

## I Parody and Intertextuality in Kundera's *Ignorance*.

This thesis probes into the parodic intertextuality which has a fusion of Kundera's novel *Ignorance* with legends, folklore, and myth of the past. The mixing of mythological fact and historical fact has proven the concept of parodic intertextuality in the novel. The central story revolves around the characters who want to go home until the Soviet demolish. On the surface, the story is the story of those immigrants and more political linked in it. However, Milan Kundera has brought the concept of the myth through the returning of these characters. There is the parodic intertextuality in Kundera's *Ignorance* because there is the relation of attendance connecting the mythical text *Odyssey*, that is, the efficient presence of *Odyssey* in *Ignorance* by means of parody and imitation. The mythological perspective for the common exiled people's daily experiences itself is a post-modern feature of parody in Kundera's *Ignorance*. The immigrants of Czechoslovakia return to their country after the fall of Soviet rule in the country. There is the similarity between the returning home of the immigrants and Odysseus' great return to Ithaca after his exile of Trojan War.

Through the means of the emotional narration of two people, forced to bid goodbye to their native country, the writer has been successful enough to establish a powerful feeling which made the reader forget the mixing of the genres in the novel. In flickering hope of finding a brighter tomorrow in an alien land, almost 20 years ago from the present, unravels a story complete with more inquiries than the solutions. In the text there are the characters who are alienated even in their mother country while they come there after a long gap. These characters due to the long gap of timeframe to their own homeland go through nostalgia, memory of past as well as they have strong sense of home. The memory of past childhood and yearning for home is nostalgic.

Author not only simply defines the longing for home rather connects this longing for home with the historical experience of one of the great poet Jonas Hallgrímsson's longing for his native country Iceland though he has been living in Denmark, the country of his enemy. In this sense, Kundera compares the state of his characters' mind with a lot of mythical and historical figures.

In *Ignorance*, there are different themes in the book which become the sources of postmodern style. It means that through the help of different features and the characteristics of postmodern genre shown by the writer. The text, being the literature of exile, is a compact exploration of variations on a theme like home and nostalgia for homeland or past. Its deeper concern is with fragmented memory and forgotten past. Most of these exiled characters got through similar experience. One of the central characters Irena is a Czech origin like author himself who has been living at France since more than 20 years. Irena and Josef have found comfortable refuge in their respective abodes at Paris and Copenhagen and have led a fairly decent life, battling through tags of émigrés in periods of insuperable doubts. Her exile to Paris has too the political condition of her homeland from the time when she has been there since the crushing of the Prague spring in 1968. After 20 Years discontinuous sandwiched between emigration-dream of finding herself she moves back to her native land. The sense of cultural alienation, nostalgia for home and native culture of the protagonist is clear while the communism is collapsed in 1989 and she bows to pressure from French friends to embark on the great return to her home. Through the postmodern literary devices the writer has mixed up the personal and the political issues in the novel.

Milan Kundera is successful to take the concepts of absence, memory, forgetting and transform them into material for a novel, masterfully coordinating them

into a polyphonic and moving work. Kundera not only tells Irena's return to Czechoslovakia rather equally brings the 'Great Return' of Odysseus to Ithaca. He even retells the Homer's epic parallel with Irena's story. For the immigrants due to the political crisis of 20 years back it is the moment of celebration because the communism is collapsed. Irena too faces the similar experiences. The notion of home or homeland is rediscovered by Irena while she returns to her homeland. The history of her nation once again evoked in the memory of Irena. Finally, Kundera compares the problem of Irena's and Odysseus' concept of home great return and their nostalgia for past. The proper reason behind blending a common story of Irena and story of mythical hero Odysseus is to depict a technique of contemporary post-modern writing.

Various themes and issues have been presented through the text. On the one hand, the writer is able to educate the reader about 1968-1989s Czech history. On the other, Kundera time and again makes between large-scale political events disturbing a whole country public and delicate, private moments between two lovers are nothing short of brilliant. There is the blending of love, relationships, memory, history, politics. The author while simply writing a novel not only tells the experience of Irena and Josef rather to defines their mental and psychological condition he brings the references from ancient Roman to Greek world views as if he is making a novel like a chimera due to the fusion of past and present, history and fiction as a perfect postmodern way of writing. He even philosophizes like separation, nostalgia, returning and love. In this sense, the novel seems like a parody even in term of its genres because it is partly a fictional narration, partly a historical outlook of Czech history as well as partly like a philosophy. His novel is parodic both in term of form

and context into the consideration, this research tries to deal the text with post-modern way of writing.

*Ignorance* is a modern retelling of the *Odyssey*. The book mainly focuses on two characters who were obliged to be exiled from their native Czech Republic during the reign of Communism in 1968. Irena flees to Paris with her husband Martin while Josef ends up setting in Denmark. Irena and Josef had met and flirted in a Czech bar briefly years before in their twenties. And they meet by chance again in their homeland after collapse of Communism in 1989. Milan Kundera's *Ignorance* is a form of parody or chimera through the parallel stories of common Czech exile Irena and mythical hero Odysseus with their experiences of returning home after 20 years. It is a post-modern writing as it is a novel with the narration of a simple subject matter.

The main rationale of this research is to bring Kundera's *Ignorance* into the dimension of the postmodern study of the issues and the elements of intertextuality. It aims to trace the form of postmodern parody in the novel. For this purpose, this thesis analyzes the various characters, their experiences in comparison with the mythical characters and their experiences as mentioned in the same novel. It aims to trace the cause between blending mythical and real story together. As its major concern, this research aims to trace the myths and real, history and fiction as well as story and philosophy as mentioned in the novel. It finally aims to prove this fusion of multiple genres and context as the postmodern parody writing, *Ignorance* reveals the fusion of multiple genres, themes and techniques. It basically focused on the blend of myth, mythical events and characters with modern masses and their experiences. It seeks the motive of retelling mythical hero Odysseus' story within the story of simple Czech people exile to Europe. It excavates the parody of myths and real. The text shows the parody between myth, mythical characters and events with the real contemporary

people, their experience and events as mentioned in the novel. This focuses on the relevance on the blend of myth and real, fantasy and reality. This is the presentation of the fusion of parody as the post-modern way of writing.

