

The Romanian Village between Idealization and Reality And Yet Eternity May No Longer Be Born (Just) in the Village

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ICAN well imagine that until about one hundred years ago, the Romanian villages must have in fact represented for people of every age something that today they still mean only for children. Surely, following the direct and indirect deforming contact with the civilization of the time, the Romanian village has also departed itself, sometimes quite foolishly, from the circumscribing definition we are attempting here. It is also equally true that in all Romanian regions one can still find today villages which remind us, in their spiritual structure, of the “village idea.” The “village idea” is the village that considers itself “the center of the world.”¹

The idea that eternity was born in the village is a well-liked saying for the people prefer to replace thinking with an interjection. There is indeed a village metaphysics, but that is something else. Ant yet metaphysics was born “in the city.” The village, which like every village, has an axis of the world in itself, has a cosmic center in the center of it where the village’s hearth and home is formed, where the church and the cemetery is; that will no longer exist in traditional, legitimized and creative forms and there would probably be some peripheral varieties favoured, more or less, by private commerce and the easy ways brought about by technology and thus we may also see in villages disco and sexy clubs, as we have . . . in Bucharest, pubs, where we could have whiskey instead of traditional plum spirit, which is not progress in any way. However, unfortunately the village is disappearing.²

The loss of the peasant civilization is no less serious than the loss of the national language.³

As regards the discourse about the Romanian village, there are at least two major tendencies, each of them being in a process proper to low and high tide: “the village idea,” to use Lucian Blaga’s phrase, and the “real village.”

There was a time in the diachronic history of the Romanian people when the “village idea” had won the day and it had partial or quasi total correspondence with the “real village.” In fact, the “village idea,” the one idealised, imagined, not in the sense that it had not existed, but in the sense that it is an elaborate construct of the sharp thinking

of philosophers or writers, has its starting point, at least supposedly, in the knowledge gained through sophisticated sociological investigations and inquires of the “real village,” which gave birth to the third type of village, the “ethnographic village.” Today’s world trend, which applies ideology to everything, tries to discredit, almost through all possible means, the “village idea” and to overestimate the benefits of urbanization, which, we must firstly say, is not necessarily the synonym of hell. Excessive ideology leads to troublesome polarizations: the village is paradise and the city is hell, village means communion and city anonymity, the village is identity whilst the city only becomes the symbol of otherness, the village is the “stylistic matrix” of faith whilst the city becomes the place of generalised apostasy, the village is associated with calm, with the time that does not move,⁴ whilst the city is the environment proper to perpetual movement, which had transformed the time in a preference for all that is ephemeral, the village is dying whilst the city beams with life and is blossoming. In short, an insurmountable conflict is installed between the idealized “beauty” of the village and the concrete “ugliness” of the city, a “class war” between rural and urban in the sense that the latter is sabotaging, “intelligently” and “consistently,” the former, the result being the ingurgitation of the village by the great dragon of the city.

I consider that the wisest thing is to get out of this useless and dizzying ideological whirlpool.⁵ I believe the truth lies elsewhere: the Romanian village had been profoundly mutilated by communism, which in the words of Father André Scrima is “the Gospel of God’s inexistence” and “the greatest catechism of darkness (to this day).”⁶ This mutilation had been carried out in such a deceiving way that we do not realize its fatal and lethal consequences. One of those is the transformation of faith into superstition and of the Romanian peasant into a “husbandry worker.”⁷ Unfortunately, those consequences had become implacable for some peasants and villages for whom they acquired the value of a Sisypus destiny.

“Eternity Was Born in the Village”: “Immovable” Temporality

WE MUST be (a little bit) disconnected from reality to preach with such enthusiasm the Blagian aphorism “eternity was born in the village” without sensing the past tense of the verb. I do not think that the sense of this addition connotes a reference to the fact that intrinsically and naturally the rural life is saturated by special metaphysical experiences or exceptional spiritual elevations. The sense ought to be sought out elsewhere.

