

## ARGUMENTS OF A *DIFFERENT* TYPE OF ROMANIAN SOCIAL PROJECT

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**Abstract:** *Every generation of thinkers has been given the responsibility to formulate solutions to the situations our society has crossed. The last quarter of a century of reentry into capitalism is full of lessons for all of those who want to measure their power of understanding and explanation with one of the most complex social phenomena. The entrance into capitalism, as a situation, cannot be analyzed without taking into account the fact that it belongs to a series of social phenomena that have made the modernization of Romania, which started in 1829. Every effort, every change of direction has transformed the fiber of society and the individual, for almost two centuries.*

**Key words:** *capitalism, neomedievalism, sociological mechanism of the generation, Sociological School in Bucharest.*

### 1. Introduction

The heritage which we have received and which we have to hand down the unity of the Romanian territory – language – history, go beyond the current political options and schools of thought. All attempts at Romania's capitalist transformation have brought back the problem of society project in a certain way: without taking into account our specific national character (considering, maybe, that this does not exist?!) and, respectively, the moment of coming out of communism. I will initially explain why we need to start the effort of conceiving our entry into capitalism from us and not from the valencies of the capitalist project.

The first of the arguments of Romanian specificity comes from the mist of history. In 1445, a few years after coming back from the Unionist Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438 – 1439), the Byzantine theologian Gheorghe Scholarios, the one to be known as Ghenadie, the first ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople under the Turks, said: "Hence, the hierarchs, seeing the deception... have withdrawn all signatures and agreements, and have returned to the previous faith... No misfortune was greater for us than this union. It is worse than hunger, fire, torture and thousands of deaths" (Staniloae, 1973). The need to preserve the faith made them choose the Turkish occupation "yoke", instead of Catholicisation offered by the Latin brothers. Although Muslims, Professor Stăniloae says, the Turks became the option through which the Orthodox people could preserve their

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Orthodox faith. The force of sacrificing welfare, freedom and individual life, in return for the untouched preservation of national identity, shows one of the fundamental values of the Romanian nation.

A second argument, offered by Liviu Rebreanu in his acceptance speech in the Romanian Academy, is that we are characterized by the absence of invasion wars: “The Romanian people were the most peaceful in the world. In our past there is no war of conquest, but only of defense” (Rebreanu, 1940). The absence of warlike passion clearly leads to the impossibility of following the path chosen by the West and to convert this passion into passion for riches. Not wanting to become the oppressors of others, not craving for the gold of others, we could not serve this passion for riches because we were, “we are and we will always be peasants”. Therefore, our destiny as a nation, as a state and as a cultural power, hinges on the quantity of pure gold that is in the peasant’s soul. But, at the same time, it also hinges on the way this gold will be used and transformed into eternal values” (Rebreanu, 1940).

The third argument is a methodological one. D. D. Roşca in the *Tragic Existence* concludes that: “we do not believe that the spiritual attitude specific to science can replace, without loss for our spiritual life, aesthetic, moral or philosophical attitude. The reason for this is that, thanks to these last three attitudes, we discover other aspects of the existence, qualitative aspects, than the ones that we discover by embracing the attitude which is specific to science. [...] the attitude from which science starts and “creates” a reality qualitatively different from the one aesthetic, moral or philosophical. It is not a priori excluded that science ends up completely “explaining”, through its specific methods, the elements of existence discovered and created by the human spirit through these previous three attitudes. But it is a priori excluded that it will end up creating them as well” (Roşca, 1995).

So, we find a warning over time if we want to impose the best society project, (for how many times do we have to accept a project from far away?): “The purest knowledge is [...] choice and consideration of some form of existence, of one thing we have chosen from many, innumerable others [...]. The judgement of existence: “this thing exists” presupposes the following value judgement: “I am interested in this thing, it concerns me”. So, any knowledge function comes from an evaluation. Our world, the one that exists for us is, therefore, born of an infinite amount of evaluations, of values in the broadest sense of the word.

What is called “fact” is [...] the result of what is called preference, value as well. I do not first see what it exists, because what it exists is infinite and indistinguishable, but I first choose something from what it can be. So any vision presupposes, from the very first moment it is born, an appreciation as well” (Roşca, 1995). With the third argument we are approaching the exercising of the freedom of choice specific to capitalism and we lack so little, namely the *spiritual* nuance – the aesthetic, moral and philosophical attitude specific to the people- to take on our *own* project of a capitalist society.

