

*The syncretism of Bernard Malamud*Ozick, C. *Literary Blacks and Jews*Winegarten, R. *Malamud's head (Rembrandt's hat)*--Allen, J. A. *The promised end: Bernard Malamud's The tenants*Field, L. *Portrait of the artist as schlemiel (Pictures of Fidelman)*--Hoag, G. *Malamud's trial: The fixer and the critics*Astro, R.

A- Katha Pollitt From the Reviews: There is something relentless, something humorless, in Art and Ardor Still, Miss Ozick might say that we have had enough of relenting, of humoring our writers. They jump up and down, they grab the reader by the shirt-front. Similarly the illustrative quotes chosen here are merely those the complete review subjectively believes represent the tenor and judgment of the review as a whole. We acknowledge and remind and warn you that they may, in fact, be entirely unrepresentative of the actual reviews by any other measure. There are now four volumes. It covers the longest span to , and in many ways is the most enjoyable. But they are an interesting lot of pieces, with Ozick at her feisty best, pushing boundaries more than she tends to do in her later, more controlled pieces. The efforts often seem at least somewhat misguided, but are nevertheless worthwhile. Suspicious of the form itself "Essays know too much", she writes in her foreword , she still manages to accomplish a great deal here. For one, there are useful introductory notes to several of the pieces. Some of the essays are also "conflated" from several previously published pieces, tying together various loose ends in one tighter piece. There are a number of book reviews, with most fortunately of the longer and more detailed variety often first published in Commentary , rather than the limited New York Book Review kind though there are some from there as well. Several of the longer pieces are particularly interesting. In *Toward a New Yiddish* Ozick famously suggested that English could serve as "a language for our need", as the basis for a new Yiddish. It is an idea from which she has since distanced herself, but the reasoning behind it and the presentation of her case which was first made in is still of interest. Ozick tries to formulate and express her personal and artistic philosophies, expressing them more generally than in much of her later work. She condemns the cultural "stream that comes to us from Greece", especially the belief in fate -- and, of course, the detested idolatrous worship. Her religion and her background lead her to a different approach to art, and she has little respect for those authors that, for example, equate "the Holocaust and a corncob". She concludes, emphatically if not completely convincingly , that idolatry "traffics, ultimately, in corpses". Here, however, -- as also occasionally elsewhere -- the emotion well-conveyed in the stylistically strong writing threatens to overwhelm rational argument, making the essays less convincing than they otherwise might be. There are also two essays on sexism and feminism, justifiably angry though by now many aspects of them are -- as she herself admits -- out of date. These are not her best essays, but they take greater risks than most of the tempered later ones. They are energetic, and occasionally outlandish, and strongly led opinions that are strongly voiced. One might or must disagree with many of her bald statements and judgments, but the pieces are still fun to read, informative, and well-written.

In Blacks and Jews we can hear responsible voices, liberal and conservative alike, speaking from the intellect and from the heart about bigotry and prejudice in today's America, and about the hope for tolerance and democracy in the American future.

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: American Jewish History By Emily Miller Budick. Cambridge University Press, Leading critics Norman Podhoretz, Leslie Fiedler, Cynthia Ozick and Shlomo Katz as well as novelists Philip Roth, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Norman Mailer, for example, have devoted a significant part of their oeuvre to explaining the Black condition as well as to exploring the interaction of the two groups in society. Black writers have paid less attention to Jews. Jews, having become highly assimilated, she suggests, looked to Blacks to remind them of their fading, Jewish identity. In a sense, she argues, Jews found in Blacks a stand-in for themselves. Jewish critics and writers, such as Sidney Hook, Norman Podhoretz, and others, felt that through the elimination of prejudice and discrimination, Blacks would inexorably follow the same trajectory as Jews. The Black experience, however, differed significantly from that of Jews. Jews were, in the final analysis, Whites. By the second half of the s, as [End Page] integration efforts failed to relieve social and economic disadvantages, Black writers and intellectuals became more interested in going it alone. Thus, writers, such as James Baldwin and especially Harold Cruse, often infuriated their Jewish counterparts by seeking to shake off Jewish as well as White influence and control. Still, the two groups were historically locked together. There was the common experience of slavery and how it played out in each community. In recent years, Black writers have been angered by what some saw as the Jewish appropriation of the term. They did not need to be told by Jews or Jewish writers that their suffering was as great as that of the American Black. Even as the relations between Blacks and Jews grew more tense beginning in the late s, what Fiedler called the "myth of racial harmony and intermingling," retained continued saliency. But the "myth", if it indeed was a myth, has begun to wear thin more recently. Even though Podhoretz shared it, to some degree, his essay "My Negro Problem - and Ours" marked a sharp turn in Jewish writing about Blacks. Here Podhoretz candidly admitted his fear of Black physicality. Growing up in Brooklyn, he was sometimes beaten and robbed by Black toughs. Balancing fear and admiration, Podhoretz produced his famous solution -- miscegenation, a formula that satisfied neither Jews nor the rising class of Black militants and intellectuals. Despite what some might see as racist overtones, the novel, so Budick suggests, offers an impassioned plea for rationality and human balance. A Crisis of [End Page] Liberalism which suggests that in crucial You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

