

THEME OF CLASS STRUGGLE IN FRANZ KAFKA'S NOVELLA, 'THE METAMORPHOSIS'

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Abstract

When subjected to be seen and understood through the lens of class-struggle, the seemingly funny novella, *The Metamorphosis*, can be enjoyed and understood more. The researcher anticipated and then pursued the thread of class-struggle running through it. The researcher carried out its textual analysis to unveil the complex mechanism of Capitalism and the deteriorating social effect of its class struggle. The central figure, Gregor, gets transformed into a big bug and readers assume that his main cause of affliction would be his loss of attractive human body and nature; but his affliction comes out primarily to be due to his getting deprived of the means for bringing about a change in his fate and, thereby crossing the boundaries of his class, to become eligible for the deserved toils of his labour. The author actually insinuates at the ages-long tragedy of the labour class, in its tiresome journey to cross its boundary, so that its members can be treated at par with their fellow human beings from the upper class. Allegorically, his wishes represent the innocent and just wishes of one unaware of the capitalist system, whereas his family's approach represents the pragmatic approach of those familiar with the limitations and boundaries of their class in capitalist system. The practical experience of his family members and the will of the upper class prevail and Gregor, who challenges the status-quo, has been shown hurled away from the system in the shape of his death.

Gregor hailing from the labor class, entertained some innocent wishes that seemed too ambitious to his family members.

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Introduction

The Metamorphosis is written by a German story-writer Franz Kafka. He is a well-read author in Germany. Almost all of his works are translated in English language. Kafka's themes appeal to every modern man. His stories seem simple and humorous on apparent level but on metaphorical level they offer many subtle perspectives. His works are the product and reflection of the age, society, and conditions in which he lived. The experience of his miserable life gets place in his various stories and novellas; one such example is his novella, *The Metamorphosis*. Events in Kafka's stories are most of the time the experiences of every common person. Due to this, it seems Kafka does not only create complete fictional world rather he lives in this physical world and writes for it. The existentialist Kafka is the hero of both English and German literature.

The Metamorphosis by Kafka is the transformation of the major human character, Gregor, into a gigantic bug. Symbolically this transformation means a lot. This shows the mental and physical changes that occur on minor level but in the story these changes have been deliberately exaggerated for effect. The change reflects the mechanical life of a person who remains busy monotonously in earning money and keeps eyes shut to the newness of life. This story is a vivid proof and explanation of the miseries of the poor class. Aim of this study is to find hints of class-conflict which is the basic cause of Gregor's transformation and the story has to be analyzed through the lens of Marxism which is the umbrella term used for the above mentioned cause.

Barry (2002) writes that Karl Marx, a German philosopher, and Fredrick Engels, a German sociologist (as he would now be called), were the joint founders of Marxist school of thought (Barry 156). Karl Marx's father was a lawyer. When Marx was six years old, his family embraced Christianity. This transformation had long-lasting effects upon him.

Marx, though the son of a rich person, led a poor life, as he remained in exile for most of the time. He left Germany in 1848, the year of revolutions; Engels was already in Britain. Marx used to write articles for the same journal for which Engels also wrote. They proposed a theory and named it Communism, instead of Marxism. The theory flourished with the same title till Engels called it Marxism. They believed that factories, transport system, etc. should be owned by the state and opposed their privatization. Both of them contributed to the work *Communist Manifesto*, in which they announced the advent of communism (Barry 156).

The researcher studied various perspectives of Marxism; he read the views of Althusser, Hegel, and Frankfurt school of Marxism and studied Marxism with geographical context, also, like German, Russian, and British Marxism. Marxism has various perspectives; The most attractive and related ones to 'The Metamorphosis' are the perspectives of class-struggle and exploitation of

labor. A sort of struggle persists in a society all the time and it leads to negativity if the society is capitalist. Because, the elite class would try to exploit the poor class whereas the poor class would strive just for their survival in the form of earning minimal livelihood. Consequently, no overall progress, meant for all the segments of the society, is possible in this system.

