

JOURNAL  
of  
APPLIED ETHICS  
and  
BIOLAW

ISSN 2501-529X  
ISSN-L 2501-529X



# JOURNAL of APPLIED ETHICS and BIOLAW

published by

the ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN ETHICS AND LAW - EDUCED

www.educed.ro

## Advisory Board (in alphabetical order)

Seval Akgün - Turkey	Alberto Garcia - Italy
Xavier Arias - Spain	Eugenijus Gefenas - Lithuania
Vasile Astărăstoae - Romania	Rodica Gramma - Republic of Moldova
Mark Aulisio - USA	Ștefan Iloaie - Romania
Tiziana Brevini - Italy	Sana Loue- USA
Mircea Gelu Buta - Romania	Zvonko Magic - Serbia
Ioan Chirilă - Romania	Claire McIvor - UK
Aurora Ciucă - Romania	Laura Palazzani - Italy
Jorge Diener - Israel	Andrei Pădure - Republic of Moldova
Halis Dokgöz - Turkey	Antonio Sandu - Romania
Elmar Dopelffeld - Germany	Călin Scripcaru - Romania
Dan Dumitrașcu- Romania	Stuart Youngner - USA
Bülent Eren - Turkey	Nuno Duarte Vieira- Portugal

## Editorial Board

### *Editor in chief*

Beatrice G. Ioan

### *Associate Editor*

Cătălin J. Iov

### *Editors*

Mirela Avădanei

Mariana Enache

Magdalena Iorga

Gabriel Roman

Iulian Warter

## Journal of Applied Ethics and Biolaw

subscription for hard copy:

100 Euros/year (4 issues) - including the shipping fee

payment details: RO68INGB0000999905167265, ING Bank, Iași, Romania

please send us a copy of the receipt by e-mail: [contact@biojustice.eu](mailto:contact@biojustice.eu)

[www.biojustice.eu](http://www.biojustice.eu)



# JOURNAL OF APPLIED ETHICS AND BIOLAW

## Table of content

Editorial .....	1
<i>Beatrice Ioan</i>	
Cognitive and Mood Enhancement: Bioethical Aspects .....	3
<i>Laura Palazzani</i>	
The Refugee Crisis and Christian Hope .....	13
<i>Mircea Gelu Buta</i>	
The Ten Commandments for 21st-Century Leaders.....	23
<i>Thomas D. Zweifel</i>	
Medical Education from Mass-Media.....	35
<i>Cătălin J. Iov, Tatiana Iov, Marius Neagu, Beatrice Ioan</i>	
On Ethical Practices of Pharmaceutical Industry Stakeholders in Romania under the Pressure of Latest Legislation .....	45
<i>Laszlo-Zoltan Sztankovszky, Magdalena Iorga, Vasile Astărăstoae</i>	
The Analysis of Sexual Behavior and the Risk of Infection with B and C Hepatitis Virus on the Detention Population in the North of Moldavia - An Ethical Approach.....	57
<i>Agnes Iacinta Bacușcă, Elena Popa, Maria Gabriela Traian, Alberto Emanuel Bacușcă, Adorata Elena Coman</i>	
Psychological and Ethical Aspects Related to Dialysis .....	71
<i>Magdalena Iorga</i>	
From Abuse to Protection. A Journey on the Path of Research Ethics Regulation - the Nuremberg Code and the Helsinki Declaration.....	81
<i>Beatrice Ioan</i>	



# The Refugee Crisis and Christian Hope

Mircea Gelu Buta\*

\* Professor, MD, PhD, Faculty of Orthodox Theology, „Babeş-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca, e-mail: butamircea@yahoo.com

*Abstract: At present the secular western world leaves the impression of vulnerability that has occurred in a prosperous citadel due to its dependence on that welfare in front of the waves of desperate people looking for shelter, trying to escape death and destruction as a result of a complicated but not inevitable geopolitical situation and constituting anything but a menace, as history has repeatedly demonstrated. The spiritual thesaurus our Christian ethics is based on, contains the in depth description of such events that accompany humanity since its very beginnings, of which one can find plentiful testimony in The Old and New Testament.*