As a passing remark, according to literary criticism, Lucian Blaga cannot even be included in the lot of the “Sămanătoriști,”⁸ whose undoubtedly emblematic representative was N. Iorga, nor among the Poporaniști,⁹ whose acknowledged exponent was Constantin Stere, but he must be included among the “great writers” of modernism.¹⁰

As we could infer from the context, the phrase “eternity was born in the village” does rather connote a subjective perception of time, namely that in the village everything is

governed without much ado. Nothing enters under the urging burden of trepidation. Everything is consumed in slow motion without the agitation proper to urban time.¹¹ In the universe of the village, the time becomes the eon that St. Maximus the Confessor talks about: “the age or eon is a motionless time,” or to put it in the majestic exegesis of Father Dumitru Stăniloae, “the eon is the eternity filled with the experiences of time or the time filled with eternity.”¹²

As such, this “eternity” is, in fact, a temporality unaffected by immediate and efficient functionality—the hallmark of the consumerist society—a temporality that “also signifies the perception of the relation between the time of action and the time of flourishing.”¹³ In other words, the time is not man’s enemy but a duration of patience and of love, “the interval between God’s call addressed to our love and our answer to God’s love. It is the time of man’s response.”¹⁴ We are not sure if this is what Lucian Blaga understood by the expression “eternity was born in the village,” but we have the certainty that the peasant (still) experiences the time in this fashion. The peasant has the exercise of awaiting an answer either if we speak about the communion with his fellow villagers or about the harvest or indeed when it comes to prayer or one’s faith relationship with God, or when learning a trade, or regarding the dying of a wish, or when losing a loved one, or when catching a glimpse of a success, or when lives within the blessed cycle of Christian feasts or when it is about one’s family life. As a result, we are sure that the peasant dies with the disappearance of this culture of awaiting an answer without useless and redundant interrogations, without forcing the appearance of a premature and weary result, without the wish to obtain superficial and short-lived experiences. Now a fundamental question is posed, which is meant to snatch us from an idyllic perspective of the village—is the horizon of the universe of the village still traversed by the spirit of an intelligent and full of vitality anticipation, which is neither stupid nor lethargic by any means? Is it not however that the world of the village is condemned to a slowness generating poverty and precarious education as well as a moral decline through the abyss of vices? One can find an eloquent answer in the words of Patriarch Daniel: “Today, the Romanian village is somehow crucified *between a nostalgic idealization and abandonment in real terms, between traditional identity and precarious survival.*”¹⁵ It follows that the Blagian “eternity” has metamorphosed under the vicissitudes of history under the pressurized “moment” of moral, and more especially, material survival. The actual needs of the Romanian peasant in the 21st century have catapulted him or her under the millwheel of the feeling that he or she is abandoned and derided by those who sing permanently his or her requiem.

Towards a “Post-Peasant Society”?¹⁶

THE WORD among the anthropologists is that the “peasant is dead.”¹⁷ Others tell us that it is not possible for the peasant to die as long as death had been “abolished” by Christ’s resurrection.¹⁸ Perhaps it is more appropriate to say that the peasant civilization is on the course of extinction or that the Romanian peasant is rather a “survivor” than a defunct person.

Unfortunately it is quite difficult to still speak about the presence of a real and authentic peasant life in our villages, identified through a theocentric vision of existence and a special relation with the cosmos and the environment. There are multiple causes. I will only examine two of those: a) the weakening of the moral character and b) the state's premeditated neglect of the village.

Many Romanian villages are depopulated or on the way of desertification from a demographic point of view. The land is not worked. There are deserted houses, a fact that coincides with the extinction of peasant life. Faith is robustly sabotaged by religious lethargy or superstition, which tend to become the center of the way that spiritual life is conceived. In the past, the church and the public house were

the two gathering centers of the village, where the personality of the individual is dissolved in that of the group, where ideas and collective representations were born, where mental interaction finds not only a most favourable framework, but also the safest one, from a repetition point of view (frequenting the Church happened at least weekly and the bar perhaps daily).¹⁹

Despite that, today it seems that the public house has a monopoly on the presence of the inhabitants of a village, including on Sundays and feast days.

God and the traditional values, which constituted the centrality of peasant life, have today become marginal, being swollen or eliminated by vices and religious ignorance. Any form of distancing from God and spiritual life contains implicitly an inconsideration of the land as source of feeding and material dependence, understood as the Creator's gifts for his people. Therefore, the thinning of the spiritual character in the rural environment is directly proportional with the volatilization of the peasant civilization.

Despite the fact that thirty years have passed since the fall of the Iron Curtain of communism, we are guilty of the same reflexes which the "red regime" had towards the rural world: the village does not represent a priority for public investment. It should be left in disarray or if it recovers and it seemingly prospers that is accomplished in a parasitic way and only because it has the lack of being geographically positioned in the proximity of a big city. If not, it continues to be a place of poverty, of educational abandonment, of an increasing number of divorces and of children born outside religious marriage.