According to Linda Hutcheon, one of the main features that distinguish postmodernism from modernism is that postmodernism "takes the form of self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement" (1). One way of creating this double or contradictory stance on any statement is the use of parody: citing a convention only to make fun of it. As Hutcheon explains, "Parody—often called ironic quotation, pastiche, appropriation, or intertextuality—is usually considered central to postmodernism, both by its detractors and its defenders" (93). Hutcheon argues that "through a double process of installing and ironizing, parody signals how present representations come from past ones and what ideological consequences derive from both continuity and difference" (93). Thus, it is relevant to observe the blend between myths and real as the post-modern parody.

Milan Kundera was a Franco-Czech author. He completed his schooling in 1948 and then studied literature and aesthetics at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University. Two terms later, he transferred to the Film Faculty of the Academy of Arts in Prague, where he first attended lectures in film. In 1952, he began teaching cinematography at the Prague Academy. Kundera came from a generation of young Czechs who had had little or no experience of the pre-war democratic Czech Republic. The ideologies of such idealistic and progressive students were greatly influenced by the experiences and atrocities of World War II and the German occupation. Still in his teens and much

attracted to Marxist philosophy, which seemed to promise a new freedom and peace, Kundera joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia which seized power in 1948.

Kundera's characters are often explicitly identified as images of his own imagination, commenting in the first-person on the characters in entirely third-person stories. Kundera is more concerned with the words that shape or mould his characters than with the characters' physical appearance. In his non-fiction work, *The Art of the Novel*, he says that the reader's imagination automatically completes the writer's vision. He, as the writer, wishes to focus on the essential. For him, the essential does not include the physical appearance or even the interior world (the psychological world) of his characters. Francois Ricard says about Kundera's writing:

Kundera compiles his works with regard to an overall oeuvre, rather than limiting his ideas to the scope of just one novel at a time. His themes and meta-themes exist across the entire oeuvre. Each new book manifests the latest stage of his personal philosophy. Some of these meta-themes are exile, identity, life beyond the border (beyond love, beyond art, beyond seriousness), history as continual return, and the pleasure of a less important life. (14)

Many of Kundera's characters are intended as expositions of one of these themes at the expense of their fully developed humanity. Specifics in regard to the characters tend to be rather vague. Often, more than one main character is used in a novel, even to the extent of completely discontinuing a character and resuming the plot with a brand new character. As he told Philip Roth in an interview in *The Village Voice*, "Intimate life is understood as one's personal secret, as something valuable, inviolable, the basis of one's originality" (42).

Kundera's early novels investigate the twofold tragic and comic aspects of totalitarianism. He does not view his works, however, as political commentary. Kundera says, "The condemnation of totalitarianism doesn't deserve a novel". (14) Focusing on the similar issues of Kundera brings the writing Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes:

What he finds interesting is the similarity between totalitarianism and the immemorial and fascinating dream of a harmonious society where private life and public life form but one unity and all are united around one will and one faith. It is not accidental that the most favored genres in the culminating period of Stalinism was the idyll. (14)

As told in his book *The Art of Novel*, in exploring the dark humor of this topic Kundera seems deeply influenced by Franz Kafka. Kundera's critique of human relationships is his critique of the communist system, which obviously made him quite unpopular in France.

Though largely philosophical and inevitably influenced by Kundera's surroundings and experiences in Prague and with the Czechoslovak Communist party Kundera's novels remain popular because they elevate the specific contexts and characters to the universal. He brings the problems faced by his characters in 1960-70 Czechoslovakia. In fact, it can be argued that Kundera's novels are driven by exactly what drives most people including the themes like inter-human relationships, addictions, and sex. In his mature works of fiction, Kundera creates an independent, self-contained world, which is constantly analyzed and questioned from a philosophical point of view. However, it would be wrong to regard Kundera as a philosopher. He is a proponent of no concrete school of thinking. Kundera greatly

enjoys playing with his storylines and while analyzing them rationally, he opens up an infinite way of interpreting the presented facts. Kundera's mature fiction highlights the semiotic relativity of the modern novel seen an ambiguous structure of signs. Playing with these signs enables Kundera to show human existence as infinitely open to countless possibilities, thus freeing Man from the limitedness of one, unrepeatable human life. In concentrating on the sexual experiences of his characters, Kundera analyses the symbolic social meaning of these erotic encounters. Thus being able to deal with the most essential themes concerning Man.

His latest novel *Ignorance* too centers on the philosophy and mythical references. He connects the issues of home returning of immigrant Czech with the Homeric return of Odysseus. Kundera compares both of these two journeys: the modern one from France to Czech and mythical from Trojan War to Ithaca together. Some of the critics too focused on the issue regarding the memory and nostalgia of homeland. The Eastern Europe like Czech is like Ithaca for these critics. In this connection, Dana L. Munteanu writes:

*Ignorance* and Homer's *Odyssey*; 'return' after the war's end (whether the Trojan or the "cold") Kundera weaves a bitter meditation on Homer's *Odyssey* in to the narrative of his novel *Ignorance* (2000). The myth of the wanderer from Ithaca wishing to return home has led us to believe in a fairy tale: the Great Return. But there is no magic return. (7)

Irena, a Czech origin, goes back to the Czech Republic from France after twenty years, only to have a premonition confirmed. She would be a misfit in her former fatherland. In this sense, she is compared with Odysseus. Keeping these issues into the consideration, this research aims to deal with the perspective of post-modern parody or hyper-reality in *Ignorance*.

James. A. Sanders relating the text in says that Milan Kundera's gift has been to mingle politics with an exploration of subjectivity, and the result has been thin, light-textured novels driven by appetite and disappointment. As he comments:

Dominating his fiction, it ridiculed Communist proclamations of alleged good news about humanity. The brotherhood of the workingman, the wisdom of the Party, but also the bribes, the lies, the coercion, the deliberate forgetfulness, those verbal front elevation and realistic behavior are, like the texture of Kundera's prose, a kind of rasping on the casement. (18)

Although Sanders linked the text with the politics and communism, there is not only the political theme but also myths, love, and nostalgia etc. There is the presentation of individuals peered out and chose a survival route for the moments they would venture outside. The characters wandered out to take lovers, but their eroticism was enough for a network of personal and state politics, laughter and forgetting to touch them.