Literature Review

Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* has been subjected to various interpretations. Some critics deal with the plot in their criticism while others relate various other aspects to the very text of the story.. On the surface level, it is a story of a salesman, Gregor, who gets up one morning from deep sleep and feels very uneasy. On his close observation, he comes to know that he has got transformed into a big beetle. This change is very shocking for him not primarily because his body has got disfigured but rather because due to this, he thinks, he will not be able to continue his job. It is the consequences of the transformation in the form of restrictions and not the transformation itself that has triggered his fears. Being the only bread-winner of his family, he thinks he would fail to continue his role in sustaining his family by working as a money-making machine. As a result of this transformation he turns from an independent to a dependent family member. Then the story moves forward to show the problems that the major character would now face in his family relations. In the very end, Gregor's death becomes the wish of the family and they are content when they find him dead in his room.

This story is a good site for further research. It offers new vistas in the fields of psychology, philosophy, political theory, and autobiography. Some critics view the story as an allegory while some take it completely as a psychological narration devoid of action, and in which all the events narrated seem the inner thoughts of the major character. Existentialism is one of the major themes related by some of the critics to the story and which is reflected in the alienation of Gregor from his inner self as well as his outer world.

The elements of Marxism stand out too prominently in this story. Mahum Qureshi's article (2011) as a Marxist critique of *The Metamorphosis* suffers from dilution and lack of concentration and focus in the treatment of Marxist perspective; she mixes up Marxism with other aspects like psychoanalysis, existentialism, and autobiography of the author etc. The researcher has not been able to find any single research devoted exclusively to the treatment of "Marxism" in *The Metamorphosis*. There is a discrepancy between the topic and the content of Mahum Qureshi's article as there is very little focus on the topic itself.

Discussing various critics of this story chronologically, I begin with Samantha J. Sacks (2016), who talks about the graphical interpretation of *The Metamorphosis* and opens up a new avenue for discussion. The critic is of the opinion that Kafka has excellently produced graphics through this story. The action of creating graphics might not be intentional but the effect that it produces is unmatched due to which, at times, it seems that the story has only this single theme. Seen from the graphical perspective, the text of the story offers a superb example of creating image e.g. Gregor as a beetle. Referring to Willa and Mair's German-to-English translation of *The Metamorphosis*, Samantha believes there is no sign of Gregor being presented as a cockroach.

Gregor's huge transformed body in the story creates problems in translating it from one language to another, due to which Gregor has not been translated as a beetle.

The graphic, comic, and magna versions of *The Metamorphosis* all portray different aspects of Gregor's personality and offer many interpretations of the plot. The difference between different versions is what lets us distinguish how far each of them falls short of Kafka's original plan and intention. This discrepancy lets us understand the implications that these texts have had over the readers' interpretation of both works—independent of one another and combined (Sacks 8).

The images of the story are significant and commendable in the sense that they depict a very complex and abstract matter in such an easy and pleasant way that the sentiments of the readers are neither hurt nor over-stretched. Due to the suggestiveness of the imagery used, the reader enjoys freedom to deduce of such a work any meaning that appeals to them.

William Frazer (2015) has discussed identity-crisis in the novel. He is in quest of Gregor's real and imposed identity. He holds that Gregor's transformation from a human to a beetle has "sameness" as well as contradictory effects. He is in trouble with his inner self as well as the outer world. He is the same Gregor but the opposing factors are different. Further, there is both absurdity and concreteness in his identity: absurdity in his animal identity (beetle) while concrete identity in his previous identity, when he used to be a human. He quotes Robert C. Evans saying, "Kafka in other words achieves a grotesque effect precisely by making Gregor (protagonist) seem pitiable, ugly, laughable, and sympathetic all at once" (Frazer, 8). He further says that this "literary device" that Kafka uses produces "ominous tension" (9). According to the critic, story-telling method and presentation of alienated person in the character of Gregor and the overall pattern of the story is "a reflector device" (14), and that the rhetoric device used in *The Metamorphosis* is an "aside or turned away dialogue...apostrophe statements" (14). Besides, he believes there is a paradoxical absurdity within Kafka when he creates the character of Gregor having an alienated self and posing "resistance" to identity.

Next, William Frazer refers to another critic Richard T. Gray, who says, "Kafkaesque describes Kafka's subversion of logic where social alienation expressed in the absurd, futile, tragic, and distorted are made tonal using paradox, irony, and 'sudden reversals of actions' creating confusion when thinking what is significant inside or outside the world" (24). According to this stance, there exists a great deal of dexterity in handling the story not only on the level of plot but also on the level of technique.

