

MIRCEA ELIADE'S *JOURNAL* – AS AN ATTEMPT AT DEVELOPING A PERSONAL SOTERIOLOGY

Abstract: This study completes the research I began in a previous article called “Mircea Eliade, Under the Terror of History”, published in the Ovidius Annals of Philology, Constanta, no.1/2012, which covered the 1941-1945 period, when he worked as cultural attaché to the Romanian Embassy in Lisbon, after having left Romania (as it would prove later, forever) in April 1940, under tense historical and political circumstances. I examine not only the writings that Eliade published during this span of time – the books and the essays that were circulated both in Portugal and Romania – but also the genesis of those editorial projects, which would shape the author's later literary works, as well as those on the phenomenology of religion. I trace Eliade's efforts to distance himself from Romania's political problems (in the 1930s, he had aligned himself with the Iron Guard, a fascist movement), and his attempts to build for himself a career as an international writer. The reading grid, by means of which I scrutinise the writer's evolution, is essentially provided by the journal that Eliade kept throughout this period. It remained almost unknown for about half a century, until Humanitas Publishing House decided to print it, in 2006, under the title The Portuguese Journal.

Key words: journal, diaristic writing, nationalism, Romanian nationalism, Eugene Ionesco, Emil Cioran, demons of the past, soteriology, salvation techniques, Work, Creation, Incipit vita nova.

The editorial accomplishments of Mircea Eliade's “Lusitanic period” are hardly spectacular. All his imaginative powers seem to have been blocked, and, on almost every page in the *Journal*, he complains of *the drought, the agony, the mediocre creativity* that define the indigence of the Portuguese environment, as well as his own capacities. We quote at random: “I deeply regret the ordinariness of the Portuguese environment” (June 3rd 1949), “my whole life has turned into such a sheer agony that I have the impression that here, in Lisbon, I am the only one that stands against it” (November 27th 1942), “I think that I have never experienced a less creative period, than this one” (April 11th 1945) (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 285).

Nevertheless, he succeeded in completing a number of projects, which, in moments of self-sufficiency, he prides himself on: the drama *Oameni și pietre* [People and Stones] (1944), the novella *Un om mare* [A Great Man] (1945). The writer is convinced that the former is, perhaps, “one of the most powerful dramas that has ever been written in Romanian” (idem, 1: 224). He also works, though discontinuously, at another Romanian mega-project, *Viață nouă* [A New Life], a novel he had begun in London,² but, especially, he keeps a diary, as he had done all his

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² “I’ve decided to start writing *A New Life*...It must reflect the whole drama of modern Romania. Obviously, the legionnaire tragedy will play an essential role. However, I shouldn’t forget that Romania, as a whole, must be presented in my novel. I don’t know how much time it will take me; perhaps several years, perhaps the rest of my

life.³ For all this, the tension inherent in the events the diarist directly experienced, between 1941 and 1945, make this journal *the major work* of the Portuguese period.

To say that the memoir represents a significant segment of Eliade's work sounds like a truism. We however move beyond the sphere of *loci communes* when stating that the journal is the germinating ground⁴ all his later work proceeded from, as is the case with Eugene Ionesco's journal, as well. Precautious *seekers for authenticity, and experimentalists*, both of them yielded, at about the same age, to the temptation of the journal. Ionesco wrote *Jurnal la şaisprezece ani* [The Journal of a Sixteen Year Old], of which a few pages⁵ were published in 1938, while an earlier version of Eliade's *Romanul adolescentului miop* [The Novel of the Short-Sighted Teenager] was entitled *Jurnalul unui om sucit* [The Journal of an Abnormal Man].⁶

Sorin Alexandrescu has produced a refined hierarchy of the layers of Eliade's memoirist work, along a ten-level cline (Alexandrescu, 112 *et passim*). *The Portuguese Journal* may represent the "zero" level ("intentionally non-codified", in terms of the analysis mentioned above), and is the only journal of this type published so far – symptomatically, two decades after the author's death–, the whole text of the *Journal* ("the original *Journal*") has not come out yet, and, "due to some testamentary provisions" (idem, 115), might not be printed too soon. Eliade's unpublished correspondence is in a similar situation. We deduce from this that the writer took (legitimate) precautions, when it came to the publication of those pages of his memoirs which refer to some very sensitive, sentimental, or ideological aspects of his biography. The full part of the glass is the fact that *The Portuguese Journal* does not fall in *this* category of diaristic work. It is a totally *different* kind of journal, and remains Eliade's first "zero degree" journal so far printed.

