

## **The Synthesis of the Mind and Body in Cynthia Ozick's *The Cannibal Galaxy***

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### **Abstract**

[1] *Hester Lilt, like many of Cynthia Ozick's female protagonists, is unabashedly independent of men. A philosopher, European refugee, and single mother, she remains an enigma to the hero of the novel, Joseph Brill, who is both drawn to her intellectual brilliance yet repelled by her fierce emotional and physical attachment to her daughter. The midrashic figure of Lilith, the woman who would not compromise her own sense of sexuality and autonomy and who paid for this independence with exile from Eden, is, in many ways, the metahuman archetype that graces Hester's life. Hester answers to no man, yet she remains alone, and like Lilith, she is demonized for this by Brill. It is he who makes the negative connection between Lilt and Lilith; it is the reader who sees the rightness in Hester's path, borne out by the later brilliance and success of her painter daughter, Beulah.*

[2] Like many of Cynthia Ozick's female protagonists, Hester Lilt, in *The Cannibal Galaxy*, is unmarried. The bias against a 'domesticated' female, a woman whose mind appears to be subservient to the life of the body and whose body clearly belongs, in the proprietary matrimonial sense, to a man, is reflected in Lilt's life choices. Her work, her personal life, and her personality seem to combine, in longing and in deed, the worlds of the physical and of the intellectual, the ritualistic and the conceptual, exemplifying an androgyny which Carolyn Heilbrun describes as an attempt "to liberate the individual from the confines of the appropriate."<sup>1</sup> Simultaneously, Lilt expresses the passion of motherhood. When Joseph Brill, the principal of her daughter's school, attacks Hester for being so blindly devoted to her daughter, Hester's strident rebuttal is single-minded: "She's everything. She's my life." (92)

[3] For Brill, a failed astronomer, devotion to nurturing children is seen as beneath a woman of Hester's brilliance. He remains mired in a traditional view of seeing women as breeders and when an extraordinary one comes along, then she, by definition, had to be lifted out of the realm of the physical and into that the idealized 'purely' intellectual.

[4] But Hester Lilt's passion for her child does not compromise her independence or her intense intellectual life. Rather, it is the notion and phenomenon of domination, specifically of men over women, which she sees as potentially compromising. "Ozick uses marriage," Mark Krupnick writes, "as James frequently does, to figure a larger crisis of culture."<sup>2</sup> The usurpation of a woman's abilities, the consistent prejudice against the fusion of her intellectual and creative talents, is what provokes Lilt's rejection not only of Brill's romantic overtures towards her, but also of his estimation of her. For a man whose name means eyeglasses in German and Yiddish, Brill's ability to see Hester realistically, is severely

limited.

[5] For while he is determined to see her as an extraordinary woman, he can only continue to do so if she fits into his idiosyncratic lens. "*The mother. It's a question of who the mother is*" (41) he says to the staff when Hester registers her daughter Beulah **3** in his school. She is a serious thinker, a philosopher whose works include titles such as *The World as Appearance*, *Divining Meaning*, and *Metaphor as Exegesis*. She considers herself an imagistic linguistic logician, "a phrase foreign to Brill" (47). He is clever enough to know that the density and difficulty of Hester's books are what he finds attractive. One cannot help but wonder about Ozick's cleverness here to not only ridicule Brill's obtuseness but also Lilt's self-conscious intellectual pose. For this phrase, 'imagistic linguistic logician,' echoes some of the self-aggrandizing language of post-structural theory, language popular and prolific in learned journals in 1983, when this novel was published.<sup>4</sup>

[6] Brill falls into the unfortunate and traditional trap of seeing Hester as all mind. Because of her highly developed intellect, "[i]t was hard for him to think of her as a woman" (50). For him, a mind like Hester's must negate the biological aspects of the female body. "She lives without anecdote; as if nothing had ever happened to her. Only mind. She was free of event because she was in thrall to idea" (83). He cannot fathom the synthesis of mind and body. He needs to reject the reality of her body. He clings to the traditional binary opposition of the Madonna-whore as if it were a life raft. This prescribed split prohibits the synthesis of the female person composed of "multiple predicates,"<sup>5</sup> body, mind, and spirit; it is anathema to the liberation Heilbrun spoke of.

