



Research Article

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The figure of the “Other” in function of the reading approach: From authorship to interpretation

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Abstract

This study examines the transformation of self-image and hetero-image in literature and its intermedia adaptations, analyzing the impact that historical context, ideological objectives, and approach to reading have on the imagining of the “Other.” Drawing on the theoretical contributions of Jean-Marie Carré, Hugo Dyserinck, and Joep Leerssen, as well as methods of comparative and intermedia analysis, the study investigates how these imaginings change over time and space, particularly in the context of Ismail Kadare’s works and their adaptations for stage and screen.

The hypothesis of this paper is that the conception of the “Other” in three dimensions – as a construct of the author, the characters, and the reader/adaptor – is a non-linear process, shaped by historical realities, ideological discourse, and interpretive approach (be it author-centered, text-centered, or reader-centered).

The research question guiding this analysis is: How do conceptions of the “Other” differ at the levels of the author, characters, and reader/adaptor, depending on historical and cultural contexts, and how is this dynamic reflected in the construction of identity and alterity in literary discourse and its adapted variants?

In conclusion, the study concludes that the image of the “Other” is not an immutable construct, but a transformable category that changes depending on historical contexts, ideological objectives and the reading approach that is given to the original text during the process of interpretation or adaptation. The analysis of stage and film adaptations of literary works supports this hypothesis, showing that the figure of the “Other” is reconfigured not simply because of the medium, but in accordance with the goals and vision of the adaptor. Imagology, in this sense, serves as a valuable theoretical framework to investigate the permanent changes in the perception of the “Other” in different cultural and discursive contexts.

Keywords: Imagology, Self-image, Hetero-image, Other, Stereotype.

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