

# IDEOLOGISTS AND DOCTRINAIRES OF INTER-WAR RIGHT-WING INDEOLOGY

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## Abstract

*In the socio-political context of inter-war Romania, an ample dynamic of proliferating right-wing ideology ideas was noted, emphasized by the radicalization of the intellectuals' attitude and especially of the young generation's attitude, having clear nationalist feelings.*

*In this sense, a nationalist ideological, militant, and uncompromising direction is being set, focused on several definitive aspects, that mainly targets the promoting and preserving of the endemic characteristic. Thus, in his statements in the '30s, Mircea Eliade shapes a nationalistic ideology from philosophical positions, based on the sentiment of a historical spiritual mission of the generation, Vasile Marin expresses himself in offensive radical terms, specific to a repudiation campaign of the existing political models and to promoting of a new form of political expression, and Nichifor Crainic elaborates a nationalist doctrine from Orthodox-theological point of view.*

*All these ideological attitudes, in spite of the inevitable limitations and traps of the political-ideologist scene of the 4<sup>th</sup> decade in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, remain, even though in time they have become repudiated and abandoned by even their authors, exciting milestones of a moment having an intense spiritual feeling.*

**Keywords:** Right-wing ideology, Nationalism, Orthodox spirituality, Anti-democracy.

## Introduction

The socio-political Romanian climate after World War I knew an intense and dynamic discrepancy of the ideological systems, focused mainly on the frameworks of ways of thinking and of reaction of a fervent nationalism, declamatory and offensive, born on the basis of political instability and ethnic and economic incongruence of the era.

In this context, the intellectuals' attitude, and especially the young generation's radicalize with deep nationalist feelings and nationalist manifestations and organization are born to promote ethnicity and to capitalize the national specific.

Leon Volovici<sup>1</sup>, in his work *Ideologia nationalistă și problema evreiască în România anilor 30 (Nationalist Ideology and the Jewish issue in the '30s' Romania)*, establishes two big directions of nationalist ideology during the inter-war period, having important consequences for the political and intellectual life. Thus, one line is represented by *constructive and cultural nationalism*, illustrated mainly by Nicolae Iorga or C. Radulescu-Motru, in the terms of an organic nationalism, moderate and tolerant towards the ethnic and social intrusions of the allogene element and, in the same time, critical and refractory regarding extremism and western values. The second direction, radical and militant, taken from Eminescu's and Hasdeu's nationalist vision, is the one of the *new nationalism*, theorized and supported through a rich journalistic activity, by Nichifor Crainic, Nae Ionescu, and a significant part of the young generation of intellectuals, (reminding here Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, Petre Tutea, Vasile Marin).

This ideological direction, adopted and cultivated by the young generation, having a true interest in the political area, is focused on certain defining aspects, that mainly targets the promoting

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<sup>1</sup> apud Leon Volovici, *Ideologia nationalistă și problema evreiască în România anilor 30 (Nationalist Ideology and the Jewish issue in the '30s' Romania)*, Published by Humanitas, 1995

and preserving of the national specific: repudiation of the existing parliamentary system and the promotion of a new form of political expression, the revival of national consciousness, based on the sentiment of a historical spiritual mission of the generation, and the resizing of Christian spirituality, having deep accents of Orthodox mysticism.

From this perspective, the present paper extensively discusses, as it is outlined in the era's journalism, the socio-political and cultural vision of certain intellectuals of great importance in the configuration of nationalist ideology and of the right-wing political ideas during the inter-war period: Mircea Eliade, Vasile Marin si Nichifor Crainic.

### Paper contents

The literary and scientific works that made Mircea Eliade famous as a writer and historian of global religions, does not wholly and exclusively represent the amplitude and depth of his way of thinking. His intellectual personality shows also another aspect, having as basis a rich journalistic activity, an ideological one that proved to be, in spite of mystifications and numerous future polemics, a fundamental stage in his cultural and spiritual development. Without a doubt, he proved to be a representative of great sharpness and visionary spirit of his generation.

Being one of the most influential young intellectuals of the era, honorary assistant of the charming professor Nae Ionescu, Eliade expressed, with an exceptional idea-generating force, the historical mission and decisive role of his generation, in the historical action.

The first generation of intellectuals after the creation of Romania Mare (Greater Romania), spirits of scope where Eliade establishes himself as one of the generation peaks, establishes itself early on, around the age of 20-22 on the stage of Romanian culture.

One of the phenomena specific to the cultural context of the inter-war period was precisely the hatching of this generation of young elite intellectuals, who, to the offence of older contemporary writers, will seize a great extent of the Romanian cultural life of the 3rd and 4th decades. Alongside Mircea Eliade, in this regard, Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, Eugen Ionescu, Mircea Vulcanescu, Mihail Polihroniade, Haig Aterian, Dan Botta, Vasile Marin, Mihail Sebastian, Petre Tutea, etc. stand out.

Through his articles published during this period, in different prestigious cultural and political journals, especially in Nae Ionescu's *Cuvantul (The Word)*, Mircea Eliade wins himself a leading position in his generation, constantly offering the rhythm his erudite and visionary thinking. The leading personalities of that era recognise, without any reservation, his intellectual capacities, his disposition towards ideological debate, as well as his passion for the dynamic of philosophical ideas, of religious and metaphysical origin.

As early as the 3rd decade, Mircea Eliade has a rich journalistic activity, intensified in the '30s, when he imposes, through an opinionated attitude and public statements, his great capacity of doctrinaire synthesis and of visionary political coherence.

In spite of the fact that he was accused and blamed of ideological wandering, through his act of joining the Legionnaire Movement (later, under different exterior pressure, he reaches the point of denying his paternity to other articles), Eliade brought a significant contribution, through his publishing during those years, to the clarification and understanding of the psychosocial and spiritual mechanism of the actions taken by the right-wing extreme.

His inclusion in the ideological context of a generation that will lead to the configuration of a vision having a certain extremism regarding politics, must be understood from the point of view of the intellectual and cultural climate of an era having a fundamental intersession of instinctive polarization of the intellectuals into antagonistic ideological areas (right-wing/left-wing). Moreover, the phenomenon can be found, even radicalised, on a large European level.

Eliade's journalistic and ideological activity from the 4th decade, disputed and unfavourably judged in the perspective of his entire intellectual representations, that has consequences practically

reflecting on the reduction of the recognition of global reputation of the scholar<sup>2</sup>, presents itself, regarded attentively and without prejudices, as a reflection of a historical mission and, in this sense, as a continuation of national cultural values, firmly fixed on the ideological line articulated by Eminescu and Hasdeu, Nae Ionescu and even Lucian Blaga.

