

ROMANIAN DIASPORA OR THE EXILE OF TRANSITION WITHOUT FINALITY. CASE STUDY: THE ROMANIAN COMMUNITY IN SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

The Romanian exodus generically called “Romanian migration” represents one of the recent episodes of contemporary history and, at the same time, one of the most tragic in terms of the collective destiny of the Romanian nation. This material offers the reader a sociological perspective on how the essence of societal life and social will has been directed or removed from the natural boundaries of the state. The Romanian migration phenomenon is nothing more than a consequence of allowing too long a nation’s destiny to be taken care of by a superimposed elites. Explain how the superimposed elites affected, slowly but surely, the adaptability of Romanian society to the historical changes that came over our will. In order to draw attention and highlight the main problems, we will try to offer an autochthonous perspective of how the “superimposed elites” (Mihai Eminescu) affected the very essence of societal life, the “social will” (Dimitrie Gusti), a fact that created at the national level a major “imbalance”, understood from the perspective of the “law of sociological parallelism” (Dimitrie Gusti). In an apparently negative perspective, we would like to mention that this phenomenon is, at the same time, part of a process typical of a “heroic culture” (Ilie Bădescu), whose outcome, without a sovereign autochthonous elite, is known only to divine providence.

Keywords: superimposed elites, nation, will, imbalance, diaspora, sovereignty.

I. THE LAW OF SOCIOLOGICAL PARALLELISM

Looking at society as a whole, at first glance, we can say that it is made up of a number of individuals living together, but from a sociological point of view, a question arises: can society be reduced to the number of individuals or is it a synthesis of its component elements? What keeps people together?

II. SOCIETY – AN EXERCISE OF WILLPOWER

Society, regardless of its degree of complexity, is not made up of a single element but always of several factors such as

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“a number of individuals, a series of relationships between them, an organizing principle or structure, etc.”⁴⁶⁶.

This explains why each part of society depends on the other parts to a greater or lesser extent and why each part contributes to the equilibrium of the whole (society) as a whole. If one or more parts of the whole choose to stop contributing to this equilibrium relationship, an imbalance inevitably arises that affects all parts of the whole, an imbalance known today as a crisis.

Dimitrie Gusti responded to this challenge in a manner worthy of the creative powers of the Romanian soul by creating what is known as the law of sociological parallelism. This law was intended to clarify the distinction between frameworks and manifestations, that is, to clarify the distinction between social phenomena and the factors that condition them. Sociological parallelism implies a clear distinction and correlation between the elements that contribute to social equilibrium. In other words, society presupposes the following:

“(…) individuals who live together, that is to say, individuals who have a number of relationships with one another, who are jointly subject to a principle of organization and who are subject to rules that transcend them and often to institutions which precede them (…)”⁴⁶⁷.

In turn, each society has a structure that is voluntarily created by its component social units, which can be defined as

“those associations of individuals bound by objective relations through a principle of organization”⁴⁶⁸.

The voluntary nature of social units is specific to human societies because although they are simple, they have certain ways in which individuals manifest themselves⁴⁶⁹ which implies that any unit pursues “certain ends and employs certain means”⁴⁷⁰. What gives human society its distinctiveness from its environment is social will, and this is why it should be considered *the essence of social life*⁴⁷¹.

i. Societal frameworks and manifestations

The key to interpreting social reality lies in the ability to explain the reciprocal correlation between frames and manifestations. Dimitrie Gusti summarizes societal reality as follows:

“(…) the autonomous totality of individuals, living together and carrying out as manifestations of will an economic and spiritual activity, ethically and legally

⁴⁶⁶ „un număr oarecare de indivizi, o serie de relații între aceștia, un principiu de organizare sau o structură etc.” in Dimitrie Gusti, „Paralelismul Sociologic” [“Sociologic Paralellism”] in *Romanian Sociology Journal*, Year II, No. 9–10, September–October 1937, p. 379, Available at: https://sas.unibuc.ro/storage/downloads/Teorii%20sociologice%20generale-8/DG37c.PARALELIS_SOCIOL.pdf, Accessed on 15 September 2024.

