



Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/1371
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/1371>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

LACANIAN ENCOUNTERS IN MILAN KUNDERA'S UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING.

*Javad Momeni.

Department of English Language and Literature, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 12 June 2016
 Final Accepted: 16 July 2016
 Published: August 2016

Key words:-

big Other, object petit a, desire, the Real, the Symbolic. The Imaginary

Abstract

The literary critics adhere to a dogmatic ideological perspective when it comes to Kundera and what is missed is the psychological dimension of his writing. This study aims to delve into the psychological core of Milan Kundera's masterpiece, *Unbearable Lightness of Being*, by drawing on two Lacanian concepts, big Other and object petit a. Kundera's characters get entangled in suspension as their encounters with their reified big Other and object petit a lead them to the different trends of subjectivities. In Franz's case, in regard with big Other, Franz replies to his reified big Other, Sabina, but, at last, he works under the illusion of fate. Moreover, considering object petit a, his involvement with the mother image as the object petit a embodied in his wife pushes him into respecting her, not desiring her. In Tomas's case, his immense obsession with object petit a in his mistresses makes him a perfect instance of Lacanian 'hysterical subject'. Regarding the object petit a Tomas sees in Tereza, his tendency to destroy her with his affairs indicates his true love for her. Furthermore, Tomas acts like a reified big Other for Tereza and she surrenders to his desires in order to overcome her own impotency to desire.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2016,. All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Milan Kundera, the renowned Czechoslovakian novelist and intellectual, was born in Brno on April 1, 1929 to an artistic middle-class family. His father, Ludvík Kundera, was an important Czech pianist and musician. Like his father, Kundera found deep attachment to music from early youth and studied musicology. His interest in music is well reflected in his literary works as they are saturated with insights from music, mainly compositional strategies. In 1948 Kundera joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and began his academic study of literature at Charles University of Prague, but he soon abandoned it and entered the Film Academy. The occupation of his country by Nazi Germany deeply injured young Kundera and the fascist totalitarianism of Nazis drove many Czech youngsters like Kundera toward Marxism. Accordingly, Kundera's early literary works belong to the tradition of Marxist literature. *Man, a Wide Garden*, (1953) and *Monologues* (1957), two collection of lyrical poems, the long poem "The Last May" published in 1955, and the play *The Owners of the Keys* (1962) are among the Marxist literary works that Kundera wrote in the early stages of his literary career (Frank, 2008). Although Kundera's early works attracted much attention and were regarded as outstanding literary achievements, he desired to disown and eradicate his early writings:

Then they expelled me from University. I lived among workmen. At that time, I played the trumpet in a jazz band in small-town cabarets. [...] Then I wrote poetry. I painted. It was all nonsense. My first work which is worthwhile

Corresponding Author:- Javad Momeni.

Address:-Department of English Language and Literature, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

mentioning is a short story, written when I was thirty, the first story in the book *Laughable Loves*. This is when my life as a writer began. I had spent half of my life as a relatively unknown Czech intellectual (Carlisle, 1985).

Kundera's literary career truly starts with his great novel *Life Is Elsewhere* which was published in French in 1973. *Life Is Elsewhere* is a reflective introspection into the life of a young poet and of his demanding mother. Kundera depicts the mother as a woman feeling unworthy of love who relishes the fantasy of being Jaromil's ethereal mother in order to escape from her actual bodily deprivation and resolve her psychological tensions. In this novel, by giving parody an ontological status, Kundera considers it as the inevitable destiny of a human being who has forgotten his authentic "being" and ignored all his existential possibilities opened up to realization. This notion, as it is applied to Kundera's relation to his characters, Jaromil and the middle-aged man, implies that these two characters are, in fact, the parody of the two stages of Kundera's own life and that of his generation's. (Momeni, 2015) Written during the Prague Spring in 1968 and completed in 1970, Kundera in this novel frees himself from his communist past by challenging it indirectly through attacking youthful immaturity and narcissism. Kundera's other famous publications include *Immortality* (1990) —the first novel by Kundera in which no Czech character appears— *Slowness* (1995), *Identity* (1997), and *Ignorance* (2000), and of course his widely-read work *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984) (Frank, 2008). Through the years, Kundera's oeuvre has gained both massive critical attention and the public acclaim, and he has established himself as one of the leading intellectual novelists of the previous century. Kundera's artistic success is easily divulged with a quick glance at the list of the literary scholars who have written on him, including such figures as the renowned Italian novelist Italo Calvino and the Marxist intellectual and literary critic Terry Eagleton. But among his prestigious oeuvre, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* has attracted more critical attention than any of his other published pieces. Calvino opens his essay "On Kundera" by quoting a passage from the novel. In the passage, Kundera renders the trauma that Franz's mother confronted after being abandoned by her husband quite subtly:

When he was twelve, she suddenly found herself alone, abandoned by Franz's father. The boy suspected something serious had happened, but his mother muted the drama with mild, insipid words so as not to upset him. The day his father left, Franz and his mother went into town together, and as they left Franz noticed that she was wearing a different shoe on each foot. He was in a quandary: he wanted to point out her mistake, but was afraid he might hurt her. So during the two hours they spent walking through the city together he kept his eyes fixed on her feet. It was then that he had his first inkling of what it means to suffer (qtd. in Calvino, 2003).

Calvino praises this passage as a sheer example of Kundera's genius in storytelling, where private sufferings are elevated to the level of universal problems. He links Kundera to the eighteenth century tradition of digressive writers such as Sterne and Diderot in terms of treating the novel as a diary that introduces different digressions, moods, and thoughts to the story being told. But for Calvino, Kundera's aesthetic virtuosity is preceded in importance by the status of his fiction as an outstanding example of 'the literature of the oppressed' in which the reader gets involved 'in the daily despair of Communist regimes.' But, unlike what is commonplace in this genre, Kundera does not appeal to pathos to arouse dutiful feelings of pity in the distanced privileged reader. Therefore, the predicament of living in Czechoslovakia is merely another inconvenience among the many inconveniences of life. Following this line of reasoning, Calvino keeps reading Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* from an ideological/political perspective, linking different events and facts of the novel, seemingly innocuous and apolitical, to ideo-political issues:

Lightness of living, for Kundera, is that which is opposed to irrevocability, to exclusive univocity: as much in love (the Prague doctor Tomas likes to practice only "erotic friendships" avoiding passionate involvements and conjugal cohabitation) as in politics (this is not explicitly said, but the tongue hits where the tooth hurts, and the tooth is, naturally, the impossibility of Eastern Europe's changing—or at least alleviating—a destiny it never dreamed of choosing). (Calvino, 2003)

