham Lincoln, impersonated by Ira Ringold, represents the continuity of American liberalism and the revitalization of this tradition in the 1950s. “The Spirit of the Common Man” in ordinary Americans aroused by Norman Corwin’s *On a Note of Triumph* is the modern version of the tradition of American liberalism. However, whiteness lays American liberalism aside, and American politics under the influence of whiteness has always betrayed the ideal of liberalism.

Political parties play significant roles in *I Married A Communist* as well as in the American political arena. They symbolize the development and progress of modern democracy because the disputes among political parties boost the development of American politics, economy and whole society. Steve Martinot [8] points out that “of the several issues that drove politics toward party formation, slavery was the most important and contestatory.” Slavery, or race, has caused American political parties to become stuck in a paradoxical situation. Theoretically, those political parties do their utmost to convince voters that their political views will lead to the final resolution of racial problems completely, whereas in actuality, they go to great lengths to protect the interests of the white ruling class. As far as the two-party system is concerned,

the form that political differences took during the moment of consolidation of the two-party system was based not on how to implement constitutional democracy but rather on how to organize white hegemony and how to structure white politics, for which black disenfranchisement was the necessary background. [8]

“How to organize white hegemony” was still at the heart of American political parties in the 1950s. Through the quarrel between Nathan Zuckerman and his father, Roth ingenuously displays the attitude of the two major political parties towards race. It can be easily inferred that both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party were greatly influenced by whiteness, and they were devoted to the maintenance and consolidation of the dominance of white-skinned Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

In the novel, Nathan’s father determines to vote for the Democratic Party. He explains to Nathan that “if we get the Republicans, that will mean the suffering in this country that it has always meant...You despise big business, Nathan? You despise what you and Henry Wallace call ‘the Big Boys from Wall Street’?” [3] From the perspective of Nathan’s father, the Republican Party, which represents the interests of big business, will bring about poverty and hardship for ordinary people like them. Though Nathan doesn’t have a preference for the Republican Party, he knows clearly that “the Democrats will never do anything to end segregation. They will never outlaw lynching and the poll tax and Jim Crow. They never have and they never will.” [3] When Ira Ringold tries to persuade a black woman into voting for the Progressive Party and is

declined, Ira thinks that voting for the Democratic Party is to put back in power the people who are going to give black people “segregation and injustice and lynching and poll tax.” [3] To Nathan Zuckerman,

the two major political parties were equally without conscience when it came to the Negro’s rights, equally indifferent to the injustices inherent to the capitalist system, equally blind to the catastrophic consequences for all of mankind of our country’s deliberate provocation of the peace-loving Russian people. [3]

Nathan’s diatribe against the two major parties at that particular moment reflects the predicament of ordinary voters around the 1950s, because their voting rights couldn’t terminate racial inequality. Nathan Zuckerman describes this predicament in his script as follows,

Let’s call it Anywhere. Many people here in Anywhere give lip service to the fight against discrimination. They talk about the need to wreck the fences that keep minorities in social concentration camps. But too many carry on their fight in abstract terms. They think and speak of justice and decency and right, about Americanism, the Brotherhood of Man, and the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. All this is fine, but it shows they are really unaware of the what and why of racial, religious, and national discrimination. [3]

Obviously, “Anywhere” in Nathan’s script not only refers to America but also indicates that racial problems are omnipresent. In *I Married A Communist*, race appears to be of the greatest importance in the presidential election, and it is also the cause of the internal split in the Democratic Party. As to the 1948 presidential election, Philip Roth makes fiction and fact merge into one. Like those before and after it, the 1948 presidential election is a significant and integral part of American politics, and it is also a critical moment for the competition between the two major parties and an opportunity for other minor political parties to elucidate their political views to win votes. After Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman becomes president of the United States. Truman is the first American president to make a speech at the 1947 annual conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. His contributions to civil rights win him a lot of black votes, but make the Democrats in several southern states abandon him. The States Rights Party—the “Dixiecrats”—which is in favor of racial segregation, is set up and constitutes a threat to the Democratic Party, because the “Dixiecrats” will draw away votes, in particular southern votes. Besides, the “Dixiecrats” nominee for presidential candidate Strom Thurmond is a rabid segregationist, and “Thurmond’s candidacy marked the South’s commitment to segregation and white supremacy in spite of the party’s changing attitudes toward civil rights.” [9]