Rachel Askenazi (2015) observes the story as an embodiment of existentialism. Rachel says that the outcry of existentialist school was at peak in twentieth century (Askenazi 1). He further says that at that time the economy was booming and capitalism was practiced in routine life. Capitalism brings forth negativity in the various classes of society whereby the upper class is given free hand to exploit the labor class (1). This free hand to exploit the labor class casts a spell of frustration over the miserable class of the society who has always been living from hand to mouth. The critic is of the opinion that when such a frustrated soul withdraws seemingly into tranquility and starts shunning the social world, he automatically stops loving humanity whereas the true meaning of life is attained only when human beings take care of one another. In a capitalist system a person

deviates towards industrialism and is rendered to the position of a component in the machine of the mechanical world (1).

Gregor, according to Askenazi, strives for earning money all the time but is unable to feel the pleasure that he desires (1). He is of the opinion that the reason for Gregor's alienation is his negligible social circle. As a transformed person he does not accommodate someone in his social life for enjoying his spare time. It is his loneliness that is the main cause of his estrangement. He gets love and veneration from others in the beginning of the story, as long as he is beneficial to them, but by the time he ceases to be productive to them, he loses all that respect and affection. (1). Askenazi, believes that when someone is in pursuit of the meaning of life then all his struggle in this regard can be termed as existentialist. He believes that there is no arrangement, in a capitalist system, to stop people from getting alienated, except their retreatment from their mechanical mode of life towards fostering relations of love and sympathy with other fellow beings (2). The affectionate and profound love of Gregor's sister, Grete, towards him proves instrumental in changing his miserable condition for the better. He argues that capitalism is a threat to one's personal as well as family relations. He narrates that in capitalist system a person achieves his materialistic interest but at the cost of losing their family and other social relations.

This novella depicts the torments of life in the modern age. The troubles of Gregor stand for the present day sufferings of humanity in the throes of capitalism. Enrico R. A. Giannetto (2013) points out that this story is the depiction of the barbarity and brutal authority of the upper class over the common people hailing from the lower class. He adds that the story states the personal life and experiences of one, say Kafka, and moves forward to the ideology of human-culture, focusing on philosophical study, scientific realities, and religious strata (Giannetto 75). Further, there is a negation of any sort of change, on the part of Gregor, which is in reality Kafka's own resistance to accept any change or a metaphorical expression of the conditions of people. No one utters sympathetic words to the transformed figure of Gregor. This attitude shows the materialistic nature of human beings who are zero tolerant towards those animals which are of no more benefit to us. We destroy them scornfully the way Gregor was crushed. Particularly, in research fields, many animals are destroyed without any feeling of "compassion" (75).

There is a gap between human beings (self) and animals (other). Human beings do not show forbearance to (other) animals; rather they try to dictate animals' behavior according to their own wishes and at the end kill them with or without any reason. He says, "Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* is the result of people's such kind of attitude, and animals can correctly be called 'machines that exist in the *res extensa* and place only human beings in the *res cognitans*' (76).

Marx states in *Communist Manifesto*: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx 24). It suggests that different social classes compete with each other to get control over authority and power. Khan (2013), summarizing Marx's view in his research thesis, says that the struggle for best economic position makes human history, as every individual and society try to obtain and retain strong economy. Economy has a greater contribution in the politics of a state. In capitalist society, even human beings become the goods of business. In modern time, labors are like the serfs of ancient times who would be kept like slaves. Marx (1967) says that the

labors are "slaves of the bourgeois class and of the bourgeois state" (Marx 479), and in *Capital* he talks about "the domination of the capitalist over the worker" (Marx 899). He connects political change with social and economic change. For him, democracy has no significance as it provides no help at all to labors.

Marxism focuses over the formation of a society where there would be no class-difference and no exploitation of any single class. It is a *materialist* philosophy. Barry is of the opinion that Marxism looks for concrete, scientific, and logical explanations of the world of observable fact (156). Marxism is ahead of other philosophies in the sense that if other philosophies try to understand the world, Marxism tries to change it. In modern industrial capitalism, one social class exploits the other, which results in alienation and the worker is made to perform fragmented, repetitive tasks in a sequence over whose nature and purpose they have no control (156). In cottage industry system, the worker himself was the owner of everything who manufactured things at home, priced them and then sold them to the customers directly. The alienated workers face reification under Capitalism in which laborers, are not considered humans even; rather, they are termed as "hands" or "the labor force" (157) and treated like inanimate objects, devoid of feelings and emotions.