The discrepancy between Romanian form and substance, the way of imposing a certain society project – the form, even capitalist, and our specificity – led to *postponement*, a “unique primary phenomenon” through which the individual can “stop his reactions” “refusing a direct and immediate vital determinism, so he can complicate and combine his

answers" (Ralea, 1996). Highlighted by Mihai Ralea, the phenomenon of *hesitation* was a possibility of human resistance to causality.

This power of postponement comes straight from the roots of the Romanian village: "The village is timeless. The throbbing consciousness, smoldering under the heap of worries and of troubles of all sorts, the consciousness of being a world in itself gave the Romanian village, in the course of many agitated centuries, that unparalleled strength to boycott history, if not otherwise, at least with its indestructible indifference. The instinctive boycott was rising against history, which was done by the foreigners around us. The pride of the village to find itself in the center of the world and of a destiny kept us and saved us as a people throughout ages of misfortune. The village was not tempted and drawn into the "history" made by others over our head. It has preserved its untouchable virginity in the autonomy of its poverty and mythology for times when it could become the safe foundation of a genuine Romanian history" (Blaga, 1972).

## 2. The Methodological Aspect

In one of his famous conferences, philosopher Mircea Vulcănescu from the *Sociological School in Bucharest*, descends into the depth of the capitalist order and of its specific economic mode of production. Mircea Vulcănescu's hypothesis presents a future entrance, not at all perceived by others, in neomedievalism. Using sociological analysis as the "verified intuition of the set of phenomena and the meaning of everyone at large, and then its restoration to the assembly of the conditioning circumstances", Mircea Vulcănescu seeks to draw the tendencies of social economic development and the circumstances which determine them. He places the sociological perspective of understanding the future at the foundation of the explanation of the present time. The hypothesis from which he starts is the following: if a) some of the circumstances of capitalism tend to disappear; b) the circumstances seem to essentially resemble those in which the medieval economy developed; c) the tendencies of the economic organization reveal principles that converge towards integration into a formula of economic organization analogous to the medieval one; then capitalism becomes (retreats) into neomedievalism.

The problem of capitalism is not a matter of understanding the sequence of forms, but of the relation between forms and circumstances. The question is whether and how it is possible. The answer is that "any form is, under this report, upgradable, as far as its conditioning circumstances reappear" (Vulcănescu, 2009) and, above all, that the influences of the previous life forms are irreversible. Mircea Vulcănescu points out that "the meaning of morphological succession it is not determined a priori but in the direction involved in the virtues of the moment. A «regression» is always possible in any given direction; if the circumstances cease to be favorable to this direction" (Vulcănescu, 2009).

The radiography of economic life made by Mircea Vulcănescu reveals the overlapping of several rhythms, different both in intensity and duration, as well as in meaning and causality. Every social moment belongs to this symphony of the composition of social trends, each of these trends only participating in the composition of certain moments, in

different weights and can go underground for a long time without being detected in reality.

When it comes to the economic crisis of 1929-1933, Mircea Vulcănescu distinguishes himself from most of other thinkers by explaining the crisis of capitalism not on the “confluence line of the conjunctive cycle movements with the specific, accidental circumstances”, but “in the plan of the secular perspective, of the trend, of the long-lasting movement.” Anticipated right or wrong, the idea of an ending of an economic cycle or even of a social system opens the possibility of coming up with alternatives clearly distinct, apart from those generated by the common trunk of capitalism. Sensing the ability to hide behind the numerical variations of the moment, Mircea Vulcănescu chose as the starting point the sense of the fundamental tendency, i.e the qualitative interpretation and not the quantitative variations of the series. The mechanism of interference of opposite tendencies leads to the emergence of tendencies to transform the capitalist order.

The vision of Vulcănescu on the morphological change of capitalism in a society analogous to the medieval economy is all the more exciting as even after the last economic crisis in 2008, there were not many thinkers approaching this refined understanding and power of explanation revealed eight decades ago. For this reason, we can consider Mircea Vulcănescu a visionary in many respects. One of his theories is the one of the displacement of the historical center of Western civilization, echoed by Fernand Braudel in the theory of the eastward movements of the centers of civilization of capitalism.

