Franz Kafka Metamorphosis



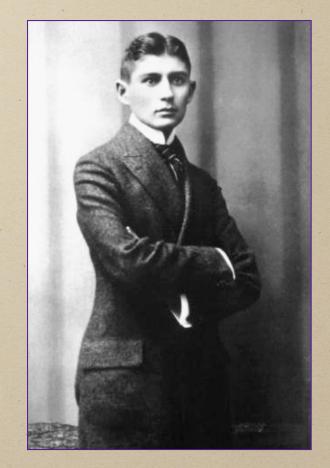
"A book should serve as an axe for the frozen sea within us."



Part 1 Emphasis: Cultural & Contextual Considerations

The "T.E.C.T." mnemonic:

- Time & Place (When and where does the action occur and how does it affect our understanding of the work?)
- Easy & Difficult (How easy or difficult is it to grasp what is outside your own cultural experience?)
- Connections (In what ways can you relate to certain aspects of the work?)
- Technique (How does the writer convey his message--plot, characterization, structure, imagery, diction, etc.?)

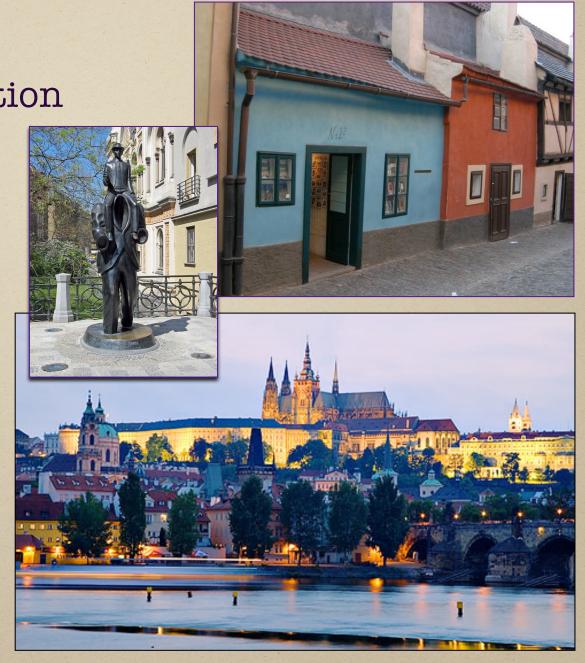


Time & Place

Biographical Information

about Franz Kafka:

- Prague, 1883-1924
- Family
- Personal data
- Love affairs
- Works
- Influences



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Part 1: Works in Translation

kafka's Prague





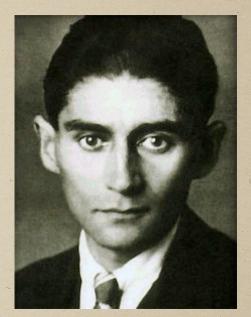
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Part 1: Works in Translation

Introduction & Overview

- Translation exercise (whole class; see handout)
- Apply "T.E.C.T." to the first several pages (whole class, reading together)
- Group work:
 - Plot (List the key events that take place in the story and indicate their significance)
 - Characterization (Make a chart of the major characters with a brief analysis of each)
 - Themes (Identify two or three possible themes in the story, providing textual support for your ideas)



