



### **Idolatry as Metaphor: Holocaust Writing in Cynthia Ozick's *The Shawl***

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**Abstract:** Contemporary American Jewish writer Cynthia Ozick advocates anti-idolatry as a means of safeguarding Jewish tradition. However, the imaginative power embodied in pagan idolatry is precisely the soil in which literary creation is born and extended. When the combination of Jewish identity and her literary creation creates a tension with the oxymoronic feature, Ozick inevitably needs to utilize metaphors to manifest her literary pursuits and religious assertions. This paper argues that Ozick presents three types of idolatry in *The Shawl* with the “shawl” as an idol, which is manifested in the form of metaphor. Meanwhile, Ozick associates idolatry with the Holocaust as an expression of her reflection on Jewish tradition and modernity.

**Key Words:** *The Shawl*, Metaphor, Idolatry, Holocaust Writing