AUREL CODOBAN

ELIADE AND ADRIAN MARINO'S HERMENEUTICS

Aurel Codoban
Academia Română, Filiala Cluj, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.
Email: aurelteodor@yahoo.com

Abstract: This study examines the distance between the hermeneutics practiced by Mircea Eliade and the systematic reconstruction proposed by Adrian Marino. While acknowledging the contribution of Marino's monograph, the analysis identifies three decisive differences: the existential priority of understanding over interpretation, an openness to signifying rationality, and the hermeneutic implications of kratophany. It argues that Marino recognizes these dimensions but subordinates them to a predominantly psychological-historical and textual model. By contrast, Eliade's perspective allows for an affinity with Heidegger's conception of understanding, without implying doctrinal identity, and extends the inquiry into meaning to gesture, ritual, and bodily practices. The relationship between the two authors thus emerges as a productive mismatch between paradigms, the examination of which brings to light the originality and still insufficiently explored possibilities of Eliade's hermeneutics.

Keywords: Mircea Eliade; Adrian Marino; hermeneutics; understanding; interpretation; signifying rationality; hierophany; kratophany; religious experience; bodily practices.

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1. A Hermeneutics to Be Reconstructed

In *Hermeneutica lui Mircea Eliade* (Mircea Eliade's Hermeneutics), Adrian Marino offers one of the earliest and most extensive systematic reconstructions of Eliade's work in Romania. Published by Dacia in 1980, this substantial volume of 470 pages was eagerly awaited and caused something of a stir upon its appearance. Marino intended his monograph to serve both as a means of asserting his own hermeneutic model and as an intellectual manifesto. The search in Eliade for the beginnings of a possible Romanian hermeneutic tradition would enable Marino to challenge the lack of theoretical grounding and the impressionism of local literary criticism and, more broadly, to help Romanian culture move beyond its provincialism.

Marino's undertaking was difficult because Eliade had not set out to develop a systematic theory of hermeneutics: "It should also be emphasized that Mircea Eliade's concern with methodology, although evident, is not especially pronounced. He even displays a certain methodological caution and reserve. He is by no means 'obsessed' with methodology, probably sensing the spontaneity, flexibility, and intrinsic fluidity of the hermeneutic process itself." For Eliade, as also, to some extent, for Gadamer and Ricoeur, the result matters more than the method (Marino 1980, 27). Eliade's hermeneutics is therefore difficult to expound: it must be discovered and reconstructed. Marino nevertheless assumed that Eliade's writings on the history, phenomenology, and anthropology of religion contained a latent hermeneutics comparable to those of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, or of Ricoeur and Gadamer, whose principles were constituted in the very practice of interpretation.

Eliade's hermeneutics is an exegesis of universal myths and symbols. At its center is the idea that human beings live in a world of signs and that myths, symbols, and hierophanies concentrate primordial meanings. Since the world itself can be read as language, hermeneutics becomes the operation through which hidden meanings are brought back to light and, through them, a relationship with an ultimate, sacred reality is recovered. Marino regards Eliade as the author of a hermeneutics in which religious phenomena are treated as privileged forms of producing and preserving meaning: "Mircea Eliade genuinely reconstructs, we might say—as we shall see—the entire fundamental problematic of hermeneutics. He rediscovers on his own all the classical positions and solutions of hermeneutics, raises and resolves all its basic problems, simply by confronting an essential

hermeneutic situation: the need to explain and interpret 'texts'" (Marino 1980, 26).

This was a remarkable achievement, recognized from the outset, and the book was considered important and influential. In the 1980s, when the term "hermeneutics," like Mircea Eliade's name, had limited currency in Romanian cultural life, some commentators recognized the book's importance both in its aims and in its conceptual apparatus: "*Hermeneutica lui Mircea Eliade* has the cardinal merit of fully restoring to our culture one of its great thinkers" (Marcea 1981, 3). Marino's monograph seeks to offer a "comprehensive, organic, and critical" picture of Eliade's thought, supplemented by his early Romanian writings, dating from the period when he still lived in the country and absent from accounts published abroad. For foreign reviewers, Marino had succeeded in offering a sound "sympathetic systematization" of Eliade's scholarly work.