The first series of far-reaching articles was *Itinerariu spiritual* (Spiritual Itinerary), the circle of 12 columns published in *Cuvantul (The Word)* in 1927, by means of which Mircea Eliade configures the main spiritual lines of his generation. This series of articles outlined the ideological and cultural programme of young intellectuals, on which future movements and cultural associations were built, such as the famous association and journal *Criterion*.

The ideas and directions of the *Itinerariului spiritual (Spiritual Itinerary)* are co-substantial with the values of right-wing ideology, underlining, beyond the imperative of action and the direct experience, the spiritual primacy and the criticism of sufficient reasoning, of Cartesianism and scientific positivism, as well as promotion of mysticism and Orthodoxy, in the sense of reassertion of national singularity. Eliade outlines an apology of the experiences, that have as aim "*the fertilization of the consciousness and its transformation into a nimble one (...) in order to provoke attitude and these attitudes - spiritual positions*"<sup>3</sup> and he speaks of a "*spirit of the present generations*", in which dominates the integration of mystical experience and the reduction of scientific rationalism, in order to achieve a complete knowledge, an authentic, harmonious, and balanced synthesis. Great importance is also given to culture, understood as "*a bundle of spiritual seeds, mostly created by religion*"<sup>4</sup>. Culture develops in the spiritual matrix of a nation, mostly formed on the framework of religion or of a mystical experience. From here comes the need to resuscitate Orthodoxy as a means of accessing the metaphysical and of revealing the sacred. On the other hand, the praise given to Christianity culminates in the taking one of the tragedies of Christian life, ambivalent and creative, ("*humanity's greatest blessing is based on this dualism flesh-spirit: the personality*"<sup>5</sup>) which is concentrated into the unification of contraries, "*in an original synthesis of the two adverse tendencies*".

The young generation of remarkable intellectuals firmly proclaims its founding role, predominantly, of an intellectual medium, able to generate culture: "*We believe that the unity of consciences, the creation of a cultural medium, having the same preoccupations and the same values - will be achieved only by the present generation (...)*".<sup>6</sup>

The seeds of this vision regarding the imperatives of his generation will develop in the following years in the outlining of what Eliade calls Romanianism, conceptually regarded as a nationalist ideology of spiritual essence, incorporated and thoroughly appropriated by the inter-war right-wing movements, which, in the first ears of the 4th decade, will absorb a large part of young Romanian intellectuals. The so called "conversion" phenomenon was however achieved gradually, a major influence in this sense had Nae Ionescu, whose seduction force and charisma was a great weight factor in the development of right-wing nationalist and Orthodoxizing beliefs of young intellectuals.

The doctrinaire articles of Mircea Eliade proved to have a prolific and reverberant impact, today being grouped in the volumes *Profetism romanesc (Romanian Prophecy)*<sup>7</sup> and *Texte legionare*

<sup>2</sup> apud Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Cioran, Eliade, Ioenscu - Uitarea fascismului (Cioran, Eliade, Ioenscu - Forgetting Fascism)*, Published by Humanitas, Bucuresti,

<sup>3</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Itinerariu spiritual (Spiritual Itinerary)*, in *Profetism romanesc (Romanian Prophecy)*, vol I, Published by Rosa Vanturilor, Bucuresti, 1990, pg.38

<sup>4</sup> idem, pag. 40

<sup>5</sup> *Ortodoxie (Orthodoxy)*, in Mircea Eliade, op.cit., pg. 58

<sup>6</sup> ibidem

<sup>7</sup> Mircea Eliade, op.cit.

*sau despre romansim (Legionnaire texts or about Romanianism)*.<sup>8</sup> Titles such as *Romania in eternitate (Romania in eternity)* or *De ce cred in biruinta Miscarii Legionare (The reason I believe in the Legionnaire Movement's victory)*, *Revolutie crestina (Christian Revolution)* or *Comentarii la un juramant (Remarks on an Oath)* indicate uncompromising attitudes of the assertion of the nationalist ideal and especially of the configuration of the *Romanianism* concept, regarded as a new spiritual dimension of the nation.

The intellectual, term used excessively in that era, having meanings that started to degrade and to "become political", so this intellectual which is "pure", authentic, not enslaved to any traditional political party, represents, in that period's concept of Eliade "*the only invincible force of a nation (...) the forces that sustain a country's history and feeds its mission (...)*".<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the intellectual has a avant-garde role, being able to give birth to a system of ideas and values that can create and stimulate social dynamic. So that - says Eliade "*any political movement has its roots in the ideas of an intellectual or a group of intellectuals*". Claiming his superiority and elitism, a prophetic aspect of revolutionary prediction is attributed the pure intellectual, since "*fundamental changes are felt at the beginning by the country's intellectual elite, that a revolution has its roots not only in the demands of a social class, but also in the elites' critique of values and spiritual experiences*".<sup>10</sup> The author additionally highlights the mission of the elite of creating superior values that are specific to a nation and of justifying its historical mission, making it eternal through the ability of creation. The preservation of the national particularity and the continuation of Romanian archaic values is given, in the essayist's opinion, by the two extremes of social class, the peasants and the cultural elite: "*Peasants have defended the field and the people. Intellectuals defend our rights for spirituality, its autonomy, and its universal, human values. A nation's historical mission is verified by two things: 1) the power to defend its field, its freedom and rights, 2) and the vaguer to create values. The classes or groups that fulfil these essential functions are the only ones that can be called vital groups, without these a nation risks to disappear from history...*"<sup>11</sup>

The intellectuals' imperative is thus, in the writer's opinion, the fundamental value of the national spirit's survival. Being the only means of assertion against foreign influences, creation is perceived as an organic, imperative need, which should reflect not only on the process of contemplation, specific to the elite ("*by contemplating, these include the world, they turn it upside down in its soul, they enrich it through their creation*")<sup>12</sup>, but also on the event or action, understood as "*spiritual bearing*" and as an interior balance of harmonization.

In the sense of creation need as a means of survival, Mircea Eliade extends his vision to the level of the state and of the doctrine of nationalism. Creation means "*thirst for eternity*", and nationalism validates itself through creation, thus through eternity, in the sense of permanence in value in time and space. By contrast, Romania is situated among the nations that constantly renounced its creative seeds. The firm and valid direction towards a nation's "eternity" is considered to be the nationalist creators, writers, philosophers, people who create culture and not the heroes or political leaders<sup>13</sup>, who only have a role of leading the historical path.