[7] He refuses to acknowledge that a woman of mind is able to incorporate into her image of herself, and by extension into the emotional and intellectual landscapes that propel her personal narrative forward, a passion for her child. Lilt's sophisticated relationship to ideas by no means eclipses the primacy of her maternal identity. Brill though is adamantly opposed to such a balanced view of motherhood. He will not accept this co-existence. His opinion, his attempted imposition of the binary opposition of mind and body, spirit and sex, is vehemently proclaimed. It is equally resisted by Hester for the destructive half-truths it continues to perpetuate.

[8] When Brill's attempts to cast Lilt into the role of sexless mind fail, he changes his focus and casts her down into the depths of the nearly satanic and makes of her all body. She becomes Lilith the female witch who undermines men's control and uses them sexually to fertilize her own little demon babies. And Lilith is the anti-thesis of the Madonna/whore split. She embodies the synthesis of motherhood and sexuality. Her vagina is a conduit for both physical pleasure and maternal satisfaction. Lilith is awesome because she represents the female who dares defy male authority, even God's.

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[9] But before he experiences this radical turn about, from idealizing to demonizing Hester Lilt, Brill can only see Hester being a part of the *Shekhina*. This is the female emanation of God in Jewish mysticism, the vessel of wisdom which remains close to the people of Israel, both on the land and throughout their exile. Brill sees both Hester and the *Shekhina* as chaste

Madonnas. His efforts though are again frustrated by the presence of her child. And motherhood, Hester informs him when she sends him her manuscript *Structure in Silence*, revolves around this physical connection and passion and renders mothers the more capable of seeing the true natures of their children.

[10] In the last chapter of her book, "Schoolmistress," Hester "pilfered one of Brill's own tellings" (158) and turns his mockery of motherhood on him: she discusses the parenting qualities of the pelican and the stork, the ideal and the conscientious parent respectively, and concludes that to them, and not to the principal's cockatoo teachers, does the title of 'Schoolmistress' belong.<sup>6</sup> Mothers and not professional educators are the ones entitled and able to nourish distinction in their offspring.

[11] Nevertheless Brill remains in awe of Hester's intellect and describes her mind as the "mazy network of enigma, the conflagration of Hester Lilt's mind! She was a sorcerer" (74). He is determined, over and over again, to see her as a non-physical, a non-sexual witch. Whereas normal women are enthralled with their children and fuss over their own bodies as well as those of their children's' (as narcissistic extensions of themselves), Hester, in his eyes, seems to ignore all that. "Even on the surface she was different from other mothers because, he surmised, she did not go to a hairdresser or contemplate her clothes. Her shoes were laced as well as old, and on this occasion she wore anklets, like an adolescent" (48). This 'surmising' is crucial for he creates a fantasy of who Hester is. And when she rejects his image of her, he becomes enraged and viciously attacks the mother-daughter diad.

[12] He 'surmises' also that Hester lived the life he has always longed to live, the life of the mind, first and foremost, a dedication to 'pure' intellect, whatever that means. World War II interfered with Brill's scientific aspirations and when he emerged from hiding in France and transplanted himself in the United States, he decided to move his sights from the skies and settle for a more grounded existence whose zenith would be the creation of a grammar school curriculum which melded together Western and Judaic traditions. He called it the Dual Curriculum.

[13] *Ad Astra*, to the stars, is the school's motto. It is a pathetic remnant of Brill's ambitions and it takes an exchange with Hester for him to come face to face with the fact that he has, in her words, "stopped too soon" (63). He is not reaching anywhere, anymore, especially not to any astral heights. Whereas Hester, in his estimation, continues to push the limits of the intellect, to think and write and lecture and publish on abstract ideas which change the way people view themselves in the universe. Brill meanwhile, has settled for a mediocre curriculum in the middle of America with average children and their normally annoying parents. Hester's accusation is not directed towards his creation -- the idea of the school, or the school itself -- but towards Brill personally. Once he established the school, Brill sat back and let it run on its own energy. He rested on his laurels too soon. His intellectual life ceased soon after his epiphany in the nun's cellar during World War II. Hester sees Brill's *ad astra* as an ironic comment on a mediocre life.