2. Between Exegesis and a Personal Theoretical Project

As an intellectual with a classical education, Marino confronted, as noted above, a hermeneutics enacted in practice rather than a programmatically articulated methodology. His systematization was bound to provoke considerable comment and criticism. The volume's very table of contents—I. Hermeneutics and Romanian Criticism; II. Hermeneutics: Object and Method; III. The Hermeneutic Circle; IV. Hermeneutics and History; V. Hermeneutic Creation; VI. Militant Hermeneutics; VII. Hermeneutics, Art, and Literature; VIII. Hermeneutics, Criticism, and Literary History—shows that he is attempting to impose ideas, concepts, or perspectives that Eliade himself did not pursue. The later chapters seem excessive: "Militant Hermeneutics," "Hermeneutics and History," "Hermeneutics, Art, and Literature," and "Hermeneutics, Criticism, and Literary History." The first two carry ideological echoes of the socialist "golden age"; the latter two press Marino's intention to deploy hermeneutics against journalistic or impressionistic literary criticism.

Consequently, "Marino's characteristic redundancy," a feature noted by reviewers both in Romania and abroad, makes the book difficult to read. Culianu, who had experienced both Romanian and Western culture, observed: "A. Marino almost always refers to hermeneutic principles, even when he invents them himself" (Culianu 2009, 213). Thus, in the first chapter and half of the second, the critic of ideas dwells on excessively elaborated concepts—sense, signification, the originary moment, intuition–

reflection, induction–deduction, and so on—which fragment and complicate Eliade's approach rather than articulate it as a unified vision.

In his memoirs, Adrian Marino recalls that, after the book appeared, some accused him of having "Marino-ized M. E.'s hermeneutics." A quip attributed to Marin Sorescu also circulated in literary circles: Marino behaved as though Eliade had written a book entitled "Adrian Marino's Hermeneutics." In general, Marino ignored commentators' reservations and criticisms or treated them with considerable condescension, acknowledging in his autobiography that his relations with Sorescu were strained and that the poet had attacked him on various occasions.

Harder to accept, as we learn from *Politică și cultură*, was the lack of interest in the book on the part of Mircea Eliade and, more generally, the Romanian exile community: "I expected the first book about Mircea Eliade in Romanian and French, published in Paris, after decades of protests—entirely justified, of course—against the 'banning' of his name in Romania, to be received with sympathy or at least a measure of goodwill. Instead, a dismal 'silence,' full of rancor, airs, and self-importance, greeted this utterly unprecedented undertaking. I quickly realized that I was being accused of … 'reclaiming' (sic!) M. E. on behalf of the regime, and so on" (Marino 1996, 47). Thus, after its publication, "Marino himself would cast the book in a negative light, disappointed by his relationship with the author of *Nostalgia originilor*, but also by suspicions that he had collaborated with the regime in reclaiming Eliade" (Dinu 2015).

The book stands at the intersection of exegesis and a personal theoretical project: in interpreting Eliade, Marino simultaneously defines his own conception of hermeneutics. This makes possible a somewhat paradoxical reading of the title. *Mircea Eliade's Hermeneutics* may refer equally to the hermeneutics Eliade actually practices and to the hermeneutics Marino discovers—or constructs—in Eliade's work according to his own intellectual bearings and interests. To a considerable extent, "Mircea Eliade's hermeneutics" is "Adrian Marino's hermeneutics." From this perspective, the remark attributed to Sorescu—that Marino behaved as though Eliade had written *Adrian Marino's Hermeneutics*—acquires a theoretical basis far more substantial than mere irony.

Even if Marino fails to formulate Eliade's hermeneutics accurately, he opens up the problem and makes possible a reading that can move beyond his own by recovering the points at which these differences become apparent. The question "Why was Adrian Marino not properly understood?" thus becomes "Where did Marino fail to understand Eliade?"

