

Identity in Cynthia Ozick's A Mercenary

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Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the limits and complexities of identity in Cynthia Ozick's novella, A Mercenary. The paper focuses on the protagonist, Stanislaw Lushinski, a Polish Jew who continually attempts to drown his Jewish identity by impersonating and fabricating a new identity, that of an African. Wearing the mask of this created African identity, Lushinski rejects his true Jewish identity, background and traditions. He seeks to conceal his identity as a Jew by eliminating his painful and gruesome past, which has had a lasting influence on his whole life. The paper also shows how the concept of identity applies to Lushinski's African assistant, Morris Ngambe, who, like Lushinski, is estranged and detached from his African culture and heritage, and attempts, in vain, to assimilate, like Lushinski, into a new identity. The paper concludes that both cannot fully assimilate into a new identity, especially Lushinski, whose African identity will always be precarious and fluctuating due to the powerful influence of his Jewish identity and past.

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الهوية في رواية "المرتزق" لسينثيا أوزيك

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ملخص

تسعى هذه الورقة إلى دراسة حدود وتعقيدات الهوية في رواية (مرتزقة) للكاتبة سينثيا أوزيك. وتركز الورقة على الشخصية الرئيسية-ستانسلاف لوشنسكي- اليهودي البولندي الذي يحاول جاهدا إغراق هويته اليهودية عن طريق اختلاق وانتحال هوية جديدة على أنه إفريقي. وتشكل هذه الهوية المصطنعة قناعا يمكن لوشنسكي من رفض هويته وخلفيته وتقاليد اليهودية. يسعى لوشنسكي إلى إخفاء هويته الحقيقية عن طريق إقصاء ماضيه المروع والمؤلم- والذي كان له أثر دائم على حياته كلها. تتطرق الدراسة أيضا إلى شخصية أخرى ضمن إطار الهوية وهو الإفريقي موريس نجامبي- مساعد لوشنسكي- والذي يشترك معه في كونه مبعدا ومنفصلا عن ثقافته وراثته الإفريقي، ويحاول عبثا، مثل لوشنسكي، أن يندمج بشكل كامل في هوية جديدة. تختتم الورقة بان لوشنسكي ومساعده الإفريقي لا يمكن أن يندمجا بشكل تام في هوية أخرى جديدة-خاصة لوشنسكي- والذي ستبقى هويته الإفريقية متقلقلة ومتأرجحة نظرا لقوة تأثير هويته وماضيه كيهودي.

Cynthia Ozick was born in New York City in 1928. Her Jewish parents migrated from Russia to the United States of America in the beginnings of the 20th century. Beside English, Cynthia Ozick spoke her family's native language, Yiddish, and in addition to American schooling, Ozick received elementary Jewish education, which greatly affected her works. After finishing high school, Ozick joined New York University, and then Ohio State University, where she received her MA degree in American literature. A novelist, poet, dramatist and essayist, her major works include *Trust* (1966), *The Pagan Rabbi and Other Stories* (1971), *Bloodshed and Three Novellas* (1976) in which the novella "A Mercenary" appears, *Levitation: Five Fictions* (1982), *The Cannibal Galaxy* (1983), a collection of essays entitled *Art and Ardor* (1983), *The Messiah of Stockholm* (1987), *The Shawl* (1989), *Metaphor and Memory* (1989), *Fame and Folly* (1996), and a play entitled *Blue Light* (1996).

Many critics of Cynthia Ozick share the view that the Jewish identity is an integral part of her fiction. Her characters are deeply rooted or connected to their Jewish heritage, and can hardly escape or conceal their history, and their assimilation into a new identity is precarious and fragile; therefore, doomed to failure. In her article, Sylvia B. Fishman (1991) argues that Cynthia Ozick's fiction "differs dramatically from the Jewish fiction of the previous quarter century, which had flourished largely by regarding Jews as a species of court jesters or existential heroes—as insightful outsiders who have special value to the Gentile world. Rather than depicting Jews primarily in terms of their universal interest or utility, the new body of fiction treats Jews , Jewish values, idiosyncratic Jewish topics as intrinsically compelling" (35). Another critic, Miriam Sivan, believes that Ozick's Jewish background plays an important role in the making of her fiction and characters. Sivan (2009) writes: "Being part of America's Jewish minority, Ozick seeks to explore the interaction between Judaism and the larger Christian and pagan cultures her people are situated within" (3).

