

Introduction

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The camouflage of the sacred. The ambiguity and unrecognizability of miracle. These are the staple of Mircea Eliade's fiction. Had it not been written in Romanian, in what Eliade called "the language of my dreams," Eliade's fiction might have been more widely read. Unfortunately, Romanian, a national Romance language, is taught at barely half a dozen universities in the United States, usually at the first year level. There exists not a single graduate program in Romanian language or literature anywhere in the Americas. Compounding the neglect of Eliade's fiction was the isolation of Romania during the Cold War as well as the writer's long period of exile from his homeland. Book collections of Eliade's short stories have appeared in Spanish and French but not in English. Nor is a book of Eliade's plays available in English translation. During the past four decades, Mac Linscott Ricketts's translations of Eliade's short stories and plays have appeared piecemeal but they have never been gathered into a book.

Theory in Action is proud to present Eliade's play *Aventură spirituală* (*A Spiritual Adventure*) in English translation. The original version of the play, which Professor Ricketts found in the University of Chicago library archives, remains unpublished. We are also honored to publish Professor Ricketts's introductory essay on *Aventură spirituală* and the first article of literary criticism on the play, written by Fevronia Novac. These contributions are complemented by Jeremy Sabella's article on Reinhold Neibuhr, and Carl Olson's article on the terror of history in the fiction of Eliade, DeLillo, and Mitchell. The editors wish to thank T. David Brent who on behalf of the Mircea Eliade Literary Estate granted us permission to print this play.