⁴⁶⁷ „(…) indivizi care trăiesc împreună, așadar indivizi care duc o seamă de relații unii cu alții, care se supun în comun unui principiu de organizare și care se supun unor norme care îi transcend și de cele mai multe ori unor instituții care îi preced (…)", in *Ibidem*, p. 380.

⁴⁶⁸ „acele asociații de indivizi legați prin relații obiective printr-un principiu de organizare”, in *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷⁰ „anumite scopuri și întrebuițează anumite mijloace.”, in *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

regulated and organized politico-administratively, conditioned by the cosmic, biological, psychological and historical framework⁴⁷².

ii. Societal disequilibrium

The entire spectrum of possible manifestations constitutes the totality “life manifestations”⁴⁷³ of any social unit because they “they all develop and determine in parallel”⁴⁷⁴. Regardless of the state of equilibrium – static or dynamic – no society can give up any one of the four manifestations, nor can it overdevelop or focus excessively or pay particular attention to any manifestation. The risk, Gusti warns, is the inevitable creation of an imbalance that, in turn, will inevitably lead to the destruction or even disappearance of society.

When social manifestations are alien to their frameworks or when the frameworks change and no longer support social manifestations, import by imitation of economic and spiritual manifestations totally alien to a country’s geographical environment and historical past leads to major disequilibrium.

“Human society is simultaneously influenced by cosmological, biological, psychological, and historical frameworks, without being able to do without any of them, except at the price of disequilibrium”⁴⁷⁵.

This theory is not only of theoretical value but can also be applied in practice to provide a society with its political elites with a summary of how equilibrium can be restored or to prevent the creation of imbalances with permanent effects.

iii. Superimposed elites – a factor of social imbalance

Groups that create or merely borrow the social form in response to the actions of the internal and external environment are called *elites*⁴⁷⁶. The role of elites is fundamental because they can transform their potential into manifestation and thus contribute to the well-being of the society they serve. If elites are worthy of uplifting the society for which they care, they can also plunge it into a major imbalance that can affect the entire system of societal relations. The critical importance of some indigenous elites is emphasized in Mihai Eminescu’s prose when he addresses the issue of the superimposed elite.

“Our intellectual world has not had sufficient power to define the mission of the Romanian nation at the height of the vitality and possibilities of the Romanians. In its migrations, our nation has drawn much wider borders than those claimed by intellectuals and politicians”⁴⁷⁷.

⁴⁷² „(...) totalitatea autonomă a indivizilor, ce trăiesc laolaltă și depun ca manifestări de voință o activitate economică și una spirituală, reglementate etico-juridic și organizate politico-administrativ, condiționate de cadrul cosmic, cadrul biologic, cadrul psihic și cadrul istoric”, in *Ibidem*, p. 382.

⁴⁷³ „manifestărilor de viață”, in *Ibidem*, p. 383.

⁴⁷⁴ „se dezvoltă și se determină toate, în paralel”, in *Ibidem*.

⁴⁷⁵ „Societatea omenească este înrăuită în același timp de cadrele cosmologic, biologic, psihic și istoric, fără să se poată lipsi de vreunul din ele, decât cu prețul unui dezechilibru.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 384.

⁴⁷⁶ Ilie Bădescu, *Sincronism European și cultură critică românească [European synchronism and Romanian critical culture]*, Bucharest, 2002, p. 12.

⁴⁷⁷ „Lumea noastră intelectuală nu a avut o suficientă putere de definire a misiunii neamului românesc la înălțimea vitalității și posibilităților poporului român. În migrațiunile lui, neamul nostru a trasat hotare mult mai largi decât cele revendicate de intelectuali și de oameni politici.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 299.