For Calvino this novel, which appears to deal with lightness, is really obsessed with the politically defined notion of constraint: "the web of public and private constraints that envelops people, that exercises its weight over every human relationship (and does not even spare those that Tomas would consider passing couches) (ibid)." Furthermore, he views Sabina as the 'author's mouthpiece,' comparing and contrasting the experience of living in Communist Czechoslovakia with Western democracy. What we encounter in Calvino's reading of Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is the general existing trend in reading and approaching Kundera's works, namely interpreting him from an ideological perspective. Terry Eagleton, in his article on Kundera "Estrangement and

Irony”, sets out to explain the relevancy of this approach to Kundera’s works in terms of their context. According to Eagleton in this context, the Eastern Europe, nothing can possibly happen by accident:

In the post-capitalist bureaucracies, even vomiting is made to assume some kind of instant symbolic meaning. Nothing in Eastern Europe can happen by accident. The logical extreme of this attitude is paranoia, a condition in which reality becomes so pervasively, oppressively meaningful that its slightest fragments operate as minatory signs in some utterly coherent text. Once the political state extends its empire over the whole of civil society, social reality becomes so densely systematized and rigorously coded that one is always being caught out in a kind of pathological ‘over-reading,’ a compulsive semiosis which eradicates all contingency. “No symbol where none intended,” Samuel Beckett once remarked; but in ‘totalitarian’ societies, monolithic structures of meaning, one can never be quite certain what’s intended and what isn’t—whether there is ominous meaning or not in the delayed arrival of your spouse, the boss’s failure to say good morning, that car which has been behind your own for the past ten miles (Eagleton, 2003).

For Eagleton survival in the Eastern Europe is crucially dependent on the subject’s adherence to “a daily hermeneutics of suspicion” and he reads *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* precisely along these lines. After making love with an engineer in his flat, Tereza starts wondering about the ordinariness of his flat in comparison to his elegance and becomes paranoid about all the small details of this apartment and every insignificant thing that took place in there: “that edition of Sophocles on the shelf, the few moments he was away making the coffee. Is it the abandoned apartment of an imprisoned intellectual? Is the engineer a police agent, and was he turning on the ciné camera while supposedly making the coffee (ibid)?” Eagleton takes Tereza’s case as a blatant proof for the omnipresence of a subtext in the daily life of totalitarian societies such as the Communist Czechoslovakia. Similar to Calvino, Eagleton also proceeds to praise Kundera on the account of the naturalness of his rendition of life under Communist Czechoslovakia. But, more interestingly, even among Kundera’s adversaries the ideological approach seems as the most pertinent approach for criticizing Kundera. Among Kundera’s critics, Harold Bloom stands out as the most well-known figure. Bloom considers Kundera’s works as ‘Period Pieces’ which have lost their luster as the Prague Spring and Communism joined history:

The “Prague Moment” has gone by; young people no longer go off to the Czech capital with Kundera in their backpacks. I cannot think that Kundera much relishes being praised as another Post-Modernist; he is aware that Cervantes outdoes everyone at the art of the self-conscious novel. I end, as I began, in some doubt as to Kundera’s lasting eminence. Much talent has been invested, ere this, in what proved to be Period Pieces. (Bloom, 2003)

As it is clear by now the literary world adheres to a dogmatic ideological perspective when it comes to Kundera. But what is missed in this way of looking at Kundera is the deeply psychological dimension of his writing. Eagleton in his essay quotes a sentence from one of Kundera’s characters about the writing of fiction: “The only thing we can do, is to give an account of our own selves. Anything else is an abuse of power. Anything else is a lie (50).” Eagleton uses this quote to further his discussion of Kundera’s ideological stance, but is not this quote extremely revealing of the fact that the core of Kundera’s fiction writing is more psychological than ideological? What the above quotation proposes is that in fiction the writer should be only concerned with the narrating of ‘selves’ since the rest is manipulating power or, more simply, is a lie. Kundera’s contempt for this power-related ‘rest’ is well documented in a passage from the *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* where he parodies the leftist way of thinking: “The dictatorship of the proletariat or democracy? Rejection of the consumer society or demands for increased productivity? The guillotine or an end to the death penalty? It is all beside the point.” (50) Indeed, they are all beside the point when it comes to Kundera, whose fiction opens up a huge space for the study of the inner life of humans. It can be argued that the ‘point’ that Kundera mentions and aims for is precisely what is missing in the one-sided ideopolitical readings, something that transcends the confines of ideological and political imprisonment and shines through their dark night—the notion of carefree ‘lightness’ as opposed to a pressuring ‘weight’ is a par excellence example of this notion in Kundera’s universe. In fact, even when Kundera is examining the ideological network, he is studying it in terms of the psychological impacts it has on subjects and the subjects’ strategies for coming into terms with their political conditions. Therefore, for exploring the core of Kundera’s writing, approaches other than the merely ideological one is needed. At this point psychoanalytic approach can help us. In the following, mainly by drawing on Lacanian psychoanalysis and by analyzing Kundera’s much discussed masterpiece *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, we attempt to reach and examine the psychological core of Kundera’s writing.

Lacanian Theoretical Framework:-

Prior to any discussion of Lacanian concepts, we must shed light on his conceptualization of three orders, the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. For Lacan, the Real order depicts the pre-Symbolic state which we have abandoned forever by entering the world of language, a state in which we undergo our compulsory needs with a sense of fullness and completeness. Lacan delineates the Real in relation to the two other dimensions - the Symbolic and the Imaginary - and considers them to “constitute the triadic (Borromean) structure of all being”. (Zizek and Glyn, 2014) For Lacan, what we call reality (which is different from the Real) is enunciated “through signification (the Symbolic) and the characteristic patterning of images (the imaginary)”. (ibid) In its mechanism, the Imaginary bears a resemblance to the mirror stage where the infant suddenly spots out of a whole image of self in an actual mirror or in the eyes of the others which stands in contrast to his primal sense of fragmented body. While the Imaginary is redolent with the images with which we identify, the Symbolic is the world of language. Only once we are introduced into language and the laws of society, we are given the ability to behave toward the others. For Lacan, complying with language's rules is concomitant with the Oedipus complex. In fact, the Symbolic is realized only by our surrendering to the Name-of-the-Father, the rules and boundaries which regulate both our desires and our fantasies and which allow us to live as a human speaking subject in the community of signifying others. (Stavrakakis, 1999) The Real, however,

...does not belong to the (symbolic-imaginary) order of signification but is precisely that which negates the latter; that which cannot be incorporated within such an order. The Real persists as an eternal dimension of lack and every symbolic-imaginary construction exists as a certain historical answer to that basic lack. (Zizek and Glyn, 2014)

Indeed, this basic lack shows itself in the gaps and holes we experience thorough the Symbolic order. By these gaps, the Real always forces “limits of negation” on the signifying and discursive order, but it is through these very limitations that the Real helps to form such an order. As Daly states, “The Real in this sense is strictly inherent to signification: it is both the unsurpassable horizon of negativity for any system of signification and its very condition of possibility.” (ibid) To illuminate the relations among these three orders we need to focus more on the Lacanian concept of lack.