Why did Eliade and other contemporaries alike sense a lack of fit, a failure to engage with his thought—and, above all, where does that failure become evident? The question is all the more important because it suggests that interpretations held Eliade back instead of bringing him to the forefront of possible debates.

For my part, I believe I have identified three significant and illuminating differences: first, the mismatch between the historical frameworks of the two authors' hermeneutic positions; second, the way a logical-causal rationality oriented toward knowledge obscures the signifying rationality present in Eliade; and, finally, the importance of kratophany for understanding the dimensions of Eliade's hermeneutics. In many passages, aspects, and details, Marino captures these central features of Eliade's hermeneutics very well, not least because he draws on early Romanian texts that are difficult to access. (I have sought to retain in the references the quotations used by Marino precisely to make clear that he had access to these ideas: he did not overlook the elements that make the difference, yet he still missed the novelty of Eliade's perspective.)

3. Understanding Precedes Interpretation

The discrepancy between Eliade's understanding of religious phenomena and the hermeneutics Marino reconstructs from the author's explicit statements rather than from his interpretive practice begins with the relationship between understanding and interpretation. For Marino, understanding is principally the result and goal of interpretation: we decipher signs, establish their meanings, and thereby come to understand them. Eliade's orientation is different: interpretation presupposes a prior understanding, rooted in the interpreter's existence and openness to the world and to the object of inquiry. The difference concerns not merely the order of intellectual operations but the very status of the hermeneutic endeavor.

To clarify the issue, we must return to the history of hermeneutics. Explication, interpretation, and understanding have not always stood in the same relationship to one another. In its initial philological-rhetorical phase, the hermeneutic endeavor primarily addresses difficulties in transmitting meaning. Distance from a tradition, changes in language, and shifts in cultural context first make it necessary to explain or explicate texts that are no longer immediately intelligible. The interpreter's task is to restore access to a meaning that has become obscure or to reveal the coherence of meanings that do not present themselves directly to the reader. In the

traditional formulation, the interpreter arrives at understanding through the explication and interpretation of signs.

With Schleiermacher and Dilthey, the center of gravity shifts toward the subject and the subject's historical world. Beyond the linguistic structure of the text, the interpreter seeks to grasp the author's individuality, experience, and the context in which the expression originated (Schleiermacher 1998, 8–9). Understanding entails reestablishing the connection between an expression and the life from which it emerges (Dilthey 1996, 236–237). Despite the differences between the two thinkers, we may speak of a psychological-historical orientation in hermeneutics. Psychological experience and the historical horizon acquire a decisive role here, but the problem remains that of understanding a life or a historical world through the interpretation of the individual and historical expressions of life.

Heidegger changes the foundations of this problematic. Understanding is no longer merely a cognitive operation through which a subject grasps the meaning of a text or of another person's life. It belongs to *Dasein*'s mode of being: human beings exist by understanding themselves and their possibilities in a world in which they are already situated. In this sense, understanding precedes interpretation and theoretical cognition. Its priority is constitutive, not merely chronological. Interpretation develops and articulates the possibilities of an understanding that already exists; it does not begin in the absence of any relation to meaning. (Heidegger, 1962, §§ 31–32, pp. 182–195)

Such a shift does not invalidate exegesis, documentary research, or the requirement of justification. It shows, however, that interpretive procedures cannot by themselves produce their own condition of possibility. Interpreters approach the object of inquiry with an existing horizon of understanding, which the encounter with that object may confirm, correct, or transform. Hermeneutics thus exceeds the status of a technique of decipherment that Marino presupposes. The interpreter's life, situatedness, and capacity for receptivity participate in the constitution of understanding, without reducing it to an arbitrary subjective impression.

