

WESTERN SEMIOTIC THEORIES IN CHINA

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Since the 1980s, western semiotic theories have been introduced to China as the giant eastern country opened to the outside world. Now the Chinese academia are quite familiar with Saussure, Pierce, Bakhtin, Eco, whose theories have crossed the boundaries of linguistics and have helped the liberation of Chinese scholars' minds. On the other hand the academic achievements attained by Chinese semioticians not only demonstrate their own features, but also enrich the theoretical realm. This paper aims to explore the uniqueness of the process of Chinese reception of western semiotic theories – the combination of and interaction between the whole and the individual, and tries to analyze the source and the significance of it. The whole article falls into three parts. In the spatial perspective, the first one deals with how a variety of western semiotic theories, as different discourses, co-exist in the semiotic context. The second section emphasizes a study by chronological order of the Chinese perception of western semiotic theories in different periods of time. The study shows how the theories were interpreted in China and how they influenced the Chinese academia. The last part points out the transformation of western semiotic theories in Chinese cultural context with the interactive relations between the distinctive Chinese and western cultures. In conclusion, the paper calls for a harmonious, dialog-oriented atmosphere for semiotic studies in which pluralism plays an important role and different theories can benefit from each other.