

The Encounter between Self and Other in Gregor Yeghikian's Play "Battle of East and West": A Cultural Semiotic Approach

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Abstract

The confrontation and communication between cultural Self and Other is one of the most critical areas of study that has been broadly investigated in Cultural Semiotics during the past decades. As cultural semiotics illustrates, cultures are the repertoire of the texts which are closely interwoven. In other words, cultures are inter-textual and texts are unique sources to comprehend diverse aspects of a culture. As a result, the present essay studies one of the distinguished Iranian plays as a text within a culture to approach the ways that Iranian culture represents itself and cultural Other. To this end, we analyze the play 'Battle of East and West' (jang-e mashregh va Maghreb) by Gregor Yeghikian (1880-1951) written in 1923 that attempts to display East and West as binary oppositions through the wars of Persian and Greek empires. The present essay aims at examining the confrontation between East and West as the encounter of cultural Self and Other in the play, by applying the contributions of Juri Lotman in this respect. The essential question of this study is that how Western culture as the cultural Other is understood, defined and represented in the play 'Battle of East and West' as a text within the cultural sphere of Iran. In other word, we try to find out if Western culture as the Other is represented as non-culture, counter-culture or extra-culture within the text. Furthermore, this essay sheds light on the self-descriptive dimensions of this play that tries to (re)define the identity of the Self.

Keywords: Cultural Semiotics, Cultural Other, Intercultural Communication, Juri Lotman, "Battle of East and West", Gregor Yeghikian

