
A PAIDEIC MODEL IN ROMANIAN PHILOSOPHICAL ORTHODOXISM

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Abstract

The article places side by side two personalities of the Romanian interwar cultural scene, Nae Ionescu and Mircea Vulcănescu, linked by a number of common theoretical research interests, among which, in particular, Orthodox theology. Nae Ionescu's paideic model is carried out on three levels: one institutional - a professor-student relationship, another at a doctrinaire level - of conveying-acquiring some ideas, and another journalistic - through debating some theological issues in the newspaper led by Nae Ionescu.

Keywords: Orthodoxism, student-professor relationship, Christian philosophy, press campaign

1. Introduction

In this study I shall place side by side two personalities of the Romanian interwar cultural scene, Nae Ionescu and Mircea Vulcănescu, linked by a number of common theoretical research interests, among which, in particular, Orthodox theology. I consider that the relationship between a professor with a broad cultural influence and a disciple of a high intellectual calibre deserves to be emphasized in order to paint an image of that age and in order to propose such a model for present day Theology, Philosophy and even Science.

My effort consists in identifying those common points of view which determine the lineage on the field of religious philosophy, some of them stated openly by the apprentice Mircea Vulcănescu himself, other noticeable while reading the works which they left behind, most of which were reclaimed after their deaths, neither of them being, as it is well known, a fancy man of scientific-systematic writing, preferring to express their ideas during lectures, conferences, in cultural magazines, etc. I consider that, for painting a better picture of the issue approached in this study, the frequent bibliographical references will be useful for future research on this topic. In this sense, I did not only search for those which seemed to me most relevant, but also for their precise reproduction, through numerous quotes.

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The connection between the two can only be made at an institutional and doctrinaire-philosophical level, thus the paideia model must be reconstructed strictly based upon this premise, as in their daily lives, the two had very different personalities. We have, on one side, Nae Ionescu, a very well known professor, but also actively involved in politics, often found in the midst of political polemics and intrigues, a successful businessman, often compared to the devil himself, and on the other hand, we have Mircea Vulcănescu, state employee, university professor, honest and loving neighbour, often compared to a saint.

Nae Ionescu's paideic model is carried out on three levels: one institutional - a professor-student relationship, another at a doctrinaire level - of conveying-acquiring some ideas, and another journalistic - through debating some theological issues in the newspaper led by Nae Ionescu.

2. The student-professor relationship

While studying in Paris, Mircea Vulcănescu comes in contact with the work of such personalities of Christian philosophy as Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson or Nicolai Berdiaev; in Romania, meeting Nae Ionescu could not have been more appropriate for the philosopher so passionate about religious thought, a meeting crucial for his intellectual development in general, and his philosophical-religious development in particular. All of these personalities will have a direct influence over him, as he himself would confess on several occasions.

Concerning Nae Ionescu, he trenchantly declares: "By way of his courses, my way of thinking collided with Nae Ionescu's, in a conflict of problems that I kept closer to heart than all the logics in the world" [1]. Furthermore: "And even though his influence may not have been the source of our religious renaissance, still this influence was the decisive force that helped 'troubled waters' return to their rightful path and helped us discover what Lucian Blaga would call 'the stylistic river bed' of our religious experience" [1, p. 46].

The recognition of Nae Ionescu as mentor was displayed without equivocation by Mircea Vulcănescu, on numerous occasions. Here is what he said in 1934, during a conference: „Our elders will never be able to understand - and their outrage seems legitimate - that 'Nae said' is, for us, the same thing as, for them, the magical expression 'Maiorescu says' once was" [2]. Or: „As a professor, Nae Ionescu is a wonderful elucidator. Personally, I always considered any discussion I had with him an assessment of myself, with the purpose of finding out to what degree I had understood a certain matter". [3]

It seems clear to us today that a fervent Christian such as Mircea Vulcănescu – but also open towards Philosophy and other areas of culture –, in the interwar era, could only have got close to Nae Ionescu, the only one among the religious scholars of the time with an original and lively way of thinking. Nae Ionescu's metaphysics and philosophy of religion were areas that intersected with Vulcănescu's own interests.

