

F.Kafka – important biographical data

- 1883 Franz Kafka born in Prague, father - prosperous Jewish businessman, family speaks German
- 1901 he attends German University in Prague
- 1906 successful degree in Doctorate of Law, begins one year of legal training
- 1910 Starts writing a diary, publishes short pieces, trips to Berlin and Paris
- 1912 Writes *Metamorphosis*
- 1914 *The Trial*

F.Kafka – important biographical data

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- **1917** Tuberculosis of the lungs diagnosed
- **1921** Starts work on *The Castle*, pensioned off by his employers
- **1923** Hebrew studies
- **1924** in Berlin, his health deteriorates, moves back to Prague, instructs his editor Max Brod to burn all his writings, Brod agrees, but disobeys instruction
- Kafka dies – buried in Jewish cemetery in Prague

What influenced his works?

- The events of his life -
- **OUTSIDER** born in the Jewish ghetto of Prague
- Prague's Jews spoke German-the official language of the Hapsburg Empire-in a Czech city, but they were neither Germans nor Czechs
- never fully accepted Judaism
- dominating father – did not approve writing -rebellious against authority appears in Kafka's works
- fear of marriage – he broke engagements

The Metamorphosis

- is an autobiographical piece of writing
- parts of the story reflect Kafka's own life-similar characters
- Kafka felt like an insect in his father's authoritative presence attacked by him
- Kafka's mother - silently hiding behind her husband's presence

The Trial

- The reader might think that the story was written after WW 2 and the Holocaust
- the main character Joseph K. parallels the history that happened in Europe during Hitler's rule
- realistic forecast of European events
- personal views of the corrupted and unjust political system in which he lived

Cont.

- Joseph K. experiences lack of rights
- arrested without any explanation or reasons given
- K. is continually shocked to find out that the court is corrupted - it is present everywhere
- It can be seen in every aspect of society, there is no escaping it - FRUSTRATION

The Castle

- A protagonist, known only as K., struggles to gain the access to the mysterious authorities of a castle that govern the village
- dark and surreal
- the main topics –
- alienation,
- bureaucracy,
- endless frustrations of man's attempts to stand against the system,
- hopelessness

Kafka's fame

- never famous in his own lifetime
- had an audience of admirers within a small circle of German-reading intellectuals
- some works - unfinished, found among his manuscripts- with chapters out of order and titles missing
- his long-time friend, Max Brod, ignored the request to burn the works
- Kafka never in his life had confidence in his talent

Kafka's museum in Prague

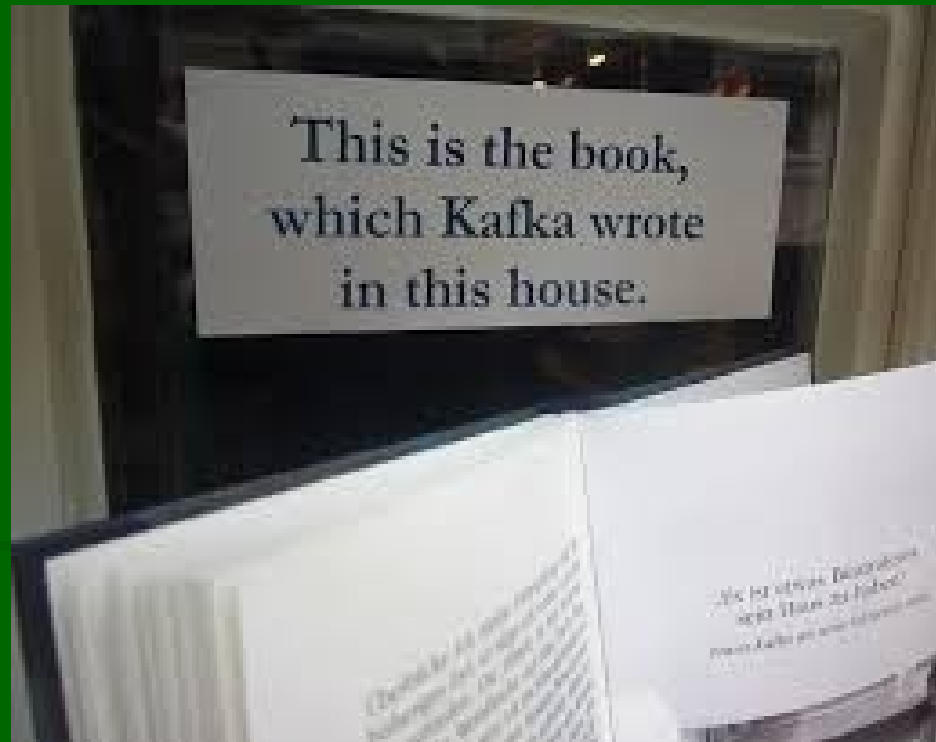






Alamy 08.11.2008

This is the book,
which Kafka wrote
in this house.



Kafka today

- Translated into many languages – problems – long sentences
- Influenced – Camus, Sartre
- 1999 a committee of 99 authors, scholars, and literary critics – The Trial and The Castle – the second and ninth
- most significant German novels -20th cent.

- Metamorphosis
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_H57OfsiahAw
- Kafka's Prague
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5FFR6coTu8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yY0lLvRGpg>
- Kafka's head