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**“THE TREES” BY FRANZ KAFKA- A THEMATIC ANALYSIS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Franz Kafka was one of the major fiction writers of the 20th century. His stories include "The Metamorphosis" (1912) and "In the Penal Colony" (1914), while his novels are *The Trial* (1925), *The Castle* (1926) and *Amerika* (1927). The Trees” is a short story by Kafka- the original German title is “Die Bäume”- that includes only four sentences. Kafka writes from the first-person plural, “we are like tree trunks in the snow,” and we, the readers, picture ourselves as such. No sooner have we done this when Kafka shifts tenses to the third-person: “they lie sleekly.” We are no longer in the trunks’ position. The shift seems illogical. Looking more closely at the first sentence, it now appears to be only a fragment beginning with “for,” like the second half of a thought. Here we are focusing and analyzing on four major themes i.e. trees, snow, trunks and appearance. Each of these themes includes a vast meaning other than its mere appearance. Definitely we can say that this story is born before the time with immense inner meanings and capable of make one individual to open the eyes and look in the inner life.

Keywords: Trees, Snow, Trunks and Appearance.

“The meaning of life is that it will end once”, one of the life visions of Franz Kafka, the most talented writers of the twentieth century. This story will be able to embody the ideas contained in the writings that were proclaimed during his lifetime and in the Pilgrimage. The philosophical and self-indulgent subjects of life, loneliness, alienation, despair, and sense of inferiority, are more natural and self-indulgent than any other contemporary, representing Kafka's stories and novels.

The stories published posthumously are more important than the writings he published during his lifetime. There was no prose to be ever happening to him. Perhaps his friend Marx Brad obeyed Kafka's words. History can be seen as a violation of a pledge to work. If time had been another thing, the literary world would have lost precious gems like Trial, Castle, America, etc. Kafka, had asked Marx to destroy all his writings after his life. But after Kafka's death, Marx Brad himself had taken the initiative and published works that were not written and completed.

Kafka's short stories are a essay model way, to dismiss the feeling altogether if the enjoyable person has some kind of essay character or doubts about whether a meaningful story is being sparked. But it can be said that they are misunderstood in the concepts. His short stories are rich in meaning and ideas. Those that require

deep distortions. It is possible to read the goodwill and the sprawling Kafka only if the reader could have a heart and soul.

Kafka's writings are numerous. At *Trial*, characters such as Joseph K, Mr K in *Castle*, and Gregor Samsa in *Metamorphosis* were all circumscribed as Kafka. The insecurity, fear, mental tension, disdain for the source of power, the obsession, the excavation, and the like are all in the form of short stories in the form of, characters, postures and parables. In the novel, the *Trial* goes indirectly to the insistence that his father, who had his own tyrannical character, had. Similarly, history and social regret are reflected in Kafka's writings. All of them are relevant beyond time. The short story "Hunger Artist" is a good example of this.

Many short stories are filled with Kafka's collection. This writing goes by quoting two short story from them. Little stories, those are less than fifteen lines in size. Although the size of the story surprises us, there is no need to specify that an inner meaning has the content and core to write a master poem. Here we consider the short story of only four lines the "The trees". The inner being is composed of the exact opposite meaning of the meanings of the mouth in the primitive. "The Trees" is a short story by Kafka- the original German title is "Die Bäume"- that includes only four sentences. The first of its three sentences plays with our expectations, our human predisposition to empathize. Kafka writes from the first-person plural, "we are like tree trunks in the snow," and we, the readers, picture ourselves as such. No sooner have we done this when Kafka shifts tenses to the third-person: "they lie sleekly." We are no longer in the trunks' position. The shift seems illogical. Looking more closely at the first sentence, it now appears to be only a fragment beginning with "for," like the second half of a thought.

#### "The trees"

"For we are like tree trunks in the snow. In appearance they lie sleekly and a little push should be enough to set them rolling. No, it can't be done, for they are firmly wedded to the ground. But see, even that is only appearance".

#### Method

This article is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected from the original works of Franz Kafka, and Secondary data have been collected from different books, articles, research journals, internet, etc.

#### Theme 1- Trees

The short story begins with "For we are as...". Immediately the reader imagines themselves as tree trunks in the snow. It 'seems' that 'tree trunks' are used as a metaphor for the reader or, to generalize, humans. "Trees" according to Buddhist teachings are our unrecognizable existence. They are capable of turning us back into light. In the first reading, it seems to be the story of the central character of the tree, which is covered in the hemisphere, about the unspeakable gavel between the tree and the earth in winter. But re-reading the story shows that there is no particular character, no particular place and no particular relationships.

