

NEW, EXCEPTIONAL BEQUEATH OF MANUSCRIPTS TO THE INSTITUTE

Bucharest, 13 March 2023

From 26th of January, the Institute for the History of Religions of the Romanian Academy has organized in partnership with the National Museum of Romanian Literature in Bucharest an exhibition presenting the manuscripts of Mircea Eliade belonging since 2022 to the patrimony of our Institute. Up to today (incidentally, the birthday date of Eliade 116 years ago), a considerable amount of enthusiast visitors benefited for the first time from such a direct vista. All details on this exhibition were listed in a previous communication. It was, needless to say, a first for us. We received hundreds of expert as well as moving reactions from the public. During this time, the cultural and generalist press as well as the social media reacted promptly and courteously to such scholarly and cultural news, placing the Institute at the core of the public cultural life in Bucharest. We are all extremely grateful for this.

Our public, scholarly and cultural, in Romania and abroad, knows we endeavour at present to publish in the first two volumes of E.C.C.E. | *Ediția critică completă Eliade. Opera științifică (până în 1945)* | *Complete Critical Edition of Eliade's scholarly works before 1945* all these manuscripts. After careful scrutiny, the ongoing team cataloguing expertly identified and dated them: there are no less than **67 manuscripts**, of which 34 are unpublished, dating from **1923 to 1940**. In our format (permanent since 1997: periodicals and series), these critical editions will certainly amount to more than 1,000 pages (also including a 'General introduction'), and will be published in 2023. This ECCE team includes at present eight scholars who cover, by their own academic competences, large spans of the early dynamic of the general and comparative field which once was Eliade's as well: Andreea Apostu (scientific secretary), Ionuț Daniel Băncilă, Daniela Dumbravă, Octavian-Adrian Negoită, Cătălin Pavel, Vlad Șovărel, Bogdan Tătaru-Cazaban (and the undersigned), four of them being full members, two half-time members and two associate members of the Institute.

The volume (and complexity) of work has continuously and substantially accrued since last March, when we received from donors the first unpublished manuscripts. Indeed, in February-March 2023, I have the grand honour to report, the Institute received from two new private donors and collectors an impressive bequeath of similar, yet much more significant, larger manuscripts. These two new bequeaths comprise unknown and unpublished manuscripts saved in similar circumstances from oblivion and dispersal, dozens of manuscripts with hundreds of folios at present destined to enter our critical editing. This is the single most significant bequeath and scholarly discovery in all the first fifteen years of IHR's existence as well as one of the chief news *ever* in all Eliade publications across dozens of cultures and languages. One year after, with direct and indirect accrual of our library of manuscripts, we may already confirm **the Institute has received and will critically edit the largest quantity of unpublished scholarly manuscripts from what was once Eliade's estate from all public institutions in Romania and since 1989.**

While perusing one month ago the newly received manuscripts, some of which were considered lost, it became rapidly apparent the planned two first volumes of ECCE are already in need of *supplements*, first and foremost because of the unique overlapping of their general content. We thus decided upon starting adjunct critical editions of more corpulent unpublished manuscripts in the form of **MEUM: Mircea Eliade's Unpublished Manuscripts from Private Collections.**

Professor Radu Vancu, the editor-in-chief of *Transilvania* (a valuable SCOPUS and EBSCO-indexed generalist journal in the humanities), supported our campaign for saving Eliade's manuscripts since the very beginning and after careful scrutiny agreed to publish our research through 2023. Prepared in less than a month, the first two instalments (with some 28,000 words for the critical editing of the first 83-pages manuscripts) are already published as

Eugen Ciurtin & Andreea Apostu, "Mircea Eliade's Unpublished Manuscripts from Private Collections. I. Notebooks I & II (Calcutta, 1929-1931). Critical edition", *Transilvania* 51 [155] (2023), no. 1, pp. 1-22. [Mircea Eliade's Unpublished Manuscripts from Private Collections: Notebooks I & II \(Calcutta, 1929-1931\). Critical edition | Revista Transilvania](#)

Eugen Ciurtin & Andreea Apostu, „Mircea Eliade's Unpublished Manuscripts from Private Collections. II. Notebooks I & II (Calcutta, 1929-1931). Concordances", *Transilvania* 51 [155] (2023), no. 2, pp. 1-16 (to be published today).

I would like to thank all persons and institutions that supported in various capacities and manifold ways our public campaign started in December 2019 (<https://enescueliade.com>). I especially thank the two new grand donors of the Institute. More news should follow in due time accordingly. A new exhibition of the Institute in partnership with one of them is already in preparation.

An exuberant quantity of these unpublished manuscripts was written by Eliade while being in colonial India as a student of Dasgupta. One of the leading experts in things Indian of our time (epigraphist included) famously placed this epigraph on a first collection of his articles:

*Dedicated to the taxpayers
and working women and men of
Canada and Australia who paid
for this foreigner's education*

(Gregory Schopen, *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997, reprinted as *Indian Monastic Buddhism: Collected Papers on Textual, Inscriptional and Archaeological Evidence*, Buddhist Tradition Series vol. 59, New Delhi: MLBD, 2010, Part I, p. vii).

One should perhaps still emulate such insight. All disciplines and sub-disciplines integrated within the generalist and comparative history of religions are directly subsidised and sponsored in Romania by the Romanian taxpayers and indirectly nowadays by a group of donors & private collectors as well. The Presidium of the Romanian Academy, the President of the Section of Historical Sciences and Archaeology, Acad. Victor Spinei, the members of the Scientific Council of the Institute – including Acad. Mircea Dumitru, who furthermore participated in the launching of the exhibition – as well as our colleagues and friends in Romania and Europe deserve all our thanks.

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