Chapter 3 : The Tenants (novel) - Wikipedia

Blacks and Jews in Literary Conversation explores the works of a range of black and Jewish writers, critics, and academics from the s to the s. By recording conversations both direct, such as essays and letters, and indirect, such as the fiction of Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Alice Walker, Cynthia Ozick, Toni Morrison, and James Baldwin, this book shows how dialogue can engender.

They settled in cities such as Providence, Rhode Island , Charleston, South Carolina , and Savannah, Georgia , generally becoming part of local societies. They were slaveholders when that was the local practice. With major immigration of Ashkenazi Jews from Germany, followed by waves from Eastern Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Jews and blacks had a greater variety of encounters, and these were markedly different in northern cities and southern areas, many of which were still dominated by agriculture. Jewish immigrants entered northern and midwestern cities in the same period when blacks were migrating in the hundreds of thousands from the rural South in the Great Migration. Stressing the similarities rather than the differences between the Jewish and Black experience in America, Jewish leaders emphasized the idea that both groups would benefit the more America moved toward a society of merit, free of religious, ethnic and racial restrictions. About 50 percent of the civil rights attorneys in the South during the s were Jews, as were over 50 percent of the Whites who went to Mississippi in to challenge Jim Crow Laws. His push to celebrate Africa as the original homeland of African Americans, led many Jews to compare Garvey to leaders of Zionism. In that period stressing self-determination for former colonies, Zionists were promoting a "return of Jews" after 2, years to the historic homeland of Israel. They called him a "dirty, filthy, black, drunken, lying, nigger. They were inspired by principles of justice, and by a desire to change racist policies in United States. Historian Hasia Diner notes that "they made sure that their actions were well publicized" as part of an effort to demonstrate increasing Jewish political clout. Spingarn , and founder Henry Moskowitz. More recently, Jack Greenberg was a leader in the organization. This was true in most regions of the South, where Jews were often merchants in its small cities, as well as northern urban cities such as New York, where they settled in high numbers. Jewish shop-owners tended to be more civil than other whites to black customers, treating them with more dignity. Du Bois interpreted the role of Jews in the South as successors to the slave-barons: The Jew is the heir of the slave-baron in Dougherty [County, Georgia]; and as we ride westward, by wide stretching cornfields and stubby orchards of peach and pear, we see on all sides within the circle of dark forest a Land of Canaan. Here and there are tales of projects for money-getting, born in the swift days of Reconstruction,â€œ"improvement" companies, wine companies, mills and factories; nearly all failed, and the Jew fell heir. He wrote, [I]n Harlem We hated them because they were terrible landlords and did not take care of the buildings. The grocery store owner was a Jew The butcher was a Jew and, yes, we certainly paid more for bad cuts of meat than other New York citizens, and we very often carried insults home along with our meats The first white man I ever saw was the Jewish manager who arrived to collect the rent, and he collected the rent because he did not own the building. I never, in fact, saw any of the people who owned any of the buildings in which we scrubbed and suffered for so long, until I was a grown man and famous. None of them were Jews. And I was not stupid: I knew a murderer when I saw one, and the people who were trying to kill me were not Jews. When we were working in Chicago, we had numerous rent strikes on the West Side, and it was unfortunately true that, in most instances, the persons we had to conduct these strikes against were Jewish landlords We were living in a slum apartment owned by a Jew and a number of others, and we had to have a rent strike. We were paying 20 percent tax. The Negro ends up paying a color tax, and this has happened in instances where Negroes actually confronted Jews as the landlord or the storekeeper. The irrational statements that have been made are the result of these confrontations. Jewish producers in the United States entertainment industry produced many works on black subjects in the film industry , Broadway , and the music industry. Many portrayals of blacks were sympathetic, but historian Michael Rogin has discussed how some of the treatments could be considered exploitative. He suggests that these were deliberately racist portrayals but adds that they were also expressions of the culture at the time. Blacks could not appear in leading roles in either the