Especially the social insufficiencies and the minuses of the political class push through in the pages of the articles, sometimes having a mild tone, other times having a polemical and denigrating tone, but the entire ideological vision, with emphasis on *missionary work and spiritual revolution*, is outlined not only as an effect of ideological reverberation strongly felt at European level, but rather

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<sup>8</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Texte legionare sau despre romansim (Legionnaire texts or about Romanianism)*, Published by Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2001

<sup>9</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Profetism Romnesc (Romanian Prophecy)*, vol.II,..., pg.32

<sup>10</sup> idem, pg. 70

<sup>11</sup> idem, pg. 101

<sup>12</sup> idem, pg. 64

<sup>13</sup> idem, pg. 128

as a reaction to the unfavourable internal context towards spasmodic socio-political evolution of inter-war Romania.

The revolt against politicking reaches maximum peaks when the prestige of the Romanian nation and culture is slandered, having a strong effect on the drastic decrease of the national spirit's ability to assert itself.

But what is inexcusable and surely fatal for a nation, is, in the author's vision, "the loss of governmental instinct", strongly felt in "the entire political incapacity" and in the concrete absence of an ample, anticipatory, and reforming vision, specific to the entire Romanian political spectrum after World War I. The governmental perspective's obtuseness of the politicians, suggestively called by Eliade "blind pilots" who "don't see, don't hear, and don't feel any more" and who, in the menacing and tempestuous context of revolutionary Europe, plot "with an unchanging voluptuousness the slow collapse of the modern Romanian state"<sup>14</sup>, induces Eliade the tragic, almost apocalyptic, prediction of the nation's disappearance: "But a nation in which a leading class has such a way of thinking, and who speaks to you about qualities of foreign people - does not live for a long time. It, as nation, does not however have the right to measure up to history."

However history acquires, in Eliade's concept, a much deeper sense, that needs to be perceived in an existential perspective, of the development of "the national being". "There is a history that is made and a history that is consuming itself"<sup>15</sup>, claims the exegete. If "the history that consumes itself" is limited to the exterior, prosaic act of the political or economical intercession, "the history that is made" has a metaphysical description and focuses on a spiritual, transfiguring, and organically progressive action, directed towards finding a "sense specific to its historical existence".<sup>16</sup> That is why Eliade considers that "it is more necessary and prolific the pure spiritual activity - rather than a political one", since "the thing that now interests more is not the political - but the historical. We are not interested in the victory of a political group - but the reintegration of Romania in its historical lines"<sup>17</sup>. The historical perspective thus requires, in this sense, being aware of a spiritual destiny of the nation and its orientation towards its specific matrix direction of its historical and spiritual existence, direction born, as a cosmic condition of every being, out of a critical soteriological need, "out of a great inner thirst for redemption"<sup>18</sup>.

"The reintegration of the nation into the historical lines" is thus achieved, firstly, through perspective and register change of the entire Romanian political spectrum, which "crumbles" a historical fact perverting it into "political incidents", and the recapitalization, in the same time, of "the historical nationalism", understood as an "act of spiritual creation" of a nation that has "the consciousness to participate in a long lasting history"<sup>19</sup>. The nationalism, in Eliade's vision, thus relinquishes itself from the political bonds and firmly structures itself on the primacy of spirituality and on the creative act of "national forces" able to imprint the nation with the sense of eternity and universalism.<sup>20</sup>

In this context, the battle of nationalism against the political sterility, the borrowed forms, and the false values, is identified with "the historical mission" of the young generation, a spiritual mission, materialized in a "spiritual revolution", Christian revolution, initiated with the aim of accession to "the salvation of the Romanian nation". "The young movement from 1927 was born with

<sup>14</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Texte Legionare (Legionnaire Texts)*..., pg.52

<sup>15</sup> idem, pg. 93

<sup>16</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Profetism romanesc (Romanian Prophecy)* ..., pg. 197

<sup>17</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Texte Legionare (Legionnaire Texts)*..., pg. 94

<sup>18</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Profetism romanesc (Romanian Prophecy)*, Vol II...pg. 155

<sup>19</sup> idem, pag. 193

<sup>20</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Nationalismul (Nationalism)*, in *Profetism romanesc (Romanian prophecy)*, vol.II, pg.196:

"The hardest battle and in which a nation's force of creation is verified, takes lace after the victory of nationalism." This means the hour when it tries to become universal."

*this historical mission's consciousness: to change Romania's sole, subordinating all the values to only one supreme value:" The Spirit."*<sup>21</sup>

As a result, excessive politicking and the precarious forms of political intercessions, can be counter-balanced, in Eliade's conception, only through a predominance over the spiritual and the Christian values, and from here comes his advocacy, in the sense of a spiritual, ascetic action, of self-accomplishment. Hence we can speak about an imperative of acting, but not in a political sense, but in a spiritual sense (*"The political sense of a battle falls on a secondary plan. The battle, the action, the effort (...) receives now its new Christian, mystical sense"*<sup>22</sup>), that later reverberates itself in the larger domains of society: *"Only now, the sense of this Christian revolution is starting to be understood, a revolution that tries to create a new Romania, creating first a new man, a perfect Christian - and that replaces the old political life, through civil life, that means it restores the humanity and Christian relations within the same blood community"*<sup>23</sup>.

Eagerly claimed in the '30s by the "Romanian youth", more precisely by the nationalist-Christian branch of the intellectual elite, the primacy of spirituality becomes, in the European context of nationalist right-wing movements, the fundamental privilege of distinguishing the actions of the Romanian right-wing extreme, in this case the Legionnaire Movement. Embedded, after the quasi-totality of historiographical interpretations, in the influential areas of western totalitarian movements, legionnareism is not, in Eliade's opinion in 1936, just a simple imitation of the latter, as it was often speculated in that era, but it reveals an essence *"so profoundly mystical - that its success would mean once again the victory of the Christian spirit in Europe"*.<sup>24</sup> In addition, referring to the invoked loans of ideological and political doctrine from other areas, the essayist rejects promptly and concludes, *"our doctrine must result from our Romanian realities"*<sup>25</sup>. In his opinion, the legionnaire movement, unlike Fascism, that emphasises on the state or, unlike Nazism dominated by racial Chauvinism, proposes a revival of the endemic fund and the implementation of a new Romanian consciousness, based on the unchangeable values of Christian morality: *"if Nazism is founded on People and Fascism on State - then the Legionnaire Movement has the right to claim itself the only Christian mysticism able to lead human settlements, (...), it is first of all a Christian revolution, a spiritual, ascetic, and male revolution, as Europe has never known before."*<sup>26</sup>

The emphasis on spirituality will however lead to a new approach, on Romanian field, of the long time circulated concept of *"the new man"*, exploited then with a maximum insistence and by the communist totalitarianism. Quotation Eliade.

The concept of *"new man"*, promoted by the Legionnaire Movement, acquires, as it was expected, clear spiritual connotations. The primacy of the spiritual, that inevitably leads to revelation, to a mystical feeling and to a new religious approach, deeply rooted into ascetic Christianity, has as a main result the cleaning of the being of selfishness or of instinctual impulses. *"The new man"*, in the Romanian nationalist ideology, is hence an individual that accepts and knows, on the highest level, the dimension of suffering, of the permanent self-battle and self-sacrifice.

