

The occult as a response to catastrophe

The Séance

1. Lotte Kopitsky & Dr. **Zorach** Kalischer

adopts opposite tactic

begins w/mock myth, mock-romance, mock-occult

decrepitude; contradiction

she's a medium like he's a professor!

comical medium & has-been professor

parodic descriptions

Kopitsky: semi-literate dentist's wife

petit bourgeois + otherworldly pretensions

her feverish imaginings

his anti-rationalist philo. + extreme hedonism vs. his impotence

pursued by the past

but also elective affinities?

2. The séance itself

conjuring the Surrogate Lover

flashback: 1942-Holocaust

Lotte's prophecies come true

now Nella's spirit appears in the flesh

his rebellion: no more lies

sees her behavior as self-deception + swindle [202]

the accident

exposes the "ghost" in the bathroom

wets himself

3. Moments of truth

has reached rock bottom

dressed in late husband's clothes = early childhood

realizes failure of Philosophy

DREAMs of new philo

ambiguous ending

does he believe in Nella's presence? power of memory?

are life/love eternal?

H. "validates" the search for super-natural responses

The Cafeteria (1968)

A. Nonfictional façade

fake AB hook

bizarre episodes related to him

pretense of famous author speaking extemporaneously

he himself possessed of philosophical, antirational convictions

Judaically learned; au courant as journalist

Aaron Greidinger is very much in demand!

B. The Holocaust & the GULAG

very circumspect because he wasn't there

life in extremis

expressions of radical evil

both utopian political systems

C. Fact & Fantasy

the hole in the fabric of reality

much more realistic base than before

little recourse to ethnography, proverbial speech, dialect

(almost) nothing lost in translation