Eventhough, here is the poor characterization and tensed plot, one feels that Kundera has touched on something powerful feelings and emotions along with the true sense of nostalgia. His narrator is not character, but intrudes heavily into the story with musings about the Odysseus journey, or the meaning of the words for nostalgia and return: "In that etymological light nostalgia seems something like the pain of *Ignorance*, of not knowing. You are far away and I don't know what has become of you." (6). The narrator's own observations leave the reader wanting more, while the characters leave us wanting less. Clearly Kundera has much to say on this topic of which his work keeps returning. Perhaps a non-fiction book later will get to the heart of these interesting themes of nostalgia and homecoming. *Ignorance* just touches the surface.

This research explores the mixture of genres and the motives of retelling the mythological event in the context of modern text. For this purpose it includes the theories related with post-modern hyper reality, parody and concept of chimera art and literature. To deal with these Post-modern elements such as the mixing of genres, the deconstruction of a narrative and the use of pastiche and layering and symbolism within the realistic framework of a work of art, this research deals with the novel through post-modern elements.

Intertextuality is a postmodern feature of writing where there is the mixing of different genre and different text within a text. Intertextuality can be defined text-author, bringing the simultaneously transforms of some prior text or referencing of a text by a reader while reading some other text. The technique of intertextuality can be categorized by the connections between different artistic works along with the respective cultures to which they share their platforms, connection between genres and the artistic work of the author: and above all between works of individuals in particular. Intertextuality strengthens the connection between historical facts along with the approaches of modern era, added by simultaneous materialization of constant conversation with literatures from other genres and the literature from tradition.

In postmodernism distinctions between different genres blur; tragedy becomes like a farce and the tragic sense is more laughable and farcical than lamentable. Similarly, the post-modern way of writing blurs the demarcation between history and fiction, myth and real as well as there is not clear cut defined genres in term of form and content. According to Lewis:

Some of the dominant features of their postmodernist fiction include:temporal disorder; the erosion of the sense of time; a pervasive andpointless use of pastiche: a foregrounding of words as fragmenting material signs: the loose

association of ideas; paranoia; and vicious circles or a loss of distinction between logically separate levels of discourse. (123)

There are, however a few characteristics that are seen frequently in postmodernism to be added to this list, such as: ambiguity, complexity, de-centers, and literary words fragmentation in dialogue, extreme use of black humor, parody, allegory and disintegration. As Hutcheon says "whereas in modernist one sensed a kind of wishful disintegration". As Hutcheon says "whereas in modernist one sensed a kind of wishful call to continuity beneath the fragmented echoing in postmodern fragmentariness are seen as liberating" (Newman: 266)

Postmodernism, as mentioned before, questions not only existence and concepts of reality, it also take up issues such as fictionality and textuality of those realities. Literary postmodernism has subsequently been adeptly summarized by Waugh as "a quest for fictionality" (10).

Milan Kundera in this novel has one of the most unique and immediately recognizable writing up the genres. Two Czech emigrants return to Prague after the fall of communism, their complex relationships with their home and with each other are not simplified but further entangled. After years of questions about themselves, their friends, their country, their grand return defy expectations and leave them with more, and more challenging, questions remarkable thing in the novel is the mixing of the concepts of different, subjects. It is his conversationalist tone, as if he's sitting in the room with you just sharing his observations and ideas over a drink. He does not simply present a scene and leave you to interpret and analyze it as the reader will, but instead is quite eager to tell the reader why he finds it so fascinating and in a pretty straightforward and affable manner. To show all this thesis has divided into three chapters. The very first chapter is the introduction. The second is the textual analysis

which gives the textual facts along with the theory in its embedded form. Ultimately, there is the conclusion which gives the concluding idea of the overall thesis.

## II Parodic Intertextuality in Kundera's *Ignorance*

The plan of this thesis is to show that *Ignorance* by Kundera which has presented the mixture of Homer's *Odyssey* to parody the returned of the people as well as a difference text types. In Kundera is re-writing the text in a modern form. In the past the great hero *Odyssey* is lost for 20 years. When returns his homeland his presence is unrecognizable by the people in his place. Likewise, the characters Irena and Josef and others have forgotten the memories of their past of their native land. Here in the contemporary time also there are the characters that are lost in foreign countries like Denmark and France because of the communism in Czech Republic. There is the exaggeration of the events and episodes to make it parodical. By doing so it has presented the Text diversity, intertextuality and which is appropriate for the transformation of the parodies into the modern form which is embedded in it.

*Ignorance* is novel which creates a situation and circumstance of re-reading of the Homeric epic *Odyssey*. In the text Kundera involves a back- and-forth re-reading of each text based on what their similarities and differences reveal about one another.

The text has full of postmodern features which is relevant to the examples in the text which are drawn from Homer's *Odyssey*. In the text the people are caught inside the *Ignorance* of the path not taken. For the innocent civilian it is very hard to be arrived at a major decision point in our lives and had taken the path we didn't take. This is somehow similar to the trap of the great warrior who had fallen inside the regime of battle and destruction. This is the question that is mainly emotional to expatriate who left a communist state twenty years former and now are faced with returning to their country to face those family members and friends who remained behind while they fled. The civilian face their own difficulties in their own way. This is somehow

similar to the myth of the "Great Return" as Kundera calls it. This is the heart touching story of some of those emigrants.

Homer's *Odyssey* is in the memory of his family and relatives. In the same way Irena and Josef of *Ignorance* are also fallen in the depth of imagination and memory. This type of element proves the novel a kind of parody. There is the wonderfully developed logic of loss that introduces the novel, expanding the notion of home into something larger a return making it similar to that of *Odyssey*. It not only to a place which is left by them for a long time ago, but to something which is linked to their past childhood, family, abandoned dreams, a deceased spouse etc. as Kundera writes:

At the university she used to be seduced by the dreams of voyage to distant stars. What pleasure to escape far away into the universe, someplace where life expresses itself differently from here and needs nobodies! But despite all amazing rockets, man will never very far in the universe. The brevity of his life makes the sky a dark lid against which he will forever crack his head, to fall back onto the earth, where everything alive eats and can be eaten. (194)

The similarity of homecoming and the return is shown like the great homecoming of the ancient heroic figure. The writer by doing so makes the parody of the great epic. By making the parody he hiddenly mocks the political system and condition.

