

# The unity of latinity and the assumption of the Christian heritage as a socio-political ideal: about Mircea Eliade's Broken Dreams

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## Abstract:

Between 1941-1945, Mircea Eliade was culturally attached to Portugal. During this time he published several books and studies in which he was concerned about the issue of latinity. His reflections are both cultural-religious, but also political. The central theme is the special mission that the Romanians have to fulfill, the "Latinos of the Orient", both within the other Latin peoples, as well as within the whole universal culture. The present study analyzes these considerations, trying to show to what extent they are still current.

**Keywords:** Latinity, Romanian culture, Lusitanian-Romanian relations, Mircea Eliade

## Introduction

Mircea Eliade was not only a historian of religions, but also a philosopher of culture. In the present study we will refer to him precisely in this position, presenting the way in which the scientist and the writer of Romanian origin considered Latinity as a matrix of the universal culture.

From the time of his youth, Eliade comes into contact with the cultural creations of the Latin countries. For example, although he will come to criticize the almost exclusive dependence of the Romanian intellectuality on the Francophone culture, he approaches "naturally" <sup>2</sup> the French literature, science and philosophy. His passion for Honoré de

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<sup>2</sup> Natale Spineto, *Mircea Eliade, historian of religion*, translated by Șerban Stati and Magdalena Ionescu, Curtea Veche, Bucharest, 2009, p. 62-63.

Balzac<sup>3</sup> is acknowledged – about which he wanted to write a book, an unfinished project -, with articles about other French writers: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Pierre de Ronsard, Jean-Henri Fabre, Denis Diderot, Romain Rolland, André Gide and so on. From the first years of the formation, a period marked by feverish, but chaotic readings, we can name readings from Montesquieu and Voltaire, from the Egyptologist Gaston Maspéro and from the sociologist Fustel de Coulange; his interest in French occultism and alchemy or orientalism and the history of religions leads him to such authors as Silvain Lévi, Paul Foucart, Solomon Reinach, Alfred Loisy, Étienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain.

This affinity of Eliade for the French culture will be doubled by intense readings in Italian (see the obsession for Giovanni Papini, which will be translated as a chapter in the novel *The Diary of a Short Sighted Adolescent*, or the scientific interest in the works of Vittorio Macchioro or Raffaele Pettazzoni), Spanish (José Ortega y Gasset) or, later, Portuguese. The latter will become accessible to him especially during the period when he was named culturally attached to the Romanian Embassy in Lisbon (1941-1945)<sup>4</sup>. It is a decisive period in the biographical and intellectual route of Eliade's life, because, on the one hand, it is in continuity with the conception he expressed, in the intense interwar journalistic period, on the Romanian culture, respectively of the place and the role of the Romanian culture in the world<sup>5</sup>; on the other hand, the Portuguese period also meant a change of vision (both on a personal and collective level), an attempt to appreciate the Romanian culture at European and even world level – and here his reflections on the connections with other Latin cultures, at which we will refer to in the following.

### **Romanians, " the Latinos of the East", and Salazar's Portugal**

Named culturally attached (or secretary) at the Romanian Legation in Lisbon – after, for a very short period of time, he was press attached – Mircea Eliade proposed, as

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<sup>3</sup> See Mircea Eliade, *Memories*, 1907-1960, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1997, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> About this period see: Mircea Eliade, *Memories*, vol. 2, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1991, p. 55-80; Mircea Eliade, *The Portugal Journal and other writings*, volume 2, the second edition, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2007; Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Mircea Eliade: The Romanian Roots*, volume 2: From Bucharest to Lisbon (1934-1945), Criterion Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 368 and the following; Florin Țurcanu, *Mircea Eliade, The Prisoner of History*, translated by Monica Anghel and Dragoș Dodu, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2003, p. 396-432; Sorin Alexandrescu, *Mircea Eliade, From Portugal*, Bucharest, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Eliade's writings on this subject were reunited in Mircea Eliade, *Romanian Prophecy*, vol. 2, "Roza Vânturilor" Publishing House, Bucharest, 1990. In the Foreword to the first volume, Dan Zamfirescu emphasized Eliade's position as "a prophet of the Romanian people": "Up to Mircea Eliade, Romanian prophecy was not taken into account. ...Not the history of religions, not the scientist, not the exegesis of the myths of mankind fascinated the contemporaries, but the prophet Eliade ... Mircea Eliade's world prophecy is an extension of the Romanian culture in universality" (p. 7).

