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The World War II and Europe's destiny  
in the notes of the journal from Portugal  
of Mircea Eliade (1941-1945)

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The beginning of the World War II finds Mircea Eliade in London, as a cultural secretary of the Romanian Embassy<sup>1</sup>. From here, he's attending the France's catastrophe, the fight for Great Britain, the installing of the fascist regime in Bucharest, its directing to the Axis, - an option that put Romania, sooner or later, in war with Great Britain. At that time he asks a visa for returning to his country, thinking to a possible conversation with general Antonescu<sup>2</sup>, in order to convince him about the fact that London, even in the case of a victory of Germany, will continue to mean a lot for Romania. In his opinion, it could be dangerous and ridiculous too, if the English people would be upset, offended, or angry with the press or Radio Bucharest - as against the Romanian's political prestige<sup>3</sup>.

When he arrived in Lisbon, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1941, Eliade knew about the confirmation of his modest appointment as a press secretary<sup>4</sup> of the local Romanian Legation. What initially seemed to be only a short Portuguese interlude, a simple stage on the returning way from London to Bucharest, lasted four years and seven months - fact that would have finally marked his existence. During the period of living in Lisbon, Eliade succeeded in keeping a personnel journal; he couldn't do this in London, being conscious about the impossibility to take out from England any pages of the manuscript.

Little known so far *The Portuguese Journal*<sup>5</sup>, appears at present as one of the most interesting works written by Mircea Eliade, a memoirs document, entirely authentic<sup>6</sup>, a document what the author wasn't going to publish it during his life<sup>7</sup>. The *Journal* begins with the day of the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 1941, two months after his arrival in the capital of Portugal, and it finishes on the 5<sup>th</sup> of September 1945, a few days after his leaving to Paris.

As he notices on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1945, Mircea Eliade has proposed to himself not to follow and comment in his *Journal* the military events. Although, he'll do this, beginning with the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1941, at the same time when the military hostilities released in East, because Romania had already entered the war against the Soviet Union, as part of the German right flank. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 1943, he was writing: "without my nation nothing interests me in history"<sup>8</sup>. The news that Germany has begun the war in East has surprised Mircea Eliade: "I recognize that I didn't expect to this war in 1941, - he's noticing in his *Journal*, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1941. I thought that the so-called Russian-German collaboration will last, meaning that the German had understood that they can't win the war this year; they are preparing for a long war. In my opinion, the attack is a sign of weakness from Germany. If they had been sure of destroying England

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<sup>1</sup> RENNI, Bryan S. - "The Life and Work of Mircea Eliade". In: GLIGOR, Mihaela; RICKETTS, Mac Linscott (coord.) - *Encounters with Mircea Eliade*. Cluj-Napoca, Scientific Book House, 2005, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> The general, then the marshal Ion Antonescu, the leader of Romania between 1940-1944.

<sup>3</sup> ELIADE, Mircea - *Memories*. Bucharest, Ed. Humanitas, 1991, vol. I, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> TURCANU, Florin - *Mircea Eliade, the Prisoner of History*. Bucharest, Ed. Humanitas, 2005, p. 396.

<sup>5</sup> Entirely published in Romanian, in 2006, Ed. Humanitas, Bucharest; preface and edition supervision by Sorin Alexandrescu; introductory studies, notes and translations by Sorin Alexandrescu, Florin Turcanu and Mihai Zamfir.

<sup>6</sup> ZAMFIR, Mihai - *Mircea Eliade and Portugal*, introductory study at Mircea Eliade, *The Portuguese and Other Writings*. Bucharest, Ed. Humanitas, 2006, vol. I, p. 78.

<sup>7</sup> DWORSCHAK, Francisc Ion - *Defending Mircea Eliade, Essay and Polemics*. Criterion Publishing, 2004, p. 229

<sup>8</sup> ELIADE, Mircea - *The Portuguese Journal and Other Writings* (further on *The Portuguese Journal...*). vol. I, p. 209.

this year, they wouldn't have attacked in Russia any more. After the final German victory, the Soviets would have done everything what Hitler had asked them". Before knowing the attitude of England and USA, Eliade has hoped, weakly, to say the truth, which "may be on the Russia's back they could make a peace of compromise". Reading in the journals Churchill's spoken to the radio, on the attack's day<sup>9</sup>, he understood that his hopes have been in vain, because "my imperialist from London shouts that the Russians fight for liberty and have to be helped against the Hilarity invasion". The morals of the war carried by the English seemed to be – once again –ridiculous. "You say nothing when the Soviets take Bassarabia, the Baltic countries half of Poland, a part of Finland - , but you howl for the Danzing's Corridor , and now, you help Stalin in the name of democracy, freedom and Christianity ", Eliade ends his note on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1941<sup>10</sup>.

From now on, Mircea Eliade will watch the war, not only, from the Romanian point of view, but also from that of a European. Living "on the edge of the Legation" – as he will say later<sup>11</sup>, – he met and made friends among the press reporters and journalists from the Lisbon's newspapers – well-known intellectuals and Portuguese politicians – by means of whom he was in a continuous contact with the events. The first German official statements from the Russian front make Eliade anxious. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1941 he notices: "I can do nothing anymore since when Romania has joined the war. My furious love of country, my incandescent nationalism throws me down"<sup>12</sup>.

