

**GLOBAL WORLD - FATAL OBLIVION  
ENDEMIC, EPIDEMIC, PANDEMIC: THE IMMINENT DANGER  
AN ECONOMIC OVERLOOK**

**Dan POPESCU<sup>1</sup>**

*Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Sibiu, Romania*

---

**Abstract**

*The world goes to globalization. There are existential problems for her, only from a global perspective reply. Among these: endemics, epidemics and pandemics. With a tens and thousands of years old, plague, leprosy, cholera, and flu of all sorts, typhus, especially tuberculosis, have done and still make hundreds of millions of victims. What are the causes? How can we? reply? What to do? There are questions from which economic perspective, we seek to respond in this study.*

**Keywords:** endemics, epidemics, pandemics, diseases, therapies, medicine preventive, expense, social profit, future.

---

1. Admit it or not – still, more and more people admit it – we live in a global world. It is a world with borders, but unique, sometimes as interest and action. It is a world in which people have become citizens of the Earth without excluding the national level. The problems always arising more harshly are global. The measures that might stop them are – better said, should be – still global. They can't be otherwise. They impose themselves as conceived and triggered through global examination, by global institutions, with globally recognized, official authority. They are relevant institutions in national spaces that remain as such, institutions authorized at this level, too. Let us think about pollution, global warming, nuclear arming, arming, efforts to preserve peace. Let us think about the great explosive risks of poverty and starvation. It will come difficult to us to judge them other than globally. We shouldn't, however, naturally eliminate the national factor. It is useless to solve a problem in one country, in one community if you do not solve it globally, if you are not listened to in this manner as well. This does not mean that such as system

---

<sup>1</sup> *Professor, D.H.C., Ph.D., Faculty of Economic Sciences, dan.popescu@ulbsibiu.ro*

should be used only to the benefit of some people: to the only benefit of strong states and economies, to the benefit of great powers, hidden or extrovert, of international capital, with clues of concrete allegiance, either Eastern or Western. The system must produce, generate advantages to everyone, poor and rich (Popescu, 2010; Popescu, 2014). Much more as in a global system – this is the situation – we have become more and more dependent to one another, maybe not on short term but surely on medium and long term.

This is not easy. The political function has become at the moment, for many elected, a means to get advantages and enrich individually, far from a needed social, national and global. More than this, a way too easy, what is not convenient is erased from the past. For example, we speak, at present, more and more, in ex-socialist countries – and I mostly refer to Romania – about the destruction, within the period of twenty years, of industry, the one that remained, framework in which corruption was active, the sly and politicians stealing immensely. And when did this happen? When, the way the world economic history eloquently demonstrates, or the history of some most important national economies, economic differences between rich and poor states, between developed and under-developed states happened to a great extent after XVIII century, when in Western Europe countries, the industrial revolution started to take action... we speak here about the very destruction of the country, asking for “re-industrialization”. But no one, almost, has been responsible for such devastating thefts in the past. Hardly can funds be constituted in order to develop without bringing, without reintegrating what was stolen in the economic circuit. There are not too many resources. Still, recovering damages has been realized to a very little extent (Popescu, 2012).

Coming back to the subject, we do not speak here of life levelling. We do not speak about “nationalization” or property diffusion, of indifference towards values or a certain licitation or super-licitation of “equalitarianism” of any kind. We do not speak about auctioning utopic ideals or getting away from realities in themselves, from the market realities. On the contrary, we speak about preserving what life has in its best, about economic and social solidarity to the advantage of everyone. There is such a solidarity under development, but to a too little extent as compared to necessities, perpetuating world and country split into a very small part of rich people and a very great part of utterly poor people. We, as people, need more than this. There is no other possibility of coming to the light. We do not grant enough meaning, at least at fact level, to such situations.

