## Contents

Editor's Note	vii			
Introduction Harold Bloom	1			
"Freedom is my L The Works of Robert C. Ports	f Milan I	Kundera	3	
The Real Avante-	Garde	7		
Milan Kundera: D Peter Kussi	Dialogues	with Fiction		13
Kundera and Kitse John Bayley	ch	19		
Milan Kundera's U Mark Sturdiva		exuality	27	
The Ambiguities of Roger Kimball		Kundera	33	
Estrangement and Terry Eagleton		47		
On Kundera Italo Calvino	55			
The Book of Laught Kundera's Na			ion	61

Kundera's Laws of Beauty 75

\*\*Fames S. Hans\*\*

The Cyclic Form of Laughable Loves 93
Michael Carroll

Milan Kundera: Meaning, Play, and the Role of the Author 113 John O'Brien 113

Time and Distance 129
Tom Wilhelmus

Milan Kundera: The Search for Self in a Post-Modern World 133

Vicki Adams

Chronology 147

Contributors 149

Bibliography 153

Acknowledgments 157

Index 159

## *Index*

Adams, Vicki, 133-145	Auden, W.H., 44
Aesthetics	Axel's Castle (Wilson), 69
aesthetics of bliss, analysis of,	
121–122	
ambiguity as a theme, 119	Bad faith as self-deception, 15
control laws of beauty, 89	Bakhtin, M.M., 67
cross from aesthetics to ethics, 140	Banerjee, Maria, 97
established by Lightness of Being, 84	Banfield, Ann, 63, 69
Joyce, well-versed in aesthetic theory,	"Bargaining in Good Faith: The
110	Laughter of Vonnegut, Grass, and
kitsch as aesthetic ideal of politicians	Kundera" (Gill), 107, 111
and political parties, 42, 85	Barth, John, 81-82
sexuality as aesthetic fulfillment, 2	Barthes, Roland
turns to ethics in Kundera's post-	aesthetics of bliss, analysis of,
modern fiction, 134	121–122
Aesthetics of the Novel (Ames), 121–122	associates weight with stabilized
"The Ambiguities of Milan Kundera"	meaning, 125
(Kimball), 33-45, 118, 122, 125	author is subject as "dispersed" in the
Ambiguity. See duality	Text which destroys all subjects,
Ames, Van Meter, 121–122	115
Amnesia, generational, 16	"The Death of the Author," 113, 115
Anderson, Sherwood, 110, 111	126
Angelic laughter, defined, 37, 133	essay on demise of author, 113-114
Animals, degradation of, 89–91	on the "excess called writing," 126
The Archeology of Knowledge (Foucault),	fiction should be displaced from
141	social responsibility, 115, 118, 122
Aristotle, 81	The Grain, 116
"The Art of Fiction LXXXI" (Paris Review), 99	interest in innocent language being twisted, 124
The Art of Reading (Iser), 99-100, 101,	The Pleasure of the Text, 115, 123
103	Bayley, John, 1-2, 19-26
Art of the Novel (Kundera), 93, 98, 111	Beauty. See also shame