Most readers are familiar with *Fragments d'un journal*, published by Gallimard in 1973, where Eliade, in Gidean descendancy, raises the curtain *calculatedly*, in order to give us an ample

life" (Mircea Eliade, "Jurnalul romanului Viață nouă" [The Journal of the New Life novel, 1940-1942, in *Jurnalul portughez* [The Portuguese Journal], 1: 384)

³ The *Journal*, from which fragments have been published both in „exile” and in Romania, has not been entirely published, twenty years after the writer's death.

⁴ Sorin Alexandrescu calls it „the original textual magma” (op. cit., 118)

⁵ See Eugen Ionescu, *Jurnal la şaisprezece ani*, 71-81. One of the friends whom Ionescu calls Mihail (Mircea?) reminds us of the young Eliade. The text begins premonitorily: „I and my friends, Mihail and Sergiu, shall conquer the world”, while, in the following pages, Mihail's Spartan programme caricatures the ascetic exercises which „the short-sighted adolescent”, i.e. Eliade had imposed on himself: „Mihail cannot afford any moment of liberty, except for Sunday afternoons, reserved for our discussions, yet even these he establishes beforehand, according to a strict programme. He wakes up at five in the morning. He enters the unheated bathroom, opens the window, takes of his shirt, despite the fact that the snow often falls in the room. Then, naked, he learns by heart two stanzas at a time from *Luceafărul* [Hyperion, i.e. poem by the great Romanian Romantic poet Mihai Eminescu] and recites them. Afterwards he does a sort of violent gymnastics with movements he himself has invented; he has a book of gymnastic exercises, yet it does not satisfy him: he does not stretch his arms, he throws them; and he repeats the movement a hundred times instead of ten times, as the book reads. The exercises last for about three quarters of an hour, and all ends with a cold shower. Until leaving for school, while drinking his tea, he repeats his lessons. He walks to the high school and arrives there at eight o'clock sharp, rings the bell, so that he should waste no time. Everyone is amazed at his power of concentration, at his capacity to memorize...during the breaks, he retrieves quickly from the desk his Italian dictionary and the vocabulary notes, and learns. In addition to the foreign languages he studies at school, he also studies other two languages by himself...He resolved to read nothing that is too amusing, or too easy, and gives himself no time to rest. And he doesn't rest. He sleeps five hours every night...He prepares himself to conquer the world.” (Eugen Ionescu, *op.cit.*, p.75)

⁶ See the “Afterword” by Mircea Handoca to Mircea Eliade, *Romanul adolescentului miop*, Bucureşti, Muzeul Literaturii Române, Bucureşti, 1988, 222.

image of his readings, studies, travels, contacts, of the reflections of the writer and scholar, who had already reached fame. Here, the diarist takes time to fix the filters, to set up the stage-lighting, keeps the sequence of events under control, and looks very relaxed. He records the monotonous cadence of conferences, from New York and Amsterdam, followed by others in Tokyo, or in Ascona, breakfasts with Jung, or Denis de Rougemont, discussions with Henry Corbin, or Georges Bataille, his correspondence with Croce, or Etienne Gilson, everything in a predicable pageant of events. Nothing seems to interrupt the chain of his accomplishments, even if the author reserves the last of the one thousand pages of the *Journal* (in the Humanitas edition) to narrating the episode, intensely symbolical, of the fire that broke out in his office.

The tonality of *The Portuguese Journal* is *different* because the overpowering historical moment *does not allow* Eliade to keep a too calculated journal. The pendulum of history swings erratically, and the diarist does not have enough time to distance himself from the events, which he breathlessly notes, in a raw, *essentialised* form. Even if he passingly mentions a breakfast or a “whisky party” at some ambassador’s residence, he does so in order to write down his own reflections. The fashionable episode usually generates febrile comments, with an incidence which is either cultural, or existential. It is this kind of incidence that is absent from the pages of the *Journal* published in 1973. It is useless to search in *The Portuguese Journal* for such notations: “The blood that I sometimes feel in my mouth comes from my irritated gum. And indeed, I was right. The dentist decides to pull the tooth out immediately. However, I’ll have to take penicillin. And I shall feel the consequences... (August 3-4, 1973)”⁷. In Portugal, he does not have time to make such notations, although it is the notation of physical suffering⁸ that contributes fatally to the recording of the long chain of catastrophes, which succeed in an implacable sequence, on the Eastern front, in the spring of 1944, and culminates in Nina’s illness.