### **3. The Paradigmatic Aspect**

Most social innovations have their roots in the needs of the past. In this respect, the issue of the current civilization relationship with the Middle Ages represented an important point of interest in the interwar period. One of the authors who will influence the interwar generation of Romanian thinkers was Nicolae Berdiaev. He analyzes the trap that the current generation set to itself: “the aftermath of [...] the new sentiment of life, of the break with the spiritual depths and with the spirit of the Middle Ages, of the creative initiative [...] will be the nineteenth century and his cars, [...] the reduction of the spiritual-creative energy, to which they gave room” (Berdiaev, 1995). However, the liberation of the creative forces of the Renaissance was not enough. Actually, the Renaissance “denied the spiritual man – who cannot create- to assert, in his place, exclusively, the natural man, the slave of necessity. This triumph of the natural man over the spiritual one, in modern history, had to lead to creative sterility” (Berdiaev, 1995). The natural man’s problem was that he did not internalize nature, although it represented his creative choice. This is the meaning of the last decadence that “on the one hand raised man and attributed him unlimited powers and, on the other hand, saw in him only a bounded being, unaware of spiritual freedom” (Berdiaev, 1995). The man’s deprivation of divine resemblance and his subjection to natural necessity drained his creative powers and led him to “the emptiness of a superficial misaligned life” (Berdiaev, 1995). Capitalism, the current embodiment of the hopes of the Renaissance, perpetuates its limits in its most intimate mechanisms.

Our approach begins by revealing what Mircea Vulcănescu said about the alteration of the human nature: the appearance of a man who is no longer in control of himself, now unstable due to the discovery of a multitude of more and more personal needs being in constant competition with himself, but constantly seeking the understanding of others; in short, the situation could be described as such- “a barrel of Danaids, from which man gets nothing, but becomes slave to his own deeds”. The pursuit of gain, the trend that dominates the functioning of capitalism leads to an economic organization in which the production of goods is the platform that supports the reproduction of capital; but not in any way, because, for example, the development of trade does not mean capitalism. Only in an economic organization dominated by industrial capital can one speak about capitalism.

The road towards this economic organization starts with the decision/ the need of the one who manages the financial force when he or she no longer chooses to buy the ready-made product to resell it, but to acquire the elements necessary for its production: tools, raw materials and work force. This moment of vision and trust is associated with the irrationality of the system- sense of risk, adventure, which brings about the endless building up of the capital.

The transformation noted by Mircea Vulcănescu, the orientation of capitalism towards the rationalization of all stages of production, leads to the fall of capitalism into the trap hidden by the spiritual antagonism between reason and adventure. Full rational exploration of markets, designing and prospecting them abolishes the specific function of capitalism to define the market as a result of economic operations. In his day, Mircea Vulcănescu noted that in the big industry the only remaining risk was the technical risk. The practice of insurance, costly economic habit, especially at a time of crisis, is nothing but the symptom of the rejection of one of the constituent elements of capitalism, the irrational of adventure and risk. After almost eight decades, the last big crisis of the system proves the Romanian thinker right as far as the need to allow “irrational” to return to the market process is concerned.

The irrational part is not only entrepreneurial spirit, risk and adventure, but also the social mission of the producer: the good of all mankind is saved by the production of a modest clerk, but who is invested with a collective mission. The vision is a little different from forcing the sacrifice of the current generation to prepare for the happiness of the next generation, as shown by the mysticism of communist production. In capitalism it all starts with the ascetism and, through risk and adventure, the capitalism is propelled to the top of the social pyramid, where he has to fight many temptations, but especially with the shadow of the Great Inquisitor, which this time is the rational, the rule, the certainty of gain. The living part, the irrational, must always prevail in capitalism so that freedom can be again at the base of meeting the needs of others.

