

# PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ROMANIAN PEOPLE<sup>1</sup>

## 1

**S**ocial psychology aims to determine and explain spiritual qualities of a population. The spiritual qualities of a population are conditioned by three main factors: hereditary biological background of the population, geographical environment and the institutional characteristics acquired by the population during its historical evolution.

---

<sup>1</sup> Text published in 1937 by the Romanian Psychological Research Society, Bucharest.

The biological hereditary background includes organic dispositions wherewith individuals who are part of the population are born; dispositions directly governing the functions of the vegetative life and by these, indirectly, those of the spiritual life. In this biological hereditary background, we are interested in the deficient and pathogenic dispositions which are beyond the influence of any education. The ordinary is less interesting because it is controllable. The abnormal, namely the frail dispositions, create obstacles and fatalities that no power can remove. The geographical environment includes all forms of energy which surrounds and causes reactions among the people: the climate, nature of the soil; production capability on the work field; the nature of boundaries. Finally, spiritual manifestations are included in the institutional

patterns. They are different from those caused by biological hereditary background and geographical environment; these are events belonging to the historical experience of people which by tradition is repeated constantly over a long period of time. These are: speech, moral and legal customs, favorite views regarding world and life appreciation; national features.

The spiritual actuality of a population is conditioned by these factors but not equally. The populations with a historical past in whose soul the institutional patterns have reached a strong consistency, have their own spiritual actuality, first of all, influenced by institutional patterns and only secondly by other factors. The biological hereditary background and the geographical environment control the spirit of the young population which has no historical past and which

lacks of strong institutional character. Among the three factors we find repugnance. In populations with inconsistent spiritual institutions the influence of the hereditary factor and of the geographical environment is overwhelming. Spirituality is like an isolation shield. It gives a population the opportunity to make its own destiny, emancipated from the biological and the geographical yoke of life conditions. Populations capable of spiritual institutions are also people of national culture, that is, creative people of spiritual originality in human history. *Not all populations are capable of having a national culture. Spirituality is not a product of time.* There are people who spend thousands of years without institutional character taking roots in their souls. They live in an eternal childhood with their soul possessed by the effect of the biological heredity or of the

geographical environment. The populations ascending to a national culture have an inherent particularity to crystallize their historical experience in spiritual institutions, which once rooted take over their spiritual life. These populations succeed in conducting, according to the rules dictated by their will, both the events that are under the influence of hereditary factors, and the actions under the influence of the geographical factor. Therefore, social psychology, which is for studying the spiritual life of the social organisms, is founded after the population, before a special spiritual life. When studying the soul of a population lacking a spiritual fixture, its object is reduced to the study of simple spiritual manifestations, half biological. In this case, it remains on the spiritual side plan conditioned by heredity and the geographical environment.

Indigenous populations, for example, are of no interest for research; they are preferably an object of study for ethnography and sociology.

If social psychology is to examine the soul of some populations with a historic past and with well-rooted spiritual institutions, then its object is completely changed. The spirit of these populations has in itself *super-biological realities*, which have to be explained in terms of a spiritual finality. And what is more difficult: not the same spiritual goal for all populations but the plan of a special goal for each population separately. This is the case of the populations we call educated people or nations that are builders of spiritual originality. If in the spiritual research savage populations hold the object of social psychology is almost nonexistent or is mistaken with the object of other sciences, in

the spiritual research other educated people hold, the object of social psychology not only it is available but it is multiplied by the number of these people; not only do we have one social psychology for all educated people but also different social psychologies: social psychology of the English people, of the French people, of the German and so on for each educated people. What we understand by spiritual reality in the soul of a people is not the same in the soul of another people. Every educated nation has its own structure and spiritual evolution; it has its own destiny.

These views make us foresee the difficulties accompanying social psychology research. The more a nation has an older and authentic culture, the more the science about its soul has to investigate a more particular object. Statistics and experimental data on which

a people's social psychology is founded cannot be used in the social psychology of another because each nation's spirituality is independent and this must first be understood in order to explain the data given by statistics and experience. In other words, the science of social psychology is not a free science in the sense that it gathers knowledge raising only on logic postulates, from the beginning it subordinates to the spiritual finality in which the history of the people to which it applies; it depends on the ideal that people pursue, which is the object<sup>1</sup>.

For the peoples with an old an authentic culture, these difficulties

---

<sup>1</sup> This dependence of the ideal is found in all sciences, except for the mathematical, after the national socialist philosophy, shared by today's rulers of Germany (comp. *Das nationalsozialistische Deutschland und die Wissenschaft*. Heidelberger Reden von Reichsminister Rust und Professor E. Krieck, 1936).

can be partly overcome through the light their ideal spreads which is well caught in the institutions they inspired. For people with a new and a not so authentic culture, difficulties remain strong, almost invincible. This is the case with social psychology and the Romanian people.

No matter how many statistical data and observations taken from experience we might have, close to the spiritual life of the Romanian people, the interpretation of the data will be accomplished in an uncertain way since there is a lack of clear awareness regarding the spiritual finality of this life. At most, the data can justify a spiritual goal disclosed but when this goal is not disclosed or is turbidly and fragmentarily disclosed then they can serve as evidence under discussion. The consciousness of the Romanian people has so far only hints

# CONTENTS

PSYCHOLOGY  
OF THE  
ROMANIAN PEOPLE 7

THE SPIRIT OF OUR  
NATION.  
GOOD QUALITIES  
AND DEFECTS 53