

REFLECTIONS ON THE SPIRITUAL RENAISSANCE IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA

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Abstract. The present essay is a speculative attempt to draw a profile of the Romanian spiritual inscape which became visible in the years following the 89 Revolution. Both the spiritual effervescence and the spiritual disenchantment are symptoms of a metaphysics which has constituted an underlying structure of mainline culture and which has surfaced in prominent works of the spirit or in historical events. The tree of life which polarizes the Romanian spiritual inscape is sacralization of history. With the help of three Romanian thinkers, Eliade, Staniloae and Cioran, I will make an attempt to find the meaning of the present phenomenon. Eliade will provide the theoretical frame of the inquiry. Staniloae will confirm my interpretation based on Eliade. Cioran comes last as a paradox and enfant terrible. The paper ends with an invitation to further reflection.

Key words: Romanian spiritual profile, sacralization of history, Eliade, Staniloae and Cioran

The Romanian Revolution or Christmas-New Year Eschato-Cosmogony

The Romanian revolution happened in December 1989. I use the verb happen because at least for the majority of Romanians the revolution was a spontaneous, unplanned event. It was a happening which turned the celebration of the victory of Ceausescu's communism into a popular uprising. The decor and participants remained the same. Only the text changed from one of praise into one of judgment. The aspect of an art performance was supported by two peculiar circumstances: the revolution was broadcast on the national TV network and its first, though temporary, leader was a well-known actor in the Bucharest National Theatre. But this art performance effect can be subordinated to that of a ritual performance. There are several elements in the unfolding of the Romanian revolution which invite such an interpretation. The time of the revolution was the interval between Christmas and New Year; the place was the centre of Bucharest and the presidential Palace; during the revolution the president was submitted to an ad hoc trial and killed; the entire population participated directly or indirectly by watching the uninterrupted broadcasting. Certainly, any revolution enacts this ritual pattern which is more or less internalized by its participants: the

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