

How To Build a Leader?

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Abstract: Romania lacks a "map of the future". This chart of the future depends just on the human factor. More specifically, on the continuous investment in the human factor. During the last 2 decades of freedom of attitude, very few positive and sustained steps have been taken through solid arguments, with clear reference points and stages that have to be followed .

It is absolutely compulsory to rebuild with new tools, as a surprise for the opponents and as an optimal solution for the supporters. This would be a new, superior creation, with an invincible astonishing result. This new tool means an effort of retraining, with a view to getting better, professional skills.

This study proposes a comparative analysis, 80 years later, following the physiognomy, the attitudes and examples of good practice regarding the social mechanism through which a youngster could be calibrated into a leader of his generation, as well as finding the obstacles of the present social system. Besides the historical, social and cultural perspective of this analysis, we would take into account elements of social ethology and anthropology, and the whole thing would be built and based on an analysis with a prognosis effect for the next generation, starting from the history of the last 30 years and discussing the effects this history has had upon the very present.

Key words : leader, reconstruction, professionalization, education, values

JEL Classification: Z13, O10, A20

1. Introduction

In today's world, the thing we miss the most is leaders who can transmit vision.

One of the reasons for which visionary leadership is so little developed today is determined by the value that our society grants a certain kind of capital: material capital.

The Noble prize laureate for economy, Joseph Stiglitz (2010) says in his book, "In freefall" that "an imminent death experience forces one to reevaluate one's priorities and values. Global economy has just been through such an experience. The crisis has brought forth not only the flaws in the predominant economic model, but also the flaws in our society". And he underlines the fact that: "too little has been written about the fundamental <<moral deficit>> that has been brought to the surface – a deficit that could be more serious and even harder to correct."

In his own turn, Stephan Young (2008) asserts that this obsession of the material gain has led to the short term thinking and to the narrow following of one's own interests. The contemporary man is dominated by the desire to possess, not by ideals.

Leaders and managers must raise their eyes beyond their own interests and must be able to regard their role as the one of determining the company or society to have moral goals and values, not just profit. They must take responsibility for the world in which they operate and in which they create their wealth. Leaders can give anything up, but responsibility. John D. Rockefeller Jr said: "I believe any right brings with it a responsibility, each favorable opportunity, an obligation; each possession, a debt".

Fry and Slocum (2008) argue that one of the biggest challenges that leaders are nowadays facing is the need of developing new business models that would emphasize

ethical leadership, employee welfare, sustainability and social responsibility without sacrificing profitability, profit growth and other financial performance indicators. There is an ever higher need for leaders that are able to maximize at the same time the so called triple crucial factor: "people, planet, profit".

The present paper is structured, after the introduction, in two important sections: the first one aims to comparatively analyze, at a distance of centuries, gestures and examples of good practice regarding the social mechanism by means of which a young person might be calibrated into a leader of his / her generation and to discuss the breaks of the current social system. Beyond the social, historical, cultural perspective, it includes elements of ethology and social anthropology, and the approach will also be built on an analysis which will constitute itself in a prognosis for the future generation, starting from the history of the last 30 years and covering its effects in the present. The second section presents several performance models that, according to the authors' opinion, may contribute to the development of those leaders that society needs so much.

The most important problem the present approach faces is the lack of specialized bibliography regarding the formation of a leader, something else and in some other area than the politics. The approach is built on complementary works and precise examples offered by history and circumstances that have required rapid interventions in the equation of power.

2. Comparative Analysis between Civilizations and Generations

Every leader has and develops a double reaction capacity. One is determined by the

cultural heritage of the social framework in which they are formed and the other is represented by the potential of building up the level of one's received knowledge. We can offer comparative examples between civilizations which are technologically competing against each other. One of the most inventive societies in history was the Medieval Europe which, until 1800 was under Asia's counterpart economic strength. But what worked here more was the urban particularity of this civilization and within it, the freedom of choice, the right of innovation and the access to power through merit and performance. A first example: the paper travelled for nearly half a globe, but the first culture which managed to produce it mechanically was the European one. The second example: the improvement of time measurement. The city needed to thoroughly organize its activities in order to develop, to innovate and to survive its competition.

Time rationalization meant something new at the time: one hour to wake up, to go to work, to open the market (later even the stock exchange), to leave work, to then put the fires off and to go to bed. This is the reason why every city invested in one clock placed in the public market. Beyond the city, the Church imposed the nature clock. And until later, in the 18th century, it has rejected this urban and protestant invention, the clock, as being an unnecessary social attribute. Outside Europe there were, of course, very big and dynamic cities, but every Chinese emperor or Indian mogul had his own celestial time and, of course, his own calendar, which was reinvented for every new rule.