Eliade becomes careful at the officials' attitude and Portuguese public opinion. For the beginning, he notices in his *Journal* the Portuguese people's when knowing about the news that the U.S.A. have entered the war: "Since America has entered the war, here the atmosphere has changed, too; the Portuguese are nervous, are frightened, are presuming, etc. The German naval successes have intimidated them. I was being in a tobacco shop when I found about the sinking of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Two bourgeois watched each other while paling". He also notices that for some time now, the English were whispering that the Japanese came in Macau, and the Germans will conquer Portugal<sup>13</sup>. When, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 1941 the Dutch and the Australians got in Timor, Eliade observes "the formidable game" of the English to make the Portuguese to believe that "Hitler is the author of their colonial drama". He affirms that he's found interesting details – not described in the *Journal* – where he writes: "Tomorrow they are waiting for the speech of Salazar at Assembleia Nacional. It's stock-still panic".

At the end of 1941, Eliade considers he also can serve his country in other manner, i.e., preparing for the Romanian public a synthesis of the political history of the modern

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<sup>9</sup> CHURCHILL, Winston – *The World War II*. Bucharest, Ed. Seculum I.O., 1997, vol. II, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 101-102.

<sup>11</sup> RICKETTS, Mac Linscott – *The Romanina Roots of Mircea Eliade. From Bucharest to Lisbon (1934-1945)*. Bucharest, Criterion Publishing, 2004, vol. II, p. 372.

<sup>12</sup> In December 1941, the new Romanian minister Victor Cadere is sent to Lisbon; being known as a French and English speaker, who had become friend during the period he had been ambassador in Belgrade with Campbell, the minister of Great Britain, also named later, at the head of its country's legation from Lisbon. Victor Cadere was hoping to meet him again in the Lusitanian capital, in spite of the state of war between the two countries, receiving, in this sense, the tactic approval of Antonescu marshal. TURCANU, Florin – *Op. cit.*, p. 406.

<sup>13</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 113.

Portugal, ending with the years of the Salazar's regime. The personality of Salazar – considered to be “an unintentional dictator” – has impressed Mircea Eliade, this thing resulting from the portrait and presentation he made to him on the occasion of the demonstration on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1941. Eliade remarked the calm with which the man was speaking to a delirious crowd: “In any case he wasn't its prisoner, not even impressed by it”<sup>14</sup>, his notice. The behaviour's difference of style is also mentioned on the occasion of presentation the letters of accreditation, on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 1941, when he remarks “the exceptional modesty” of the Portuguese dictator, whose eyes “are not shining, not penetrating, intimidating you, but they are piercing you without any hostilities”<sup>15</sup>. Taking into account the fact that Romania “has what to learn from the recent history of Portugal”, in the winter of 1941-1942, Eliade writes the book about Salazar and the revolution from Portugal. Presenting the intellectual who has dedicated himself to bring back Portugal on the way of its historical destiny, Eliade wished to transmit a message to the leaders of Romania – a message pointed at the end of the book – affirming: “In the huge conflicts of interests and ideologies that feed the World War II, the Portugal's rights don't mean a great matter. But, for Salazar it means everything”<sup>16</sup>.

Salazar will send another message to Mircea Eliade – a great admirer of the “Estado Novo”'s creator –, on the day before he came to Bucharest, in July 1942. They met at the São Bento Palace on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1942, the meeting being arranged by António Ferro, the chief of the National Propaganda, a friend of Eliade. The author notices in his *Journal* that Salazar asked him if there was in Romania a “spirit of the front” – which it by self could save the country after the war, because it would be “the only total spontaneous organization”, above the parties. So, the blood sacrifice would be useless, giving as an example the case of France after the World War I, which unknowing to organize this spirit has lost the single possibility to remake the unity of the country - the results being seen in 1940. Eliade also notices that Salazar confessed his faith in elites and their power to change a country; that the crowds are sensible only at constants, like as: the national dignity, the balance, the inside silence, and if they are respected, the crowds will join any revolution<sup>17</sup>. Eliade doesn't mention in his *Journal* if all these are addressed to the Romania's leader, but in his *Memories* he writes that Salazar has transmitted in an “ingenious” manner a “personnel message” to the marshal Antonescu, whom he describes like this: “If I were in his place, Salazar essentially said, I would keep as more as possible of the army in the country. The marshal Antonescu is not a politician; he hasn't achieved his position by means of a political party; his only force is constituted by the army. So, why should I waste it in the Russian steppes? Keeping it in the country, or as near as possible to its borders, I will have the army's support in order to face the difficulties”. At the end of the message, Eliade adds: “Obviously, Salazar was suggesting to the Marshal to follow the example of Finland”, but, he also was adding in

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<sup>14</sup> The lucidity and the academic calm of Salazar have also impressed other people, from Paul Valéry, at the beginning of the 30's, to Kojève, at the beginning of the 50's, and these characteristics have impeded his assimilation to the other European dictators, rather accustomed to excite the crowd than convince it rationally. ALEXANDRESCU, Sorin – *Mircea Eliade from Portugal*. Bucharest, Ed. Humanitas, 2006, p. 143.

<sup>15</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 96-97.

