

GEORGE JIGLĂU

## The Interethnic Stalemate in Romania: Origins and Risks

**Abstract.** The accommodation of ethnic diversity has played an important role in the development of the Romanian political system following the fall of communism. The first decade of transition witnessed a sinuous path of interethnic relations between the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority, from violent clashes and implementation of minority unfriendly legislation to minority inclusion in the national government. The second stage, associated with the efforts leading to Romania's Euro-Atlantic integration, brought a change in tactics from the Hungarian politicians. The author presents a general overview of how the political game between the Romanian state and the Hungarian minority developed in the last two decades and emphasises the legislative dimension of the disputes. The main argument of this article is that, although the interethnic relations have been normalised, the legal dispute is in a stalemate, which, if unresolved, threatens the current stability in the longer term.

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### Introduction

The Romanian political system and the political mobilization of the Hungarian minority create a fertile ground on which to explore some of the most important theoretical expectations regarding political mobilization of ethnic minorities as such. Romania encompasses a Hungarian minority of approximately 6% of the population and includes a growing Roma population, officially considered to be at around 3% of the population however the exact size still unaccounted for. In total, Romania officially recognizes 19 ethnic minorities,<sup>1</sup> offering a perfect context in which to study the interaction between a large ethnic majority – over 80% of the population is ethnic Romanian – and either small minorities with historical and cultural relevance or large minorities with strong political representation, claims, and ambitions. Two other factors increase Romania's relevance

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald F. KING / Cosmin Gabriel MARIAN, *Minority Representation and Reserved Legislative Seats in Romania*, *East European Politics and Societies* 26 (2012), no. 3, 561-588.

# Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania

**Farimah Daftary, François Grin**



## **Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania:**

Interethnic Relations in Post-communist Romania Lucian Nastasă, Levente Salat, 2000      **Post-Communist Romania at Twenty-Five** Lavinia Stan, Diane Vancea, 2015-06-24 2014 marked the 25th anniversary of the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe The events of 1989 are widely seen as having ushered in new all encompassing reforms in almost all areas of life In few other places were reforms more contested and divisive than in Romania a country that suffered greatly under the sultanistic cum totalitarian dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu faced the region s only bloody anti communist revolt and as such had the longest to travel on the road from communism to democracy We now have a generation s worth of experience with these wrenching reforms that have deeply affected Romania s political institutions and political culture and ultimately allowed it to become a member of the coveted European Union club This volume gathers key lessons for democratic theory and practice from Romania s first twenty five years of post communist transformation Written by leading experts in the field of Romanian Studies the chapters focus on the most important factors that have shaped the country s political transformation during the first 25 years of post communism      Transnational Catholicism in Post-Communist Europe Timothy A. Byrnes, 2001-08-27 Through the use of three case studies Poland Croatia and the Slovak Republic Timothy Byrnes argues that the Catholic Church remains deeply involved in the central politics of this vital region over both governmental structure and public policy deeply implicated for better or worse in the ethnic divisions that characterize the post communist era and profoundly part of the social fabric of virtually every state in East Central Europe      Problems of Post-communism ,2005      The Bibliography of Romanian Nationalism & Ethnicity in Western Languages Sorin Mitu, 2008      *Dampening the Powder Keg* Mihaela Mihailescu, 2007 Democratization in Eastern Europe prompted warnings about the risks of the process for the many multi ethnic countries of the region Yet the Yugoslav tragedy remains the exception rather than the rule in understanding interethnic relations This work analyzes post communist Romania and Slovakia two multi ethnic countries that have steered clear of interethnic violence despite the absence of institutions specially designed to manage interethnic relations despite the exclusion of ethnic minorities from government and despite quasi majoritarian political environments In the two studied cases interethnic opposition coalitions resulted from the adoption of basic democratic political institutions which constrained actors across the ethnic divide to cooperate More broadly this work questions the notion that multiethnic countries are unlikely candidates for peaceful democratization and suggests that as long as participation in democratic processes either in government or in opposition is possible for ethnic minorities violent conflict can be averted The argument is of interest to both scholars of conflict and peace studies and to policy makers involved in conflict prevention      Tolerance and Intolerance in Historical Perspective Csaba Lévai, Vasile Vese, 2003      History of Romania Susana Andea, 2006      **In Defense of Area Studies** John Richards, 1995      Twelve Years of Change in Mexico Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, 1995      **Global Perspective** ,1989      *Atlas Ost- und Südosteuropa: 8-H* Österreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa-Institut, 1989

