

La insoportable levedad del ser The Unbearable Lightness of Being

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Abstract:

“The Unbearable Lightness Of Being” tells a story narrated in the way of a novel, where love relationships are addressed from the sentimental, social, anthropological and philosophical point of view. In this story you can see how carnal passions flow in a context that affects the emotional ties between Tomás and Teresa, a Czechoslovak couple living during the Prague Spring of 1968, when after an failed revolution attempt the country subdues more under the yoke of the Soviet Union, causing a setback in its political and economical situation. Throughout history, Kundera uses very graphic elements that describe the passion and sensuality of the characters making it impossible to disassociate from the circumstances to fully undersand topics as love, politics, sexuality and the conception of being that the author contrasts so clearly

Keywords:

Identity, communism, philosophy, idealism

Resumen:

“La insoportable levedad del ser” cuenta una historia narrada en el sentido de una novela, donde las relaciones amorosas se abordan desde el punto de vista sentimental, social, antropológico y filosófico. En esta historia se puede ver cómo fluyen las pasiones carnales en un contexto que afecta los lazos emocionales entre Tomás y Teresa, una pareja checoslovaca que vivió durante la primavera de Praga de 1968, cuando después de un fallido intento de revolución, el país se somete más al yugo de la Unión Soviética, causando un revés en su situación política y económica. Kundera utiliza elementos muy gráficos que describen la pasión y la sensualidad de los personajes, lo que hace que sea imposible desvincularse de las circunstancias a temas completamente inferiores como el amor, la política, la sexualidad y la concepción del ser que el autor contrasta tan claramente

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Introducción

Milan Kundera took this work to a high point in contemporary literature history. Due to his deep and accuraty analysis of the humann being and the concept of love (intrinsically described) from a predominantly philosophical point of view that is influenced by a period of transcendental historical and political events, as it takes place in Prague between 1960 and 1970 and recalls the artistic and intellectual life of Czech society during the communist period, from the Prague Spring to the Soviet invasion of 1968.

Throughout the story, Kundera uses very graphic elements that describe the passion and sensuality that accompany each main character that represents a metaphorical figure, who are impossible to dissociate along with politics and their unified story. One of the most significant elements in this book is the complexity in the description of the identity and essence of the protagonists, of Tomas and Teresa. He represents the Kierkegaard’s ethical and aesthetic categories, as he behavior is ambiguous as husband and fickle. By the other hand, Teresa is the vivid image of the moral, a concerned woman devoted to her loved one, of complex thoughts and feelings hard to understand. She is a woman full of insecurities and an immeasurable love of which recurrently and failed to try to break free. On the

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other hand Tomas can be considered as a typically man dissatisfied with his passions, although

inevitably clinging to his first love, Teresa, who happens to be his own nemesis, and results to be involved in the inevitable game of temptation of Sabina's seduction. The affair with Sabina represents an escape before the darkest feelings that characterize the relationships we use to classified as "serious and lasting" to become merely the casual encounter of Thomas, which although at first appears to be ephemeral, it becomes routine that starts to be customary, and eventually it begins to be a need; Sabina could represent the lightness and the hallmark of freedom and modernity.

Franz, another peculiar character in the history who turns out to be the antagonistic of Tomas in the subject of the love and who influences in the life of Sabina so importantly that helps to understand the philosophical questions implied her different relationships nature, we could say that he represents the gravity.

Every single character tells a unique story that is interconnected with another one, as the decisions and behaviors of each one impacts other's live indirectly. The eternal return idea that typically brings us back to our very own reality, where each person has only one life to live, to seize the opportunities that do not represent most.

For "The lightness of being", the author leads us the burden of defining the meaning and sense for weight and lightness, giving us the clue of telling us that lightness is unbearable. However, the reader has to choose with one of the two options, but how we choose between weight and lightness if we do not know what is the meaning of each one? There are reasons to decide for the weight, because "the heaviest burden is the image of the most intense fullness of life," and because "the heavier the burden, the more level our earth will be, more real and true will be", in other words, we have the weight of realism that might to become pessimism. By the other hand, there are also reasons to opt for lightness, when it could be understood as the absolute absence of load that makes man become lighter than the air, fly high, distance yourself from the earth, from your earthly being, being real only half way and your movements are as free as insignificant, and lacking of a weight that anchors to the ground can lead us to fly over reality, moving us towards the anesthetized utopia.

Kundera pushes us abruptly into the abyss that impels the lector to decide, when he asks: "So, what should we choose? Weight or lightness?" And although it does not tell us if the weight is positive or negative, if the lightness is negative or positive, philosophy could banishes us to the world of Parmenides, who considered positive lightness and negative weight; agreeing with the author on the premise that "the contradiction between weight and lightness is the most mysterious and equivocal of all contradictions."

The richness of this novel is indisputable. It is important to recognize that goes beyond a complex sentimentality history, rather, it is literature that requires a deep

study before getting into the great issues that address from the philosophical, psychological, sociological, erotic, political, epistemological, phenomenological, aesthetic, historical, and romanthic, making it an excellent choice for those readers that prefer to digest literature alone and aim to understand the full picture. Also, this work is so versatile that can be understood as a simple romantic novel, without having to dig deeper in so many complex premises.

After a rich piece of literature such as "The Unbearable Lightness of Being", it is expected that each reader compose her/his own analysis, since as we read it constantly, each time represents a different opportunity to come across a new adventure, to find a clue to track further, to build a more complete perspective that can provide us greater understanding, but also that can fit better with the very own reality. The reader who dares to try this work and possess in any way previous literature will be able to understand and delight in a better way the exquisite references that the author makes alluding to the greatest writers of all time such as Balzac, Flaubert, Dostoevski, Tolstoi, Joyce, Proust, Kafka, Musil, Fielding, Mann and of course Nietzsche with the idea of eternal return. If the lector does not have a big and varied cultural background, it is not a big deal, as this reading represents a good opportunity to start venture into it.

Referencias

- [1] Kundera, M. *The Unbearable Lightness Of Being*. Tusquets Editors. 2004