While the travel notes and the pages of the “Indian journal” pass through a long “maceration” process⁹, *The Portuguese Journal* is written *en prise directe*, the diarist does not have the necessary time to “codify” events, which systematically catch up with him. *The time for living* and *the time for confessing* overlap. The reader too runs “against time”, since he too has to advance breathlessly through the text, a sensation that only the *Journal* of Mihail Sebastian also induces. History, which Eliade loathes (yet, which also seduces him, as it happens with Cioran too), and structure the work as a *crescendo* seem to occasionally border the limits of the bearable. Persecuted by horrors that are sensibly *different*, taking risks, which ultimately prove to be *different* too, Eliade and Sebastian find themselves in the feverishness with which they write about their predicament that the same *History* forced upon them, while at thousands of kilometres away from each other (their affective distancing had consumed a few years earlier).

Having studied, from his early youth, *the techniques of salvation* in various religions of the world, Eliade appropriates for himself soteriological virtues, which he then activates in

⁷ ...Several pages later, he describes his dental sufferings *in extenso*, using specific terminology: „I went to the dentist to have my bad tooth pulled out, early in the morning. One of the roots had protracted into the sinus and Doctor W. filled the perforation with a sort of small plastic pellets. He tells me that I may lose the „pellets”. That is why, he tells me, that I shouldn’t cough or blow my nose, for a week. When I tell him that I was leaving for Palm Beach in a few days, he gives the names and phones of some dentists (December 20, 1973)”. (Mircea Eliade, *Jurnal*, 2: 140).

⁸ Insomnias and depressions torture him, at a hallucinating pace: „In the last month, I have had as many as ten nervous attacks a day.” „There are days when five-six neurotic storms test me.” (Eliade, 1: 245, 198).

⁹ *India* was published in 1934, although, as the author himself says, „many of these notes were written between 1928 and 1931” (Mircea Eliade, Preface, 25), and *Şantier* (roman indirect) [Work in Progress (an indirect novel)], in 1935. Sorin Alexandrescu places the Indian memoir on level 4. (*op. cit.*, 112).

moments of distress, and “Portugal” is a major one. Beyond the *derivate* purpose of any journal, Eliade attributes an explicitly therapeutic function to it, and sees in it *a defence against the nothingness that threatens him from all sides* (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 313).

The *labyrinth* is the figure that best circumscribes the writer’s woe during the wartime years.¹⁰ His covenant with Romania holds still firmly and, consequently, he tenaciously resists any temptation to *separate* himself from it, which may bring “healing” to him. For the time being, he is in the “hurricane’s eye”. It is very likely, (as Sorin Alexandrescu also suggests, 120) that Eliade might have “pruned” the *Journal* of some pro-legionnaire comments,¹¹ however the ideological stake seems to have been clearly subordinated to his *affective pact* with Romania. The terms in which he evokes his visceral attachment to his country generally belong to the somatic register: he is “consumed to the marrow”, he suffers *in his flesh* (1: 131) etc. In the former part of the *Journal*, the old wounds still bleed abundantly. He does not go as far as Cioran does in declaring that “I love Romania’s history with a heavy hatred”¹², however, like his friend from Paris, he can conceive of his love for Romania only in terms of *combustion* and *furor*. Cioran: “We will have to madly intensify our *ardor* for life to become *fire*...” “No matter how much my vanity and my *fury* would like to integrate Romania...” (*Schimbarea la față a României*, 49, 51). Eliade: “My *furious* love for my country, my *incandescent* nationalism destroys me” (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 102). Everything culminates in the affirmation which, later on, would be copiously (mis)interpreted: “If I didn’t feel so *Romanian*, I could easily detach myself from my toils imposed by circumstances. Yet Corneliu Codreanu had made of me a fanatical Romanian” (idem, 156). Analysing the sentence, Sorin Alexandrescu makes a few fine and necessary semantic dissociations, and concludes: “...Eliade does not accuse Codreanu of having indoctrinated him as a nationalist, neither does he see his own “fanaticism” as a defect, he only admits it as a moral duty: “truly, I owe this Romanian fanaticism of mine to Codreanu only. The expression clearly refers to the formation of his own identity, in the sense in which a student would refer to his guru” (Alexandrescu, *Mircea Eliade, dinspre Portugalia*, 170-171). Anyway, the fact that Eliade did not “change” it, testifies to the probity of his directly acknowledging, without marginal glosses, a filiation for which he assumes some responsibility, at least.