On the other hand, Ellen Pifer (2015) identifies Ozick's fiction as part of "postmodern or antirealist literature," and believes that her "consciousness as a writer has been forged by history and traditions" (89). Similarly, Timothy L. Parrish (2001) argues that "Ozick's characters share an abiding concern with their status as Jews" (440). In "Portnoy's Complaint: It's about Race, not Sex (Even the Sex Is about Race)," Dean J Franco (2012) surveys jewishness in many works of American Jewish writers, including Ozick, and

he concludes that: "Between 1959 and 1970—just before the social stratification of multicultural identities—Young Jews experienced tremendous social mobility, including the freedom to step out of Jewish history. The sorrows of Jewish assimilation were contemporaneously chronicled in lugubrious articles . . . as well as in fiction by such writers as Cynthia Ozick and Saul Bellow" (42-43). Moreover, Franco has an interesting view on Ozick's fiction. He believes that her fiction "is deadly serious, often intimating violence, hostility, and fear, precluding even the détente and mutuality of contemporaneous schemes of ethnicity and multiculturalism in public life in the 1970s" (58). Franco concludes that in Ozick's fiction Jewish identity cannot be assimilated into a different milieu: "In Ozick's fiction, assimilation is not only not inevitable, it 's impossible" (61).

In her review of *Bloodshed and Three Novellas*, Rosellen Brown (1976) calls Cynthia Ozick "a unique and challenging writer whose intellect is vivified by the lively juices of a reveler in language" (30). In *A Mercenary*, Ozick has challenged the complex issue of the limits and scope of the Jewish identity in the character of Stanislav Lushinski, an impersonator who seems to have problems with his identity as a Jew, Lushinski escapes from Poland to Africa and then moves to New York. By origin, Lushinski is a Pole and Jew. He moves to an African country and tries to adapt well into another identity through which he works as a diplomat representing this African country in the United Nations. A Pole and diplomat, Lushinski was not a Polish diplomat. His new identity as an African diplomat renders him a target for people's mockery: "people joked that he was a mercenary, and would sell his tongue to any nation that bargained for it" (15). Furthermore, he is often referred to as "the P.M. which meant not so much that they considered him easily as influential as the Prime Minister of his country (itself a joke: his country was a speck, no more frightening than a small wart on the western—or perhaps it was the eastern—flank of Africa), but stood, rather, for Paid Mouthpiece" (15).

Lushinski's past was gruesome, and his painful experiences as he recollects them now still haunt him. He remembers how he managed to escape from the Polish peasants who wanted to turn him over to the Germans. He remembers how he escaped into the dangerous and snowy forests of Poland; an act which made him view not only Poland but Europe as an epitome of danger and savagery. Seeking to hide his true identity,

Lushinski puts on a mask that distances him from his Jewishness. Lawrence Friedman (1991) believes that he "exchanged his cold and gray European homeland for hot and bright Africa, his native language for tribal dialect and diplomat's English, his Judaism for cosmopolitanism" (95). His escape from Poland to Africa is symbolically an escape from his Jewish identity.

Another significant character in the novella is Lushinski's assistant, Morris Ngambe, an African with Oxford education:

His assistant, Morris Ngambe, held an Oxford degree in political science. He was a fat-cheeked, flirtatious young man. . . He was exactly half Lushinski's age, and sometimes awash in papers after midnight, their ties thrown off and their collars undone, they would send out for sandwiches and root beer. . .; in this atmosphere almost of equals they would compare boyhoods. (18)

Though he shares his office with the diplomat Lushinski, and though they share their boyhood stories, and though there is a sense "in this atmosphere almost of equals", Morris, unlike Lushinski, does not feel that he belongs in New York. He thinks that this city is no different from the deadly jungles of Africa: "'This city, this city' he wailed to Lushinski, 'London is boring but at least civilized. New York is just what they say of it—a wilderness, a jungle'" (23), and later he calls it "a city for Jews" (49).

