

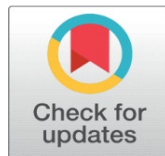
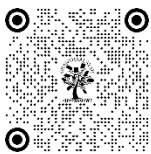


SATIRIC ELEMENTS IN TRADITION AND CULTURAL ROOTLESSNESS ARE DEPICTED IN CYNTHIA OZICK'S BLOODSHED AND THREE NOVELLAS

Sanju S. ¹, Dr. R. S. Regin Silvest ²

¹ Ph. D. Research Scholar, Reg.no: 22113224012004, Department of English, St. John's College of Arts and Science, Ammandivilai, Nagercoil, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, India-627012

² Assistant Professor & Research Supervisor, Department of English, St. John's College of Arts and Science, Ammandivilai, Nagercoil, Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamilnadu, India-627012



DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.3870](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.3870)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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ABSTRACT

Judaism has a strong hold on the concept of Jewishness, and its connection with the fundamental goodness of life and humans is what Jewishness is all about. It is because of this emphasis on the human race's kinship, the sanctity of human life and personality, and the individual's right to freedom that Jews have been able to not only endure the suffering inflicted upon them but also, be empowered to celebrate who they are. Jewish rites are extended into everyday life by Ozick. Cynthia Ozick's *Bloodshed and Three Novellas*, is mostly focused on the tradition's betrayal. Each tale in the anthology reflects extensively on tradition, on the betrayal of Jewish identity, and illustrates the unfavorable effects of rejecting traditional values. All of the main characters recognize how important it is to acknowledge their Jewishness in order to promote harmony, wellness, and peace. Ozick makes a strong statement on the challenges that Jews experience in assimilating into American culture. By emphasizing on numerous imperfections and flaws in the personality of her characters, she brings out funny situations and thoughts.

Keywords: Satire, Sarcasm, Jewish, Bloodshed, American culture



1. INTRODUCTION

Bloodshed and Three Novellas by Ozick examine the traditional Jewish contradiction of fact and fiction. The characters in this collection of short stories either have a strong Jewish heritage or identify as peripheral Jews. In this book, Ozick explores the effects of cultural rootlessness and the fallout from rejecting conventional beliefs. In this case, the novellas are coupled. They allow for divergent perspectives and illuminate them. In the novellas, Ozick reflects on tradition and discusses how Jews betrayed mosaic beliefs. Cynthia Ozick makes an effort in each story in this book to illustrate how damaging it would be for Jews to break with tradition and morality. She promotes the need to reject idolatry and idols. Ozick assumes the role of the voice for Jewish identity since assimilation is seen as a severe danger to Jews. In *Bloodshed and Three Novellas*, Cynthia Ozick establishes herself as a Jewish storyteller; she upholds the obligation bestowed upon her by the Holocaust and the degree to which such obligations distinguish Jews from other people. Through her short works, Ozick probes the roots of the "eschewal of the moral life," "discontinuity" attraction.

The issue of Jewish identity following the Holocaust is addressed in the opening tale in the anthology, "A Mercenary." Through the narrative, Ozick demonstrates how a false identity neither liberates nor elevates, and an impostor has no place in society. The story's main character is a Polish Jew by origin who flees Poland's barbarism for Africa's paganism and becomes a mercenary, the prime minister's garish pet, and a well-paid slave held for amusement. Although his mistress and his UN helpers easily penetrate the sardonic intellectual mask and reveal the weak Jew, the prospective victim, his passionate affinities to other cultures, Africans and Americans, are fueled by the stark dread of embracing his Jewish identity. The epigraph has been presented by Ozick as the ideal illustration of worship. According to Lawrence S. Friedman, "Goebbels's words are characteristically sinister in their historical context, implying that the Holocaust—that definitive 'creation' of Nazi 'expressionism'—reflected the twisted life of its perpetrators" (94).