The mass migration of rural inhabitants to cities is a clear sign that the roots are no longer stable. Those are shattered or uprooted by the vicissitudes of the times and the precarious state of the spiritual and economic life. Because of that, the peasant does no longer feel bound to the land and is not in love with the tranquillity of the skies and of the earth, but is attracted by blocks of concrete and the buzz of urban agglomerations, which paradoxically provide an inner balance induced by financial stability. Hence from a being oriented spiritually and vertically in the materiality of the world, the peasant becomes a biological entity hypnotized by a horizontal materiality lacking a spiritual garment.

The splitting between urban and rural is also an avatar of the communist totalitarian class war. The obsession with a forced urbanization had as a real direct consequence

the instauration of a depreciation and inconsiderate attitude for the peasant world and implicitly for the peasant. Probably, because of that, current ways of speaking record negative and contemptuous connotations of expressions such as “oi, you peasant” or “you are a stupid peasant.” The rural world is associated with moral decadence and a major lag in relation to the technological advances specific to the industrial and digital époque of the civilised world.

The solution to get out from this regrettable peasant metamorphosis is to attempt a spiritual renewal of the horizon of the peasant world by returning to a life centred on God and the values of the tradition as well as by an urgent implementation of a legislative package giving priority to the economic environment of the rural world. If we do not act concretely in this regard, the words of the ethnologist Șerban Anghelescu may become prophetic:

Ideologically supra-dimensional, miserable and innocent, an illiterate savant, a poor metaphysician, a gold producer martyr, land bound, with a heavenly soul, a living sacrifice that unanimously bears the country on his or her back, our common ancestry, an ignored deity, an innocent drunkard, a debauched who observes the old world order, the eternal ancestor and child of ours, we hold his or her hand and teach him or her to write, to read, to look after his livestock, to vote as he or she should, to not be magical, to forget myths and yet still tell us stories, an innocent victim from whose body we feed, because the land is him or her, the wheat came from his or her sweat and blood, a Christ a little bit pagan, the nations' eternal soul, unalterable, identical with oneself and yet changing with the first blow of wind, pure as a tear and quickly tempted by bad people, a Latin who lost to the Dacians or a Dacian led by Latins, a Pelasgian made a Turk, a candid barbarian, a harsh gentleness, a spring hidden to oneself, quicker dead than alive, created by us from top to bottom, from hair to nail, a mirror we created to show us the face and the back, we are the Romanian peasant, ploughmen and shepherds of fantasies.²⁰

The Village, “an Utopian Otherness” for City Dwellers:²¹

The City Peasant and the Peasant City Dweller

ANY IDEOLOGY has nostalgia as a surviving ingredient from which utopia is born accordingly. The latter forces permanently the territory of correlation. This is how we arrived at the formation of a rural correspondence with things specific to the urban. In this sense, it is worth bringing to attention a small but eloquent example:

Even today the country life is extended producing honeycombs in the city's blocks of flats. One can see small gardens with flowers or vegetables in front or at the back of blocks (and even hen or pig houses). Here and there, a feeble grapevine climbs on the exasperated greyish of buildings, coming out from the fief of an apartment so that in the autumn the absence of

a single ripped bunch of grapes, guarded until then as the apple of one's eye, could trigger a big scandal, especially between the neighbours of upper floors. The interior stairs of blocks, someone wrote, is the vertical correspondent of the once upon a time village lane. The time when the sky was the only cinema of humans was long forgotten and forests of IV aerials have invaded the skies of the city. The suspended circular tower, transparent (or not), tower of glory and observation point, as a family good, the balcony is the old wooden crate from the front of the gate and the taller brother of the country house porch. The balcony is either a small animals farm, a dry room or a car garage, here are aligned the jars with pickled vegetables and the onion and garlic strings, here wine and spirits are made, here gossip takes place, a game of cards and gammon is thrown, the politics of the country is done on the balcony, governments rise and fall, here in the balcony, not far from the ground level, but also neither close to heaven, a spark from the "meadow of Iocan"²² has landed.²³