Marxist societal model comprises *base* (the material means of production, distribution and exchange) and a *superstructure*, which is the cultural world of ideas, art, religion, law, and so on (157). Marxism says that the above-mentioned list is produced by economy and is not a list of innocent things. When the same is said of culture, it is called *economic determinism*, which is the central part of traditional Marxist thinking (157). Marxist critics of literature claim that an author's ideology and social class has great effect on their writings.

Mazlish (1984) writes that, "Marxism is, then, a combination of these two basic ideas: everything is product of the Mode of Production (in this case, Capitalism) and the whole process of history is characterized by endless competition between antagonistic economic classes" (Mazlish 97). Marxism seeks the basic competition between the exploited and the exploiter, between the labor and the owner. It divides the society into the following two types:

- A. Bourgeoisie: In Marxism, it refers to the owners, elite class, capitalists, or managers who control the Mode of Production. In their hands lie the food and rest of the labor class.
- B. Proletariat: This is the class of wage-earners who work in factories, offices, and fields. They are factory workers who have no assets except their working hands which are supposed to work mechanically.

Textual Analysis and Discussion

The text of *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka was analysed through the lens of two Marxist elements: class struggle and exploitation of labor; both of them are corollaries and mean nearly the same thing because when there is class struggle, then there is bound to be exploitation of another class, namely, the lower or the labor class; it is rarely possible that any two groups having the same social status would exploit each other. *The Metamorphosis* is the story of a salesman, Gregor Samsa, who gets up one morning from deep sleep and notices that his human body has been transformed into a big bug (Straus 652), writes Nina Pelican Straus (1989). This is the beginning of the story and of the miserable life of Gregor's as well. The researcher took Gregor

not as a bug, but as a human being who had become unable to perform any human action. The research analyses Gregor's dilemma in the light of class struggle and exploitation of labor. The research downplayed the aspect of transformation of a human being into a bug and instead tried to highlight as to how a human being is treated by others, and the society as whole, when they cease to earn for others and instead becomes a liability over others.

Straus writes that *The Metamorphosis* is the replica of class struggle (1989, p. 653). At almost every point in a society, the higher class and the lower class, the dependent class and the independent class, and the rich class and the poor class can be found competing with each other. The upper class tries to keep the lower classes subordinate and does not want it to exceed its fixed limits, whereas, the lower class tries to challenge the status-quo and change its current situation for better. In this way, the struggle between them continues on constant basis.

Gregor's earns a meager living by traveling on the road from one place to another. His job and travelling means place him straight in the lower, subordinated, and labor class. He cannot afford nutritious food and hence sustains himself on "irregular bad food" that has a telling upon his health (4). This is not a problem specific to Gregor alone, but rather every individual, belonging to the lower class of the society, faces it. Gregor represents every poor person who is under the suppression of upper class. People like Gregor cannot have relations of love or affection as they are not considered worthy of them. The poor and wretched people are doubted everywhere. The upper class sets its own standards of behavior and living, which are beyond the reach of common or poor people and in this way they are deprived of real and wholehearted relations. Gregor is victim to "temporary and constantly changing human relationships which never emanate from the heart" (4). As the labor class has no social value, so no one from the elite class takes heed to establish permanent relations with people from the labor class.

In a society, especially a capitalist one, salesmen are not accorded the status of human beings even. The upper class maintains a specific frame of mind regarding salesmen, which debars it to treat them on equal or respectable footing. The labors are considered "harem women" (5), with whom no one from the upper class wants to maintain relations or serious communication. It clearly shows the degraded status of Gregor's class in the society. "Harem women" is a too humiliating a label to be given to men who work hard to earn bread and butter for themselves and their families. Instead of giving them respect, they are treated disrespectfully. As they are considered not worthy to be looked upon as human beings, so they are supposed to live their lives like caged animals. They are expected to be obedient, selfless, perfect, and mechanical, with no flaws that are associated with other normal human beings.