This is demonstrated, besides other unquestionable processes, by one of the greatest, one of the most acute and toughest threats – a threat not just theoretical but one that has become, most often, reality and for which we pay a huge price – which the world today faces and will represent a problem of tomorrow. We are thinking here about “mass diseases”, about endemics, certainly, but especially about epidemics and pandemics. In usual terms, **endemics** represent diseases that repeat in the case of humans in a certain area. **The epidemics**, however, represent the fast apparition of a disease in a certain area or the fast multiplication of an existing disease in an area. Last, **pandemics** reveal themselves when the epidemics touch several continents, even the entire Planet. Certainly, progress in medicine, the therapeutical capacity of new medicine, the fight lines for immunity amplification, for the amplification of human resistance in front of diseases, viruses and bacteria, progress in civilization development, their “contagiousness”, all these are unquestionable realities. They bring us joy. The latest sun ray on the terrible fight with cancer is in itself a reality.

The epidemics and pandemics situation is a little more complicated. An entire history, long way before our era, shows causes in this framework, causes that led to the dying of, cumulatively, tens and tens of millions, if not hundreds and hundred million people. Such causes have been by far removed nowadays. Warm places and “fat” ones that nurtured even endemics and epidemics and pandemics, however, have been poverty, starvation, huge lacking of everything. These are doubled by ignorance, lack of hygiene, absence of public policies (as we call them today), initially found at a much less scale but which, nowadays, may be found globally. These have been funded on obscurantism, fanatics, and other similar reasons. All these still persist nowadays. We start, therefore, a journey to examine in time and space such situations that seem extremely complicated. We have been inspired, mostly, from the excellent analysis performed, not long ago, on epidemics and pandemics by the French review „Science et vie” (Les Cahiers de Science et Vie, 2017). Allthesame, we have brought into discussion, due to older preoccupations we had, as well as amplified the documenting and reflection area by sensitively integrating the Romanian phenomenon and we emphasized the economic implications of the respective processes. Is this an economic problem? Surely, it is. Everything that comes into contact with our numberless needs, with rare resources, scarce and scarce all the time, certainly refers to economy. It is by all means economy, even if it includes “economy also”.

2. ... Many times, we are talented to believe that many of the new processes, positives ones belong to this century, better said, to the time having a debut in the years 1950 and 1960 until the present. We mean, here, certainly, perspective as well. This is totally wrong. We do not speak here about the saying of the wise King Solomon of Israel „Nihil nove sub sole” („nothing new under the sun”), but about more realistic processes, which we also have at present on our agenda. For example, democracy, then mass industrialization, also globalization, secularization etc., processes that people everywhere face nowadays – and not only from the perspective of “great civilizations” and “heavy trends”. In this sense, globally, we see not only progress but, also, unfortunately, the absence of change and even regress, excluding political “parti pris” and their promotion, often so embarrassing, exclusivist, lacking content. However, all these revealed themselves in larger and larger masses, essentially during XIX century and more than this, even before. Here we could, in fact, talk about the birth, adolescence and youth of modern world, developed not only into centuries but even into milleniums, which only a global human kind history, one of their collective history (Singaravélou, S.Venayre 2017; J.Osterhammel, 2017; D.Popescu, 1981 (a history of industrialism); Popescu, 1984 (a history of world starvation), may bring them to light. Limited history, relative to one continent or another, to one country or another, to one time or another, has a slightly lesser visibility in this respect. Of course, we are interested in King Louis XIV or the great English revolutionary Oliver Cromwell, the trends developed in this way. But from a broader, more rational perspective, we are interested in what happened with countries or regions in Africa and Asia at that time or before, the way civilizations evolved here and their parameters, which could be the future. Only in this way can we understand the connections of that and subsequent period, but also those of today. But behold, the insight we have leaned on epidemics and pandemics. When you live in a terrible misery, with the undermined, vulnerable, sensitized body, you do not first think of the risk of epidemics and pandemics . You hardly see them as such, though the effects are devastating. And when you are living in luxury residences, when you have a gilded life, all this, more or less, from private money or from public money, from public effort, even less; you believe intangibly the pink color "covers" everything. And yet, endemics, and especially epidemics and pandemics struck and struck everyone (even if motre on the most disadvantaged), without distinction. They struck him and struck them without boundaries generated by the living standards.