attitude toward beauty and shame, 75 fantasy that requires reader to Beethoven's music as, 76-80 suspend expectations, 10 as goal of poetic viewpoint, 135-136 fictive events are rooted in 1968 individual life and beauty, 144 invasion, 109 laws of beauty, 78, 80-82, 84-85, 89, history tends to be forgotten, 114 Hugo, 15, 122-123 man's sense of discomfort in modern illusion that text is timeless or ideological world, 144-145 impersonal is undermined, 63 influenced by Laughable Loves, 99 value of impure form of beauty, 89-90 ironic dissertation on arts of erotic as weaknesses that make us human, trickery, 14 134, 135 Jan and Edwige, 72 Beckett, Samuel, 47-48 Karel's preference for poetic oblivion, Beethoven in The Book, narrator talks about, 73 masterpiece of post modern fiction, music of, as driving force for love, 76 - 80Mirek's shame about affair with Zdena, 62-63 quartet of, based on Es muss sein, 53, Mother, 14, 66 narration in, 15, 36-37, 62, 67, 71, 74 quartets played in Lightness of Being, 79 nascent political concerns of Bell, Pearl K., 7-11 Laughable Loves find fruition in, Beyond Glasnost, 1989 (Goldfarb), 108 Blahynka, Milan, 3, 95 nudists share dream of natural Blame, 85-87, 130 paradise, 72 "The Book of Laughter and Forgetting: orgies are "distinctly creepy," 39 Kundera's Narration against plot of, 71-72 Narration" (Pifer), 61-74 poly-generic character of, 108 post-modernist cycle of, 109 The Book of Laughter and Forgetting seven Parts constitute a generic (Kundera) "The Angels," 36-37, 120-121 smorgasbord, 108 book-writing as a disease, 61 sexuality as the focus of, 27 bound to Czechoslovakian history, shifts from real Prague to Atlantis, 16 'shrinking and blurring" as part of chic epithets, sad, obscene, tender, 20 aging, 65-66 circle dancing in, 8, 41 story of Czech vomiting, 47 contrasting pull of disunity in stories structural unity is achieved, 108 of, 97 struggle against power is struggle against forgetting, 40-41, 121 cyclic form of, 107-108 Czech citizenship revoked because of, Swiftian satire and pessimism, 16 20 Tamina Dubliners compared to, 111 imagined on a children's island, 64, elevated Kundera's position in literary 66, 119 world, 34 personal tragedy of, 64

sex reveals contradictions of, 15, 122–123
'shrinking and blurring" as part of aging, 65–66
theme of man's relationship to history, 137, 140
totalitarianism in, 44
"wall of mirrors," 61, 62
weak woman/strong man misogynist stereotype, 108
Zdena, 63
The Border, defined, 31
Broch, Hermann, 1, 41–42
Brooks, Cleanth, 99

Calvino, Italo, 1, 55–60
Cambodia, 58
Capek, Karl, 14
Carnivalesque, sex and the, 51
Carroll, Michael, 93–113
Chamber Music (Joyce), 98
The Chapter in Fiction (Stevick), 109
Closure in the Novel (Torgovnick), 103, 105
Coincidence, analysis of, 76–79, 144

Coincidence, analysis of, 76–79, 144 "Comedy is Everywhere" (Kundera), 139–140

Communism

Kundera questions, 35–36, 43–44, 116 Kundera's hatred for, 42–43 no private life, just cynicism and kitsch, 24

as official history, 130–131 portrait of politically-oppressive society appears through retrospective patterning, 107

Sabina loathes and fears Soviet idealism, 25

Communist Party Organization, 30 Compression, literature of, 7–8, 8–11 Conrad, Joseph, 93 Contrasts. *See* duality Conversations with Eudora Welty (Peggy Whitman, ed), 98

Curry, Sister Martha, 110

Cyclic form

architectonics of Kundera's literary works derived from his musical ideas, 98, 119–120

The Book as a closed post-modernist cycle, 97–98, 108–109

circularity, 104-105

fragmented social situations described by, 109

Ingram's study of cycles, 96–99, 103, 108, 110

Laughable Loves as, 93-96, 97-98, 100-109

of other authors, 98

retrospective patterning, 103-107 shows broad cross-section of

otherwise isolated characters, 109

sociological cognates of, 111 spectrum of, 97–98

stories may be simple and the dynamic of the cycle challenging, 99

"The Synactics of Cycles of Short Stories" (Goreben), 100

Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children* as example of "pattern of development," 110–111

"The Cyclic Form of Laughable Loves" (Carroll), 93–113

"The Cyclical Method of Composition in Gottfried Keller's "Das Sinngedicht" (Kramer), 98

Czechoslovakia, 9, 47, 64, 87, 114, 130, 135

"The Death of the Author" (Barthes), 113, 115, 126

Deconstruction/deconstructionists, 114, 124, 134–135, 135–136

Demonic laughter, defined, 37, 133

Derrida, Jacques, 134, 140 Descartes, 90-91, 141 The Dialogic Imagination (Bakhtin), 67 Diderot, Denis, 1, 37-38, 56 Discourses (Descartes), 141 "Doctor Havel After Twenty Years" (Kundera), 5, 97, 104, 106, 142 Doestoevsky, 40 Don Juanism, 57, 97, 123 Duality. See also kitsch breaking through the "wall of mirrors," 62 demonic and angelic, 51-52 East (orthodoxy or ideology) and West (nihilism), 133, 141 Kundera's criticism of political systems, 43-44 of love and sex, 23 of mind and body, 29 of possibility and politics, 89, 145 transcendental buffoonery as, 44, 103-104, 118 Dubcek, Alexander, 33 Dubliners (Joyce), 95, 96, 98, 107, 110-111 Eagle, Herbert, 108 Eagleton, Terry, 47-54, 107 Eastern Europe art of, offers new testimony about mankind, 117 avant-garde found among dissident