*The will to find the necessary courage to follow the guidance of these teachings easily leads to the discovery that living by the commands of the scripture is far less dangerous than ignoring them, a fact proven by the ambiguity and confusion of the sociological conclusions as well as by the political unrest. The majority of approaches that have tried, one way or another, to ignore the Christian ethics have turned, faster than their authors have expected, into wastelands that lead nowhere.*

*The attitude of the practicing Christian involves, above all, the effort of assertion, the spiritual law becoming a priority overruling any other interests. This is obviously a decision that has to be taken individually before it is made public. As in many other*

*circumstances of our history we are met by an outstretched hand, and this hand cannot help us unless we accept it.*

*Keywords: postmodernism, migration, Christian spirituality.*

The contemporary world, especially the inhabitants of Western Europe, had to take attitude facing the wave of immigrants that practically showed up on their doorstep and for which they were obviously not prepared. The events are not unprecedented, however, as the Bible points out in Chapter 17, the Book of Isaiah, the tragedy that is going to come over the town of Damascus: “See, Damascus will no longer be a city but will become a heap of ruins.” (Isaiah, 17:1)

The researchers alarmed by the Old Testament had a minor impact on the public opinion, the latter being convinced by the media that we are facing a crisis or conspiracy without precedent. As a result, speculations and taking stands have proliferated, different spontaneous groups found their spokespersons on the spot and

the entire storm of ideas became impregnated with partisan spirit, amplifying convenient aspects and ignoring those less comfortable. Sociologists have found themselves overnight on huge testing ground, the amount of evidence overwhelming and the results spectacular, but the latter describe what has happened in a retrospective moment, when many of the unwanted consequences cannot be undone, but for a lengthy period of time and with great effort and sacrifice, lacking any guarantee for the final success.

**1. What is, in fact, the crisis described by the international media? Who is affected and to what extent?**

The crisis described by the mainstream media is in fact a PR product, the package used by a competition governed by industry for the sake of selling its product. Everybody is aware that, in a world governed by the greed for profit, impartiality is no longer a valid item of judgments. In fact, even an accidental observer has plenty of opportunity to realize that the reports mention tens of thousands of refugees, while the provided pictures or videos show only groups of several dozens and only for the reason that they were involved in some sensational and usually violent incident.

We are dealing from the very start with a distorted image of the events leading to one-sided conclusions, partisan attitudes that are often obstructing the reasonable solving of more difficult situations, increasing the stress factor for those involved, in their turn subject not only to the strain generated by an unforeseen situation, as many of those playing an official part had not been prepared, but also to the continuous political and media pressure generating unrealistic and exaggerated emotional responses.

To this unhappy state of events one has to add the activism of both camps, those in favor of welcoming the refugees and their adversary, acting under the impact of invoked high anxiety and fear of conspiracy anywhere and anytime. Such activism has been upgraded by the wish of both camps to perform successfully, the irrepressible wish for „victory“ on the ground of the other part's defeat being an obviously counterproductive wish, even if taken for granted in an open society.

**2. The Old Testament already mentions migration**

An interpretation of the present based on the teachings of the past as a key to enlightenment is to be expected and even desirable from the perspective of Christian ethics, as the sequence of events determining the inhabitants of the Near East and other



regions to migrate towards North-Western Europe is neither unprecedented nor surprising.

It is therefore difficult to understand why people in leading positions go public making statements about a “surprising, unexpected migration”, a hardly stable point of view. Suffice it to take into consideration the teachings of the Old and New Testament:

*2.a. Economic migration (Ruth and Jacob)*

Since biblical times, prosperity acted as a strong magnet, so strong that nothing, not natural obstacles, nor other threats could prevent people from starting out in order to follow an image of abundance often present in their minds only.