The Jews who stray from their culture are mocked by Ozick. They are therefore unworthy of God's favor and will have to face his wrath in a desolate place. Stanislaw Lushinski, the protagonist of the narrative, claims to believe in history but never goes back to the Jewish world. He eventually changed from someone who was afraid to someone who was terrified. The parallel events of Ngambe's life, who is the protagonist's hidden sharer, are also described in the narrative. Ozick emphasizes the crimes committed by the Nazis during the Holocaust against the Jews. They are unable to live their usual lives because the dread still lingers in their imaginations. Lushinski describes his early years as though he is recounting a myth. When he was six years old, Lushinski made his terrifying escape from the Nazis through the Polish woodlands.

Ozick draws a comparison between two hangings of the boyhoods of Lushinski and Morris: one was a cruel torment perpetrated by the villagers who hung Lushinski by his wrists from a rafter, and the other was a neck exercise performed by the village men. He escaped that world because of this. Ozick reveals the result of his own choice and the fallout from the historical incident in this way. The protagonist of Ozick's novel is seduced by foreign cultures and aspires to be born elsewhere. Everyone makes fun of him when he tells his tale, but his German mistress Louisa seems unconcerned about the authenticity of her lover. People who disregard their culture and end up unproductive are mocked by Ozick. Morris Ngambe's mental colonization of Europe as a result of leaving Africa and receiving an education at Oxford is a reflection of Lushinski's past. Morris Ngambe claims there is no conflict between the tribal and the universal, but the secretary of state dismisses him as uninteresting and pointless despite his firsthand experience of Africa. The contrast made by Ozick in his article "Towards a New Yiddish" is nonetheless evoked by this phrase. Ozick observes that to say tribal and universal are ultimately the same "is to annihilate culture". He has no interest in biography and is concerned with the results of life. Morris Ngambe is the embodiment of Lushinski's innermost wishes and a manifestation of paganism.

Ozick highlights the fact that Jews still experience the effects of the Holocaust and are filled with terror as a result. Lushinski ascribes his independence to a historical catastrophe: "Every survivor is free. Everything that can happen to a human being has already happened inside the survivor. The future can invent nothing worse. What he owns now is recklessness without fear" (37). Ozick says that liturgy is in charge of the reciprocal moral imagination in her article, *Towards a New Yiddish*. But according to Lushinski, there aren't any real-life holy men. Lushinski despises being Jewish. He feels compelled to take a bath at the mere mention of the term Jew, and this rite indicates baptism and links him to Disraeli, a Jew who had been baptised. Ozick exposes Lushinski's desire to live in the European woods rather than the African village's woodland as a native there. Morris describes Europe as the "Dark Continent," a "hellish and horrible" place from which "you fled... you ran like prey into the shadows" (23), and New York as a wilderness and a jungle. Lushinski fears what he is after fleeing his tormentors via the dangerous and dark Polish woodlands. He flees in fear and views Europe as the darkest part of the twentieth century.

At the end of the novel, however, Ozick's protagonist switches from being the victim to being the victimizes. Morris has a transformation, going from being frightened to being frightened. Thus, the tale highlights the condition of Jews, for whom mimicry neither elevates nor frees. They become just victims in the end. The issue of Jewish identity following the Holocaust is brought up by Ozick. The second part of Ozick's "Bloodshed" exposes the protagonist's transformation, just like it does in "A Mercenary" concerns. the distinction between Jews who are anchored in their culture and those who are on the periphery of it. The gang of Hasidim and mystics who follow them seduce the story's protagonist. He is obliged to admit his own lying and demonic practices at an interview with the Rebbe because he is suspicious of others' fraud. As a result, by placing the protagonist at the outskirts of Jewish civilization, Ozick places the Rebbe at its center. The story is a grave sin against God and disqualifies the writer from going to the next world.