Social disequilibrium is not a phenomenon that occurs by itself, without providing predictability before it happens and without someone creating the necessary conditions for its creation, as it is a natural reaction of any social unit to “self-preserve” itself. So, we are reminded of what Mihai Eminescu warned us of, the danger of creating “superimposed” elites, the only ones capable and guilty at the same time of degrading Romanian society and pushing the destinies of millions of people outside the borders of the Romanian state:

“(…) a totally unproductive class, which has learned nothing, worked nothing, and had nothing, and which has become the master of those who have learned, of those who have possessions, of those who work”⁴⁷⁸.

In our history, therefore, there have been permanent social struggles between indigenous peoples and those coming from the provinces of great economic powers. Therefore, the constitution of the parasite class cannot be strictly endogenously understood but can be understood in terms of a “dynamism from outside”⁴⁷⁹ a struggle between indigenous and foreign elements, which are influenced by the dynamics of the major economic powers⁴⁸⁰. It is therefore possible to explain how a demagogic state is the perfect place where it can emerge

“a class of politicians, of patriots by trade, with no background, no traditions, who make politics a speculation, a means of livelihood”⁴⁸¹.

This creates an imbalance between native and immigrant social classes, and the worst scenario is that the foreign element dominates the native element.

In light of Romania’s transition from communism to democracy, the 35 years clearly show that the “elites” were not able to manage autochthonous potential but only meticulously directed it from the periphery of the Soviet economic system to the periphery of the Western capitalist system.

III. ROMANIANS IN SPAIN – TRIGGERS OF HEROIC WILL

i. Historic chance to reconquer Romanian capital

From an honest perspective, the diaspora phenomenon can be viewed as a heroic precursor to the movement to relocate Romanian capital within its natural borders. We emphasize heroic values because Romanians who “chose” the path of emigration are people who can easily fit into the typology of heroic culture:

“Heroic culture is the defining characteristic of generations and personalities who give enormously and expect nothing in return. Creative processes have complete sovereignty in these people. Nothing guides people to creative behavior, nothing

⁴⁷⁸ „(…) o clasă cu totul improductivă, care n-a învățat nimic, n-a muncit nimic, și n-a avut nimic și care a ajuns stăpână pe cei ce au învățat, pe cei ce au, pe cei ce muncesc”, in *Ibidem*, p. 115.

⁴⁷⁹ „dynamism din exterior”, in *Ibidem*, p. 338.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸¹ „o clasă de politicieni, de patrioți de meserie, fără trecut, fără tradiții, cari fac din politică o speculă, un mijloc de traiu”, in *Ibidem*.

sustains them; only the voice of their innermost soul is listened to and followed without delay and without any calculation. The prototype of this behavior is apostolic holiness. A man of heroic culture emerges in the life of the nation from the eternally illumined mystery of the Holy Apostles⁴⁸².

From this perspective, what Dimitrie Gusti said at a conference on societal imbalance takes on a completely different light when he stated two fundamental things:

– Economic and spiritual manifestations are the very substance of social unity; without them, life cannot exist⁴⁸³;

– Whenever a society neglects spiritual factors in favor of others, it induces a state of imbalance that can hardly be redressed. The risk is existential, and the social unit disappears⁴⁸⁴.

In this way, the phenomenon of emigration after the change of the communist regime can be summarized as a movement of divine providence, which has as a long-term objective the fixation of Romanian capital within the borders of the Romanian state.

ii. Spain – an area of social reintegration

a) Biological framework

Statistically speaking, the phenomenon of emigration began to take on exaggerated proportions, starting in 2000 and ending in 2016, when there was an increase of over 200% of Romanians who chose this path⁴⁸⁵. On a time, axis, the period 2007 – 2008, the economic crisis, was the peak of this contemporary phenomenon worldwide, becoming the second largest diaspora country in the world after China⁴⁸⁶. On the axis of dominant gender, feminine gender has made a major contribution to increasing the number of emigrants from Romania since 2016⁴⁸⁷.