The story begins by telling the human race as a whole. The first sentence is that we are like the trunks of snow that is the winter. The human race is likened to the trunk of mankind. Everywhere on earth there is man. In first sight, the trunks are thin and are ready to fall for a small impact. But that is not possible because they are firmly planted on the ground. But that, too, is just a sight to behold, the writer said.

According to Kafka's view point, a person's humanity is the only trait that identifies them as a human being. When humanity is taken away from a person, they are no longer considered human by others because they lack individuality and human attributes. Humanity gives a person the reason to be accepted into society, and people who lack humanity become outcasts.

A timeless classic, "The Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka entralls readers with its witty elements of magical realism. Despite the seeming absurdity of the story's plot, the text covers topics that comprise the core of human existence, such as alienation and identity crisis, making it relatable for many readers. The story can be

interpreted in numerous ways. Some claim that the story illustrates the complex process of identity formation. Others argue that "The Metamorphosis" intends to highlight the egocentric nature of mankind. In addition to illustrating the egocentric nature of humans and process of identity formation, the story also addresses the topic of alienation.

### **Theme 2- Snow**

From the outside, we're all just a piece of trunk wood covered in snow. Snow represents the difficulties that come and go between us when it comes to human beings. Life is full of sorrow and endurance. We've grown up and spread like a huge tree in the middle of all these circumstances. As the days go by, snow comes over us and covers us with the hand of a white blanket of it. At that time, our sources of power, which are leafy branches, may come and be covered by depressing snow and which may shake us all when it falls around all. You would think that you would lose your life by shivering in that cold. But we do not know the strength of the trunk roots from the outside. The trunk root will show its strength when it demands. Life is snow-covered ultimately. Winter is just the middlemen who bring joy and the intermittent spring of life let go of the worries of winter.

According to Fyodor Dostoevsky "Pain and suffering are always inevitable for a large intelligence and a deep heart. The really great men must, I think, have great sadness on earth." When we suffer we have an opportunity to grow in our endurance. To learn the art of going beyond what our comfort zone would dictate. This is the place of true growth. Consistent endurance leads to the establishment of what we all want but very few have, character! "...we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us". (Romans 5:3-5). According to Kafka himself said about suffering "You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of the world, that is something you are free to do and it accords with your nature, but perhaps this very holding back is the one suffering you could avoid". And "Suffering is the positive element in this world, indeed it is the only link between this world and the positive."

### **Theme 3- Trunks**

The trunk we see from the outside is just the outside of man. Their gains, losses, joys and sorrows are all twigs, leaves, flowers and fruits. We do not know the power of trunk roots we do not see from the outside. Roots from trunks are full of values and thoughts that we have assimilated. The trunk and roots can be likened to the subconscious mind of Sigmund Freud. The subconscious mind is the powerful secondary system that runs everything in our life. Learning how to stimulate the communication between the conscious and the subconscious minds is a powerful tool on the way to success, happiness and riches. The subconscious mind is a data-bank for everything, which is not in our conscious mind. It stores our beliefs, our previous experience, our memories, our skills. Everything that we have seen, done or thought is also there. In terms of messages about the value of human life, Kafka seems to be saying that human life is valuable and all humans should be treated as significant and important and should be good to one another.

It is these values and thoughts that take root in the depths of the earth, and then spread the flower and bear fruit. The stronger the roots, the trunk the longer we survive. If we keep the strongest value, we will be swept away by the storm. The roots and trunks are also important for keeping us well on earth. When we think about thoughts and values, let's step aside the great wordings of Mahatma Gandhi "Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words. Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior. Keep your behavior positive because your behavior becomes your habits. Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values. Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny."

### **Theme 4 - Appearance**

Appearance is the way that someone or something looks. Appearance can be real or illusion even hallucination. Appearances can be deceptive; one should look closely at one's surroundings because the truth might not be obvious. In the end of the story, it 'seems' as if the jokes are on us. It is believed Kafka is saying that

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when dealing with humans, and trying to get to know them, do not expect any consistencies, because not only can reality be deceiving, reality can also change. Even if people are rooted to the ground, for example, in their opinions, values thoughts, Kafka could be saying that it is possible for these people to change.

### Conclusion

This is a famous story of Franz Kafka. A small short story. Tress, snow, trunk, appearance are the main themes here in this story. Definitely we can say that this story is born before the time with immense inner meanings and capable of make one individual to open the eyes and look in the inner life.

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