The text is the genuine example of the intertextuality. Here, the writer very cunningly has linked the return of the Odysseus whose rest away from Ithaca lasted twenty years. The main protagonist of the great epic did not return for twenty years. The same total of time the Czechs used up under the Soviet domination after their 1969 self-emancipation. Kundera makes a point about the implication of twenty years

in the distance of the lifetime and about the inconsistency of the country that a great returner, like Odysseus, finds himself in. The writer goes on writing,

After leaving Calypso, during his return journey, he was shipwrecked in Phaeacia, whose king welcomed him to court. There he was a foreigner, a mysterious stranger. A stranger gets asked "Who are you? Where do you come from? Tell us!" and he told. For fourlong books of the *Odyssey* he had retraced in detail his adventures before the dazzled Phaeacians. But in Ithaca he was not a stranger, he was one of their own, so if never occurred to anyone to say, "Tell us!" (34-35).

The same difficulties and hazards have faced by citizen. As *Odyssey* felt alien for a long time being detached with his family and near and dear ones, the innocent civilians of the country also faced the same condition. It is because "intertextuality may be relevant for the translation of the parody embedded in it" (Cristina 16).

This thesis has focused on the issues of the intertextual concept interrelated in the text along with its relevance in the translation of a particular text type in *Ignorance* which are the parodies. This research demonstrates various claims regarding the text *Ignorance* especially and concept established by the critic on the path of the return of the civilians after a long period of time with reference to this issue. Their claim put in a nutshell the wide ranging concept of the return of *Odyssey* is that the readers of the translated parodies have to be familiar with their innovative foundation, so as to infer parody tone. "Intertextuality as a textual strategy use stylistic devices such as imitation and parody in the media through allusion" (Kristeva 434). The examples for the translations in the various languages provide evidence that contradicts their claim. The very small illustration confirm my point: translated parodies may stand as texts in their own right.

*Ignorance* is a novel which is a kind of exploration of the nostalgia for homeland, and the imitation of the Odyssean homecoming. As Kundera is famous for the writing of nostalgia and memories, this novel which is also a kind of a novel which has its deeper concern with memory and forgetting. When *Odyssey* comes in the house of Penelope, she takes an interest in this strange beggar, suspecting that he might be her long-lost husband. Quite crafty herself, Penelope organizes an archery contest the following day and promises to marry any man who can string Odysseus's great bow and fire an arrow through a row of twelve axes a feat that only Odysseus has ever been able to accomplish. There both of them forget their past and accept the future. At the contest, each suitor tries to string the bow and fails. Odysseus steps up to the bow and with, little effort, fires an arrow through all twelve axes. He then turns the bow on the suitors. He and Telemachus assisted by a few faithful servants, kill every last suitor.

This story is related in the meeting of Irene and Josef in *Ignorance*. In both of the text *Ignorance* and *Odyssey* there is the presentation of other people's perceptions of them as disputed or in exile either of the historical hero and of the characters in the novel and run counter to their own sense of being at home in their new countries. It suggests however is equally interested in the themes of exile and return on a metaphorical level.

With these words she offered him her future. And although Josef has no interest in the future, he feels happy with this woman who so visibly desires him. As if he were away back in the past, back in the years he used picking up girls in Prague. As if those years were inviting him now to take up the thread where he broke it off. He feels young again in the company of this stranger,

and suddenly it seems unacceptable to cut short the afternoon for an appointment with her step daughter. (170 -71)

Through repeated allusions to the *Odyssey* he poses the question of whether, especially in the modern world, not only notion of return to an unaltered homeland, but the possibility of getting better the memories of the past with any truthfulness and totality, are always deceptive. Both on the actual and the symbolic level, the exilic state is one where past and present, old and new, coexist and mix together. Structurally, too, in this novel Kundera intermingles the lives of the character both of the text and narrative threads in such a way that none of them can be followed without reference to one another?

Irena, in this novel is a Czech emigrant who lost the memories of the native land which has been free from the communist ruling system. She is such a character in the novel, which has spent twenty years in Paris since the humiliating scenario of the Prague spring in 1968. She is in the trap of irregular between walking nostalgia and the fearful emigration-dream of finding herself back in her native land. This dream is like the dream of Penelope. In Homeric time also people thought that *Odyssey* is dead and will never return. Like all the people, she misinterprets appearances and assumes that *Odyssey* is dead and gone forever. Even though Odysseus like some daemon haunts her dreams, Penelope rationalizes that dreams can be true or false and that her dreams about her husband must be false. If Odysseus is any more real than a figment of her imagination, she demands proof of it. Whenever she hears stories about Odysseus' survival, she devises tests to prove the credibility of the stories. Here Kundera makes the similarities of the two dreams. The dream of the emigrant and the dream of Penelope who sees her husband in every dream are compared like a parody. She also feels like the emigrant in her own land. Like her there are characters that

have extreme passion of the return in their homeland. Their return is compared to the return of the Homeric character's return after the Great War. When the communism system collapses in 1989, she bends over to pressure from French associates to go abroad on the great return, the idealistic journey home, only to find again that she had left partly to escape her overbearing mother.