<sup>16</sup> Idem – *Salazar and the Revolution in Portugal*. Bucharest, Ed. Gorjan, 1942, p. 238.

<sup>17</sup> Idem – *The Portuguese Journal...* p. 128-129

a footnote, that it's "useless to talk here in what extent the policy of the marshal Mannerheim could be imitated"<sup>18</sup>.

As arrived in Bucharest, Eliade observes that the state of war is not felt here and "almost nobody – excepting the members of the Iron Guard<sup>19</sup> – can realise the situation that could occur in case the Anglo-Russians would win". He confesses that it begins to be terrified by the future, as, he notices, "if we lose, we'll disappear both as state and nation"<sup>20</sup>. Eliade won't be met by Ion Antonescu, but only by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mihai Antonescu, to whom he sent the message from Salazar. By the mean of which he avoided the subject, he understood that Salazar's idea – the spirit of front – neither was convenient to him nor transmitted to the Marshal, being content with an allusion regarding him: "We know how the military men are, they have pragmatic spirit and do not know to lead a country".

Coming back to Lisbon in August 1942, Eliade begins to evaluate the whole political and military situation in Europe from the angle of the fears for his country, for which the survival becomes the real stake of the World War. Although "member of the Iron Guard", Eliade suspends any internal political judgements as long as Romania's East War will last - expressing first of all, his angry with its too many risks, later, the dread of occupying and crushing his country by the Soviet Union, and then, the hypocrisy of the other allied countries and the opportunism of the different countries. The author of the *Journal* is always keeping a sovereign distance as against the world around. His reflections are sometimes changed in an amazing document of political clear-sightedness, of most profound analyses. His vision upon history, upon war and its consequences, becomes more pessimistic when he predicts the hopeless tragedy of Romania: "We are living through a cosmic catastrophe: this is the unique sense of the war. I have to watch it like as my ancestors were watching the drought, the earthquake, the epidemics", - notes in his *Journal* on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1942. As the great fight from Stalingrad, which had been beginning on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, wasn't showing any signs that it would be won by the Red Army, Eliade intuits, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1942, "the falling down of Germany and the victory of communism". He feels frightened especially by the "naught" seeing it developed before his eyes: "the Latin-Christian civilization succumbing under the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat, in fact the dictatorship of the most abject Slav elements"<sup>21</sup>.

Eliade is fully aware of the fact that a new world will be born from the world struggle, but this new world, an Anglo-Bolshevik one, wanted by Churchill and Roosevelt, he, as a Romanian, cannot accept it, because this will imply the abolition of the Romanian nation and state. "If I were a Portuguese or a Swede or a Brazilian – he notices in his *Journal*, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December 1942 – maybe, this event would seem to me insignificant as against the greatness of the world which would organize itself after the Anglo-Bolshevik victory (although I think that such a world can't be grandiose from

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<sup>18</sup> Idem – *Memories*. Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing, 1997, p. 383-384.

<sup>19</sup> An extremist right wing party in Romania.

<sup>20</sup> ELIADE, Mîrcea – *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 131.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 137.

any point of view you would judge it)<sup>22</sup>. He's agonizing thinking that "these extraordinary times" invoked by Churchill in a speech in December 1942, could become real. Eliade was considering the fate of the future world will be decided on the Eastern front. The discussions with the phyla-English are exasperating him, considering that "their political passion make them to forget the war decision fact: the Russia's active coming in the world history", as he notices on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1942. "In the same way – continues his above mentioned work – the Latin people were ever fighting with the Greeks at Constantinople permitting to the Turks to set foot in Europe. Then, three hundred years ... we bled in order to the Turks not to get in Europe's heart. This time I don't know if the history happens again"<sup>23</sup>. Trying to think more detached from the events, Eliade notices on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 1942 that "the Jews, English and Americans succeed well with the Russians, the only ones who are resisting". But, always judging "in history" – as his mentor Corneliu Codreanu<sup>24</sup> has taught him -, i.e., taking into account his people, and not in absolute, - would have permitted him to detach easily; Eliade considers that "if this resistance leads to the military fall of Germany, none of the three above mentioned great nations can take into account the Romanians' rights or their historical necessity. Or, even if the English would try, it'll be too late – with too strong Russians"<sup>25</sup>.

"The actuality" of the Eastern war, that is continuously obsessing Eliade, remains "the filter" through which all the other facts spent in other areas of the world are watched. The events from the Northern Africa, the Anglo-American landings, and Rommel's defeat have troubled him enormously, between the 6 and 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1942, - and, as contrasted with the whole Romanian legation from Lisbon, like as in Madrid, was growing enthusiastically. "Insomnias, nightmares, depressions – Eliade notices in his *Journal*, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1942. I saw, as usual, all referring to my country; I told to myself that the German divisions retired from Stalingrad to be sent in France would be replaced by Romanian divisions; anyway, a clever Romanian can't agree with a defeat of the Axis, *now*, when our army is on the Volga...". Although, the second day he felt more "detached from the events", Eliade had a "confused premonition" that things would come more dramatic. The "so serious" news on radio, - Eliade reminding about it in his notice on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 1942, it couldn't be, but only in touch with the change, after the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1942, of the course of the struggle from Stalingrad, in favour of the Russians"<sup>26</sup>.