### **3.1. Defining the capitalist. The antagonisms of the Capitalist System**

The most authoritative of economic analysts of the interwar period, Mircea Vulcănescu, defines capitalist as being the initiator of the change of trade in a production activity, which then places it in the system of capitalist movement. The decision to change the way

capital is used and the courage to control the production process of the good, the purchase of the necessary goods reflects, first of all, the ability to seize a more economical way of meeting the needs of others. Thus, the capitalist makes the transition from the medieval organisation of crafts to the development of the capitalist enterprise, being the initiator of the new type of capitalist organization, more precisely of organizing the production of industrial capitalism. There are three stages of this transition, in the view of Mircea Vulcănescu: barter, meeting the needs of others and, specifically, pursuing financial gain. It is suggestive that the philosopher of the Sociological School of Bucharest places barter at a time prior to the birth of capitalism, not only because it is the mechanism of meeting the needs of the participants in the exchange process, but above all as the absence of money. The second stage, the one of crafts, seems to be a decadence in terms of satisfying their own needs. Novelty consists in postponing the immediate gratification of one's own needs and introducing the meeting of the other's needs through the exchange following the provision of crafts. Mircea Vulcănescu's finding is that satisfying one's own needs continues to be a goal, and production for the needs of others becomes a means. This stage removes the person from the circuit of meeting people's needs, preparing for the disappearance of meeting the needs as a purpose for economic activity. In the last stage the purpose becomes the money gain. Meeting one's own needs falls in the middle spot in order for the state of production to emerge, for example, for the laborer. Thus, we can talk about capitalism. The hierarchy of purposes has been definitely conquered by the gain of money and its disengagement from meeting the other's needs opens the way for the development of capitalism, leaving aside the old economy of exchange.

The domination of capitalism, ie the imposing of the money gain, brings about some controversy. Thus, the opposition individualism/ individual interest versus collectivism/general interest is manifested as a result of the grafting of the joint production system, meaning the multitude of interests involved, on the old, individual distribution system remained from the day of the barter and which is supported by the existence of private property. Can we notice here one of the weaknesses of capitalism that puts more to work in order to satisfy a certain type of buyer? Is this the secret of capitalism productivity, hidden behind the division of labor?

Mircea Vulcănescu implies that Adam Smith does not realize that the harmony between the individual and the general interest occurs only during the prosperity of capitalism. The Romanian sociologist very clearly emphasizes that prosperity determines social harmony not vice versa. *The invisible hand of the market*, which puts individual interest in the service of the general interest, is only functional when we are already in prosperity. Following the thread of Vulcănescu's thinking, the question that arises is: social harmony/ *the invisible hand of the market* fulfills the role of maintaining prosperity? But if so, then how is prosperity generated? Because not individual freedom, market mechanism or legal regulation of private property determine the prosperity of capitalism. Mircea Vulcănescu does not ask this question but expresses very clearly his doubt through an evaluative expression of the sense of harmony of individual and general interest. He mentions two parallelisms: on the one hand, between the rationale of organic regulation, encountered in living, biological systems and periods of prolonged economic crisis; on the other hand,

between the tendencies of economic freedom and periods of prosperity. Rather, we are faced with the assumption by capitalism of a *modus vivendi* of adapting living organisms to their environment. For this reason, there may be a long term decline in economic forces and in the organizational forms that support them.

The capitalism basically works on the basis of an antagonism between the individual (one) and the collectivity (many). Thus, both production itself and the capitalist economic system aim at money gain, while the middle becomes production through employees and, respectively, the meeting of needs. In order to achieve the two goals, work becomes a commodity, which demonstrates the link between trade and production. The preconditions of capitalism identified by Mircea Vulcănescu are: the social division of labor (commodity), the existence of the market and the production for exchange (trade), the monetary economy (money). Therefore, it is the old medieval structure of commercial capitalism, improved to produce major social changes (ruptures).

Among the inherent conditions, the novelty of capitalism consists in the existence of an irrational component, a successor of some of the myths of humanity. Capitalism implies the interweaving of the two types of conditions: on the one hand, those that define the natural nature of things (rationality), where we find the needs, and the natural nature of freedom and property, where we discover the buyer, and, on the other hand, it presents the virtual character of the economic action, what is to be accomplished, the effort, the type of indefinite technical progress and of the indefinite expansion of outlets. The fulfillment of these conditions generates the following effects of capitalism: *the expanding of the production of goods*, rooted in the old commerce, *the instrumentalization of life* which fulfills the rationalization process, and the monitoring of the effects of some *contractual constraints*, such as money making, imitation of elites, advertisements, the press, which represents the perpetuation of some fashions/ validated models in order to maintain and strengthen the preeminence of the capitalism.

