MIHAIL SEBASTIAN'S DIARY - MASK OF DESTINY

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Abstract: Sebastian's diary presents, in an objective manner, without passion or mystification, the position of victims from the interwar period, revealing the attitude of the Romanian authorities towards the Jews in the period of the Second World War, thus dismantling and rebuilding a series of myths and historiographical fictions. The author presents, in a Lucid manner and in a dynamic writing, the collective depersonalization, marked by the metamorphoses of some friends, presenting images of shaky friendships turned into sudden estrangements, depending on Circumstances, Sebastian acutely feeling his status as a victim, the writer, incredulous, sad witnessing some resignations of morals, of ethical disaggregation's, of the deviation and destruction of previously admired consciences. The image that the diary gives us is that of a Misfit individual, who cannot find one purpose and an ideal, neither outside nor in one's own self. Remarkable is, however, his honest living, undisguised, the drama of a lucid sensibility, with all its human qualities and flaws. In the Journal, the writer records his own mental reactions and discovers that for his closest friend she is completely different, like around some distorting mirrors. In these conditions, the assumption of the Jewish Identity progresses in a revealing parallelism with abandonment to friendship and communication with his friends who see in him only the image of a stranger. Mihail Sebastian is very sensitive to any form of persecution, to fear and the terror that the degrading Anti-Semitism of the era instilled, recording with acuteness hallucinatory images, absurd and tragic scenes of the persecution of the Jews, images of a present abominable that cannot be forgotten or mystified.

Keywords: Lucid, Circumstances, Misfit, Journal, Identity, Anti-Semitism

Mihail Sebastian's diary represents a remarkable work of literature of experience which it prompts you to reflect, it's a memorable book that stands out through a revealing alloy between passion and lucidity. The diary was written over a rather long period, between the years 1935-1944,being published posthumously, in 1997, at the Humanitas Publishing House, under the care of Gabriela Omăt. The Manuscript of the journal has known several avatars; in 1961, the manuscript was submitted by Mihail Sebastian s brother at the Israeli Embassy in Bucharest, then arriving at the Yad Vasem Museumfrom Jerusalem, after which it returned to the family's possession. Literary critic and historian Z. Ornea tries in vain to obtain it for publication, but he cannot offer the guarantee to the family who owned the manuscript that the journal will not be censored. Kept in Paris until the founding of the Mihail Sebastian Foundation (Mihail Sebastian Foundation, in the USA), its founder proposing to Leon Volovici, Israeli writer, of Romanian origin, to edit the text together, the manuscript being proposed to publication, finally, by Humanitas Publishing House. This manuscript, kept hidden for so long, represents a revealing autobiographical document of interwar Romanian literature, testimony of a collective psychodramas, revealing in its pages "the testimony of the Jew from the darkest period of Romanian right-wing extremism and the second war. Reading it, it's impossible to stay the same. The Jewish problem becomes your problem. A huge shame spreads over a whole period in national culture and history, and its shadow covers you too. You couldn't guess, in despite so many books read about the Holocaust, that the evil was so deep and that, from the crossing tunnel, people and authors you admired came out unblemished, with an air of pathetic guilt about which you never know

if it has been fully assumed. Great national authors appear today, after Sebastian's Diary, Decline"[1]

The appearance of Mihail Sebastian's Diary reconsiders the place occupied in Romanian literature by to a writer located, through his other works (prose, dramaturgy, essay) in the second line value. It is a book that generates emotions, passions and fervours, proof of the fact that its publication, transcends the sphere of literature, exposing the theme of Jewishness and the issue of the tragic destiny of the Jews from Romania, anti-Semitism, the acute problems of the exacerbated nationalism of the period interwar period, during the Antonesian regime, there being, at the same time, numerous references to the right intellectual, with fascist tendencies (Eliade, Noica, Cioran), his autobiographical pages Sebastian exposing the theme of truthfulness, the relationship between experience and expression or identity dilemmas of intellectuals anchored in history. Sebastian's diary presents, in an objective manner, without passion or mystification, the position victims from the interwar period, revealing the attitude of the Romanian authorities towards the Jews in the period of the Second World War, thus dismantling and reassembling a series of myths and historiographic fictions. The author presents, in a lucid manner and in a dynamic writing, collective depersonalization, marked by the metamorphoses of some friends, presenting images of of shaky friendships turned into sudden estrangements, depending on the circumstances, Sebastian acutely feeling his status as a victim, the writer, incredulous, sad witnessing some resignations moral, of some ethical breakdowns, of the deviation and destruction of some consciences, previously admired as being of striking morality. He reevaluates his own friends, whose image slides from integrity to the cracks of morality and democratic attitude. Camil Petrescu 's meeting with Sebastian in Palace Square in Bucharest, is eloquent, Camil complaining, imperturbable, about the fact that there are too many Jews in the center of the Capital. Moreover, the same Camil Petrecu informs him,on December 30, 1937, with a certain imperturbable coolness, that he would enroll in the National Guard Iron, if the ideological movement will seem profitable to him. In this way, Sebastian's Diary does not offers answers to the questions of the era, even if it "accurately describes the state of mind of the elite intellectuals of those years, also giving an image of the deaf anti-Semitic atmosphere in feeling to ordinary people. Those who criticize Sebastian deny precisely his capacity for objective reflection of facts." [2]

