

***NEW POLITICS OF CONFLICT:  
WEST/EAST CULTURE CLASHES AND PARADOXICAL AFFINITIES  
IN POSTMODERN ERA***

**Key words:** *Western individualism; Eastern mass consciousness; culture clash; terrorist spectacles; hyperreal war; guerilla war; “men in small rooms”*

**Abstract:** The paper examines the new politics of conflict in a postmodern context, with a focus on the notion of West/East wars as spaces of hyperreality, as media-bound wars. Spectacles of war, guerrilla war, the mix of reality and fiction that accompanies the wars in postmodern era, West/East culture clashes and postmodernist erasure of distinctions, the plots concocted by the “men in small rooms”, the war strategies that the East has “learned” from the West, all this are illustrated in Don DeLillo’s novels *Mao II* (1991) and *Falling Man* (2007). Drawing on *Mao II* in particular, the paper also looks at new types of conflicts and unexpected affinities, in the media age, between a Western, traditionally individualistic culture like the U.S., and an Eastern culture of the masses. In this context, it examines various degrees of Western xenophobia and anxiety over an “Asian” mass identity, and the connection between masses, death, terror, war, and the corresponding tragic news images. Other related aspects involve conflicts and affinities between the terrorist and capitalist discourses, the symbiotic relationship between the Eastern terrorists and the Western media. In *Falling Man* (2007), leaving the news stories aside this time, DeLillo chronicles the September 11 attack from the perspective of the people who witnessed it and through the story of the terrorist hijacker. DeLillo’s post 9/11 novel attempts to find an ethical solution to the established us/them opposition, emphasizing the ‘union’ of the terrorist and the terrorized in a community of suffering.

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