Kundera has focused on the issues of the intertextual concept consistent in the text along with its relevance in the translation of a particular text type in *Ignorance* which are the parodies. This research demonstrates there are various claims regarding the text *Ignorance* especially and concept established by the citric path of the return of the civilians after a long period of time with reference to this issue. Their claim put in a nutshell the wide-ranging concept of the return *Odyssey* is that the readers of translated parodies have to be familiar with their innovative foundation, so as to infer their parody tone. Intertextual concept is the vital issues and the method of the writer. It is a concept which takes the help of another text to develop the idea and the main concept. Maria Jesus says:

The concept of intertextuality requires, therefore, that we understand texts not as self-contained systems but as differential and historical, as traces and tracing of otherness, since they are shaped by the repetition and transformation of other textual structures. Rejecting the New Critical principal of textual autonomy, the theory of intertextuality insists that a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole and so that it does not function as a closed system. From the initial approach, there have appeared a wide range of attitudes towards the concept of intertextuality and what it implies, to such an extent that it is partially impossible to deal with it without considering other related subjects

or without taking into account the various contributions made by a large number of literary critics. (268)

Through the analysis of above mentioned comment of Maria, it is clear that intertextuality is the relation each text has to the texts adjoining it, we call intertextuality. Intertextual examination examines the relation of a declaration to that the sea of words, how it uses those words, how it positions itself in respect to those other words.

*Ignorance* is such a text where Kundera presents mythical as well as the contemporary theme. The text shows the resemblance in the two exiles: the exile of the characters and the exile of the great hero *Odyssey* in the past. It blends the past and the present. Irena and Josef, correspondingly Prague to experience again their aged lives. It isn't easy: 20 years of political separation and touching deficiency signify no one actually counts them in the middle of the living. Josef, who when he fled told his brother and sister in-law to take what they like from his flat, finds his brother wearing his old wristwatch. As:

Earlier, by their total uninterested in her experience abroad, they amputated twenty years from her life. Now, with the interrogation, they were trying to stitch her old past onto her present life. As if they were amputating her forearm and attaching the hand directly to the elbow; as if they were amputating her calves and joining her feet to knees. Transfixed by that image, she can give no answer to that question: anyhow the women are not expecting one, drunker and drunker they fell back chatter which leaves Irena out. (43)

The great hero also separated twenty from his homeland for different reason Kundera here takes the reference from the great epic and makes a parody of that epic

presenting the character and their return in their homeland after the political resolution.

*Ignorance* explores the condition and the extremely painful situation for those who have to leave their country and who are in forced exile in ways which go against the expectation of those who are out of the touch of such exile. On the surface, Kundera represent two characters for which longed for return to the Czech mother country put forward little completion, as they find out that life in their assumed countries Denmark and France has more actuality for them than what they have returned to find. Moreover, they realize that other people's observations of them as displaced or in exile run counter to their own sense of being at home in their new countries. Twenty years after the Greek hero Odysseus first set out from his home Ithaca to fight with the other Greeks against the Trojans, Odysseus' son Telemachus and his wife Penelope are overwhelmed with over a hundred suitors who are trying to influence Penelope that her husband is dead and that she should marry one of them. The characters like Irena also have a strong faith on their motherland as Penelope and her son has a faith on return of their family member. By comparing these two situations Kundera has blended the past and the presenting making the novel a kind of parody of that great epic and history.

*Ignorance* is a kind of a correspondence of the great and historical text *Odyssey* the events and episodes of the text resembles the plot and the theme of *Ignorance*. Here, while creating the text based on the historic text the writer does not copy the events exactly but makes parody of the original text. It means the novel *Ignorance* is a kind of parody of the original *Odyssey*. According to Culler,

There are two ways of approaching intertextuality: The first is to look at the specific presuppositions of a given text, in the way in which it produces a pre-

text, an intertextual space whose occupants may or may not correspond to other actual texts. The second enterprise, the study of rhetorical or pragmatic presupposition, leads to a poetics which is less interested in the occupants of that intertextual space which makes a work intelligible than in the conventions which underline that discursive activity or space. (16-35)

According to Culler's above mentioned comment, any text which produces later making a copy of the events limits the set of possible extra copy those which are either logically or pragmatically similar. It means it makes the parody by imitating the actions and stories. Culler also calls attention to the complex quality of the relationship that exists between influence and intertextuality. Influence and intertextual concept are different from each other. Intertextuality is referring to the literal and effectual existence in a text, he asserts that intertextuality is an insufficient term and recommends in its place transtextuality, by which he means the whole thing, be it open or hidden, that relates one text to others.

The concept of intertextuality is originated from the Latin *intertexto*, the meaning of which is the blending together while weaving any type of text. It is a term which is first introduced by French Scholar Julia Kristeva in the late sixties. Kristeva broke with traditional notions of author's influence and the text source positing that all signifying systems, from board settings to poems, are comprised by the way in which they change previous signifying systems. A literary work then is not simply the creation of a particular novelist, but of its association to other texts and to the structures of language itself. Intertextuality is, a way of being responsible for the role of fictional and extra-literary materials without alternative option to traditional notions of authorship. It challenges the notion of the text as autonomous, enclosed

entirely, foregrounding, in its stead, the fact that all fictitious creation takes place the presence of other texts; they are, in effect, palimpsests.

The two characters resembles here in the text *Ignorance. Odyssey* and Penelope are themythical characters which are the sources of the creation of the two characters of *Ignorance* Irena and Josef. Having emigrated in the 1970s, Irena settled in Paris with her husband and a young family. Though life proved difficult after her husband died, she battled through, and feels strong and independent for it. Josef left Czechoslovakia and found love and happiness in Denmark.' But what did she know about those times, this young woman who merely went through life on the narrow footbridge of the present, devoid of all historical memory' (Kundera 72). When they meet, by chance, on a long put off homecoming, they pick up the shreds of a love that was abandoned years earlier, before it had chance to blossom. Each adrift in their homeland, culturally disconnected from their former peers and with the language sounding strange to their ears, they find solace in each other, connected by memories of who they were and uncertainty about who they have become.

But memory is unreliable: do they remember the past in the same way? It is the great question which is worthy of answer. For example when *Odyssey* arrives at the places the next day, still disguised as a beggar, he endures abuse and insults from the suitors. The only person who recognizes him is his old nurse, Eurycleia, but she swears not to disclose his secret. Intersperse with this story, Kundera ponders on Homer's *Odyssey* and Odysseus understands of arrival, illustrating parallels with those of Irena and Josef. One of the great things about Kundera is that he avoids persuasive responses in favour of confusion and vagueness. There are no simple truths, only a jumble of disagreement.