Romanians constitute the largest foreign community in Spain, topping the one million mark, with an average age of 38 and a 47% female population. The most effervescent episode was the period between 2000 and 2007, when the population of Spain grew from 17.500 to approximately 200.000 people, representing a 1000% growth rate⁴⁸⁸.

⁴⁸² „Cultura eroică este definitorie pentru generațiile și personalitățile care dăruiesc enorm și nu așteaptă nimic în compensație. Procesele creatoare au, la acești oameni, o suveranitate deplină. Nimic nu-i îndrumă spre conduita creatoare, nimic material nu-i susține, singură vocea adâncului lor sufletesc e ascultată și urmată fără întârziere și fără de nici un calcul. Prototipul acestei conduite este sfințenia apostolică. Omul culturii eroice se ivește în viața neamului din zarea de taină în veci luminată a Sfinților Apostoli.”, in *Ibidem*, p. 219.

⁴⁸³ „Manifestările economice și spirituale sunt de natură substanțială în sensul că ele constituie însăși viața socială (...)”, in *Ibidem*, p. 381.

⁴⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 383.

⁴⁸⁵ OECD, *Talent Abroad: A Review of Romanian Emigrants, Talent Abroad*, Paris, OECD Publishing, 2019, p. 29, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/bac53150-en>, Accessed on 15 September 2024.

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 75.

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 34.

⁴⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 45.

If, before 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 1 million Romanians lived in Spain⁴⁸⁹, in 2024, there would have been approximately 600.000⁴⁹⁰.

b) Psychological framework

Romanians in Spain are well integrated in their adoptive communities and are appreciated as domestic, modest, eager to help their neighbors, and eager to add value to the society in which they live. Their return to their home country could be supplemented or encouraged by fiscal measures adapted to their real needs⁴⁹¹. All this is nothing but the pure manifestations of a soul that is not at all emphasized. Moreover, this proves that the creative abilities of Romanians are still valid, but they must have a favorable framework for manifestation that is not oriented toward “suffocating” these abilities.

c) Economic manifestations

Approximately 80% of those who arrived in Spain were unemployed when they left the country, and upon arrival in Spain, they cited finding a job as their main reason for leaving the country⁴⁹². From another perspective, Romanians represented the second largest community of professionals registered as PFA in Spain (after the Chinese community), with approx. 45.000 people (more than 11% of the total foreign PFA in Spain)⁴⁹³.

Moreover, the fact that they strongly want to obtain Spanish citizenship to secure a stable job in the local/central administration, to ensure a pension 5 times higher than that in Romania, proves that the desire, not understood by the government in Bucharest, is to be appreciated for their work at its true value⁴⁹⁴.

⁴⁸⁹ R.C., „INTERVIU Peste un milion de români trăiesc în Spania” [“INTERVIEW Over one million Romanians live in Spain”], in *Cotidianul*, January 22, 2023, Available at: <https://www.cotidianul.ro/peste-un-milion-de-romani-traiesc-in-spania/>, Accessed on September 15, 2024

⁴⁹⁰ Romanian Embassy in Kingdom of Spain, „Comunitatea românească” [“Romanian community”], in *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, n.d., Available at: <https://madrid.mae.ro/node/769>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹¹ R.C., „INTERVIU Peste un milion de români trăiesc în Spania” [“INTERVIEW Over one million Romanians live in Spain”], in *Cotidianul*, January 22, 2023, Available at: <https://www.cotidianul.ro/peste-un-milion-de-romani-traiesc-in-spania/>, Accessed on September 15, 2024

⁴⁹² OECD, *Talent Abroad: A Review of Romanian Emigrants, Talent Abroad*, Paris, OECD Publishing, 2019, p. 50, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1787/bac53150-en>, Accessed on 15 September 2024.