For Lacan, lack comes to exist as we're forced to abandon our fantastic unity with the mother's body as the source of unrelenting fulfillment and step in the world of language. Such lack which is concomitant with our entrance in language, or signifying process, leads us to desire an array of things to deal with the lack itself. But, even when we reach our desired object, the fundamental lack of the mother's body is never made up for, therefore, this eternal lack triggers a new desire ; therefore, the lack-desire loop starts to take shape. Indeed, the realization of desire is its non-fulfillment as we face an ever-lasting lack in our encounters with the objects of desire in the Symbolic order. (Homer, 2005) In his book, *the Unconscious*, Anthony Easthope (1999) distinguishes between two lacks, “lack-in-being” and “lack-of-being”. He, firstly, shed lights on the difference between the Real and the Symbolic and the Imaginary and then points how these two lacks are experienced:

The imaginary is the domain of the ego where the I misrecognises itself as a full identity, imagines it speaks with clear and coherent meaning, but where it is in fact subject to all kinds of fantasy including the power to ‘overlook’ the symbolic order. The symbolic is the domain of culture, all the rules and symbolic meanings which exist ‘out there’ before I ever come along, especially, in Lacan's view, as a particular structure of signifiers, the Other. The real, for Lacan, is there, both inside us and beyond, outside language and resisting signification... The gaps and differences between the signifiers in language introduce lack and absence into the speaking subject; the real, in contrast, has no holes in it. (Easthope, 1999)

As Easthope clarifies, in Lacan's view, if we are to be a speaking subject, we have to step in the Symbolic order, the world of Meaning which is ontologically pre-situated for us. Such transition from Being (the Real, in which there is no hole) to Meaning (the world of signifiers which introduce lack in the speaking subject) brings about the unconscious (ibid); the fact that puts stress on the relation between subjectivity, the Other and the unconscious. In addition, as we apply language we undergo two lacks: 1. “lack-in-being” which implies the gaps between the signifiers we use to produce meaning in the Symbolic order; this lack, indeed, refers to the gaps in the Symbolic order, out of which the Real is waiting to surge up and disrupt the process of signification, 2. “lack-of-being” which cannot ever been compensated and which pushes us into unending loop of lack-desire. (ibid, 95-103) Furthermore, as these two faces of lack are put in the context of the encounter with the Other's enigma, the subject's indulging in his fantasies can be explained.

Lacanian conundrum “What am I in the [big] Other’s desire?” Or “CheVuoi?” metaphorically, makes a hole or “gap” in subject’s actual existence and causes a “lack” in his being as a desiring subject. As Homer points out, our fantasy is an answer to this crucial question and it is actually through this fantasy we, as human beings, get to know how to desire and we are formed as a desiring subject (Homer, 2005) That these fantasies act as our last shelter to which the subject seeks refuge in order to overcome the lack is the embodiment of the Lacanian thesis that “the last support of what we call reality is a fantasy”. (Zizek, 1982)

Encounters with the Masks of Big Other:-

A controversial term that quite often appears in any discussion of the Lacanian theory of psychoanalysis is the ‘big Other.’ In simple terms the Lacanian big Other is an anonymous and insubstantial entity to whom the subject feels obliged to answer and excuse himself, a father-figure that keeps watching over the subject and serves as a yardstick according to which the subject evaluates his actions and determines his decisions. As Slavoj Zizek (2007) explains in his *How to Read Lacan*, as the big Other functions like a yardstick against which the subject measures himself, “the big Other can be personified or reified in a single agent: the ‘God’ who watches over me from beyond, and over all real individuals, or the Cause that involves me (Freedom, Communism, Nation) and for which I am ready to give my life (9).” Defined as such, the big Other occupies a central place in Kundera’s *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* as it remarkably influences and regulates one of the major characters. The psychic constitution of Franz’s, who, accompanied with Sabina, makes up one of the two central couples of the novel, is immensely configured by the influence of the big Other, that is the events entailed by his encounters with the different masks of the Big Other . As a devoted Geneva professor, Franz immerses himself deeply into an academic world of delivering lectures and reading and publishing books. On the other hand, as a royal and compassionate father and husband, his personal life is centered on his daughter and wife, who seem not to have been the perfect match for him but he tolerates them out of compassion. But all of this changes when Sabina steps into his life, or to be more accurate, when she exits his life. After a period of secret romance between these two, Franz decides to tell his wife about the affair but, contrary to his expectations, this act does not bring joy to Sabina and leads her to desert him. It is after this desertion, that Sabina obtains the status of a reified big Other in Franz’s psyche. He starts to think of her as an ‘invisible goddess ’ (Kundera, 1984) who watches ‘over him from beyond (Zizek 9)’ and since her satisfaction is the yardstick against which he measures himself, it becomes his obsession: “Whenever he published an article in a scholarly journal [...] all he could think of was what Sabina would have said about it. Everything he did, he did for Sabina, the way Sabina would have liked to see it done (Kundera, 1984).” Such devotion to an imaginary goddess cannot be explained as a traumatic symptom of losing Sabina and Marri-Claude simultaneously, since Franz immediately starts a new relationship. In fact, this new relationship is even more fulfilling than his previous ones as ‘they lived in truth and nothing they did was secret’ and “now he lived in a tiny flat in the old part of town, where almost every night he was joined by his young student-mistress. He did not need to squire her through the world from hotel to hotel; he could make love to her in his own flat, in his own bed, with his own books and ashtray on the bedside table (Kundera, 1984).” But, not knowing of the big Other figure that Franz carried in his mind, even the young mistress was baffled by the strange sympathy that Franz displayed for the countries occupied by Russia:

The only thing she could not quite fathom was the curious sympathy he had for the countries occupied by the Russian empire. On the anniversary of the invasion, they attended a memorial meeting organized by a Czech group in Geneva. The room was nearly empty. The speaker had artificially waved gray hair. He read out a long speech that bored even the few enthusiasts who had come to hear it. His French was grammatically correct but heavily accented. From time to time, to stress a point, he would raise his index finger, as if threatening the audience. The girl with the glasses could barely suppress her yawns, while Franz smiled blissfully at her side. The longer he looked at the pleasing gray-haired man with the admirable index finger, the more he saw him as a secret messenger, an angelic intermediary between him and his goddess. He closed his eyes and dreamed. He closed his eyes as he had closed them on Sabina’s body in fifteen European hotels and one in America (Kundera, 1984).