Vulcănescu's opportunity, but also that of other students interested in philosophical-religious issues was the fact – revolutionary as well – that the professor had the courage to debate such problems during his university lectures: “To talk about ‘redemption’, ‘holiness’, ‘orthodoxism’, ‘heresy’ - during lectures on Metaphysics and Logic, meant to divert from a well established tradition of idealism and positivism. The metaphysical and religious history issues had been long before excluded from academic concerns. Professor Nae Ionescu was the first to place these problems – with competence and originality – at the centre of his classes. Religion had, without a doubt, been mentioned before in the philosophy department; but it had been mentioned as a long forgotten stage of human thought, as a ‘false or imperfect philosophy’. (...) As a true forerunner, Professor Nae Ionescu did not shy away from opening his first university course with a lecture on love; then followed the courses on The Philosophy of Catholicism, on The Philosophy of Protestantism, on Faust, on the issue of redemption and so on. Only much later did our thinkers and professors discover that religious issues were still of interest, that positivism and idealism where long outdated beliefs, that it is not at all compromising to believe in God, that Christian philosophy once again dominated the 20th century. When the history of Romanian philosophy will be written, we will see that for 15 years *we were contemporary* to Europe only through Nae Ionescu's courses. To be fair, only professor Nae Ionescu could afford the liberty to speak about religion, Christianity, mysticism and Dogmatics, from the department of Metaphysics; this because he was a fierce logician, and held courses on the Philosophy of science, and had completed his PhD thesis with a mathematical problem. No one could contest his solid scientific training. He could not be suspected of pathetism, of ‘mysticism’, of dilettantism. So his lectures on religious philosophy were looked upon with distrust – but at the same time with timidity [4].

According to Emil Cioran, this attitude that the professor had, his interest for religion and the teaching of religious metaphysics during his lectures, fit into a much broader approach towards existence: “you have to trick your lucidity with various ‘formulas of equilibrium’: God, country, etc.” [5].

Mircea Vulcănescu grew closer to Nae Ionescu, as it could easily have been anticipated, following the courses on religious philosophy held by the professor during 1923-1924. Already ‘reconverted’ to faith and a member of the Romanian Christian Students Association (RCSA), it was clear that Vulcănescu was attending these courses. He and other members of the RCSA represented, in fact, the professor's regular audience. This group had recently discovered social Christianity in Rauschenbusch and Fosdik's books, and waited for and believed in “redemption, through the fulfillment of the Gospel, immediately, in souls and society” [1, p. 43]. However, the professor spoke of a different kind of Christianity, “harsh, asocial, fully focused on the afterlife, in which the Kingdom of God would only be realized at the end of the world, through a sort of eschatological catastrophe of the entire Cosmos”, an “exclusively theocentric” Christianity, “whose only dictum was the love for God, compared to which the

love for your fellow man, that for us seemed the key to Christianity, appeared only as a wondering of the western world” [1, p. 44]. In other words, to their ethical Christianity, based upon “the sacrifice you can make for the ‘lowliest of humans’, judging that the value of a Christian soul is quantifiable by what a soul is willing to do for the ‘hundredth sheep’”, the professor opposed a metaphysical Christianity, which meant the liturgical contemplation of an ecstatic God [1, p. 44]. (Nevertheless, this doesn’t mean that Nae Ionescu denied the value of the Christian principle “You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself”; he added: *only as much as yourself*; or, put differently, you love God with all of your heart, (...) the other you love only as much as you love yourself, as Constantin Noica explained).

3. Doctrinal coordinates

Mircea Vulcănescu did not hesitate to call Nae Ionescu a theologian and described him as a harsh theologian (a fundamentalist, as we would say today), “stringy, dry, monastic, intransigent and stiff, unpleasant, but tonic”, in a manner in which “only easterners can be”, very different from the Catholic condescendence or even unctuousness [1, p. 47]. Vulcănescu adds: the professor’s fundamental orthodoxy was “a type of Christianity that for us seemed authentic, because it was not for study (...), an intransigent Christianity, of old, a monastic Christianity, rooted in its radical and realistic views, nurtured from the authentic sap of our forefathers’ traditions (...)” [1, p. 47-48].