The story tells of "an occupational illness, regarding which he had not the slightest doubt" (9). The pathetic condition faced by Gregor is that although he is no more in human form and physique yet his manager, representing the upper class, is not ready to accept the fact. He suspects Gregor and other salesmen of making lame excuses and cannot believe they could fall ill at all. Even if they do, he considers them so strong and resilient that even despite being ill they can continue working. This is the problem with the upper class that they are neither willing to understand nor able to believe that poor people too can fall ill and have health or other problems. The "one condemned

to work in a firm, where at the slightest lapse someone immediately attracted the greatest suspicion" (13). In the field, every laborer has to work with full energy, even if they are physically or mentally stressed. Every laborer is bound to work devotedly and diligently in all circumstances, because in case of any lapse of omission or commission, they run the risk of expulsion from job or of incurring a cut in their wages.

Gregor's mother tells the manager, "The young man has nothing in his head except business. I'm almost angry that he never goes out at night" (15). According to her, Gregor is obsessed with the thought of business only, and has stopped participating in any type of recreational activities, thereby risking his mental health. This condition of deprivation from enjoying a few moments of pleasure and leisure is faced by almost every laborer. The only thing that concerns them is how to make both ends meet and how to ensure survival. Being mother of a salesman, would she be listened to and responded positively by the manager is a question the answer to which is a definite no. The reason is that poor people are considered senseless, no matter how much wise they may be. When the poor are in communication with the rich or with those who wield some political, economic, or social power and authority, then their points of view are not taken seriously. The words of Gregor carry no weight for the people around him due to his inability to earn any more. "People did not understand his (Gregor's) words anymore," because a person's worth and his influence over others in today's materialistic world is evaluated by the amount of money they earn (20). When the poor are not placed in the category of humans at least, then they are less likely to be listened to by the rich. Their words and their speech are considered to carry no meaning and significance for the upper class. Terming poor people's speech as meaningless chatter, the author writes, "Noise sounded like something different from a human cough." (21) The writer equates their speech to a meaningless irritating sound that nobody is ready to listen to and consider, solely because they are poor.

Gregor is aware of the fact that "people don't like travelling salesmen" (25) but he has no other option to live on. He says, "Travelling is exhausting, but I couldn't live without it" (25). Gregor lives his life upon the roads and abandons every type of happiness just to have a good and relished familial relation. He knows the troubles and tortures of the road-life but he cannot give it up as it is the only source of income for his family. The future, destiny, and social position of the lower class, most of the times, remains in the hands of the upper and elite class. The passage, given below, has been extracted from the story that shows the real value and the worth of a laborer or a poor person in a society.

The travelling salesman who is outside the office almost round the year can become so easily a victim of gossip, coincidences, and groundless complaints, against which it's impossible for him to defend himself, since for the most part he doesn't hear about them at all and only then when he's exhausted after finishing a trip, and gets to feel in his own body at home the nasty consequences, which can't be thoroughly explored back to their origins" (26).

This paragraph is the clear picture of a poor person who becomes the gossip of masses. Every misdeed, whether committed by him or not, is related to his personality and character. Poor people

have such an ephemeral honour that it evaporates into nothingness in no time, while rich people's honor sticks to them and it is very difficult to dishonor them in any way.

Gregor's father, a constant threat to Gregor, is the embodiment of an authority that is all the time ruling a poor person or laborer. Like every subjugated person, Gregor is waiting for "a mortal blow on his back or his head from the cane in his father's hand" (30). The cane is a symbol of every impending unpredictable threat and curse that may befall every laborer any time.

The life of a laborer is bound in a vicious circle from which there is no escape. He ends at the point from where he has started his journey. He is blindfolded and is engrossed so much in his struggle that he even fails to realize that his limited world is just a part of the whole world. This is the reason that "the high open room, in which he was compelled to lie flat on the floor, made him anxious, without his being able to figure out the reason, for he had lived in the room for five years" (36). This room is everything for him that is why, he cannot make any progress. This is the world in which Gregor has lived some part of his life.

Like him, many of the dependent people live their lives without exploring the vaster world of reality outside. They depend on the ruling class for the fulfillment of their need for food, as, in the story, Gregor seeks his sister's aid, "if she did not do it on her own, he would sooner starve to death" (37). Such situations make a person senseless and they lose self-esteem. Gregor says to himself, "Am I going to be less sensitive?" (38). He knows that he is about to lose sensitivity and this is one of the reasons that the research takes Gregor not as a bug but as a deteriorated laborer. Gregor's family thinks about the behavior of the people when they come to have a creature in the form of the transformed Gregor. Almost in every materialistic society, when one stops earning one is treated and rendered to a status no less than that of Gregor. The family members meditate and discuss the outcome of the transformation. They become chatter-boxes on this issue as "for two days at all meal times discussions on that subject could be heard on how people should now behave" (41). They worry about their own survival because they have a dependent creature like Gregor in their family now. The trouble and misery of Gregor is forgotten and the family is looking forward to a trouble-free family and social sphere.