Franz’s pathological obsession with the goddess Sabina extends to the limit that not only he regards the gray-haired man as ‘a secret messenger, an angelic intermediary’ between himself and his fabricated big other but he also considers his new mistress as a gift and a secret messenger sent by Sabina, the goddess. While the paranoid nature of Franz’s belief in what he calls ‘the cult of Sabina’ appears completely insane and his make-believe that she is observing and regulating his life seems ludicrous, its very ridiculousness perfectly illustrates the true status of the big Other, which is a virtual make-believe entity:

In spite of all its grounding power, the big Other is fragile, insubstantial, properly virtual, in the sense that its status is that of a subjective presupposition. It exists only in so far as subjects act as if it exists. Its status is similar to that of an ideological cause like Communism or Nation: it is the substance of the individuals who recognize themselves in it, the ground of their whole existence, the point of reference that provides the ultimate horizon of meaning, something for which these individuals are ready to give their lives, yet the only thing that really exists are these individuals and their activity, so this substance is actual only in so far as individuals believe in it and act accordingly (Žizek, 2007).

Perhaps the virtual nature of the big Other has never been rendered so lucidly as in the case of Franz's 'Sabina goddess.' But, more importantly, it is precisely because of this inherent virtual state of the big Other that Sabina's influence on Franz's life seems to be so complicated. As Lacan (1981) explains at the end of his *Seminar on the Purloined Letter*, 'a letter [which] always arrives at its destination', the subject who recognizes himself in the big Other regards the omnipresent big Other as the sender of all the messages that are received by him; even the fact that we tend to interpret most of the events and accidents that happen to us as secret messages or meaningful omens from beyond, that are fulfilling some predetermined function, is founded on such a subjective presupposition. Thus, every meaningful message (letter) eventually reaches its addressee as the receiver considers himself as the intended addressee of that message. Žizek explains this point by way of referring to a well-known accident in the *Arabian Nights*:

The hero, lost in the desert, quite by chance enters a cave; there he finds three old wise men, awoken by his entry, who say to him: "Finally, you have arrived! We have been waiting for you for the last three hundred years," as if, behind the contingencies of his life, there was a hidden hand of fate which directed him toward the cave in the desert. This illusion is produced by a kind of "short circuit" between a place in the symbolic network and the contingent element which occupies it: *whoever* finds himself at this place is the addressee since the addressee is) not defined by his positive qualities but by the very contingent fact of finding himself at this place (Žizek, 1992).

The same logic is also discernable in Franz's tendency to consider his new mistress or the gray-haired Czech man, or more generally the important events of his life as messages sent by Sabina, the big Other. The illusion is caused when the subject (mis)recognizes himself as the addressee of a message, as Franz (mis)recognizes himself as the addressee of the Sabina's message articulated through the intermediary figure of the gray-haired man. But this goddess is not the only big Other or ultimate point of reference for Franz. As it was mentioned before, besides 'god' the big Other can also be reified in such causes as Nationalism, Liberty, or Communism. The fact is these causes by providing 'the ultimate horizon of meaning' and constituting the very ground of the subject's existence become the mirror in which the subject recognizes himself but as it is always the case with the masks of the big Other, they are virtual and cease to exist if the subject refrain from believing in them. The Grand March of history or more generally Communism (a blatant reification of the big Other) is the grand cause that Franz believes in. Although he was not deeply immersed in politics but the Grand March stood as an ultimate horizon of meaning that defined true life for him—as it is indicated in the fact that he didn't regard his academic life as real but considered taking part in demonstrations as experiencing the real life. Franz's fascination with Grand March and leftist discourse is lucidly rendered by Kundera in the following passage:

The fantasy of the Grand March that Franz was so intoxicated by is the political kitsch joining leftists of all times and tendencies. The Grand March is the splendid march on the road to brotherhood, equality, justice, happiness; it goes on and on, obstacles notwithstanding, for obstacles there must be if the march is to be the Grand March. [...] What makes a leftist a leftist is not this or that theory but his ability to integrate any theory into the kitsch called the Grand March (Kundera, 1984).

Franz's fascination with the communist Grand March was to the extent that he belonged to that group of leftist intellectuals who in response to the scandalous crimes of the Soviet Union (specifically Russia) quite sheepishly reclassified this situation as yet another big obstacle on the path of the Grand March that must be removed. So when a leftist comrade invites him to a march in Cambodia he could not turn it down. Cambodia had gone through the bombardment by Americans, a civil war that had torn it apart, Soviet Union's massacre of a large number of its population and last but not the least occupation by Vietnam. The colleague that had contacted Franz was a fellow leftist who had accompanied him in marches in Paris and quite expectantly he 'was thrilled by the invitation,' but then he notices his mistress's objection in her eyes and declines the offer. At this point, Franz's problem is not so much the disdain of his mistress about his acceptance of the invitation and ultimate leaving as it is the conflicting