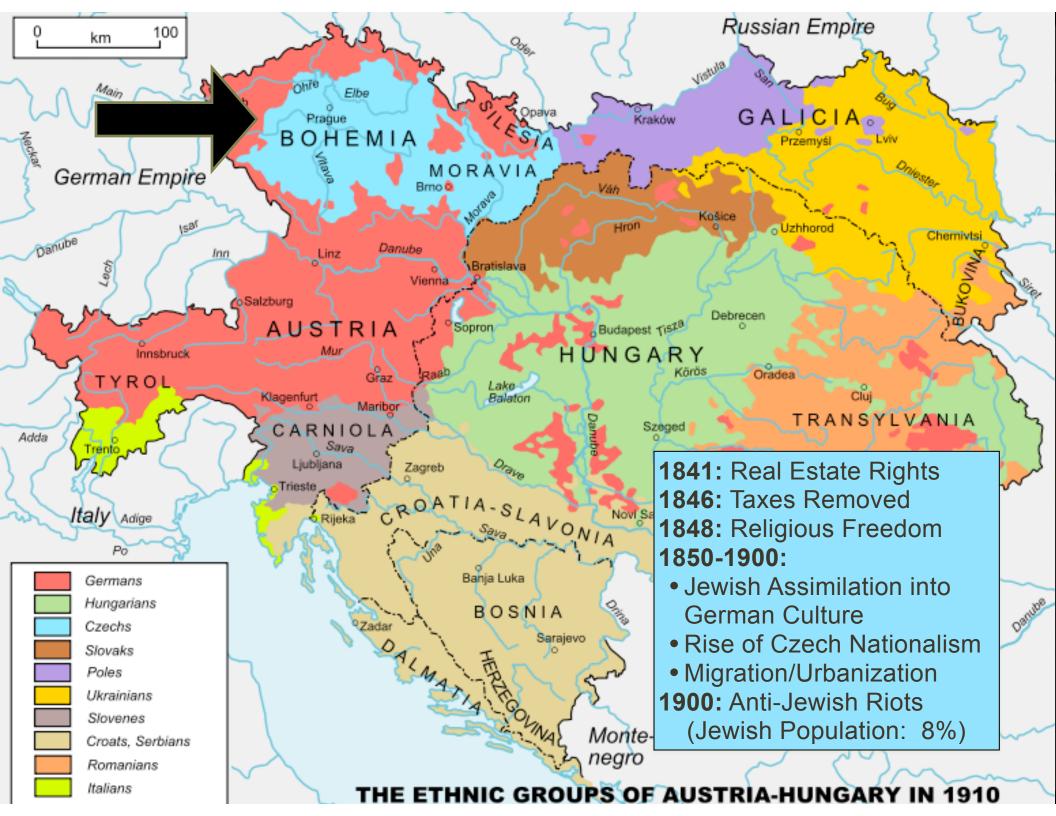




Stuff to think (or blog) about:

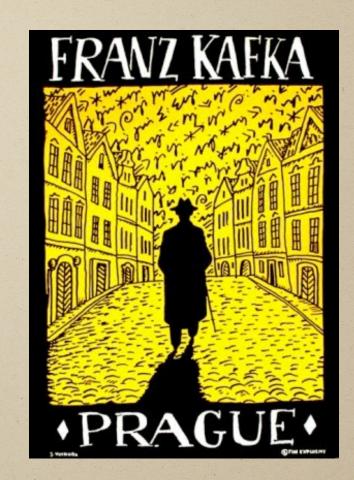
What is the source of a person's identity? Is personhood something that comes from within the individual, or is it formed from his/her environment? Consider Gregor: does he become more bug-like in response to his treatment by his family, or because of his own acts, or perceptions? Consider also Gregor's living space: does the transformation of it from bedroom to storage closet have an effect on him?





Setting

- How does the setting (the house and its rooms) contribute to Gregor's physical, social, and psychological isolation? How could this story be told in a larger setting, if at all?
- What are the results of the isolation caused by the restricted space of the story--that is, what are the ultimate consequences for Gregor? What does he learn about himself, if anything?
- Consider what "home" means, ideally, to each of the family members. Is there a message here about the impact of one's home on one's overall quality of life?



Character

- How does Kafka maintain the reader's sympathy for Gregor?
- Explore the ways in which Kafka allows the reader to see into Gregor's mind, and suggest which are most successful.
- Examine the connection, if any, between Gregor's description of the other characters, and the ways they reveal themselves by their actions. Are Gregor's assessments always correct? Why or why not?



Stuff to think (or blog) about:

- How does Gregor's loss of language affect his ability to gain control over his life and ultimately his fate? Is there a point to be made here about literature?
- At times, Gregor seems to enjoy being a bug. What are the implications of this in terms of understanding the human condition?



