

**Title:** The Russian Perspective on the Notion of the Self: Mikhail Bakhtin's "Inner speech" and Yuri Lotman's "Autocommunication"

**Author:** Kim Soo Hwan, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

The purpose of this presentation lies in comparing the main concepts of the psyche and the self through the writings of M. M. Bakhtin and Yuri M. Lotman. The main goal here is to confirm the common ground between the two thinkers while emphasizing their originality. The presentation thus aims also at serving as an opportunity to think about the uniqueness of the Russian perspective or position on the notion of the self, distinguished from the Western approach.

The concept of "inner speech" by Bakhtin, which represents the semiotic connection between consciousness and unconsciousness, was suggested as a conceptual alternative to the Freudian unconscious. Meanwhile, a theoretical concept relevant to Bakhtin's inner speech in Lotman's thoughts—indeed, one of the most original and creative concepts of the latter—is that of "autocommunication." Autocommunication refers to the case in which the subject does not transmit information to another person but directs it back to himself or herself. If Bakhtin tried to show why monologue-like inner speech was not a monologue but a complicated dialogue, Lotman proved why surplus repetition was creation instead of repetition.

In thinking of the self/ego, Russian theorists take a standpoint different from that of their Western counterparts. Their strategy is to concentrate on justifying the multiple, creative, and dynamic self-creating semiosis instead of revealing the emptiness of and cracks (fissures) in the subjectivity. Can we call it a characteristic strategy of "peripheral" thinking, which is distinguished from the "central" one, or is it merely another piece of evidence that shows the theoretical frailty of Russian thoughts on the issue of the subject? This is an open question.