Cagle, Herbert, 108
Cagleton, Tèrry, 47–54, 107
Castern Europe
art of, offers new testimony about mankind, 117
avant-garde found among dissident artists of, 10–11
demonstration of "a man need not be an insect to be treated as such,"
144
fiction of remains mystical and ironic, 49
as land of orthodoxy or ideology, 50, 133
lightness opposes irrevocability, 56–57
paranoia as a possible subtext in, 48

Écriture, defined, 63 Écriture et la différence (Derrida), 140 "Edward and God" (Kundera). See also Laughable Loves (Kundera) Alice, 29 Chehachkova, 103, 104 Edward, 5-6, 29, 30-31, 104, 105 lighthearted outlook on sexuality, 28-29 overt references to politics in, 105 published in 1968, 94 Ein Hungerkunstler (Kafka), 98 Either/Or (Kierkegaard), 38-39 "Erasing History and Deconstructing the Text: Milan Kundera's The Book of Laughter and Forgetting" (Strauss), 114 "Estrangement and Irony" (Eagleton), 47-54, 107 "Eternal recurrence," analysis of, 56 The Example of Richard Wright (McCall), 110-111

Falsification in novels, 69 The Fantastic (Todorov), 112 The Farewell Party (Kundera) aficionados of contemporary fiction recognize, 34 a celebration of life as disorder (freedom), 9-10 centers on fertility and procreation, comedy of deception, 14 Jakub poisons Ruzena, 15 myth of control over destiny is exposed, 136-137 rationality and irrationality in, 17 Ruzena poisoned by Jakub, 15 the spa is a microcosm of the world, Faulkner, William, 62, 96-97, 98 Flaubert, Gustav, 67

Fortuities, analysis of, 76-79, 144

Foulcault, 134–135, 141 France, Anatole, 16 "Freedom is my Love" (Porter), 3–6 Frye, Northrop, 40–41 Fuentes, Carlos, 133, 141, 144, 145

"A Game of Make-Believe" (Kundera), 4-5 Genesis (Bible), 83–84, 85, 90 "Genre and Paradigm in Milan Kundera's *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*" (Stoltz, ed.), 108 Gereben, "the network of cross-reference," 104 Ghiselin, Brewster, 96

Gill, R.B., 107, 111, 133 Go Down, Moses (Faulkner), 98 Goethe, 17, 125–127

"The Golden Apple of Eternal Desire" (Kundera), 94, 97, 101–102, 104, 106

The Golden Apple (Welty), 98 Goldfarb, Jeffery, 108 Goreben, Agnes, 100 The Grain (Barthes), 116 Grand March, 58 graphomania, 61, 74

Hans, James S., 75–93
Hemingway, 96, 126–127
"The Herald" (Kundera), 94
Herder's view of reading, 125
"The Hitchhiking Game" (Kundera).

See also Laughable Loves (Kundera) antithesis is self-deception, 28 characters are anonymous, 101 demonstrates how textual structures are key to form and meaning, 100 motive of game is to escape dismal limitations of their lives, 105–106 plot of, 28, 101–102, 124 published in 1965, 94

Hitler, reconciliation with, 22–23 Holocaust, 72 Hugging the Shore (Updike), 107 The Hunger Artist (Kafka), 96 Husak, Gustav, 64 Husserl, Edmund, 99

"I, A Mournful God" (Kundera), 3, 4, 6
"I, Sad God" (Kundera), 94
Identity. See also individualism
The Book as a critique national
identity, 108
difference and identity converge, 51
maintain identity with "moment of
pause," 140
in a post-modern world, 134, 137
reliance on language for identity, 65,
66–67
(See also language)
Idvil defined, 141–142