The apocalyptic vision of a Romania threatened by disappears, swallowed by the Soviet Empire, and makes the sombre background which Eliade begins his *Journal* with, in 1943. As a result of the meditations upon the course of war, the despair in the previous year is coming back. "Everything seems to me useless and absurd, if a new world is born at the cost of Romania's disappear as state and nation. I'm not interested in any earthly paradise (which I not believe in) if it is acquired by sacrificing my nation"

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 162.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 154.

<sup>24</sup> The leader of the Iron Guard and its members' movement.

<sup>25</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 156.

<sup>26</sup> MASSON, Philippe – *Dictionnaire de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*. Paris, Larousse, 1979, vol. II, p. 1726, where they say that the struggle from Stalingrad knew a first phase of the German offensive, from 17<sup>th</sup> July to 18<sup>th</sup> November 1942, and a second one, a Soviet offensive, from 19<sup>th</sup> November 1942 to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1943.



– his notice on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1943. He sometimes thinks quietly to the Slavonic-communist new world which Stalin has organized: “Romania – become Soviet, will lose its bourgeoisie and intelligence, but the crowd, in case it’s not deported, it’ll acquire a better education and a corresponding medical treatment. And, after five hundred years, the Russians will retire. How will my nation look like then”, – Eliade wonders on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 1943<sup>27</sup>. Regarded as men who get free liberate Europe, “the red murderers”, as Eliade calls the Soviet people, will challenge the agony of Europe; he feels how this makes Eschil to go back in his tomb. “Him, who glorified the Greek heroic resistance as against Asia, he’s attending now Europe’s giving up to the Asian hordes”, it’s his notice on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 1943. In his opinion, Churchill and Roosevelt met again at Casablanca, “don’t see how Stalin plays a practical joke on them, how they’re the victim of the most tragic prank in the world history: as against the other political assassins – the red murderers had the merit to operate on a large scale, above millions”. He is again on the verge of taking out the war of his *Journal*, but he’s coming back thinking that, maybe, “million of dead persons putrefying in Russia – as he notices on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 1943 – ten millions of people inseminating the whole Europe in future are not only, but the offerings necessary to a cosmic balance, about, the poor us, don’t realize”<sup>28</sup>. He talks about the destiny of Europe with the manager of the *Diário Popular*, “proud young man” whom “the birth of a new Europe by sacrificing fifty or sixty million people, from Helsinki to Bucharest, seems to be a regrettable, but natural thing”. Eliade’s indignation makes his interlocutor to recognize himself “that a four thousand kilometres distance”<sup>29</sup> changes a lot of things – beginning with the moral and finishing the freedom”<sup>30</sup>. Becoming more and more attentively to the evolution of the military operations, Eliade notices even the vaguest rumours in his *Journal*. He writes about the “landing rumours” on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> of April he makes notices about the persistent rumours concerning the Brazilian imminent occupancy of the Azores, as well as the “separate German-Russian peace”. He mentions the fact, that there, in Lisbon, “People talk about all these, like as we’d talk (us, the Romanians – our note) at a café about Popescu’s imminent divorce or Ionescu’s trick”. Because of the rumours about invasion, Eliade brings his *Journal* and a part of the manuscripts to the Romanian legation place; – in case of evacuation he could save them.

The Romania’s fate and that of the Romanian nation, the every day obsession of Eliade, comes back at the beginning of June 1943. On the 7<sup>th</sup> of June he notices in his *Journal*: “In the present apocalyptical fight, my nation has too little surviving chances... We are neighbours with an empire which is about six times larger than the entire Europe; with 200 millions inhabitants which in 2000 will be 400-500 millions; with an incredible economical and geopolitical space; with a social, ecumenical and popular mystic, especially at the end of the war (starvation, poverty, ruins, revolts, disappointment, etc.). In front of this colossus – there was a sick, optimistic and naive Romania. There was a dominant category waiting for everything from its hate as against

<sup>27</sup> ELIADE, Mircea *The Portuguese Journal...*, p. 170.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 178.

<sup>29</sup> Referring, probably, to the distance between Lisbon and Moscow.

<sup>30</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...*p. 185.

the Germans. In this decisive storm, are pilots are blind. We have decimated our army in Russia, lost the whole armament at Stalingrad, while the Hungarians kept their military force intact"<sup>31</sup>. You can see from this notice how well Eliade rezones with the ideas from Salazar's message. Eliade reproves the double game done by the Romanian diplomacy between the years 1943-1944, trying to obtain insurances from the Anglo-Americans as the threatening of the Soviet conquer, postponing in the same time the moment of breaking the alliance with Germany. "Our blood sacrifice –notices on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June 1943-, is compromised by the idiot game of the political leadership that tries a double game, with the Anglo-Saxons, losing what we have won with the Germans, obtaining nothing at the Anglo-Americans. The Great Ica (Mihai Antonescu-n.n.) politicized with the Germans in one hundred per cent, and the same, wants now to politicize with the Anglo-Americans sending stupid messengers which are caught by the Gestapo and cost us new artillery battalions on the front. Ica doesn't understand what the Hungarians have always understood: that fact that the same man cannot do two politics that his duty is to obtain as much as possible from the Germans, on the basis of our sacrifices, and *another*, if necessary, to do *another* politic". When he finds that in the country where "the same Romanians who didn't drink champagne for any German victory against Russia" have celebrated with champagne the falling down of Tunisia, he understands that for Romania "almost everything is lost". The arrangement with the Anglo-Americans seems to him an illusion, the same sad illusion he felt in case of the Romanian legation from Lisbon. He's wondering why "nobody sees the simple fact that if the Russians cannot be defeated, the falling down of Germany will automatically bring the Romania conquer by the Soviets, and everything what follows: the execution of the 100 000 people who in spite of their sins constitute the Romanian phenomenon today".