⁴⁹³ Diana Mereșan, „Câți români mai sunt în Spania? Autoritățile iberice oferă cifre diferite despre mărimea diasporei românești” [“How many Romanians are there in Spain? The Iberian authorities provide different figures on the size of the Romanian diaspora”], in *Libertatea*, February 2, 2022, Available at: <https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/cati-romani-mai-sunt-in-spania-autoritatile-iberice-ofera-cifre-diferite-despremarimeadiasporei-romanesti-3958479>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹⁴ The minimum pension in Romania is worth 1281 lei (257.55 Euros) unlike the minimum pension in Spain worth 5000 lei (1000 euros), in Georgi Baciu, „Schimbări majore privind pensiile în Spania: o nouă vârstă de pensionare și mai mulți bani” [“Major pension changes in Spain: a new retirement age and more money”], in *Ziarul Românesc*, April 19, 2023, Available at: <https://ziarulromanesc.es/viatainspania/pensiile-in-spania-in-2023-majorare-pensii-varsta-depensionare/>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

If we look at the comparative contribution to the country's GDP, we see that in 2021 alone, Romanians in Spain sent about 2 billion dollars to the country, and when added to remittances from Italy and Germany, they are worth 3,21% of Romania's GDP in 2021⁴⁹⁵. However, we realize this huge effort of will as soon as we look at the big picture, so we can see that the economic strength of the diaspora is one of the basic pillars of the Romanian economy, an economy based on consumption. We asked ourselves rhetorically: if there is no industry in the country, what do we consume? The money sent by the diaspora to the country! An analysis of economic data from the national press shows that the diaspora is the largest domestic investor in Romania, recording remittances worth 11 billion euros in 2022, making it the third most important source of revenue for the national budget, after European funds and foreign investments⁴⁹⁶.

We are witnessing a cunning accounting "error": the money sent by the diaspora is taxed twice, once at source and once in the country through the payment of 19% VAT on the consumption of products and services in the country. Not only has the emigration of Romanians abroad been encouraged, but this means that recipients are left with approximately €9 billion, and the difference of €2 billion goes "free of charge" into the state treasury without politicians offering anything significant in return to Romanians who have fled to foreign countries⁴⁹⁷. In order to underscore the fracture of Romanian sentiment that the entire political class in Romania is experiencing, we have to say that neither the IT sector (which accounted for 8% of GDP, €9 billion, in 2022⁴⁹⁸) nor the construction and real estate transactions sector (which accounted for 8% of GDP, €7 billion, in 2023⁴⁹⁹) is

⁴⁹⁵ Alina Mătiș, „Diaspora, investitorul nostru. Câți bani trimit acasă românii de peste granițe și de unde vin cei mai mulți” [“Diaspora, our investor. How much money do Romanians send home from across the borders and where do most come from?”], in *Panorama*, Available at: <https://panorama.ro/diaspora-investitorul-nostru-cati-bani-vin-in-tara-de-la-romanii-din-diaspora-si-de-unde-sunt-trimisi-cei-mai-multi/>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹⁶ Leonard Bădilă, „Nicolae Ciucă: Cel mai mare investitor, de altfel, în România știi cine este? Diaspora” [“Nicolae Ciucă: Do you know who is the biggest investor, by the way, in Romania? Romanian diaspora?”], in *Capital*, May 27, 2024, Available at: <https://www.capital.ro/nicolae-ciuca-cel-mai-mare-investitor-dealtfelinromaniastiiicineestediadspora.html>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹⁷ Even the former President of Romania, Traian Băsescu, said in an interview „Let's not make a drama out of the fact that we are leaving. Romania's biggest objective was to liberalize the labor force (...)”, in *Adevărul* Newsroom „Băsescu: Să nu mai facem o dramă din faptul că românii pleacă să muncească în afara țării” [“Băsescu: Let's stop making a drama out of the fact that Romanians go to work abroad”], in *Adevărul*, August 5, 2010, Available at: <https://adevarul.ro/stiriinterne/societate/basescu-sa-nu-mai-facem-o-drama-din-faptul-ca-1100447.html>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹⁸ Lidia Neagu, „Piața IT din România produce 7% din PIB și a depășit valoarea de 9 miliarde de euro – studiu ANIS” [“The IT market in Romania produces 7% of GDP and exceeded the value of 9 billion euros ANIS study”], in *Economica*, November 9, 2022, Available at: https://www.economica.net/piata-it-dinromaniaproduce7dinpibsiadepasitvaloarea-de-9-miliarde-de-euro-studiu-anis_625544.html, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