Idyll, defined, 141–142

Immortality (Kundera), 126–128

"The Impossible Don Juan" (Banerjee),
97

In Our Times (Hemingway), 96
In the Penal Colony (Kafka), 7
Individualism. See also identity
amnesia as individual and national
destruction, 16
attack on sentimentality is other side

of defense of individualism, 40–41 erotic intimacy as refuge for individuality, 39 (See also sexuality)

fate of individual in modern society, 36

identity arises from differences, 65 importance of the individual, 144 individual's helplessness against authority, 7

kitsch cannot coexist with, 85 the novel as ally of, 44 Ingram, Forrest L., 96–99, 103, 108, 110

Intrusive author. See also Barthes, Roland: narrators/narration clash of codes and cliché underscored by, 122 effect of, 118-119 "I" that is Kundera rips away verisimilitude, 116 in Immortality, 127-128 introduces real facts into fantastic events, 137-138 Kundera as critic of his own book, 114-115 purpose of, 115-116 on Tereza's weak image, 123-124 thoughtless consumption discouraged by, 125-126 Irony in Kundera's writings. See also breaking through the "wall of mirrors" allows, 62 compromise between irony and commitment, 133-134 cynicism and, 9-10 demonic as, 37, 52 dissertation on arts of erotic trickery, domination and subjugation, 108 "Estrangement and Irony" (Eagleton), 47-54, 107 Jakub's meditation on guilt, 15 kitsch cannot coexist with, 85 lengthy Short Dictionary of Misunderstood Words, 120, 123 nudists' pride vanished with their clothing, 73 as part of Kundera's style, 36 poetic viewpoint is incapable of irony, 135-136 portrait of politically-oppressive society appears through retrospective patterning, 107 reality derived from narrators' reminders, 39-40, 61-62, 63,

81 - 82

represents border line between too much and too little meaning, 53 romance treated unromantically, 53 Tomas chooses responsibility of another's life (weight) and lives idyllic life in the country (lightness), 138–139 Iser, Wolfgang, 99–100, 101, 103

Facques and His Master (Kundera), 40 Jacques le fataliste (Diderot), 37-38 Jameson, Frederic, 140 The Joke (Kundera) Beethoven's String Quartet in F Major compared to, 53 Kundera displays mastery of modernist novel, 109 Ludvik (protagonist), 14, 33, 39, 143 memory has an ambiguous significance, 16 multiple narration leads to exposure of overlapping delusions, 13 plot of, 33, 130, 142 political narrative exposing excesses of Czech inquisitors, 8 Ride of the Kings, 130-131, 142-143 sexuality as the focus of, 27 Joyce, James an exile from his provincial homeland, 111 Chamber Music, 98 dissolves material and social phenomena, 62 Dubliners, 95, 96, 98, 107, 110-111 well-versed in aesthetic theory, 110

Kafka, Franz
cockroach scenario, 144
Ein Hungerkunstler, 98
The Hunger Artist, 96
individual's helplessness against
authority, 7