Thinking to the manner in which "the universal history is made", due to a spiritual structure, to an own destiny, Eliade considers that "the Europe's history would have another course because Adolf Hitler wasn't a sailor". In the note on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1943 he develops the following idea: "In the summer of the 1940, when Great Britain could have been conquered by only some battalions and with one hundred armoured cars, Hitler hesitated as the invasion – although all the preparations had already been done – because he was thinking to losses: to *drowned people*. The drowned people don't mean anything for a sailor. Shipwrecks can happen without war. That's why the Anglo-Americans will try to invade Europe. Hitler hesitates before the some thousand or ten thousand of drowned people, *without fighting*, but he doesn't tremble in face of the millions who are dying in Russia, on the ground. He thinks that at least there, their death is *positive* – although the loss in waves of a part of the invasion army could have been a thousand times more positive"<sup>32</sup>.

Being conscious that his previsions are correct, that nothing great can happen anymore, waiting the "fulfilment of the history", Eliade receives quietly the news regarding the resignation of Mussolini and the naming of Badoglio as the leader of the Italian government. "And curiously – he notes in the *Journal* – I, who was trembling at any bad news from Sicilian, learning about Mussolini's leaving – which was meaning a

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 199-200.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 201.

separate peace in a few days or few weeks – I have suddenly grown calm... My nation could die as a result of this event, but I keep looking forward calmly”. Eliade is confidentially informed that the Romanian ambassador Victor Cadere was in audience at Salazar from whom he finds that the Anglo-Americans – although Russian, apparently – they are totally convinced by the Bolshevik danger. Then, Eliade wonders himself: “Didn’t Salazar say it to prepare his coming out from the neutrality? Since the main reason which kept him doing this there was the phyla-soviet policy of the Allies”<sup>33</sup>.

Even after the resignation of Mussolini, when the Allies continued to ask the surrender of Italy without any conditions, Eliade notices: “So, there isn’t anymore a war against fascism, but against Italy... One could say that Eden prefers an anarchical and Soviet Italy, instead of an Italy put honestly out of fight”. He tries to think deeply what will happen after that, taking into account all the key-factors and, as usual, informing about the events regarding the situation of Romania. “We can’t put us out of war, because we’ll be immediately conquered by the Germans. The Russians are still very strong. The Allies don’t have enough courage to land in Balkans, for fear of Russia could conciliate with Hitler. Our fate is to get <free> by the Bolsheviks” – Eliade ends his note on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August 1943.

After the Conference from Quebec, the Allies announced they’ll continue to bomb Roma until Italy will capitulate. “To this, the military genius arrived in 1943!” Eliade exclaims in his note on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 1943. He also observes in his note that Stalin didn’t send not at least an observer to the conference in Canada. He is angry because nobody *sees* anything”. On the 24<sup>th</sup> of August, Eliade notices in the *Journal* a painful detail regarding Mussolini’s falling down: “Certain Spanish newspapers wrote nicely about the Duke, and the minister of Italy at Madrid went to the Foreign Affairs and protested against this thing”. The capitulation of Italy was expected by everybody, but the manner in which it was performed, through the armistice signed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1943 with the Allies, seemed to be unrespectable for Italians, even more an act of “perfidy”, because it was stealing the last hope regarding Romania’s rescue. He analyses again the situation in East – in his note on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1943: “It is possible the Germans will put divisions out from the Russian front, to delay the occupation of Italy by the Allies. And, as Romanian I’m interested only by the Eastern front; So, I can’t see anything forward. The single salvation could be the Allies’ landing in Balkans. But I doubt that Stalin will permit them this”.

Generally thinking, that the Romania’s fate has been once again sealed by the capitulation of Italy, Eliade expresses his disappointment, even his disgust regarding the Italians’ attitude. “The last follower of Italy in Lisbon – it was me, turns his head and spits. I have never thought that the Italians can be flunkeys. Now I’m sure about this. Their putting out of war is as well disgraceful as their joining it. I hope to live as long to assist to the Italians’ Diaspora changed in waiters and singers, and Italy’s lending to the tourism agencies”<sup>34</sup>, he ends his note.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 1943, Eliade notices in his *Journal*, “for history” – some things which he had found from the colonel Bianchi, aeronautic attaché beside the

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 211.