From this perspective, a first reservation concerning Marino's reconstruction can be formulated. Although he invokes Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricoeur, he remains predominantly aligned with psychological-historical hermeneutics. His claim that "the great shadow of Schleiermacher, and then of Dilthey" hangs over Eliade's hermeneutic orientation is revealing (Marino 1980, 66). Marino places Eliade in this

tradition even though Eliade mentions no possible affinity with it, and even when the passages Marino gathers would allow for a different conceptual arrangement. His classical formation and concern to establish a rigorous discipline of interpretation favor this choice; the scattered character of Eliade's methodological reflections also leaves him considerable scope for reconstruction.

For Marino, hermeneutics is theoretically and practically identified with interpretation, while understanding constitutes "the ultimate goal and supreme act of the hermeneutic process." Within the same logic, deciphering meanings becomes the basic condition of understanding, which must then be communicated to the reader: to understand and to make understood (Marino 1980, 32, 53, 54–55). Marino privileges a hermeneutics in which interpretation leads to understanding, and understanding acquires substance through explanation. This conception accords with his insistence on rigor, precision, philology, and erudition, in opposition to dilettantism and impressionism (Marino 1980, 51). Within this framework, hermeneutics may be defined as the theory of interpretation that leads to understanding. Yet this definition expresses a particular historical configuration of hermeneutics and cannot be extended to its entire development. If Eliade's hermeneutics is organized wholly from this perspective, the existential condition that makes it possible remains in the background.

Eliade's observations about his own activity point precisely to this condition. When he confesses that, submerged in documents, he loses what is personal, original, and alive in himself, while a return to life allows him to see and understand things differently, Eliade distinguishes between the accumulation of information and access to meaning (Eliade 1973, 46). Documents are indispensable to research, but understanding requires a living relationship with what they convey. Returning to oneself here means reopening the possibility of recognizing meaning.

The claim that we understand above all what our own vocation, cultural orientation, and historical moment prepare us to understand should be read in the same light (Eliade 1954, 5–6). Interpretation unfolds within a prior horizon of receptivity. This horizon neither guarantees the truth of an interpretation nor exempts the interpreter from verification, but it explains why the same documents may remain mute for one scholar and become meaningful for another. Understanding also depends on the possibilities of existence through which interpreters can open themselves to the world they study.

Eliade's appeal to lived experience and reexperiencing thus acquires a meaning that exceeds psychological reconstruction. To understand the religious world from within requires that the human position in the cosmos become intelligible as a possibility of human existence (Eliade 1978, 138–139). Historians of religions need not reproduce the believer's experience in its entirety or subscribe to the believer's faith. They must, however, possess a receptivity that allows religious manifestations to be encountered in their own significance. For Eliade, the sacred is not exhausted by the psychological states of those who experience it, although access to its meaning involves human experience.

Marino himself sometimes recognizes this dimension. He observes that to understand is to exist and explicitly links this idea to the existential ontology of Heidegger and Gadamer (Marino 1980, 60). Elsewhere, he states that the true condition of understanding is ontological rather than psychological and describes the relationship with the object as vital and existential (Marino 1980, 64). Marino recognizes the ontological dimension of understanding but does not consistently grant it the role of an organizing hermeneutic principle. He acknowledges it only within an approach that continues to present understanding as the result of interpretation.

This oscillation becomes visible when interpretation, understanding, and explanation are brought together under the general idea of penetrating meaning (Marino 1980, 60–61). Their interdependence is real, but the overlap in their meanings risks obscuring the relation of grounding among them. The explication of a meaning must also be distinguished from the causal explanation of a phenomenon. Showing how the meaning of a religious manifestation is articulated is not equivalent to deriving it from psychological or historical causes. The decisive question distinguishing Eliade's hermeneutics from Marino's is therefore whether interpretation produces understanding or develops, tests, and communicates an understanding that already makes interpretation possible.

Marino cites Eliade's regret that a sacred dance requires a laborious exegesis for the modern reader, even though its meaning ought to be evident (Marino 1980, 58–59). In a world in which the symbol is alive, meaning participates in the existence of those who live it. The need for an interpretive key arises when this familiarity is lost. Exegesis then seeks to restore access to a universe of meanings from which the modern interpreter has become estranged. At the level of religious experience, lived understanding precedes the commentary that explicates it; at the level of modern scholarship, interpretation can help reopen such access.