Kundera influenced by, 1	meaninglessness, 29		
In the Penal Colony, 7	autobiographical works		
suspends readers between narrative	The Book of Laughter and Forgiving,		
and sub-text, 48	10, 64, 108, 113–114		
tradition of formal complexity and	Immortality, 126-128		
experimentation, 93	Life is Elsewhere, 9		
The Trial, 26	on Beethoven, 73		
unpublishable in Czechoslovakia, 20	biographical information, 1, 33–34,		
Kennedy, Gerald, 97, 99	98, 111, 113		
Kierkegaard, Sõren, 38–39	on Communism and Democracy,		
Kimball, Roger, 33–45, 118, 122, 125	43–44		
Kitsch	(See also politics)		
	on degradation of animals, 91		
criticisms of kitsch have kitschy			
appeal, 45	on essence of the novel, 111		
dangers of, 42	father of, 64–65		
defined, 23–25, 41, 54, 84	flashiness of, blends with fictive		
as edulcorated "Victorian"	strategy, 23		
representation, 58–59	on fortuities, 77		
as enemy of life, 26	on the Grand March, 58		
idealizing disavowal of the	on his musical compositions, 98		
unacceptable, 53	(See also Beethoven)		
intersects realm of fictive and unreal, 82	historic period portrayed truthfully but not intentionally, 116–117		
irony and individualism cannot	identifies himself through his novels,		
coexist with, 85	113–114		
"Kundera and Kitsch" (Bayley),	on identity of a people, 35–36		
19–26	interrogates his characters and		
Kundera's own, 143	engages his readers, 13, 116		
origin of, 83	on kitsch, 25		
as shit, 53, 83-85, 89	lack of tolerance for creation of		
substitute for religious and chiliastic	surface appearances, 8		
illusions, 25	on laws of beauty, 81		
as totalitarianism, 53, 59, 85-87	literary immortality established, 34		
we want to believe in, 91	literary roots in 18th Century, 16		
Klima, Ivan, 17	on lyrical poetry, 67		
Konrad, Gyorgy, 131	Nietzschean truth teller, 19		
Kramer, P.M., 98	on Nietzsche's "mad myth," 129		
Kundera, Milan. See also kitsch; main	on novels as a game, 118, 125		
entries beginning with Kundera's;	on novel's wisdom, 135		
individual works by their titles	path of, from protest, to comedy, to		
anti-Communist stance, 35	satire, to surrealist compression, 8		
anti-romantic without scorn, 9	political engagement, effect on his		
on art of Eastern Europe, 117	fiction, 17		
associates human condition with	political nature of his works is		

36

nonexistent for him, 42-43 forgetting, 40-41, 64-66, 67-68, 114 games, 100-101, 104-106, 124, 136 a post-modernist, 2 precise thought preferable to precise human denial of aspects of our observation, 16-17 existence, 83 professor of film technology in human existence as farcical, hopelessly uncontrollable, 29-30 Prague, 20, 33 individual's helplessness against prose writing as variations on a few related themes, 14 authority, 7 light and dark, personal and public, as skeptic shows each man has his falsehood, 14 on the synthetic power of the novel, man's relationship to history, 68, 137, 140-142 mind/body duality, 29 on totalitarianism, 71 typically runs good ideas into the narrator is omniscient regarding sex, ground, 24-25 "Kundera and The Book: The Unsaid Paradise, 41, 71 relationships built from fortuities, and the Unsayable" (Molesworth), "Kundera and Kitsch" (Bayley), 19-26 repetition in erotic love, 51 Kundera (father), 64-65 say "yes" to life even during its "Kundera's Laws of Beauty" (Hans), hardest problems, 84 75-93 sex reveals essence of characters, 29, Kundera's themes. See also intrusive 122-123 author; irony in Kundera's text is beyond social responsibility, writings; kitsch; politics; sexuality 122 aesthetics of ambiguity, 119 thematic exploration through arbitrary nature of language, 119-121 nondidactic discourse, 93 The Border, 31 weak woman/strong man misogynist characters' innermost concerns and stereotype, 108, 122-124 desires, 27-28 weight and lightness, 20, 56-57, 71, coincidences as probable 125, 138-139 probabilities, 81 Kundera's writing. See also Kundera, contrast or difference, 66-67 Milan; Kundera's themes derail life from its dreary anti-Stalinism does not fall back on romantic idealism, 51 predictability, 106 emotional distance, 28-29, 38, 54, architectonics of Kundera's literary 122-123 works derived from his musical erotic, 124-125 ideas, 98, 119-120, 145 escape dismal limitations of life, authorial author figure facilitates play, 105-106 115 examining committee and dismissal, carnival undermines ideological kitsch, 54 101, 105 fate of individual in modern society, characters' stories are his first