[14] One is tempted to apply this notion of stopping too soon not only to Brill's intellectual development vis-a-vis the world of philosophy, but primarily in this novel to his view of women in general, and mothers in particular. It is no coincidence that Hester is single. As Brill wonders, so does the reader, why she "did not volunteer whether she was divorced or

widowed" (48). It seems simply irrelevant to her personal and professional life. For this unattached status renders her free to live the life of the mind and body without compromise. When she receives an offer to teach philosophy in Paris, she has only her child's and her own needs to consider. And she does, remaining in the United States until Beulah is done with grade school but then taking the offer in Europe when she feels the child can psychologically tolerate the transition. She does not have to contend with a husband's emotional demands or career.

[15] Brill too is unmarried. But unlike Hester, he is also not a father, not until the end of the novel when he marries his simple minded secretary and has a son (this in response to Hester's resounding rejection of him: as a man, as a thinker, as an educator, and even as a friend). Yet his marital status is just a given for him, more a matter of circumstance with no moral and psychological underpinnings. Hester's marital status, on the other hand, is no mere detail. For Brill is only capable of seeing the banality of marriage and the irrational 'servitude' of childrearing. Of course this is an ironic position for an educator who is also supposedly devoted to the intellectual and psychic development of children. But Brill insists, and one must add again blindly, on the mind-body split; he is only interested in the mind, as it were, and leaves the body to somebody else's care. He thinks it an "insanity" (52) when mothers "make a roiling moat around their offspring" (64).

[16] Along with his lost ambition to reach new intellectual heights, Brill has also lost his connection to Jewish texts which might offer him an alternative position from which to approach a woman like Hester Lilt. Gershom Scholem points out how the *Zohar* itself rejects this reductive relationship of licentious versus chaste female. He explains that affinity and compatibility exist more often between these two forces than is commonly recognized:

The *Zohar* repeatedly contrasts Lilith, as the whorish woman, with the *Shekhina*, the noble or capable woman of chapter 31 of Proverbs. Yet the comparison of two *Zohar* passages, -- 223a-b and III, 60b -- shows how far the author's mythical imagination can go in uniting these two figures. The first passage describes the *Shekhina* in its appearance as a power of harsh judgement, manifesting destructive traits -- but at the same time as the mother of Metatron, the highest potency in the angelic world, who 'emerged from between her legs.' The second passage is closely related to the first, developing variations of the same theme in new directions in a manner typical of the *Zohar*. Here the *Shekhina* is described as the mother of two females from the demonic region: Lilith and Naamah. Hence, the demonic figures are born from her -- truly an extreme and daring notion.<sup>7</sup>

[17] This notion of the *Shekhina* as the mother of Lilith, as the female presence who encompasses the qualities and characteristics of unapologetic sexuality, an aversion to be husbanded and the longing to mother, is useful in understanding the kind of character Ozick has created in Hester Lilt.

[18] Yet for Brill, it is these very same characteristics which are anathema. When he sees Hester exhibiting the 'normal' signs of motherhood, of mother love, when he can no longer idealize her, he of course attacks her:

She was like the others: nature's trick, it comes in with the milk of the teat. Each thinks her own babe is goddess or god. But she was worse than the worst... She believed in a seamless future for her little crippled creature. The others stopped at the present; scratched at the present; intended to force, to refashion, the imperfect present. They had the exuberant reformist ferocity of Cinderella's sisters -- they would command the slipper to fit [...] Hester Lilt scorned such ameliorative. She was ready to do without the slipper. She was infected with madness. Beulah had made her mad. The flawed daughter, shining, crowned, barefoot, inside the veil of the mother's madness. (101)

[19] But it is Brill who is mad, and not in the sense of being insane, but in the sense of being enraged. He wants his chaste Madonnas to titillate his imagination, much as they had when, as a young man in pre-war Paris, he was infatuated with a statue of Madame de Sevigne in the Musee Carnavalet, mistaking her buxom and attractive figure for Rachel, a matriarch of Israel, and thereby justifying to himself his desire for her. Hester even reminds him physically of Madame de Sevigne, "[s]he had the face, the voice, the poise, the enigma of her character, the brilliance of her written sentences; the same stout neck" (53). And like her, Hester lives the life of the mind. Madame de Sevigne's major flaw, in Brill's eyes, was her "daughter-obsession" (53). He was thrilled when upon meeting Hester he thought he found, not in a museum or historical tome, but in his own backyard, so to speak, a woman of the intellectual stature of Madame de Sevigne. She had the physical look as well, he surmised, but none of the other mess that went along with female physicality, including the passion of motherhood. Since Hester speaks little of her child to him, he gleefully concludes, that "you could almost not tell she *had* a child" (53). For him this is the highest compliment he can pay an intellectual woman. No wonder then that he feels utterly undermined when Hester hurls at him, in an absurd kind of self-defence, "'You think I'm not like any of the mothers. You never say it, but I know what you think. I'm exactly like them, why shouldn't I be?'" (93).

