

PANDEMIC ETHICS AND THE BIOETHICS OF THE CRISIS

Ștefan VLĂDUȚESCU

*Professor, PhD, CCSCMOP, University of Craiova, Romania; E-mail
vladutescu.stefan@ucv.ro*

Abstract

This review is an analysis of the most significant book on applied ethics published in the last decade in Romania on bioethics. In essence, the bioethical effects of the coronavirus pandemic are highlighted. In a meta-analytical reading, the theme, problems, ethics and ideas of the study are highlighted. Both the theoretical and practical merits of the study are presented. Theoretical merits include: a) realistic presentation of the role of bioethics in times of crisis, including the assumption of the role of crisis bioethics in crisis b) clarification of the theoretical foundations of ethical models to be adopted in pandemics and c) development of a generic reflection on the bioethics crisis induced the crisis of individual landmarks (crisis of individual situation / orientation), the social crisis, the post-pandemic economic crisis. Among the practical merits we mention the arguments for faster adaptation of contemporary human beings to computer phenomena such as artificial intelligence, 5G communications, Internet, virtual world, digital avatar, virtualization of social space, reinvention of post-pandemic freedom, informed consent.

Key words: bioethics, applied ethics, ethical models, bioethics crisis, crisis bioethics

1. Introduction

The professor Antonio Sandu is one of the most important Romanian researchers in the field of ethics, bioethics, medical ethics, as well as in the field of social philosophy, social assistance and sociology. In the alternative, in these areas of knowledge, he is a qualified doctoral supervisor. He is therefore a recognized, a renowned specialist and therefore it is understandable that his book on the ethical inductions of the Covid 19 pandemic ("Bioethics in crisis or the crisis of bioethics? A philosophy of pandemic in the medical society", Iasi, Lumen, 2020) it is an editorial event and a moment of theoretical reflection and drawing of practical conclusions.

2. Initiation, structuring, methodology

The study is structured in 14 sections: an introduction, 12 chapters and a conclusion. According to the specification from "Introduction" (Sandu, 2020, p. 15), this volume includes lectures given by Professor Antonio Sandu between March 12 and May 7, 2020 at the "Ștefan Cel Mare" University of Suceava. These are online lectures that were later introduced on the Youtube channel of Lumen Publishing House, thus being available to a wide audience. This openness makes its ideas and practical inductions have an appreciable social effect both in terms of awareness and in terms of awareness, responsibility and transformation of bioethical attitudes into social behavior.

The internal argumentative architecture of the book is in line with the general principles of scientific research and highlights "the need for ethical debates to be known by the community of specialists and transformed into a professional ethical conscience, because such approaches to the situation by decision makers, more chosen when they are advised by specialists in public

health or medicine, to be infused with ethical values, and these to be the basis of models of practice” (Sandu, 2020, pp. 14-15)

The area of investigation was the investigation of the ethical foundations of the decisions taken in the first months (March-May 2020) of the coronavirus pandemic. The topic is topical, with profound practical and representative implications for the field under investigation.

The fundamental theoretical and practical stakes of the study are to explain and explain the principles of bioethics, to be aware of the functioning of these principles, to make citizens and decision makers responsible for their application and, finally, to evaluate the concrete application of the principles.

The working method is a complex one; it resorts to the observation and analysis of events, to the synthesis of modes of action and their evaluation through widely accepted principles, a re-establishment of concepts, recourse to the history of concepts, reading the pandemic situation and analytical decisions.

3. Ideatic and problematic

The approach starts with the debate of the principles of bioethics and from their use in the ethical decision”, from the redefinition of bioethics and from the need to study it. It states that "Bioethics tries to answer the question: what are or should be the behaviors, desirable behaviors of humanity in general, but also of each of us in particular, in the face of situations in which each is put due to health, the participation of medical care, on the one hand, but also the development of technologies that bring with them new threats to humanity, which adds to the old ones that humanity seeks to diminish or eliminate ”(Sandu, 2020, pp. 19-20).