Embracing Romanian philosophy’s, par excellence, Socratic spirit - as described by those who experienced it -, without being a ‘pedagogue’, refusing writing or systematic expression (“the philosopher’s tomb stone” [4, p. 24]), an unusual attitude for the age, again quite revolutionary, preferring free philosophizing, unconstrained by a coherent framework, Nae Ionescu nevertheless had a field of ideas around which he built his argumentations. It can be said that this aspect represents yet another coordinate of his paradoxical philosophical personality: he refused the system, but had a few core ideas around which he navigated. It has been said, for example, that “the central axis of Nae Ionescu’s way of thinking was – regardless of what anyone has said – Orthodox Christianity” [6], but moreover, it’s not a mistake to say, I believe, that Nae Ionescu had an articulated philosophical framework; he was not the kind of thinker who perpetually speculated during his courses or in newspapers, nor the sort of thinker who constantly refused to give any value to philosophical theory in general, the way in which a professional sceptic would proceed.

As mentioned above, for Nae Ionescu religious experience, the religious act, implied, firstly, a relationship between man and divinity, and only afterwards a relationship between man and man: “Here, from the religious act, only one thing can be deduced: that the act implies the presence of two parties. These two parties are essentially different in nature” [7]. Man and God or the two poles of the religious act, “the one who lives the religious act and the one who fulfils it” are different in essence; the second is “out of this world”, it is

“something that surpasses the limits of our Universe, it is truly an absolute. Well, the absolute is what we generally call divinity or God, an entity that, somehow, has an influence over us, (...) but whose laws of existence escape use, and escape us precisely because this second party, God, is essentially different from us and everything that surrounds us.” [7, p. 53, 55] The religious act is, therefore, “an act of transition, a release of the individual from himself and a reference of the individual to something other than himself”, and not an inner act, but a sort of state of mind [7, p. 32, 33].

The religious relationship between man and man, on the basis of the commandment “You shall love your neighbour”, is not a norm in Eastern religious metaphysics, which Nae Ionescu endorses, but “pure and simple, a valuation of yourself in the midst of others”: “(...) in these circumstances in which love is no longer a leading norm in the East and does not represent my interest for other, but only the little interest I have for myself, in these circumstances, religion no longer gains explosive force; my fellow man, my neighbour, no longer has any actual importance, just as I no longer have any actual importance. And then, the entire religious process is simply confined to the individual and God (...)” [7, p. 27]. The professor states, and brings to his aid religious texts, that the love for God is different from the love for your neighbour, and the community of love among people is in no way a consequence of the love for God, as it is believed in the West. The religious act is a personal act, at an individual level, not a social one, meaning that divinity does not sit at one pole while the entire humanity sits at the other [7, p. 88-91]. The community of love is a “natural fact”, of “enthronement of the human consciousness”, of its return to its natural functions, that has nothing to do with the individual’s redemption, but which can coexist with redemption [7, p. 115]. Finally, the meaning of the principle “You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself” is the following: “do not cherish your neighbour as you do yourself, but do not cherish yourself more than others. (...) However, what follows from here is that the true bond between people in this life is not the positive connection of love, but the negative and passive one of compassion” [8]. Nae Ionescu will accept, nonetheless, a sort of collective love and even collective redemption, at a national level.

Torn from the original place of creation, fallen into history following the ancestral sin, man discovers suffering, struggle, tragedy [9]. Not being the master of the world he lives in, even though he was placed there as its centre and purpose, not being his own creator, but a simple creation much like the world around him, man carries out his day in anxiety. The feeling of dependence towards the Creator, as well as feeling severed of his organic ties, being torn from the Creator, sits at the basis of his unrest. He feels incomplete and, to be whole again, to regain equilibrium, he must dedicate himself to something else, he must redeem himself. The problem of redemption starts here, continuing “towards devoting your own person, towards melting your very being into something else, towards seeking equilibrium in a single point of support that transcends you”. And the easiest solution for every man is *love*, “a release from

oneself, devoting your own person towards a new entity, different from yourself and the others, or from yourself and another person, (...) towards an entity in which the two individualities meld". This attitude which sits at the base of religious life can also be called *sacrifice* and can also be translated like this: "(...) nothing is more valuable than divinity; therefore, nothing can be preferred to divinity, thus everything can be sacrificed and thus everything must be sacrificed, secondly, to this divinity" [7, p. 143].