interest, 55-56, 134-135

Index 167

5, 97, 104, 106, 142

"Let the Old Dead Make Way for the

demonic is closely associated with of language, 119-121 post-modern theorists about, 140 death drive, 52 dislocated texts free of "semantic hoax" of, 145 metanarrational closure, 48-49 world of referents beyond, 62, 74, ethos of contemporary dissident fiction epitomized, 34 Laughable Loves (Kundera). See also explorations of intimacy in distress, Laughable Loves, stories in 1970 edition, 6, 94 expresses concept of identity in a Alzhbeta, 102-103 post-modern world, 134, 137 contrasting pull of disunity in stories historical placement as backdrop to of, 97 problems of existence, 117 "The Cyclic Form of Laughable image of orgies equated to image of Loves" (Carroll), 93-113 concentration camps, 51-52 cyclic nature of, 93-96, 97-98, novel is to raise questions, not answer 100-109 them, 62, 69-70, 74, 116, 118 erotic adventures are "distinctly novels as a place for metaphysical creepy," 39 speculations, 49, 53, 70, 103-104 final order of, 94-95 format of, compared to The Book, 108 opens a window to world of referents beyond language, 62, 74, 116 games as theme of, 100-101, prevents undeserving privileged from 104-106, 124, 136 distancing the oppressed, 56 interpretation of last scene in, 30-31 readers must adopt role of irony without cynicism, 9-10 interlocutor, 70 recognized by aficionados of reflexive, 71 contemporary fiction, 34 repetition as humor, especially erotic sexuality as the focus of, 27 love, 51 shows broad cross-section of short chapters and shifting, episodic characters who are isolated from narrative, 36 one another, 109 shuns literature of incoherence and of thematic gestalten become absolute ideas, 139-140 retrospectively patterned, 103-107 witness and critic of his own book, weak woman/strong man theme, 108, controlling what reader perceives, 122-124 women become inclined to transcend 114-115 Kussi, Peter, 13-17 mortality, 103-104 Laughable Loves, stories in. See also "Edward and God"; "The Hitchhiking Game"; "Nobody Language falls apart in dislocating sexual bliss, Will Laugh"; "Symposium" "The Golden Apple of Eternal 122 - 123identity derived from reliance on, 62, Desire," 94, 97, 101-102, 104, 106 65, 66-67 "Doctor Havel After Twenty Years,"

limitations of, 62

linguistic play shows arbitrary nature

Young Dead," 5, 94, 104

stories 1-3: thesis is deception, 3-4, 6, Fiction" (Kussi), 13-17 95-96 "Milan Kundera: Meaning, Play, and the Role of the Author" (O'Brien), stories 4-6: antithesis is selfdeception, 4-5, 96 113 - 128stories 7-10: synthesis, 4-5, 96 "Milan Kundera: The Search for Self in Laughter, two kinds of, 37 a Post-Modern World" (Adams), Leitch, Thomas, 69 133-145 "Milan Kundera's Use of Sexuality" "Let the Old Dead Make Way for the Young Dead" (Kundera), 5, 94, 104 (Sturdivant), 27-31 Life Is Elsewhere (Kundera) Molesworth, Charles, 108 a critique of poetry that is poetry, 68 Monology (Kundera), 98 historic period is portrayed truthfully, Musil, Robert, 1, 38 not intentionally (from preface), "My Nurse Above All Others" (Kundera), 94 116-117 Maman cannot be sure of what is "Myth of the Cave" (Plato), 141 wrong, 15 mordant portrait of the artist, 9 observation tower as metaphor for Nabokov, Vladimir, 93 shifts in perspective, 14 Narrators/narration. See also intrusive poetic viewpoint is incapable of irony, author 135-136 digressive narrative technique, 36-37, reader is confronted with burden of 39-40, 49, 61-63, 67, 74, 81-82 history, 67 lightness of delivery, 71 Lightness of living, 56-57. See also The multiple narration leads to Unbearable Lightness of Being overlapping delusions, 13, 69-70 obsessive concern for architectonics (Kundera) Literature of compression, 7-8, 8-11 of narrative form, 95 Lodge, David, 107-108, 109, 119, 137 omniscience regarding sex, 27 Lyotard, Fancois, 140-142, 144-145 political narrative exposing excesses of Czech inquisitors, 8 reflections during "Ride of the "Man Thinks, God Laughs" (Kundera), Kings," 142–143 starts puzzled and gains knowledge 133 The Man Without Qualities (Musil), 38 slowly, 15 Mann, Susan Garland, 96, 109 Naturalness, analysis of, 49-50 Mann, Thomas, 16 Nietzsche Marx, Karl, 51 "eternal recurrence," 56 Mauvaise foi, 15 originator of awareness of human McCall, Dan, 111-112 degradation of animals, 91-92, 119 Metaphors, 14, 16, 125 Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 129 "We possess art lest we perish of the "Milan Kundera, and the Idea of the truth," 83-84 Author in Modern Criticism" (Lodge), 107-108, 109, 119, 137 what does it mean to be wholly