The drama that consumes him is aggravated by the impotency of conceiving his own destiny otherwise except in terms of *solidarity* with his people, at least in the foreseeable tragedy that followed the year 1942. All kinds of scenarios cross his mind (some of them premonitory: leaving for America, glory) which, in fact, he evokes only to reject them: “I am a Romanian. I cannot deny this now.” Or: “...What I cannot accept, what I cannot assimilate is the tragedy of my people...My despair springs from this Romanian destiny” (*Jurnalul portughez*, 162, 160).

The imminence of the catastrophe accompanies like a *baso continuo* the pages of the *Journal*. Is Eliade (naturally inclined to melancholy, which some attributed to his “Moldovianism”)¹³ exceeded by his depressive humours that reveal themselves in the

¹⁰ “I feel that I have been in a labyrinth for some time. I advance with difficulty, not knowing where to go to, whether I’m getting closer to the exit, or whether I’m going deeper and deeper into it.” (Mircea Eliade, *Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 347.)

¹¹ A few of them however testify to the slow extinction of an old sympathy: „In Bucharest, nobody fights for cause. Almost nobody – except the legionnaires – realizes what is in store for us, if the Anglo-Russians emerge victorious.” (Eliade, *Jurnalul portughez*, 1 : 131.)

¹² Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României*, 42.

¹³ At the age of twenty-two, Eliade had published a defiant article entitled „Împotriva Moldovei” [Against Moldova]; in *The Portuguese Journal*, in an attempt to comment on his own „Moldophobia” as an attempt to exorcise the

apocalyptic vision (at the time he was working at a novel called *Apocalypse*), which he projects over post-war Romania? Is the insistence with which he evokes the Russian danger, everywhere in the *Portuguese Journal*, the expression of a personal Russo-phobia? These are simple rhetorical questions, now that we know that the inferno that Eliade foresaw, materialized exactly as he said they would in the *Journal*: "...I imagine how the Romanian elites will perish, how all personalities will be crushed, how thousands, if not millions of Romanians will be deracinated..." (1: 225-226).

Eliade was confident of his own capacity for self-salvation, because he had been exercising it for a long time: "I can say that there is no personal pain that I cannot absorb, in a few hours, nor any personal tragedy that I cannot overcome, in a few days" (idem, 160). Until mid-thirties, when he used to be only "a fanatical Romanian", it had been difficult for him to imagine another destiny for himself, except for the Romanian one. At the end of the former half of his Portuguese sojourn, he states this clearly, thus offering us, in anticipation, the solution (already "theorized" in *Gaudeamus*) he would use after the war: "Why shouldn't I save myself now, as I did ten years ago, by adhering to other principles, and assuming a nobler and more universal destiny?" (idem, 199). However, *at that particular moment*, he notes on December 25th 1942, he could not detach himself from Romania's fate. *For the time being*, he denied himself the right to search for other solutions, since his daily life paced itself with "the progress of operations on the Russian front" (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 162).

The Portuguese Journal, Eliade's most important work of the war time, is more than a simple diaristic work. He started writing it, in April 1941, as an individual haunted by doubts, after being "forced to leave" England; he keeps on writing it, in Portugal, equally tormented by uncertainties, which reach paroxysm, at the end of 1944, with Nina's death and Romania's tragedy. *A different Eliade*, free, calm, and ready to start anew, would conclude it. In depth, *The Portuguese Journal* is an excruciating exercise in inner transformation and painful gestation, at the end of which a "new man" emerged. Sterility, drought, even *the thirst for suicide* (idem, 227) are the signs of a massive mutation, the equivalent of self-renewal. Fascinated from his teenage years by Papini's *Un uomo finito*, Eliade is equally haunted by the Latin adagio *Incipit vita nova*. A chapter in *The Novel of the Short-Sighted Adolescent* already bears this title.