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his first wish, to learn the Portuguese language, with which, according to his own confession, had been in contact since he was in India<sup>6</sup>. Then he came into contact not with political, but especially cultural, Portuguese personalities, which is part of a true "Romanian cultural strategy"<sup>7</sup> outside. In the *Memories* there are mentioned the historian and the right-wing polemicist Alfredo Pimenta, the director of the Museum of Modern Art in Lisbon, the doctor Reinaldo do Santos, and the historian João Ameal, having close relations with Antonio Ferro, the Portuguese Minister of Propaganda, and with others in this ministry<sup>8</sup>.

As expected, Eliade best accomplished his cultural mission in writing. Between 1942-1944 he published several articles in the Portuguese newspapers, some of which later appeared in Spanish, and also in Madrid. The intention was to make some Romanian writers known (Eminescu, Iorga, Rebreanu, and so on), but in other articles some comparisons could be made between Romania and Portugal from the perspective of the wider context of Latinity<sup>9</sup>.

One of the most important studies published now is entitled "Latina gente e regina..." – a true study program regarding the Lusitanian-Romanian relations, respectively regarding Eliade's conception of the nature and the role of Latinity<sup>10</sup>. The title comes from a poem by Vasile Alecsandri, *Ginta latină e regină*, which had been awarded at the great poetry competition in Montpellier and illustrated the "golden age" of Latin solidarity, the one from 1870 to 1880.

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<sup>6</sup> Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Romanian Roots...*, vol. 2, p. 391, believes that Eliade never learned Portuguese so well as to write in this language, and the studies published in the Portuguese press would have been translated by someone else. This opinion is somewhat denied by Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 14, who wrote the following: "...Eliade did not know Portuguese before, but, knowing Italian, Spanish and French, he learned it quickly, out of sheer curiosity... During his four and a half years of residence in Portugal, Eliade could not have spoken (fluently) Portuguese – in the Journal, he admits that he spoke with some people in French - but he read enormously and, secondly, he referred to the Portuguese culture wherever he could do it". In fact, Eliade himself wrote on this subject a few decades later: in a note dated February 15, 1960, he confessed that he forgot 90% of Portuguese, although he can still read it without any difficulty. See Mircea Eliade, *Journal. Found pages: October 9, 1959-3 May 1962*, Tracus Arte, Bucharest, 2017, p. 62.

<sup>7</sup> See Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> According to Mac Linscott Ricketts, *Romanian Roots...*, volume 2, p. 373.

<sup>9</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu points out that these studies and articles – in fact, popularizing – nevertheless attest Eliade as "a European literate", who, "wherever he is in Europe, writes about a" local "author in the same way, that is, from the perspective of the great European culture...". Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> The study is found in Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...*, volume 2, p. 283-291. Mac Linscotts Ricketts, *Romanian Roots...*, volume 2, p. 370, states that this study led to comments in the Portuguese press when it first appeared.

The main thesis of the study is that the French book industry, on which European culture was highly dependent at that time, did not translate and did not publish books representing the Latin spirit. Thus, important Russian, American, British, German, and even Dutch, Finnish, and Japanese writers were translated but not Portuguese, Spanish, Romanian, or Italian writers. Eliade is of the opinion that this fact is a symptomatic one: since the French writers themselves would not have "Latin spiritual values" (being oriented towards the liberal ideas of the French Revolution), it is not surprising that their publishers are not interested in writers from other Latin countries. This situation has as the main negative effect that the Portuguese, Spaniards and Italians do not know Romanian novelists, poets and philosophers, and vice versa.