"Milan Kundera: Dialogues with

human, 75 "Nobody Will Laugh" (Kundera). See also Laughable Loves (Kundera) Klima, 100-102, 104, 105, 106 published in 1963, 94 theme of Laughable Loves established in, 100 Zaturetsky, 100-101

O'Brien, John, 113-128 "On Kundera" (Calvino), 1, 55-60 Opelik, Juri, 95 Oppenheimer, Lois, 94

Paradoxical Resolutions (Werner), 110 Paranoia, defined, 47–48 Parmenides, 21–22 The Pastures of Heaven (Steinbeck), 96 Pelikan Stares, Nina, 114, 117, 121, 124 Pifer, Ellen, 61-74 Plato, 141 The Pleasure of the Text (Barthes), 115, 123 Pochoda, Elizabeth, 13 Podhoretz, Norman, 126 **Politics** anti-Stalinism, 51-53 commitment to political freedoms, 70 Communism and Democracy both subvert freedom and privacy, 35-36, 43-44, 116

Communism as "official history," 130-131

"Edward and God" has overt

references to, 105 examining committee and dismissal as theme, 101, 105

Hitler, reconciliation with, 22-23 The Joke exposes excesses of Czech inquisitors, 8

kitsch and politics, 26, 42, 85 lightness and politics, 20, 56

nascent political concerns, 108 political dimension of circle dancing, political engagement, effect on Kundera's fiction, 17 political nature of works is nonexistent for Kundera, 42-43 portrait of politically-oppressive society appears through retrospective patterning, 107 relationship between possibilities and politics, 89, 145 as theme, 34-35 Porter, Robert C., 3-6, 95 The Post-Modern Condition (Lyotard), 140-142, 144-145

Raskolniikov, 15 Reading process, 100–104 "The Real Avante-Garde" (Bell), 7-11 A la recherché du temps perdu (Proust), 69 Religion, 85 "Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century" (Ingram), 96-99, 103, 108, 110 Retrospective patterning, 103-107 Review of Contemporary Fiction, 2, 94 Ride of the Kings, 130-131, 142-143 Roth, Philip, interview of Kundera, 2, 27, 38, 43

Protension and retention, 99-100

Protest, writers of, 7–8, 16

Proust, 62, 69

Sabbath's Theater (Roth), 2 Sartre, Jean-Paul, 15 Satire, 7-8, 16, 39. See also irony in Kundera's writings Schlegel, Friedrich, 44 Schnitzler, 8 Self-deception

Rushdie, Salman, 20

Short Dictionary of Misunderstood Words

(Kundera), 120, 123

antithesis in Laughable Loves, 4-5, 96 Steinbeck, John, 96 bad faith as, 15 Stendhal, 23 result of losing touch with memory, Sterne, Laurence, 1, 37-38, 56, 125 16, 40 Stevick, Philip, 109 unmasked with character is call to The Stone Guest (Pushkin), 24 take action, 14 Story cycles. See cyclic form Semiotic systems. See language Strauss, Nina Pelikan, 114, 117, 121, Sexuality as aesthetic fulfillment, 2 Sturdivant, Mark, 27–31 Alzhbeta expresses emotions as Swift, Jonathan, 16 sexually related action, 102-103 "Symposium" (Kundera). See also a basis of disorder shared by all Laughable Loves (Kundera) comic and other devices are not mankind, 8-9 Don Juanism, 57, 97, 123 overused, 124 erotic intimacy as refuge for comic and other devices in, 6 individuality, 39 Nurse Alzhbeta, 28, 102-103 erotic textual and erotic themes, plot of, 5 124-125 published in 1968, 94 "The Synactics of Cycles of Short Klima, Martin and male in "Old Dead" play socio-sexual games at Stories" (Goreben), 100 the expense of women, 104 Kundera's handling of gender roles could up-end sexist foundations, Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Nietzsche), 129 122 "Time and Distance" (Wilhelmus), language falls apart in dislocating 129-131 sexual bliss, 122-123 Todorov, Tzvetan, 112 laws of beauty applied in sexual and Torgovnick, Elaine, 103, 105 Totalitarianism. See also kitsch bodily contexts, 78 lightness is associated with cinema, German participation in Aryan sex, and politics, 20 paradise, 72 love shapes the novel, sex provides hell and dream of paradise at the the commentary, 23 same time, 71 "Milan Kundera's Use of Sexuality" kitsch as, 53, 59, 85-87 Kundera's loss identified with (Sturdivant), 27–31 the point where difference and Czechoslovakia's, 64 identity converge, 51 literature that only provides answers as search for internal utopia, 144-145 as, 116 Tamina suppresses awareness of, 15 motivation for, 137 Shame, 87-89, 90, 91. See also beauty novel as no place in, 118 "Sherwood Anderson and James Joyce" paranoia as natural result of, 47 shame as a masterful weapon of, 88 (Curry), 110 Shit, 53, 83-85, 89 solipsism as flipside of Stalinism, 50