Race, or to be exact, whiteness, plays a very important role in the 1948 presidential election and the split of the Democratic Party, as does Communism. Truman and the majority of Democrats perceive the Soviet Union as both an ideological enemy and a threat. Communism is supposed to be an enemy of the Capitalist system in the United States, because it means to nullify private property ownership, which is the foundation of Capitalist system. Being a sergeant in Iran with Ira Ringold, Erwin Goldstine, as a spokesman for white Capitalists, thinks that the difference between Capitalism and Communism lies in the fact that “our system works because it’s based on the truth about people’s selfishness, and theirs doesn’t work because it’s based on a fairy tale about people’s unselfishness.” [3] In the United States, Capitalists and the ruling class refer to almost the same group of people, who are mostly WASPs. Communism is also supposed to be a threat to the white ruling class. When asked what the Communist Party stands for, Paul Robeson, “the Negro actor and singer, cochairman of the Wallace for President Committee,” [3] says that the Communist Party stands for “complete equality of the Negro people.” [3] From Nathan Zuckerman’s perspective, Truman is actually not a determined anti-racist when compared with Henry Wallace. Both the political views of the Progressive Party led by Wallace and the party’s image fill Nathan with the hope that racial problems are about to be solved completely. In Nathan’s opinion, Wallace is “a politician against high prices, against big business, against segregation and discrimination, against appeasing dictators like Francisco Franco and Chiang Kai-Shek.” [3] What’s more, the Progressive Party nominates “more Negro candidates for office than any party in American history—fifty Negro candidates for important national offices on Progressive Party tickets.” [3] The Progressive Party, which is made up of mainly Soviet sympathizers, becomes both an enemy and a threat because of Communist infiltration, which leads to its crushing defeat of it in the 1948 presidential election.

3. Whiteness and Citizenship

Steve Olson [5] states that

democracy and racial oppression are intimately connected in the United States...This connection is sealed through citizenship. Citizenship is a political identity signifying equality in the public sphere and the shared enjoyment of rights and duties, including the all-important right to participate in governing public affairs.

Olson further points out that in the antebellum era, “whiteness became the political color of citizenship. The significance of racialized citizenship is not that only white persons could become citizens; it is that becoming a citizen effectively made one white.” [5] Ira Ringold’s personal

experiences of constructing his American identity show that even nearly 100 years after the Civil War, whiteness still means citizenship, and vice versa.

As a child, Ira grows up as “a loudmouth kike outsider” in an Italian community. Before World War II, the Jews were not whites because of cultural and religious differences and limited class mobility, so they couldn't be regarded as American citizens. They were excluded both by the white ruling class and poor whites like Italians. Whiteness has stratified American society, and this stratification has been solidified. A “little guy” as he is, Ira cannot resist “the lure of the underdog,” and “the struggle of the disinherited up from the bottom was an irresistible lure.” [3] Ira Ringold is a representative American figure who travels around, takes any job no matter how hard it is, and most importantly, moves upwards along the social ladder through his hard work. Philip Roth has endowed Ira Ringold with individuality, which has been cherished long in the United States, and the determination of self-transformation.

Motivated by “the struggle of the disinherited up from the bottom” and “a struggle not to pick up that shovel” with which he kills an Italian who always abuses him due to his Jewish identity, Ira becomes a Communist. While in Iran, Ira Ringold reads a lot of Marxist works and joins the Communist Party with the help of Jonny O'Day, who, as another father figure, is responsible for Ira's political consciousness. Communism offers Ira a political identity which can enable him to participate in public affairs as a Jew, so it seems that Communism is only a shortcut for Ira. To him, becoming a Communist signals the possibility of self-transformation. Therefore,

Ira belonged to the Communist Party heart and soul. Ira obeyed every one-hundred-eighty-degree shift of policy...He managed to squelch his doubts and convince himself that his obedience to every last one of the party's twists and turns was helping to build a just and equitable society in America. [3]

According to Murray Ringold, there were a lot of young “Iras” in the 1950s who were politically and morally “gullible.” Disappointingly, political beliefs cannot liberate them from their dilemma as both Americans and non-Americans. What they, like Ira, aspire to is individuality and freedom which the two-room shack in Jersey represents, but Communism, like Judaism, still symbolizes a group identity instead of an individual identity.