Eliade names in his study some very talented Portuguese writers, with whom he had recently become acquainted, and gives the publicity the names of some outstanding Romanian novelists, who were not known to the European public because they had never been translated into French: on the one hand, a series of Portuguese writers ahead of Eça de Queirós, and on the other hand, Liviu Rebreanu, Mihail Sadoveanu, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Lucian Blaga, and so on.

The author's strategy of this study is that these authors should be translated, published and promoted much more than before, an important role in this process having "the individual initiative". First, it must be acknowledged that, "beyond the fact that we are not aware of the creations of the Latin spirit, we make an inaccurate idea of the virtues of Latinism itself." (In the sense that this concept is more "elastic" than it is commonly believed...) Then, "for a return to Mistral", it is necessary to eliminate "intermediaries" – in this case, the French book industry – because "the most important effort", the most fertile consequence for the future of all Latin countries *is to get to know each other directly* (emphasis added) by learning our languages, organizing a well-targeted translation campaign, encouraging our university students to devote themselves to Roman languages and cultures". However, it must be acknowledged that a direct knowledge of the Roman culture "does not improvise from day to day", and here a "personal initiative", doubled by enthusiasm would be needed, Eliade ending with optimism: "and I do not doubt that there will be enough initiative in every neo-Latin country so that this sample of expansion and the development of the Latin consciousness can start at any moment"<sup>11</sup>.

Other important data regarding Mircea Eliade's conception of Latinity can be found in the two small books written during the "Portuguese period": *Os Romanos Latinos do Oriente* ("Romanians, Latinos of the East") and *Salazar and the revolution in Portugal*<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 290-291.

<sup>12</sup> The two writings, the first initially written in Portuguese, the second in Romanian, are found in *Ibidem*, p. 7-218 and 219-280.

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The first book was written between September 29 and December 4, 1942, at the level of the knowledge and of the bibliography from the early 1940s, representing "an epoch document", "a kind of summary or even a last vulgarization of the Romanian historiography before communism. <sup>13</sup>"In the preface of the Portuguese edition of the book, the author states that "the happiest way to write an introduction to the history of a people is to start with its geopolitics and to end with the study of its historical mission", and from this perspective "it would be interesting to write – one day a historical parallel between the Portuguese and the Romanians, the farthest Latin peoples from each other". As Sorin Alexandrescu stated, "we see here the almost obsessive idea of Eliade in most of his writings in Portugal, especially in the first two or three years, that of the parallelism between the two countries and a (partially) common mission of them in Europe, for example, the resistance against Islam and the dependence on a sea and a river, respectively": on the one hand, the Atlantic, which is the "lung of Portugal", and on the other, the mouths of the Danube and the Black Sea, which constitute "the point of support " for Romania.<sup>14</sup>

After that, as the same interpreter pointed out, "propagandistically, the text had to show ...that Romania and Portugal, although at the extremes of European Romanism and despite the differences between them, knew the same fate of small countries, dependent on the protectors, sometimes sympathetic, sometimes selfish: England and France for Portugal, France and Germany for Romania"<sup>15</sup>.

The guidelines of the exposition of the history of the Romanians by Eliade focus on those points that should have legitimized the politics of the national Romanian state: state continuity, the resistance of the Romanians against the invasions of the east and south-east or the permanent attempts to make a unitary state. Thus, the first part of the book deals with the origin and the formation of the Romanians, with an emphasis on the continuity in their present territory, that is, of "Greater Romania" before 1940. The second part of the book is entitled "Essential moments in the history of Romanians" and is centered on the idea of "a people without luck", doubled by that of the role of sacrifice of the Romanians. Finally, the last chapter refers to the spiritual life of Romania, and here Eliade distinguishes the two myths specific to the Romanians: the supreme sacrifice, in *Mesterul Manole*<sup>16</sup>, respectively the death-bride, in *Miorița*<sup>17</sup>. The characteristic of the Romanian culture is that everything is created for the moment, not for eternity, and this way of perceiving time explains the "drama" of Romanians" to live

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<sup>13</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 28.