*“Except for Benjamin, all the other four children of Jacob are born in Syria and Mesopotamia. Irrespective of the places where man's presence had been noted for the first time, the beginnings of civilization were encompassed by the Fertile Crescent. The economic concepts of the people in the Old Testament are consequently not exclusively of Hebraic origin, but also Egyptian, Akkadian, Sumerian, and Assyrian. The Israelites left Egypt during the reign of Ramses II, who ruled between 1304-1327 b.C., in an outstanding political, religious, but also economical act.” (1)*

*2.b. Political migration (David)*

The wish for power acts as intensely as the instinct of survival. From ancient cultures and up to modern times, surviving has become in certain environments and particular circumstances synonymous with holding on to or not losing the grip on power, the defeated often being ritually sacrificed in order to prevent the conflict from starting again. Testimony is to be found in numerous peace treaties but also in the biblical text:

*“David, the son of Isai, from the tribe of Judah, starts his military career in the service of his predecessor Saul, the founding King of Israel, marries the latter's daughter Micol, according to tradition, after his victory upon the Goliath the Philistine. According to 1 Samuel 17:45-50 David had killed Goliath with his sling, but according to 2 Samuel 21:19 Goliath's killer was not named David, but Elhanan. David's popularity arises the suspicion of Saul and forces him to take refuge in the border region of Judea, and later to take service with the Philistine dynasty of the city Gath (II Kings, 24).” (2)*

**3. The Old Testament is fundamentally structured on the mass migration of the chosen**

Starting with the biblical texts and up to day there exists a structural link between migration and the initiatory journey. The divine is in a state of

dialogue with the spiritual part of the human being, an entity that is not connected to a particular place or status, but to a state of grace that is not only mobile, but also transportable, while blessing and prayer accompany the migrants during their journey, not only in the case of the Jewish people and their migration away from Egypt. In the postmodern world, where desacralization played an important role in the education of people, but also in producing some of the serious social problems nowadays, such thoughts are no longer part of the current communication among people and therefore their reiteration becomes a necessity (3).

On the one hand, Yahweh follows his migrant people, he is not tied to a certain geographical position (The Temple of Jerusalem), he joins his people standing both in front and behind his flock (Exodus 14:19, Isaiah 52:12), and the flock is able to worship him in a moveable tabernacle. On the other hand, Yahweh is depicted as the God of all migrants, not only of the Jews who moved away from Egypt, but also of the Philistines, who migrated away from Caphtor or of the Armenians, who left Kir (Amos 9:7) (4).

*3.a. The themes of Exile and Exodus are fundamental for this writing.*

In order to preserve a correct point of view that should not distort the historical fact it is necessary to understand the context of such dramas on the background of wars that can be both military and/or economical.

We are allowed to imagine that driving out a people continues to count as a gesture of brutal violence, but as long as the purpose of Yahweh was to make the Pharaoh drive the Jews out of Egypt (Exodus 6:1; 11:1), this did not have to happen during a violent process at any rate. Israel was given a migration of divine inspiration, as this was the case with many Canaanite peoples. The Canaanite conquest was a violent one, but not unusually so it had been tough, cruel and according to some, even unjustified (5).

At the same time a modern Yahweh is hard to imagine as a just God, as the "an eye for an eye" mindset is no longer valid in a postmodern secular world that attempts to reach a different degree of tolerance and understanding through the principles of political correctness. The postmodern God loves his people in a less demanding manner and the prosperous contemporary societies, which are in fact the target of the migration we are talking about, are

not only a model of tolerant thinking and acting, they are also the only prosperous social solutions, proving that intolerant behavior will never generate the well-off people, including the ones the migrants are looking for.