Romanian Nationalists and the Holocaust Randolph L. Braham, 1998 The highly publicized obscenity trial of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* 1928 is generally recognized as the crystallizing moment in the construction of a visible modern English lesbian culture marking a great divide between innocence and deviance private and public New Woman and Modern Lesbian Yet despite unreserved agreement on the importance of this cultural moment previous studies often reductively distort our reading of the formation of early twentieth century lesbian identity either by neglecting to examine in detail the developments leading up to the ban or by framing events in too broad a context against other cultural phenomena *Fashioning Sapphism* locates the novelist Radclyffe Hall and other prominent lesbians including the pioneer in women's policing Mary Allen the artist Gluck and the writer Bryher within English modernity through the multiple sites of law sexology fashion and literary and visual representation thus tracing the emergence of a modern English lesbian subculture in the first two decades of the twentieth century Drawing on extensive new archival research the book interrogates anew a range of myths long accepted without question and still in circulation concerning to cite only a few the extent of homophobia in the 1920s the strategic deployment of sexology against sexual minorities and the rigidity of certain cultural codes to denote lesbianism in public culture *The Romanian Journal of Society and Politics*, 2001 Nation-building, Ethnicity and Language Politics in Transition Countries Farimah Daftary, François Grin, 2003 Takes stock of the experience of the countries concerned in dealing with linguistic diversity The emphasis is on the interplay between the politics of language and the development of language legislation codifying the respective status of different languages Nine case studies ranging from the high visibility cases of the Baltic States to much less known language policy developments in Armenia or Tatarstan provide in depth analyses illustrating the remarkable range of language politics in times of change The case of a stateless people the Roma and the politicization of the debate on the standardization of Romanes are also discussed Apoint venture with the European Centre for Minority Issues Flensburg Germany *Romania in Transition* Lavinia Stan, 1997 Presents a detailed assessment and analysis of the post 1989 political and economic situation in the country with essays on areas such as the social origins of ultranationalism and radicalism mass media and democracy macroeconomic stabilization competition law and policy applications of the marketing concept philosophy and Romanian consumer desires and feelings of deservingness Distributed by Ashgate Annotation copyrighted by Book News Inc Portland OR **Nationalism in Late and Post-Communist Europe** Egbert Jahn, 2008 The breakdown of the Communist party rule was accompanied by an unexpected renaissance of nationalism and secessionism Of the nine Communist states only five nation states have survived Whereas the German Democratic Republic became unified with the Federal Republic of Germany the three multinational states dissolved into 16 hybrid ethno national states and two states of federated nations The latter remain imperiled in their territorial integrity In all countries state and ethnic nationalism combine in peculiar ways which leaves room for sub national stateness and various other forms of ethnic and national heterogeneity In this volume experts describe the unfolding of nationalism in each of the

post Communist states during the period of upheaval from 1985 to 1995 First the relationship of the titular ethnic group with its own ethnic nationalism is discussed as well as the nationalism that refers to the whole state including the minorities This relationship influences the way the states treat the minorities which often aim for sub stateness or at least for representation through a political party organization      *Sociological Abstracts* Leo P. Chall,2003 CSA Sociological Abstracts abstracts and indexes the international literature in sociology and related disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences The database provides abstracts of journal articles and citations to book reviews drawn from over 1 800 serials publications and also provides abstracts of books book chapters dissertations and conference papers      **Ethnic Identities in Dynamic Perspective** Gypsy Lore Society. Annual Meeting,2003      **Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe** Margit Feischmidt,2001  
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## **Table of Contents Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania**

1. Understanding the eBook Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - The Rise of Digital Reading Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Exploring Different Genres
  - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
  - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
  - Popular eBook Platforms
  - Features to Look for in an Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Personalized Recommendations
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania User Reviews and Ratings
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania Free and Paid eBooks
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania Public Domain eBooks
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania eBook Subscription Services
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania Budget-Friendly Options

6. Navigating Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania eBook Formats
  - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania Compatibility with Devices
  - Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
  - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Highlighting and Note-Taking Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Interactive Elements Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
8. Staying Engaged with Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Joining Online Reading Communities
  - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
  - Following Authors and Publishers Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Benefits of a Digital Library
  - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
  - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
  - Minimizing Distractions
  - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Setting Reading Goals Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Interethnic Relations In Postcommunist Romania
  - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
  - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
  - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
  - Integration of Multimedia Elements

- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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