<sup>16</sup> \*\*\*, *Meșterul Manole*, Paideia, Bucharest, 2013. See also Lucian Blaga, *Meșterul Manole*, Agora, Bucharest, 2009; Octavian Goga, *Meșterul Manole*, Hoffman, Bucharest, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> \*\*\*, *Miorița. Balade populare*, Cartex, Bucharest, 2007.

every moment as if it were the last of their lives." Regarding the value of the Romanian popular culture, the author concludes that "it is one of the most organic and substantial known in Europe". What differentiates the Romanian culture from other cultures is that the cultured art remains indissolubly related to the popular one, as it appears in the case of Cantemir, Eminescu, Hajdeu, Hodobescu, Pârvan, Blaga, Iorga, Creangă or Sadoveanu, and among younger authors like Arghezi .

The second book, "Salazar and the Revolution in Portugal", was written between November 19, 1941 and May 29-30, 1942, appearing at the Gorjan publishing house in Bucharest in 1942. The book draws a portrait of Salazar<sup>18</sup>, the Portuguese dictator of that time, centered on its moral and religious sides, a fact evident especially in the 13th chapter, entitled "A spiritual revolution"<sup>19</sup>. For our theme, however, a special importance has the preface of the book, a "true manifesto"<sup>20</sup> in which it is justified not only the reason for writing the book but also the whole activity of Eliade in the recent years. The central theme is the search for the answer to the question: "Is a spiritual revolution possible?"<sup>21</sup>

As stated, the idea that politics is subordinate to the spiritual has its foundation in Eliade's Indian experience. He himself confesses: "In Calcutta ... I discovered the spiritual possibilities of Gandhi's political activity, that spiritual discipline that allowed you to stand before the blows and do not respond. So was Christ ...<sup>22</sup> ". As for the answer to the above question, it is an affirmative one, as Eliade believes, a "spiritual revolution" had already taken place in Portugal. We find here a "Christian form of totalitarianism", because the state led by Salazar is based on the notions of person, not of individual, and of love, not of class hatred (as in Marxism). The Salazar state, in its capacity as a Christian and totalitarian state, is founded, "first of all, on love and on the replacement of the individual, of the citizen, with the family, an organic community then extended to the corporation and to the state"<sup>23</sup>.

The fulfillment of this revolution, as the fulfillment of a national destiny, was possible only when Portugal ceased to be subjected to a "Europeanization" attempt. In other words, "Europe did not begin to take Portugal into account until this became itself

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<sup>18</sup> See António de Oliveira Salazar, *Doctrine and Action: Internal and Foreign Policy of the New Portugal, 1928–1939*, Faber and Faber, London, 1939; Michael Derrick, R.J. Stove, *The Portugal of Salazar*, Campion Books, New York, 1938; Hugh Kay, *Salazar and Modern Portugal*, Hawthorn Books, New York, 1970; Tom Gallagher, *Salazar: The Dictator Who Refused To Die*, C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> See Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...*, volume 2, p. 175 and the following.

<sup>20</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 43.

<sup>21</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...* volume 2, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> Idem, *Ordeal by Labyrinth. Conversations with Claude Henri-Rocquet*, translated by Doina Cornea, Dacia publishing house, Cluj Napoca, 1990, p. 51.

<sup>23</sup> See Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 48.

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". Why this? Because Europe can only be conveniently assimilated by the elite, Eliade believes, evoking the example of Spain for Corneille, of England for Voltaire or of Greece for Goethe. "But when nations as a whole try (or are forced) to imitate one or other of the European countries, borrowing systems of thought and governance, then they either wreck, or reach hybrid, weak creations, standard forms, which mean, beyond of their own sterilization, the death of Europe"<sup>24</sup>.