*3.b. The New Testament also teaches us that statistics (meaning the numeric proportions) is not relevant in such situations*

From the perspective of Christian ethics, this statement is obvious. It can be reconsidered on the basis of economic findings, a means by which the secular postmodern society is attempting to prove the idea of an existing crisis, with repeated and insistent references to figures and their meaning in economical and especially financial terms. As long as prosperity and certain abundance are considered fundamental goals of society, such judgments are partly justified, starting from a simple reasoning: any diminishing of prosperity is given an antisocial value. It is on the other hand impossible to agree with such a one-sided judgment from the ethical point of view, in contradiction with an entire Indo-European heritage in a broader sense and first of all with our Christian heritage. Reducing the aspirations of any human being to a dependence on a relative and elusive material comfort is almost a strike

directed against ethics in general and Christian ethics in particular (6).

**4. The approach to the problem is inconsistent and there is no true concern for the causes that have generated this migration**

Unfortunately the mainstream media that should be the main channels of information have failed their major mission on this count, as they have shown too much interest in the effects and too little concern with the causes of what is going on. Under the circumstances given, public opinion was under a strong influence inspired by political partisanship, an attitude far from what is required, looking for apparent solutions and definite advantage in the polls in matters that, on the other hand need to be accepted before we can talk about any way of solving them. The churches in turn, as divine-human institutions, are expected to give satisfaction to God, but also to the mass of worshippers, so they have limited themselves to declarations of principle, appealing to fundamental Christian values, especially compassion.

It is the mission of every practicing Christian to decide by himself if he/she is capable - and Christian ethics teaches that it's worth the effort - to live and act according to the fundamental principles of his/her own religion, meaning not merely

abstract thinking, but also feelings translated into facts.

In this context, contemporary attitudes prove a considerable shortcoming. Invoking the European Christian spirituality on the background of measures meant to protect welfare and prosperity is in fact a contradiction in terms proving the presence of latent conflicts (7), (8).

### **5. Some approaches are recurrent**

*5.a. These refugees are not going to be temporary, but permanent*

The sociological approach with a tendency towards pragmatically thinking judges in these terms: temporary versus permanent, but the same terms are improper if we try to accept Christian ethics, meaning a completely different vision about temporary life and permanent salvation. In fact, duration in terms of conventional time measurement tells us little about the event as such, as we speak about a dimension of moral significance, as not the length or brevity in time of sin or virtue, respectively, could become the key to their just validation.

Again the subject of disturbing material wellbeing is being translated into improper terms, as material abundance and prosperity have no connection with spirituality in general and with Christian spirituality in particular. Though the Protestant

experience is placed at the very root of capitalism by the sociologist Max Weber, no one has ever been able to prove that economy can lead to salvation. In fact economy (the golden calf) has become a reality that is less and less accessible to the common man, while the differences between the rich and the poor are increasing even in the countries where honest economic competition produces an acceptable balance between leaders and the average population and a quite numerous middle class.

*5.b. They are headed towards the prosperous North out of economic reasons*

This description, indebted to a sociological and political vision, is not convincing if one takes into account the moral aspect of the problem.

It is neither logical nor ethical to assume that the inhabitants of a prosperous region do not have more means to help some fellow humans in distress.

*5.c. The fact that the majority are men is part of the problem, too*

It is difficult to imagine a migration of women and children while able men stay at home. An insight into the cultural differences tells that in the East the man goes in front, not for lack of politeness towards his female companion, but in order to be the first one to face any danger.

Unfortunately opinions have grown rapidly into radicalism, the

consequence being that even comments like the one above may be considered „propaganda“. This is an inefficient way of submitting the issue to public scrutiny. In fact it is not about supporting certain cultural values in opposition to others, on the contrary, ethically speaking, it is about demonstrating one's own ability or inability to live up to the expectations of Christian teachings.

*5.d. Once accepted, they will be followed by their families*

Has anyone imagined that these people might wish for a separation from their own families? Or does anybody want such separation?

*5.e. Different forms of extremism are triggered among the native population because of these events*

The circumstance is real, but who is in fact triggering extremism? Under no circumstances the immigrants, as they have no interest whatsoever in finding a hostile mindset in the place they want to settle down. Those interested in triggering extremism are the locals, and the presence or absence of such circumstances will not stop them, as they can find yet another reason any time.