The above text speaks plainly about the nostalgia (legitimized or not) of the peasant, who was forced to move to the city, witnessing to the physical death as well as to the oneiric resurrection of his or her village in their soul. It is a way of urban ruralization, that is, the real peasant becomes a city dweller in the spirit or a city peasant. This metamorphosis is possible without tainting ideologically the conception of death with Romanians as death, according to a British journalist in love with Romania, "is lived more beautifully by the Romanians."²⁴ Perhaps in the framework of this logic we may wish any kind of death, including that of the village or of the peasant, to be a cosmetic one, eliminating any kind of tragedy or dramatization from its content. It is the farce which the grave diggers of the Romanian village managed to set in motion, the assistants of the red devil. We believe that this urbanization of the Romanian peasant was also possible due to the fact that in the collective memory that certain characteristic need of the urban had won, which could be expressed synthetically as follows: "to be different from the others."²⁵ That is a tyranny of otherness over specificity.

The post-December 1989 period places us in front of a change of direction: the city inhabitants fall irremediably in love with the world and the peace of the village. No matter how much the city dwellers would wish to metabolize the spirit of peasant civilization, even if they move into the village they will only be at best ruralized locals. The fact that one wears popular costumes, eats organic, lives on minimal means, away from the benefits of the industrial or digital technology, cannot automatically transform us in authentic peasants. Speaking in today's language, I would dare to say that a city inhabitant moving to a village is a disguised peasant, who rather adopts a "lifestyle"²⁶ than plunging into the heart of the peasant civilization.

We cannot ever understand the beauty and depth of the peasant world without the spirituality and values in which the peasant, unadulterated by vices or the malady of some ideology, believes. It is a terminology contradiction to speak about atheist peasants. If they exist, it is clear that they have been poisoned by communism, altering their conscience and atrophying their innate thirst for the transcendental heaven. Consequently, not the urbanized peasant nor the ruralised city dweller could save the Romanian village, but the real love of peasants, which could be translated into an effort of

spiritual renewal, of re-centring the evangelical values and of communion with nature devoid of ecological euphoria.

The Romanian peasant sees God's presence and protection in all things. He prays to God to keep and comfort his livestock, in which he also senses a feeling. The peasant sees God in the mystery of nature. A beautiful landscape is a true paradise for the peasant. It is said in the Miorița (The little ewe) ballad: "Near a low foothill / At Heaven's doorsill." In the forms of peasant art, a young man inscribes the spinning wheel of his beloved and a husbandry man the gate wooden pillar and his tools with drawings which do not imitate nature, but they mirror its transfiguration. The peasant feels the people are so close to God, to the Mother of God, so that he or she uses for them diminutives such as "cutie God," "God's Mummy." This is a sign of a warm humanization.²⁷

The Solution? The Tabor of Transfiguration and the Jerusalem of Pentecost

IT IS a truism that neither the idealisation of the village nor the demonizing of the urban will save the peasant civilization. If we witness a massive migration from villages to cities, it is the time to focus more intensely the attention of clergy on the spiritual aspects of our world. The impregnation of the urban horizon with the evangelical spirit will have as one of the possible consequences the awakening of a special love for the peasant and the village.

The event of the Transfiguration took place on the mountain, the symbol of retreat, a place of peace, of the earth being orientated towards heaven, a place of perspective, of effort, of decoupling from the buzz proper to the world at the foot of the mountain. All witnesses present at the revelation of Christ as Light divine and uncreated have been changed or transfigured into capable beings able to partake of the uncreated divine energies so that they themselves may become people of light: "In Thy light we shall see light" (Psalm 35:9, the Septuagint).

The event of Pentecost or of the Descent of the Holy Spirit took place in the ambient of a multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic city, in the Jerusalem of diversity and of difference. The Holy Spirit descends on the apostles as a roar and in the shape of tongues of fire to unify those who are so diverse culturally, ethnically and linguistically. Hence, the city could be unified through the Pentecost of the Spirit, the grantor of unity and communion. Only the junction between Tabor, as symbol of peace and retreat, which is so arduously sought out by city dwellers, and the city of Jerusalem, as a symbol of diversity, although not an ideologized one, but concrete and personal, not a group one, could save the village of tranquillity and of retreat through transfiguration, and the pluralistic city through unification and not uniformity. Thus, in order to resurrect the village needs the spirit of transfiguration of the peasant world, and the city, in order to be complementary and not in conflict with the rural, needs unification and communion.