As expected, some exegetes have seen here evidence of anti-Europeanism and anti-Westernism in Eliade, in the sense of a fold on the traditional local values<sup>25</sup>. In fact, things are more nuanced, because the "local" does not oppose Eliade's universal, that is, the European one, but only another "local" way of taking on the European trends. This important clarification is made by Sorin Alexandrescu, who also distinguishes, based on Eliade's reflections, four "European" paradigms: 1. A maintenance in non-communicating local systems (a kind of anachronistic "Europe of ethnicities"); 2. The import of an abstract system of rules as a basis for its own modernization, which leads to "hybrid creations" and, in essence, to the discredit of Europe itself (a fact which is criticized by both Portuguese "fundamentalists" and Romanian "traditionalists"); 3. Cultivating an own synthesis, in which the local tradition, expressed in European language, becomes interesting for other European countries (a kind of "Europe of nations"); 4. Europe as a transnational system of all European countries<sup>26</sup>. It is obvious that Eliade advocated for the third model, while the model that has prevailed, which we are experiencing today, is the fourth.

Another important idea of the preface is that, carrying out a "spiritual revolution", Portugal is a model for Europe in general and for Romania in particular. Thus, the "Portuguese model" is the proof of the success that Europe can become not only a continent of nations, but one of "Christian nations". "I think that I did not go too far away from the problems of our nation and of our time, revealing this book, which is about the recent history of a country from the other side of Latinity" – Eliade says. The "great turmoil of today" and the sacrifice of youth "are all reduced to the problem of the restoring or the disappearing of Europe, of this Europe that considers only those countries that do not betray their destiny and suppress their history". The Christian revolution committed by Salazar, through which Portugal was saved, it is a historical experience that "compels us – as Christians, as Latinos, as Europeans – to review a whole series of concepts: tradition, nation, freedom"<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal*, volume 2, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> See for example Marta Petreu, *An Infamous Past or the Rise of fascism in Romania*, Apostrof Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1999, p. 344. The author thus opposes Eliade's so-called anti-Europeanism, the pro-European attitude of Emil Cioran.

<sup>26</sup> Sorin Alexandrescu, cited works, p. 49-50.

<sup>27</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal*... volume 2, p. 10.

The two principles that we find clearly expressed by Mircea Eliade regarding Latinity are: first, the need of the Latin peoples to support, cultivate and promote their own cultural values and their *people of culture*, without falling into the temptation of taking over foreign models; Secondly, the need for these Latin people, regardless of the spatial-temporal distance, to know their common cultural and religious background. These are two principles that Mircea Eliade will follow when he publishes studies and articles during his period as a diplomat in Portugal.

### ***Dor and saudade***

This article, published in 1942<sup>28</sup>, starts from the finding that, in a book from 1914, *A saudade Portuguesa*, Michaelis de Vasconcelos searched for words similar to *saudade* in various other European languages, without referring to the Romanian word "dor" (In any case, the words found were only imperfect approximations). According to Eliade, not only that "dor" and *saudade* are almost synonymous, but they reflect the essence of the Romanian and Portuguese soul.

Almost all the study continues with an analysis of the rich meanings of the word "dor" in Romanian: it expresses that indefinable state of someone dissatisfied with the present and attracted by the past, by a certain place or by another person; it can be not so much a nostalgia for something, as it is a general melancholy of the man who realizes the situation of the man separated from God, thus alone in the universe ("the void of the human being abandoned in the world"); Finally, the yearning expresses a feeling of despair, but a despair that is not definitive, does not degenerate into a tragic one. Regarding doina, Eliade concludes that this popular song is the quintessential vehicle of yearning. But references to "yearning" are not only made for popular creation, but also for cultured Romanian poetry: see for example Eminescu's poetry *One wish alone have I* and the volume of lyrics by Lucian Blaga entitled *At the Courtyard of yearning*. "Although it is a term rich in metaphorical values – Eliade concludes – the yearning has not lost contact with the real world, it remains fixed in concrete. Whatever it is, passion or desire, thirst or hunger for real experience, all of these can be expressed in Romanian through the word yearning, which has become the expression of any desire and which implies the human being as a whole<sup>29</sup>."