### 3.2. Characteristics of capitalism

In a brief economic characterization of capitalism, Mircea Vulcănescu revealed the importance of the demographic factor, and then highlighted the tempo of economic life that leads to the profound transformation of human beings who no longer find the meaning of their own activities. His approach continues by emphasizing the distinction between the mechanism of consumption and the mechanism of production, the distinction that becomes possible precisely because of the measurement made *the money gain*, in the sense of stimulating production activities when they increase or, respectively, inhibit production activities, when they show signs of decline. The characteristic of rationality is then emphasized and presented as a production technique and as a Cartesian mentality, which, in order to be able to control reality, is cut into parts so small as to be handled. Finally, the irrational part is revealed, which releases the individual's initiative on adventure and risk; it is about *liberation of immediate care of the deed*, which provides rational safety in the regularity of natural phenomena and, at the same time, respect for people and property. It is only when freedom leads to the uncertainty of present and future, when the market is conceptually clarified. The picture depicting the economic

system of capitalism is naturally complemented by the presence of those who borrow money and of the care for maturity assumed by those who will build industrial capitalism, how the network of industrial capitalism covers all social areas through the benefits of trade, thus supporting the functioning of large urban agglomerations. Throughout this mechanism, money plays an important role, breaking at the same time the link between those who produced and, respectively, the products of their work. Consumption begins to be both a cover for needs and an opportunity for other industries, generating a sort of architectural structure of product conjugation and of the division of their use.

*The money gain* requires speculation on non-capitalist factors in the market such as peasant households or the needs of workers, generating an irrational distribution that needs, in turn, a man always looking for the maximum gain. In order to achieve this gain, man must be inventive, must know and use the circumstances to his own benefit and have a strict work discipline, even an *iron religion*. There are, therefore, two determinations: one, that begins with the *money gain* to reach the irrational individualistic of products (which calls for a *stretched economic man*), and, respectively, the second, which starts from the inventive man who maintains capitalism and is offered, as a reward, *money gain*. Both determinations are impregnated by the *iron work religion*, characteristic of the active man in capitalism.

### 3.3. The therapeutic function of the crisis of capitalism

The economic capitalist mechanism, structured on competition and free play of supply and demand, is inevitably subject to imbalances and to crises. Therefore, economists, and Mircea Vulcănescu is no exception to it, interpret the economic crisis as a natural fact that occurs with a certain periodicity in order to regulate the capitalist economic mechanism. The moment attains the limit to which the commodity stock can grow (labor, money, products) without being able to achieve the ability to be acquired. Basically, it is the limit to which capital can multiply without having cover in the industrial production. The crisis appears as a *general sterilization of the means of production* precisely because of the abundance of the market. The image of capitalism which Mircea Vulcănescu builds is that of "the dragon which swallows his own tail". *This symbolism is the representation of the continuous revival of capitalism.*

The originality of Mircea Vulcănescu's thinking is also revealed in the conception of the phases of the economic cycle in capitalism: "1) the revival of economic life: **the inning**; 2) its momentum: **prosperity**; 3) the strain characterized by the stalling of the previous impetus: **the strain**; 4) collapse of prices; the wind shifts: **the crisis**; 5) slowing business; decay, stagnation, or depression; and, finally, 6) **detente**, easing of the market preparatory for reviving" (Vulcănescu, 2009).

In contrast to the previous era, capitalism succeeds in transforming the types of uncertainty (political, economic, spiritual) specific to the Middle Ages into predictability and security. It is possible that Mircea Vulcănescu addressed the characteristic of the security of capitalism also because of its absence from the ethos of the Romanian society.



### 3.4. The similarity between communism and capitalism

Mircea Vulcănescu notes that the need to industrialize communism leads to a close definition of it to from that of capitalism. In form of state capitalism, the Russian variant of capitalism existing in the interwar period changes the capitalist principle of *unlimited extending of needs* with the principle of *the steadiness of life*. Mircea Vulcănescu believes that by a return to the medieval principle of *people's living according to their own condition*, everyone has *available the minimum necessary for his support in relation to their task*. Although similar as a form, the distinctive nuances between the medieval principle outlined above and the old biblical principle, which was to be resumed by communists, must be maintained, "from everyone according to possibilities, to everyone according to needs". The latter's effect is the destruction of the debauchery, which did not fit into the pursuit for money gain. Is it Mircea Vulcănescu's intuition based on the weak penetration force of capitalism in Central and Eastern Europe? Was there a need for a break in the existing community structure? And so an alternative to capitalism appears – communism – which keeps, as Mircea Vulcănescu states, both the old money gain in the form of accumulation added value by the State, as *being the only master of the means of production that rents work*, as well as the old contractual form which became the *salary*, which transforms labor into commodity.