theatre or in movies: No Jewish people ever attacked or killed black people. Jeffries said that Jews controlled the film industry, using it to paint a negative stereotype of blacks. According to historian Greenberg, "It is significant that Jewish agencies engaged with their African American counterparts in a more sustained and fundamental way than did other white groups largely because their constituents and their understanding of Jewish values and Jewish self-interest pushed them in that direction. Reform Jews participated more frequently than did Orthodox Jews. Sixteen Jewish leaders were arrested while heeding a call from King to march in St. Augustine, Florida, in June. It was the occasion of the largest mass arrest of rabbis in American history, which took place at the Monson Motor Lodge. Martin Luther King Jr. Their deaths were considered martyrdom by some, and temporarily strengthened black-Jewish relations. Martin Luther King, Jr. Can we ever express our appreciation to the rabbis who chose to give moral witness with us in St. Augustine during our recent protest against segregation in that unhappy city? Need I remind anyone of the awful beating suffered by Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld of Cleveland when he joined the civil rights workers there in Hattiesburg, Mississippi? And who can ever forget the sacrifice of two Jewish lives, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, in the swamps of Mississippi? Philosopher and activist Cornel West asserts that there was no golden age in which "blacks and Jews were free of tension and friction". West says that this period of black-Jewish cooperation is often downplayed by blacks and romanticized by Jews: Jews, on the other hand, tend to romanticize this period because their present status as upper middle dogs and some top dogs in American society unsettles their historic self-image as progressives with a compassion for the underdog. It is as if all the efforts of the local blacks for voter registration and the desegregation of public facilities had not even existed until white help arrived. For Jewish liberals, the great memory of that summer has been the deaths of Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner and "almost as an afterthought" James Chaney. Jews from the southern states engaged in virtually no organized activity on behalf of civil rights. Jews were increasingly transitioning to middle-class and upper-class status, distancing themselves from blacks. At the same time, many black leaders, including some from the Black Power movement, became outspoken in their demands for greater equality, often criticizing Jews along with other white targets. Cruse insisted that Jewish involvement in interracial politics impeded the emergence of "Afro-American ethnic consciousness". For Cruse, as well as for other black activists, the role of American Jews as political mediator between Blacks and whites was "fraught with serious dangers to all concerned" and must be "terminated by Negroes themselves. Black Hebrew Israelites are groups of people, mostly of Black American ancestry situated mainly in the Americas who claim to be descendants of the ancient Israelites. They are generally not accepted as Jews by Orthodox or Conservative Jews, nor are they accepted by the greater Jewish community, due to their degree of divergence from mainstream Judaism. In a speech, Farrakhan said "I have a problem with Jews You, the black people of America and the Western Hemisphere [are]. In the early 20th century, one important area of cooperation was attempts to increase minority representation in the leadership of the United Automobile Workers UAW. In , Jews and blacks joined to request the creation of a new department within the UAW dedicated to minorities, but that request was refused by UAW leaders. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin. Blacks often perceive the Jewish defense of the state of Israel as a second instance of naked group interest, and, again, an abandonment of substantive moral deliberation. Some blacks view Israel as essentially a white and European power, supported from the outside, and occupying space that rightfully belongs to the original inhabitants of Palestine. The responses of the so-called young militants does not represent the position of the vast majority of Negroes. There are some who are color consumed and see a kind of mystique in being colored, and anything non-colored is condemned. We do not follow that course in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and certainly most of the organizations in the civil rights movement do not follow that course. Historians believe that this difference contributed to the decline of the black-Jewish alliance in the s, when blacks began seeking ways to build on the civil rights legislation of the s. Greenberg believes that this increased resentment and fear among Jews. Bakke, when black and Jewish organizations took opposing sides in the case of a white student who sued for admission, claiming that he was unfairly excluded by affirmative action programs. Some Jews accused him of anti-Semitism for these activities. These remarks were thought to have extended the era of African-American and Jewish distrust into the s. Some commentators believed that the unrest was related to

