

## IDENTITES MULTICULTURELLES ET POSSIBILITES DE COMMUNICATION REFLETEES DANS UN TEXTE LITTERAIRE

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### **Abstract**

What makes the difference between cultures? Are these differences visible in the language? How can one make himself understood? There is what Ioan Petru Culianu calls “the games of mind”, patterns existing in every language and probably in all civilizations and which, with certain variations, contribute to the safeguarding of a certain unity in diversity.

Milan Kundera’s novel *L’Ignorance* has the word *nostalgia* as a starting point. He explains its significance in some European languages: homesickness, pain provoked by someone’s absence, desire of what is absent, of what it has been – the past, lost childhood, the first love – or of what it has never been – a new adventure – the suffering provoked by ignorance.

The author tends to interpret this word through the “adventures” of several characters belonging to different cultures: since Ulysses, the character of the “epic that founded nostalgia”, to Irena and Josef, two Czech emigrants in 1969, to Gustaf, a Swedish cosmopolite, and, on a secondary level, to Milada, a Czech citizen, as well as Irena’s mother. Two themes emerge from this first approach: the one of the voyage and the one of alterity, straightly connected to each another.

Through the approach of the classical conception of the voyage in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the great moments of an initiatory voyage, the departure, the proof and the return are closely followed. By evoking Ulysses himself, *L’ignorance* insists on the *return* which, through flash-backs, will bring the two other stages to the fore.

*Alterity* is seen through the difference between sexes, difference which prolongs in us through the distinction between the masculine and feminine principles, family and social habitual relations, culture and habits. As the return implies the modification of the relationships with the originating community, the phenomenon of alterity acquires other meanings.

**Keywords:** Nostalgia; Ignorance; Homesickness; Suffering provoked by ignorance; Voyage; Alterity.

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