⁴⁹⁹ Stelian Dinca, „IG: Construcțiile și tranzacțiile imobiliare au generat 16% din PIB în ultimul deceniu” [“IG: Construction and real estate transactions generated 16% of GDP in the last decade”], in *Agenda Construcțiilor*, September 27, 2023, Available at: <https://www.agendaconstrucțiilor.ro/files/actualitateainterna/igconstrucțiileșitransacțiileimobiliare-au-generat-16-din-pib-in-ultimul-deceniu.html>, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

carrying the brunt of the economy but the backs and knees and tears of those who have left for the hardest jobs: fruit picking, construction, elderly care, etc. – which not everyone would be able to do.

IV. CONCLUSION – THE IMPERATIVE OF AN ELITE TO CARE FOR THE ROMANIAN SOUL

At present, the political environment wants to feign interest in the Romanian community in Spain, but it should not be forgotten that the first step toward maintaining Romanian citizenship by granting dual citizenship was 15 years after Romania's integration into the European Union⁵⁰⁰. This shows that the Romanian government does not fully understand the purpose and benefits of EU membership, and the disinterest in Romanians who are already deprived of many rights is alarmingly high.

At a historical turning point, August 1917, in Răcăciuni, King Ferdinand promised the brave Romanian soldiers

“(…) the right to control to a greater extent the land for which you fought (…)”⁵⁰¹

here it is that more than 100 years later since the Great Union, the Romanians find themselves captive to the challenges of the new economic empires, being driven from their native lands by a crisis artificially created by an elite that serves more of the interest of other economic forces to the detriment of the local ones. Thus, if at the time of 1917 we found ourselves together in the face of foreign danger, guided by a leader concerned with the fate of the Romanians, at a distance of a little over 100 years we find ourselves scattered and without a leader in front of other forces equally dangerous for the being national like those of 1917, but this time, the front was in the economic realm. Only alongside and together with the effort of these millions of people who let themselves be guided by the unspoken thought of divine providence and created a national movement to regain economic sovereignty, a strong and wise leader can create a second moment like the one in Mărășești from the summer of 1917, but this time in the economic field.

Impoverished by the economic component, in the midst of an uncertain process toward Western values, the Romanians could not helplessly witness the degradation of the last vital element of society – the spiritual part – and they risked everything,

⁵⁰⁰ R.C., „INTERVIU Peste un milion de români trăiesc în Spania” [“INTERVIEW Over one million Romanians live in Spain”, in *Cotidianul*, January 22, 2023, Available at: <https://www.cotidianul.ro/peste-un-milion-de-romani-traiesc-in-spania/>, Accessed on September 15, 2024

⁵⁰¹ „(…) dreptul la a stăpâni într-o măsură mai largă pământul pentru care v-ați luptat (…)", in Cosmin Roman, „105 ani de la discursul regelui Ferdinand I la Răcăciuni” [“105 years since King Ferdinand I's speech at Răcăciuni”], in *Academia Forțelor Terestre „Nicolae Bălcescu”* din Sibiu, March 3, 2023, Available at: https://www.armyacademy.ro/ev_2022_03_23.php, Accessed on September 15, 2024.

guided only by the hope for a better future and the fact that God would not abandon them. Such a historical gesture, which can be categorized as a sign of the fulfillment of a historical mission of the country in a moment of balance, must be answered by a political class capable of knowing, caring for, and raising the Romanian soul to its dignity as a divine creation and co-participant in the entire creative process at the level of universal culture.

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