Mircea Eliade wrote that Nae Ionescu's way of thinking aligned to these two coordinates [4, p. 25]: *sympathia*, man's existence in history, together with his fellow men, knowing the tragedy of love and suffering in a changing world, and *soteria*, man's exit from history through love towards God, through the hope of redemption.

At a philosophical-doctrinal level, Mircea Vulcănescu enthusiastically embraced this vision, as we have seen above. In the studies published in the cultural magazines of the time, Nae Ionescu's influence was clearly visible. In this respect, here I will emphasize a few relevant ideas.

Thus, when he tries to outline a defining picture of Christianity he does so in terms inspired by Nae Ionescu: he defines Christianity as a religion of Jesus Christ, "meaning the religion of the Son of God, one with the Father, embodied in the Holy Spirit, and crucified for our redemption in the days of Pontius Pilate, God revealed to us not only through the text of the Holy Bible, but also through living, uninterrupted tradition, kept within the community of the Church that perpetuated not only the text of the Scripture but also its meaning, unchanged, from the days of Christ to the present, community that continues to this day, in a mystical way, through the communion of those living and dead with the very being of our Lord Jesus Christ embodied in the mystical life of the Church" [2, p. 46]. It is a religion that embodies "a feeling of man's connection with something or someone that goes beyond him", leaving man with the feeling that the transcended being enters the world through Christ and gives new value to the things of this world, followed by the feeling of love towards the neighbour (a feeling of solidarity in suffering and of community of fate in sin) and with the hope for redemption (which means that this world does not hold much importance for a Christian) [2, p. 46-50]. It is above all a relationship between man and God, an act of two entities, and only then an act that implies the community of men; in other words – Mircea Vulcănescu is faithful to Nae Ionescu's philosophy – in Christianity man's love for divinity holds the foremost importance and only afterwards the love for the neighbour: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and your neighbour as you love yourself" [2, p. 47, 50].

Then, speaking about Christianity's fate in the modern world, Vulcănescu, in the footsteps of his professor, depicts Christians as living the drama of having broken away from their original condition and living with the desire to return there through redemption. Christianity has the duty to rebuild the old unitary world, under religious meanings, and to 'rid itself' of this world. The illusion of earthly paradise must be shown openly: "This animalistic happiness is just a

dangerous utopia that brings among us a caricature of Heaven that is contrary to our human condition and compromises our redemption. Whichever form such a world would take, and however ingratiatingly or brutally it would approach Christianity, such a world is not a Christian world or a Christian union, even though it should become the real union of tomorrow's society, it is not the community of love of Christianity and cannot be confounded with it" [2, p. 73-74]. From this it follows that the Christian is living his own drama as well: "(...) the Christian's earthly drama is that he is forced to live torn between two worlds" or, in other words, the Christian cannot be together with both God, and with this world, because he will not find redemption in this world, however close it may be to the Christian law [2, p. 78-79]. Man's temptation to substitute the Christian community of love with a terrestrial community (in the sense discussed by Durkheim), his temptation to get involved in "God's work for redemption", will, in the end, be destined for failure, but there needs to be no delusion that the age that will follow will be one of triumph for Christianity, but rather one of "experimentation" [2, p. 77, 79].

Elsewhere, while discussing the crisis of Christian morals (an issue that was quite broadly debated at the time, not only in our culture), Mircea Vulcănescu, faithful to Nae Ionescu's ideation – whom he often invokes in the study *Notes on the moral crisis* –, believes that the Western religious philosophy is to a much greater extent responsible for this crisis than the Eastern one [2, p. 131]. The West's moralist view is guilty for this state of affairs, in the attempt to transform the Christian philosophy "into an organizational doctrine of human happiness on this earth, based on altruism and love for your neighbour, considered good goals 'in themselves' for the human activity". It is the consequence of the Augustinian interpretation of the dictum "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind, and your neighbour as you love yourself" (Augustinian dictum that placed the love for the fellow men primordial in Christian theory) in the detriment of Nae Ionescu's interpretation of Origen (which placed the love for God above the love for the fellow men).