Lushinski, unlike his assistant, likes New York, the melting pot where he could conceal his Jewish identity which was the cause of his past suffering, and present painful memories. One way of effacing his painful and gruesome past experiences is by joking about them. In his T. V. interviews, Lushinski turns his painful boyhood into "mockery and parody" (28). On the T. V. shows, he presents his life story as a fairy tale of a Polish boy who escaped the Germans and the Polish peasants into a snowy forest. His fear has turned him into a "Pole putting himself out as African," into someone who "was making himself up. He had made himself over, and now he was making himself up, like one of those comedians who tell uproarious anecdotes about their preposterous relatives" (28).

In a short story titled "How to tell a War Story," Tim O'Brien (1998) notes that the truth is often unbelievable. He goes on to say that it is often not necessary to tell the truth, it only matters what effect the writer wants the reader to have. Considered in this light, "A Mercenary" is a novella that

contrasts the truth about Stanislav Lushinski with the falsehood that he has created to escape his identity and past. Lushinski's escape journey from Europe to Africa, in terms of space and identity, is also a journey into language:

His English was less given to sermonizing. It was a diplomat's English: which does not mean that it was deceitful, but that it was innocent before passion, and minutely truthful about the order of paragraphs in all previous documentation. (17)

The novella contrasts native language, or language of the proletariat, to a diplomatic language, or the language of the Bourgeoisie. Lushinski can speak the African language perfectly; although he does, it is more like a sermon. He separates the two societies, as he later does between himself and other Jews. Lushinski also gives the Africans his diplomatic English language, through translating into English the poem of the murdered author.

The contrast and contradiction that colors Lushinski's life and identity can be sensed when we see that the novella, at one level of interpretation, experiments with irony and with the truth. Stanislav Lushinski's life is ironic. He denies the truth and accepts, even creates the life he desires. He erases his past, only telling brief stories of his life in Poland, and tells countless tales about Africa, where he only lived for fourteen months. He creates bush stories and steals story ideas from Morris. Then, he chastises Lulu for reading stories. "Imagination is romance. Romance blurs. Instead count the number of freight trains" (38). Yet, he continues to tell more stories of his African "past."

Moreover, the novella contrasts nonfiction with fiction, especially the fictitious world he has fabricated about his African history and identity. Lushinski is a diplomat for a small African nation, although he is actually from Poland. "A white man, he spoke for a black country" (17). His life is completely fabricated and fictional. He makes up his history in Africa, often referring to fiction or his assistant's history. In a T.V. interview he reveals part of this fiction when the host asks him about a man he claims to have killed:

-And you were only six?

-No, Lushinski said, by then I was older.

- And you lived on your own in the forest—a little child, imagine!—
all the time?

-In the forest. On my own.

-But how? How? You were only a child!

-Cunning, Lushinski said. (28)

Frequently, he is laughed at, mocked for this story and the other stories he fabricates. His colleagues find out that he is not a dull person; his comic attitude quite amuses them: "It astounded them. They resented him for it, because the comedy had been theirs, and he the object of it" (17). No one appears to believe him, yet everyone listens to him. He is the hit of television shows and spends most of his time talking among the proletariat.

Lushinski's new life and created identity focus on speaking; speaking on television and at conferences. At the beginning of the novella he is referred to as a "paid mouthpiece" (15). He denies that he is afraid of words and states that he loves to speak, to make people laugh. "Yet, Lulu, like Morris, noticed a word which made Lushinski afraid" (37). He was afraid to be called a Jew. He denies his Jewish heritage, running in the shower every time he is accused of being Jewish in a baptismal ritual that cleanses him of the past. Instead, he creates a new history; he kills the past and denies that he is a Jew. Lulu, tells him, "'I know what you hate', she accused, you hate being part of the Jews. You hate that'" (40). Then she proceeds to say

I never think of it. You always make me think of it. . . And
then I say that word—she breathed, she made an effort—I say
Jew and you run the water, you get afraid. (40)

The mere mention of the word Jew scares Lushinski and makes him want to bathe. His fear and insecurity as a Jew drives him to denounce Poland and Europe and insist on being an African, "'I don't want Europe. . . An African! An African!'. . . 'Louisa'—he had a different emphasis now: 'I am an African,' and in such a voice, all the sinister gaming out of it, the voice of a believer" (40). Apparently, his hatred of being called a Jew is strategy of escaping his Jewish identity.

