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1. Introduction

One of the most important, most influential and probably most mysterious authors of the nineteenth and twentieth century is certainly the Czech writer Franz Kafka. Due to their ambiguity, Kafka's works have been reinterpreted several times and were categorized in different literary ways. The absurdity of the stories and the life of the protagonists in many of his works were already seen as presumption of existentialism: In existentialism the individual's starting point is characterized as a sense of disorientation and confusion in the face of an apparently meaningless and absurd world. Religious approaches to interpret the novellas were, at least in former times, conventional, as well: The contents of his texts seem to be a borrowing of Kabbalah's ideas, a school of thought that originally derived from the Jewish faith. Moreover, there are sociological approaches regarding Kafka's works as massive criticism on society. The reason might be seen in his social exclusion. Following this approach, Kafka depicts in his works the protagonists as representatives of humankind and reveals their relationship to themselves but also to the environment. Biographical approaches try to compare his stories with his life as there are a lot of details in Kafka's works that can be discovered in his real life. On the other hand, there are several psychological approaches that aim mapping Kafka's emotional and social state by interpreting his works. The attempt to interpret Kafka's works as an aid to cope with the feelings towards his father exists, as well.

Generally, it is the psychological and the biographical view on Kafka's works that aroused my interest. Especially the complexity and the ambiguity of his works contributed to my examination of the topic. The initial absurdity and the obscurity of the story *The Metamorphosis* sparked my interest towards this author even more. Due to this fact, I am interested in analyzing the relation between Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and his personality. I am going to scrutinize in how far *The Metamorphosis* constitutes a self-portrait of Kafka with particular regard to Kafka's relationship to his father. Additionally, on the basis of the upcoming results I would like to examine if *The Metamorphosis* can be regarded as autobiography in literary terms.

I will start by depicting characteristics that are relevant to identify a literary work as an autobiography. In addition, I am going to discuss several aspects: There will be an analysis in how far the book mirrors Kafka's personality with particular regard to the relationship to his father. Subsequently, as Kafka's protagonist metamorphoses into a giant beetle I am going to explain possible reasons for Kafka's choice of this animal. Afterwards, I am going to outline in how far Kafka's *Metamorphosis* fulfills the features of an autobiographical work and finally, there will be a conclusion in which I am going to sum up my results.

2. The Metamorphosis – Mirroring of Kafka's Personality and the Relationship to His Father

2.1 A Literary Self- Portrait: The Autobiography

"... if our creative drive comes from the very depths of our heart, then we never find anything but ourselves in our work" (Sartre 2001: 262).

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the most common definition of a portrait is "painting, drawing, photograph, or engraving of a person, especially one depicting only the face or head and shoulders" (Oxford Dictionaries Online). The intent of a portrait is to show the inner essence of a subject and not just the outer appearance: "The aim of Art is to present not the outward appearance of things, but their inner significance; for this, not the external manner and detail, constitutes true reality" (Aymar 1967: 119). Furthermore, an artist who portraits another person strives for photographic realism and attempts a representative portrayal: "The only expression allowable in great portraiture is the expression of character and moral quality, not anything temporary, fleeting, or accidental" (Aymar 1967: 94). Following this definition the intent of a portrait is to display the personality, the thoughts or the mood of a person. Words that are more or less the same as portrait are "image", "likeness", "picture" as well as "tablet" and also an epitaph might be a portrait. The visual representation of a person may also be combined with a text: Then the image can be called emblem which was especially popular in the Elizabethan era. On the other hand, a self-portrait is "a portrait that an artist produces of themselves" (Oxford

Dictionaries Online). Again, the depiction can be drawn, painted, photographed or sculpted.