All these attitudes are, in fact, the corollary of a serene and often fatalistic acceptance of the tragic: *"Giving up earthly pleasures - says Mircea Eliade"*<sup>27</sup>, in his article ***Comentarii la un jurament (Notes on an Oath)*** - *is not a lessening of the being, a sterilization of the substance - but, on the contrary, a frantic increase of the spiritual being, a victory of the real against the fleeting, illusive, despairing human joys*". Asceticism and moral purification are regarded, by transcending or sublimation of distress, as being determined for the accession towards the dimensions of interior

<sup>21</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Texte Legionnare (Legionnaire Texts)*..., pg. 50

<sup>22</sup> idem, pg. 44

<sup>23</sup> idem, pg. 51

<sup>24</sup> ibidem

<sup>25</sup> idem, pg. 95

<sup>26</sup> idem, pg. 46

<sup>27</sup> idem, pg. 45

freedom, devoid of psycho-social gearings or of individualistic limits: "*When the new man's centre of gravity falls on salvation and on spiritual development - the man becomes free. Free to contemplate and to judge work of art as it should be. Free to practice a science or technique, to research a philosophy, to value a work of art - without feeling his human being completely engaged in this activity.*" The soteriological vision<sup>28</sup> of the new man, falls on the social, in the terms of a nationalist revolution that should restore moral order and replace the structure of a stale political life with new civil frames of life, created under the Christian sign of mystical living. Essentially, the spiritual lines of "the new man" converge towards restoring "the existential, historical sense" of the nation: "*a united and strong Romania*"<sup>29</sup>, "in an organic, national state", able to capitalize its creative forces and its national spiritual specific. The anticipated victory of nationalism was supposed to broaden these spiritual outlines towards far away horizons of universalism.

From the positions of a fervent nationalism, Eliade's attitude in the '30s, influenced mostly by the right-wing ideology, strives to configure a Romanian spiritual paradigm put under the sign of a spirit that wants to be prophetic and transfiguring.

Despite the fact that Eliade's journalism with a nationalist militant theme was denied or silenced by the essayist, becoming famous in the inter-war exile years as a historian of religions, "*the imprudent acts and errors of youth*"<sup>30</sup>, cannot be omitted during the attempt to configure the spirit of the inter-war era, because, states Z. Ornea with an obvious sincerity: "*Eliade was too big and too important for his generation to ignore his writings and attitude taking*"<sup>31</sup>.

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Among the young intellectuals grouped around the *Axa* journal, having a considerable cultural impact in the '30s comes to the fore Vasile Marin, venturesome and bright, having a promising political intelligence. He was part of a prestigious circle of intellectuals, such as Mircea Eliade, Mihail Polihroniade or Victor V.Vojen, whose publishing and intellectual activity had an important role in the propagation of the right-wing ideology within the spiritual climate of inter-war Romania.

The group from *Axa* constituted in intellectual elites of the Legionnaire Movement, which had a journalistic and ideological contribution and which succeeded in penetrating into the so-called cultural aristocracy, imprinting the distinguished nature of the prestige to the Movement. "*Bright, ironical, and even impertinent* - said Francesco Veiga<sup>32</sup> in his work *The History of the Iron Guard - the members of the group, sons of middle and high bourgeoisie, overall had an unparalleled glamour, which was refined and modern*". Of course, the solid knowledge in different academic subjects (Political Science, Law, Philosophy), the rich argumentation and oratorical ease made them unique, triggering, as it was expected, a great emulation, especially among the knowledge-thirsty youth and students.

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<sup>28</sup> Eliade develops the significance of two concepts *Soteria* and *Sympathia*, understood as two spiritual tendencies for "*the reconciliation of the soul with the world*": "*Soteria*" reflects "the attempt of rescue, salvation, getting out into the world", and *sympathia* - "*the attempt to find support in the world, to love the world, to search for harmony with all its existence*", in *Mantuire, Istorie, Politica (Testimony, History Politics)*, in *Profetism Romanesc (Romanian Prophecy)*, vol.II, pg.152

<sup>29</sup> idem, pg.163

<sup>30</sup> In his *Memoriile (Memoires)* Eliade, being constrained by certain circumstances, that slowed down in a certain manner the assertion of his prestige or his assertion on the European cultural stage, confesses: "the imprudent acts and errors made as a young man forms a series of misunderstandings, that will follow me my entire life", *Memorii (Memoires)*, vol.II, (1937-1969), Published by Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1991,pg.49

<sup>31</sup> Z. Ornea, *Anii Treizeci (The '30s). Extrema dreapta romaneasca (The Romanian right-wing extreme)*, Published by Fundatia Cultural Romane, Bucuresti, 1995, pg. 211

<sup>32</sup> Francesco Veiga, *Istoria garzii de fier 1919-1941 (The History of the Iron Guard 1919-1941)*, Published by Humanitas, Bucuresti, 1995, pg. 160

In this context, the captivating personality, marked by vitality and impetuosity, of Vasile Marin is outlined, a first class intellectual, considered by his generation's colleagues and by historical analysts, one of the most intelligent ideologists of right-wing nationalism. In this respect, some of his journalistic texts stand as proof, texts that remained in the archives of the era's journals, as well as a biographic portrait masterfully elaborated by Mihail Polihroniade and published in the reverential issue of *Cuvantul studentesc (The Words of the Students)* from January 1937, as a requiem to the one year commemoration from his death, in the Spanish front-line.

Unfortunately, the number of Vasile Marin's sources and notes is very low, and his death, that came at an age when his personality was in full efflorescence, had suddenly disrupted the completion of a stupendous mind, who, in his small amount of articles, announced himself as a potential visionary. His intellectual capacity and his sharp intelligence could have made its way to celebrity and could have assured him the posterity's absolute reception, just like Eliade, if his destiny had not enrolled him on the line of heroic sacrifice for the proclaimed ideology, with all its contextual and historical limits.