[20] And when he is forced to accept reluctantly that she does share characteristics of the other mothers who "from morning to night [...] were hurtled forward by the explosion of internal rivers, with their roar of force and pressure" (64), he punishes her with phone calls in which he tells her to face the truth about her 'beloved' child: Beulah is and will remain utterly average. Hester does not take this bait, but simply informs him he is mistaken. Again he is stopping too soon. This time his assessment of a child's potential is flawed, Hester rejoinders. She insists that one cannot take the obvious signs of outward ambition and participation in group activities to predict future success.

[21] Brill is enraged further by her resistance, her counterpoint, and turns on her. He viciously attacks her professionalism, her linguistic analyses. He calls her work an act of cannibalism enacted upon her own flesh and blood. If Hester insists on being a mother like all the others, then Brill will add the twist that even so, she stands apart from the hordes of lactating breasts. He claims that she uses her daughter as a specimen for her philosophical theories. Beulah is dissected, he insists, in order for Hester to have material for her professional advancement. And to add insult to injury, he claims that Hester actually invents

theories around Beulah's deficiencies. She is the scheming tailor weaving the emperor's new clothes.

All your convictions. All out of Beulah. You justify her [...] you invent around her [...] If Beulah doesn't open her mouth then you analyse silence, silence becomes the door to your beautiful solution, that's how it works! If Beulah can't multiply, then you dream up the metaphor of a world without numbers. My God -- metaphor! Image! Theory! You haven't got any metaphors or images or theories. All you've got is Beulah [...] Wherever there's a hole in her -- a deficiency, a depression, a dent, an absence -- you produce a bump [...] You compensate for everything. You re-tailor the universe. (114)

[22] The physical and intellectual juxtaposition Brill makes between Hester and Madame de Sevigne is even further explicated when he states that "Madame de Sevigne's unreasonable passion for her undistinguished daughter had turned the mother's prose into high culture and historic treasure" (11). This is just what he accuses Hester of doing -- using her love to conjure philosophical theories. Yet with both women, Brill is simply off the mark. For in actuality it is not the mothers' talents he is looking to undermine, but their love for their daughters. And the mothers, or at least, Hester, do not create high culture out of their daughter's 'lowliness,' masking at all costs their offspring's putative mediocrity. The intellectual brilliance of the mother serves her passion for all her offspring: daughters and texts.

[23] The *Cannibal Galaxy* ends with Brill being proven wrong in a number of significant ways. First, and of course not surprisingly, is his criticism of maternal involvement. Beginning with his own descent [sic] into paternity, the words he once used against the mothers are now applicable to him: "the ardor of [his life] was directed toward nothing else" (64), but the rearing -- physical, intellectual, and spiritual -- of his son, Naftali. Then there is the inversion of all his hopes and projections: Naftali was the brilliant child, the ambitious and orderly student. Contrary to Brill's system of predictions, Naftali's fascination with categorization and data do eventually serve him well, though not as the theoretical mathematician or physicist Brill expects he will be, but as the everyday accountant he does become. Brill's arrogant questioning of Hester's ability to live with a mediocre human being for a child is thus turned on him. To make matters worse for Brill, Beulah, the unremarkable, quiet child, whose mother simply loves her because she is her child, becomes a renowned painter.