In literature the term portrait refers to a written description or analysis of a person. Often a written portrait gives a deep insight, and offers an analysis that goes far beyond the superficial. This literary form is called biography respectively autobiography: "Identity must be seen as contingent and forever incomplete, continually changing as it generates and regenerates itself. Thus, to write an autobiography means, in essence, to write one's own identity" (Steiner and Yang 2004: 16). The difference between the two terms of biography and autobiography is, of course, the point of view: Biographers generally rely on a wide variety of documents and oral conveyance, whereas an autobiography is written from the viewpoint of its subject and it may be based entirely on the writer's memory. The latter is derived from three Greek words meaning "self," "life," and "write," and today most commonly defined as "an account of a person's life written by that person" (Oxford Dictionaries Online), or as Lejeune's states: "[An autobiography is a] retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality" (Anderson 2001: 2). Following this definition, an autobiography is, simply put, a reckoning. Furthermore, Roy Pascal analyzes that the 'true' autobiography tells us not merely of remembered deeds and thoughts, but is for both author and reader "a spiritual experiment, a voyage of discovery" (Howarth 1974: 364). As this paragraph proves, the intent of the portrait in paint and of the portrait in literature - the (auto-) biography - is the same. Byatt even considers the written portrait to be more expressive than the painted one: "The onlooker [...] may construct a relation in time with the painter, the sitter and the recorded face, but this is a more arbitrary, less consequential time than the end- to- end reading of a book" (Byatt 2002: 1).

Despite the blurry margins between works that are considered to be autobiographical and works that are not, there are characteristics that are common to the majority of autobiographical literature and thus serve to categorize a literary work as either autobiographical or not. These features are the grammatical

perspective of the work, the identity of the self, and self-reflection and introspection (Berryman 1999: 71): Concerning the first characteristic one has to say that most autobiographies are written from the first person singular perspective. This seems plausible because autobiography is usually a story one tells about himself. It would not naturally follow that the writer would recount his or her past from a second or third person perspective. However, there are a lot of examples that do not follow this pattern and are yet classified as autobiographies. Secondly, the author, as well as the narrator and the protagonist must share a common identity in the work to be considered an autobiography (Anderson 2001: 3). Sartre says: "... the writer meets everywhere [...] in short, himself" (Sartre 2001: 264). Nevertheless, the self that the author constructs and which becomes a character within the story may not be a completely factual representation of the author's actual past self leading, due to the fact that the common identity may be but never has to be fully identical (Quigley 2000: 107). When talking about the third characteristic of autobiographical works, one has to say that although the intent of the majority of autobiographers is authenticity, they, unlike biographers, are not expected to reveal all about their subject. Thus, autobiographers are free to shape their life-story, however they would like to: They are at liberty to select what they want to include or omit. They can simplify or amplify an event or as Bates puts it, "He [the autobiographer] will often be enlarging on special aspects of his life, such as the influences that moulded him..." (Bates 1937: 3). The way the author organizes and arranges the events of the story shows what he or she considers being important. Furthermore, Porter and Wolf state that the author depicts parts of his personality through his experiences and the way he or she describes them. The way in which the writer illustrates past events says much about "who he thinks he is" (Porter and Wolf 1973: 5).

An author may write about his life by stating real events hence in a factual, purely autobiographic way or he may embed his feelings, attitudes, experiences and autobiographical details in a fictional text. This blurring of fiction and truth within a literary work has led to the creation of a subdivision within the genre of autobiography namely the genre of "autofiction" (Doubrovsky 2004: 70). This rather new literary term is widely accepted among scholars. A. Hughes describes that "autofiction may be understood as a narrative modality that inhabits the referential

space likewise colonized by autobiography proper, but at the same time offers a patently enriched and treated, hence fictionalized, and metamorphic, version of the life-story of the autofictionneur” (Hughes 2002: 566). The difference between traditional autobiography and the genre of autofiction is that autobiographers are attempting to depict their real life while writers of autofiction are basing their work only upon real experiences. Writers of autofiction are not expected to be as historically accurate as autobiographers are. According to Hughes, authors of autofiction are saying “c'est moi et ce n'est pas moi“ (Hughes 2002: 570). This statement sums up the genre of autofiction: It depicts the writer’s experiences with the addition of fictional elements to make the work more than just a recapitulation of life events.

2.2 Kafka’s Personality

As *The Metamorphosis* actually includes parallels to Kafka’s real life it is worth to use “Kafka’s diaries” (Brod, 1993) and his “letter to the father” (Kafka, 2005) in which he writes about his feelings and emotions to support the findings about the author’s personality.