The goal of communism, that of *increasing production in all industrial branches*, is identified by Mircea Vulcănescu as one of the goals pursued in capitalism and which is part of the ideology of prosperity. There is also the spirit of competition, of specific capitalist competition between the components of the state economy.

Mircea Vulcănescu cites Lucien Laurat who thinks that the Soviet economy nationalized the added value. The new accumulation, made directly by the state, is rational in its use in new productive investments, according to the five-year plan. The image of the capitalist is replaced by the image of the collectivity. There is State exploitation in Soviet Russia, which will seek to rule through the new economic domination of the administrative function (Mircea Vulcănescu calls it *secretarial*) the process of producing goods more efficiently than the capitalist. Defined otherwise, the process is *an administrative autocracy in the service of industrialization*. The specificity of the *Secretariat* is no longer the free accumulation of transmissible values, as in the old capitalism, but the rudimentary system of *functionaries*. With increased capacity of changing the social, the state's fiscal intervention directly determines, on the basis of specific rights as if in the medieval age, the part due for individual consumption and, respectively, the part of the state. The only difference between communism and capitalism, as they existed in the interwar period, is the difference in legal order, the complete transformation of legal relations.

### 3.5. The day of maturity

Any type of social ordering is viable as long as the conditions that generated it are maintained. The question that Mircea Vulcănescu asks is for how long will capitalism survive. Is there a day of maturity? As long as the economy remains open, as long as there is possibility of finding outlets that increase productivity and respond to the principle of

profitability, capitalism will continue to exist. Quite unlikely, the revival of the social mechanism of capitalism should follow its own historical path: “*increasing productivity* [s.a.] – not profitability, I speak clearly –, in such a way as to permit a reduction in the cost price in such proportions without affecting the remuneration of the factors of production, so that the demand remains higher than the supply” (Vulcănescu, 2009). The need to increase material productivity to always outperform profitability involves an ever-increasing number of outlets. Capitalism solves this problem through two strategies (intuited by Mircea Vulcănescu): the first is to promote competitors in their image and likeness, which then defeats by taking over the market, then retiring through crisis, when it no longer keeps the performance attained; the second, due to the constraint to replace existing products on the market, either due to the limitations of the period of operation or due to the increased performance offered by the new models.

Mircea Vulcănescu also emphasizes some economic laws: *a tendency of decreasing of the material efficiency in agriculture* and, respectively, *the existence of a profitability limit of the industrial investments*. Although man has the capacity to discover and implement new means of production, he is struck by the proportional decrease in the effectiveness of these means.

It is interesting that the ending of capitalism foreseen by Mircea Vulcănescu is not ideological. The explanation should be sought in understanding this world as a world with finite and definite possibilities. The myths behind the emergence of capitalism, although still functional, must be abandoned because they are simple illusions: *never-ending prosperity, individual freedom as a law of human nature, the intangible civil order, society of contractual essence*, or the disappearance of the constraint relations once with the Middle Ages. Taking a new perspective, says Vulcănescu, will force us to revise the concepts and, sharing a holistic vision, *we will have to find the lost unity of the human face and we will have to obey it*. We always had the solution at hand: returning to the *simple, natural lifestyles that are born at the reversals, by themselves and which are eternal*.

#### **4. The Sociological Mechanism of the Generation. Activism through Despair and Historicism by Resignation**

I believe that the strength of a nation lies in seemingly common, ordinary people, but who have a tremendous potential, a vocation sacrificed to the need of society and, at the same time, carefully guarded. These destinies, which have the capacity to turn around continental geostrategic forces, can be called, in good faith, heroic destinies. They just need a bit of luck, which “should not be understood as a whim of chance, but as a hidden spring, pushing all worldly settlements to the core of their true nature” (Vulcănescu, 1991). Every nation getting a bit of luck, our share was the most exalting “possession of a nation that does not make it a means of defending others, but an occasion of man’s spiritual exaltation and free development in his inner state. It is, perhaps, the ability to submit to circumstances, without giving up your ideals. It is, of course, the wisdom to trust the fate, united with the determination of not giving up anything that is essential to your being. It is, finally, the patience of waiting for the time, until the hour of fulfillment, united with the impatience of falling into the brink of decisive moment” (Vulcănescu, 1991).

