

Sacrifice and transformation in kafka's "the metamorphosis"

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



" The Making of an Allegory," by Edwin Honig and " Franz Kafka's ' Metamorphosis' as Death and Resurrection Fantasy," by Peter Dow Webster illuminate how sacrifice and transformation are a vital part of the deeper meaning of " The Metamorphosis." Gregor Samsa is an ordinary young man until he wakes up one day as a giant vermin; metamorphosed into something horrendous and reviled by the world. Through Honig's and Webster's critical essays, this transformation, as well as many more, and sacrifice made by all involved are explored in a thorough and definitive way.

In " The Making of an Allegory," Honig illustrates how the family structure is altered and strengthened by Gregor's transformation and, in turn, his seclusion. Honig's syntax defines his article and gives the reader an excellent idea of this complete metamorphosis of the family. An effect of this is depicted through Mr. Samsa, seen through the cracked door of Gregor's room, as he now " holds himself very erect," dresses " in a tight-fitting blue uniform with gold buttons," and " his black eyes dart bright, piercing glances.

" By using syntax such as Honig does, he explains how the change in Gregor has brought about a change in his whole family, most notably his father. He accompanies this with a great deal of imagery, including " above the high stiff collar of the jacket his heavy chin protruded...[and] his usually rumpled white hair was combed flat..."

Honig's interpretation of this change displays to the reader that Gregor's family was affected just as much, if not more, than Gregor. The depressive nature of Gregor towards his father's new behavior portrays his seclusion

and essential worthlessness. These transformations become the center of attention when Mr. Samsa begins hurling apples at the misshapen Gregor. This scene illustrates the retaking of his position as head of the family even as Mrs. Samsa, " her hands clasping his father's neck, [begs] for Gregor's life." Honig's intention is to make clear how he feels about the family's resurgence and Gregor's seclusion and thus his figurative departure from the world. His syntax and imagery clearly state his view as to how the major change in Gregor causes a major change in his entire family.

In " Franz Kafka's ' Metamorphosis' as Death and Resurrection Fantasy," Webster clarifies how Gregor is not the only one transformed by his situation, as well as the negative effects that have been brought on by it. The tone used by Webster in his essay brings about this negative feel towards the transformation itself, as well as a cynic view towards most of the novel, especially the title. "'Metamorphosis' is misleading as a title," because it entails that only one person or being is being metamorphosised; instead, " it should be pluralized since the whole family...father, mother, and sister...are equally transformed." By giving a reason as to why the title is erroneous, Webster expresses his disturbance towards the title and that Kafka should have realized this and given the proper form of the word.

He declares that " Grete...finally refers to...Gregor as ' It' and insists that unless he is rejected...the whole family will disintegrate," interpreting Grete's altered view towards him as a sign that she has also grown up through this. The syntax displayed only adds to the negativity towards not just the title, but other parts of the book. Grete's sudden outburst combines

with the syntax of other pieces in the article to display Webster's assertion on the negativity of the whole family's transformation. This contrasts with the positive outlook towards it displayed by Honig, who declares that the metamorphosis is helpful to the family.

Not only is there a negative outlook towards the transformation, but also towards each other; Grete, who began as the only person who truly cared about Gregor the beetle, begins to become sickened by him, " when [she] comes into the room, she rushes to open the window, as though she too could not stand the fetid atmosphere." Once again, Webster is displaying Grete's own metamorphosis, which is almost as big of a change as Gregor's, but with more of a negative effect toward others. Webster's description of the transformations that occur in the characters serves as a metaphor to everyone else in the real world; major events in your life will bring out your true colors and display you for who you are.

In Honig's " The Making of an Allegory" and Webster's " Franz Kafka's Metamorphosis as Death and Resurrection Fantasy," both authors analyze the significance and importance of Gregor Samsa's sudden metamorphosis. The syntax Honig uses gives his essay, as well as the Samsa family's transformation, a positive spin and depicts how it truly involves the whole family. This is illuminated by the statement " It is as though the family needed first to have [Gregor's transformation] swallow its own distaste...before finally expressing its own real feelings overtly." By using words such as " distaste," Honig informs the reader that Gregor's

transformation was negative, but the effects of it on everyone around him were positive.

He includes this with later syntax, recounting "...Gregor's identity and the problematic issue it raises are developed in the distorted relationship between himself and others..." Webster's tone in his essay denotes the negative approach towards the transformation, how it harmfully affected Gregor and his family. The syntax and tone used by the two authors both attribute to their own spin on the transformation. Even though they each have their own reasons for their views on the metamorphoses, Honig and Webster don't disagree with each other on it.

Both argue that it's not only Gregor being transformed, Honig stating " When Gregor's metamorphosis is accepted as a fact, the other characters show themselves for what they are," and Webster declaring " Metamorphosis is misleading as a title, it should be pluralized since the whole family...father, mother, and sister...are equally transformed." Both writers have the intention of drawing the reader to the fact that everyone involved in Gregor's life is transformed along with him, although they have different views on whether it was positive or negative. Honig and Webster both make valid points toward this and, while slightly contrasting, are equally correct with their viewpoints of entire transformation.

Gregor's metamorphosis changed his life forever, also altering his family's lives, whether it is positively or negatively. Both authors illuminated the significance of this and how it brought out the Samsa's true colors. Honig's and Webster's critical essays describe the transformation in a contrasting yet

agreeable way that gives the reader room to interpret it however they please.