In these works, Kafka often complains about his profession as an insurance employee and about the economic partnership with his brother-in-law: “Vorgestern Vorwürfe wegen der Fabrik bekommen. Eine Stunde dann auf dem Kanapee über Aus-dem-Fenster-springen nachgedacht“ (Brod 1993: 50). Referring to this fact, Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis* is also very dissatisfied with his work as a salesman and pursues this profession only, in particular, to redeem his father’s debts and to ensure his family’s financial existence. He reinforces the disfavor towards his job with the following statement: “Oh God, [...] what a strenuous career it is that I’ve chosen!” (Metamorphosis, part I). Moreover, Gregor swears: „It can all go to hell!“ (Metamorphosis, part I) and “Getting up early all the time, [...] it makes you stupid. You’ve got to get enough sleep” (Metamorphosis, part I). After Gregor’s metamorphosis the sister and the mother empty out his room under the excuse to allow more movement to the bug. At the point when they try to remove the picture of the woman in furs and Gregor refuses to accept this, another parallel to Franz Kafka becomes obvious: For Gregor the woman in furs illustrates the ideal of a woman.

However, she remains untouchable for him as he is bound to supplying his family and this is the reason why he is not able to start one of his own. Furthermore, Gregor has to travel a lot and thus does not have much contact with women in general. This might also be the reason for the relationship to his sister which is more intimate than common relationships between siblings: "...Gregor would lift himself up to her armpit and kiss her throat ..." (Metamorphosis, part III). In parallel, Kafka also had a very intimate relationship to his sister and remained a bachelor most of his life. In his "letter to the father" he writes: „Von Ottla wage ich kaum zu schreiben... Du siehst uns zwar [...] oft beisammen, wir flüstern, lachen... Du hast den Eindruck von frechen Verschwörern... sitzen wir beisammen, mit aller Anstrengung, mit Spaß, mit Ernst, mit Liebe..." (Kafka 2005: 11). Of course, it is very arguable which kind of love towards his sister Kafka means in this text passage, but again, the comparison of his fictional work and his "letter" highlight the self-reference of Kafka in *The Metamorphosis*.

2.3 Kafka's Relationship to His Father

"... for each step his father took he had to carry out countless movements"
(Metamorphosis, part II)

As already mentioned above, Gregor Samsa holds his family, respectively his role within the family, responsible for not being able to raise a family on his own. Similar to that, Kafka especially blamed his father for his own lack of experience with women: "Und es ist mir dann, als kämen für mein Leben nur Gegenden in Betracht, die Du entweder nicht bedeckst oder die nicht in Deiner Reichweite liegen, ... und besonders die Ehe ist nicht darunter" (Kafka 2005: 18). These accusations towards the father are, however, not the only complex issues Kafka depicts in his work: „Ich mager, schwach, schmal, Du stark, groß, breit. Schon in der Kabine kam ich mir jämmerlich vor, und zwar nicht nur vor mir, sondern vor der ganzen Welt, denn Du warst für mich das Maß aller Dinge“ (Kafka 2005: 4). This quotation illustrates that Kafka felt physically inferior to his father and that this fact contributed to Kafka's withdrawn kind of life within society. The author discusses these feelings in his works and consequently also transfers this field of emotions to *The Metamorphosis*:

There is the figure of the weak and awkward bug which aims at not being destroyed by manhood. On the other hand, Gregor Samsa considers his father, in a similar way Kafka does, to be physically intimidating and to be superior to him: "...he was standing up really straight, dressed in a tight-fitting blue uniform with gold buttons..." (Metamorphosis, part II) and is astonished at "the gigantic size of the sole of his boot" (Metamorphosis, part II). In *The Metamorphosis* the physical difference between the two characters is even reinforced by the fact that the father's "usually dishevelled white hair was combed down into a shining and carefully exact parting" (Metamorphosis, part II). This quotation depicts the fact that the father takes pride in his appearance while Gregor himself feels absolutely weak and helpless ever since his metamorphosis: "His many legs, pitifully thin compared with the size of the rest of him, waved about helplessly as he looked" (Metamorphosis, part I).

