FRANZ KAFKA: BRIEF PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON ABSENT-MINDED WINDOW-GAZING

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to conduct a psychological analysis on Franz Kafka (1883-1924), an eminent figure of the 20th century, known for his disturbing and dreamlike works. This study takes its place in the current landscape of Kafka studies, which often focus on philosophical or sociological interpretations, by proposing a novel psychological perspective on his creativity. The Bohemian writer's creative and literary thinking will be analysed and the short story *Absent-minded Window-gazing* from *Contemplation* (1912) will be examined. Emblematic of Kafka's vision of the meaninglessness of human nature, this short story traces elements with pictorial precision that offer the reader a critical-interpretive explanation. The study of the tale, focusing on the futility of days, will present themes and characteristics of Kafka's para-oniric language, such as the inversion of the meanings of social expectations and conventions, generating absurdity and alienation and emphasising the solipsistic condition of man. The methodology employed will be that of the Psychology of Art and Literature, a discipline founded by Prof. Antonio Fusco, which researches the psychological reasons behind the creation of characters and environments. This work aims to demonstrate the writer's need to investigate his characters and human nature in order to "understand himself". The results of this psychological analysis could significantly enrich our understanding of Kafka's oeuvre, revealing the deep roots of his themes and contributing to a more multifaceted view of 20th century literature, especially with regard to the expression of alienation and the absurd.

Keywords: Franz Kafka, Psychology, Creativity, Absent-Minded Window-Gazing, Art

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to show the reader a psychological analysis of the Bohemian writer Franz Kafka. At the same time, it will offer some psychological reflections on the recurring themes and elements in Kafka's works, with particular reference to the very short story belonging to the *Contemplation*, i.e. *Absent-minded Window-gazing*. One of the main aims of this study, in line with the Psychology of Literature, is to search for the psychological reasons that drove the author to devise specific characters and settings. An equally crucial element is the symbols present in the literary text. Their decipherment will take place through an accurate and detailed search for psychological meanings, avoiding rigidly codified interpretations and instead enhancing the subjectivity of the interpreter (Tomassoni, 2020).

This study will focus on the analysis of the main and recurring concepts in Kafka's works, with a particular focus on the characters in the short story *Absent-minded Window-gazing*.

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