4. Controversial journalists

From Nae Ionescu, Vulcănescu acquired the habit of debating philosophical-religious issues in the press, because Nae Ionescu "did not understand the job of journalist solely as a passive occupation of contemplating the events that are taking place and analyzing their meanings, afterwards explaining them clearly, to everyone's understanding, but saw daily newspaper journalism as an instrument of intervention in everyday life, a collaboration with history, a direct means of creating the event" [1, p. 146]. It was, in fact, the professor's favorite means of making philosophy (in competition perhaps with direct, spontaneous philosophizing, during his lectures), sacrificing the 'classical' model of reflection, locked inside an office, deep in the windings of the system. It is known that he was, in fact, in this sense, a pioneer in Romanian

journalism, through the introduction of philosophical, theological, ethical and other issues in newspaper articles. Eliade noticed “the European dimension” of this model of making journalism/philosophy, later comparing him to Unamuno [4, p. 50]. Due to this, we today have more articles of interest belonging to Vulcănescu.

Nae Ionescu however, as a journalist, had a rarely before seen harshness and did not hesitate to debate any sort of topic, even against some institutions that were dear to him, like the Romanian Orthodox Church.

In fact, his relations with the Church were most of the time tense, and this can be evidenced by the two press campaigns he held against it. The first began in the year 1927, when the patriarch attended the Regency Council brought together after King Ferdinand's death and the exile of his successor Carol II. Thus, the professor, who envisioned an independent and respectable Church, uninvolved in politics, had two complaints in connection to the event: the first, the patriarch's presence in the Regency Council was a violation of the religious canons, that forbade priests to enter into politics, and second, the patriarch's presence in the council called for a patriarchal change in the leadership of the Church (solution that was, nevertheless, undesirable for Nae Ionescu, since it would have led to an even greater “canonic chaos” at the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church) [10]. It seems that patriarch Miron Cristea was directly to blame, having accepted the position in the Council, finding himself in the paradoxical situation of “holding the royal prerogatives, which were above his ministerial authority”, and then, moreover, as patriarch, finding himself under his own authority. Nae Ionescu's campaign while at ‘Cuvântul’ newspaper didn't manage to convince Miron Cristea to resign, but instead convinced the patriarch that Nae Ionescu deserved to be painted as a devil on the wall of the Patriarchal Church... [1, p. 76]

‘Cuvântul’ newspaper's second press campaign against the Romanian Orthodox Church was connected to the Synod's controversial decision to modify the date for Easter in the year 1929. The setting, in short, was the following: after the modification decided during the Pan-orthodox Conference in Constantinople, from 1923, of the Julian calendar, which was lagging behind the civil one with 13 days, the 1st of October 1924 became the 14th of October. After the modification, in 1929, Easter should have been celebrated on the 5th of May, not the 31st of March, as the Synod had decided. This would have been a grave error, according to ‘Cuvântul’ newspaper, since the date chosen by the Synod was not in accordance neither with the Church's canons, nor with the date decided by other Orthodox Churches.

Mircea Vulcănescu followed Nae Ionescu's footsteps, especially in his second campaign, showing in his articles, among other things, that some of the old religious canons prohibiting innovation and urging to keep with traditions were being broken (for example, the 7th canon of the 7th Ecumenical Synod).

But other rules would have been broken as well, by establishing the date for Easter on the 31st of March [2, p. 260]. The first is that Easter would have fallen before the Spring Equinox, which is forbidden in the *Apostolic*

Constitutions (book V, chapter 17): “(...) But do you observe carefully the vernal equinox, which occurs on the twenty-second of the twelfth month, which is Dystros (March), observing carefully until the twenty-first of the month, lest the fourteenth of the month shall fall on another week, and an error being committed, you should through ignorance celebrate the Passover twice in the year” (which would mean that one sacrifice and one resurrection would not be enough for redemption). And here a distinction must be made between the “ontological meaning of the liturgical Easter that may be celebrated on any day (...) and the other meaning of Easter, of remembrance and celebration, which takes place only once a year”.