However, these are not the only aspects that prove the conflict between Kafka and his father:

Vergleiche uns beide: ich, [...] der aber eben nicht durch den Kafka'schen Lebens-, Geschäfts, Eroberungswillen in Bewegung gesetzt wird, [...] Du dagegen ein wirklicher Kafka an Stärke, Gesundheit, Appetit, Stimmkraft, Redebegabung, Selbstzufriedenheit, Weltüberlegenheit, Ausdauer, Geistesgegenwart, Menschenkenntnis, einer gewissen Großzügigkeit ...(Kafka 2005: 2)

As this quotation exemplifies, Kafka did not only suffer from his physical inferiority but he also felt mentally suppressed by his father. Moreover, this quotation suggests that the author seemed to feel some kind of ashamed in terms of his deviating personality traits. This feeling of being mentally inferior towards his father and the attempt to disprove this inferiority are also topics that Kafka depicts in *The Metamorphosis*: Gregor shows ambition to earn money for the family in the attempt of not disappointing his father. Furthermore, he does not allow himself anything although he is the family's moneymaker: "... he had kept only a few crowns for himself" (Metamorphosis, part II). The reason might be that he is too scared of his father and of the consequences if this one catches his son pocketing the money. Gregor's doggedness to demonstrate his abilities is also depicted by the fact that he has never missed to go to work during his career as salesman: "Well then, what if he

reported in sick? But that would be extremely embarrassing and suspicious, because during his five years' service Gregor had not been sick even once" (Metamorphosis, part I).

Kafka's inability to express himself verbally during his father's presence is another topic that is addressed in the 'letter to his father' as well as in the novella. In the 'letter to his father' Kafka writes:

Ich wäre ja wohl auch sonst kein großer Redner geworden, aber die gewöhnlich fließende menschliche Sprache hätte ich doch beherrscht. Du hast mir aber schon früh das Wort verboten, deine Drohung: ‚kein Wort der Widerrede‘ und die dazu erhobene Hand begleiten mich schon seit jeher. Ich bekam von dir - du bist, sobald es um deine Dinge geht, ein ausgezeichnete Redner - eine stockende, stotternde Art des Sprechens ... (Kafka 2005: 5 - 6)

On the other hand, Gregor Samsa's voice seems to have changed due to his transformation:

Gregor was shocked when he heard his own voice answering, it could hardly be recognized as the voice he had had before. As if from deep inside him, there was a painful and uncontrollable squeaking mixed in with it, the words could be made out at first but then there was a sort of echo which made them unclear, leaving the hearer unsure whether he had heard properly or not. (Metamorphosis, part I)

Kafka frequently depicts the suffering from this inability to express verbally in *The Metamorphosis*: "That was the voice of an animal" (Metamorphosis, part I). "... in order to make his voice as clear as possible, he coughed a little, but taking care to do this not too loudly as even this might sound different from the way that a human coughs and he was no longer sure he could judge this for himself" (Metamorphosis, part I). Obviously, Kafka tried to handle this restrictiveness by writing about it in *The Metamorphosis*.

By comparing the 'letter to his father' and *The Metamorphosis* it becomes obvious that Kafka became not only nervous due to the presence of his father but rather anxious. In the 'letter' Kafka remembers the father's authoritative educational style which he also addresses in the novella: "[...] Gregor's father seized the chief clerk's stick in his right hand [...], picked up a large newspaper from the table with

his left, and used them to drive Gregor back into his room, stamping his foot at him as he went” (Metamorphosis, part I). Referring to his father Hermann Kafka the author describes the main character’s father of *The Metamorphosis* as domineering and violent: “His father looked hostile, and clenched his fists as if wanting to knock Gregor back into his room” (Metamorphosis, part I). “Then his father gave him a hefty shove from behind which released him from where he was held and sent him flying, and heavily bleeding, deep into his room” (Metamorphosis, part I).

I would like to reconsider the quotation mentioned above because it demonstrates the whole range Gregor’s feelings of inferiority have on his life: “... *for each step his father took he had to carry out countless movements*” (Metamorphosis, part II). Every emotion concerning the father distresses the salesman and blocks his effectiveness – mentally and physically. Additionally, this quotation emphasizes the autobiographical content of the story because by comparing his life to that of his father, Kafka recognizes: „Es ist so, wie wenn einer fünf niedrige Treppenstufen hinaufzusteigen hat und ein Zweiter nur eine Treppenstufe, die aber so hoch ist wie jene fünf zusammen“ (Kafka 2005: 16). Similar to Kafka who is aware of the fact that he will never meet his father’s requirements and thus abandons this one -“... hier war ich tatsächlich ein Stück selbstständig von dir weggekommen, wenn es auch ein wenig an den Wurm erinnerte, der, hinten von einem Fuß niedergetreten, sich mit dem Vorderteil losreißt und zur Seite schleppt ...“ (Kafka 2005: 14) - Gregor Samsa also tries to ‘escape‘ his father by moving his injured body into his room: “... Gregor wanted to drag himself away, as if he could remove the surprising, the incredible pain by changing his position” (Metamorphosis, part II).

