



**THE SEARCH FOR THE MYTHICAL STATE  
OF INNOCENCE: THE MYTHOPOEIC  
DIMENSION IN THE NOVEL DICTIONARY OF  
THE KHAZARS BY MILORAD PAVIC**

*Ivan Cvetanovic*

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The realm of mythology has held fascination for Serbian writer, Milorad Pavic, since his first published book of poetry, Psalmists, which is greatly focused on the spiritual rebirth of man. In his first and best novel, Dictionary of the Khazars, Pavic brings the Pre-Adamic myth to life as an original, strong and poetic metaphor. In so doing, he demonstrates that what provokes the readers consciousness is a mythic impulse, which is buried in the depths of human mind. The creation of the body of Pre-Adam is an ultimate paradise that can be reached only in dreams, through endless searches of dream hunters as mythical heroes who know exactly when Pre-Adam is close to God, and when he is opposite of God. Reminding the reader to be more actively involved in the creation of his own reading, Pavic at the same time encourages him or her to read the novel with optimism and the knowledge that the mythical approach is of vital importance to communicate with the novel. In his message through the Pre-Adamic myth, Pavic wants to show that the crucial point in literature is to interpret the archetypal concepts for contemporary man in such a way that it will not be a lecture, but a creative, playful, imaginative challenge. Campbell's three stage quest pattern (departure, initiation, and return) of the mythical journey of the hero operates within the framework of Pavic's narrative. It is initially presumed and then proven that the search for the Pre-Adamic body is a mythical journey of heroes in the novel, that the creation of Pre-Adamic body is a cosmogenic myth, and that Pavic is a modern myth maker.

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