Before undergoing transformation, Gregor has some wishes that he wants to fulfil but is not allowed by his social sphere. His class is not in a position to have the things that are reserved for the rich class alone. He talks about such things "in conversations with his sister, but always only as a beautiful dream, whose realization was unimaginable," (44). His economic conditions are not stable to fulfil his dreams. He is not in a position to improve his social standards that is why the author says; "such futile ideas went through his head," (44). The value of ideas depends on a person's social, political, and economic conditions as well. If one has some value in one's society, one's ideas are respected and acted upon more. Gregor works day and night to have some higher social status and hence to get out of his miserable condition. Gregor thinks that if he can earn more money in less time, "he could have paid off more of his father's debt to his employer" (45). This is the first hurdle that he considers to be surpassed before rising up in societal stratification. For this purpose, "money to live on must be earned" (46). Currently, Gregor has no position in his society. He is a rolling stone. He is a man "whose exact location she (his mother) didn't know,"

(53). He does not have social stability. So, Gregor works hard to earn more and more money in lesser time. He keeps himself as busy as a bee in his hard work.

When faced by a need every type of rest and facility fades away. Gregor's father who is an old man is now supposed to work and earn money. He forgets that he is an old man; "he was standing up really straight, dressed in a tight fitting blue uniform with gold buttons, like the ones servants wear in a banking company" (62). If one faces financial crisis, one has to work hard, no matter how much old one may be and that is the point which Marxism strongly opposes. Money comes in response to the shedding of sweat and blood by the laborer. In a capitalist society, the owner demands outcome and target from the laborer, so he/she does not care when the laborer is ill or old. One has to work hard to fight out all the hardships and miseries in which one is engulfed, as no one else will come to help him. In the story, when apples get rotten in Gregor's body, "no one ventured to remove the apple, it remained in his flesh as a visible reminder" (p. 66). This is the result of losing capability to earn money.

With the transformation of Gregor, the family loses its income source, so to make both ends meet, all the family members now have to work. Consequently, "the mother sewed fine undergarments for a fashion shop. The sister, who had taken on a job as a salesgirl, in the evening, studied stenography and French, so as perhaps later to obtain a better position" (67). For gaining social standard, all of them adopt some type of jobs, which again shows, clearly, the existence of class struggle. The father leaves the arm-chair and goes out for work. The uniform of the father stands for the job that he has adopted. He is obsessed with its thought and remains in that uniform all the time and "with a sort of stubbornness, the father refused to take off his servant's uniform even at home" (67). He can think of his position only and cares for nothing else. "He was always ready for his responsibility and even here was waiting for the voice of his superior" (67). His father is the real embodiment of the imposed mental slavery. This clearly shows that the inferior or the laborer is compelled to remain ready all the time for carrying out the order of their superiors or their owners. The type of task assigned to the laborers, how they are paid money for their work, and how they are mentioned can be understood clearly from the extract of the story, "A huge bony cleaning woman with white hair flapping all over her head came in the morning and the evening to do the heaviest work" (69).

Above all, when labors are granted something as a compensation for their labour, then the thing that is given to them and way it is given to them is both shocking and humiliating. Gregor receives food that is not worthy to be eaten by a human being. The treatment and attitude adopted with Gregor represent those with other individuals of his labor class; when his sister brings food for him, she "kicked some food or other very quickly into his room in the morning and at noon," (71). Further, he is left in the shabby place and the authority, his father, does not allow anyone to clean his dwelling. His father forbids everyone to go into Gregor's room; even "he shouted at the sister that she would no longer be allowed to clean Gregor's room ever again" (73). Most of the times, the poor people are left hopeless and helpless in the run of life, the way Gregor is left. Almost every laborer is given a funny nickname that is meant for mocking at their characters as Gregor, too, was called; "Come here for a bit, old dung beetle!" (74).