Ozick also draws attention to the radically different theological reactions to the post-Holocaust human condition. In the story, Bleilip, a Jewish fundraiser, travels to a newly built Hasidic community outside of New York to meet a distant relative. He compares the survivors of the Holocaust to a community of dead men. He holds completely different opinions about Hasidim. He believes that his cousin is the beneficiary of a life that is blessed and safeguarded by God, a gift from the Messiah. The Rebbe incorporates passages from the Talmud into his reading and offers a novel interpretation of classical works. When he hears them, he withdraws to a place of uncertainty and misery. There, he examines the rebbe and draws the conclusion that he is a self-stabber based on his posture and amusingly flat nose. Only because he has come to study about the Hasidim, not as a pilgrim, does the Rebbe understand. Stories of miracles and the notion that certain "Rabbis" achieved levitation and hung in the air for all eternity captivate him, as does his scant reading. The spell, however, has no effect on the Rebbe. In spite of his desperation, he calls himself a secularist and rejects the notion that life is a mistake. Nevertheless, the Rebbe accuses Bleilip of hiding a toy pistol in his pocket, saying, "Beast! Lion." He would consume them, according to him (67).

The Nazis' crimes against Jews are also revealed by Ozick in her book. When Ozick discusses the messages kept in the pockets, she also mentions the Nazis' practice of using work permits. "All I am is ashes and dust." It also claims that the world was made "for my sake." The terrible rite divided those Jews who would be executed immediately and later, as the Nazis had covertly planned, giving false hope. Because it made a distinction between those who were meant to die immediately and those who were allowed to live momentarily, the labor permit system closely reflects the Rebbe's conception of the world without Messiah. Consequently, Ozick makes fun of the Nazis' hypocrisy. As a result, Cynthia Ozick uses her book to both expose the psychological responses of many Holocaust survivors and parody the disadvantaged Jews who abandon their rich culture. She makes fun of the Nazis' barbarism as well. By situating her protagonist on the outskirts of Jewish society and the rabbi at its center, she highlights the Rebbe's powers.

This book's fourth narrative is connected to its third. Idolatry is criticized in both stories. Ozick's short story "An Education" explores the dangers of idolatry and the importance of cultural decay. The protagonists of the book are Jews who make fun of their own culture and give in to Christian temptation. She reveals idolatry and examines its psychological and intellectual aspects. "The basic commandment that defines Jewish identity is reinterpreted" in the story (78). It is a humorous method of handling a student who makes an effort but fails to see life through the lens of words. When Una Meyer, the protagonist of the narrative, enrolls in a Latin course at college, she earns a "master's degree in classics and most of a Ph.D." by the time she reaches 24 (76). She lacks emotional intelligence and academic knowledge. She hates marriage. Identifying as a Platonist, she opposes the concept of "cultural relativity" and maintains that man is perfect. Una believes she has found her soulmate when her friend Rosalie introduces her to Clement and Mary Chimes and shares with her their card library of books. Two key concepts in Clement Chimes' writings are "non action" and "stasis." His lack of cultural roots prevents him from completing his work at the seminary and stifles his inventiveness. He is unable to go past the book's title page, "Social Cancer: A Diagnosis in Verse and Anger."

As a responsible daughter, she rides her bicycle to the market to buy food when she finds out that the family has less money. She views the birth of their daughter as the union of two perfections since she idolizes Chimes to such an extent. Boris Organize has started studying medicine. He considers the Chimeses "worse than perfect" in contrast to Una. In addition to protesting their mistreatment of Una, he informs them that their infant is undernourished. But when she returns home, her ideal parents object to her lover because of her obsequiousness and cooking. Una's infatuation is identified by the medical student, who also gives her a dose of reality. Una the qualities of imperfection and perfection, thereby signifying, respectively, Hellenism and Hebraism. As a result of breaking the rule of Judaism, which forbids idolatry, Ozick's protagonist experiences disappointment and disillusionment. As a result of violating Judaism, Ozick's protagonist experiences disappointment. The Jews who deny their history and flee from their identity are highlighted by Ozick. Clement Chimes has changed his name from Chaim, which in Hebrew means "life," to Chimes, which means "like what a bell does. Heidegger and the Holy Ghost are simply puns in his mind when he uses the word "Holocaust." Thus, Ozick mocks Jews who disrespect their culture.