anti-Semitism. The two ethnic groups live in close proximity to each other in this neighborhood, and the Orthodox Jewish community has been expanding. Leonard Jeffries of the City College of New York was a proponent of this idea, but his conclusions have been disputed by major African-American historians of the slave trade, including David Brion Davis. According to surveys begun in by the Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish organization, African Americans are significantly more likely than white Americans to hold antisemitic beliefs. There is a strong correlation between higher education levels and the rejection of anti-Semitic stereotypes for all races. Black Americans of all education levels are significantly more likely than whites of the same education level to be anti-Semitic. Nation of Islam and antisemitism The Nation of Islam, a black religious and political group, expressed several anti-Semitic pronouncements in the late 20th century. But he did not consider Jews to be any more corrupt or oppressive than other whites. He is alleged to have referred to Judaism as a "dirty religion" and to have called Adolf Hitler a "very great man"; Farrakhan denied these claims [88] [89] [90] [91] [92] but a tape obtained by The New York Times supports the claim that he did and that he praised Hitler. Jewish views on slavery During the s, much of the Jewish-black conflict centered on allegations of anti-Semitism made against studies of Jewish involvement in the Atlantic slave trade and allegations that they were over-represented as prominent figures in it. Blacks consider [Jews] paternalistic. Black people have destroyed the previous relationship which they had with the Jewish community, in which we were the victims of a kind of paternalism, which is only a benevolent racism. The Americans claimed that they had the right of citizenship as Jews under the Israeli Law of Return. Under the law, the only people recognized as Jews are people who are born Jews having a Jewish mother or maternal grandmother, those with Jewish ancestry having a Jewish father or grandfather, and people who convert to Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative Judaism. He said that Israel had airlifted thousands of black Ethiopian Jews to Israel in the early s. They were considered a cult rather than a group of historic Jewish descendants.

Chapter 4 : Art & Ardor - Cynthia Ozick

A writer named Cynthia Ozick, it turned out, had already had the temerity to write an essay on literary Blacks and Jews--an essay titled, in fact, "Literary Blacks and Jews." All it took was one reading of the essay.

Chapter 5 : Blacks and Jews in Literary Conversation - E. Miller Budick, Emily Miller Budick - Google Books

Likewise, Adam Zachary Newton's innovative Facing Black and Jew explores how Ozick's essay "Literary Blacks and Jews" aims for ethical analysis but instead resorts to a common if subtle arrogation of the very grounds for ethical encounter to Jews and Jewish literature.

Chapter 6 : Blacks and Jews: Alliances and Arguments - Google Books

Elfin, soft-spoken, plainly dressed in a black blouse and a long black skirt (with white sneakers peeping out from beneath the hem), Ozick was an affable and attentive presence.

Chapter 7 : Project MUSE - Rereading Cynthia Ozick: Pluralism, Postmodernism, and the Multicultural Enc

A number of the pieces and reviews focus on Jewish issues, whether considering Updike's Bech books (specifically the first, though a postscript is added to update the appraisal) or Literary Blacks and Jews or The Magisterial Reach of Gershom Scholem.

Chapter 8 : African Americanâ€™ Jewish relations - Wikipedia

(African-American tradition is a less substantial presence in the book, which primarily pairs Jewish and Chicano literature and critique, but the one chapter dealing with African American work is an engaging, ethical intervention in the

politics of the reception of Toni Morrison's Beloved).

Chapter 9 : BLACKS AND JEWS by Paul Berman | Kirkus Reviews

Cambridge Studies in American Literature and Culture (paperback). Blacks and Jews in Literary Conversation explores the works of a range of black and Jewish writers, critics, and academics from the s to the s.