

Shaked - "Mostly Kafka"

Lotman et al Semiotics of Russian Culture - History

- can lit unlock a society's quest for identity?
- choice of text will already predetermine what ques / ans we seek
- nothing "Jew" about Kafka
- only Jew character is Mendel in Amerika
- despite his passionate interest in Heb / Yid lit
- Lucien Goldman - the better the novelist the less his overt relationship to the society he inhabits (Sociology of the Novel)
- eg. lack of def time / place in Kafka's fiction?
- does this have any Jew. meaning?
- Robert Wyman (E. German reception theorist): "Past Significance & Present Meaning"
- pre-1945 / post-1945 Kafka are 2 distinct writers
- plays diff function once we read it as realistic ↔ fantasmagorical

Semiotic def of Jew. lit

eg. of Roth's Job

hero is a "lehrer" which can only mean 3rd / 4th
untranslatable concept of a marginal person

The heroic decision to write for a minority (Brenner) ↔ decision to write for fellow assimilated Jews & culture at large

Berdichewsky's "שׂה"

- hero cursed by the "shadows" he tries to cast off
- wrestling with those shadows reveals how strong their ties still were
- Heb lit prolonged the struggle
- Self-hatred a function of 1/600 Jew
- collective punishment as fact or ideology
- to be a Jew = be in state of exile
- provide a justification for your own extermination
- "Jew as cockroach" ∴ he should be exterminated
- guilt for being what you are