This distinction also allows the relationship with Heidegger to be clarified. Prior understanding in the ontological sense should not be confused with an immediate and complete knowledge of every symbol. Interpreters may need sustained effort to understand a particular religious manifestation. That effort nevertheless rests on an openness to meaning that precedes their operations and is transformed through them. Eliade's affinity with the Heideggerian perspective concerns this constitutive priority and the existential character of understanding, without implying that their conceptions are identical.

Understanding traditional religious values may constitute "the first step toward a spiritual awakening" (Eliade 1978, 77). It can change the perspective of the person who understands and bring about a renewal of that person's inner life (Marino 1980, 285). For Eliade, hermeneutic creation thus also concerns the transformation of interpreters, expanding their possibilities for understanding themselves and inhabiting the world. To this extent, knowledge of a tradition becomes an existential experience.

The limitation of Marino's reading becomes apparent in the way he gathers numerous testimonies to the vital, existential, and transformative character of understanding in Eliade, yet subordinates them predominantly to a hermeneutics of interpretation, of methodical decipherment. From our perspective on Eliade's hermeneutics, the order of grounding must be reconsidered: interpretation rests on understanding, develops it, and submits it to the test of an encounter with other worlds. The erudition Marino insistently demands remains indispensable to this endeavor; its force, however, depends on the interpreter's existential openness, through which the document can become a bearer of meaning.

4. Signifying Rationality

Second, the difference between the hermeneutics Eliade practices and the conception of hermeneutics through which Marino attempts to reconstruct it concerns the form of rationality at work in interpretation. For Eliade, understanding constitutes the prior horizon within which interpretation and explication become possible. This difference allows his position to be brought into proximity with Heidegger's perspective without presupposing an identity of conception or a demonstrated line of influence. The implication is that understanding is less the outcome of knowledge than that which makes knowledge itself possible.

The importance of Eliade's approach can be understood within this shift. Against evolutionary and reductionist readings of religion—Tylor, Frazer,

and Müller—that portray archaic human beings as prelogical subjects submerged in affectivity, he shifts the emphasis from assessing religious phenomena as imperfect forms of knowledge to understanding them as forms of signification. The beliefs of archaic human beings are no longer judged solely by their adequacy to logical-causal knowledge. They are investigated for what they disclose about the experience of the sacred and the constitution of an inhabitable, ordered, and meaningful world. This change of perspective does not require abandoning the criteria of scientific knowledge, a prospect Marino seems to fear. It requires recognizing that these criteria do not exhaust the questions we can ask of religious experience and, above all, cannot frame the most appropriate ones.

Marino indeed reproduces statements by Eliade that might have led to this conclusion. "Even when we know […] we do not understand," Eliade writes in an article in *Itinerariu spiritual*. And in *Soliloquii* he specifies: "Understanding is not obtained through thought, because it is thought itself *repliée sur elle-même*" (Eliade 1991, 70). The contemplative language and the reference to revelation may suggest an opposition between the rational and the irrational. Yet the point of these formulations can be read differently: they challenge the sufficiency of a knowledge that accumulates information and establishes explanatory relationships without gaining access to the existential meaning of what is known.

From this perspective, Eliade's implicit commitment is to a rationality of signification. He does not systematically theorize it under this name, but he puts it to work in the study of religious phenomena. What may seem absurd or mistaken when judged solely as an explanation of the natural world becomes intelligible when understood as the expression of a meaningful relationship with the world. Myth and ritual are not merely logical answers to questions about the causes of phenomena; they articulate ways of inhabiting the world, ordering experience, and assuming one's existence.

