Balkan identity between the Orient and Europe in Milorad Pavić’s “Dictionary
of the Khazars”

Frontier Orientalism. Balkanism. Milorad Pavić. Orientalism. Balkan identity.

This article analyzes the cultural, historical and religious contexts of Milorad Pavić’s postmodern novel Dictionary of the Khazars. Its aim is to analyze the role of Oriental, Balkan and European literary and folkloric motifs as the means of Pavić’s original narrative strategy. Another goal is to discuss whether Pavić’s employment of these motifs could be framed in terms of Gingrich’s concept of frontier Orientalism, or should be conceptualized by other categories. Pavić’s approaches toward the Balkan’s common identity seems to be more likely based on the idea of a crossroad than the idea of “no man’s land” of liminal frontier area. The author discusses the accuracy of applying already existing theoretical concepts to Pavić’s works and tries to propose conceptual instruments that would enable to see the work of this postmodern writer in a more accurate manner.

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