I have to note two surprising aspects. First, thinking that Mircea Vulcănescu never imagined that his own perspective *of the generation*, so overworked, would become the axis around which his explanation of our current *in-ability* to build ourselves as a society in capitalism will be built. Second, that the interwar ideological stream would begin to break out with real power just over a few generations, according to the legend of Legion XIII Gemina: *fontem aeternum a solo restituit*.

#### **4.1. The problem of the younger generation**

Mircea Vulcănescu offers a sociological interpretation of the social state in which Romania was in the interwar years. This interpretation is the vision of a strategist who understood the necessity of a social moment that would later become *the Romanian reference moment*. The placement on the battlefield of the Romanian vital energies made the victory clear and the future prepared by understanding the phenomenon that was happening under the eyes of the *Younger Generation*.

Coming out of World War I reunited, Romania felt the need for spiritual union because the dominance of the non-Romanian mentality in the cities was very high. Was it natural for a non-Romanian consciousness to be felt by a generation that was devoid of opportunity to be made available to the people? Yes, precisely through the effects felt, *the younger generation* found evidence of a profound mechanism that had used freedom and individualism to block creation, production, the very right to life of a society that had undergone profound transformations since 1821.

As for how did freedom and individualism, in the immediate aftermath of World War I, end up being elements generating counterproductive effects, this is a problem that is related to the very sociological explanation of capitalism. So powerful were these effects that, not just for a generation, but for three generations already, Romanians have come to no longer want to plant in the society these two seeds, specific to capitalism. What suffered then the Younger Generation would offer event to the Romanian right political wing an own vision, which does not at all resemble the liberalism and individualist vision of the Victorian Age. So strong was this kickback that, personally, I did not find a right-wing thinker following the Western pattern in the interwar period. Mihail Manoilescu's deviation to state capitalism, or Virgil Madgearu's agrarianism, appears strange for a Western critical eye.

Admittedly as a drug that had the effect of poison, freedom and individualism came to life at a time when Romania was at a stage of social economic development- at the end of the global economic crisis in the years 1932- 1933. The problem of the Romanian interwar elite turns, according to Mircea Vulcănescu, into the problem of the generation: a generation whose generous impetus, whose assumed responsibilities and whose cohesive force, had set in motion the great project of reconstruction of the Romanian society. The fault of this freedom and of this individualism of the wills was the absence of the market. The mechanism that had the role of regulating the competition could not be born. As Hayek would have said, later, the pressure of laws in some societies leads to bureaucracy. Was the generation before the Younger Generation guilty or was it a systemic error of capitalism?

It is certain that the young generation found through Mircea Vulcănescu the promoter of that specific way of rebuilding the mechanism of social competition (market) that is so necessary for a society. To the sins of capitalism to replace need by purchasing power, Mircea Vulcănescu contrasts *the understanding of the need*. To generation's colleagues, Mircea Vulcănescu sends the message to give up their vocation in order to understand the needs they would serve. By voluntarily renouncing your vocation to serve the needs of others the mechanism that corrupts society is petrified. Having no (outside) temptation to face, the young man devotes himself to the needs of others. Thus, it builds up the new space of social competition and the community is reviving. An invigoration that does not stop with the authenticity of the person, but goes to the fact that, through the elucidation of the social context, it becomes true.

It should be added: by serving the interests and needs of the community people do not lose their vocation and do not seek to impose it for a simple reason, namely, the subordination of the person to the exigencies of the community development is the way by which the temptation of corruption is interrupted. But vocation remains a potential ferment for times when society's needs may require it. Thus, society becomes stronger and cohesive.

#### **4.2. The two tendencies: activism through despair and historicism through resignation**

At the moment of the affirmation of the interwar capitalism, the *young generation* is struggling with two tendencies: historicism through resignation and activism through despair.