Vasile Marin was born on the 29th of January 1904, in Bucuresti, and attended the courses of "Sfantu Sava" and "Gheorghe Sincai" high-schools. He stands out through his passion for reading, even through erudition, highlighting his firm vocation for ideological and political debates. He chooses the courses of Law School, where he gets involved in the student movements, on the lines of ideological nationalism. Publicist Mihail Polihroniade<sup>33</sup>, his friend from his student years, recalls: "*A small literary circle was formed, where, besides Marin, Carandino, and I, the following also participated: N.N. Matheescu, Mircea Eliade, Ion Anghel, Balan, Petrisor Viforeanu, and so on (...). I remember even now Marin's first work, if my memory is right; it was called Pamfletarii reactionari francezi (The French Reactionary Pamphleteers). He spoke about Leon Bloy and Leon Daudet. At the age of nineteen, Vasile Marin was a formed man. He had a maturity in thinking, a certainty, a precision that we hadn't reached yet. The basis of his culture had also been established (...).*" He substantially assimilated his knowledge about the era's ideologies, about Marxism and Fascism, manifesting a unique inclination towards anti-modern doctrine, "reactionary" dogma of Charles Maurras, with whom he also maintained correspondence.<sup>34</sup> His works always caused lively debates, his personality dominated by rational, relentless thinking, common for the judicial field, and by clear argumentation, based on scientific premises, is replenished with an obvious aesthetic sense, easy to recognise in his arborescent and well-elaborated sentences, in his metaphoric expression, and his fine irony, that used to offer a note of allusive subtlety to his articles and filled them with a discrete lyricism of evocation. After his graduation, he starts his career as lawyer in Ion Lugosianu's practice, Minister of Romania in Rome and respectable member of the National-Peasant Party. He is noticed for his intelligence, talent, and political spirit, for which, in 1927, when the National-Peasant Party comes to power, Vasile Marin holds the position of Chief of Staff of his master, who now is Under-secretary of State. He defends his Ph.D. thesis in 1932, with his work *Fascism* and he is offered the title of Doctor of Laws. The book presents the constitutive organization of the Italian Corporate State. At that time, Vasile Marin's book was the only work that substantially approached Fascism, as a doctrine and political practice.<sup>35</sup>

Along with his enrolment in the Legion in the autumn of 1932, Vasile Marin was completely dedicated to the legionnaire belief and ideal, carrying out a ample journalistic activity at *Axa* journal, then, being observed by Nae Ionescu, he is employed as editor at *Cuvantul (The Word)*. In addition, the great amount of trials the Legion experienced, due to altercations, often violent one, with the Government's institutions, have established him as "the Legion's Lawyer". "*As lawyer, he brings, without exaggerating, huge service to the legion. All of us remember what the spring and summer of*

<sup>33</sup> Mihail Polihroniade, *Vasile Marin*, in Vasile Marin *Crez de generatie (Generation Belief)*, pp.95-203

<sup>34</sup> Vasile Marin, *Crez de generatie (Generation Belief)*, Published by Majadahonda, Bucuresti, 1997

<sup>35</sup> idem, pag. 197



1933 meant. The Vaida Government (...) started a destruction battle against us. Slander, injury, insults, hits, torture, arbitrary arrests descended upon us. And finally, even though we endured - by the order of the Captain - with resignation any hit, still we were the ones on trial. The trials proceeded. From one corner of the country to the other, "the Legion's Lawyer", Vasile Marin was summoned."<sup>36</sup>

In 1933, when the Iron Guard is dissolved, he is arrested and locked up at Jilava, where he becomes close friends with Ion Mota, the Legion's founder and commander, translator of *Protocoloalelor Intelptilor Sionului* (*Protocols of Zion*). The strong spiritual affinity between the two will continue until their death in 1937, in the Spanish front-line at Majadahonda. Together with other six legionnaires, Vasile Marin insisted on leaving for Spain, to participate, "in the name of the Christian crusade", in the battle against the "atheistic communism" revolutionary movement. The duty of honour for protecting Christianity, otherwise a fundamental value of the legionnaire doctrine, was sensed as a fatidic calling, as an inner drive to the testimony of his belief, and it culminated in the uncompromising decision to leave for battle as a volunteer in the front-line. But his decision was sealed, even though unconsciously, by the premonitory enunciation of the sacrifice: "*Don't let Mota leave without me. I'm signing up for the seventh coffin.*"<sup>37</sup> The death of the two strongly shook not only the Movement, but also the entire public opinion from Romania. Serving as a power of example, the Legionnaire Movement saw, after the funerals, that otherwise were extremely ceremonial, of great ritual brilliance and reverence, an ample popularization and consideration, thus revealing its hidden power, just like the invisible part of an iceberg. Armin Heinen<sup>38</sup> writes in his study *Legiunea Arhanghelului Mihail* (*The Legion of Archangel Michael*). *The social movement and political organization* "The official condolence declarations of important personalities from the Romanian society (and from abroad n.n.) have boosted the Legion's prestige. In the same time, they constituted proof of the fact that no other right-wing party can ever compete against the Legion. (...) During the funeral ceremonies for Mota and Marin, the Guard has demonstratively stated its power (...)" On the other hand, there are testimonies regarding the impressive number of participants at the ceremony, 20 churchmen and tens of thousands of people, the convoy being one and half hour long.<sup>39</sup> Deeply moved by the loss of Vasile Marin, Nae Ionescu sees in his death a divine punishment: "So when He decided Vasile Marin's death, God wanted to scold us. That is why our pain is dark."<sup>40</sup>

The synthesis of his doctrinaire attitude is presented by the volume *Crez de generatie*,<sup>41</sup> (*Generation Belief*) issued in February 1937, as a selection from the statements and theoretical articles of the young "martyr". The anthology is accompanied by a praising panegyric, signed by Codreanu and with an ample foreword from the mentor of the entire "philosophy of life" generation, Professor Nae Ionescu.

In the foreword of the book (a collection of articles, letters and diary notes), the philosopher considers Marin "an authority of the legionnaire doctrine", emphasising his attributes of quality and precision.

Most of Vasile Marin's articles concisely and sometimes even educationally present the theory of nationalist doctrine in contrast with the weaknesses of parliamentary democracy of the era, considered to be corrupt, decadent, and internationalist. This antinomy, nationalism-democratism, is a constant of its ideological theme, upon which sit the fundamental lines of its socio-politic

<sup>36</sup> idem, pg. 199

<sup>37</sup> Ion Dumitrescu Borsa, *Cal Troian intra muros* (*Trojan horse intra muros*), Published by Lucman, Bucuresti, pg. 186

<sup>38</sup> Armin Heinen – *Legiunea "Arhanghelului Mihail" (The Legion of Archangel Michael). Social Movement and Political Organization*, Published by Humanitas, Bucuresti, pg. 292

<sup>39</sup> apud. Armin Heinen, quoted work

<sup>40</sup> Nae Ionescu in the foreword of Vasile Marin's, *Crez de generatie* (*Generation Belief*), Published by Majadahonda, Bucuresti, 1997

<sup>41</sup> Vasile Marin, quoted work

argumentation. Notable articles: *Democracy, the enemy of nationalism, Between democracy and the totalitarian state, Bourgeois state and the national revolution, What is nationalist politics, Abdications of the democratic state, The two student bodies, Politics or The nation against de import state*, articles that were published between 1927-1936, in the journals *Axa, Cuvantul (The Word)* or *Cuvantul Studentesc (The Word of the Students)*.

