

YOUNG GENERATIONS AND THEIR PURPOSE

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ABSTRACT

This paperwork aims to briefly analyze the actual situation of the young generations through a pluri-paradigmatic perspective. Why is this topic chosen? Because the generation represents the means by which a nation can rise or, on the contrary, in the undesirable case, dissipate in the face of the challenges of the times. In this sense, the role of the elites is an essential one, not only for the good organization of the nation, but especially for the preparation and strengthening of generations to foresee and reduce the effects of future crises.

Keywords: generation, elite, value.

THEORETICAL CLARIFICATION: WHO ARE THE YOUNG PEOPLE?

[1] Fred Mahler in his book, *Generation of the Year 2000*, defines young people as “the future of the present”²⁶⁸.

[2] Aristotle states in this sense that young people are the social category that stores hope²⁶⁹.

[3] At the same time, youth is a “potential factor for change”²⁷⁰.

HOW SHOULD WE RELATE TO YOUNG GENERATION?

According to Mahler, youth is that part of life in which man becomes conscious. But what does it mean to be aware? It means to have an ideal and to act

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²⁶⁸ Fred Mahler, *Generația anului 2000*, București, Editura Politică, 1988, p. 8.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

in the direction of its realization, but only in accordance with the highest values, which leads us to think of Dimitrie Gusti's concept of *cultural personality*, an idea similar to what Constantin Rădulescu Motru defined as *energetic personality*.

Some examples of iconic generations of young people, listed in the works of Mircea Vulcănescu:

[1] the generation of forerunners, according to N. Iorga, who appears after the revolution of Tudor Vladimirescu;

[2] the Pașoptist generation;

[3] the social generation, since 1907;

[4] the fire generation, which includes N. Ionescu, N. Crainic, L. Blaga, P. Șeicaru;

[5] The young generation. Here Mircea Vulcănescu distinguishes two founding moments of the young generation: a "spiritual" one (1925–1929), characterized by self-rediscovery, and a "non-spiritual" moment (1929–1932) dominated by lack of perspectives²⁷¹.

What we want to point out is that these generations have taken on a mission in relation to the urgency of the times. This leads us to ask: have today's young people (in this case "snowflake generation") undertaken any collective mission? If so, what is it? If not, how can its non-existence be explained?

A possible explanation for the non-assumption may be the permanence of the "non-spiritual" stage, in the sense that the emphasis has been shifted in the consumerist society from the soul to the body, from being to having. The lack of prospects thus becomes a *modus vivendi* for today's young people. We thus encounter an exaggeration of the exhortation "Carpe Diem!". In other words, the moment becomes the most important but also the only reference point for young people. In theology, this phenomenon is called secularization.

The process of secularization has caused a shift in the center of gravity of life and culture from God to man. At the center of existence God is no longer placed, but man. Thus, the world passed from theocentrism to anthropocentrism²⁷².

Regarding the role that young people have, that of taking on a mission, it must be said that such an action would involve education on the one hand, but also would require self-education. In this sense, we cannot help but wonder how one can discover its own purpose, an idea that takes us to the example of talents. In order to be able to multiply your talent, don't you first have to know what that is? But before that, comes the question, how do I know what my talent is?

²⁷¹ Istorii regăsite, "Tânăra generație", 2010, Available at: <https://istoriiregasite.wordpress.com/2010/10/22/criterion-i/>. Accessed on June 18, 2021.

²⁷² Pr. prof. univ. dr. Nicolae Răzvan Stan, *Suport de curs: Spiritualitate și cultură filocalică*, Craiova, 2020–2021, p. 3.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELITES

The societal function (for the whole society) of the young generation has two major directions:

1. they are the expression of innovation and perpetuation.
2. they innovate (they rise to the ideal, so they surpass themselves) only insofar as they are aware of reality (or they deceive themselves that they are²⁷³).

Innovation is in a continuous tension with the perpetuation (preservation) of a social order. Anticipatory socialization is the process that unites them. Adapting to the group that empowers you (reference group) means: innovation (you can't adapt perfectly, you are deviant²⁷⁴) and perpetuating the order of that group through integration.

From another perspective, Mihail Manoilescu analyzes the Romanian bourgeoisie from a totalitarian perspective. He asks himself this question: What is the role of the bourgeoisie in the society of which it is a part? At the time of writing (1942) Manoilescu is aware that Romania has not entered the phase of the totalitarian state (Germany / Italy). That is why it analyzes the pre-totalitarian state of Romania in the bourgeois class, a class that deals with the organization and national production being the main force that raises the state of a society.

The need to analyze the bourgeoisie also arises from the state of the village: its double exploitation in relation to the city (unequal exchange between village and city and foreign exploitation of cities). Manoilescu's brief conclusion was that the Romanian bourgeoisie ignored the village, the social unit whose importance was highest and whose share at the administrative level represented about 80% of the country's population at the time.