Milan Kundera parodies the world wars with the great historical Trojan wars and the exile civilians with the civilians of the past. Here he links the two texts and makes the parody of the myth of the *Odyssey*. The different type of invasions and attack in modern period resembles the historical wars and battles. Kundera goes on commenting:

Like blows from an ax, important dates cut deep gashes into Europe's twentieth century. The First world war in 1914, the second and the third longest one: the cold ending in 1989 in with the disappearance of communism... after several centuries, they achieved their independence, and in 1938 they lost it. In 1948 the communist revolution, imported from Moscow, inaugurated the country's second twenty- year span: that one ended in 1968 when, enraged by the country's insolent self - emancipation, the Russians invaded with half a million soldiers. The occupier took over in full force in the autumn of 1996 and then, to everyone's surprise, took off in autumn 1989- quietly, politely, as did all the communist regimes in Europe at that time: and that was the third twenty- year span. Our century is the only one in which historic dates have taken such a voracious grip on every single person's life" (Kundera 10-11).

It is the Parodic distortion of the past. Here Kundera seems as if he rewrites it, falsify it. Which exaggerate the importance of one event and fail to mention some other. It is only capable of retaining a paltry little scrap of the past, and no one knows why just this scarp and not some other one, since in each of us the choice occurs mysteriously, outside our will or the readers' interests. So, *Ignorance* explores the theme of post modern parody because of the various fusions of the traditional myths with the context of the modern world and the stories related with.

Roland Barthes claims that there is the connection of the past and the present in the text which based on the Intertextual concept. He claims that intertextuality is not simply the literary concept, but it is historical and the historical and social factors are themselves signifying practices which transform and inflect literary practice. It is the bend of past and the present. For Roland Barthes, who says publicly the death of the author. It is the reality of intertextuality that permits the text to come into being.:

Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of code, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources of influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious of automatic quotations, given without quotation marks. (39)

The function and effectiveness of intertextuality can often depend quite a bit on the reader's prior knowledge and understanding before reading the secondary text. The text are the product which are the outcome of reader's own previous readings. Understanding and position inside the enlightening formation also from crucial intertexts.

*Ignorance* is a novel which flows like an insightful and moving like the Homeric *Odyssey* along the lines of intermingling of the textual elements of the traditional text of Homer. The reader perceives Kundera's approaching and shares in the attempts at returning home. There are also moments of as beauty as the characters reach out for something absent, a person or place that isn't there. The moments of as beauty and the union of the characters show the glimpse of the great heroic return. In the old epics, where the great character *Odyssey* falls down which is very touching

and high sounding but the character of modern age are not taken very importantly. They fall in the characterization, which is so light and shadowy that it is almost non-existent, particularly with minor characters like Milanda. The plot is also like the plot of Homer's *Odyssey* and seems to have been created to support the theme and the characteristic of *Odyssey* and therefore is heavy handed and for the most part, a nuisance rather than driving force for the book.

Kundera makes the textual element of *Odyssey* in the new novel but there are slight different. The returns of the characters are shown unwilling somehow. It attempts to show the Parodicnature of the text. It means this novel is the parody of the great epic *Odyssey*. Irena is the character in the novel who is motivated into a guilt ridden "great return" by a French friend, and her lover Gustaf, who has recently started a job in the Czech Republic. However, from the beginning we feel Irena's ambivalence as she returns to a country no longer here. Irena finds, quite movingly for anyone who has experienced this kind of exile, that nostalgia is something that exists only inside of her, and isn't curable by a visit home. Here the concept of returning home changing into visiting home. There are a lot of difference between their two concept. For the émigré, home no longer exists. This is a painful lesson as she struggles to meet up with the friends she missed and revisit the places which have been populating her dreams. In a kind of parallel narrative, Josef is also trying to recover a place and time left behind, while fulfilling a promise to his dead wife. He meets Irena in the airport and the two have a brief encounter which is as full of disappointment as their trip "home.: You can't go back to a point in time anymore than you can go back to a place you left long ago- at least as the same person. Irena is, in any case, looking for her escape. Josef too is looking for a kind of escape, but neither really wants it. They run towards that which they've run from.

The relationships of the past and the present situation are the main element of the intertextual notion. The characters and their past as well as the memory turn out to be a necessary feature that determines the author's approach to his hero/ heroine and prompts a similar attitude on the part of the reader. Inability 'to remember' means the weakness of the character, the instability and desperation of their place. This is the parody of the hubris of the great mythical hero *Odyssey* who has forgotten his family and country during the course of the Great War. Kundera says:

He tried to get firmly in mind the idea that he was leaving his country. He tried hard to evoke his past life. He tried hard to see it as a landscape he looked back on with longing, a landscape vertiginously distant. But he could not manage it. What he did succeed in seeing being him in his mind's eye was tiny, compressed like a closed accordion. He had to make an effort to evoke the scrapes of memory that could give him the illusion of a destiny that had been lived. (64)

Therefore, it explores the condition of exile in ways which go against readily expectation. On the literal level, he portrays two characters for whom he longed- for return to their Czech homeland offers little fulfillment, as they discover that live in their adopted countries, Denmark and France has more reality for them than what they have returned to find.

Julia Kristeva said that there is a unified force in literature that connects all the variety of traditions, history and current. She gives that force a name when she works out her hypothesis of intertextuality. For Kristeva, this concept has own apprehension a great deal than merely recognizing the fictional orientations or motivations. Rather, the idea of intertextuality is an expression of the complicated dependence of literary works on all the literature that has come before them To put it another way, people

shares a wide variety of experiences in literature, and intertextuality occurs where authors use these shared experiences to communicate their ideas with their audiences. As "intertextuality as textual strategy, and posit three different types: Parodic allusion, creative appropriation and self reflexive reference". (Walter431) So, possibly the most excellence description of intertextuality would be the use of multifaceted fictional associations as a way of communication. Any text can be considered a work of intertextuality because it builds on the structures that existed before it. There are countless example of authors borrowing from the Bible and from Shakespeare. Here Kundera draws his ideas from the great epic *Odyssey*.

