

"the metamorphosis" by franz kafka essay (critical writing)

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



Literature has always been an integral part of human life. It appeared when a person tried to write down his/her personal feelings and emotions connected with a certain object and became one of the main remedies which helped to do it. That is why it is obvious that all important events in the life of people are reflected in literature. Additionally, literature can serve as the mirror, which helps to see peculiarities of the epoch in which certain work is created.

Being influenced by the beliefs topical for society at its current stage of development, authors have no other choice but to reflect them. However, at the same time, literature also touches some eternal themes which have always been topical for humanity, though they obtain some other meaning at the moment.

Such issues as relations between people, their attitude towards relatives, the influence of money on these relations, and the sense of human life, in general, have always been popular.

With this in mind, analysis of every literary work provides a great number of opportunities to understand human nature better and recognize their attitude towards these issues and compare this attitude with the modern one. Resting on these facts, analysis of the work *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka can provide a great number of opportunities for a better understanding of human nature.

First of all, it should be said that a good analysis of the work is impossible without a clear understanding of the character of its author and ideas peculiar to him. Franz Kafka is one of the most influential authors of the 20th

century. He managed to create works atmosphere of which could shock a reader. Being raised under rather unusual conditions, he was able to embody his feelings in his works. They are imbued by absurd and fear of reality.

Additionally, the feeling of helplessness and insignificance can appear while reading his works. Kafka is known as one of the brightest representatives of existentialism. This term appeared to describe the beliefs of the group of philosophers and writers who considered that human existence was unique though absurd and senseless.

Every person has his/her own life in which he/she is free to live as he/she wants, though there is still a great fear of reality and recognition of absurdness of the life. That is why it becomes obvious that Kafka wanted to reflect these ideas in his works (Stephens, 2015), is a great admirer of this philosophic movement.

Under these conditions, The Metamorphosis can be taken as a good example of the embodiment of ideas of existentialism. The whole work is devoted to description of feelings and emotions of a person who suddenly discovered that he became an insect. There is no explanation of what the reasons for this transformation are and how it happened. One day, Gregor Samsa just makes this horrible discovery. Such an unusual setting, used by Kafka, just underlines indeterminism of human life.

The author wants to show that a person is forceless in the face of the world and reality, and everything can happen to him (Delahoyde, n. d). Samsa is not able to understand this change at once; however, gradually, he

accustoms and is able to move and control his body. However, he is not able to live and survive. Being deprived of communication as his family refused him and, moreover, being injured, he dies alone, and his death remains almost unnoticed.

There is a great number of different themes touched by the author in this work. It is obvious that human existence and its senseless character are discussed here. However, Kafka also cogitates about such eternal issues as money, its influence on people, relations within the family, loyalty, and, additionally, complicated interaction between mind and body. That is why, being rather complicated work, *The Metamorphosis* suggests a great number of opportunities for its analysis.

As has already been stated, the issue of relations between mind and body is touched in work. Transformed into an insect, Gregor, however, saves the mind of a human being. Besides, at the beginning of the story, he could hardly speak as sounds which he produces are like "painful and uncontrollable squeaking" (Kafka, 1912, para. 7). Additionally, it is difficult for him to control his body "it turned out to be too hard to move; it went so slowly" (Kafka, 1912, para. 8).

Gregor still has his own mind though it is difficult for him to work under new conditions and rule a new body. However, in the course of the development of the story, it becomes easier for him to control his body. Gregor is able to climb and move his limbs. However, not only he influences it. The author also

wants to show that the physical state of a person influences his mental abilities. Gregor's behavior becomes more and more insect-like.

He prefers to remain in dark and tight spaces. Additionally, his preferences in food also change. The scene of the removal of furniture can serve as the culmination of this conflict. Being not able to control his instincts and determine what is better for him, Gregor leaves his room in a panic and receives a wound from his father. It is possible to say that the conflict between mind and body leads to the death of the main character.

Additionally, the issue of alienation can be seen here. It is obvious that the transform, which happened to Gregor, creates the barrier between him and the rest of the world. Being not able to communicate with his family or colleagues, the main character feels lonely and abandoned. However, this barrier can also be taken as the metaphor used by the author to show a reader a difference in the attitude towards people who differ from the majority of society (Batson, 2015).

Being a common traveling salesman, Samsa is taken as a member of it. He has colleagues and relatives who seem to like him and communicate with him. However, having become an insect, Gregor is ignored and deprived of any communication. Kafka shows readers the cruelty of society, which does not accept people who do not follow its rules or differ from its majority. Additionally, one more theme appears. The thing is that Gregor is also ignored by his family.

That is why the issue of relations between children and parents is also touched at work. Being the only person who earns money in the family, he is respected and loved. However, things change. The only person who now cares about Samsa is his sister Grete. Gregor is sure that " Grete would probably be the only one who would dare enter a room" (Kafka, 1912, para. 45).

The author also shows that even the love of parents and their attitude towards their child can be altered under the influence of some external factors. His parents do not try to understand or accept him, as it is still their child, though, in another body. However, being sure that society will reject this creature, they are not able to accept it too. Additionally, now, Gregor is dependent, and some money should be spent to feed him. The issue of money is also important here.

Being the only earner in the family, Gregor is appreciated and cared, though, now his transformation leads to his becoming one of the main reasons for the financial problems of the family because people, who rent rooms, refuse to live near Gregor. This fact makes the situation even worse as now family does not know how to survive, and even Grete, who is the only person who cares about Gregor, says to her father, " You've got to get rid of the idea that that's Gregor.

We've only harmed ourselves by believing it for so long" (Kafka, 1912, para. 85). It becomes obvious that Grete refuses her brother. Though, it is possible to suggest that she lies. She is not sure that Gregor disappears. On the

contrary, it is possible to assume that, being the only person who communicates with him, she knows that it is really Gregor, however, she prefers to forget about it as it is much easier to live in this way.

Having analyzed the story, it is possible to make a certain conclusion. Kafka manages to create an atmosphere of the absurdness of human life and the powerlessness of a person in the face of reality. Being deprived of communication, Gregor became a person who is not needed in society. That is why death was the only way out for him.

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