Historians and literary critics after 1990 have commented on the Journal, some of them noticing the irony the destiny of the writer, his diary pages producing strong reactions and comments.The model that Mihail Sebastian seems to follow is that of the French writer Jules Renard, who recorded, in his diary, for 23 years, almost daily, human figures, books written or read, ambitions, illusions, disillusions, urges and regrets in a rush of self-rediscovery and of evaluating the world, through the lens of one's own sensations, perceptions and emotions. Thus, in this remarkable creation of Mihail Sebastian several types of diary can be identified: an intimate diary, which contains data about his material situation, often deplorable, about his mistresses readings by the writer, about musical preferences and fleeting loves, a creative journal, with details about the writing of some of his plays, about the conception of novels, but also a political-intellectual diary, recording data about the war, comments on some political events, the perception of the anti-Semitic attitudes of some friends, etc.

The intimate diary transcribes the inner states of Mihail Sebastian, a lucid writer brittle, who has a very bad opinion of himself, the sensations he expresses being of "silence,

[1] Vasile Popovici, My Jewishness, in Geo Șerban, coord., Sebastian under the times, Universal Dalsi Publishing House, Bucharest, 1988, p. 261.

[2] William Totok, Everyday Anti-Semitism, Diary Entries of the Romanian-Jewish Writer Mihail Sebastian, in Iordan Chimet, Mihail Sebastian File, Universal Dalsi Publishing House, Bucharest, 2001, p. 232

disgust, decay", the self-image being often drastic ("a wreck", "a loser"). Incidentally, the Journal begins under the sign of a sorrow caused by the fact that he wears glasses, "which make him ugly" and change his appearance. The writer believes that he is incapable of any activity, lacking energy, dynamism, will: "The truth is that I do not achieve anything. I can't read a book disciplined from beginning to end. I am willow, sleepy, decayed, disgusted with myself, I expect a little grace from somewhere". He feels trapped "in an unbelievable race', which can lead him either to 'salvation' or to 'disaster'. The image that the diary gives us it is that of a maladapted individual, who cannot find a purpose and an ideal, neither outside nor inside own self. Remarkable is, however, the sincere, undisguised experience, the drama of a lucid sensibility, with all his human qualities and flaws: "The man without a uniform thus understands to manifest himself as a free man, not regimented by any ideology, seeking the balance between extremes, even if in this middle point, of critical consciousness, he discovers, most of the time, only solitude: a loneliness of a normal person in a profoundly unbalanced world. Mihail Sebastian cast a look upon her if not calm and serene—for it is one of its innocent victims, always forced to note its precariousness - in any case lucid, unclouded by partisan fervours, open to a wide and demanding understanding."[3]