In a broad sense, intertextuality is the position to or submission of a literary, media, or public text within another literary, media, or public text. In literature, intertextuality is when a book refers to a second book by title, scene, character, or storyline, or when a book refers to a social text such as a media, social, or cultural story. There is the correspondence of the origin of the text and the ideas from outside of the text. It means the matching of the original text's idea and the idea beyond the text is the key element of Intertextual concept. This borrowing invites a comparison between your understanding of the text outside of the book, and its use inside of the book. Intertextuality asks us to think about why the author is choose this particular fictional or social text, how they are as well as the text in the book, and to what consequence is the text re-imagined by the book, or the book formed by the text. There is the comparison between the contemporary text *Ignorance* by Kundera and the epic *Odyssey* by Homer. It means there is the comparison between the two texts in intertextual concept. When literature references another text, we are asked to draw from our knowledge of the text in its original form, and compare this to how it is

being used, changed or reframed by the primary book. Intertextuality functions on comparison and contrast of similarities and differences.

When he returns for a long period of time, Odysseus reveals himself to the entire place and reunites with his loving Penelope. This type of reunite is made upon Irena and Josef. Their return from the foreign country is exaggerated like the return of *Odyssey*. *Odyssey* travels to the outskirts of Ithaca to see his aging father, Laertes. They come under attack from the vengeful family members of the dead suitors, but Laertes, reinvigorated by his son's return, successfully kills Antinous's father and puts a stop to the attack. Zeus dispatches Athena to restore peace. With his power secure and his family reunited, Odysseus's long ordeal comes to an end. There is the imitation of the Homeric style of writing in the text *Ignorance*. It is the parody of the epic *Odyssey*. The exaggeration is made for the comic effect. The comparison serves to show how conciliation, debased, perhaps even extinct is the idea of nostalgic return in the modern, cosmopolitan world. As Kristeva comments:

In terms of imitation, a parody imitates the style of particular writer, artist, or genre with deliberate exaggeration for comic effect, parodic allusion then, is a stylistic device in which one text incorporates a caricature of another, most often, popular cultural text... that seeks to amuse through juxtaposition. Here, the audience knows enough information about the original text to find humor in the parody. Allusions are based on the assumption that there is a body of knowledge that is shared by the author and the reader and that therefore the reader will understand the author's referent. (435-36)

From the remark it is clear that the concept of intertextuality fundamentally deforms the plot of the given text or the book, scattering its representation of entirely into an uncontrolled, illimitable elements of relations and links, paraphrases and trash, texts

and contexts. For many hypertext authors and theorists, intertextuality provides description of the kind of textual space.

All the human being has the passion towards the respect and glory. The respect lover characters of Kundera parodically presents the glory seeking tendency of the great hero in the past time. Like other Greek heroes, Odysseus has loving streak. He too would like to be "honored as god," but he must not lose his wits in his pursuit of glory. As:

Of all that breathes and crawls across the earth, our mother earth  
breeds nothing feebler than a man. So long as the gods grant him power, spring  
in his knees, he thinks he will never suffer affliction down the years. But then,  
when the happy gods bring on the long hard times, bear them he must, against  
his will and steel his heart. Our lives, our mood and mind as we pass across the  
earth, turn as the days turn. (150)

When *Odyssey* comes there he was in the disguise of a beggar. Nobody recognize him. However, he has the passion that the people should have the respect same as before they used to do. Like Irena and Josef who want respectful life after the exile, the great hero also has the same feeling of glory and respect in his own land.

Odysseus is himself in disguise as beggar, and his words here help maintain that cover. According to the story he has told, he once was a great warrior, plundering faraway lands, until one day he was captured. On one level, his words here strengthen those lies.

Roland Barthes argues that there is the presentation of another text within a text. It means that there is the depiction of the impression of the original text which is copied and rewritten and made a new form. For example the writer compares the characters

and situation of the two books and makes a new form. It means that there is the comparison of the two books and given a new form by mimicry and parody.

This is intertextuality in the sense that a text may appear to be the spontaneous and transparent expression of a writer's intentions, but must necessarily contain elements of other texts. The text of parodic intertextuality provides an extraordinary example of this in the text where he picks out some of the quotations without quotation marks, some of the references to cultural codes, stereotypes, received wisdom etc. (278)

There is the expression of the writer. The intention of making the character similar to the prior text lies in the later text. This new method will produce a new object that we call text and which is Intertextual by default: other texts are always present in it, at varying levels and more or less recognizable form. It means that *Ignorance's* meaning and interpretation are all shaped by the meaning of *Odyssey* because all the characters and situations are resembles with the Homeric text. It means that intertextuality is the shaping of texts' meanings by other texts.

Intertextuality is concept most completely and in the beginning explained by Julia Kristeva in the school of post structuralism. Intertextuality has in use on a diversity of meanings in view of the fact that her argument of the term in the 1960s. On its most basic level, intertextuality is the concept of texts' making use of each other's words and concepts. This could signify as much as a complete ideological concept as little as word or phrase. The authors like Kundera who borrow the idea of the meaning, characters, situations and circumstance use the concept enthusiastically from preceding texts, their work gains layers of meaning. Also, another feature of intertextuality reveals itself when a text is read in light of another text, in which case all of the supposition and implications neighboring the other text shed light on and

shape the way a text is interpreted. Most of the writers make use of ideas from the previous works to give a layer of meanings to their works. When the readers read the new text with reflection of another literary work, all related assumptions, effects and ideas of other text provide them a different meaning and changes the technique of interpretation of the original quantity. Since readers take influence from other texts, and while reading new texts they sift through archives, this device gives them relevance and clarifies their understanding of the new texts. For writers, intertextuality allows them to open new perspectives and possibilities to construct their story. Thus, writers may explore a particular ideology in their narrative by discussing recent rhetoric in the original text.