[24] Lastly, since Brill is jealous of Hester's love for Beulah, he forces a crude and disparaging critique onto this mother-child bond. In his relentlessness to cast the philosopher/mother as some kind of non-physical being, he does himself the greatest disservice. Of all the women in his life since coming to America after the War, and of all the hidden infatuations he suffered over the years, Hester is the closest he has ever come to knowing a woman who could possibly be a suitable mate. And it is not merely the "lilt -- of French in her mouth [which] wheeled her back to him" (53), but the kinship of being European Jews in the post-Holocaust society which informs him of their potential

compatibility. They do not speak of it, but they share a pre-war world, its culture, education, and its losses. Yet even more than their common background, it is her ambition which binds Brill to her. He reflects that for her ambition was "the same as desire, and her desire was unlike his; it had long ago put away dream. Her ambition, her desire was to cast molds, to bring form into being" (63-4).

[25] But what Brill does not understand or cannot accept is that Hester is not merely concerned with abstract form that is ideas. Hester, whose name has numerous maternal, literary echoes, is also, literally, invested in the molding of human form into being, the making of a human child, of rearing Beulah unto adulthood.

[26] It is also no coincidence that her last name Lilt, resembles the name Lilith. Brill himself recognizes this after Hester has rejected his way of seeing in the world: "Lilith, the night-demon" (51) he says to himself tracing her name over in his mind. "Lilt. He imagined lutes. But no; undoubtedly a Hebrew origin. Leyl, night. Lutes of the night; night-music. Or that succubus to small boys in the ghetto, Lilith [...h]er name made his throat swell" (51).

[27] He cannot abide the more balanced view already quoted from the *Zohar*, but embraces the traditionally sexist rabbinical view of Lilith as the antithesis of the *Shekhinah*. It is a simplistic Madonna-whore augmented by Lilith's rampant and rapacious promiscuity, fit to throw the world into chaos.**8**

[28] And since Brill is utterly ambivalent about Hester Lilt, he cannot help but proclaim at first that a brain like Hester's is incompatible with the female body. What he interprets as her seemingly casual attitude towards her child proves this for him. On the other hand, his growing attraction to her, and her lack of response, propels him to see her as bewitching, dangerous, the whorish Lilith overstepping her proper role as a female creature. She who was all mind is suddenly all body to him. Whereas once he was in awe of her intellect, admiring her mental prowess, now he is in awe of her body, in the sense that one is in awe of god, meaning, when one stands in fear of a great power. This perception of Hester Lilt as a demonized Lilith figure "embodies not only Brill's fears but Brill's desires."**9** For this traditional fear of female sexuality, and the impulse to regulate and control it, can be said to drive many of the laws found in the Talmud.**10**

[29] Hester herself would have no trouble identifying with the Lilith association.**11** She is the self-sufficient matriarch, the mother, the giver of life and the thinker, the critic of language who ponders literary expression and its relationships to power. It is no wonder then that Brill feels he has been "waylaid [...], plundered and robbed [...]. In hindsight he knew he had been ambushed by Hester Lilt" (162). Meaning, his vision of himself is shaken by her. She has shown him up by taking the words *ad astra* literally, and pushing herself to intellectual heights which are rewarded professionally. His ambush then, is similar to that of the Musee Carnavalet, which as a young man he claimed to have tried to avoid. It was a house of 'pagan' art, "[b]ut the roundabout way was an ambush: it took him without his intending it" to the museum (9). The world of aesthetics, the world of philosophy, of women with intellectual, creative and physical powers, has turned the world of the small Parisian *cheder* upside down for him.

[30] Brill, who stopped too soon, who succumbed to the ennui of ordinary existence once the originality of the Dual Curriculum was in place, was ambushed and ultimately undermined

by the presence of Hester and Beulah Lilt. While the mother and daughter duo has no intention of doing this, nevertheless, it is so. Brill misreads the daughter, Brill misreads the mother, and, most importantly, Brill misreads the mother's love for the daughter.

[31] He underestimates the intensity of this bond, seeking to sever the mind from the body in women, seeking to disconnect what was once one and which, in body and in mind, can continue to nourish women. His final defeat in the internal battle he engaged in with Hester is confirmed with Beulah's success and her denial of him. When he watches Beulah being interviewed on television, there is an exchange that brilliantly encapsulates Brill's defeat. He is riveted to the screen, morbidly drawn to what he knows to be true, masochistically revelling in all that he has gotten wrong. Beulah is asked about her childhood and she, who had been silent all those years, is now not only in command of language, both linguistic and pictorial, but has her wits about her more than Brill could have ever imagined. She claims to have no recollection of Brill's school. This completes the 'public' repudiation of his life's work, which for him encapsulates his life. When Beulah is asked specifically to comment then on her mother's anecdotes concerning her unique schooling in the U.S. she replies:

"'My mother lies alot.' (Audience laughter.) 'It's her occupation.' (Audience laughter.)