In the *Journal*, he notes that his work on a vast fresco, *Viață nouă* [*A New Life*], he had begun writing in London, hardly progresses. Like many other Romanian projects, he *writes it with difficulty*, although, like Gide, he simultaneously keeps a diary, a *Journal of the novel New Life*". The failure is symptomatic! It looks as if the abandoned project bearing this title could materialize *scripturally*, at the cost of author's own metamorphosis only! In other words, the failure of the author to write the novel entitled *Viață nouă* turns into a success of the same individual to accede to a *vita nova*. After Nina's death, he has the feeling that he was thrown into *a new life – of which he hardly knew anything* (idem, 269). Very soon however, he would know. The two weeks he spent in Paris, in the autumn of 1943, in the company of Cioran, of Georges Dumézil, Paul Morand, and René Grousset, would substantially modify Eliade's inner alchemy. On August 10th, 1943, he mentions the prospect of leaving for America, which he immediately disavows: "In America, in three or four years, I would bask in glory, I would have a large

demon of melancholy: "...Moldova makes me sink into deep melancholy... everything I have written in the *Cuvântul* [The Word, i.e. a periodical of the time] against all sorts of «Medelenism» [allusion to Ionel Teodoreanu's classic novel trilogy, *La Medeleni* (1925 and 1927)] and «Moldovianism» has first of all a therapeutically purpose: to cure me of the terrible melancholy in which I had slipped since my adolescence." (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 122-123).

audience and a vast fortune, only if I had a stone heart, and gave up my Romanian ethnicity, for another culture. Yet, I cannot do this” (idem, 209). Back in Lisbon, three months later, following some Parisian “revelation”, he makes the following comment: “In Paris, I learned that one could not win universal acclaim in science, working within the narrow limits of a minor culture” (idem, 216). We re-read the sentences and cannot believe our eyes! What an amazing change of attitude! In a well-known article of 1938, Eliade praised provincial life, and tagged as mere “superstition” the idea that only great metropolises could favour creation (“You can become a great poet at Buzău, i.e. at the time a small Romanian provincial town.”).¹⁴ Five years later, he revives a favourite theme of his friends, Ionesco and Cioran, namely, the minor status of Romanian culture!¹⁵ Cioran might have wielded some influence over Eliade, so more so as the latter spent most of his time in Paris “in his company. An orgy of paradox and lyricism” (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 215).

Even if the Parisian sojourn came at the end of a series of interrogations about his own destiny, which had been tormenting him for some time, the “break” explicitly follows his journey to the capital of France. In November 1943, the *non-retour* point to Romanian culture seems to have been reached. From the optative of doubt, in the August entry (“...if my heart were of stone...”), to the perfect of the *action accomplie*, three months later, the difference in tone is essential: “I have concluded – scientifically and esseistically – the Romanian phase of my life” (idem, 216). Consequently, “the new” Eliade prepares his descent into a “new space”, which he seems to have (re)discovered: Europe! His self-assurance is also formulated in the perfect tense: “I have decided to explore Europe more deeply and more steadily I have done so far...” (idem). This happened in 1943, because two years later, a month before leaving for Portugal, while commenting on the geopolitical situation of the moment, he would order his priorities evenly: “I’m interested in all these, firstly, as a Romanian, and secondly, as a European”(idem, 377).

The Romanian phantasms do not completely disappear (they persist with Ionescu and Cioran, and the more so with Eliade, by far the most “contaminated” of the three); they however move down to the deepest strata of fiction. As with Cioran, France was the realm where he regained lucidity and abandoned Utopian temptations, a “lustration” process that had begun in Lisbon. Once the Romania phase was completed, the resorption of “the demons of the past” came to an end. Eliade, the hermeneutist “reads” Nina’s death as a stage in the unfolding of the initiatory scenario of his own destiny: “Nina’s passing away would have only a soteriological meaning for the life I was to live from then onwards.”(idem, 271). Salvation came exactly on time to meet someone who had just got out of the labyrinth. Hadn’t he said, in the former section of his *Portuguese Journal*, that there was no tragedy he could not overcome?