Philip Roth portrays Ira as “a Communist with a weakness for life...an impassioned Communist who was not, however, made to live in the closed enclave of the party, and that was what subverted and destroyed him.” [3] By doing this, Roth exposes the personal contradiction between Ira's political commitment and aspirations for home life. Ira's commitment to Communism is a kind of “blind ideological faith” [10] which is actually

“self-betrayal, the betrayal of one's ideals and moral conscience.” [10] Leaving the army and later on O'Day, Ira becomes a leading player on the radio writer Arthur Sokolow's prestigious weekly hour-long show, *The Free and the Brave*. Later he changes his name into Iron Rinn who “propagates the post-war myth of the ‘common man,’ the wholesome, unified being” [11] and turns into a secret Communist. A stable and prestigious job has helped Ira realize both economic and social upward mobility which makes him struggle between his political beliefs and family life.

His marriage to a once famous actress Eve Frame, who still enjoys great popularity as a radio hostess among ordinary people and the middle class, drags him up “out of the Newark ditch and into the world of light.” [3] Ira is proud of the transformation—“the trinity of Iras, all three of him—the patriot martyr of the podium Abraham Lincoln, the natural, hardy American of the airwaves Iron Rinn, and the redeemed roughneck from Newark's First War Ira Ringold,” [3] and the transformation has bestowed on him a new white identity. After the marriage, “that beautiful house, all those books, records, the paintings on the wall, that life she had full of accomplished people, polished, interesting, educated people” [3] have led Ira into a life he has never known or imagined. However, blind romantic faith has made him overlook Eve Frame and his step-daughter Sylphid's anti-Semitism, which causes a series of problems in his marriage. Besides, his aspirations for freedom are constantly in conflict with the bondage imposed on him by marriage. Ira is loyal neither to his political beliefs nor to his marriage. His belief in Communism is “self-betrayal,” and so is his marriage to Eve Frame. “Ironically, his marriage to Eve, which begins as a romantic idyll—the consummation of his journey from street brawler to aristocratic thespian—proves ultimately to be an expression of self-betrayal rather than self-fulfillment.” [12]

Ira's personal contradictions reflect the national contradictions between freedom of political beliefs and the witch-hunt McCarthyism which robs people of that freedom as well as the contradiction between racial equality and whiteness. Ira's new white identity is not stable at all, because when Eve Frame discovers that Ira has betrayed her and has had affairs with Sylphid's friend Pamela and also his masseuse, she discloses Ira's Communist affiliations in her ghost-written biography *I Married A Communist*. Ira Ringold is on the list of the House Un-American Activities Committee, which is supposed to investigate alleged disloyalty and subversive activities on the part of private citizens, public employees, etc. Communists are thought to be both disloyal and subversive, so anyone who is suspected of being a Soviet sympathizer or Communist will be investigated thoroughly. Roth integrates this historical background into the novel through the hearing of Murray Ringold. Murray Ringold refuses to cooperate, and one of the committee members

says, “Sir, I question your loyalty.” [3] Murray Ringold in return says, “And I question yours.” [3] Both Ira and Murray are dismissed because of their “disloyalty.”

In his letter to Philip Roth about *I Married A Communist*, Saul Bellow writes, “It’s a treat to read one of your manuscripts—I say this up-front—but this time the overall effect was not satisfactory.” [13] In Bellow’s opinion, Ira Ringold is “probably the least attractive” [13] of all Roth’s characters. However, to Roth, Ira is not alone, because “back in that era, there were a lot of angry Jewish guys around like Ira. Angry Jews all over America, fighting something or other...aggressive about your beliefs and leaving no insult unavenged.” [3] Ira is “an instrument of history,” [3] “whose life was so intimately circumscribed by so much American history.” [3] Social and economic upward mobility has helped Jews assimilate into America, but their American citizenship is not stable at all, and Eve Frame, a Jew who passes for a WASP, proves this, when she is excluded by WASPs as soon as her Jewish identity is revealed.