In connection with the writing of this article, Eliade affirmed that at its base was a re-reading of Eminescu's poetry, *One wish alone have I*, in which new meanings would have been found: not only the reintegration into the Cosmos, but also the desire to find, through death, his true cosmic family (waters, mountains, stars, forests) – so not only

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 327-335. „Dor-Romanian saudade” was initially published in Portuguese language in *Acção* no. 89, December 31, 1942.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 335.

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reintegration, but also "returning home to his own."<sup>30</sup> What we need to keep in mind is Eliade's intention to find and interpret common literary themes between two distant Latin cultures, the Romanian and the Portuguese. We have here the proof that the theoretical principles stated, regarding the identity of the Latin cultures, even separated by time and space, were not a statement without a real basis<sup>31</sup>.

### **Camões and Eminescu**

In his Journal, Eliade made a passionate reference to the best known Portuguese writer, the poet Camões. In fact, during his time in Portugal, Eliade wrote an article referring to the latter and the most important Romanian poet, Mihai Eminescu<sup>32</sup>. The two national poets, the author believed, represented paradigmatic examples in the case of Latin culture, exemplary illustration of how, each in particular, enriched the "Latin genius". In other words, even if one was a Renaissance poet and the other a romantic poet, and even if the two were at a distance of three centuries, Camões and Eminescu were living proof of their re born ability that Latinity also gave proof of: Latin peoples, creative peoples par excellence, owe this dynamism to its essential values - "language, faith, culture, human dignity". The creative traditions were those that transformed the native cultures into "spiritual values of universal circulation", because the Latin civilization was the one that made each local culture an "ecumenical culture".

Camões's role was mainly to duplicate, at a spiritual level, the Portuguese geographical discoveries. In a "revolutionary" act, "what Camões brought new to the universal culture was precisely the transformation in spiritual values of the *geographies* and experiences considered until then as "barbaric" and without any higher significance". (About the "Camões's revolution in its aesthetic and moral meaning" Eliade announces that he will write two studies, which have remained only at the project

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<sup>30</sup> According to Mac Linscott Ricketts, cited works, p. 371.

<sup>31</sup> As for the *saudade* – the Portuguese "yearning" – Eliade gives an emotional lyrical testimony about this state, which he experienced in Portugal. "Nowhere in any other country have I heard a call more melancholy, more heartbreaking than that of the nerd from Lisbon" - wrote Eliade, seeing here "the most perfect expression of *saudade*." This term is therefore not an invention of the Coimbra, of the poets and of the romantic travelers; it is really the proof of the essence of the soul of a people, and the Portuguese, we are told, "they are a sad people". The Portuguese encountered by Eliade are characterized by him as follows: "They are melancholy, they smile all the time, they are lost, they are as affable as all those who carry with them an unspoken sadness, for no reason". See Mircea Eliade, *Memories*, volume 2, p. 77-78.

<sup>32</sup> Originally published in Portuguese, in 1942, in the *Acção* newspaper, it will later be reproduced in Romanian: Mircea Eliade, "Camões and Eminescu", in *Vremea* XVI (1943), May 9, no. 687, pp. 8-10. We used the text reprinted in Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...*, vol. 2, pp. 292-302.

stage: *The island of love and mythical geographies*, respectively *Camões, an attempt at a philosophy of culture*.)

On the same plane as Camões is, Eliade thinks, the Romanian poet Mihai Eminescu, considered "one of the greatest lyrical geniuses of Latinity"<sup>33</sup>. "The Latin genius is enriched by the poetic creation of Eminescu just as it was enriched by the creations of Camões", Eliade believes, because the first one "incorporated a vast and wild *terra incognita* and transformed into spiritual values experiences considered until then as lacking of significance". Especially the poem *Luceafărul*, but also in other of Eminescu's creations, make of the "barbarous geography" what was Dacia for the Romans, a specific *Weltanschauung*, expressing a "characteristic attitude in front of the Cosmos and of God"<sup>34</sup>.