Two words, two realities, capable of doing something concrete for the Romanian village: the transfiguration of mentalities (economic, cultural, spiritual) through the elimi-

nation of prejudices about peasant civilisation and the unification of contrasts through sedating any attempt at ideologizing diversity as a lethal weapon for natural specificity (biological, ethnic, linguistic and religious).

The transfiguration of otherness and the unification of diversity constitute the surviving breather of the postmodern world in which, unfortunately, the stress falls on group interests and not on that of the person or of the community as a reality formed by unique and unrepeatable persons.



Notes

1. Lucian Blaga, "Elogiul satului românesc: Discurs rostit la 5 iunie 1937 în ședință solemnă, cu răspunsul lui I. Petrovici" (Bucharest: Monitorul Oficial; Depozitul General și Imprimeriile Statului; Cartea Românească; Imprimeria Națională, 1937), 9.
2. Alexandru Paleologu, "Azi nu mai există țărani," *Transilvania* (Sibiu), new ser., 24, 3–4 (1994): 68.
3. Paul H. Stahl, "Prezentare," in Henri H. Stahl, *Povestiri din satele de altădată*, with illustrations and commentaries by Paul H. Stahl (Bucharest: Nemira, 1999), 8.
4. Lucian Blaga, "Sufletul satului," in *Opera poetică*, foreword by Eugen Simion and George Gană, edited by George Gană and Dorli Blaga, foreword by George Gană (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2007), 116: "Little girl, put your hands on my knees. / Eternity I believe was born in a village. / Here every thought is slower and your heart throbs at a quieter pace, / as if beating not in your chest / but deep in the earth somewhere" (translation adapted from Leonard Druso and Romanian Poetry websites).
5. Alain Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului: Despre comunism, nazism și unicitatea "Șoah"-ului*, translated by Mona Antohi (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999), 37: "You cannot stay intelligent under the empire of ideology."
6. André Scrima, *Ortodoxia și încercarea comunismului*, edited by Vlad Alexandrescu, translated by Vlad Alexandrescu, Lucian Petrescu, and Miruna Tătaru-Cazaban (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 158.
7. <https://journalspiritual.eu/vintila-mihailescu-satul-romanesc-imaginar-cunoastere-si-politica/>, accessed 10 March 2021: "Having inherited the Bolshevik distrust of peasants, it started by uprooting peasantry from villages leaving those without their means of production and it continued by trying to mould the peasants into the homogenous mass of 'the working people.' Approximately three million people were pushed/ attracted into cities and industry. The transformation of peasants into proletariat had only been partially successful as those often organised themselves into what I like to term 'diffuse husbandry,' that is, whilst a part of husbandry remained stable in the village another worked or moved into the city, but keeping their relationships and redistributing the work, resources and consume, let alone counting the emotional support. Through what Gerald W. Creed names 'the domestication of industry,' a part of the urban and industrial resources promoted by communism against peasantry was thus returned to the village and used in the interest of the husbandry. The result was what sociology named the 'peasant worker' or 'the husbandry worker,' as I personally prefer to call him or her. The peasant society, in