Returning to the urban Europe, we also have an example which proves the force of innovation: the glasses. An apparently trivial

object, the invention of glasses and their widespread use meant the saving of twenty years for each professional, that is, the age period between 40 and 60 years of age, the peak of skill, performance and strength for each generation of professionals. The increase in the professional lifespan meant for Europe the reality of another detail: the perfecting of the clock and its series production and this led to the development of precision mechanics. Until the 20th century, Europe has held the monopoly for clocks manufacturing and a result of this monopoly towards the rest of the world is the sad memory of Russian soldiers which, arriving in Romanian cities after 1944, were especially robbing pocket and hand watches.

These simple examples prove the force of the social framework that the European city had in the forming of its leaders. This was the world in which they were developing and these were the information and the competencies that they had access to for their improvement. From one generation of performers to the next, after the 16th century, Europe experienced the explosion of the industrial revolution. The standards that the 19th century Western European society had reached, had several corollaries, according to David S. Landes (2013): a society based on geographical and social mobility, people being able to move depending on opportunities; a society that prizes and capitalizes the new not the old, the youth, which relies not on experience, but on change, on risk instead of on safety. Talents being unequal, the society itself is not one of equal quotas, but it has a tendency towards a more fair allocation of income than in the case of privilege and advantage we could meet in more rural, patriarchal societies, which are poorly urbanized

and industrialized but strongly ideologized. The middle class would be a lot more widespread and professionally diversified, and this equality within it would result in a more homogenous dress code and more relaxed manners between classes. This happened in Western Europe whereas in the East, people were getting used to poverty and they had no idea of what was going on abroad, and the peoples living in the Balkan states are now blaming for their poverty their exploitation by more wealthy economies in Western Europe, which makes them feel better.

The problem is a very simple one: societies that have invested in technology through education, culture, the development of skills and performance manage to offer each generation the best framework for competition and for the social calibration of new leaders. Wealth means education, expertise, technology and, ultimately, knowledge. And the latter is cultivated through leaders.

From now on, the future belongs to those who have brain, hands and character.

3. Performance Models

- **Value-Based Education**

In our opinion, education is the strongest and the safest long-term way of solving this fundamental problem of our time. It is necessary for us to introduce moral values in the curriculum. Education is an effective weapon. School must lose the mentality of emphasizing the individualism and the efficiency at all cost. It must return to the appreciation of values and behaviours of respect for others, for other cultures and for the environment. A solution could be a complex, humanistic approach to the individual and the attempt of developing all forms of

intelligence that the human being possesses, not only the rational one.

In his book, *The 8th habit*, Stephen Covey (2006) argues that there are four types of intelligence, namely: mental intelligence (IQ), physical or corporeal intelligence (PQ), emotional intelligence (EQ) and spiritual intelligence (SQ). The Spiritual Intelligence is the most important of all, because it becomes the source of orientation and guidance for the other three types of intelligence. "The spiritual intelligence is the ability to access meanings, values and higher long-term purposes and unconscious aspects of the self and the ability to use these meanings, values and purposes with the aim of living a fuller and more creative life. It was the intelligence that guided men and women such as: Churchill, Ghandi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mother Teresa. The secret to their leadership was their ability of inspiring people, of giving them the feeling of something worth fighting for." (Covey, 2006)

The highest forms of manifestation these four kinds of intelligence have are: for the mental intelligence – vision; for the physical intelligence – discipline; for the emotional intelligence – passion; for the spiritual intelligence – conscience. "The moral sense, or conscience is part of a human being as much as a hand or a leg. All are being given it to a higher or a less extent. Conscience can only be strengthened through exercise" – Thomas Jefferson.

John Maxwell (1999) believes that "people don't care how much you know when they realize how much you care. The act of leadership begins in the soul, not in the mind. It blooms with significant relationships, not with more regulations".

Theoretically, at present, there is more "Education" than it has ever been, but there

is also more degradation, more greed, selfishness, a lack of sincerity and of integrity. Unfortunately, education nowadays doesn't represent emancipation, refining and evolution anymore.

The educational system is heading into a wrong direction – instead of developing a person as a human being, the educational system is directed towards shallow, surface acquisitions.

Education needs to be enriched with values. Value-based education helps us develop in youths values such as: character, good conduct, moral integrity, self-discipline, compassion, love for every living thing, responsibility and many other positive qualities. So what do we need?

There is an urgent need for change – changing what we are with what we need to become. We need for the education system to understand the value of education and that of further education. We need a metamorphosis of education – from a cocoon there should come out a butterfly. The improvement will not give us a butterfly, but only a faster caterpillar.

But where does value-based education fit in the curriculum? Anywhere.