3. ... Among the greatest scourges that have ever shaken mankind, marking its history as well as our often individual and collective imagination, there are epidemics and pandemics of plague, cholera, but also leprosy-a disease that had a great power of contagion in the past - syphilis, tuberculosis, malaria, smallpox, Spanish, swine flu, flu in general etc. From the beginning – as authors such as Celine Lison, Marielle Mayo, Philippe Testard-Vaillant, Christophe Mignon, Nicolas Chevassus, Fabienne Lemarchand, Lionel Cavicchioli, Arnaud Fontanet etc. emphasize (*Les Cahiers de Science et Vie*, 2017) and not only them –, people everywhere were horrified by such diseases. I have shown myself in this sense, that the diseases listed before were, most often and initially attributed to supernatural causes, to the divine punishment, to the terrifying fantastic, to the devils with or without horns etc (Popescu, 1984). People had always been "small," fearful, "sinful", frightened, they had always needed a supernatural to pray, to beg to help them, to protect them, explaining the evil that had befallen upon them by the action of malicious forces or of punishments received from the supernatural. But either their begging, or in the imagination of evil forces, they were - and are not - far from the truth. Divinity may defend them, and they must have faith. But how may it protect them? Conscious or not, ignorant or not, accumulation of "bad" deeds – including pollution, its perpetuation and accentuation, misery, weakness and debility of all sorts amplified by the pseudomodernism of the time or even of misunderstood modernism etc. –, may be the bad will that seduces them to a path finally and socially wrong. Which is not the way of faith. Therefore, by faith and acting in the sense of good they can defend themselves (Popescu, 2017).

The epidemics and pandemics we are talking about have struck strongly over time – and they still strike today – Romania, the territories inhabited by Romanians. Plague, cholera, diphtheria, tuberculosis, exanthemous typhus, typhoid fever. Pellagra to behold, a metabolism disease, endemic, a situation accused by Professor PhD nutritionist Ioan Claudiu, who died in the communist jail, and who stated that due to the cruel misery the peasantry around 1907 lived in, the year of the great revolt (but also later), the very vital fiber of the Romanian people was threatened (Claudian, 1939). The social, analysis afterwards directly or indirectly resumed, by the Romanian or foreign memoirists of the First World War – in this latter regard we cite here the count of Saint-Aulaire or Marcel Fontaine (Saint-Aulaire, 2017; M.Fontaine, 2017) – who had emphasized the terrible livelihood of the country's population, mostly reached to the limit of supportability and misery, in the pandemic with

the feast of some of the few and rich, cynical and insensible to the realities of the country. Let us remind Camil Petrescu and Cezar Petrescu who had emphasized the terrible livelihood of the country's population, mostly reached to the limit of supportability and misery, in the pandemics with the feast of some of the few and rich, cynical and insensible to the realities of the country . Let us remind Camil Petrescu and Cezar Petrescu, who, in their books, genuine social novels, showed how in the autumn-winter of 1916, a minister (and not just him) had requisitioned several wagons to take his furniture, paintings, ornaments to shelter, whereas poor citizens were crowded like sardines in 2-3 wagons, risking their lives, on a trip to Iași where, in such conditions, many of them died? Let us also remind that today in Romania, with the lowest income per capita in the EU with the lowest pensions practically one cannot live – for the majority – of such income they receive? And then for what the development, for those who are enriched after the Revolution, especially from public money, who live big and who are held liable, in Justice, often politically selective or until St. Swithin's day, often just for minor deeds? What about the recovery of damages, as I said, a „rara avis”? Nobody touches, most of the time, the scammers from abroad, from the West, but also from the East, for their complicated deeds with the Romanian crooks... Despite the great progress made by Romania after 1989, there are things that make us think. The market, of course, but also institutions, including European ones, may have a corrective role. For now, they do not have it...

Perceptions of epidemics have evolved with time, with the emancipation of the individual, of the people, with progress in development. Even if in the Middle Ages, for instance, we thus remind, the primitive understanding of the epidemic and contagion, not knowing their real causes. "God's punishment" was still regarded as an immediate direct reason of epidemics. Of course, things are relative. Like I said, "God's punishment" could fine misery, promiscuity, dirt, also withered air and it really was. There were situations where nobles of the Court of France, of King Louis XIV, were scratching with fine sticks their lice under their thick wigs – washing, cleaning, often were not " aristocratic habits" –, which often suffered from various illnesses, while common people washed themselves in the crystalline water of the brooks, preserving their health and being in a better physical shape. Not only in France it was in such a way...

... Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, with the discovery of microbes and disease transmission vectors, but also with the

improvement of habitat conditions (even in the countryside, animals were removed from the house etc.), personal and collective hygiene – the full range of policies in this sense – become an important factor in combating diseases and epidemics (Popescu, 1984). And many more afterwards, especially national, regional and global institutions designed by remarkable researchers and doctors who – in my opinion – them first –, and not, for example, emphatic generals on battlefields, those who for personal glory sacrificed tens and hundreds of thousands of lives –, well worth from the homeland ... One more fact: with the recent WHO efforts (World Health Organization), epidemics with serious effects on the human being no longer concern only contagious diseases but also a series of chronic and non-contagious diseases. For example, obesity, often caused by poor, polluted diet, inactivity, and – why not – by lack of civic consciousness, lack of ideal and perspective. "Fat and beautiful" has long become not only a despicable, but extremely unhealthy slogan. The gross dirt, eating from garbage – a phenomenon that was once less significant now, expanding in Romania – give birth to their "fat people" vulnerable inside ...

But how did they show up, what huge losses of human life and economic substance have caused, more of the scourge diseases that struck the world? And do we witness, under the conditions of the expansion of world poverty – even if sometimes with relative thresholds – at a certain recrudescence of these? Here's another question. Let's look at some elements.

4. Plague, yes. In this regard, I have used this data from the above-mentioned number of „*Science et Vie*”, see especially the passages Marielle Mayo. Of course, my works too, as since 1984, in my book „*Cornul abundenței, un miracol?*” (Horn of Abundance, a Miracle?), Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest, I have referred to such matters. And then I went on (*Les Cahiers de Science et Vie*, 2017 ; Popescu, 1984). More hypostases. One of them, spread by the bacteria, „*yersinia pestis*”. It has a presumed emergence of 53,000 years, being reported in Central Asia 28,000 years ago, and in Europe and other places in Asia somewhat later. Plague, in general, had caused huge damage. Populations have lessened sensitively. Plague has unbalanced and debased the economies in a very serious manner. In ancient times, trade and wars between Eurasia and Africa spread to different forms of plague, bearers being primarily rats on ships (*Mus Decumanus*), that accompanied the armies. From the Middle Ages, the West will be more seriously struck, whereas after the 16th century, with the discovery of the New

World, Indians, slaves and even colonists will have to deal with "unknown" diseases, in particular the plague. The nineteenth century, among others, by replacing sailing ships with much more productive steam boats that have begun to sail the seas and oceans far and wide, will "speed up the microbial unification of the world" (Les Cahiers..., 2017). However, plague, will accompany people, it will follow them on foot, horseback or crossing waterways and seas.

Several sequences. In the fourteenth century, plague epidemics in Constantinople would generate the deaths of 30,000 inhabitants, thereby facilitating the fall of the Byzantine capital in the Ottoman hands. In the 100-year war in France, deaths as a result of plague, apparent in population deficits, will interrupt the fighting for a few years. Subsequently, the Mediterranean ports, "generous" entry gateways of the scourge, the commerce and the trade of the respective countries collapsed for many years, the assets will be concentrated in the hands of the survivors, the labour force will rarify sensitively, the economies will stagnate. The North, under cooler climatic conditions, less inviting for the plague, relatively circumvented by the plague, will thus take, to some extent, the well-known economic advance on the south. The plague will attack in successive waves every 9-10 years, until late, to the seventeenth century, but continuing even later. Hundreds and hundreds of deaths. See Italy, Spain, and "Plague in London" („Jurnal din anul ciumei”) ("Journal of the Plague Year"), Daniel Defoe's pseudo-diary basically so realistic, an undeniable „verité” (Defoe, 2009). The populations of the countries, the principals, the duchy, and the counties almost halved.