The text of the diary offers us the chance to restore the personality of the writer caught in a game of mirrors, perpetually oscillating between life, literature, confession and fiction. On the other hand, the diary offers a rich factual material regarding the persecutions to which the Jews were subjected, with regarding the legionary crimes, etc., the "Jewish" journal not being able to be understood in its true and just sense meaning and relevance in the absence of references to the Jewish novel by Mihail Sebastian, For two thousand years, present in the metabolism of the Journal without really being a part of its configuration. After the scandal generated by the publication of the novel, Mihail Sebastian is marginalized, silenced, vehemently attacked by intellectuals of all ideological orientations. In the Journal, the writer records his own psychic reactions of the one who discovers that for those closer friends he is completely different, like around some distorting mirrors. In these conditions, the assumption of Jewish identity progresses in a revealing parallelism with the abandonment of friendship and communication with his friends who see in him only the image of the stranger. Michael Sebastian is very sensitive to any form of persecution, to the fear and terror it creates, the degrading anti-Semitism of the era, acutely recording hallucinatory images, absurd scenes and tragic of the persecution of the Jews, images of an abominable present that cannot be forgotten or mystified: "It's an anti-Semitic madness, which nothing can stop. There's no brake anywhere, either a reason. If there was an anti-Semitic program – it would still be good. You would know to what limits it can go. But it is nothing but pure bestiality, without control, without shame, without conscience, without purpose, without aim. Anything, anything, absolutely anything is possible. I see the paleness of fear on the Jewish faces, they freeze their smile of atavistic optimism, their old consoling irony fades." The authorities adopt anti-human measures directed against the Jews. For example, a city hall ordinance forbids them to trade in the market, outside certain hours: "You wonder every day what will be invented against us. It takes a lot of imagination to think of something new. Besides, since with expropriation of real estate, since with deportations and assassinations - everything else becomes grotesque, childish, stupid". Affirming the fact that he stops organizing in his " Jewish condition", the Journal's writer exposes us to the enormous trial of the human being without a will.

The register of individual dynamics circumscribes emotional experiences, kinship ties, impact some meditations, reading becoming a defining passion that the Journal highlights, through recording numerous reading impressions (Shakespeare, Balzac, Jules Renard,

[3] Ion Pop, A man without a uniform, in Geo Șerban, coord., Sebastian under the times, ed. cit., p. 282.

Stendhal, Gide, Proust, Mallarmé, etc.). The creative journal reveals the creative universe of the author, finding here essential moments and stages for the elaboration of the works. From this perspective, although he has the will to be active, industrious, the writer seems permanently irritated by his inactivity, he feels overwhelmed by the awareness of his physical, psychological, historical "limits". A lucidity emerges from here brittleness of the one who writes, a special ethical clarity, the full understanding of talent and his creative availability: "There is a certain lack of spontaneity in me that cannot be cancelled by any other quality. What I write is a little schematic, a little linear, a little abstract, even when it's graceful, even when it's crossed by a wave of emotion (because I'm so sentimental). I can, therefore, make short stories of 200 pages with an intimate diary accent - but not a novel". Sebastian is tortured by the difficulties of writing, he often hesitates, in a search for perfection, to certainty and correctness, and when he writes he is disappointed by "the way he writes". He writes with difficulties, his contradictory consciousness confronting two binary tendencies: "the desire to write well" and "the desire to be honest, spontaneous, authentic". It is a permanent confrontation with oneself it is, in fact, the main obstacle to fluent, authentic writing, insofar as truth existence must be consistently reflected in writing, the anxiety of an incomplete rendering of the real and their own experiences producing a kind of blockage regarding their own writing. Freedom of Mihail Sebastian is relative, it being limited by the distance between experience and fiction, the finality of his works being pure authenticity, the writer referring to his Journal as a novel authentic, unfinished, written in the key of complete sincerity. The intellectual and political journal represents a valuable source for understanding interwar social-historical life, the writer integrating concepts, images, scenes related to the atmosphere of the intellectual circles frequented by Mihail Sebastian, but also in the sphere of relations with close friends from the world of letters (Mircea Eliade, Camil Petrescu, Al. Rosetti) and theatre people.

A spectacular testimony is, in the pages of the Journal, the one concerning Nae Ionescu. After the introduction to the novel For Two thousand years in which the philosopher reveals a configuration conceptualization of the antisemitism of a Jewish book and after the publication of Mihail's essay Sebastian How I became a hooligan, it was unlikely that the relations between the two intellectuals would continue, but despite all these facts, Mihail Sebastian remembers him in his diary in a friendly way, Nae, the apprentice continuing to regularly attend the philosopher's courses, even though he had completed for a long time the university studies. However, Sebastian notices in these courses the "step down" of the "director of conscience", the former charm of the courses begins to fade, the diary recording how the former student sometimes scathingly analyses his teacher's teachings, marked by hypocrisy: "I didn't go to Nae's class yesterday. It started to bore me. The latest lessons were reprints, quite annoying in their political facility, reprints of the lessons of last year".