Finally, there are a few depictions in the novella that, on the one hand seem to be a part of Kafka’s personality but on the other hand cannot be proven by referring to other works of the author: Before the metamorphosis of Gregor Samsa, it is the salesman who feeds his family. This is why Gregor can be considered to be the head of the family although it is his father who still represents this position. While his son earns money and pays his debts the father sleeps all day and rests on the efforts of Gregor: “The same tired man as used to be laying there entombed in his bed when Gregor came back from his business trips, who would receive him sitting

in the armchair in his nightgown when he came back in the evenings ...” (Metamorphosis, part II). Despite this laziness the father insists on his role as patriarch and often tries to demonstrate his authority: “... who would place his stick down carefully and, if he wanted to say something would invariably stop and gather his companions around him” (Metamorphosis, part II). However, after his transformation and the resulting inability to work, Gregor notices involuntarily that his father is definitely up to put his retirement down and to take responsibility for the future of his family: “He was standing up straight enough now; dressed in a smart blue uniform with gold buttons, the sort worn by the employees at the banking institute; [...] under the bushy eyebrows, his piercing, dark eyes looked out fresh and alert...” (Metamorphosis, part II). One might suggest that Kafka suffered from the responsibility imposed on him already in his youth and that he never acquired the necessary appropriate reputation for his efforts. This might be, although Kafka was not the only moneymaker within his family, the reason why he depicts the father in *The Metamorphosis* like he does: Gregor’s lazy father rests on the money his son earns and meanwhile makes himself comfortable. Furthermore, the change in the father’s attitude and his resulting appearance can be interpreted as Kafka’s ideal of a family patriarch: It is the confident and titivated father who consolidates the family’s fortune and who is not financially dependent on his son.

2.4 The Figure of the Bug

There are several possible reasons why Franz Kafka chose the main character of *The Metamorphosis* to transform just into a giant bug. I will show that the figure of a bug can be used as a symbol for the most different purposes and that Kafka, in allusion to his life, might have chosen this shape for encouraging reasons. On the other hand, he might have chosen this figure to confirm his suffering and his dissatisfaction with life.

At the beginning of the story the protagonist finds himself metamorphosed into a vermin with many pitiful thin legs, an “armor- like back [...] and a brown belly , slightly domed and divided by arches into stiff sections” (Metamorphosis, part I). One point that supports the first thesis for Kafka’s choice is the fact that Gregor Samsa is useful for the family’s earnings just as the ladybeetle was said to be useful

for agriculture: Farmers in former times believed this type of a bug to be a present of the Holy Mary and thus named the animal after her. Furthermore, there is the scarab, a bug which was believed to rehabilitate itself out of his ball of dung and thus was a symbol for self-creation. Therefore, the scarab was associated with Chepre, the God of life, who was also associated with the rising after death. Following the Egyptian faith this God rose every morning on the East horizon and moved the sun in front of him, similar to the scarab and its ball of dung. According to the assumption that there were only male animals, this bug was also a symbol for masculinity and fertility. In allusion to the self-rehabilitating scarab one might suggest that Kafka chose the form of a bug to emphasize his endurance in life while suffering from his personal living conditions. In addition, Kafka might have chosen this animal in the hope that there will be a better life after death and because it represents the features women are attracted to. Another reason for choosing the shape of a giant bug might be the features of the click beetle which was sacred by the ancient Egyptian goddess of war Neith due to its survival instinct and was thus worshiped by former cultures. One might say that this is exactly the instinct Kafka respectively Gregor Samsa needs to cope with life and especially with the distressing relationship towards his father.