'What occupation would that be?'

'Mother.' (Audience laughter.)

'Surely,' the interviewer pressed, 'the mother of Beulah Lilt has got to be different from other mothers. As a matter of record, she happens to be Hester Lilt of L'Institut Philosophique--'

'That only means she writes down her lies.' (Audience laughter.)" (145)

[32] Hester Lilt of the L'Institute Philosophique has, from her daughter's point of view, the occupation, not of philosopher, not of post-structural linguist, not of renowned scholar, but of Mother. This is not a contradiction in terms for the child in whom "the amazing mother lurked. The children always contained the mothers" (72), according to Brill. This does not run contrary to how she was raised. For Hester is Beulah's mother and Beulah is Hester's life. **12**

[33] According to the Alphabet of ben Sira, **13** Lilith was half of the original Adam who was made in God's image. From this narrative we can understand that the seminal or archetypal relationship between man and woman was predicated on equality and justice between them. **14** When Lilith protested against the male Adam's insistence that he dominate her sexually, their relationship failed. When she defied God's order that she return from the Red Sea and appease Adam, she was banished from Eden. Rather than submit to the will of the collective male voice, Lilith suffers banishment.

[34] Hers, one can say, is the first of a long string of exiles imposed on Israel. **15** Two losses are hereby linked: the forced closure of women's minds which Ozick mourns in her essay, "Notes Towards Finding the Right Question," and the lack of reconciliation with female sexuality. These linked losses inhibit a woman's ability to express her erotic self. For David Biale, this reduction of erotic energy is directly linked to the passivity of exile that haunts the Jewish people. It is as if when Lilith went into exile, she took with her the life-enriching



sexual force. Of course asexuality did not accompany Israel in its extended diasporic life, but Biale notes that the celebration of this vital component of existence was muted. This muteness reflects an overall sense of powerlessness. Return for the Jews then means not only a return to the land, not only a reclaiming of the erotic life force, but also a more holistic knowledge of women which allows both men and women to benefit from the full range of their physical and intellectual lives.<sup>16</sup>

[35] Lilith, the original exile, with her sexual bravado and self-determination, is the metahuman figure who graces Hester's life. And the *Shekhina* who went into exile with Israel is doubly so. For the *Shekhina* then is the female in exile not only from the land, but from herself, the woman who has been silenced and told to choose either submission to an insecure Adam or the hardships of living outside the fecund Garden. The healing of the original rupture includes the integration of the male and female. And this is done not least via narratives, like Ozick's *The Cannibal Galaxy*, whose heroine expresses a new vision of the female in the world. This *tikkun*, or righting of the imbalance, is intended to repair the basic injustice which has tragically prevented too many individual women from realizing their lives' potential and as such has robbed the world of a precious resource. Ozick has described Jewish women's exclusion from the world of literacy and scholarship as a "loss numerically greater than a hundred pogroms; yet Jewish literature and history report not one wail, not one tear."<sup>17</sup> This is the loss of the mind which has been eclipsed by the putative primacy of the female body.

[36] At the novel's end, though Brill claims to have "heard nothing ever again about the life and work of Hester Lilt" (162), he is haunted by her and by Beulah. He feels bombarded by Beulah's paintings, as he once felt overwhelmed by her mother's books. The last sentence of the book, written from Brill's point of view, is a description of Beulah's work: "She labored without brooding in calculated and enameled forms out of which a flaming nimbus sometimes spread" (162). Beulah is enlivened by her creativity and the labor of her body, which produces paintings, but can potentially also labor to produce a child, enables her to create forms which are both material and abstract, both of the body and of the spirit, the light of the flaming nimbus illuminating the path towards this more balanced, just, and authentic view of women.

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#### Notes:

1. Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Toward a Recognition of Adrogyny* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) x.