Of course, Mihail Sebastian's apprehension about the quality of Nae Ionescu's courses does not come from the audience's change of attitude towards his instructor, because the notations from the Journal also convey a wave of admiration and affection: ,,What Sebastian describes here is namely the familiar cult of friendship beyond ideology, which flourished in an atmosphere of sophisticated frivolity (a frivolity, one might say, under the specter of catastrophe whose approach few were aware), frivolity that was the prerogative of very intelligent people in a corner forgotten by Europe, in a predominantly provincial culture, with a small (though extraordinarily talented) elite. So small was this elite that man had to be on good terms with his opponents ideologically if he wanted to be able to talk to some intelligent people." [4]

[4] Matei Călinescu, The 1927 Generation in Romania; ideological options and personal relationships, in Geo Șerban, coord., Sebastian under the times, ed. cit., p. 261.

The writing reflexes exhibit two different patterns: "Nae from good times", but also his image Nae Ionescu "altered as a man and as a teacher", the former apprentice oscillating between the respect of the past and the disillusions of the present, because, impressed by the eloquence of his own ideas, Mihail Sebastian notices Nae Ionescu's bouts of vanity, the desire to get rich, hidden, but all the more obvious: "Balcic, Saturday, April 30 [1938]. To Nicholson (the Labor MP who was now 2 weeks in Bucharest) told him that he would not understand anything from Romania, if he wanted to judge it with the criterion of "individual freedom". It's a value we don't know, that we borrowed- a nonsense and over which the organic, natural solution of the Romanian nation passes by without considering it mandatory."

At the death of Nae Ionescu, the writer expresses a sincere suffering in the pages of the diary:

"Saturday, March 16 [1940]. Crying nervously, impossible to control, yesterday morning, entering the house Nae Ionescu, two hours after he died. It goes with him for a whole period of my life, now— just now - definitely closed. What a strange fate this extraordinary dying man had unfulfilled, unfulfilled, defeated and - if it were not difficult for me to say it - missed. I love it so much because he had so little luck!".

The diary is a living testimony of the writer's Jewishness: "Mihail Sebastian brings to its pages the testimony of the Jew from the darkest period of Romanian right-wing extremism and the second war. Reading it, it's impossible to stay the same. The Jewish problem becomes your problem. An immense shame spans an entire period of national culture and history, and its shadow covers you too. You couldn't guess, despite so many books read about Holocaust, that the evil was so deep and that, from crossing the tunnel, people and authors whom you admired, came out stained, with an air of pathetic guilt you never know if it was fully assumed. Great national authors appear to you today, after Sebastian's Diary, diminished"[5]. Over the course of the war, the Diary records the harrowing inner journey of Mihail's destiny , the overwhelming loneliness, the anxieties in the face of horrors. Thus, at the moment when the soldiers the Soviets, having arrived in Bucharest, rob and abuse with overwhelming cruelty, Mihail Sebastian has a lenient attitude: "I can't take all incidents or accidents too tragically. I think they seem normal. Really fair. It is not right for Romania to escape too easily. After all, Bucharest, this rich, careless, frivolous is a challenge for an army that comes from a desolate land (...). The Russians are definitively in their right".

The diary also records the murders committed against the Jews, the dismissal from the Royal Foundation for Literature and Art, the condemnation of the writer to misery, the specter of atrocities, the obligation to perform activities of "maximum public interest" (to shovel snow from a railway line or other) and to pay "taxes", without the possibility of concentrating on creation, the prohibition of signature with his own name, forced to give up the only space of intimacy, marking all these sufferings of the writer, Gheorghe Grigurcu describing this condition of "hypoalgesia", in contrast with the "vindictive demonization" of the diary pages.

The ideological diary records the invasion of Poland by the German and Soviet armies, then the collapse of Paris, the writer addressing the same themes that can be found in the novel For Two Thousand Years and in the essay How I Became a Hooligan: The Status of the Jewish Intellectual, anti-Semites Actions, the atrocities of an unforgiving history, etc. In the first part, some aspects of the mechanisms of one's own writing are revealed, recording the anxieties, the interrogations, the spiritual and amorous tortures, so that in the second part there will be described the atrocities of war, the ravages of hatred, the dehumanization of friends who adhere to fascism. In the pages of the journal, Mihail Sebastian deals with several essential themes: music, literature, love, antisemitism and war, reveals his attachment to classical music, refuge and space, compensatory in the breathless atmosphere of the era.