Lulu is fully aware of how scared and insecure can Lushinski be by the mere mention of the word Jew. She first attacks his story telling: "You want everything you're not, that's what it's about!" (40). She accuses him of denying what he is and pretending to be an African. Yet, Lushinski rebukes

with "the voice of a believer," "I am an African" (41). This leads the reader to question Lushinski's sincerity in calling himself an African. He is undoubtedly not an African but does he truly believe he is? Have his stories convinced him? How far can his fabricated identity endure? Cheryl Alexander Malcolm (1997), indirectly, answers the questions by referring to another work by Ozick, *Virility*, in which she believes that "identity which endures is inherited not created" (463).

Critic Ken Koltum-Fromm (2010) believes that Cynthia Ozick's characters "personify ideas and conflicts," and that "the material stuff of language is the central actor in a play about loyalty, betrayal, heritage and place" (276). As far as the language is concerned, readers notice that one aspect of Lushinski's rejection of his true identity manifests itself when he goes so far as to deny language to fellow Jewish people. He is fully aware that he feels no affiliation or intimacy with the other Jews, "Always he was cold to Jews. He never went among them" (41), and consequently, "No Jews invited him" (45). Without speaking, he continues to deny his relationship to Jewish culture. He speaks without using words to Lulu: "Without words he had told her when to say those words; she was obedient and restored him to fear" (41). This stance reveals how applicable to Lushinski are the concepts of loyalty to or betrayal of his Jewish heritage.

People have heard rumors that he is a mercenary, and in essence, he is a spiritual mercenary in his refute. He murders his heritage, his past, in turn for a new past. He murders that which governs over him, in turn for a new power, that of a diplomat for a country that he knows little about or cares little for. Lushinski is quite convinced that he is an African. He views his Africanness as an identity and not as a mask. However, by the end of the novella, the true African Morris Ngambe could uncover and unmask Lushinski, "Morris saw him as an impersonator. Morris uncovered him; then stabbed. Morris had called a transmuted, a transformed African. A man in love with his cell. A traitor. Perfidious. A fake. Morris had called him Jew" (51).

At times Morris is even confused by Lushinski's words. At listening to one of Lushinski's stories about his boyhood, Morris finds himself puzzled: "He wondered why everyone laughed. The story seemed to him European, uncivilized. It was something that could have happened but probably did not happen. He did not know what he ought to believe" (43). Yet, it is Morris

who ultimately reveals to Lushinski that everyone knows or presumes he is an imposter. And, it is Morris who calls Lushinski a mercenary, not outwardly but through a letter. "Here is a man who wishes to annihilate a society and its culture but he is captivated by its cult. For its cult he will bleed himself" (51).

Morris also relies upon language. His language, as does Lushinski's at times, transforms New York into a deadly jungle, more deadly than his native land: "a wilderness, a jungle" (23). The only difference between Morris and Lushinski is the perception that the reader has about Morris. The reader feels that he is telling the truth, quite possibly because Morris attacks America's lifestyle and its nationalism. "Our notion of nationhood is different, it has nothing political attached to it; it is for the dear land itself, the customs, the rites, the cousins, the sense of family. A sense of family gives one a more sublime concept: one is readier to think of the Human Family" (33).

Morris reveals Lushinski as an imposter, as a story teller. Lushinski's stories bother Morris, and he even wishes Lushinski's falseness would be discovered. Lushinski says, "Sometimes it's better where you aren't than where you are. Morris wished the Prime Minister had heard this; surely he would have trusted Lushinski less" (44). Again, this makes Morris's character believable. His opposition to Lushinski and in turn to American diplomacy touches many American citizens' views and the very concept of the "dirty politician." Lushinski argues, "People who deal in diplomacy attach too much importance to being believed. A quality of lies is a much more sensible method" (47).

It is ironic that Lushinski stresses the "importance of being believed" and argues against fabrication and fiction, a fiction his whole life centers around. It is a comedy, continuously bringing up laughter and comparing Lushinski to a comedian. "He was becoming a comic artist" (42). However, Lushinski can be viewed as a tragic figure who is unwilling to accept the past and lives in an imaginary, fictional present. He does not live nobly but uses his position to do as he pleases. He even manages to escape the jungle that Morris struggles to survive in. Lushinski stresses that "It may be that every man needs to impersonate what he first must kill" (51).

