

Abstract

Our work is devoted to the Romanian philosopher and author of fantastic prose, Mircea Eliade. The unique feature of his fiction lies in the narrative building upon the initiating structure, and reflecting the mythological consciousness, which is perceived by the author as a means of escaping historical relativism. In order to analyse his work we applied the hermeneutic approach, which is in our view best suited for interpretation of Eliade's prose. The hermeneutic approach shows that the author-narrator assumes the function of a religious initiator, who is in possession of *a vision* of the world and conveys it to his readers. The initiated author can see a *different* world, a possible world that surpasses the material one, and he is able to bring this vision, inexpressible by words, to the reader. Thus, the process of reading and analysing such a text then turns into gradual initiation into the secrets of existence through its esoteric dimension. Eliade's aim in his fantastic prose is to show that even in the desecrated world the sacred is hidden *anywhere* and a man is still able to reveal it *anytime*.

Key words: Eliade, initiation, narrator, symbol, sense, hermeneutics, imagination, inner and outer face of literature, sacred, profane, reality, death initiation, dramatic performance, salvation, initiation scheme, “center”, myth