[5] Vasile Popovici, My Jewishness, in Geo Șerban, coord., Sebastian under the times, ed. cit., p. 261.

Everyday miseries, sufferings and atrocities, the writer bitterly recording the duplicity of some interwar writers, who adhere to the legionary ideology. Nicolae Manolescu believes that despite the documentary dimension, Sebastian's diary imposed itself through a "certain universality". They are social contexts and political, ideological, in a broad sense, sometimes codified literary, against the background of which "his identity Sebastian, before and after death, is manipulated, hijacked, reinvented, instrumentalized." LEONE Volovici, the one who put Sebastian's diary into circulation, believes that "it is not at all certain that Mihail Sebastian would have published his diary, not literary transfigured, as it appears today, at over fifty years after the writer's death", considering that it is possible that the writer used it in setting up a "new confessional novel or, rather, for a projected essay-testimony, mentioned in a note". Mihail Sebastian starts this diary at the age of 27, in February 1935, in a "difficult hour", in a moment of balance triggered a year earlier by the scandal surrounding the novel For Two Thousand Years, with the scandalous foreword by Nae Ionescu, which justified anti-Semitism from a metaphysical-theological perspective. To the attacks aimed at the Romanian and the prefect's acceptance Sebastian responds with the essay How I Became a Hooligan (1934): " For Two Thousand Years was a risky act of sincerity. In his wake, a lost house remains, a fallen symbol, a great arrow friendship. A little dust, that's all. (.) It's a sad count: it's not anymore depressing, I tell myself without braving anyone and, above all, without braving myself, that we will never pay dearly enough for the right to be alone, without half memories, without half affections, no half-truths." All this time, despite the scandals and attacks, Mihail Sebastian publishes articles in important periodicals: The magazine Fundatiilor Regale (where he was also editor, from 1936 to 1940), at Rampa, Viaţa Românească, etc.

Sebastian begins to write a diary marked, as Leon Volovici observes, by "the feeling that his life, his intellectual trajectory has reached a critical point", an autobiographical writing having, in the vision of the writer, the intention to offer a compensatory way of existence, a testimony, through the clarity of the self-examination, through the courage of the confession, but also through the obsessive care of the detailed notations (gestures, events, meetings, scenes, dialogues, etc.). The model from which the claim is made is that of Jules Renard's introspective journal, commented on by Sebastian in an article from 1936: "Jules Renard is sincerity itself. His diary records, without hypocrisy, everything what a human consciousness can know throughout a life that is not always made of heroics. He disarms us through the courage of confession. Few people have ever taken the pen in hand to be so ruthless with themselves. (.) His intimate examination is without arrangements. He has the courage of his vanities, the courage of his envy, the courage of his cowardice. He confesses to them directly, without apologizing, with a kind of ironic cruelty that only children have." [6]

Of course, Sebastian's diary has, as Leon Volovici notes, several dimensions: " First it is an intimate diary, of inner states, of sentimental experiences, of family relationships - with his mother and two brothers - the transcription of some dreams, sometimes of a transparency, stunning, numerous reading impressions, lots of classical music listened to frenziedly on the radio or in the hall of the Athenaeum". The journal is also one of creation, recording the status of some texts, through comments, notations, echoes, thus revealing the interpenetration between fiction and biography.

There is also a "Jewish" diary here, which records the changes in the status of the Jews, recording testimonies of his own experiences and dilemmas, of the Jewish drama of those years. After the scandal of the novel, Sebastian was violently attacked by Jewish intellectual circles for his membership in the group from "Cuvântul", which in 1933

[6] Leon Volovici, Preface to the volume Mihail Sebastian, Journal (1935-1944), Third Edition, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 7.

supported extremist groups. Since 1937, the diary records stages and forms of the discrimination and marginalization of the Jews, the fragments of diary becoming, as it were, a dramatic continuation of the convulsive experiences of the hero in the novel For Two Thousand Years: After having lived, for almost a decade, the euphoria of acceptance and consecration in the environment Romanian literary, Sebastian then also knew the painful experience of the legislated rejection and a gradual ostracization. He is especially sensitive to the increasingly grotesque forms of persecution, marked with subdued resignation and irony. With all the differences, sometimes radical, in the field of ideas, Sebastian maintains friendly relations with quite a few Jewish intellectuals, whether it is the Zionist leader and ideologue A. L. Zissu, either by the communist Belu Zilber, or by the writers Felix Aderca or Camil Baltazar, all brought back, by force of the new legislation, to the humiliating situation for them of being limited to a space exclusively Jewish cultural, created around community institutions ("Baraşeum" Theater, high school and the Jewish college, etc.)." [7]

