



## Franz Kafka: Subversive Dreamer (Michigan Studies In Comparative Jewish Cultures)

By Michael Löwy

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*Franz Kafka: Subversive Dreamer* is an attempt to identify and properly contextualize the social critique in Kafka's biography and work that links father-son antagonisms, heterodox Jewish religious thinking, and anti-authoritarian or anarchist protest against the rising power of bureaucratic modernity. The book proceeds chronologically, starting with biographical facts often neglected or denied relating to Kafka's relations with the Anarchist circles in Prague, followed by an analysis of the three great unfinished novels—*Amerika*, *The Trial*, *The Castle*—as well as some of his most important short stories. Fragments, parables, correspondence, and his diaries are also used in order to better understand the major literary works. Löwy's book grapples with the critical and subversive dimension of Kafka's writings, which is often hidden or masked by the fabulistic character of the work. Löwy's reading has already generated controversy because of its distance from the usual canon of literary criticism about the Prague writer, but the book has been well received in its original French edition and has been translated into Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Greek, and Turkish.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

This reading of Kafka so thorough, consistent, and inspired can surprise, but it convinces; not by the aggressive assertion of a thesis, but by the quality of information, the rigor and finesse of listening; in short, by knowledge.

Guy Petitdemange, *Etudes*, July 2004"

#### About the Author

**Michael Lowy** is Emeritus Research Director in Social Sciences at the CNRS (French National Center of Scientific Research) and lectures at the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS; Paris, France).  
**Inez Hedgesis** Professor of French, German, and Cinema Studies at the College of Social Sciences and Humanities, Northeastern University, Boston.

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