

PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS FOR THE RESEARCH OF MOUNTAIN ECONOMY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL BIOETHICAL APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

The mountain and national economic research and ethics, as an integral part of a social market economy, are essential for a sustainable global and European political cohesion and involve the grounds for the actual observance of human dignity and the responsibility of those that decide on local destinies, for an authentic social and economic equity.

The systemic malfunctions of a consumerist market economy, according to which a society may exempt itself from the censorship of morals, social equity, spiritual bioethics and culture, and may replace them with the rationality, profit at any cost and technological progress that led to the current environmental, political and economic crisis.

These are joined by the bleak outlook of the new era, entitled “COVID-19”, namely the era of the biological warfare, economic supremacy and limitless power, orchestrated by the great military and economic powers of the world.

Against this background, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen issued, on July 7th, 2020, a historic document, with plan code Q2 2021, entitled: “Long-term vision for rural areas” (2040) – which also includes **the mountain** – through which she invites all European citizens to send sustainable economic proposals for surviving the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences.

The main purpose of the document is finding new solutions for avoiding food and environmental crises, in the context of a demographic growth at global level – Horizon 2050, towards 9.5 billion inhabitants and, implicitly, for the local implementation of the *European Green Deal*.

1. Legal grounds of the document and “verifying” the subsidiarity principle

What particularly sets this document apart is that it expressly refers, for the first time after 1992 (Maastricht Treaty), to the legal grounds of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, namely Art. 39 (2) and Art. 174 and 175, which are based on the subsidiarity principle which, unfortunately due to the globalist ideology, was passed over, in the globalisation era, in favour of solely the European Regulations and Directives.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light numerous deficiencies in the utopian globalist thinking. Nevertheless, Romania benefited from “globalisation, in terms of both economic development and political progress. It transitioned from the centralised, planned economy to an open market economy integrated into the European single market. The increase in the standard of living and the strengthening of democracy were also obtained with the support of international and European institutions”, according to Professor Mișu NEGRÎȚOIU,

PhD.(<https://negritoiu.ro/2020/pandemia-si-deglobalizarea-este-sfarsitul-unui-secol-de-crestere-a-interdependentelor-economice-consecinte-pentru-romania>).

However, the European Union found only just now, during the pandemic, „gaps” in the systemic policy and certain shortcomings in terms of social cohesion and solidarity and it recommends returning to the basic principles of the EU, at least for the “rural common agricultural economy”, which would better “operate” following the traditional principle of *subsidiarity*. Some political economy experts see this return as a the start of a deglobalisation process (Mișu NEGRITOIU, “Pandemics and Deglobalisation: is this the end of a century of economic interdependency growth? Consequences for Romania”).

Under Art. 4 of the European Charter: “The autonomous exercise of local power [10] establishes the principle of subsidiarity, stipulating that these local authorities have, within the law, the full competence to take the initiative for any matter that is not excluded from the scope of their competences or that is not assigned to another authority that the exercise of public power must, in general, be the responsibility of those authorities which are closest to the citizens and that the powers, competences, entrusted to local authorities must normally be full and complete. The Charter text anticipated the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty, as its preamble stipulates: „decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen”.

(https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/Principiul%20subsidiaritatii%20definitie%2C%20evolutie%20si%20tendinte.pdf). Subsidiarity = global thinking, but local action¹.

E.g., Art. 39 (2): “The objectives of the common **agricultural policy** shall be: (2) In working out the common agricultural policy and the special methods for its application, account shall be taken of: (a) the particular nature of agricultural activity, which results from the social structure of agriculture and from structural and natural disparities between the various agricultural regions (i.e. **the mountain**); (b) the need to effect the appropriate adjustments by degrees; (c) the fact that in the Member States agriculture constitutes a sector closely linked with the economy as a whole”.

Article 174: „In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Union shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of economic, social and territorial cohesion. In particular, the Union shall aim at reducing disparities between the levels of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least favoured regions. Among the regions concerned, particular attention shall be paid to rural areas, areas affected by industrial transition, and regions which suffer from severe and permanent natural or demographic handicaps such as the northernmost regions with very low population density and island, cross-border and **mountain** regions”.

(See:https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:9e8d52e1-2c70-11e6-b497-01aa75ed71a1.0020.01/DOC_3&format=PDF).

¹Bis vor kurzem galt das Subsidiaritätsprinzip als eine Besonderheit der katholischen Soziallehre. Die Konjunktur dieses Prinzips setzte 1989 ein, als die „Konferenz Europa der Regionen“ forderte: „Subsidiarität und Föderalismus müssen die Architekturprinzipien der Gemeinschaft sein“. Vgl. A. Anzenbacher, Christliche Sozialethik, Paderborn - München - Wien - Zürich 1998, S. 210-224. Noch wichtiger war die Betonung des Subsidiaritätsprinzips in Maastricht. Vgl. „Vertrag über die Europäische Union“ 1992. Im Grunde genommen „ist dieses Prinzip dem Inhalt nach doch uralte christliche Tradition“ meint J. Höffner, in: Christliche Gesellschaftslehre, Münster 1962, S. 50.