There is vivid class distinction in the characters of the three lodgers who come to live in Samsa's apartment. Though, all of them have unknown job description, but still one of them seems superior. When they come for breakfast and check the food, they consider it not according to their taste. They let one of them taste the breakfast for knowing if it needs further improvement. It also shows that they are never ready to compromise their life standard and want nothing inferior to their set life standard, even in trivial matters. .

In fact, the one who sits in the middle (for the other two on the corners, he seemed to serve as his bosses and authority) cuts off a piece of meat lying on the plate, obviously to establish whether it was sufficiently cooked and whether or not something should be shipped back to the kitchen (77). This means, also, that the choice of the authority supersedes the choice of the followers and the choice of the followers indispensably becomes the choice of the followers, even against the wishes of the followers. The upper class wants all the pleasures reserved exclusively for itself and does not let the lower class partake of it. The lodgers pay to the family as they have rented one of their rooms. With Gregor's family, they, as representatives of an elite class, behave in that aristocratic way. When Grete plays the piano, one of them says, that they would prefer that "the young woman come into us and play in the room here which is really much more comfortable and cheerful" (78). They want to grab all the types of pleasure and beauty to the maximum for themselves alone and to stick to. They, time and again, come near Gregor's sister and harass her. It "must certainly bother the sister... worriedly observed by the father" (80). Lower class people do not like some of the nasty habits of the upper class but their lips remain sealed under some threat or compulsion. When talking amongst themselves, they observe all sort of decorum, but when addressing someone from the lower class, their manner of address becomes non-human and uncivilized like, when they felt the need of taking breakfast they said, "Where is the breakfast? They asked grumpily to the cleaning woman" (92).

The lodgers are astonished to find Gregor possessing the human sense of pleasure when the music of piano attracts him; "Was he an animal that music so seized him?" (82). Gregor becomes a source of joy for the lodgers when they come to know of his miserable condition; "Gregor seemed to entertain them more than the violin recital" (82). This is the condition of every poor person that the well-off world around laughs at their miseries. Gregor's family is tired of taking care of him anymore; they say, "A communal life among human beings is not possible with such an animal and would have gone away voluntarily" (86). Now they want to get rid of him. In the end they are all happy because Gregor is dead and they "all three had employment" (96).

The story is full of instances where struggle between the upper and the lower class is portrayed. The researcher's attention was caught by the most prominent ones and he tried to inter-connect them. Gregor, being a perfect example of an individual from the lower/labor class, represents and signifies every single individual of the labor class, whenever his name gets mentioned in the text. If, in the story, he bears a separate name from other individuals of his class, it was done merely for the purpose of ensuring clarity and establishing connectivity of the topic with the text.

Conclusion

The study reveals that despite being a funny and attractive story, it relates a very ruthless tug of war played between the haves and the have-nots of the materialistic society, inside the Capitalist system. The author's attention was drawn to two aspects of capitalist system the most i.e. class struggle and exploitation, but took up the aspect of class-struggle for the present study. However this study made researching the other aspect along the same line easy and possible.

The study unveils, on one hand, the unending and chronic struggle of the labor class to get out of the vicious circle, set for it by the upper class, and, on the other hand, the stubborn will and machinations of the upper class to frustrate the labor class in its efforts to come closer to the privileged life of the upper class. The story shows the slaughtering of Gregor, at the altar of Capitalism; his mind and life serves as the real scene of struggle between these hostile forces. Kafka tries to tell us that for Gregor the point of concern is not the transformation into an insect, but rather the fear of the consequent loss of job and thereby the consequent frustration of his dreams to change the status of himself and his family for better.

By controlling the means of production, the upper class so ingeniously loads the dice against the lower class that even Gregor's family members, whose fate he wished to change against the odds, are compelled to get rid of him or see him dead. The society automatically becomes so much bereft of social values in Capitalism that its members cannot afford to establish selfless social relationships amongst themselves. The overriding concern of a laborer in the materialistic and extremely hostile anti-social environment ensuing from capitalism is to exchange their donkey work for a respectable, deserving and equitable living. The jobless condition of Gregor, notwithstanding his sincerity, causes the other family members to lag behind in their struggle for survival and in their move to cross the boundary of drudgery. All this unrest, loss of social values, monotonous diligence and weakening of social bonds in the lives of individuals, amply borne out by the incidents and characters of this novella, are attributed to the existence of one deadly aspect of Capitalism i.e. class-struggle.

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