Thanks to memory, imagination and reason, intelligence can find all solutions and can solve all problems. We should, hence, cultivate the character besides the intellect and we should develop the teamwork spirit besides the strength of personality. Thus, Călin Georgescu (2012) argues: “the future will belong to the brain and the mind, if we want to survive. We need the mind to be free, critical and independent. For Romania, my philosophy is simple and it will certainly work: we need to hire the best young minds, to give them all the support they need and

the intellectual freedom to allow them to work and to succeed in their own country. Brains must be put to use.”

The same Călin Georgescu (2012), says that “Romania is about to lose its strategic thinking nucleus and to destroy its own future. If only the weakly trained stay here, how can one develop a country? There is no way to do it. Only the obsequious are staying, those who have no other ambition but to please their boss. There is no need for smart people, for people who ask questions, the obedient are needed. Do you know what the problem is? Loyalty for the party leaders is confused with and it's more appreciated than loyalty for one's country. There are people who are prepared to serve their country, to help it, to surrender their own life for it. This has nothing in common with the daily demagoguery. But I sometimes wonder what can the people who spend daily four or five hours on TV talk shows and other five-seven hours in meetings know or understand?”

• From a Country Project to How We Build a Leader

Using the same comparative method, we offer an example calibration of a leader produced in different cultures and civilizations, but ones that have gone through a similar crisis. At the beginning of the 1st century, CE, the ancient Rome was on the edge of the abyss again, and the Senate decided to grant power to the eldest among them: Nerva Antoninus. This was the model of the leader. Age and experience. He was over 90 years old. He, not having children, imposed a novel method, placing in opposition age and experience with the ability to bring in the new and professional performance. This method was used to adopt the best representative of

the next generation in order to make him emperor. The perfect military. Having a completely formed character. The visionary and the strategist at the same time. Nerva adopted the provincial Ulpius Traianus as his son, granting him the power under the same condition: adopting the best in the next generation. Trajan in his turn, adopted Hadrian. The latter adopted Antoninus Pius, and the last adopted Marcus Aurelius. It was an unmatched state machine with a maximum social gain.

Aurelius, however, surrendered to his feelings and chose his son, Commodus as his successor, and the state was back in crisis, in less than a generation. In the modern and contemporary times, the developed countries offer a similar model. In the big companies and the big family businesses, the leaders associate themselves with people with top competences, people tested by time, not necessarily involving family members, unless they truly perform. The new leader, however, rejoins the ranks of the "adoptive" family, even in Japan, such a conservative country. In the Romanian pre-modern market town and city there is a similar model for the forming of a leader. The Hagi Tudorache case, who was himself adopted by marriage with the daughter of his former employer. But here we are talking about his son, Costache, who, between 7 and 14 years of age was a shop boy, working just as the other shop boys. When he was 14, he was sent to the Commercial School in Vienna to bring a plus of value to his family investment. But the best part of this value stays at home. That is, his former shop mates become his associates due to the guild camaraderie that had connected them during the common years of their apprenticeship. Costache and his associates will set up

the first Romanian bank in the neighborhood of Lipscani, during Cuza's reign.

A country project can only be achieved with a healthy, educated and well informed population, "for only in this way it can be master of its own fate and it can become immune to any action of intoxication or manipulation." Still education is the one to offer the coherence of a long-term vision built on anticipation. And not on decrees or party directives. But currently we have no country project, because we lack the map of the future. For Călin Georgescu (2012), the country project "should be based on at least a few things. Firstly, one should combine the short and medium-term thinking with the long-term thinking. One must know where you are heading and which are your niches. Then, whatever we do, must be analyzed on the cost / benefit dimension. Last, but not least, we must substantiate what we have disregarded with great recklessness in the last years, that is, investing in people. This is the most important thing that Romania has neglected in the last years"

Poverty brings about many shortcomings in the destiny of many of the younger generations. In their case, grown-ups are the ones who make decisions, and in most cases these decisions cause the future grown up to become a social failure. In the most important years in their lives for their education and school training, they are being redirected by the grown-ups raising them towards illegal subterfuge, in a ruthless exploitation. In 1994, 37.6% of all Romanian children "were living below the lowest poverty line (taking into account the family income), in other words, the degree of poverty is twice as much for children as it is for the adult population" Poverty endangers the attention needed for the basic

needs of children and youths, while "malnutrition underlies the high rate of infant mortality in Romania, and a third of the potential pupils in the country are being affected by the exceedingly low quality of secondary education and by the low school attendance in the rural areas." Exploitation of children through work, either in their parents' household or, even worse, by being rented to their relatives or for very small sums of money, doesn't mean a good start in life for those who survive in infancy, and this harms their future. (Warren Corwther,1998).