confrontation of two reified figures of the big Other. Franz's mistress is an agent sent by his goddess Sabina, therefore she must be kept happy and satisfied all the time if he intends to keep Sabina satisfied, it's a yardstick against which he measures himself. On the other hand, the call to march is a direct call from the leftist cause, a mirror in which he recognizes himself and which serves as his existing ground. In Žižek's terminology, this ideological practice works like a "spectral supplement" (Myers, 2003) which conceals the traces of the Real and helps Franz's reality (the Symbolic order in which he lives) to exist and survive. If Franz refuses to believe in such spectral supplement, he has to face a trauma, the intrusion of the Real into the Symbolic order, which may lead to the collapse of all his existence. More importantly, here, we are faced with the conflict of two rivaling big Others in Franz's psyche and the reason for his immense guilt while he's hanging up the phone. For resolving this conflict, Franz reconciles these two by merging them together, making himself believe that taking part in this March is what the Sabina goddess actually wants and his cause and his goddess are not at opposite poles. For achieving this, he reasons with himself in this way: "Wasn't Cambodia the same as Sabina's country? A country occupied by its neighbor's Communist army! A country that had felt the brunt of Russia's fist! All at once, Franz felt that his half-forgotten friend had contacted him at Sabina's secret bidding (Kundera, 1984)." Once again the letter arrives at its destination and Franz's friend delivers the secret order of Sabina, which is now synonymous with the imperative of his cause. Franz reconciles the contradictory biddings of his two big Others by merging them. Franz's deep dependency on the big Other(s) is well illustrated in this make-believe reconciliation and Kundera's categorizing him as one of those people 'who live in the imaginary eyes of those who are not present (Kundera, 1984).' However, a short while before he dies in the novel his status starts to change and he starts to challenge the subjective presupposition underpinning his attachment to the big Others he carried in his psyche. Following a series of disappointing events that happened in Cambodia—a pretentious march invested with political interests that led to nowhere—he started to doubt the authenticity and value of the Grand March: "Franz could not accept the fact that the glory of the Grand March was equal to the comic vanity of its marchers, that the exquisite noise of European history was lost in an infinite silence and that there was no longer any difference between history and silence (ibid)." This dubiousness about the Grand March soon extends to doubts on the cult of Sabina and leads to an epiphany in Franz:

He kept thinking about Sabina, feeling her eyes on him. Whenever he felt her long stare, he began to doubt himself: he had never known quite what Sabina thought. It made him uncomfortable now as well. Could she be mocking him? Did she consider the cult he made of her silly? Could she be trying to tell him it was time for him to grow up and devote himself fully to the mistress she herself had sent to him? Picturing the face with big round glasses, he suddenly realized how happy he was with his student-mistress. All at once, the Cambodia venture struck him as meaningless, laughable. Why had he come? Only now did he know. He had come to find out once and for all that neither parades nor Sabina but rather the girl with the glasses was his real life, his only real life! He had come to find out that reality was more than a dream, much more than a dream (Kundera, 1984)!

The most revealing part of the assertions that Franz makes in his moment of epiphany is his rejection of both 'parades' and 'Sabina' as the center of his universe. He tears apart the curtain of illusions that had bound him to a dream life to find the 'real life' which he was missing. At this point he finally seems to be free from the grasp of the big Other(s). In other words, it seems that he dares to encounter the gaps the Real produces in the Symbolic order. But on closer inspection, things seem to be different. As it is evident in the above quotation he still regards himself as the addressee of a secret message, he believes there was a purpose for his coming to Cambodia— finding his real life. Therefore, the virtual figure of the big Other is still present in his mind, only this time reified as Fate (another major personification for the big Other). Franz's predicament contains an important Lacanian lesson on human psyche: inevitably, it cannot evade or escape the grasp of the big Other in its different forms and shapes since human beings have no such endurance to tolerate the trauma of facing the Real.

Encounters with the *Objet Petit a*:-

While the Lacanian big Other contributed a lot to a new understanding of the psychological status of one major character of Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, it is not the only Lacanian concept that is pertinent to the universe of the novel and Franz is not the only character to whom it is applicable. The other concept is *objet petit a* and a short detour to cinema can well aid us to explicate it and account its relevance to the novel. In the cinematic adaptation of Patrick Suskind's *Perfume* Grenouille, the film's miserable protagonist lacks odor so that it is impossible for others to smell him; conversely, he has such an exceptional sense of smell that he is capable of detecting people from far away. When Grenouille's beloved girl dies he tries to resurrect her, of course not physically. He attempts to recreate her odor by killing many beautiful young women and removing the surface of

their skin to extract their odors, thus creating an extraordinary perfume. This strange perfume is the ultimate extracted 'essence' of feminine charm: when the masses smell it, they suspend their restraints and embark on blissful sexual orgy. This extracted femininity is a supreme example of what Lacan called the *objet petit a* "the object-cause of desire, that which is 'in you more than you' and thus makes me desire you (Zizek, 1997)." As Lacan (1972) explains in *Le Siminaire, livre XX Encore* *Objet petit a* is one of the three objects on the sides of the triangle of the Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real. Aside from *Objet petit a* the barred other (*Autre*) and capital Phi are also included among these three, designating the three ways in which the traumatic abyss of *jouissance* is domesticated. As Zizek explains people "can only desire insofar as they become victims of an illusion: they think they desire another person because of him or her, that is, they are not aware that their desire is caused by the essence/odor which has nothing to do with the person as such (Zizek, 1997)." In the universe of Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* the Lacanian *Objet petit a* plays a central role. It is most detectable in the relationship between Franz and his wife and Tomas's special interest in women.

Franz's Encounter:-

As it was mentioned before, the relationship between Franz and his wife was not fulfilling one. Franz felt he would regain a long-lost freedom after he left his wife and settled with his student-mistress. But the question is how did he convince himself to marry her in the first place and why did he keep living with her when their marriage was not peculiarly a happy one, or why did he at last decide to confess his affair to her while he was so guilt-ridden about it and did everything he could to keep it a secret and prevent her from getting hurt?

Franz married Marie-Claude after she confessed her deep love to him and threatened him that she will commit suicide if he rejected her. Franz obeyed her wish and remained married to her even though the emotional intensity of the initial suicide threat soon subsided:

And even though Marie-Claude never recaptured the emotional intensity that accompanied her suicide threat, in his heart he kept its memory alive with the thought that he must never hurt her and always respect the woman in her. It is an interesting formulation. Not respect Marie-Claude, but respect the woman in Marie-Claude. But if Marie-Claude is herself a woman, then who is that other woman hiding in her, the one he must always respect? (Kundera, 1984)