Activism through despair leaves aside any program in order to embrace the frenzy of the deed. The deed becomes "the condition of human fulfillment" on the way to a *strong state*. Vision of social engineer, *activism through despair*, fights the *bad* politics and seeks to straighten the society status through a *good* one. Then, activism through despair, as Mircea Eliade remarked, cleanses the dignity of the intellectuals and places them at the "root of any political movement" that is aimed at solving the problem of a "strong state". Such a state is bound to adhere to people who are always worthy of deed. Activism through despair seeks to recover time and to make the situation right. It calls for faith in the deed that makes things right and in the accomplishment of the proposed objective; it comes with the transformation to take place when you are engaged in the task. It is an "apostolate" that *the young generation* assumed, tired of the failures of that generation that failed to carry out the act of administration assumed by the Great Union. Vulcănescu cites Mircea Eliade, who highlights the creative energy of young people left out of society, face to face with the interest of preserving the positions occupied by "elders": «"If I could bring down the entire Bucharest and build a fortress of the sun in its place, a young, white, virile city! A town without pimps, without the elderly, especially without the elderly. Where the elders are, there is grief, gal land venom, cowardice and immorality [...] Health, courage, manhood – instead of vice and cowardice"» (Vulcănescu, 2004). Activism through despair comes to resist the losing mentality of those undeservedly seated at the helm of Romanian society, through a deed that heals, that brings courage.

Historicism through resignation works with the force of deed that integrates where social need demands it. Written in the temporal flow, it asks for the toil to be, having the conviction that, it is only in this way that “the deed comes naturally, to top it off” (Vulcănescu, 2004).

### 5. The Roots of a New Project

One of the paradigms that have the power to explain what has happened in our transition towards capitalism in recent decades is found in the confluence of the two perspectives of Mircea Vulcănescu’s thinking. That capitalism is not what it was supposed to have been once it is, in turn, an interesting (re)discovery at the moment. But the fundamental discovery starts from identifying the difficulty of building or changing the social space, shows how this change should be started and reveals the Romanian dimension of the organization of society, the best able to meet our needs.

The major difficulty of a construction is due to the generation of the “second to third echelon”. First of all, it is specific that the repeated attempts to build a project in the Romanian social space in the last two decades failed to coagulate enough social energy and trust in order to be followed. Not that many of the projects in themselves were the cause, the social actors were those who, apparently, *betrayed these roadmaps*. The mechanism is presented in the *perspective of the generation*, elaborated by Mircea Vulcănescu. He identifies the successive existence of generations in the continuation of Romanian society. The generations of precursors are listed, the generation of the 1848, the youth generation, the social one, the fire generation and the younger generation. To these, to come to present, I add the communist generation and, respectively, the echelon of two to three generations.

I will further provide you with some of the characteristics of the young generation identified by Mircea Vulcănescu:

- it is the product of a situation;
- it has a social mission;
- it generates two tendencies from within towards the society, namely: *activism through despair* and, respectively, *historicism through resignation*;
- the solidarity of the generation is an effect of the debate on “what should be done?”;
- there are four elements that give birth to the generation: the identity of the problems the generation faces, the identity of the way to attack them, the identity of the masters and the identity of the material to which they refer.

Secondly, the inability to manage, or even the absence of creative social energies that lacked in these 30 years, perhaps represent the key that opens the possibility to explain and understand the absence of a vision at that time. The early years of the post-December period started the search for and definition of the Romanian life which, combined with the solution of the Western capitalism would have brought prosperity, efficiency, and a better life. But now, if we were to make an assessment, the Romanian society is in a profound social anomie. From macroeconomic indicators to energy independence, it seems that Romania expects nothing but to disappear. Loans over loans, lack of perspective, material, intellectual and cultural impoverishment make the

achievements of the Communist totalitarian state look like the pinnacle of social evolution from which we have *managed* to survive.

What we forgot to remember is why we wanted to become ourselves again. Capitalism and any other form of organization of society would not be functional without integrating the deed where the need requires it. The pride of even those who have sacrificed their vocation in order to be “useful to others”, in some sort of post-secular approaches to valuing the neighbor's love (Sorea, 2015), is missing, the manifestations of human freedom and dignity are missing. The problem of the *Romanian Form of Life* is that it places the deed as the natural result of any human state. The whitewashing of this life spring forces occurs precisely when individualism is not corrupted, in order to place a moral barrier to corruption. Because by blocking desire, the destructive potential is eliminated and society's springs are indeed whitewashed. Is there any connection between the refusal to be politically corrupt and, respectively, the effort to understand the call that is made to you by the world around you?

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