2. Mountain economy between the healthcare policy and COVID -19

After 50 years of communism, it would be very difficult for the Romanian people to withstand yet another 50 years of “medical totalitarianism”, as some would prefer (<https://www.profit.ro/opinii/dupa-50-de-ani-de-comunism-guvernanti-ne-propun-acum-si-o-jumatate-de-secol-de-totalitarism-sanitar-19462132>). I do not challenge the existence of the virus, but its excessive medical politicisation at such a radical level cannot be accepted, since it will surely lead to an unprecedented food crisis, that will cause the death of a lot more people than a virus more aggressive than many others known by the current medicine.

Daniel Dăianu, President of the Fiscal Council declares: “We are at war. We must not allow politics to cause great pain to this country, in the near future” (<https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/economie/digi-economic/daniel-daianu-razboi-coronavirus-criza-provocari-1363923>).

“The economy will feel the effects of the coronavirus pandemic for a long time, [...] at this time, the economic drop is steep and we expect a deficit exceeding 8.6% [...] The aftermath will last for years, economies will not be the same again. What should Romania do?” (<https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/economie/daniel-daianu-avertizeaza-vor-fi-sechele-ani-de-zile-de-acum-inainte-economiile-nu-vor-mai-fi-la-fel-ce-trebuie-sa-faca-romania-1353181>).

Concerning the mountain, Prof. Radu REY, PhD, provides an answer to the question above, alongside realistic and pertinent solutions for the pandemic and post-pandemic period of the mountain economy, in the study entitled: „AN EUROPEAN MOUNTAIN STRATEGY / Other aspects of interest. A flexible Community mountain strategy, adaptable to diversity, based on the principle of subsidiarity and with adaptations to local backgrounds for economic and social cohesion, providing efficient support for emerging economies, left too far behind, represents the “expectancy” for the upcoming decades (Horizon 2021 - 2040).

This mountain strategy was detailed and supported in the “Memorandum of the Mountain Forum in Romania” directed to the European Commission, following their invitation to submit legislative and economic proposals and initiatives for the problems of the first half of the 21st Century.

2.1. COVID-19 between theoretical uncertainties, political correctness and economic chaos

“Life remains the only 100% deadly disease” according to a saying. Whatever we do, death arrives on time for each of us and, even more so, we die “every day”, even now, when we are alive, according to the words of St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15, 31), since death is a “function” of our life. For this reason, we should not obsess over a biological phenomenon which is highly natural, but we should rather “learn how to die” cautiously, protecting the people around us, with dignity and mentally balanced, accordingly.

Fear and panic kill more and faster than the COVID and they also destroy mental health. The great savant of antiquity, Avicenna (980-1037), performed the following experiment: In the same yard, in close quarters, he left together a lamp and a wolf and then he studied their behaviour for several days. The only thing standing between the lamb and the wolf was a wooden fence, with medium-sized eyelets, allowing visibility in both directions, but sufficiently tall and solid for the wolf not to be able to climb or destroy it. Although it could not reach the lamb, the wolf growled, howled, stalked, dug at the soil beneath the fence, tried to climb it, pull at it with its teeth. None of the wolf's actions succeeded. Despite this, a week

later, the lamb died. The fear that the wolf would be able to cross the fence at one point was the only thing that killed the poor lamb.

Scientists often invoke this experiment when claiming that fear causes severe imbalances. The body no longer secretes the necessary chemicals and the cell dies and, when the fear is great, all of the body's cells die. (see: Prof. Claudiu BĂZĂVAN, PhD, Up with the yeast, down with the antidoron, Bucharest, 2020).

When the fear and terror of death are officially “strategically fed and promoted”, when you feel as if the ground is slipping from under your feet and there's nothing to hold onto, it is better to hold onto the heavens and you will never fall.

In the COVID-19 era, people “have had their faces taken away” and have had a cloth placed on their faces, namely “the everyday mask”. The human face turned into a “mask”, without features and glow, with a lack of self-awareness or awareness of others, a “απροσopαω – απροσopατωs” - “aprosopao - aprosopatos”, namely faceless, whose face cannot be seen, exactly as the ancient slaves were called, those who were not looked upon, but only counted and ordered when taken to work. All these internal fears and external masks are brought on by the worldwide political correctness.