In the above quotation Franz's resolution that 'he must never hurt her and always respect the woman in her' is coupled by an observation on the part of Kundera (as an intrusive narrator) that truly captures the essence and function of *objet petit a*. Franz is not attracted to Marie-Claude on the account of her individual attributes but he is attracted to something which is in her but is more than her and on the account of which he respects her. Additionally, as Kundera puts it into question since Marie-Claude is herself a woman, who is this excess of being hidden in her? This excess of being which is in Marie-Claude but is more than her is *objet petit a* in its purest form. Arguably, it could not be rendered in more lucid terms than this. But there is a further twist here: Kundera on his musings on this excess of being first links it to the platonic image of womanhood (The Platonic ideal of a woman, perhaps?), but then proceeds to reject that idea in favor of something more personal "No. His mother. It never would have occurred to him to say he respected the woman in his mother. He worshipped his mother and not some woman inside her. His mother and the Platonic ideal of womanhood were one and the same (Kundera, 1984)." So, the woman inside Marie-Claude that Franz cares to respect is a mental image of his mother, or to put it into Lacanian terms, in this tango of attraction between Franz and Marie-Claude, the *objet petit a* that makes Franz desire Marie-Claude is the mental image of his mother that he sees in her. Indeed, this *objet petit a* is reminiscent of his fantastic unity with his mother before he was introduced into the Symbolic order and made to experience the ever-lasting loop of lack-desire. Now, there are two important points here that deserve reflection. First, in the above quotation Kundera explains that it never occurred to Franz that the woman in Marie-Claude that he respects is his own mother. Typically, the subject often remains fully unaware of the odor (that is *objet petit a*) that regulates his desire for the other and as Zizek (1997) indicates in *The Plague of Fantasies* there is even nothing uplifting in becoming aware of that certain odor or essence. Correspondingly, Franz remains fully oblivious to the object-cause of his desire for Marie-Claude (and even if he became aware of it, not only it was not uplifting for him but probably disgusted him). The second point is there is actually no 'desire' involved here as the form of admiration that Franz has for Marie-Claude is fully neutral and asexual, that is he respects her but doesn't desire her. His respect could be adequately equated to the respect that a son has for his mother (or for that matter the respect of a friend for another friend). Therefore, while in Lacan's teachings *objet petit a* is constantly linked to regulation of desire (or love) in the case of Franz its function is limited to the regulation of less passionate urges, namely 'respect.' At the first glimpse this might seem as a deviation from the *objet petit a*'s framework of functioning but closer inspection reveals that this is not the case. For understanding

the true nature of this seeming deviation a detour to the psychoanalytic theory of Ernst Jones, a disciple of Freud, can be quite rewarding. In his ground breaking essay "Hamlet and Oedipus" Jones extends a psychoanalytic theme that he finds in Shakespeare's play and concerns mother-complex to most men, as he explains:

The underlying theme relates ultimately to the splitting of the mother image which the infantile unconscious effects into two opposite pictures: one of a virginal Madonna, an inaccessible saint towards whom all sensual approaches are unthinkable, and the other of a sensual creature accessible to everyone. Indications of this dichotomy between love and lust (Titan's Sacred and Profane Love) are to be found later in most men's sexual experiences." (Jones, 1951)

Jones makes the point that most men view women according to an either/or mentality of Angel/Monster which is deeply originated in the duality of the mother image in the unconscious of these men during childhood. Franz's case is quite pertinent to the case of such men as the mental image of his mother that he carries in his mind is that of a 'saint' or angel woman, as it was implied in the passage quoted earlier which related how Franz's mother coped with the desertion of his father in a way that Franz would not get hurt or in his assertions about his immense love for her. Now given that the odor he smells in Marie-Claude is the scent of his mother, it comes as no surprise that instead of regulating desire for her, this *objet petit a* produces respect for her in Franz. This also accounts for their cold sex life; as it is directly stated in the novel the couple's sex life did not even worth mentioning. This is completely attributable to the workings of the mother-image-*objet petit a*, because when the *objet petit a* is 'an inaccessible saint towards whom all sensual approaches are unthinkable' how can there be a remarkable sex life for any couple?

So far, the marriage between Franz and Marie-Claude and its continuance have been explained by drawing on the mother-image-*objet petit a*, now the fact is that its end is also explainable by referring to it—albeit this time through its loss. Throughout the novel Franz is too anxious to hide the affair that he is having from his wife. This tendency on Franz's part is to the extent that he drags his mistress (Sabina) all over Europe for intercourse and avoids doing it in Geneva, to a great extent out of guilt and also to run no risk of getting caught. He also avoids her in public places to arouse no suspicion whatsoever. The reason for taking such huge measures to hide his infidelity is again traceable back to his relationship with his mother. He regarded her as a symbol of fidelity as she remained faithful to him and raised him single-handedly after his father left. Furthermore he tried to return her favor by remaining faithful to her even in his dreams: "He loved her from the time he was a child until the time he accompanied her to the cemetery; he loved her in his memories as well. That is what made him feel that fidelity deserved pride of place among the virtues: fidelity gave a unity to lives that would otherwise splinter into thousands of split-second impressions (33)." Hence, from this vintage point his diligent efforts for hiding his infidelity from the woman who carried his mother's odor are completely understandable. But what enables him to directly confess to his wife his infidelity? The answer to this question can be found in a cocktail party that Marie-Claude threw for all painters and artists who ever exhibited their works in her private gallery. Sabina was supposed to attend the party and expectantly Franz was too nervous about it but then a minor incident deeply impacts his perceptions: when Sabina enters the room, Marie-Claude goes to greet her but after a few words she lifts the ceramic pendant that Sabina was wearing around her neck and in a very loud voice says: "What is that? How ugly! Those words made a deep impression on Franz. They were not meant to be combative; the raucous laughter immediately following them made it clear that by rejecting the pendant Marie-Claude did not wish to jeopardize her friendship with Sabina. But it was not the kind of thing she usually said." (Kundera, 1984) Witnessing this scene imparted a huge blow to the angel woman image/odor that he had weaved around his wife and associated with her mother. As Kundera explains "He could not get 'That pendant is ugly!' out of his mind, and it made him see Marie-Claude in a completely new light. Her aggressiveness—invulnerable noisy, and full of vitality—freed him of the burden of goodness he had patiently borne all twenty-three years of their marriage (Kundera, 1984)." The fact is Marie-Claude's rude words deprived her of the *objet petit a* that made Franz respect her and obliged him to hide his infidelity from her. Therefore, this 'completely new light' that Franz starts to see Marie-Claude in is a status in which she is emptied of the *objet petit a* that had sustained their marriage and this loss of *objet petit a* is precisely what frees Franz from 'the burden of goodness he had patiently borne all twenty-three years of their marriage.' Furthermore, after confessing his affair to Marie-Claude and receiving a cold and indifferent response from her, he starts to wonder whether the odor that he smelled in her really ever existed:

He had always told himself he had no right to hurt Marie-Claude and should respect the woman in her. But where had the woman in her gone? In other words, what had happened to the mother image he mentally linked with his wife? His mother, sad and wounded, his mother, wearing unmatched shoes, had departed from Marie-Claude—or

perhaps not, perhaps she had never been inside Marie-Claude at all. The whole thing came to him in a flash of hatred (Kundera, 1984).