*5.f. Migrants are considered a threat to our European Judaeo-Christian heritage*

This is a false alarm, contradicted by historical facts since neither the eight-century reign of the moors over the Iberical Peninsula, nor the eight-

century ottoman domination in south-eastern Europe could produce such an outcome.

*5.g. There is a risk of a frustrated "underclass" coming into being, which will oppose the European system of values*

This underclass has already existed for a long time, actually since ancient history and it was never formed by foreigners exclusively, while the European system of values is opposed first of all by the secular postmodern society itself, as long as we are to consider the European heritage a Christian one.

## **6. Obviously these problems have already been given answers to and others will follow in due time**

*6.a. Permanent migration does not have to be a threat to society (see America)*

In fact the basic question to be asked is if globalization - and the majority seems to agree that it has become unavoidable, even if some do it reluctantly - might be possible without migrations? Or if the contemporary world, where travelling around the globe is only a matter of time and money, can afford to consider migration in the same terms as 2,000 years ago?

As long as migrations have started in biblical times, what reason could there be for them to stop right now?(9)

6.b. *Migration towards prosperous countries regards the future of children too*

An open society that is the only one to support globalization cannot be caught in a web of thoughts dealing with sealing borders, regardless of their political, social or cultural nature.

### **7. Christian morality imposes 4 major paths**

- a. living up to the demands of Christian ethics even under difficult circumstances;
- b. cultural differences are an opportunity as well;
- c. we have to adapt to the question whether immigrants should be allowed to preserve their culture and traditional beliefs;
- d. we have to show solidarity as demanded by our Christian ethics.

### **8. Conclusion: is the question of "How many refugees we can accept?" contrary to Christian ethics?**

The establishing of refugee quotas is a strictly financial matter, perhaps linked to the permanent concern of politicians not to lose votes, but it has nothing to do with ethics in general and with Christian ethics in particular. The media working on a principle of profit and not of information for the benefit of the

public continue to present a distorted image of the events in progress, in order to maintain and eventually deepen the proportions of a critical situation.

The crisis is in fact one of mindset, and it manifests itself within the thinking patterns of the postmodern western common man, captive in his welfare offered by the abundance of prosperous countries, a mindset that is now called to answer the demands set by certain principles of his spirituality and which he has ceremoniously evoked in time, but, at least since World War II, he has never been confronted with on a daily and practical basis.

#### **References**

1. Piroșcă G, Rogoianu A. Matricea biblică a economiei, Economie teoretică și aplicată. 2012;XIX;5(570):86-95.
2. Gray B. The Politics of Migration, Church, and State: A Case Study of the Catholic Church in Ireland. *International Migration Review*. 2015; doi: 10.1111/imre.12165.
3. Gruber J. Remembering Borders. Towards a Systematic Theology of Migration. In: Judith Gruber, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Hans-Joachim Sander (Eds.): *Migration as a Sign of the Times*. Chicago: Brill; 2015. p. 79-108.
4. Im CH, Yong A. *Global Diasporas and Mission*, Oxford: Regnum Books International; 2014.
5. Lamb DT. *God Behaving Badly: Is the God of the Old Testament Angry, Sexist and Racist*. Illinois: Inter Varsity Press; 2011.

6. Jung JH, Horstmann A., Bach D. (Eds.). Building Noah's Ark for Migrants, Refugees and Religious Communities. USA: Palgrave Macmillan; 2015.
7. Ognjenović G., Jozelić J. Politicization of Religion, The Power of Symbolism: The Case of Former Yugoslavia and its Successor States. USA: Palgrave Macmillan; 2014.
8. Polak R. Migration as "Sign of the Times", Perspectives from Practical Theology, in: Judith Gruber, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Hans-Joachim Sander (Eds.): Migration as a Sign of the Times. Chicago: Brill; 2015. p. 47.
9. Joppke C. The secular state under siege: religion and politics in Europe and America. New York: John Wiley & Sons; 2015.