story of, in The Book, 44

"Towards a Poetics of the Short Story

Cycle" (Kennedy), 97, 99
Transcendental buffoonery, 44, 103–104, 118
The Trial (Kafka), 26
Tristram Shandy (Sterne), 37–38, 56, 125
Truths, 19

The Unbearable Lightness of Being (Kundera) aesthetics established by, 84 Central European in a time before cinema, 20 circle dancing in, 41 as compelling story, 19 digressions form almost a parallel novel, 57 fortuities in, 76-79 fusion of Kundera's experiments with narrative architectonics, 109 heaviness portrayed in, 20-21, 23, 56, 89-90 idyll, defined in, 141-142 Kierkegaard's Either/Or, compared to, 38-39 Kundera's literary immortality established by, 34 lightness portrayed in, 20, 23, 24, 56 lives are composed according to laws of beauty, 89 love shapes the novel, sex provides the commentary, 23 nucleus of, every situation we face is unique, 56 a Period Piece?, 1 plot of, 2, 21 reconciliation with Hitler, 22-23 relationship between possibilities and politics, 89, 145 relationship between shame and beauty, 75 study of individual life and beauty of,

144

history, 137, 140-142 weak woman/strong man misogynist stereotype, 108 The Unbearable Lightness of Being, characters in Franz, 24, 58, 124 Franz' mother wearing unmatched shoes, 55 Sabina author's mouthpiece, 58-59 frees herself of fear of kitsch, 59 inversion of weak woman/strong man stereotype, 124 love as kitsch, 23-24, 25 painter in Socialist Realist manner, shows lightness to be a "semantic river," 57-58 Sabina and Franz, 119-120 Tereza Beethoven inflames her sense of beauty, 76-77 compared to Nietzsche, 92 does not have "weight" necessary to justify Tomas following her to Prague, 57 emotional distance of, 123 experiences deep involuntary movements of the soul, 25 lightness is not learned by, 21 motifs in her life, 78 paranoia after sex with engineer is cultural, 48 selfless, loving nature of, 2 true antithesis to kitsch is weight of her love and death, 25 values Beethoven as "something higher," 78-79 Tereza's mother, 85-87 Tomas erotic friendships, 2, 56 forced to confront shame, 88-89

motif of "es muss sein," 79

theme of man's relationship to

obsessive womanizer lacking redemption, 23 the rule of threes as applied to, 39 suspects that truth lies in necessity, 57 unreal character made plausible, 82 vacillating between lightness and weight, 125, 138-139 Tomas and Tereza, 59, 78-80 Uncle Tom's Children (Wright), 110 "The Unity of Dubliners" (Ghiselin), 96 Unspeakable Sentences (Banfield), 63, 69 The Unvanguished (Faulkner), 96-97 Updike, John, 107

Velvet Revolution of November 1989, 1 Visions of a Spring Day (Faulkner), 98 Welty, Eudora, 98
Werner, Craig Hansen, 110
"What Stories Are" (Leitch), 69
White, Edmund, 123
Whitman, Peggy, 98
Wilhelmus, Tom, 129–131
Wilson, Edmund, 69
Winesburg, Ohio (Anderson), 110, 111
Woolf, Virginia, 62
Wright, Richard, 110, 111
Writing (Auden), 44

The Yawning Heights (Zinoviev), 7

Zinoviev, Alexander, 7