The definition of the political correctness was brilliantly summarised at a political science class in the US, by a contender that was recently awarded the first prize. “Political correctness is a doctrine cultivate by a delirious and illogical minority, promoted by the official media, which claims that it is possible to grab human faeces by a clean side”!

Political correctness generated a proclaimed epidemic, but for which no illness pathology or physio-pathology or cause-effect reaction was proved, even to this day; all that we currently know about Covid-19 are just theories, based on which a number of casualties was reported, without clinical evidence on it being caused by a certain “something”, since only very few autopsies were allowed.

Despite these major uncertainties, the entire planet went into lockdown and mass psychosis was created, generating an economic chaos without precedence in the history of humankind; human rights were annulled and the scientific studies valid today may be deemed as void tomorrow, under a simple order from WHO, which is a political and not a medical organisation.

In conclusion, I am able to state, without fear of error, that in the political situation of COVID-19, Bioethics were cancelled, alongside malpractice. The “primum non nocere” (first, do no harm) principle was abolished, the scientific studies valid today could be deemed as void a day later and the right of a patient to decide on a medical act and to be correctly informed was brutally violated. Bioethics prevent medical doctors from unwillingly becoming criminals. (<https://www.activenews.ro/stiri/Dr.-Camelia-Smicala-%E2%80%9ECa-urmare-a-faptului-ca-studiile-stiintifice-valabile-azi-pot-fi-declarate-nule-maine-dreptul-pacientului-de-a-decide-un-act-medical-si-de-a-fi-informat-corect-ar-trebuie-sa-stea-in-continuare-la-baza-medicinei-162514>).

Bioethics, in the mountain, global or national economy, is what prevents economists and economic researchers from unwillingly becoming economic assassins of their own countries.

3. Proposals and approaches

I would describe the COVID-19 pandemic as a profound attempt and a challenge for each of us, as it targets both the body and the economy, as well as the soul, faith and peace of humankind.

In order to overcome these challenges, we need to keep our own identity, that the Irishman Peter Hurley, who is very well-versed in Romanian customs, defines as formed of five pillar-words: *Romanian language, faith, land, traditional culture and sacrifice*. This is how he explains them:

“When I read the words of prayers in Romanian, I believe that they have power and resonance. For Romanian words, the sound and meaning are very, very close”;

“The second word is faith. Faith in God is extremely powerful. You are the only Latin orthodox people in the world. This turns you into a bridge between all that is in the East and all that is in the West”;

“The third is the land. The language, the faith and the land, especially the Carpathians. The Carpathian Mountains are the backbone of the Romanian people. You are just as comfortable on the eastern, southern and western sides. The Carpathians were never a defence wall, but rather a tree to be climbed when in danger. The land in Romania is one of a kind in the entire Europe. And this incredibly fertile and fruitful land gave birth to an authentic and traditional culture. A traditional culture so complex and beautiful, so full of values, was born and developed! Prof. Ion Bucur, PhD, the former director of the Astra Museum in Sibiu, describes the Romanian peasants as an aristocracy of the European peasants. And I believe that it is so!”;

“The traditional culture is the fourth word. It is about this living tradition, this living traditional culture, which is still present in this part of Europe. In the words of Lucian Blaga, this traditional culture, that we find today in Romania, is currently a link in a continuous chain. In our part of the world, in Western Europe, this link has already broken”;

“The fifth trait that defines you, which is also probably the most painful one, is sacrifice. This constant, seemingly endless sacrifice. To me, being Romanian is not about a passport or a place, but rather a calling: being Romanian is about having a calling. Being Romanian is not about rights. Unfortunately, it was almost never about rights, but it is about responsibility. Being Romanian entails an undertaken responsibility, a cross to bear, but not in a negative way and rather in the positive sense of the concept [...]. Being Romanian does not mean a building, a national hymn, a war, a victory or a temple, but rather this spiritual construction, an amalgam of language, faith, place (land), living traditions and this white shirt of sacrifice that you've been wearing for hundreds of years”.

(<https://cersipamantromanesc.wordpress.com/2020/05/02/un-irlande-ne-reaminteste-ca-muntii-carpati-sunt-coloana-vertebrala-a-poporului-roman/>).

This is an exceptional lesson in spiritual bioethics and cultural anthropology, given by a foreigner to the Romanian people, and it impeccably defines the DNA of our beings. He sees the survival of the Romanian people in any era, either political or pandemic-medical, if it follows its century-old calling and does not discard its own identity. Otherwise, we will become tenants in our own country.

The spiritual and cultural calling of the Romanian people must be a priority, especially during crises, since they represent our chance and power, that will make the natural beauty and wealth of our mountains and fields even more sustainable and fruitful.

Help us, our Lord Jesus Christ, help us work “in subsidiary”, with You, for a richer, cleaner and dignified Romania!