4. Whiteness and Class Struggle

Whiteness divides not only all of American society but also the American working class into different categories. First of all, there are white workers and non-white workers, where white workers are supposed to be superior. Take the Mexicans with whom Ira Ringold once works in the Sussex zinc mines for example. The Mexican workers are “the lowest of the low.” [3] A conceptual distinction establishes the difference between white workers and ethnic minorities only in social position, and the division into work categories helps white workers acquire material privileges. Alexander Saxton [14] points out that as early as in the nineteenth century, “the presence of the Chinese tended to enhance opportunities for whites, since Chinese labor made possible infrastructure enterprises such as railroads, and by taking over low-paid and menial tasks left the skilled and prestigious positions for whites.” Although the wage white workers receive from “the skilled and prestigious positions” is absolutely out of proportion to the profit of white Capitalists, Du Bois [15] thinks that

it must be remembered that the white group of laborers, while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage. They were given public deference and titles of courtesy because they were white. They were admitted freely with all classes of white people to public functions, public parks, and the best schools.

Although white workers are not so rich or powerful as white Capitalists, they are tempted into believing that they, like white Capitalists, are totally different from those ethnic or black workers, and whiteness has got them out of the situation of being oppressed. As a result, “the

foundation of the American racial order is a cross-class alliance between the dominant class and one section of the working class.” [5] “The cross-class alliance” strengthens the unity of white people, and whiteness destroys the unity of the working class and weakens the power of white workers as a political force in a Capitalist society. “Race in the United States has served to mystify class relations while keeping the poor and working class politically divided.” [16] Economically, white workers who belong to the oppressed help maintain the operation of the Capitalist system in America. Politically, white workers are complicit with the oppressors, wrongly considering the class struggle waged by non-white workers as a racial struggle.

In Murray’s hearing, the members of the House Un-American Activities Committee raise a series of questions like

how can you be paid by the taxpayers’ money when you are obliged by your damnable Communist oath to teach the Soviet line? How in God’s name can you be a free agent and teach what the Communists dictate? Why don’t you get out of the party and reverse your tracks? I plead with you—return to the American way of life! [3]

Obviously, Communism is opposite to “the American way of life,” and any individual or behavior that deviates from “the American way of life” is labeled as being associated with Communism, and therefore questioned or censured because of disloyalty to the United States.

Four years after Ira Ringold is sacked, Murray Ringold is also dismissed because of his refusal to cooperate with the House Un-American Activities Committee. Although Ira Ringold and Nathan Zuckerman think that it is because he is Ira’s brother, Murray knows that they would have come after him even without Ira. He is investigated because he goes to great lengths to “establish the dignity” of his profession. What he is interested in is “teachers getting respect—respect, and proper emoluments for their labors, and so forth. Teachers had problems with pay, working conditions, benefits...” [3] Murray thinks that his concern is “not even so much political as economic,” [3] but “sociological.” However, the House Un-American Activities Committee thinks that Ira’s union “wasn’t the teachers’ union—it was the Union of Angry Jews.” [3] When “the teachers’ union” becomes “the Union of Angry Jews,” Murray’s sociological concern turns into a racial one.

A few days before Murray’s hearing, a thousand UE (the United Electrical Workers, to which Ira belongs while in Chicago) members picket the Robert Treat hotel, where the members of the House Un-American Activities Committee live. The *Star-Ledger* of Newark describes this activity not as “a legal demonstration as guaranteed by rights laid down in the Constitution” [3] but “an invasion of forces hostile to the congressional inquiry.” [3] The fact that those demonstrators chant in Spanish makes one of the committee congressmen draw the conclusion that these workers are “ignorant ‘dupes’ of the Communist Party.” [3]

What they seek to do is to “place social power in the hands of those who were inherently unsuited to hold it.” [16] Political radicalism and racial inferiority conflate. The members of the United Electrical Workers and Murray strive for the benefits of the working class, which is in conflict with American society where the interests of WASPs take priority, so what they do is far from being “the American way of life.”

The conflation of Communism and ethnic minorities has effectively blocked the overall joining of American working classes, and they who are organized by their respective unions have to struggle for their own benefits through non-violent means rather than aim to overturn the rule of the white Capitalists. Take Ira’s union for example. Most often, the union meetings held regularly are mainly about “routine business like proposals for a new contract, the problem of absenteeism, a parking-lot beef, discussion of the looming war...racism, the wages-causes-prices myth.” [3] Another consequence of the conflation between Communism and ethnic minorities is that it convinces the working class that Communism is to solve racial problems, and the resolution of racial problems will enable ethnic and black workers to enjoy equal rights, which is bound to do harm to the interests of white workers. Abraham Lincoln, personated by Ira Ringold, is popular among ordinary people, and “Lincoln’s” viewpoints of supporting price controls, condemning the Smith Act, and defending workers’ rights seem to enjoy popular support, but Americans are unwilling to vote for Henry Wallace’s Progressive Party which is supposed to be in line with “the founding ideals” upheld by Abraham Lincoln, mainly because the Progressive Party strives for equal rights between white and black.