Italy's legation in Lisbon. "The minister Hoyningen-Hueve went to spend his vacation to Buçaco, saying sarcastically: <Call me when you find that Mussolini returned to Roma> The Gestapo's spies started the party. When the planes returned from Italy nobody was in the airport... Bianchi says to me that he got orders to welcome certain guys. He didn't know anything about their missions, but he presumed. He took them out for a walk in town. They had a good time on the Guincho beach together with two German <secretaries> from the secret service. These two messengers were going every day to the English legation by taxi. Nobody followed them. After signing the armistice, the English press published their photos. Bianchi showed them to the <girls> and he asked them: Do you remember them? More. The Italian planes used to bring two or three persons. When the messengers arrived, they were twelve. As none of the Germans was in the airport, nobody presumed anything. Among the new persons there was the German general<sup>35</sup> without a hand, without an eye, but who had Italian passport – he didn't say a single word because he didn't know Italian. The general Castellano – coming every day to the English embassy could be recognized as military man from a mile after the manner he was greeting. Everything was done clearly. As the Germans didn't presume anything they couldn't avoid the armistice. If they had arrested the messengers and found their secrets, they could arrest Badoglio and avoid the tragedy of capitulation"<sup>36</sup>.

By means of the German legation from Lisbon, and as a result of Hoyningen-Hueve's intervention to the General Department of the German forces in France, Eliade receives the right to go for a month to Paris. He has some doubts because "the Russian front goes so bad" – it's his notice on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1943. Once arrived in the capital of France, he is surprised by the "Parisians' welfare". Here he spends a lot of time with Emil Cioran, who probably calmed him about his fears regarding the Romania's disaster. He returns to Lisbon with a new vision about the events: "The front goes worse and worse, but I don't know why I don't afraid anymore, he notices on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1943. I have the feeling that nothing catastrophic will happen. Or, more precise, the danger is so European that I cannot think anymore locally, referring only to us". Anyway, this is the time when Eliade finishes the Romanian period and starts the European period in his life – it's the moment when he decides not to come back to Bucharest anymore.

Mircea Eliade and his friends from Lisbon celebrated the New Year 1944 modestly – fact that is noticed in his *Journal* – to be checked lately "in what measure the modesty of the New Year's night anticipated or not the events we were waiting for, and we are considering them decisive in 1944". The first notices of the 1944 show us an Eliade who accepts the new destiny of Europe, i.e., "to become a certain Albany". He doesn't read newspapers, doesn't listen to the news about war, doesn't politicize, and doesn't comment. "My disgust of history has increased so much – he writes in the first days of the new year – that almost nothing that is going to happen in the world interests me... I have assisted to the disappear of France as a great power. Shall I assist to the change of the Europe in a certain Albany, too? Everything is possible"<sup>37</sup>. He even thinks that the

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<sup>35</sup> Eliade doesn't remember his name.

<sup>36</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...* p. 213-214.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 221.

victory of the Soviet Russia on continent is a good thing. These ideas are noticed in his *Journal* on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 1944: "In fact, I have all the reasons to believe that the Soviet Russia has to defeat and begin a new historical cycle. The man I discover in all the archaic societies has already surpassed in Europe. Beginning with the Renaissance and the industrial revolution we are assisting to anthropology. The modern man is a hybrid one. He doesn't think anymore that that traditional, he doesn't valorise life like him – but he doesn't have the courage to become a machine producing economical values, as in the Soviet Russia. Do we try again <synthesis>, again adjustments, again compromises?"<sup>38</sup>.

They could say that Eliade accepts the fatality because he has all the time the "feeling of the immanent, unavoidable historical catastrophe" of his country. For the whole "crazy and imbecile" world which doesn't see this catastrophe, he has a feeling of "pity combined with disgust". On the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 1944 he "sees" how the "Romanian elites will disappear, how the personalities will disappear, how thousand or maybe million Romanians loose their country"<sup>39</sup> in order to perish the Romanian thorn from the great Slav community"<sup>40</sup>. When he learns the news that the Red Army passed the Dniester and stepped the Romanian territory, Eliade's life became a nightmare. He wishes to come back in his country, to go on the front, not to fight, but to die, because he feels "a final disgust of history". He feels closer and closer the tragedy of the whole Europe and wishes to die. Because of the events he can't apply his "suicide thirst", ever more the Anglo-Saxons prove – in his opinion – "imbecility" in the manner in which they carry out the war when bombing Bucharest, helping Russia. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1944 - he notices in his *Journal*: "The bombing of Bucharest by the American liberators made me think for the first time with less horror and disgust to the Russians. After the surprising gentle declaration of Molotov, the Americans are destroying our Capital. It is useless to comment. I suppose that the readers of the present journal will have be seen the judge of history – at the date when they are reading my pages. The Anglo-Saxon imbecility will make jump also the last obstacle existing in the way of Russia's victory".

In his despair, Eliade thinks to do something, but all he can do is to run all over in Lisbon to tell every Portuguese he meets that in case Romania falls down, the Russians will arrive by the side of the Tagel and nobody can stop them. "I walked all over the town – he writes in the same note on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1944 – and I told every Portuguese I met: You have to know that in case Romania falls down, the whole South-Eastern Europe falls down. The Russians will be in the Adriatic and Mediterranean. And when they will conquer Germany too, they'll be by the sides of the Tagel. Nobody will stop them"<sup>41</sup>. In his notice from the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 1944, regarding the same events, Eliade mentions: "I have spent the month of April being terrified by the Anglo-American air bombings which began the scientific destroy of Bucharest. I don't think to my town, but to the few cultural institutions we had and destroyed by the liberators. I check once again the imbecility of the Anglo-Americans' war and the ability of the Soviets who are

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 221-222.