In order to provide tools for assessing the quarantine that was in force at the time of the debate (March 2020), Professor Antonio Sandu first discusses two principles of bioethics, formulated by T: L. Beauchamp and J. F. Childress (2012); it is about “the principle of benevolence or beneficence (the purpose of

any action in the medical system is to do good, correlated with that of not doing evil, non-malice (...) abstaining from any voluntary evil" (Sandu, 2020, pp. 20 - 21) In addition, a third principle is discussed: the principle of "respect for the autonomy of the individual, the patient, the person" (Sandu, 2020, p. 22), and a fourth principle (that of equity or social justice) (Sandu, 2020, p. 133). These principles induce the coagulation of either a deliberative ethic (the ethics of social consensus, proposed by Jurgen Habermas) or an imperative ethic. a bioethics based on principles, but which, on the other hand, is modeled on the idea of democracy (acceptance by the majority.) As such, what is undertaken must have bioethical acceptability and social acceptability. must be seen in the van plan, that is, your decisions have a "quasi-democratic character" (Sandu, 2020, p. 44). The point of view that emerges is that decisions must have an imperative character, but also a democratic substantiation. "Personally, says Professor Antono Sandu, I am a follower of a (bio)ethic that combines the idea of ethical expertise, of imperative-normative type, with the democratic ethics of decision based on communicative action" (Sandu, 2020, p. 45).

The issue includes topics of great interest: a) respect for the bioethical principle of autonomy in relation to the idea of informed consent in pandemic emergencies due to coronavirus, b) medicalization of social life, c) whether bioethics is a branch of philosophy or is a new transdisciplinary social science, d) how ethical standards work in a crisis situation, e) what research techniques are adapted to study society in a pandemic situation, f) what inductions the pandemic has on the virtualization of social space, g) how fake news works in a pandemic , h) whether the pandemic situation will generate a crisis of bioethics, i) how bioethics will transform after the pandemic crisis, j) how a bioethics of responsibility should predominate, k) about the impact of spirituality on bioethics in a pandemic.

The pandemic crisis means negative instability and a positive opportunity to think. From the analysis of the biotech crisis and bioethics in crisis, Professor

Antonio Sandu formulates a memorable idea: the idea of a new ethic, “the ethics of the pandemic” (Sandu, 2020, p. 413). The relatively negative part of the crisis is that lockdown or isolation, social distancing accentuates the virtualization of social space, the distance between the "two Romania": "a rural Romania, poor, and an urban, modern, almost western" (Sandu, 2020, p 424).

The pandemic crisis is changing. The changes are part of the unseen part of the iceberg that brings to the surface the pandemic behavior, the ethics of such behavior. The ethics of the pandemic is already a reality. One of the articulations of such an ethic is put in memorable words: "We must behave as if we were simultaneously both infected and uninfected to protect ourselves and others" (Sandu, 2020, p. 297).

4. Conclusion

In addition to a field of facts of a strict topicality, clearly and thoroughly delimited, a clear theme, an idea and a coherent and cohesive issue, the work benefits from the support of an extensive, up-to-date, adapted and relevant bibliography in which books, articles and Internet sources are critically analyzed, judiciously interpreted and critically exploited. All these are gathered and put into convergence in an excellent, comprehensive reflective organization.

The book is admirably structured; the argumentation is rigorous, thoroughly substantiated methodologically and showing an admirable mastery of the fundamental concepts and of the most advanced and topical theories regarding the investigated field. The presentation is pleasant, cursive, fresh, fast, attentive to the listener and the reader, with a clocvial air. The book is currently the most settled, most serious and valuable Romanian research on the psychology, sociology, ethics and bioethics of the pandemic. As such, the transformation into separate studies of some of its chapters, their translation into English and their publication in journals with visibility will make Professor

Antonio Sandu's deep, comprehensive and innovative thinking known to the international academic community.

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