The second is the possibility of celebrating Easter before the Judaic Easter (a possibility permitted by Catholics, who disregard the Judaic Easter), which itself created confusion among Christian believers and some priests. Even though Jews sometimes celebrate Easter after the Resurrection, this should not change Christian’s natural orientation towards celebrating Easter, because the Easter according to the law means “prefiguring the true Easter, ordained by Jesus Christ to his apostles during the Last Supper”. Again, according to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, Christian Easter can only take place “after the Jewish Easter, so that the prophecy, meaning the sacrificing of the lamb, may come first, followed then by what had been prophesized, meaning the death of the man and His resurrection” (book V, chapter 17). To celebrate before the fulfilment of the prophecy would mean to “disregard the true relationship between the two Testaments”, and, up until now the Church has guarded the connection between prophecy and truth in the two Testaments.

Finally, it is interesting to mention that both of them, the professor and the disciple, were practicing Christians, despite these virulent attacks, addressed especially to those who were the heads of the Church at that time.

5. Orthodox radicalism. The disciple’s raving

In what Vulcănescu called ‘Nae Ionescu’s fundamental orthodoxy’, we can also find other theoretical attitudes, present primarily in his journalism, outside of his project of outlining a new, strictly Eastern, metaphysical religion.

He militated for imposing Romanian Orthodoxy at a regional level, considering that Romania had become the biggest and most important Orthodox country, after Russia’s atheization through communism; it was a joint effort (but not directly), with that of Nichifor Crainic and his group from ‘Gândirea’ magazine.

At an institutional level, Nae Ionescu ‘dreamt’ of a strong Romanian Orthodox Church, dominant in the region, ruler of the East. Thus, the Romanian Orthodox Church did not live up to the philosopher’s claims, not only through its moderate standing (mediocre, in the professor’s eyes) at a regional level, but also ***through the ‘sin’ of not being strictly separated from the state and more especially from politics, or through the ‘sin’ of its moral liveness.***

Orthodoxy, Nae Ionescu believed, is Romanians' pure form of being religious; to be born Romanian is to be born Orthodox: "As soon as religious belief, as historical reality, is an integral part of the other historical reality, nation, it follows that, in the definition of the notion 'Romanian' and in the establishment of the reality 'Romanian', Orthodoxy becomes an essential note, and respectively component. To be Romanian, not a 'good Romanian', but simply Romanian, means to also be Orthodox" [11]. Thus, a Catholic, for example, can be a good Romanian, but not a pure, authentic Romanian. Catholicism or Protestantism is categorically rejected as religious belief that could hold the badge of the Romanian soul.

Mircea Vulcănescu however did not share the same radical attitude; he regarded the western theologies with sympathy, at least from a purely theoretical interest (he also did not hesitate to criticize them, as seen in the previous chapter). At one point, he even criticizes the professor's view as exaggerated (but, with a sort of apparent timidity), comparing him to Soloviov, from this point of view [2, p. 139].

In the face of Mircea Vulcanescu's preoccupation for the Western Christian philosophy, Nae Ionescu, a devoted 'easterner', appeared perplexed, asking him, at one point, regarding a certain event, why he was his 'apprentice' and yet he was preparing to speak during a conference about Toma de Aquino's philosophy [1, p. 140]. In the same context, Nae Ionescu said that, for Toma de Aquino, "all issues succeed one another (...) in a perfect order and are resolved in order, like in G.G. Antonescu's pedagogy course", but nevertheless tried to highlight the damascian roots of the thomistic philosophy, attempt that, it seems, constituted Vulcănescu's escape route, as he answered through another question: "In this case how does my preoccupation for Toma de Aquino come as a surprise to you?" [1, p. 140]. Probably out of respect for the professor, who had an Anti-western view, Mircea Vulcanescu, a similarly devout Orthodox, did not unequivocally respond to him that there cannot be a Philosophy of religion without the great contribution of the West. (While in Paris – after having already attended Nae Ionescu's courses -, he was ready to establish a Circle for thomistic studies, together with other Orthodox Romanians – "the only Orthodox Latins, settled between the East and West, consequently having needs for *reflection* over the religious condition" [2, p. 227]). This was, however, a simple scolding, coming from someone who loved Vulcănescu and who encouraged him on the path of religious philosophy. The true attacks on Vulcănescu will come from others, some of them great personalities of Romanian interwar philosophy, as we will later see.

