

PERETZ**SHOLEM ALEICHEM**

Tsiachnovka: Polish outback
satiric name

Kasrilevke: Ukrainian outback
humorous; mock-mythic
town of happy paupers

Panorama

Jews/God Hurban habayyit
 besmedresh = hostel
 multiplicity of prayer houses
 cemetery

besmedresh = post office

Jews/Jews trade internal
 tefillin & earth from Israel
 no description of market
 hekdesch/morgue

no commerce w/China
no supply & demand

Jews/Gentiles the baillif
 the porits

Post Office; Yareme the Janitor
news filtered thru Hazefirah

Narrator AB outsider
 Maskil

AB insider
worldly but wondrous

Sources
of conflict hanging by a thread
 no charter
 betrayed by the rich

K. vs. Paris, Mosocw

Plot/style from reality to nightmare

anecdotal

Historical-
Horizontal poverty, starvation
 agunot
 shtadlanut

political antisemitism

Vertical-
Mythic World of Illusion
 mock resurrection

life-in-death

Verdict living death
Vertical axis turns horizontal
dead town is "living death"

ironic C"C
horizontal turns vertical

Peretz still living the nightmare

beyond the shtetl

shtetl = body politic

shtetl = stubborn faith
naive solidarity

Yerusalaim-shel-mata

Yerushalaim-shel-ma'alah

Binary Oppositions

PERETZ

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Internal, embedded The Dead vs. the Living: rise up in protest	Kasrilevke vs. Zeydl: It cannot be!
External: The shrayber vs. the shtetl Science/progress vs. decay & slow death	Antisemites vs. the Jews Has comic analogue w/in the shtetl
INFORMANT: ½ in ½ out; source of unreality Smarter than he lets on but totally self-referential	Narrator: ½ in ½ out: source of IRONY Man of the world
Goyim exonerated in opening lines; a specifically Jew. island in time/space (Suzanne)	Postmaster/Janitor: cutting anti-S down to size
Shtetl trapped in a world of illusion	Shtetl trapped in a world of illusion (Gosha)
shtetl dystopia, nightmare	Shtetl utopia; ignorance is bliss
Beyond repair	Victor-in-defeat; refuse to succumb
Vestige of an unusable past	Collective hero: here-to-stay

Q: What does their shtetl actually stand for?

A: Tsiakhnovka: the actual Polish shtetl

A: Kasrilevke: the Jewish body politic

Q: Who is the greater pessimist? Peretz or SA?

A: For Peretz, the root problem = socio-economic; rooted in a dead medieval past

A: For SA = endemic to modernity itself