One of the decisive ideas of the twentieth century is precisely that the meaningful may represent the highest expression of rationality. Claude Lévi-Strauss formulates this idea clearly when recalling the impact of his encounter with psychoanalysis. The oppositions between the rational and the irrational, the intellectual and the affective, the logical and the prelogical lose their rigidity in the face of a more encompassing category: the meaningful. Apparently the least rational forms of behavior may, in fact, be profoundly meaningful (Lévi-Strauss 1968, 60). To say that the meaningful lies beyond the rational does not here mean abandoning it to the irrational, but overcoming an excessively narrow conception of reason.

Freudian psychoanalysis offers a model of this shift: symptoms, dreams, and parapraxes are not treated as mere illogical accidents. Eliade proceeds in a somewhat similar way with the religious beliefs of archaic human beings and with the world's religions.

Marino notices this distinctive feature. He shows that Eliade rejects reductionism and that religious phenomena are understood "from within, in terms of the essential spiritual situations they express" (Marino 1980, 61–62). Moreover, he explicitly states that Eliade's explanatory system "is not causal, but ontological and existential" (Marino 1980, 62–63). A critique of his reading therefore cannot maintain that Marino simply ignores the autonomy of meaning. The problem is that he does not follow the consequences of this insight through to the end. His disdain for impressionism, essayism, and superficial spontaneity, and perhaps a slight apprehension about irrationalism, lead him to retreat rather than embrace signifying rationality.

The distinction between a logical-causal rationality oriented toward knowledge and a signifying rationality also allows a more precise formulation of the relationship between explanation and interpretation. Causal explanation does not in itself bring all inquiry to a close, just as interpretation does not remain open merely because it has yet to find the right explanation. They answer different questions. Signifying rationality thus has its own requirements of coherence and adequacy, without being reducible to the identification of a cause. Its implications are far-reaching: the recognition of a rationality that renders apparently irrational experiences intelligible by discovering their meaning. Such a rationality allows the differences between archaic and modern cultures to be reconsidered without automatically arranging them on a scale of deficiency and progress.

The background of signifying rationality is the connection between consciousness, meaning, and the sacred: "Consciousness of a real and meaningful world is closely linked to the discovery of the sacred" (Eliade 2013, 5). From this perspective, the sacred participates in the constitution of a world that has meaning for human beings. The study of religion is therefore not limited to cataloging beliefs and explaining their emergence. It investigates the existential situation assumed by religious human beings and seeks to make it intelligible to contemporaries.

The creative character of hermeneutics can thus be understood more clearly. Interpreting a religious experience can alter the horizon of the person who understands it. It reveals possibilities of existence that were

inaccessible within that person's own cultural framework. Understanding from within does not imply adherence to the faith under investigation, but a willingness to recognize its coherence and its power to generate meaning. Hermeneutics thus becomes an experience that affects the interpreter, not merely an operation that reconstructs its object.

The limitation of Marino's reading therefore lies in the distance between his observations and the framework within which he organizes them. In Eliade's hermeneutics he identifies the autonomy of meaning, illustrated by pansemy and polysemy, the existential character of understanding, and the openness of interpretation. Yet he does not bring these together in a recognition of Eliade's commitment to signifying rationality. It is precisely this commitment that would make it possible to understand the unity of Eliade's approach: religious phenomena are intelligible because they express ways of constituting and embracing a meaningful world.

5. Kratophany: Interpreting the Sacred as Power

A third point at which Marino's reading can be reconsidered concerns the kratophanic dimension of the manifestation of the sacred and its consequences for Eliade's hermeneutics. Kratophany brings the sacred as power to the fore in religious experience. It does not constitute a domain separate from hierophany but emphasizes one of its dimensions. Properly understood, this dimension would have allowed the development of a perspective in which hermeneutics moves beyond its philological restriction to texts. The power of the sacred is also encountered in gestures, rituals, modes of conduct, and bodily practices. Their interpretation must take into account both the meaning they express and the efficacy attributed to them. A ritual gesture does not merely communicate something about the sacred: by performing it, participants seek to enter into a particular kind of relationship with it.