At present, Romania is quartered in "the position of a rural picturesque periphery, with a confused identity and a modest contribution in an European context". What is needed is "a sustained professionalization and a change in the mindset of the whole society in relation to the requirements and responsibilities which are inherent to being an European Union member, having as a political focus for a long-lasting development the stake on research, cutting-edge technologies, culture, continuous interdisciplinary education, cultivating harmonious relations between man and nature" (Călin Georgescu, 2012).

We can be aided in our search by a text from Mihail Manoilescu (1942): "Raising sheep corresponds culturally to illiteracy, agriculture to primary school, commerce and industry to middle school and, respectively, high school. Industry develops intellectual abilities such as resistance and discipline. The machine creates a superior form of discipline; because of it, time becomes precious, measurable in minutes and seconds".

Stephan Young (2008) believes that "in emerging countries such as Romania, the Communist regime has had a minimal

contribution to the system of values. The values imposed by the Communism were either rejected, or in time they became uninteresting, for lack of supporters. In the emerging countries, one of the consequences of this reality was the fact that, amid the fall of the Communist regime, the collapse of the system of values has not been followed by the adoption of a new set of sound values. People have been deprived of values to relate to, their behaviour and decisions being guided in most cases by their own material interests. Such countries have fallen into a sort of nihilistic behaviour, into a value crisis.

Consequently, Romania today is welcoming a return to the values and traditions that existed before the Communist regime. All that someday gave people force and confidence may again become valid today, giving people the landmarks they need to make decisions in their dealing on the free market".

- **Reconstruction through professionalism / professionalization**

This is the problem, but what could be its solution? The reconstruction operation must be started with a new tool, one that will prove disheartening for the adversaries. And optimizing for the partisans. This operation of reconstruction has already been present in our modern history and it was successful. It happened between 1860 and 1914, during two active generations. Thus, "in a country that relied on quacks and healing ladies, there appear pioneers in the Romanian medicine, such as Victor Babeş, Ion Cantacuzino, Mina and Nicolae Minovici, Fr.Rainer, George Severeanu etc. In a country in which the main transportation was the bull-driven cart, there appear plane builders and designers, such as Traian Vuia and Aurel Vlaicu. Later even

Henri Coandă. In a country which used to import the industrial machines together with their operators, as the Assan family did when they brought their famous mill in 1860, there appear genius engineers, such as Anghel Saligny. In a culture of immobility, there appear great explorers, such as Emil Racoviță and Grigore Antipa, talented sailors and aviators, such as the admirals Vasile Urseanu and Nicolae Păiș or pilot Băzu Cantacuzino. "The Romanian painters, sculptors, writers, scientists and engineers have proved, between 1860 and 1914 that they represent the true value of the Romanian nation. (...) The Romanian bourgeoisie and intelligentsia is due the existence of the unitary state, the setting up of the national industry, Romania's contributions to the culture and science of the whole world. But these results have been too feeble to develop a civic spirit, to spread the culture and civilization among the masses, to replace the oriental spiritual heritage with a modern, Western thinking" (Călin Georgescu, 2010).

Deprofessionalization is also supported by older generations, who have led moderate lives and without involvement and who become aggressive when their comfort of laziness and degradation is being threatened. What is even worse, the public authorities, instead of supporting the professionalization, which they claim to represent in the eyes of the voters, actually support the reports of the lazy and of the fallen, at the expense of those who are making the effort to innovate, to change.

What truly matters at present is work, prudence, honesty, patience, tenacity. For the people who are plagued by poverty and famine, or for those used to "it works well enough", this could amount to selfish

indifference. This is the reason why the people who live for work represent a lucky and very small elite. It is, however, an elite open to the newcomers, to the self-appointed, the kind of people who are emphasizing the positive aspects. In this world, the optimists usually prevail, not because they are always right, but because they are thinking positively. Even when they are wrong, they think positively, and this is the way towards accomplishment, redress, improvement and success. The educated optimism, the conscious one, is worth it; pessimism can only offer the empty consolation of having been right." (Landes, 2013).

The future's problem is very simple: whoever will invest in this elite, made of people who work with perseverance, will save themselves. The nations which have developed such elites are wealthy and will continue to get even wealthier, whereas the countries which will delay the investment will continue, possibly for hundreds of years, in the same poverty that will increase with each generation. Because the former will generate technology and absorb performers from everywhere, whereas the latter will consume technology and export workforce.

At the antipodes, there is a pragmatic reality: the fact that the 21st century will be marked by the one who knows best to take full advantage of science, to anticipate and use a minimum of resources for obtaining maximum results.

Conclusion

We have seen the danger. The question that we need to ask ourselves is: will we take advantage of this opportunity of getting out of this moral and ethical confusion that we

are in the middle of at present, will we get back our sense of balance between individualism and community, between means and

goals, and, most importantly, will we educate individuals who are decided to live up to the common ideals and values?

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