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Which is it:

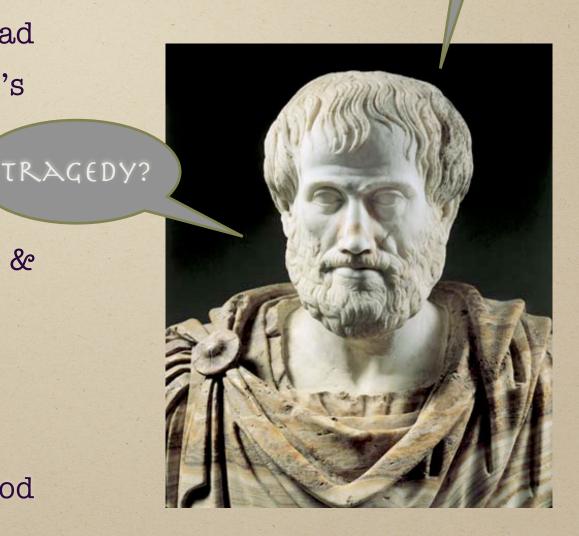
COMEDY?

Tragedy

- extraordinary characters
- things go from good to bad
- tragic flaw leads to hero's fall
- hero's fall brings catastrophe
- catharsis results ("fear" &
 "pity")

Comedy

- typical characters
- things go from bad to good



Comedic Elements

- What use does Kafka make of comedy or absurdity in the story? Find some funny parts and explain why they work.
- Evaluate the ending and, if appropriate, suggest an alternative, providing adequate rationale for your idea.
- What if one or more of the other characters morphed into non-humans--instead of Gregor? What would they become, and how might the story be told?



Ideas:

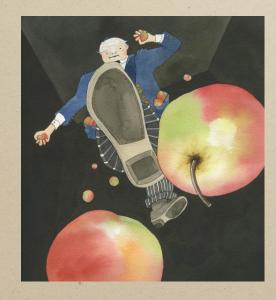
- Can one read <u>The</u>
 <u>Metamorphosis</u> as an eerie prophecy of the Holocaust?
- What is a Marxist interpretation of the story?
- Can <u>The</u>
 Metamorphosis be considered a Postmodern work?
- What did you discover about yourself after reading this story?





Stuff to think (or blog) about:

As the story progresses, Gregor seems to become more human (or at least more humane) than his human family? Does Gregor actually sacrifice himself for their sakes?





"And so he broke out - the women were just leaning against the desk in the next room to catch their breath for a minute - changed his course four times, he really didn't know what to salvage first, then he saw hanging conspicuously on the wall, which was otherwise bare already, the picture of the lady all dressed in furs, hurriedly crawled up on it and pressed himself against the glass, which gave a good surface to stick to and soothed his hot belly. At least no one would take away this picture while Gregor completely covered it up. He turned his head toward the living-room door to watch the women when they returned."



How does this extract support one interpretation of the meaning of the work?



Final Thoughts? Franz Kafka
Metamorphosis

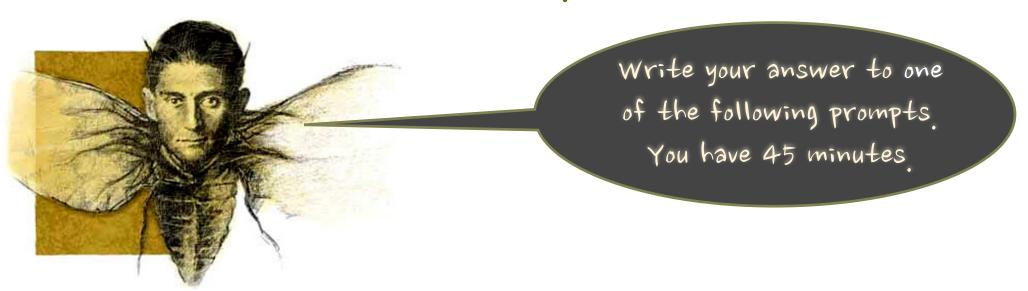
Interactive Oral



Franz Kafka
Metamorphosis

Supervised Writing





- We have does the author's choice of setting or other narrative technique serve to advance the plot?
- Describe how one of the characters is impacted by the expressed or implied demands of society.
- What is the significance of a particular symbol or motif that recurs in the story?
- Choose one or more characterizations of Gregor that differs from the author's life experience and suggest a rationale for the author's intent.

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