There are not only positive associations about the figure of a bug: Often there is a feeling of discomfort when thinking of these animals because they inhabit dark areas. Gregor also perceives these feelings in his family: The other family members are disgusted by his new way of eating as he does not tolerate 'normal' food any longer but has to eat rotten things. Thus, he often crawls away into his lonely room in order to spare them from his occurrence. In addition, the appearance of beetles is, at least in most of today's societies, rarely a symbol for beauty. People often describe these animals as ugly and obscene while there are different opinions which part of a bug's body is the most disgusting one. A lot of people are even scared of bugs because they abominate the tiny hair on their legs or other characteristics. Again, one recognizes the parallels to Kafka's protagonist who feels physically inferior to others and who has no relationship to women to speak of. Different types of bugs are considered to be harmful for the crop in agriculture and this is why they are often fought with toxic liquids. In allusion to Gregor Samsa you could say that he feels unloved or even harmful to his family and that the father's

throwing of an apple to hurt Gregor is the ‘toxic liquid’ within the story. Consequently, the main character feels as plague or pest – the same way bugs are denoted in particular contexts. Another interesting point is the fact that an apple lasts out to kill Gregor in the end: This point could be interpreted as indication that Kafka felt so weak that it would have been an ease not just to make his life more difficult but to ‘squash him like a bug’.

2.5 The Metamorphosis as Self- Portrait

In the following chapter I want to compare the criteria and aspects I have elaborated on autobiographical works to Franz Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis*. As already mentioned above the term autobiography is derived from the Greek words meaning “self”, “life” and “write” whereas Lejeune says that an autobiography is based on the author’s life and experiences with particular regard to his or her personal development. By using further works of Kafka as an aid, I already emphasized the fact that Kafka definitely transferred personal experiences and feelings to *The Metamorphosis* and thus “wrote” about his “life himself” in a certain way. In addition, following Pascal’s definition of autobiography Franz Kafka invites the reader to a voyage of discovery: By reading *The Metamorphosis* the reader gets to know the Czech writer and has the opportunity to get an idea of his emotional state.

In terms of the common identity of author, narrator and protagonist Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* fulfills the requirements to be regarded as an autobiography: Although the identity of the three subjects is not an identical one there are numerous aspects that indicate the similarity between the author’s life and that of the protagonist. Furthermore, the story is narrated from Gregor’s view yet, not in the first person singular perspective. There are a lot of monologues and direct speech and in the course of the story, especially after Gregor’s death and the narrative perspective changes to an authorial one but without giving up this common identity. Concerning the criteria of self-reflection and introspection Kafka again meets the requirements for autobiographical works: He is not expected to reveal all about his subject in *The Metamorphosis* but he definitely amplifies some events that have affected his personal development: The way in which the writer illustrates past events says much about “who he thinks he is” (Porter and Wolf 1973: 5).

Consequently, the novella could be regarded as autobiography as far as there wasn't the genre of autofiction (Doubrovsky 2004: 70) which refers to the blurring of truth and fiction and thus suits Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* the best. A. Hughes states: "Autofiction may be understood as a narrative modality that inhabits the referential space likewise colonized by autobiography proper, but at the same time offers a patently enriched and treated, hence fictionalized, and metamorphic, version of the life-story of the autofictionneur" (Hughes 2002: 566). Obviously, Kafka based his work on his experiences and emotions and 'fictionalized' them to make the work more than just an enumeration of his life.

3. Conclusion

In this last section I would like to summarize the most important aspects of this term paper. As a basis for further analysis of *The Metamorphosis* I depicted the features a literary work has to fulfill in order to be regarded as autobiography. Subsequently, there was the question in how far Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* is composed of the author's personal experiences with particular regard to the relationship to his father. As this analysis has proven Kafka based the content of the story on his personal life: There are many issues Kafka suffered from during his life and a lot of them can be discovered in the life of the protagonist. It is neither the dissatisfaction with his profession nor the familiar conditions Kafka suffers from the most. Instead, it is the abnormal relationship towards his father the author highlights within the story. This fact is manifested by comparing the novel to "Kafka's diaries" (Brod, 1993) and his "letter to the father" (Kafka, 2005). The father-son relationship is also one of the main reasons for Kafka's choice of the figure of the bug: He feels suppressed by his father – mentally and physically – and describes the concomitant impacts on his life by letting Gregor undergo a similar emotional journey he went through himself. To put it in another way, the shape of the beetle symbolizes Gregor's, respectively Kafka's weakness and awkwardness within society. After the comparison of the novel and the author's life I have, on the basis of the autobiographical features, examined whether *The Metamorphosis* is a self-portrait of Franz Kafka. Consequently, it can be denoted as autobiographical work but with a high degree of fiction. This blurring of truth and fiction leads to the term of autofiction which seems to describe the story's genre the best. In conclusion, you can say that Franz Kafka revealed a part of his identity by writing *The Metamorphosis*.