Ozick's novella is obviously a story about impersonation. The impersonators in this narrative are the people who present themselves in a false manner before esteemed company, which subverts their racial identity

and cultural heritage. They choose roles which will place them in high social regard and economic standing, as well as separate them from their past. Especially for Lushinski, impersonation is his business, and personal occupation. It is through impersonation that Lushinski manages to achieve his chief concern and goal, people's respect. The regard in which he is held is very important to him. He craves admiration as a speaker, story teller, diplomat and patriot. Essentially, he needs for people to believe in him, so that he can believe in himself.

Stuart Hall (1994) investigates the views and conceptions of identity, particularly cultural identity. Hall argues that one important meaning of identity lies in the strong interconnectedness between the past and the future, and that history plays an important role in creating a state of "constant transformation" to one's identity. He puts it,

Cultural identity . . . is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. (225)

Identity is a concern for both Lushinski and Morris. Each is removed from his culture and past by education and social achievements. Their original identities undergo noticeable transformation in an attempt to assimilate into the new ones. They differ in their feelings concerning their being separated from their native culture and their ability to mask themselves within their new identities. Thus it seems that the intention of *A Mercenary* is to examine the individual's struggle to redefine himself, its origins, development and consequences.

Miriam Sivan (2009) reveals that Cynthia Ozick, like many American Jewish writers, follows the dominant trend in American Jewish fiction that it "has been always characterized by this tension of assimilation and retention" (1). In this light, Lushinski's attempt at assimilation into the new created African identity is not smooth; rather, it is a precarious and fragile one. In his endeavor to assimilate, Lushinski depends upon the conviction of others that he is a well-mannered, educated, respectable African (in patriotism, if not in blood) gentleman. He strives to maintain this false identity by concealing the fact that he is a Jew. Because of his manners, bearing, and

talent for persuasion, he tries to elude a difficult heritage and is able to pursue a prosperous future. However, this seems to undermine and, to use Freedman's words, "corrupt" his identity as a Jew. His claim and conviction that he is African makes his original identity an impure and unclean one. Jonathan Freedman (2009) argues that the Jewish identity "stresses the need for purity, consistency, limits, boundaries in defining what is and what is not Jewish. This is of course one impulse in Judaism as a religious practice itself, one in which the delineation of clean and the unclean, the pure and the corrupt, is central, definitional" (35).

Moreover, Sivan observes that "[in] a bid for normalcy, according to standards preexistent in the mainstream, members of minority groups change names, and dress, compromise religious observance, and intermarry with other ethnic groups, contributing to a deconstruction of originary distinctiveness" (1). Lushinski, the Jewish minority member has not only tried to change or compromise, but has tried to completely abandon his Jewish heritage, in which he has failed. This has rendered his life a precarious one in which he fluctuates between the true and the new identity. Lushinski, therefore, seems to fit well into a type of character that Daniel Walden (1987) calls "a between person" (3). He has patterned and fashioned his life as an impersonator. He continually adopts different facades in order to gain an advantage in every situation which he finds himself in. He feigns loyalty and cultural patronage to anyone (more specifically any country) that will offer him a position that generates respect and wealth. Thus he is called a "P.M." (a paid mouthpiece) and a "mercenary."

Lushinski has based his life on assuming false identities and on trying to escape his race and nightmarish history (both personal and cultural). It has become a nightmare from which he tries to awake to a more beautiful and sweet present. This reminds readers of Stephen Dedalus's famous quote in Episode Two in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, "History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (28). Similarly, Lushinski reveals what he thinks of history when he replies to Lulu's statement that she hates history by telling her that it is inescapable; he tells Lulu, "Poor Lulu, some of it got stuck on you and it won't come off—" (39). Although he does not try to hide the fact that he is a Pole who has been adopted by another country, Lushinski does all he can to hide the fact that he is Jewish. He lives in constant fear that his race will be exposed. He not only fears that other people will label him as a Jew, but also that he will be forced to accept the

role of a Jewish man. He believes that to be a Jewish man in his position might make him the target of racial prejudice, and cause him to slip in the estimation of the elite.