In his opinion, the democracy, having roots in the French Revolution of 1789, is founded on instruments that exclude the possibility of promoting and preserving an authentic nationalist spirit: universal suffrage, partidism and financial power, means that entail legal formalism and economic and social individualism. These elements appear, in the author's vision, as being totally incompatible with the national fund and with the Romanian nation's interests, which are still unconsolidated. Moreover, a newly formed state, in its unification processes needs "aggressive national politics, strongly central, pulled out from under the fluctuations of electoral orientations"<sup>42</sup>, because "state management is a specialization that cannot be left to the discretion of masses"<sup>43</sup> and "electoralism does not allow selection, since the masses do not have the instinct of value hierarchy."<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, the democratic regime favours the parties' battle for power, politicking, and corruption, and it mainly regulates the individual interest of the officials.

Another weak point of democratism would be, according to his assertion, electoralism, based on a crass materialism, as well as the universal vote, to which we due "the tragic consequence of crumbling the national body", while "behind the curtains, the international finance pulls the strings and settles its affairs having the complete certainty of success: *Divide et impera*". This entire politics of electoral game inevitably leads to "the degradation through unification of the collective life, and the nation that is numerically and quantitatively designed loses the sense of real and eternal value", issue that determines Vasile Marin to consider democracy "the solvent of nationalism".<sup>45</sup> So democratism proved to be a formula that contrasts with the development process of a nation, considering the fact that the nation is in a continuous making and needs an organic evolution, followed in time as a living organism, self-conscious, while "the geometricians' democracy, the adorers of the Rousseau cult, the state and the society are not natural products, but something artificial, a social contract, a fundamental pact, signed between individuals, who, in their turn, are equal and identical. The life of a society, of a nation, is neither logical, nor symmetrical. It cannot be restricted in formulas and nor can it be cast into patterns".<sup>46</sup> The democratic individual, equal with himself, universal and abstract, is opposed to Vasile Marin's man, who is rooted in "our land, in our history, in the national consciousness, in the adaptation of national necessities"<sup>47</sup>, and the principle of quantity, regarded as validation criterion, is opposed to the principle of quality and ethnic and ethic bases. At one point, Charles Maurras, who analysed the realities of democratic France, also stated: "Under the name of parliamentary democracy, we have the reign of the power of money, controlled by a sort of bankers' government".<sup>48</sup>

In his article *Politica*<sup>49</sup> (*Politics*), Vasile Marin strengthens his argumentation regarding democracy as a possible solvent of national state congruency, presenting the example of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which, due to the democracy that favoured the strong offensive of the subjugated nationalities, had prepared its imminent dissolution. "The politics of the nationalities

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<sup>42</sup> Vasile Marin, *Democratia, dusmanul nationalismului (Democracy, the enemy of nationalism)*, *Crez de generatie... (Generation Belief)*, pg.50

<sup>43</sup> Vasile Marin, *Note (Notes)*, quoted work, pg. 60

<sup>44</sup> Vasile Marin, *De la formalismul democratic la nationalismul constructiv (From democratic formalism to constructive nationalism)*, quoted work, pg.168

<sup>45</sup> ibidem

<sup>46</sup> idem, pg. 167

<sup>47</sup> ibidem

<sup>48</sup> Vasile Marin, *Extremismul de dreapta (Right-wing Extremism)*, op.cit., pg.182

<sup>49</sup> Vasile Marin, *Politica (Politics)*, quoted work, pg. 143

enclosed in a State that is not the natural expression of their historical and ethnic being - concludes Vasile Marin - cannot be other than democratic politics. For there is no stronger instrument for the dissolution of a state, than democracy. Numerically and quantitatively designed, abstracting ethnicity, standardizing the specificity on the basis of man's universality, democracy is the ideal regime of internationalism." In the same article, the legionnaire ideologist bursts out ironically and quizzically, charging the parliamentary life and the democratic institutions: "The unripe fruit, picked by the revolutionaries of the Pasoptism from the principle garden of the '89 Revolution, have been brought to mature and to make seeds in the Romanian greenhouse." The results have been disastrous for the country and its people".

The democratic regime, considered to be detrimental for the young nations, recently created, can have other consequences in countries that have a rich nationalist past and which, along their secular evolution, have given birth to a solid culture, such as France for example: "Over the work of 40 kings can stretch the gloss of integral democratism. The national institutions, created to last forever, resist and further develop through their own lives, in the contempt of the fleeting existence of the present forms. What about us?"<sup>50</sup> The ideologist estimates that the only chance to consolidate the Romanian nation would be the one given by strict nationalist politics, capable of valuing the national specificity, as a principle of the state.

Vasile Marin speaks, in this sense, of a *constructive nationalism*, creative nationalism, that has its definition given by Maurice Barres: « *Le nationalisme ordonne à juger tout par rapport à son pays natal.* » In contrast with democratic regime, constructive nationalism implies a form of governing created according to the historical context and to the social and economic needs of the nation, under the authority of individuals elected, having an exponential level, who "summarize the characteristics and the aspirations of that respective nation", with will and spirit of sacrifice. Being pro-monarchy, nationalism develops the framework of the society's pyramidal structure, unlike "globalism and cosmopolitanism, which are nothing else than covers, behind which plots for the dynamiting of monarch authority and nationalist fundamentals are woven."<sup>51</sup>

The ideological system promoted by Vasile Marin, develops fundamental aspects of the nationalist theory: *the political, the social, and the spiritual*. In his article *Ce este politica nationalistă (What is nationalist politics)*<sup>52</sup>, the author defines the political character as well as the character of the State, the psycho-social character as well as the spiritual one, from the point of view of an ethic and axiological paradigm. Thus, nationalism is "an offensive and assertive policy. Its roles must be materialized in a national state, that shouldn't be available to the citizens. It must be a prestigious state, having a historical, cultural, civilizing mission. Nationalism is a new ethic and a hierarchy of values. It promotes the national spirit above the civic one; it conditions through the national primacy all the other state related roles."