What is being implied above is a general key feature of *objet petit a*, that is to say —similar to the big Other—it has a virtual character and exists as long as the subject believes that it does. In *How to Read Lacan*, Žizek (2007) compares this status of the *objet petit a* to that of the ‘anamorphosis’. Anamorphosis is a part of a picture which would seem as a meaningless blotch if one looks at it straightforwardly, it will only take on the shape of a known object once we change our position and look at it from a slanting angle. Therefore Lacan’s point is that “the object-cause of desire (*objet petit a*) is something that, viewed from in front, is nothing at all, just a void: it acquires the contours of something only when viewed at a slant (ibid).” Hence, *objet petit a* is as virtual as the big Other and comes into view only when the subject chooses to see it, in other words the essence or odor that *objet petit a* signifies is merely a projection on the part of the subject who is looking awry. As Žizek explains:

This is *objet a*: an entity that has no substantial consistency, which in itself is ‘nothing but confusion’, and which acquires a definite shape only when looked at from a standpoint slanted by the subject’s desires and fears - as such, as a mere ‘shadow of what it is not.’ *Objet a* is the strange object that is nothing but the inscription of the subject itself in the field of objects, in the guise of a blotch that takes shape only when part of this field is anamorphically distorted by the subject’s desire (Žizek 2007)

Thus, when Franz ponders that ‘perhaps she had never been inside Marie-Claude at all’ he is knee-deep inside Lacanian theory: the *objet petit a* that he inscribed in Marie-Claude was nothing but a ‘shadow of what it is not,’ distorted by his desire for his mother. Furthermore, as it was mentioned before, Franz is not the only character in the novel that struggles with *objet petit a*. Tomas, the ‘epic womanizer,’ seems also deeply involved with this Lacanian notion, albeit in a completely different way.

Tomas’s Encounter:-

In the novel Tomas is portrayed as a Don Juan figure that has many affairs but never sticks to any of them. His interest in women is so much that even after marrying Tereza, and to her great dismay, he continues his amorous relationships. His style of womanizing is marked by innumerable flings which merely center on sensuality and intercourse and are free from emotional attachment. However, as Kundera indicates, Tomas’s passion for passing flings does not reduce him to a mere cold-hearted womanizer since there is a certain curiosity in his pursuit of women. (Kundera, 1984)

What is evident in Kundera’s comments is that Tomas’s passion for pursuing women is deeply impacted by a sense of curiosity that pervades his thinking of women and intercourse with them. But, even more importantly, Kundera’s commentary indicates the fact that Tomas’s desire for women is directed at a partial object, like the sound of her sighs (Lacan added sound and gaze to the existing Freudian partial objects: the penis, feces, and breast (Easthope, 1999)), or a partial physical disposition— e.g. nude body, or distorted face during orgasm. From this vantage, Tomas’s desire for these partial entities could well stand for his thirst for feminine *objet petit a*, especially in regards to the fact that for Lacan in perversion *objet petit a* is incarnated in partial fetishistic features such as nose, hair, or feet. But Tomas’s search for *objet petit a* in women goes deeper than this as he revels in the virtual essence or odor that is truly constitutive of *objet petit a* in them:

Using numbers, we might say that there is one-millionth part dissimilarity to nine hundred ninety-nine thousand nine hundred ninety-nine millionths parts similarity. Tomas was obsessed by the desire to discover and appropriate that one-millionth part; he saw it as the core of his obsession. He was not obsessed with women; he was obsessed with what in each of them is unimaginable, obsessed, in other words, with the one-millionth part that makes a woman dissimilar to others of her sex (Kundera, 1984).

The one-millionth part dissimilarity that defines the female subject’s odor for Tomas is the core of his obsession, and as a reminder of Lacan’s formula that *objet petit a* ‘is something in you which is more than you’ so that makes me desire you, it is not truly women (‘He was not obsessed with women...’) that Tomas desire but it is something in them that is more than them and that Tomas desire and is obsessed with, namely the one-millionth odor of dissimilarity. But Tomas’s immense obsession with extracting his mistresses *objet petit a* makes him a perfect example of what Lacan calls ‘hysterical subject’: “the hysterical subject is precisely a subject who *poses jouissance* as an absolute; he responds to the absolute of *jouissance* in the form of unsatisfied desire. Such a subject is