The betrayal of Judaism is the topic of "Usurpation," much like in "Education". According to this argument, Jewish authors who create a make-believe reality through language are breaking the second commandment by engaging in idolatrous behaviour. Her willingness to follow the patriarchal ideas is made clear in the tale. It portrays what happens to a writer who abandons his tradition in order to change who he is. However, Ozick makes it plain that the residents of the next world do not let Jewish storytellers forget who they are when they choose to write about the profane rather than the holy. These authors, in Ozick's opinion, are usurpers. She writes, "Usurpation is a story written against story

telling against the Muse Goddesses: against Apollo,"(01), in the foreword to the book. It fights against idolatry, sorcery, and mystification as well as deception and false miracles. It is an innovation intended to counteract the corruptions and abominations of story-telling that result from idol worship or from the adulation of magical occurrences. The narrative centres on a Jewish author who is connected to the author. In her quest to create the ideal narrative and get the "magic crown" of fame and immortality, she corrupts the labour of others. In her narrative, Ozick also depicts the clash between Hebraism and Hellenism.

The story's protagonist and narrator are unnamed, much like Edelshtien from "Envy or Yiddish in America," who has a secret longing for western culture. Like Yankel Ostrover's killer, Edelstein, she is a little-known novelist with a tremendous ego who will do everything to get more readers. The novella highlights the author's conflict with tradition as Ozick's narrator accuses the well-known American Jewish author of breaking the law and committing immoral acts. She meets a famous author, listens to him speak, and reads his unpublished work on 92nd Y Street in New York. the Magic Crown, only to find it was something she had planned to write. Rather of treating the robbery seriously, Ozick treats it with contempt. While falsely accusing the narrator of squandering her creation, she tricks him into seeking something that was made by someone else. She accuses him of attacking the text and writing too fast. As a result, Ozick ridicules the author's exaggerated sense of uniqueness.

Ozick's protagonist is irresistibly drawn to anything that is anti-Moses. She doesn't take stories from other people's newspapers. She critiques, destroys, and then rebuilds their work. Furthermore, Ozick investigates the difference between religion and magic and comes to the conclusion that they are interchangeable. The narrator of *Usurpation* gives the following explanation for the student's death: "I killed off the student to punish him USE reak for arrogance." The goat was known as a ba'alga'avah. I disciplined him because only a ba'alga'avah would have the audacity to write about religion. In what way? By turning faith into magic" (157–58). According to her, the self-idolater is the only individual who is qualified to write about religion. The narrator of *Usurpation* lusts after magic, breaking the bond of tradition between old and new. The conclusion of "Usurpation" is influenced by Ozick's persistent last-after-stories as well as her fear of idolatry and desire to follow patriarchal precepts. Therefore, usurpation exposes Judaism's most recent and significant breach and supports its commandment-obedience.

Bloodshed and Three Novellas by Ozick contains four fictions that are directly relevant to the current. She exhorts us to give up the idols. The collection is a reflection on the challenge to modern living posed by the disappearance of values and beliefs. The first section of Ozick's experimental work, which focuses only on the creative process and the result, is broken up into four sections that are explicitly titled "fictions." *Bloodshed and The Three Novellas*, clearly illustrate Ozick's belief amid a trying moral situation. She is very concerned that the loss of Jewish principles and beliefs in the modern world poses a threat to the preservation of the Jewish heritage. Kauvar opines that, "Concerned as they are with the rootlessness, disbelief, and idolatry, the fictions in *Bloodshed* pertain directly to our times" (110). Cynthia Ozick makes an effort in each story in this book to illustrate how damaging it would be for Jews to break with tradition and morality. She promotes the need to reject idolatry and idols

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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