<sup>39</sup> Expelled from the country.

<sup>40</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...* p. 225-226.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 227.

forcing their allies to bomb the open towns and being content of the strict military victories<sup>42</sup>.

The opening of the second front in Europe, by Allies' landing in Normandy, doesn't make Eliade enthusiastic. Only it makes him think about the uselessness of the four years of war, and filtering the event through his soul of a good Romanian, believes that he'll never forgive the Germans because they have reduced the front in Russia to defeat themselves in West, especially, if the defeat is inefficient, thing that has happened. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1944 – he notices in his *Journal*: "At last – the invasion! I remember the 1940, in London. Who could believe then, after Dunkerque, those four years ago, the English attacked – and successfully? It was the great futility of this war. In fact, if this should happen – why these four years of victories, tragedies, ruins and bluffs?"<sup>43</sup>.

The fight given in Eliade's soul between accepting or not accepting the unjust reality – as he was considering it, but being unable to do nothing – can be seized in the pages of his *Journal*. In June, before the 21<sup>st</sup>, he writes: "The decadence of Europe which I assist to... can't give me comfort", and looking for solutions he finds that the unique output could be the recovering of a cosmic consciousness of the man. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1944 he notices "although in the middle of some magnificent events (the invasion of France), I am very detached, very indifferent about all will happen"<sup>44</sup>. The result is the resignation and the acceptance of "the history which is done": "Suddenly I put up with the war, with the catastrophe, with the end of that Europe I knew and loved - Eliade notices a few days later. The war destroys have a sense and they fulfil a role in the universal equilibrium. The war – like death, in the individual condition – corresponds to the other cosmic act which the man ignores or of which is afraid: the regression in the primordial amorphous, in which all losing between one another and are melting in unity"<sup>45</sup>.

As the result of the war was anticipated, opportunists like those trying to save their sink renouncing to the fascism have appeared all over. Enzo Bolasco - the ex Italian press attaché at Lisbon and a friend of Eliade was an example of the manner in which all the opportunists in Europe could end. "Bolasco was an old and passionate fascist – Eliade notices in his *Journal*. But, after the coup of Badoglio he became monarchist, anti-German, pro-English, etc. In this sense, he also delivered a series of ridiculous manifests. Then, he went to the Badoglio Italy. He hoped to keep his position under the anti-fascists, too. So far it seems he was shot"<sup>46</sup>.

Eliade realizes that the rupture with his country was for good, that he is isolated by the Romanian public, that new young generations will grow up without *Maitrey*, *Return from Eden* and *The Hooligans*, that he will have from now on "to start to write only for myself, for some friends who will survive and for the future readers". So, Eliade didn't believe in the solidity of the new configuration of Europe. He will write for the "tomorrow readers", including among them those in the country, too. About

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 228.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 230.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 232.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 235.

<sup>46</sup> He was shot by the French Committee from Alger, being accused of "fascist spy".

them he notices: "How much surprise for them discovering me later"<sup>47</sup>. The fate of Eliade regarding the ephemeral new state of things in the Eastern Europe was resulting from the conviction that the Marxism couldn't be an ideology available for man. "If the Marxism will triumph in world – Eliade notices on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 1945 - and the Christianise will be abolished, then it is demonstrated that the man cannot support the paradox of *to be man*; of having, *he*, the finite and the ephemeral, the nostalgia of the infinite and eternity; of trying all the experiences and knowing all the fallings to be able to get the coincidence with the Absolute, its reintegration and regeneration". If, although something would happen like this, then Eliade considers "it's better to finish with the human condition" and "to go back to the natural biological condition giving up to the spiritual liberty we have profaned it and of which, directly speaking, we have almost never profited effectively.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 1945 Eliade notices his *Journal* about the meeting between Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill and the conversations at Yalta during the period of 4-11 February: "The whole world burning. The present fusion has a single advantage: that the metal melted with so many sacrifices can be moulded in any type of patterns. If the three... will have political genius and good faith, they'll be able to mould the world in fusion in perfect patterns. If not, we are going to have to deal again with the old, used forms. Later, they couldn't do anything, ("Strike while the iron is hot"). Excepting the case in which a third world war will melt the world again"<sup>48</sup>.

Between other events, e.g. Roosevelt's death, convince him that "The Soviets will gain the war and the peace", while for Romania could redefining "the epoch of the Russian protectorate". "On Radio Bucharest – he notices on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 1945 – we hear only about what the Soviets are doing, thinking or saying. Our poor leaders are only some tools. At the first gesture of autonomy they will be pushed away. That's why, probably they'll don't do it". He wasn't wrong, contrary.

The "wild" struggles in Berlin – noticing about them on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1945 – offer to Eliade the occasion to meditate upon the German mythology which Hitler tried to rebirth<sup>49</sup>. Here it is what he notices in his *Journal*: "Hitler succeeded at least this: to put up-to-date the destiny of the Nibelungs and in the mythological order, to accomplish *Ragnerök*- the final catastrophe. Since 1934 I was wondering how a political, revolutionary movement can assimilate a pessimistic mythology ending with necessity in *Ragnerök* ... How can you ask a nation to follow you assuring it that depending on the measure it understands your mission, fatally reaches the disaster? This paradox had been obsessing me for 12 years and as many times I've discussed the problem of Hitler's I told it"<sup>50</sup>.