The writer makes it vivid by matching the characters and the situations and the time frame between Homeric *Odyssey* and the recent novel *Ignorance*. Irena and Josef meets by chance while returning to their homeland. Which they had abandoned twenty years earlier. They come there to meet the relative and characters like the great hero *Odyssey* when they chose to become exiles. The characters are not able to manage and to pick up the thread of their strange love story, broken up almost as soon as it began and then lost in the tides of history. The characters Irene and Josef almost lost in the tides of history. As the narrator goes commenting:

From then on she succumbs to the charm of these affinities, there furtive contacts between present and past; she seeks out those echoes, these co-respondences, these co-resonances that make her feel the distance between what was and what is, the temporal dimension (so new, so astonishing) of her life.(79)

It means like in the past *Odysseus* of *Odyssey* all the characters are driven by their history. They cannot be separated from their family and relative whether they are in Denmark or they are in heaven.

There is the concept of intertextuality that there should be a text within a text. It means that the ideas are brought about by the author from another text which is very popular. There is a complex quality of the relationship that exists between influence and intertextuality. The mixtures of two books are the new form of the two genres.

The perception of similar comparability's from text to text; or it is the assumption that such comparing must be done even if there is no intertext at hand wherein to find comparabilities. The first is to look at the specific presuppositions of a given text, the way in which it produces a pre-text, an intertextual space whose occupants may or may not correspond to other actual texts. The second enterprise, the study of rhetorical or pragmatic presupposition, leads to a poetics which is less interested in the occupants of that intertextual space which makes a work intelligible than in the conventions which underline that discursive activity of space. (96)

From the above motioned remarks it is clear that intertextuality is a textual reference within some text that reflects the text used as a reference. Instead of employing referential phrases from different literary works, intertextuality draws upon the concept, rhetoric or ideology from other texts to be merged in the new text. It may be the retelling of an old story, or you may rewrite the popular stories in modern context for instance, *Ignorance* is the use of the characters and plot from *The Odyssey*.

The place and the people have forgotten them like *Odyssey* has forgotten by his family members also. The truth is that after such a long absence their memories no

longer match. They remember the people and the near and dear ones. but other people refused to remember them. We always believe that our memories coincide with those whom we loved. But this is just a false impression. Then again it records only "an insignificant, minuscule particle" of the past, and no one knows why it's this bit and not any other bit. We live our sunk in vast stop thinking about, a fact we refuse to recognize. Only those who return after twenty years, like Odysseus returning to his native Ithaca, can be temporarily deprive of sight and dumbfounded by scrutinize the goddess of lack of knowledge personally. Other text proves them a different meaning and changes the technique of interpretation of the original piece since reader takes influence from Homer's texts, and while reading ignorance they sift through archives, this device gives them relevance and clarifies their understanding of the new text. Here in the novel intertextuality allows them to open new perspectives and possibilities to construct their story. Here Kundera has given the glimpse of the bad image of political system and explore a particular ideology in their narrative by discussing recent rhetoric in the original text.

### III Analogy of Homeric *Odyssey* and Kundera's *Ignorance*.

Through the analysis of *Ignorance* the research comes to the conclusion that there is parody of great epic *Odyssey* mixing of the mythological and historical facts has proven the meaning of parodic intertextuality. Kundera's *Ignorance* observes the communist invasion in Czechoslovakia during 1968-1989 within the state of exilement in analogy of alienation, loss of memory, homesickness, nostalgia, self-reflexivity, and parodic type of intertext. The novel depicts the parodic intertextuality in the most fascinating and effective manners. *Ignorance* clearly pictures the contemporary reality of Czechoslovakia and exhibits the harsh impact of communist rule due to which general civilians are bounded to leave their motherland. The two world war and Trojan war are parodic. They are forced to accept exilement as well as slavery in own country. It doesn't only mix of personal and political issues but also invokes the ignorance of path not taken. Kundera develops the themes and ideas in the novel as the critique of political system of the then Czech society by showing its effects to general people by imitating the mythical characters with real characters. It shows analogy of *Odyssey* and *Ignorance* where there is relationship of equivalence with each other.

The plot of the novel *Ignorance* contains the details of every events, realities, alienation, exilement, homesickness and nostalgia faced by Irena and Josef. During these days altogether during the discourse history of Soviet invasion in Czechslovakia. It is based on the exaggeration of the mythical hero Odysseus who also faces similar situation during Trojan war and exiled for 20 years. *Ignorance* is based on large scale political events disturbing the nation. They are finding a brighter tomorrow in alien land. In the same way, they are alienated in their mother country when they come after a long gap as *Odyssey* in Ithaca. They are facing nostalgia even

in their homeland. Here, It seems more nostalgic parodic as well as intertextual. All are due to post modern sense of differentiation. Here, the characters Josef and Irena entangle to reveal the political facts of their country which can signify the communist invasion, horror, alienation from home, detest of French friends, hidden identity, memory of family and relatives from which Kundera is motivated. Then, he mythically, parodically and intertextually presents it in *Ignorance*. So, both of the texts are analogically interrelated.

As contemporary novel Kundera's *Ignorance* is significant. It is parodic nature of text. It means this novel is the parody of the great epic which is mythically meaningful, from which Kundera is influenced. The novel parodically intertextualized myth and past. Plot, characters and story of the novel is significant with plot, characters, and story of *Odyssey*. The place and the people have forgotten Irena and Josef like Odysseus has forgotten by his family members. There is parody of the original text. The exile of Irena and Josef is parallel with that of Odysseus. There is mixing of mythological and historical facts. Memory of family, relatives and a deceased spouse is in both text. All are presented analogously.

To sum up, Kundera's *Ignorance* successfully expresses the idea of analogy of Homer's *Odyssey* by presenting parodic intertextuality within the concern of contemporary political and individual issues by imitating from mythical ideas of past. It gives very sense of self-reflexivity and parodic intertextuality. The novel eloquently expresses the sense of alienation, and communist horror. Great return of Odysseus is parodically presented by the great return of Josef and Irena who are detached from their own country. It also criticizes the ruling system of Czechoslovakia before 1989. Lastly, *Ignorance* is works of arts that sounds Kundera's belief in the political system of Czechoslovakia during Soviet invasion which can be investigated the essence of

analogy of Homeric *Odyssey* with Kundera's *Ignorance* through the ideas of every individual by re-examining and revaluating mythical text of Homer with real text of Kundera. Thus, the novel marks its position to the parodic intertextuality to show the analogy where there is relationship of equivalence with real and myth.