Romanian Influences in Mircea Eliade's Construct of his Hermeneutics

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Summary/Abstract: The author seeks to discover the Romanian influences in Eliade's hermeneutics. He delves into two sources of hermeneutical approach, Indian and Romanian. Eliade had admitted that Indian spirituality had helped him understand the structures of Romanian culture.
During the last few years, Mircea Eliade's political past and the alleged influence of this past upon his scientific work has been considered the starting point for several controversies, which were analyzed by reputable scholars and also rejected. Although the suspicions and accusations brought to Eliade have been numerous, his life and work should not be interpreted (only) on the basis of his political options during a very limited period of his life, simple sympathies from his youth and without taking into account the historical context which generated these sympathies. With this volume The Romanian-born author and scholar of religious studies Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) is credited with a substantial contribution to the advancement of the study of history of religions. As Eric J. Sharpe puts it, Eliade 'ranges far and wide over the world of religion.' It is our attempt in this paper, to analyse Eliade's methods in the study of history of religions by looking into the relevant textual material found in Eliade's works as well as uncovering some of their critique. We briefly argue that Eliade's hermeneutics has been decisively influenced by the spiritual milieux of his native Romania, and that his history of religions evolved as scholarly construct of the empirical experience of the sacred he encountered first in his country of birth. Mircea Eliade (1907-1986), Romanian historian of religions and author, and professor in the University of Chicago Divinity School and Committee on Social Thought, 1957-1986. The papers include correspondence, manuscripts, photographs, publications, audio and video recordings, and personal materials and artifacts. Mac Linscott Ricketts studied with Eliade and translated many of his books into English. Regarding Eliade's academic legacy Ricketts has stated: "Eliade's impact on religious studies has been vast but is difficult to measure."