ELITES FACING OTHER ELITES

We start from two main ideas:

[1] If we stop at the definition of what it means to be aware (written at the very beginning of the essay), we remember that being conscious presupposes the existence of an ideal in the direction of which one manifests, which gives the 'direction', driven by some ideas with high value rank.

[2] Young people fulfill two major functions in society: they are the expression of innovation and perpetuation. They only innovate insofar as they are aware of reality.

It turns out that the measure of anchoring the individual in reality is given the ability to innovate and perpetuate an idea.

²⁷³ One proof that young people are only apparently aware is that they trust in 'political correctness', a certain interpretation of reality that gives them the illusion that they really understand the reality around them.

²⁷⁴ Ion Ungureanu, *Paradigme ale cunoașterii societății*, București, Editura Humanitas, 1990, p. 247.

Thus, starting from these pillar ideas, we try to answer questions that we consider relevant in relation to the topic of the discussion:

- a. who sets the height of a value?
- b. or what makes the [value] “high”?
- c. how does it combine or relate to other high ideas / values?

In this sense, the sociologist Nicolae Petrescu says through the surface and substrate paradigm that:

“the relationship between human nature and social differentiations corresponds to the relationship between the substrate and the surface of social life. This is the double aspect under which social life appears. The first is the permanent and unifying aspect, the other represents the provisional and differentiating aspect of the social reality. While human nature always remains the same, social differentiations vary according to time, place and ethnic group”²⁷⁵.

So according to this paradigm, the differences are only social, in form. But still, on what criterion is one form or another, higher or lower?

We try to explain through another paradigm, that of the pyramid of needs and the principle of social derivation, which says:

“In order to respond to the most basic biological needs, society creates means to satisfy them, and these means become, in turn, derived needs, which will generate new means and therefore needs, which means that the social derivation of needs is a process continuously and that biological (elementary) needs represent only a link in the chain of (derived) social needs. In turn, derived needs are „elementary” or „natural” in the same sense as biological ones, in the sense that without their satisfaction human survival is not possible”²⁷⁶.

In other words, social differentiation comes from the way society accepts basic needs. However, this “way” is given by the elites of that society, which, among other things, deal with “national organization and production, being the main forces that raise the status of a society”²⁷⁷.

In this way, young people appear from this perspective as the essential and necessary element through which elites promote and pass on a “way”, a “style” or a

²⁷⁵ “Relația dintre natura umană și diferențierile sociale corespunde relației dintre substratul și suprafața vieții sociale. Acesta este dublul aspect sub care apare viața socială. Primul este aspectul permanent și unificator, celălalt reprezintă aspectul provizoriu și diferențiator al realității sociale. În timp ce natura umană rămâne mereu aceeași, diferențierile sociale variază în funcție de timp, loc și grup etnic.” in Nicolae Petrescu, *The interpretation of national differentiations*, London, Watts and Co., 1929, pp. 106–107 apud Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

²⁷⁶ “Pentru a răspunde celor mai elementare nevoi biologice, societatea creează mijloace de satisfacere a lor, iar aceste mijloace devin, la rândul lor, nevoi derivate, care vor genera mijloace și deci nevoi noi, ceea ce înseamnă că derivarea socială a nevoilor este un proces continuu și că nevoile biologice (elementare) reprezintă doar o verigă a lanțului de nevoi sociale (derivate). La rândul lor, nevoile derivate sunt „elementare” sau „naturale” în același sens ca și cele biologice, adică în sensul că fără satisfacerea lor nu este posibilă supraviețuirea omului.”, Ion Ungureanu, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–48.

²⁷⁷ “... organizarea și producția națională, principalele forțe care ridică o stare a unei societăți” in Mihail Manoilescu, *Rostul și destinul burgheziei românești*, București, Editura Cugetarea-Georgescu Delafras, 1942, p. 61.

simple formula of “how to”. Beyond the practical mode, this *modus operandi* is “taught” [we could say, mainly] through books.

The moment or the “place” in which two societies “meet” becomes problematic, because that place is neither uniform nor easy to establish or identify. Is it legitimate and natural when the elites defend those represented, but is it still when these “actions” overlap in the space (physical, cultural, ideological, political, etc.) of the other elites? Many “hide” from the idea that the best defense is the attack, but even so, an aggression remains. If we have basically, as human nature, the same needs, why do some have greater needs? We tend to believe that it is also due to the ideas circulating in that space.

The most spectacular are the pan-ideas, in the sense that they “throw” over vast and very diverse spaces. Even if they are based on various „myths”, which in their essence have the same „message”, the victory of good over evil, who and what is good or bad? All the elites and the tension that manages these ideas directed against someone, is called geopolitics.

In conclusion, young people are the future geopolitical actors of society and if they are oriented towards an ideal, or a way to achieve that ideal, it will be perpetuated further: through family, children, relatives, relatives, acquaintances, etc.

SHORT CONCLUSION

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