However, there is also an "intellectual and political journal"[8] here, very consistent with notations and observations referring to the literary and intellectual environments of the era or to friends and colleagues of the generation: Mircea Eliade, Camil Petrescu, Al. Rosetti, Petru Comarnescu, Eugen Ionescu, Antoine Bibescu, Radu Cioculescu, C. Vişoianu, Teodorescu-Branişte. Relations with representatives of theatrical environments (directors, theatrical chroniclers, actors and actresses), "complex and winding, marked more than once by tensions, disappointments, sometimes by disturbing expressions of fraternal solidarity." [9]

The diary is also a testimony of the separation in the ideological space of Sebastian Nae Ionescu, but the distance that is established between the author of the diary and his friends who are more and more close to the legionary ideology (Eliade, Noica, Cioran). Faced with the radicalization of his friends, Sebastian mentions himself, writes Leon Volovici, "twice handicapped: as a Jew, challenged by an ideology that sees the Jew as the main enemy, and as an intellectual, left, like Beranger, the hero Eugen lonescu's play, alone in front of some totalitarian and collectivist options that challenge the right to exist as an individual". Moreover, the writer feels besieged by the convulsions of some opposite ideologies: "It's not the first time I'm in the middle, between the ideological machine guns of the extreme right and the extreme left." Hence the categorical refusal of extremism: "But I? I who believes neither in some nor in others?" Eugen Ionescu is the only one who discovers, in a note from 1946, the resources of lucidity, humanity and courage of Sebastian: "I loved him so much. Mihail Sebastian had kept a clear mind and an authentic humanity. He was now a friend, a brother. He had matured. It had become serious, deep. The journal thus records the path of maturation of the writer, but also some letters that testify the writer's vulnerability in the face of trials existence: "Time passes slowly and the life I lead requires stronger nerves than mine. I have moments of exasperation, when I would like to scream. In a way, my lack of nervous resistance scares me. Do I know what life has in store for me from here on? (.) The changes at the Foundation worry me. The new literary secretary was installed. I'm under no illusions about my chances there, but if I get kicked out, I'd like, at least, that the matter is not published in the newspapers and not broadcast on the radio. It would hurt me, so, from this point of view, my situation is very difficult."[10] Especially after the invasion of Poland by the German and Soviet armies, and after the occupation of Paris by the German army, the political diary takes on an increasingly significant weight, the diary seems to be written by a man "who walks, day by day, hour by hour, with the thought of death next to him, in him".

[7] *Idem*, p. 7.
[8] *Idem*, p. 8.
[9] *Idem*, p. 8.
[10] Letters to Camil Petrescu, vol. II, edition edited by Florica Ichim, Minerva Publishing House, Bucharest, 1981, p. 95.

Sebastian's diary is above all a writer's diary composed from the perspective of authenticity and important sincerity by "recording the moment, in reality, the acuity of daily observation, coherence and depth of introspection result in the slow composition of a work in which the builder builds himself, using his own life as the only building material. Death so unexpected and absurd - in an accident, on May 29, 1945 - gave this last creation the aura of a message from the brink of death." [11]

The diary ends at the end of 1944 recording a few months of brutal change regime in Romania: "Beyond the satisfaction of ending the war and the thought of survival, Sebastian senses, anxiously, the signs of the installation of new forms of repression, which concerns him directly, but not as a Jew this time, but as an individual under a regime which, from now on, begins to- and creates the instruments for the exclusive exercise of power. Once with the first signs of handling and political mystification, Sebastian perceives from now on the beginning of the new rhinocerization, in the opposite sense, pro-Soviet, which will affect not a few intellectuals, Romanians or Jews."[12] Mihail's experience in the editorial office of the newspaper "Free Romania ("terrorized by conformism") is noted with complete ethical intransigence: "Indoctrinated imbecility is harder to bear than pure and simple imbecility."

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[11] Leon Volovici, Preface to the volume Mihail Sebastian, Journal (1935-1944), Third Edition, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2016, p. 11.
[12] *Idem*, p. 11