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TOPIC OF RESEARCH: Configurations of Exile in Select Novels of Milan Kundera

Findings

The thesis attempts to explore the different exilic dimensions of life in Milan Kundera's select novels. The novels examined are *The Joke* (1969), *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (1979), *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (1984) and *Immortality* (1990). The thesis tries to bring to the forefront Kundera's minute ideations on politics and human relationships. At times, the nature of exile in Kundera's novels is more politically charged and at times, it is metaphysical.

Following are political dimensions of exile discussed in my thesis:

- Majoritarianism and authoritarianism as the breeding grounds for pre-conditions of exile
- The marginalization of Liberal Intellectuals under authoritarian regimes
- Conservative Politics as the roots or origins of totalitarianism
- Kundera's Skepticism towards mass-movements and Kitsch
- Uncanny forms of surveillance
- Kundera's critique of an idyllic society

Following are the abstract dimensions of exile:

- Spiritual malaise in life
- Poetic contemplations on time-Image and lived-experience
- Kundera's ideations on being and idea where the latter supersedes the former in different dimensions of life

- Poetic significance of the idea of lightness in relation to Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of eternal recurrence
- Contesting the popular notions of exile in academic discourse
- The Search for Exile and the exile of meaning itself

Following are the more personal dimensions of exile:

- The intellectual underpinnings of exile in Ludvik's life
- The ideological tussle between communism and
- Exile in the Personal Abstract or the abstraction of exile
- Modernist distortions or poetic deceptions
- Love as a situs of exile