The fits of melancholy seem to have been left behind, like Portugal itself, whose “always negative” results (idem, 1: 382) - he summed up a few days before leaving. On the last page of the journal Eliade writes a topical commentary on the situation in Romania. His conclusion is firm and final: “Romanians have learnt from the planetary war one thing only...To change their master” (idem). The harshness of the verdict – in an already French syntax! – reminds of Cioran’s

¹⁴ A few paragraphs later, in the same article, „Our fear of the „province” is amazing, our fear that we might not „endure” in a provincial environment, that we could „create” only in Bucharest, in Paris, or in New York.” (Mircea Eliade, “Provincia ‘ratează’?”, 2: 212-213.

¹⁵ The topic, about which Ionescu and Cioran wrote many pages, namely, the handicap of having to express themselves in a peripheral language, was also dear to Eliade, who, after a breakfast with Ortega y Gasset, experiences, once more, the melancholy of being obliged to express himself in a less-spoken language. (*Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 217.)

intransigence, a sign of his distancing from the judgment of his compatriots. Getting out of *l'épreuve du labyrinthe*, the cyclotomic Eliade spends his last days in Portugal in a state of “European” exultation! “I’m going to the consulate for the passport... I’ll surely get my visa, I’ll go to the office, wait for my turn to come – like all other happy mortals. *This* is my life. This is the life of whole Europe; hardships, penury, patience, despair soaked into optimism”(Jurnalul portughez, 1: 380). The following day he exults: “I’ve got the visa. Sojourn time in France: *illimité*” (idem).

There is a stronger reason for his jubilation: the return to the status of a writer, after wearing the “uniform” of an embassy clerk, for the last few years: “What a joy to be able to show my passport on which it is written: occupation – writer!” (idem)

Eliade walks through the circles of hell seemingly unscathed, and finds unsuspected resources of survival, because at stake was the continuation of the Work, the continuation of Creation. The euphoria he experienced during the few weeks before leaving, makes room to the self-confidence with which he announces the new departure: “I sat down at my desk and I began writing. I hear the noises of the city again, after seven months during which I had heard the echoes of the waves only. For seven months I have lived with my back to the city, facing the ocean only. I now return to the world. I remember all my previous departures. I tell myself that life is made of departures” (idem, 1: 369). The “Olympian” calm is, visibly, a literary construction. Once out of the labyrinth, *the writer* returns to his metaphorical tools, remakes the gossamer of the lyrical register, which concluded *The Novel of the Short-Sighted Teenager*, a mixture of melancholy and belief in success.¹⁶

A *totally different* Eliade arrives in France, freed of the ghosts of the past, in an extreme material misery, but carrying in his suitcase the first three hundred pages of the *Prolegomena la o istorie a religiilor* [*Prolegomena to a History of Religions*], the future *Traité d'Histoire des Religions*, which would be published by Gallimard, in 1949, in the same year, when his friend Cioran, the other de-fascized Romanian, published his *Précis de décomposition*. Captivated by the process of *renovatio* he had gone through, *the new Eliade* exclaims, at the end of the *Journal*, on two different occasions: *Incipit vita nova*. In the last notation, *à la manière de Chateaubriand*, who, in the very last sentence of the text, let us know the date and the time when he concluded his *Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, Eliade, calculates the period spent in Portugal, with unerring accuracy (“Thursday, September 13th, the train for Hendaya leaves at 8.40.”): “1/8 of my whole life”.¹⁷ *The temporal anchoring*, so rigorously recorded (sometimes maniacal with Eliade¹⁸), denotes his perseverance to inscribe the decisive moments of his own destiny, in the uncertain archives of posterity, against the background of the terror of History, that is, of Time.

For the Eliade who leaves Paris is convinced that he *had something important to say to the world* (Jurnalul portughez, 1: 216). Not long before his departure, he had concluded a remarkable prose piece entitled: *A Great Man*!

¹⁶ “The sun rises again. The sun darkens...I have revisited some many things...I have returned home. From now on, I shall have to work harder, tirelessly, to exhaust the years of my youth...My attic has remained the same: gentle, lonely, and sad...It is raining...I’m happy it rains in the garden again”. (Mircea Eliade, *Romanul adolescentului miop*, 219-220.)

¹⁷ The calculus is (almost) scrupulously mathematical: (of the) 451 (months, he had lived until that moment): 55 (moths, in Portugal) = 8, 20! (Eliade, *Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 383).

¹⁸ Consider for instance, the entry on Nina’s death: „Monday, November 20, time: 12.30. Eleven years and eleven months (five days shorter) since our engagement.” (Eliade, *Jurnalul portughez*, 1: 269)

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