2. Mark Krupnick, "Jewish Jacobites: Henry James' Presence in the Fiction of Philip Roth and Cynthia Ozick," *Traditions, Voices and Dreams: The American Novel since the 1960's*, Ed. Melvin J. Friedman and Ben Siegel (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1995) 98.

3. Ironically, Beulah means 'husbanded' in Hebrew. Ozick has created a heroine who remains untethered to the institution of marriage, but whose daughter, is already not as free as her mother seems to expect women should be.

4. Naomi B. Sokoloff's article, "Interpretation: Cynthia Ozick's *The Cannibal Galaxy*," analyzes the novel in terms of post-structural paradigms and does identify and discuss the satire and irony which abound in the text.

5. Simone de Beauvoir, who also critiques this split when she quotes from Keirkegaard's, *Stages on the Road to Life*: "To be a woman is something so strange, so confused, so complicated, that no one predicate comes near expressing it and that multiple predicates that one would like to use are so contradictory that only a woman could put up with it." *The Second Sex*, trans. H.M. Parshley (1949. New York: Random House, 1974) 162.

6. Elaine M. Kauver, *Cynthia Ozick's Fiction: Tradition and Invention*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1993 (163).

7. Gershom Scholem, *On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead, Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah*. Trans. Joachim Neugroschel. 1962. (New York: Schocken, 1991) 191.

8. Lilith is identified as Adam's first wife in the Zohar 7:34; 3:19.

9. Kauver, *Tradition* 163.

10. Judith Plaskow cites Jacob Neusner's article, "Mishnah on Women: Thematic or Systematic Description," *Marxist Perspectives* (Spring 1980): 94-95, when she writes that under the surface of the Mishnah's whole treatment of women lies this fear of women's sexuality.

11. It is even more than an association if one writes the names in Hebrew, an alphabet of consonants. The words are nearly identical. Lilt= lamed, lamed, taf/tet. And Lilith = lamed, yod, lamed, yod, taf, the major difference being the inclusion of the two yod's, which is the letter which often signifies the divine. Lilith then is lilt with god.

12. It is interesting to note that in Hebrew, Beulah, refers to someone who has been 'husbanded' through sexual intercourse. It is as if the daughter of Hester Lilt need not become the object of a man's desire for she has already been possessed by a mother who will not take advantage of this fact but will encourage her daughter to claim her body as an autonomous object for her own use and pleasure.

13. Aviva Cantor writes that scholars seem to agree that although the text remains undated, that it was written in the Gaonic period, some time before 1000 C.E. ("The Lilith Question," *On Being a Jewish Feminist*, ed. Susannah Heschel, New York: Schocken, 1983, p.44).

14. Ozick herself has written that women's equality is presented in the Bible: "The source is the great feminist source itself, the first source in the history of all civilization to declare against instrumentality and for the Kingdom of ends -- and that is Genesis, Chapter Five, Verse One: those words about being made in the likeness of the Creator" ("Torah as Matrix for Feminism," *Lilith 12-13* (Winter/Spring 1985):48. This is the second mention of the nature of this egalitarian creation, the first being in Genesis, 1:27.

15. What began with Lilith in the Garden, ended when the *Shekhinah* herself was exiled with Israel after they lost their war with Rome. Is it coincidental that concomitant with the return of Israel the nation, to Israel the promised land, is a growing recognition, via the women's movement (starting with the fight for civil suffrage in the late nineteenth century and on through the second wave of feminism in the 1960's until today, with the ongoing important work being done both in gender studies and in the political fields), of the banishment of the *Shekhinah*, of the female principle in the human sphere, from the everyday lives of women and men? Against enormous resistance within the framework of rabbinical Judaism, women are today learning Talmud, Mishna and more significantly Gemorra, to degrees which would have unimaginable one hundred and fifty years ago. Women scholars are today working in rabbinical courts as pleaders, a kind of lawyer, helping mainly women work their ways through their divorce cases. And the day is not far off when it will be accepted (albeit reluctantly by the established power base of rabbinical Judaism) that women can act as *poskim*, or decisors, of *halacha*, or law, the source of ultimate power within the Jewish world.

16. David Biale, *Eros and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books) 172.

17. Cynthia Ozick, "Notes Toward Finding the Right Question," in Heschel, Susannah, ed. *On Being a Jewish Feminist* (New York: Schocken, 1983) 138.

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