- the proper sense of the term, started its process of dissipation.” Cf. Vintilă Mihăilescu, “Principiul gospodăriei,” in *Etnogeneză și țuică* (Iași: Polirom, 2018), 29–33.
8. “Sămănătorism” was a literary current at the beginning of the twentieth century which had as its goal the cultural education of peasants and the cultivation of the lasting values of the past, which could be found especially in the world of the Romanian village. The name of the literary current comes from the magazine of this movement, *Sămănătorul* (The Sower), which was published between 1901 and 1910.
 9. “Poporanism” was a social and literary current which proposed an approach that valued a realistic, non-polished, vision of the Romanian village. It was against any tendency to idolise the Romanian village. The “poporanist” ideas were published in the magazine *Viața românească* (Romanian Life).
 10. Nicolae Manolescu, *Istoria critică a literaturii române: 5 secole de literatură* (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2008), 677–686.
 11. Sfântul Maxim Mărturisitorul, *Ambigua: Tălcuiri ale unor locuri cu multe și adânci înțelesuri din Sfinții Dionisie Areopagitul și Grigorie, Teologul*, translated, introduction and notes by Dumitru Stăniloae (Bucharest: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1983), 61.
 12. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 4th edition, vol. 1 (Bucharest: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 2010), 349.
 13. † Daniel [Ciobotea], *Satul românesc: Izvor de spiritualitate și cultură populară* (Bucharest: Basilica, 2019), 51.
 14. Dumitru Stăniloae and M.-A. Costa de Beauregard, *Mica dogmatică vorbită: Dialoguri la Cernica*, 2nd edition, translated by Maria-Cornelia Ică Jr. (Sibiu: Deisis, 2000), 173.
 15. † Daniel, 54.
 16. Vintilă Mihăilescu, *Scutecel națiunii și hainele împăratului: Note de antropologie publică*, 2nd edition (Iași: Polirom, 2013), 196.
 17. *Ibid.*: “Since I started to work in the museum with this name, I repeated as many times as in as many interviews that ‘the peasant is dead’ that I started to suspect myself of necrophilia.”
 18. Costion Nicolescu, “Satul meu. Țăranii mei,” *Transilvania*, new ser., 24, 3–4 (1994): 133: “The peasant has died, but that had been said even before about God. How could he or she died as death had been abolished? The peasant is eternal if we are not to measure everything only by the terrestrial units of measurement. He or she only ‘moves’ in another place. There are still peasants and peasants are still being born. This is not triumphalism, it is a belief and like any strong belief it transcends any science and any calculations.”
 19. F. Constantiniu, “Aspecte ale mentalului colectiv sătesc în societatea medievală românească,” *Studii și materiale de istorie medie* (Bucharest) 7 (1974): 83.
 20. Șerban Angheliescu, *Farmecul discret al etnologiei: Eseuri* (Bucharest: Tracus Arte, 2013), 182.
 21. *Ibid.*, 90.
 22. The “Meadow of Iocan” from a novel (*Moromeții*, 1955) by the writer Marin Preda was a real village agora, where people gathered daily to get information and exchange opinions.
 23. Ion Mircea, “Țăranul român sau cât e, totuși, ceasul în istorie,” *Transilvania*, new ser., 24, 3–4 (1994): 7–8.

24. Mihăilescu, *Scutecele nașunii*, 189: “Some years ago, my mum asked me where I wanted to be buried. Without too much thinking, I perplexed her with my answer: ‘In Romania.’ Death is experienced more beautifully by Romanians.”
25. Vintilă Mihăilescu, “Două sate în tranziție: Tipuri strategice dominante în lumea rurală,” *Revista de cercetări sociale* (Bucharest) 3, 3 (1996): 11.
26. Mirel Bănică, “Gânduri despre satul românesc: Schimbare, transformare, adaptare,” *Horob: Revista anuală de spiritualitate și actualitate* (Huși) 1 (2019): 33: “We no longer figure into a line of family ‘succession,’ but it is rather about the result of a life choice linked to a lifestyle change (something between ‘conversion’ to nature and ‘personal choice,’ a gesture somehow subscribing to the secularized logic of the modern world.”
27. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Opere complete*, vol. 9, *Reflecții despre spiritualitatea poporului român* (Bucharest: Basilica, 2018), 164–165.

Abstract

The Romanian Village between Idealization and Reality: And Yet Eternity May No Longer Be Born (Just) in the Village

The present article endeavours to treat, in a comparative style, two ways of positioning oneself towards the discourse about the Romanian village: one idyllic (“the village idea”) and the other realistic (the real village). The inflation of the “village idea” has inevitably led to the ignorance of the concrete problems with which the “real village” is confronted. Any form of dichotomy between the two visions is counterproductive. The way out of this ideological whirlpool could become possible only if we take into account the spiritual dimension of the peasant civilisation as well as the need to implement some intelligent public policies to redress the Romanian village. The rural and the urban must not be thought of in a Manichean way, but complementarily. The salvation of the Romanian village from disappearance could only be ensured if we pay heed to two fundamental aspects: the spiritual renewal of the rural and of the urban coupled with a heightened attention from state authorities in regard to the real and concrete problems of the village. Any other approach which ignores this perspective risks remaining only in the territory of senseless ideology. We must avoid free idealization as well as the tendency to ideologically “set alight” the village. The only and unique modality of saving the Romanian peasant and the village is to discover again the *culture of expectation* as the duration of patience and love so characteristic to the peasant civilisation—patience as otherness and love as union. It is only in this way that the village and the city will reciprocally discover the joy of finding out that the spiritual, cultural and economical interdependence constitute the most appropriate ambient of survival for both of them.

Keywords

Romanian village, communism, migration, post-peasant society, peasant civilization