Let us also remember the frequent plague in the Romanian countries, amongst which the "plague of Caragea-Vodă”, in the nineteenth century. And in Moldova and Wallachia and Transylvania there were terrible plague epidemics addressed primitively with primitive mental treat, infirmaries (hospitals), lazarettos where they were staying in quarantine or there were convalescent people were disastrous (Popescu, 2002). The deceased, but often the dying and the sick were thrown by the undertakers into carts and then discharged into ditches and improvised cemeteries, the dead or the living together, generating the other and further outbreaks of infection ...

Looking globally, "The impact not only human itself but psychological one of these hecatombs will be deep: how each is waiting to die, legal prohibitions, religious institutions diluted, themselves decimated by plague, become powerless. There will be a context favorable to the Great Schism (1389), to the explosion of anti-Semitism (the Jews being accused of carrying

with them and generating this terrible scourge), the invocation and supplication of the supernatural become commonplace and all forms of penance. The gradual abandonment of the Latin language, lacking the teachers, "there were quite a few and their deaths were known to have considerable concrete effects," Marielle Mayo writes (*Les Cahiers...*, 2017) ... Africa will also be struck hard, such creating, for example, the possibility for the Europeans and the Ottomans to settle in the Maghreb at the end of the sixteenth century. In Asia we are witnessing conjugation of plague with famine, which will cause amongst others the impoverishment of China and the decrease of its population in 60 years, from 125 million to 90 million inhabitants, both China and Mongol Empire falling under Ming domination...

Of course, we have just raised a small corner of the curtain for a world with a dramatically incredible fight. Here's what mostly fleas and lice did, by biting rats and transmitting the infection to humans. Even important people died of plague (Pericle and Marc Aureliu, for instance), but also ordinary, ordinary people, the real world itself being suffocated ... Today declared eradicated (who really could know, given the lack of hygiene which is nowadays a universal, global problem, under the conditions of lack of dirt for much of the world), let us hope, however, that we know how to prevent this type of catastrophe.

5. Another terrible scourge that struck hit and still strikes the world is leprosy. „*Les Cahiers...*” reveals us the following: "A pathogenic agent – *Mycobacterium leprae* and *Mycobacterium lepromatosis*. It is transmitted by the respiratory tract and often by skin contact. The oldest known leprosy case dates back to 4000, a skeleton exhumed at Rajasthan, in India" ... The people of Alexander the Great brought it from Asia to Europe. And it has spread... Leprosy "eats" the face, limbs, organs, everything. "There is no one whom my sight (sick of leprosy, n.n.) does not disgust, while my body collapses in rotteness", wrote a French poet, Baude Fastoul, by the thirteenth century. Many times, the sick have been and are reunited in isolated communities where, as a fatality, they are waiting for their dreadful end... Literature abounds in the description of such dramas. Papillon, the hero of Henri Charrière of the homonymous *verité* novel, in his escapes, encounters a leprosy community that will help him... And the great Romanian journalist Filip Brunea Fox (Filip Brauner, 1898-1977) – surnamed the "prince of the Romanian reportage" whom I had the opportunity to speak to on many occasions and who counseled me, in my 1966-1970 work in the country's

largest daily newspaper (1 million copies per day) describes a leper colony in a large and dramatic report in Romania at Tîrchileşti (Brunea Fox, 1974) ... Today, leprosy is mainly located in warm areas, where it actually started from: Africa, Asia, Latin America. Physicians point out that nobody has antidote to date. It is certain that we currently count about 2.8 million people affected by leprosy in the world. Or, as it is called the "salary of sin", I think it is not negligible. It is not only in my opinion that there is, otherwise, shown a great potential for infection.

It is interesting to note that, according to some suppositions, leprosy declined in the Middle Ages – not only in Europe, to be later eclipsed, as a result of a disorder of pathogenesis (the set of pathological conditions present in a determined population at a certain moment) caused by the eruption of plague in the middle of the fourteenth century and by the progress of tuberculosis whose bacillus seems to be antinomic to leprosy. Further research is being carried out, but it is not however possible to properly control the environment for the leprosy outbreak, in this case the misery, the beggars and the vagabonds' environment, however of ignorance and promiscuity. Segments relatively "in progress" now and not only in underdeveloped countries. Of course, the world evolved and it is evolving, but it has not changed much and it changes in not a few ways. It's not a pun at all...