capable of relating to a term that is off-limits; even more radically, it is a subject that can only exist insofar as it relates to a term that is 'out-of-play' (Žižek, 1997)." Correspondingly, in his insatiable search for the one-millionth odor of dissimilarity Tomas poses Jouissance as an absolute and puts off all limits. This is in turn characteristic of Freudian death drive since as it is stated in the novel "extremes mean borders beyond which life ends, and a passion for extremism, in art and in politics, is a veiled longing for death." Similarly, extremism in experiencing Jouissance stands for 'a veiled longing for death.' Furthermore, at this point the character of Tomas is even comparable to the character of the aforementioned hero of the *Perfume*, Grenouille. While Grenouille was obsessed with murdering young pretty girls for extracting their *objet petit a*, Tomas was also obsessed with the jouissance of extracting the *objet petit a* out of multiple his female partners. Their kind of obsession is similar; the only difference is Tomas did not murder anyone—at least literally. The fact is although he did not hurt any of the women he had flings with but his many passing affairs hurt the one woman he could not leave after a short-term relationship: Tereza. The innumerable flings of Tomas's continuously tortures Tereza throughout the novel, and every time that she finds out about one of them, she seems to be metaphorically murdered with grief. But on the other hand Tereza is the only woman to whom Tomas is emotionally attached and as he discovers "making love with a woman and sleeping with a woman are two separate passions, not merely different but opposite. Love does not make itself felt in the desire for copulation (a desire that extends to an infinite number of women) but in the desire for shared sleep (a desire limited to one woman) (Kundera, 1984)." Tereza is the one woman who Tomas desires to share his sleep with and thus truly loves. This being said, his (un)conscious urge for destroying her with his affairs is completely explainable from a Lacanian perspective. Lacan reformulates *objet petit a* in the case of love in this way: "I love you, but there is something in you more than yourself that I love, *objet petit a*, so I destroy you (qtd. In Žižek, 1997)." Regardless of what the *objet petit a* that Tomas sees in Tereza could be (something which remains unfathomable throughout the novel) the important point here is that Tomas's urge for destroying Tereza with his affairs signals a semi pathological strain in their relationship that accords with Lacanian theory. However, it is also possible to read this pathological aspect of their relationship as a sign of Tomas's true love for Tereza. As it was suggested in an aforementioned quote from the text any form of extremism denotes trespassing the borders beyond which life ends and is a 'veiled longing for death.' If we accept this view as the standard outlook that the text favors, then Tomas's behavior can be read as a fine example of extremism in love. In this light, Lacan's views on the nature of love can also be reread as musings on how love in its most extreme form functions. However, herein we are confronted with one of the most common anti-antifeminist prejudices against Lacan which "concerns his alleged claim that, since desire and Law are two facets of one and same thing, so that the symbolic Law, far from preventing desire, is constitutive of it, only a man - being entirely integrated into the symbolic Law - can fully desire, while a woman is condemned to the hysterical 'desire to desire' (Žižek, 2001)." The fact is if we accept Tomas's (un)conscious wish to destroy Tereza as a sign for his true love/desire for her we are adhering to the Lacanian formula that it is only the male that is capable of true desiring, since Tereza makes no similar attempt to destroy or hurt Tomas—the only exception in which Tereza does something that could have hurt Tomas if he found out about it is her intercourse with an engineer she met, but even in this case there is no hint that Tereza intended to destroy or even get back at him and she even started to feel guilty about it afterwards. Lacan's formula centers on 'desire,' but it is easily translatable into a formula for love as well, that is to say in answer to the age old question that whether true love belong to masculine or feminine domain, Lacan's answer is: only a man can truly love while a woman is condemned to the hysterical 'love to love.' From this perspective, our earlier argument that Tomas's tendency for destroying Tereza speaks of a deep love is confirmed again. Furthermore, Lacan's formulation of desire as a specifically male domain also explains Kundera's treatment of sexuality in gendered terms throughout the novel (something for which he was much criticized by feminists as they considered it a blatant instance of male chauvinist attitude). In the context of the novel, Tomas's success as a playboy is indebted to his insolent way of ordering women to do what arouses his desire, e.g. his constant order 'strip' or his ordering Sabina to walk naked on the mirror. From a Lacanian perspective, it could be argued that Tomas is well aware of the burden of desire that as male subject he carries and as he finds his female objects of desire incapable of desiring he does that on their behalf, forcing them (by ordering) to take on what he desires as their own. So when Tomas orders 'strip', the female subject fully complies as this order fills the gap of her impotency to desire, as Tomas does the act of desiring on the behalf of both of them. In other words, Tomas acts like a reified big other for the female subjects, particularly Tereza. She, in reply to the question of "What am I in the [big] Other's desire?" Or "CheVuoi?", surrenders to Tomas's desire in order to overcome her own impotency to desire.

Conclusion:-

It must be noted that the way the mental predicaments of the characters of Kundera's masterpiece were studied here in the light of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory presented a chance to divulge how much Kundera's novel supersedes

the level of being merely an ideologically- burdened novel and is ripe with psychoanalytic facts whose extraction can enrich appreciating Kundera's work. As it is always the case, surely Kundera was no reader or friend of Lacan's but since Lacan's insightful theory touches on the most basic issues of human mentality, his theoretical premises were discernable in Kundera's novel. In this paper, we have focused specifically on two Lacanian concepts, big Other and object petit a. In Franz's case, his encounters with big Other and object petit a provide him with two opposite trends of subjectivities. In regard to big Other, the positive trend originates in Franz's replies to the reified big Other, the goddess Sabina, and the negative one has its roots in his laboring under the illusion of fate. Moreover, considering object petit a, the positive trend results from his involvement with the mother image as the object petit a embodied in his wife, and the negative one is informed by his sudden awareness of the banality of Marie-Claude's character. In Tomas's case, his immense obsession with objet petit a in his mistresses makes him a perfect example of Lacanian 'hysterical subject'. Regarding the object petit a Tomas sees in Tereza, his urge for destroying her with his affairs signals his true love for Tereza. Furthermore, Tomas acts like a reified big Other for Tereza and she surrenders to his desires in order to overcome her own impotency to desire.

References:-

1. Bloom, H. (2003): Milan Kundera. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 12.
2. Calvino, I. (2003): "On Kundera." Milan Kundera. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, pp. 55-67.
3. Carlisle, O. (1985) "A Talk with Milan Kundera." Magazine Desk, Late City Final Edition Section 6; Page 72, Column 1; Sunday, May 19.
4. Eagleton, T. (2003): "Estrangement and Irony." Milan Kundera. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, pp. 47-48.
5. Easthope, A. (1999) :the Unconscious, London: Routledge, pp. 90-103.
6. Frank, S. (2008): Migration and Literature: Günter Grass, Milan Kundera, Salman Rushdie, and Jan Kjaerstad. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 80-84.
7. Homer, S. (2005): Jacques Lacan, London: Routledge, pp. 86-102.
8. Jones, E. (1951): "Hamlet and Oedipus." Essays in Applied Psycho-Analysis. London: Hogarth, p. 144.
9. Kundera, M. (1984): The Unbearable Lightness of Being. New York: Harper & Row.
10. Lacan, J. (1981): "Seminar on "the Purloined Letter". Murdoch, W.A.: Murdoch University Library, p. 14.
11. Momeni, J. (2015): "Parody of a Life which is Elsewhere", International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences, Vol. 55, pp. 35-43, 2015
12. Myers, T. (2003): Slavoj Žižek. London: Routledge, pp. 71-73.
13. Stavrakakis, Y. (1999): Lacan And The Political. London: Routledge, pp. 20-31.
14. Žizek, S. and Glyn, D. (2014): Conversations with Žizek. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, pp. 6-10.
15. Žižek, S. (1989): The Sublime Object of Ideology, Verso, London, England, p. 47.
16. Žizek, S. (1992): Enjoy Your Symptom!: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out. New York: Routledge, pp. 14-59.
17. Žizek, S. (2007): How to Read Lacan. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, pp. 9-25.
18. Žizek, S. (2001): The Fright of Real Tears: Krzysztof Kieślowski between Theory and Post-Theory. London, pp. 170-177.
19. Žizek, S. (1997): The Plague of Fantasies. London: Verso, pp. vi- xviii.