From spiritual point of view, nationalist politics develops a set of values that are strongly transfiguring, generically named by the author *national mysticism*. The fundamental lines of this "mysticism" converge all of them to the supreme aim, the creating of a human character that is totally disengaged from materialism and the era's triviality, who passed through "the school of heroic permanence." National mysticism forms "the man of cardinal virtues: the hero, the priest, the hermit, (...) the soldier". Perceived as a true religion, with the imperative force of profound conversion, nationalism obtains missionary accents, almost religious and military-like at the same time: "The national army is a religious order. Our nationalism will dissolve the policy of personal interest. The term "enough" will disappear. Nobody is enough, but everybody is sacrificing himself. It's a sacrifice when you command; it's a sacrifice when you obey. The development of cardinal virtues in a man,

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<sup>50</sup> Vasile Marin, *De la formalismul democratic la nationalismul constructiv (From democratic formalism to constructive nationalism)*, quoted work, pg. 169

<sup>51</sup> idem, pg.170

<sup>52</sup> Vasile Marin, *Ce este politica nationalistă (What is nationalist politics)*, quoted work, pg. 52

*this is the reason and being of our nationalism. (...) Nationalism can also be a social system to the extent that it is an instructive school of high idealism.*" As regards leadership, it must be subordinated to the idea of purity and idealism. Beyond the sense of responsibility, complete disinterest is imposed regarding personal, material or vain interests and a serious commitment is imposed regarding the ascetic commitments, reaching the highest quota of abnegation and renunciation in regard to any telluric instincts. *"The leading of the state must be done by people who have nothing. The elite is not a noble elite, but an elite of pure individuals. The rest of the society can indulge itself in the practice of old institutions, the leaders cannot. Out of them, the instinct of seizing and the wish to enjoy earthly goods must disappear. A state cannot be founded on the ethics of the gorged ones."*

This interior transfiguration, that crowns the legionnaire morale, practised with perseverance by the elite of the Movement, imposes another perception on life and on the value of sacrifice, going up to the liberating revelation. The author himself confesses in an emotional confession of faith: *"I have the impression that this simple, definite appreciation imprints a sort of high transfiguration to our being, which cannot be seen or touched by any personality tribulation, agitated by complexity. (...) I cast away something every day, and there were so many before! I have never suspected the immense burden of uselessness that I used to carry on my back. However, it's the first time when the unloaded burden does not produce an immediate sensation of ease, but rather a sensation of suffering. (...) I am now awaiting my big day: the day of the man in me, the man that I cramped inside for so many years. I'm just as afraid of it as a man should be when he is perfectly conscious of the thought of a second birth."*<sup>53</sup>

The primacy of suffering, of self-battle, leads to spiritual perfection, giving nationalism a deep sense of spiritual mysticism, often invoked also by the Captain in *The nest chief's booklet*: *"We pursue the spiritual reform of man, on the line of our Romanian man, to his natural being, the one that a century of another structure falsified"*<sup>54</sup>.

Beside the spiritual dimension, nationalism involves, in the author's opinion, other aspects too, that trace defining lines of constitutional, ethical, and ethnic nature (especially the anti-Semitic character). In the Conference held on the 3rd of February 1936 on the subject *The national status in relation to the national movement*<sup>55</sup>, Marin analyses a series of notions, establishing the connections and subordinations between them, so as all the aspects of nationalism be debated with sharpness, progressively, and systematically. In the process of evolution, from the people to the nation to the national state, nationalism stands out as a primary bond, "the only guiding thread".

Thus, starting from the term people (*"a larger gathering of people who have the same origin, who have the same religious beliefs, who stand on a determined territory, who speak the same language, and are agitated by the same spiritual metaphysics"*), he defines the nation, as a group of people who became aware of itself", being the only reason of the existence of a group of people, which, in order to affirm itself, creates a culture, and in order to relate to other nations, to materialize by validation, it transforms in a national state. *"From people, to nation, to state, there is only one guiding thread"*, exclaims Vasile Marin. *"Nationalism is the attribute through which a certain group of people commits through a certain nature, through a certain expression in relation to the others. It's an element of identification; the representation model of a nation is its own."*

In an ample article, *State and culture*<sup>56</sup>, Vasile Marin systematises the idiom culture-civilization, from the perspective of the national state. The trilogy "nation-state-culture" forms, according to his perspective, the foundation of the Romanian phenomenon. The nation, understood as a human entity, an organic whole, needs its integration in a national state, in order to promote a

<sup>53</sup> Vasile Marin, *Note (Notes)*, quoted work, 56

<sup>54</sup> apud Vasile Marin, quoted work

<sup>55</sup> Vasile Marin, *Statul national in raport cu miscarea nationala (The national state in relation to the national movement)*, quoted work, pg. 69

<sup>56</sup> Vasile Marin, *Stat si Cultura (State and Culture)*, quoted work, pg. 139

specific, national culture. The state is "*its capitalization instrument, the essential principle of its force of affirmation*" and culture is "*the superior form of life of a nation*", the means through which "*it maximizes its attributes (...) through culture a nation survives its physical being*".

Correlating these defining lines, without ignoring the imperative of the fact and the historical missionary role of the young generation, "*of giving the united nation, the state it deserves*"<sup>57</sup>, nationalism appears as "*an organic whole that binds heaven and earth*", being able to spiritually distinguish the nation.

Regarded in a historical perspective, one can reproach to Marin, as face Z. Ornea<sup>58</sup> does, the fact that "*he battle democracy for a long time*" and he stood on smooth positions of anti-democracy attitude, in the strict spirit of right-wing extreme.

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One of the main dimensions of inter-war nationalist ideology is Orthodoxy, regarded as a spiritual-religious matrix, that concentrates in it, integrally and representatively, the essence of Romanian national specific. The ideologist, that highlighted and built around this axis a real doctrine of the nationalism, was found alongside Nae Ionescu, Nichifor Crainic. Poet and theologian, talented journalist and formidable polemicist, Nichifor Crainic represented a strong influential point on the student years and on the intellectuals of the era. In his recent book *Capcanele Istoriei (The traps of history). Elita intelectuală Românească între 1930 și 1950 (The Romanian intellectual elite between 190 and 1950)*, Lucian Boia considered Crainic one the biggest "*gatherers of young people*" or directors of consciousness, we could say, alongside Nae Ionescu and Dimitrie Gusti.<sup>59</sup>

Crainic's name is however associated with the journal *Gândirea (Thinking)*, the systematic centre of his ideological debates and polemics, the matrix of *thinkism*, ideological, artistic, and literary current, that promoted vigorously the conservatory nationalist concepts.

Being strongly traditionalistic, the journal initiated great debates of ideas on the subject of national specific and on the spiritual origins of Romanianism, having the declared intention of asserting a Romanian spiritual status and of consolidating its distinctive, unique values.