**6.** Cholera, now, the "enemy of the people". Known and tossed since antiquity. It starts from a bacterium, „Vibrio Cholera”, with Ganges Delta as region of origin. Man is its only known animal reservoir (Les Cahiers ..., 2017). Serious stomach and intestinal disorders, high frequency "stools", most often causing the patient dehydration and then general infection of the patient's body and his/her death. Tens and hundreds of thousands of dead. The movie is long. Several sequences. In Europe, epidemics – the fruit of previous pandemics – frequently... In Paris, in 1832, the cholera would generate over 7,000 deaths in just a few months. At the end of April 1833 there were almost 18,000 cholera deaths throughout France. Misery, dirt, lack of hygiene, weak and vulnerable organisms, insidious and promiscuous habitat conditions, altered water "have given rise" and "give rise" to cholera at mass scale. From a revolutionary perspective, French workers often affirmed that "through cholera, the bourgeoisie wanted to poison the labourers." It is right, among the rich, living in such conditions compared to the poor, there are not many who are to get sick of cholera. However, Lenin has, in this regard, a much tougher statement, it is true that referring to typhus (exanthemous typhus) and not as

much to relatively less aggressive cholera in Russia: "louse is the enemy of communism"... A statement with some positive results in the time of Bolshevik power.

... In Romania cholera often attacked hard, especially at the slum. It was, like everywhere, the same misery and poverty, puddled water and the dirt in which the cholera germs were swarming... Even I remember that in the 1980s a rumor had been released that on the Romanian seaside "due to the bad conditions here" there are cases of cholera "brought" from Turkey. Fortunately, nothing was true, it was just rumours launched for a specific purpose: the impact on tourism in Romania, on the seaside, for the benefit of some neighbours... However, according to the data, in general, today we are not talking about cholera epidemics. There are hot and cold outbreaks that the doctors and the entitled institutions extinguish. But what if that does not happen this way, perhaps, anyway? In addition to human measures, let us leave ourselves to be guarded by God with the sacred words "God forbid".

7. There have been other epidemics, perhaps of lesser importance, but which have rebalanced the fate of the countries. 36 million people in the world are now infected with syphilis, a great potential for contagion... Then Santo Domingo, today the capital of Haiti's state, "yellow fever" was already endemic, the local population being immune to it when the English troops landed there in 1794 to bring new territories under the Crown of England. They lost the fight, the army with the soldiers suffering of that disease for the first time, the English being destroyed not by enemies, but by the "yellow fever". In 1802, the great Napoleon will send here an expeditionary body of 35,000 people, two-thirds of this army being quickly shattered by the "yellow fever", the French abandoning Santo-Domingo, and Haiti becoming the first independent state in the Caribbean. In this fact, a gesture may be detected that has given another look to a good part of the history of the world. Namely, Napoleon, based on the unfortunate experience and considering that the American Louisiana, owned by the French, also called the "yellow fever" capital, was dangerous, he would sell it to the Americans, thereby "accelerating" the history of the United States and opening the west of the American continent to the Yankees...

... Let us remind that in the Russian campaign, the French Emperor will lose more people because of the typhoid epidemics that have struck his troops – deeply rooted in the heart of Russia, but hardly and badly supplied, badly equipped, dirty, in rags, greatly weakened by hunger, cold and frost – than

combatants (Vrăjitoru, 1936) ... Let us also remind of the exanthemistic typhus epidemics that struck hard and painfully Romanian troops in the First World War, in retreat and rehabilitation in Moldavia. There "pressed" more the people dead of typhus than those dead in the battles. Only a genuine heroism of the Romanian and French medical bodies, a bold and blessed stubbornness of the Romanian soldiers and commanders to resist such poor conditions of the front, the heroism of the fighters generated the energies of the army to a great extent (Saint-Aulaire, 2017; Fontaine, 2017) and allowed the great victories against the invading German troops from the "triangle of death" Mărăști, Mărășești, Oituz. The "delousing", the gas they were washing their hair to kill the lice (the lice and the fleas being vectors for transmission of the disease), has remained in the army ever since as a true slogan bringing reward, not of trouble. Can the typhus revive at present, not necessarily in the European West, in the US, and neither perhaps in Romania, in the conditions in which the great misery and dirt persist on much of the Earth and even in the conditions in which in the developed areas of the world, there are bigger or smaller islands where living conditions are severely degraded (for example, areas in southern Italy, degraded districts in New-York, New-Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, not to mention Bucharest where from Puișor up, there seems like another world etc)? I think so, we are still subject to high risks. Which, in fact, may be seen and felt. Far too little, however, in the actions of the governors, prepared to globalize the profit rather than the fight against global diseases...