6. Together for worse

In that age, this type of philosophy, aside from the public appeal it enjoyed, was also met with hostility, with a sort of contempt, which, surely enough, touched our above mentioned philosophers as well: Comarnescu declared that "mysticism is characteristic of the new generation", Petrovici or

Ralea labeled it “snobbism”, and Rădulescu-Motru, “neurosis” or “commercialized mysticism” [1, p. 68].

Ultimately, for example, he attacked the view presented by ‘Cuvântul’ newspaper and ‘Gândirea’ magazine [12, 13], labeling it “mystic” and “obscurantist”; this view had also made its way into the University and it encouraged a “belletristic philosophy”, a religious “mysticism”, a “philosophy to be used by journalists masquerading as saviors of public opinion”, as opposed to “scientific philosophy”, maiorescian tradition, whose goal is to understand the surrounding world as objectively as possible.

In his reply, Mircea Vulcănescu said [13, p. 206] that Philosophy is, at the same time, both “a primordial axiological intuition of existence”, and “a rational search for its meanings”; and so it appears in the works of all of the classics evoked in the article by C. Rădulescu-Motru; consequently, it is not scientificity that give Philosophy its classic view, and so, nonscientific philosophy need not be excluded from teaching. Such an exclusion would be entitled if nonscientific philosophy were lacking “a primordial, clear view on existence” and a “rational, discursive, well-argued foundation”.

Moreover, it seems that this scientificity is no more than a trend like any other, which can be demonstrated historically and sociologically and, thus, objectivism is not a *necessary* attitude. The final conclusion is that, in fact, the cultural environment of the times is the one that must determine the presence of one type of philosophy or another in education. Professors who studied in the West starting with 1880, in an environment of scientism, empirio-criticism and associationism, brought back this new type of cultural model to the Romanian universities. The youngest, who found in the West an environment built by Husserl, Scheler, Heidegger, Maritain, Blondel and so one, brought home a different cultural model.

Nae Ionescu also had a point of view in this sense, dating back to 1919: “Today, Philosophy, struggling, rightfully or unrightfully so, to become scientific, attempts – in its new hypostasis – a gracious contempt and a slight sympathy for those who – in despair to find answers to the mysteries of the world at the bottom of a phial – are searching, on less precise routes, but maybe less prolific, for their inner peace. For my part, I will know to someday find the right occasion to use in my analysis the presuppositions of this philosophy which intends to become scientific. For now, gentlemen, the spiritual crisis experienced today by humanity in its entirety is so acute – on the other hand, Philosophy’s inability to cross boundaries which have in fact been reached two millennia ago is so evident - that the accusation of ‘literaturized’ philosophy, abandoned to non-scientific methods, can be received with complete peace of mind” [8, p. 75-76].

7. Final considerations

Few things can be said about the sources of this common way of thinking, since Nae Ionescu expressed his ideas mainly during his university lectures (later retrieved and published by some of his students), spoken spontaneously, on the spot, by the professor, without any notes or prior preparations, lacking bibliographical references. This is also the reason why Nae Ionescu has been accused, over the years, of plagiarism, issue that seems, however, to have been permanently put to rest in favour of the accused, in a recently published book [14].

Considering this latest revelation, we are facing an original philosophy that could have probably become of reference for European culture in its entirety, if this kind of philosophizing would not have been prohibited with the instauration of atheistic communism in Romania. Not only did this type of philosophy (the philosophy of religion) meet its end during Communism, but also many philosophers who cared for it, among them *Mircea Vulcănescu, whose last act, lived inside de walls of a communist prison, has been compared to the great moments of personal sacrifice of the martyr philosophers.*

Therefore, all that can be done today, when history allows, is to bring to light and popularize their work, selecting those aspects of their philosophical activity that deserve to be brought forward for debate.

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