5. Conclusions

Philip Roth integrates Ira Ringold into Rousseau and Thoreau’s tradition of individuality by the two-room shack, and he also integrates Ira Ringold into the political forces of his time, which once again stresses the inseparability of individual and history. Everyone is both inside and outside the history of his time. Derek Parker Royal [17] comments, “in American Trilogy, what he has done is to write the individual subject into the fabric of history, and in doing so he illustrates that identity is not only a product of, but also a hostage to, the many social, political, and cultural forces that surround it.” Ira’s construction of a new white identity is not only a product of the political forces, which require the participation of ethnic minorities or even black people to be in line with American democracy, but also a hostage to the same political forces, which are aimed at protecting the privileges for white people within American democracy.

Bringing a part of The Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858 or The Great Debates of 1858 back to life through Ira

Ringold, Roth displays the focus of the political sphere in 1948 by Stephen A. Douglas’s assertion that

I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. I believe this government was made on a white basis. I believe it was made for white men, for the benefit of white men, and their posterity forever. I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men...instead of conferring it upon Negroes, Indians, and other inferior races.” [3]

The existence of racial problems not only negates American democracy, but also reveals that whiteness is actually in the nature of American democracy. Fundamentally, on the one hand, whiteness robs non-whites of their equal participation in national and public affairs, and on the other, whiteness splits the working class to eliminate the threat to the existing political system and Capitalism. Communism is the focus of the globe and American political arena, and McCarthyism consolidates the rule of whiteness in the name of anti-Communism. As a result, *I Married A Communist* is Philip Roth’s reflection on that particular historical period and contemplation of whiteness and American democracy. Whiteness, which signals privileges, is inevitably in conflict with democracy, and the complicity between them has blocked America from becoming a democracy in real sense.

Acknowledgements

This paper is part of the result of the research program the author hosts, “The Study of Race in Philip Roth’s Later Novels,” No. 2017SJB1100.

REFERENCES

- [1] Posnock, Ross. (2006) *Philip Roth’s Rude Truth: The Art of Immaturity*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- [2] Safer, Elaine. B. (2006) *Mocking the Age: the Later Novels of Philip Roth*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- [3] Roth, Philip. (1998) *I Married A Communist*. New York & Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- [4] Pozorski, Aimee. (2011) *Roth and Trauma: the Problem of History in the Later Works (1995-2010)*. New York: the Continuum International Publishing Group.
- [5] Olson, Joel. (2004) *the Abolition of White Democracy*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- [6] Frankenberg, Ruth. (2005) *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. London: Routledge.
- [7] Hutchison, Anthony. (2005) “Purity is Petrefaction”: Liberalism and Betrayal in Philip Roth’s *I Married A*

Communist. Rethinking History, Vol. 9, No. 2/3, June/September, 315-327.

- [8] Martinot, Steve. (2010) *the Machinery of Whiteness: Studies in the Structure of Racialization*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- [9] Philpot, Tasha S. (2007) *Race, Republicans & the Return of the Party of Lincoln*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
- [10] MacDonald, Brian J. (2014) Philip Roth's Mock Lincoln. *Canadian Review of American Studies* 44, no. 3, 389-401.
- [11] Basu, Ann. (2015) *States of Trial: Manhood in Philip Roth's Post-War America*. New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- [12] Brauner, David. (2007) *Philip Roth*. Manchester &. New York: Manchester University Press.
- [13] Bellow, Saul. (2010) To Philip Roth. 1 Jan. 1998. In Saul Bellow & Benjamin Taylor (Eds.), *Saul Bellow Letters* (pp. 539-541). New York: Viking.
- [14] Saxton, Alexander. (1990) *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*. London and New York: Verso.
- [15] Du Bois, W. E. B. (2013) *Black Reconstruction in America*. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.
- [16] Horton, Carol A. (2005) *Race and the Making of American Liberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [17] Royal, Derek Parker. (2005) Pastoral Dreams and National Identity in *American Pastoral* and *I Married A Communist*. In Derek Parker Royal (Ed.), *Philip Roth: New Perspectives on an American Author*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.