Eliade's reflections on the two national authors justify his remarks even from the beginning of the study, where it was stated that his intention will not frame neither in the comparative literary history nor in the critique of the influences, but in capturing the "spiritual values" that Camões and Eminescu embodied. According to Mircea Eliade, "the mental universe of Latinity is an expanding Universe, it is never the same, it never rests." Thus, under the sign of Latinity, the universality of Camões and Mihai Eminescu is always highlighted, being a common spiritual convergence, beyond their Portuguese and Romanian origin or their spatial-temporal distance.

### **Instead of conclusions**

It is not to be believed that the interest in Latinity was a concern only in the Romanian or Portuguese period of Eliade. In a study published in a magazine in Spain in 1953, he expressed the universal relevance of the Romanian culture, of which the Romanian intellectuals had to be aware of, in a manner similar to that of his previous writings. First of all, from a cultural and spiritual point of view, Europe is not a monolithic bloc; in order to be able to "form new syntheses", it needs the orphic and Zalmoxian dimension that the Romanian culture carries in itself. Thus, with reference to the Aurelian withdrawal, when "the seed of Rome was not lost after leaving Dacia", Eliade wonders if Europe "*can still allow this second departure of Dacia today?* Being part, body and spiritual, from Europe, can we still be sacrificed without this sacrifice to

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<sup>33</sup> About this Eliade will publish another article in Portuguese. It is reprinted, in the Romanian language, in Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...*, vol. 2, pp. 303-315: "Eminescu – the poet of the Romanian race".

<sup>34</sup> This "cosmic Christianity" is a specific theme in a certain period of Eliade's cultural-religious conception, but its analysis would take us too far from the purpose of the present study.

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jeopardize the existence and the spiritual integrity of Europe? It depends not only on our survival, as a nation, but also on the survival of the West."<sup>35</sup>

Unfortunately, Mircea Eliade's reflections remained unknown and unappreciated for a long time, both in Romania and Portugal. (We are able to mention only one exception here: a volume published in 2000, bilingual<sup>36</sup>, in which, together with Eliade's study of "Camões and Eminescu", there were two chronological lists, useful for understanding the socio-historical and cultural context, in which the two lived, respectively fragments, in the Romanian and Portuguese languages, from *Luceafărul* and *Lusiada*.) And yet, in today's Anglophone predominance, these reflections are more current than ever. Latin countries must rediscover their common heritage, and on the other hand, seek to develop spiritually in relation to their "sisters." Beyond certain inaccuracies or political motivations tributary to the time<sup>37</sup>, we believe that here is the importance of the message about the nature and the role of Latin in the universal culture, as seen by Eliade in Romania, from Portugal...

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<sup>35</sup> Mircea Eliade, "The Destiny of Romanian Culture", in *Destiny. Journal of Romanian culture*, notebook no. 6-7, August 1953, pp. 19-32. The study is resumed in Mircea Eliade, *Romanian Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 139-151, here p. 151.

<sup>36</sup> Idem, *Camões & Eminescu*, essay by Mircea Eliade and poetic anthology, prefaced by José Augusto Seabra, Libra Cultural Foundation, Bucharest, 2000.

<sup>37</sup> They are highlighted, among others, by Florin Țurcanu in his monograph, respectively by Mihai Zamfir. The latter underlined some of Eliade's shortcomings from this period: naive nationalism in the work dedicated to the history of Romanians – in fact, a "fiction" –, which he will then gradually detach from; idealization from the work on Salazar; Eliade's right-wing options, also extended to Lisbon, which it seems he will be unable to break for a long time, and so on, see Mihai Zamfir, "Mircea Eliade and Portugal", in Mircea Eliade, *Portugal Journal...*, vol. 1, p. 69-91.