**8.** A scourge that has struck and has been striking the world for thousands of years – and which will strike it further – was and still is the flu in all its forms of manifestation. There is a virus spreading it – Morbilli virus. The disease has – apparently – an age hard to define, being transmitted – according to some opinions and in its initial form – by pigs, birds, during their domestication by humans. I do not go into too much detail. They have been and are extensively researched, debated. Over time, effective drug therapies have been discovered, vaccines that, most of them, immunize... But the forms of influenza have responded, virus strains have diversified and, unfortunately, they have almost always been a step ahead of human professional efforts... The Spanish-influenza, after World War I, has ended many lives – tens and millions of people –, on all continents, being a pandemic, more than the war itself. Thus, between January 1918 and December 1920, this pandemic affected one third of the population of the planet. And then things went on, perhaps more slowly... Problems have related

and still relate, in their first stages and in spite of massive institutional measures, to the same vulnerable, weakened by hunger, misery, ignorant human bodies etc. Equally, or better said at the same time, they have related and are related to a particular culture of hygiene, life, and civilization. I was in France teaching at Rennes when the "mad cow disease" broke out. Reading detached several studies and articles in this regard, even on the spot, this disease has been found an economic, commercial component, in this case banning French beef imports. But I could not help seeing that my French colleagues with whom we had lunch and dinner for many times, if not daily, demanded – their request being quickly solved – the official documents on the "parents" of the cow or ox of the meat of which we, where appropriately, served the roast or cooked meat. Let us understand, they were not luxury restaurants but simple bistros. So, in my opinion, I noticed a remarkable culture, not only gastronomic, let's say, but also general hygiene. But how can you ask people lacking resource, the largest part of the world's population, to understand or do it as the occupation of many of them, is digging through the rubbish pit, to find out the daily food? The "parents" of the ox where the meat was taken from? The "parents" of the cow? Bullshit. Let us be reasonable! Here is the great, difficult problem of today's world, a problem stimulating diseases. I have seen such fragments of cruel misery and digging through trash in Argentina, at Buenos Aires, but also in Africa de Sud, at Capetown and even in a rich region of this country in Stellenbosch. But only there? I have seen – and I see it – repeated many times in Romania... Here is why, I insist that we are dealing with a global issue which is imposing global economic solutions. Otherwise, in spite of efforts and notable steps, tens of millions of people will continue to die of influenza, including avian influenza, which in Romania was approached and treated with incredible ease. Let us remind of the tourism and the huge global circulation of labour force, hard to control from the perspective of the proliferation of influenza or other scourges, and which cannot be removed because they are an intrinsic part of our world now?

9. I have left the last the scourge that now, unfortunately, is such an unwelcome recrudescence: tuberculosis. Generated and transmitted by bacteria: *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. It comes from East Africa, whereas the ancestral bacteria have diversified and then migrated to West Africa and Europe. This "migration" took place along with people through the respiratory system. Tens of thousands of years – and even more, in Syria since the Old Neolithic – it could not be solved, which somewhat clouds the perspective.

More worrying, however, is that about a third – 2.4 billion people – of the world's population suffer from tuberculosis, they are infected by tuberculosis bacillus, statistics say (see also *Les Cahiers de Science et Vie*, 2017). It is a lot, it is an explosion bomb in progress. Over 80% of cases are located in Asia and Africa, but this, I think, does not exempt the exposure of Europe – see, for example, the current recurrence of tuberculosis in Romania, sickness, as a general rule, caused by misery and poor habitat conditions, alcoholism, syphilis, ignorance, dirt, misery etc. Unfortunately, we meet such elements. It is true, the treatments, where they are made, are effective, as well as BGC-type vaccines, but that effectiveness is related, to a great extent, as anywhere in the world, to changing living conditions, for the better, all over the world. Can we solve it? Responses differ from case to case, which is not, I think, a fundamental solution in a global world and responsive to contamination. Cases must be eliminated, even if we often attack the effects very well.