In short notices, without any other comments, Eliade writes down "the news of Mussolini's execution", exposed to view in the market (30<sup>th</sup> of April 1945) and "the news of Hitler's death" (1<sup>st</sup> of May 1945). He learns about the capitulation of Germany when he was at Ericceira with Calin Botez, member of the Romania's legation. Regarding

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<sup>47</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...* p. 295.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 319-320.

<sup>49</sup> The German mythology suggests the final fight between "heroes" and "monsters", a struggle ending by a final defeat of the heroes.

<sup>50</sup> ELIADE, Mircea – *The Portuguese Journal...* p. 359-360.

this event, Eliade notices: "A stranger was running in the market crying: La guerre est finie! A guerra acabou! The first and the only one – enthusiastic". It wasn't a surprise for Eliade because as he notices "from two months any surprises wasn't possible anymore. We all knew that things will finish in this way – and the huge capitulations of the German army from West and Italy seemed to anticipate the armistice".

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May he goes to Lisbon to watch the manifestations on the occasion of the "victory day". Two days later he notices in his *Journal*: "I wonder what is authentic, what general safe is and what is <internal politic> in these manifestations. Antonio de Souza, whom I saw, was telling me that everybody is sad. He especially refers to those from the left extreme who were waiting to be brought to power at the same time with the fascism falling down and war ending. But Salazar who did the big mistake to order mourning for Hitler's death and was cursed by the Anglo-American press – repaired his mistake breaking the relations with Germany. So that, he is also celebrating the <victory>, today"<sup>51</sup>.

When on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 1945 the first information about the atomic bomb dropped by the Allies at Hiroshima appeared in press – Eliade notices his thoughts about the signification of its usage and the consequences of such an invention for humanity. "I wonder how wars will be possible in the near future if this bomb is perfection could. Probably the ultimatum addressed by Truman and Attlee implies not only the Japanese, but also the Russians. So far, the Allies have this great military superiority; Russians could reach them in ten years. That's why the Anglo-Americans are in a hurry to announce it". On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August he mentions again other aspects regarding the war and the new invention which in his opinion is not else but the "last step" (for now) of the itinerary started near The Knowledge Tree that is "an ultra central product of the ration and scientific knowledge". First of all he notices "sensational turn of events" which the Soviet Union did it when it declared war to Japan: "With the atomic bomb it is sure that Japan will capitulate in a few days, in a few weeks maximum. But now, when the USSR is also in war, the victory will be of the <Allies>. And on peace, the USSR will have a word to say in the Extreme Orient, too. In fact it must be like this. The stupid ness has to be paid: always and by anyone". He analyses the whole war through the prism of the new events: "Anyhow the history of the war should be done, it is sure that the victory was conquered first of all with the help of the arms made by intelligence. Not the Russian proletarian made the miracle at Stalingrad, but the mathematicians, physicians and chemists in USSR and from all over the world who thought and worked in labs conforming themselves exclusively to the *scientific truth* and not to the Marxist or Hitler's ideology. If the German scientists discovered the atomic bomb in 1941-'42, today Hitler would be the world's master. The heroism of the whole German people didn't serve to anything. Germany has been crushed as any other big or small power, today. And this happened not by using material and crowds, but using arms perfection and invented by scientists. With or without heroism, with or without ideology..."<sup>52</sup>.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of August Eliade notices in his *Journal* that "Japan will accept the conditions of capitulation from Potsdam if the Allies guarantee the prerogatives of the

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 362.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 374-375.



emperor”, but two days later he writes full of hope the information heard from the fellows as that the Anglo-Saxons are decided “to resist firmly to the Soviet imperialism in the Central Europe” and the atomic bomb and some phrases from Truman’s speech “are warnings”. He affirms about them: “All these are interesting me first of all as a Romanian, but also as a European. I was terrified by the idea of the influence zones leading fatally to our political and cultural assimilation to the Soviet colossus. I was also terrified by the idea of the Chinese wall between the Occidental and the Oriental Europe which constituted the embryos of a new war”. In the equilibrium between the Anglo-Saxons and Russians he “sees” again “the hope of a Romanian autonomy”: We can’t permit us not taking into account all the political forces around us. To adder totally to one of them (as we have done in the case of Germany) means to risk our existence. The atomic bomb saved for now the world from a Soviet supremacy. But this doesn’t mean that the world can return to the bourgeoisie, etc. I can’t see other out coming but the socialism”<sup>53</sup>. He was right at least regarding the half part of Europe, that part situated East from the Berlin’s wall.

So, Eliade suggested himself not to do many notices about war, he although observes in his *Journal* many aspects and makes many interesting comments regarding the military and political events, he proceeds – it’s true – to a selection of them, depending on one essential criteria: the impact of the events upon Romania, his native country which he represents in Lisbon. These are observed first as a Romanian and then as a European. He is interested by the fate of Europe from the two perspectives. Remarkable is the fact that Eliade intuited with an hour earlier before those who had the duty to do it the danger represented by the Soviets for the peace of the world and its post war organization. The readers of his *Journal* have now really the “surprise” to observe this thing.

(Tradução para inglês de Alina Stoica)

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 377.