In his insightful article, Peter Kerry Powers (1995) shows that "Ozick's stories are largely populated by people without a past, who are brought into contact, however briefly, with embodiments of Jewish history and memory" (58). Probably Lushinski's continual denial and rejection of his identity as a Jew renders him, in his own conception, pastless and rootless. He consistently and persistently puts tremendous efforts to escape and forget the personal suffering he endured in his past, because he is a Jew. "[He] wants everything that [he] is not, because of what [he] is" (37). We gather together through his romantic lies about growing up in the woods (31), being a carpenter in Russia (43). . . etc, that he is trying to hide the difficult, degrading struggle that led him to become a diplomat.

Because his lies are so believable, readers assume that his childhood and adolescence were so hard to bear that he does not want to speak of or remember it. Lushinski's descriptions of his fairy-tale family, a perfect blonde, blue-eyed, Aryan couple, lead us to assume that his skin color and features made him a target of prejudice, particularly by the Nazis. And so, Lushinski wants to forget that he was at one time, a dark-haired, brown-eyed Jew who may have been tortured because of his race. He claims that he has killed a man, but never reveals the situation or identity of the man who was murdered. Becoming an African diplomat has allowed Lushinski to "[make] himself over. . . [and make] himself up"(28). And so he convinces himself that he can be anything he or anyone else wants him to be.

Similarly, identity is a concern for Lushinski's assistant, Morris Ngambe who is removed from his African culture and heritage. However, his situation, as a man removed from his birth-rights is quite different from Lushinski's. As a member of an African tribe, he was held in high regard, as a child. He was the son of a wealthy chief and his mother is considered a deity. He was called a "prime soul-born of-prime soul" (19). His family's wealth and prestige allowed him to receive good education and become a success in the "white world." He is an aid to a diplomat. This position has taken him far from the "clan life" of his ancestors and has made him "[invest] himself with a chatter, not his own"(21). Africa is still dear to him,

but he is estranged from it. Unable to celebrate its rituals and culture, he must be part of the "white world," but without a white man's privileges.

Although it seems as though his position is a benefit to him and a credit to his people, Morris is not really held in high regard. He cannot cloak himself in his new identity as Lushinski has done, because of his skin color. Despite his education, he is still considered inferior. He is merely a servant to people, like Lushinski and the Prime Minister, and cannot hope to be more. He moves in their circles, but does not share their lifestyle and mobility. This is seen especially, when he comes to America where he faces overt racial prejudice and sees the poverty and segregation that African Americans face. He identifies with their inability to pursue their cultural heritage. And so he considers himself "in exile among the kidnapped . . . lost to language and faith" (21). In this respect, both Morris and Lushinski cannot fully abandon their pasts. Both seem to be victimized by the state of loss, homelessness and belonging nowhere. Vera E. Kielsky (1985) labels both men as "preposterous, wretched exiles lacking a sense of purpose, unable to forget their pasts and integrate in the present" (52-53). To better understand Lushinski, readers have to set him against the backdrop of his African assistant. Kielsky stresses that

[w]ithout Ngambe as a counterpart, the portrait of Lushinski would be less convincing, one dimensional. Only the juxtaposition of Lushinski, the Jewish mercenary and Ngambe, the African idealist, puts Cynthia Ozick in the position to illuminate the bitterness and mournfulness of assimilation as a mutual basis between their very dissimilar experiences. (57)

Readers cannot fully comprehend the complexities of Lushinski's identity unless he is juxtaposed with the truly African Morris Ngambe.

In conclusion, identity is a concern for both Lushinski and his African assistant, Morris Ngambe. Both are detached from their original background, and try to feign another new identity. Unlike Lushinski, the separation from his people pains Morris. He yearns for the solidarity of the clan and the richness of their rituals and beliefs. Morris cherishes the memories of his childhood and is proud of his native culture. He seems to regret taking on the new position and identity, which have left him "alone, treading among traps, in jeopardy of ambush, without a female" (48). Both have left behind their native culture and adopted a new one. Lushinski did

this in order to escape the stigma surrounding Judaism, as well as his troubled past. Morris did the same because he wanted a better life. Yet Lushinski found career success and happiness as an impersonator, while Morris found only shame and regret. Yet, however happy or unhappy their present might be, and however hard they try, their past identities will continue to haunt and burden their present lives. Alexander Malcolm beautifully puts it: "The past, whatever its form, returns to influence the present" (460).

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