Let us also remind HIV epidemics and pandemics in Africa – many states with a large proportion of the HIV-positive population, for example in South Africa –, in Asia, but not least in the USA? Another serious threat, with often palliative and extremely expensive remedies, and which, unfortunately, has spread to our country.

\*\*\*

A direction of action: shaping a philosophy, shaping a much better structured concept on global evolution and development, shaping and even developing a globalization civilization. An economic progress being made visible through the efforts of all, for the benefit of the worthy, but also with an essential social and solidarity component, centered on the individual. And more. Health, medicine, disease mitigation are fundamental priorities of the world, and no elements to be left behind. How much does it cost? Much, but it must be thought of in the key of positive externalities, which leads to another interpretation of costs: health is almost costless. Interestingly, the "Assurance Maladie" system in France, which tends to include the entire population of the country whether or not it has worked for some time. A system that is practically extended to the EU and whose essential ideas are also embraced by the US. At the same time, we also refer to the role of preventive medicine. It is cheaper to prevent the disease than to treat it once it burst out (Popescu, 2014).

In today's world – as in the past, but less noticeable –, everything is totally connected. Overheating of the Earth, like others, comes from everybody, and affects everyone. We often talk about security in a narrow sense, neglecting that human security in fact means energy security, food

security, and health security etc., categories on vital human levels. Seen at the national level as well, at the community level and globally. In this case, the disease brings together both the poor and the rich, the need for more wisdom on the part of all, the decision-makers or the ones who are decided upon becoming apparent.

## 10. References

- **1974**, Brunea Fox, *Reportajele mele-Cinci zile printre leproși (My Reports-Five Days Among the Leppers)*, Eminescu Publishing House, Bucharest
- **1939**, Claudian, Ioan, *Alimentația poporului roman*, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă Regele Carol al II-lea Publishing House, Bucharest
- **2009**, Defoe Daniel, *Jurnal din anul ciumei (Journal of the Plague Year)*, Art Publishing House, Bucharest
- **2017**, Fontaine Marcel, *Jurnal de război-Misiuni în România (War Journal-Missions in Romania)*, Humanitas Publishing House, Sibiu-Bucharest
- **2017**, Osterhammel J., *La transformation du monde au XIX-é siècle (World Transformation in XIX Century)*, Nouveau Monde, Paris
- **1981**, Popescu D., *Civilizație și industrie (Civilization and Industry)*, Albatros Publishing House, Bucharest
- **1984**, Popescu D., *Cornul abundenței-un miracol? (The Horn of Abundance-a Miracle?)* Continent PH, Sibiu-Bucharest
- **2002**, Popescu D., *Istorie economică-Istoria economiei naționale (Economic History-History of National Economy)*, Continent PH, Sibiu-Bucharest
- **2012**, Popescu D., *Criza indecentă (Hoggish Crisis)*, Continent PH, Sibiu-Bucharest
- **2014**, Popescu D., *Amenințări pentru secolul XXI (Threats to XXI Century)*, Continent PH, Sibiu-Bucharest
- **2017**, de Saint-Aulaire, conte, *Însemnările unui diplomat de altă dată Notes of a Former Diplomat*, Humanitas PH, Bucharest
- **2017**, Singaravélou P., Venayre S., *Histoire du monde au XIX-é siècle (World History in XX Century)*, Fayard, Paris
- **1936**, Vrăjitoru D., *Alexandru cel Mare, Hanibal, Cezar and Napoleon*, Ministerul Apărării Naționale Publishing House, Bucharest
- **2017**, Les Cahiers de Science et Vie, Paris, octobre
- **2017**, Popescu D., *Martin Luther. Se năștea o lume (Martin Luther. A World Was Born)*, Transilvania, no.8