Marino acknowledges the breadth of the documentary material on which Eliade works. Nevertheless, he organizes this vast diversity predominantly around the relationship between interpreter and text (Marino 1980, 26). The limitation of his reading can be located precisely here: the diversity of religious manifestations is acknowledged, but its consequences for the model of understanding remain insufficiently developed. Gesture and ritual risk being treated primarily as messages to be deciphered in the manner of texts, even though their religious meaning also involves performance, participation, and transformation.

From the perspective of kratophany, ritual can be understood as a signifying operation. It enacts relationships among people, things, and sacred powers within a shared horizon of meaning. Magical thinking offers a privileged field for examining this interdependence of meaning and efficacy, without thereby reducing all ritual to magic. Symbol and myth participate in this operation in turn: the sacred narrative may be recited in a ritual act, while the symbol may organize bodily conduct. The distinction between hierophany and kratophany thus illuminates two emphases within the same experience, without instituting a rigid separation between meaning and power.

Eliade's analyses of initiation offer a pertinent example. Symbolic death and rebirth are enacted through ordeals and gestures that change the participant's status. Similarly, yogic practices raise the question of a meaning accessible through the disciplining of the body, breath, and attention. The body thus becomes a medium of understanding: certain meanings become clearer through the practice of a mode of conduct, not merely through its explanation (Eliade 2005, 141–144).

From this perspective, we may say that religious experience itself has a hermeneutic structure. Participants understand the world through myths and symbols, but also through the forms of conduct in which these are embraced. Lived experience has existential priority over the document that records it, without being independent of the traditions that shape it. Experience and its expressions stand in a reciprocal relationship: myth guides practice, while practice actualizes and may deepen the understanding of myth.

The potential originality of Eliade's hermeneutics must therefore also be sought in this interdependence of understanding and participation. Interpreters investigate an experience in which meaning is lived and enacted. This alters the demands of interpretation without requiring scholars to become practitioners. Kratophany allows us to develop this opening in Eliade's thought: beyond the deciphering of documents, hermeneutics turns toward the ways in which religious human beings understand, organize, and transform their existence.

Marino does not sufficiently develop the consequences of this broadening of perspective—from interpreting texts to understanding practices—for the very model of hermeneutic understanding. We therefore cannot simply say that he ignores extratextual manifestations, only that he subsumes them under the textual model, retaining the relationship between interpreter and text as the essential one. He also regards this

relationship as qualitatively the same across the different historical stages of hermeneutics. Recognizing a broader object does not lead him to reconsider the model of interpretation. The body and gesture are not merely objects of interpretation; they can participate in the constitution of religious understanding. Moving beyond the philological model thus concerns both what we interpret and how meaning becomes accessible.

6. A Productive Mismatch between Paradigms

Mircea Eliade's hermeneutics, as reconstructed by Adrian Marino, can be read as the expression of an encounter between the interpretation practiced and theorized by Eliade and the psychological-historical hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey, which Marino practices in a philological and textual manner. It is as though a version of hermeneutics close to Heidegger's ideas were being interpreted by a hermeneutician close to Kant. We might be tempted to speak of the hermeneutics of a misunderstanding. Yet what is at issue is more a mismatch between paradigms than a misunderstanding, and this kind of misunderstanding ultimately proves productive in revealing the novelty of Eliade's hermeneutic intentions.

Eliade is moving toward a new paradigm by situating religious phenomena within signifying rationality, drawing on a hermeneutics of understanding, and bringing kratophany, as well as hierophany, into the scope of hermeneutics. His initial affinity with Jung, his late and qualified acceptance of Freud, and his limited interest in structuralist semiology also obscure the character of his hermeneutics. Fearing impressionism and the superficiality of inspiration, Marino remains within classical rationality, oriented toward facts and causes, and within a hermeneutics of interpretation and the text. What is striking here is the effect of prior commitments—to Jung in Eliade's case, and to a philologically grounded hermeneutics in Marino's—which obscure their access to much newer ideas with which they might otherwise have been in accord. Behind these commitments, we might discover certain ideological attachments and life experiences, but that is another topic.

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