Nichifor Crainic was one of the most fervent journalists of the era, a great name in the writer's guild. Global and comprehensive, Nichifor Crainic's ideology predicts the mingling of the national spirit with the religious, Christian, and Orthodox spirit. Hence an entire argumentative plea on different scientific and artistic areas, searching for evidence in theology, ethnology, and ethnography, anthropology, art and folk aesthetics. But from all of these, the idea of the religious person stands out as a foundation of the socio-political cultural existence and model. Essentially, Crainic's contribution stands in the unbinding of *the religious background of tradition*, according to George Achim's phrase<sup>60</sup>, who otherwise summarizes his place in the configuration of inter-war ideology: "*Nichifor Crainic was the main ideologist of what can be called, using Basil Munteanu's phrase, "militant traditionalism", orientation that associated, from right-wing nationalist positions, the national idea with the religious idea of matrix Orthodoxy, a style creator in the field of culture.*"

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<sup>57</sup> idem, 178

<sup>58</sup> Z.Ornea, Z. Ornea, *Anii Treizeci. Extrema dreapta românească (The Thirties, Right-wing Romanian extreme)*, Published by Fundația Culturală Română, București, 1995, pg. 56

<sup>59</sup> apud. Lucian Boia, *Capcanele istoriei. Elita intelectuală românească între 1930 și 1950 (The traps of history. The Romanian Intellectual Elite between 1930 and 1950)*, Published by Humanitas, București, 2011

<sup>60</sup> George Achim, *Revolte și consimțiri (Revolts and Consents)*, Published by Dacia, CLUJ-Napoca, 1995, pg. 261.

The volume *Puncte cardinale in Haos*,<sup>61</sup> (*Cardinal Points in Chaos*) cumulates the main valences of his ideological vision, and in order to be able to rebuild the guidelines of his concept we will appeal directly to some of the important essays of the writer: *Tineretul si crestinismul* (*Youth and Christianity*), *Sensul traditiei* (*The sense of Tradition*), *Puncte cardinale in haos* (*Cardinal points in chaos*), *Rasa si religione* (*Race and Religion*), *Marturisire de credinta* (*Statement of faith*).

One of the subjects that Crainic approaches in order to contextualize the problems of the era, is the one of the youth, regarded as a main recovery factor of national and traditional values, lost in assault of western decay. The problem of the youth is largely debated in Mircea Eliade's era and others "from the generation" such as Crainic recapitalizes the subject and gives it a new extension, by reporting it to the religious dimension.

Religion and the religious phenomenon is interpreted firstly from ethnic and governmental point of view, in the sense of systematic consolidation of the national specific, aspect that invariably gives it the capacity of authorizing and purifying collective force, in the same time on a secondary plain the relation of the individual with the transcendent. Orthodoxy represents, from ethnogenetic point of view, the security and un-altering basis of the Romanian nation, its specificity mark, thus Crainic exclaimed enthusiastic - *the Romanians are the only Latin Orthodox people and the only Orthodox Latin people*". Thus, Orthodoxy is considered as being the only primordial principle of the Romanian spiritual order, cardinal point of orientation, verified and validated by history: "*in the multi-ethnic complex of present Romania, the eastern ritual of the two national Churches is the formula for preserving the majority of the Romanian block. (...) Orthodoxy will be the key for understanding this history.*"<sup>62</sup> If the historical artefacts of the Romanian people have a rich religious representation, the folk culture and art are, in their turn, born out of a creative consciousness dominated over the years by living the religious event, which confirms "*the strong presence of Orthodoxy in the Romanian soul*"<sup>63</sup>. The organic link between religion and culture is extensively debated by the essayist and undeniably argued: the popular creation dominated by the Byzantine style, the fine arts, profoundly spiritualized, as well as the musical and poetic rhythms answer back over centuries to the echoes of a specific Byzantine style, deeply implemented in the collective Romanian consciousness.

Religion represents, in Crainic's opinion, the matrix pot from which the cultural phenomenon and the geo-anthropological symbolic representation develops and evolves.

Nationalism is born from "*the substance of this Church mixed everywhere with the ethnic substance*".<sup>64</sup> In the doctrinaire spirit of right-wing ideology prevailing during this era, the mentor of this thinking naturally intertwines the ethnic and the religious regarding them as a fundamental categorical duality for the governmental statute of the Romanian people: "*The new spirit that blows over Europe is a nationalist and religious one in the same time, meaning that it wants to take into account both the organic and diverse realities of ethnic nature, and the transcendent reality of religion (...) Nationalism is the key condition for the rebirth of every nation, as its lack is the sign of decadence and death*".<sup>65</sup>

The revolutionary spirit and the vitalist, spontaneous, and deliberate force specific for this age, renders the youth with an enthusiastic manifestation towards extremes, towards infinity, determining the youth to adopt radical, irreconcilable, and polarizing attitudes. In the Romanian context, and not only there, as we have also seen in Eliade's articles, the social dynamic is in full

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<sup>61</sup> Nichifor Crainic, *Puncte cardinale in haos* (*Cardinal points in chaos*), Published by Albatros, Bucuresti, 1998

<sup>62</sup> idem, pg. 73

<sup>63</sup> idem, pg. 75

<sup>64</sup> idem, pg. 79

<sup>65</sup> idem, pg. 102

extremist reconfiguration, and the opposing lines formed (Christian nationalism and Atheist internationalism, the soviet equal of right-wing nationalist movements), immanently imply the taking of a position regarding the religious idea. "*Christianity and atheism are the peaks that demand the tumultuous psychology of the young generation* - Crainic says, and - *the problem of the relation between youth and Christianity is not only today a problem of catechism and a pastoral problem where the church has the initiative, but rather a problem of attitude enforced on the youth having that era's extremist spirit.*"<sup>66</sup> In this sense, the Church acquires a stabilizing and ordering role within the massive accession of the right-wing youth, though this reviving its vital functions and its secure place in social life. Although in the shadows, trivialized and entirely formalized as a result of the western virus penetrating in the collective psychology, with all its material and commercial imprecations, Crainic's concept restores his vital force and his redemption, and on this basis he will formulate within nationalism "*an integral concept of life in which (the youth, n.n) can save its sole from the ruins that pile up all around.*" "*The Church remains with the task* - the theologian firmly points out, using the adequate styles that betray his talent and poetic expression - *to capture and filter the positive waves that burst over its threshold or to dam up the negative and rebel waves the hit its coast.*"<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusions

The inter-war period knew one of the most expansive and influential socio-political materialization if the nationalist ideology. Supported by the largest part of the elite intellectuals of the era and theorized in nuance, depending on the tackled scientific and cultural paradigms, the national doctrine involves several facets that ideationally express the cultural personality and political thinking of its ideologists.

Thus, Mircea Eliade develops a nationalist ideology from philosophical and spiritual positions, based mainly on the metaphysical and historical dimension of the nation. In his turn, Vasile Marin represents the political offensive of nationalism, in a combative manner, undeniably marked by the limits of his ideological position. Regarding Nichifor Crainic, his doctrine is coagulated on a theological assumption, an Orthodox-spiritualistic one.

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<sup>66</sup> idem, pg. 2

<sup>67</sup> ibidem

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