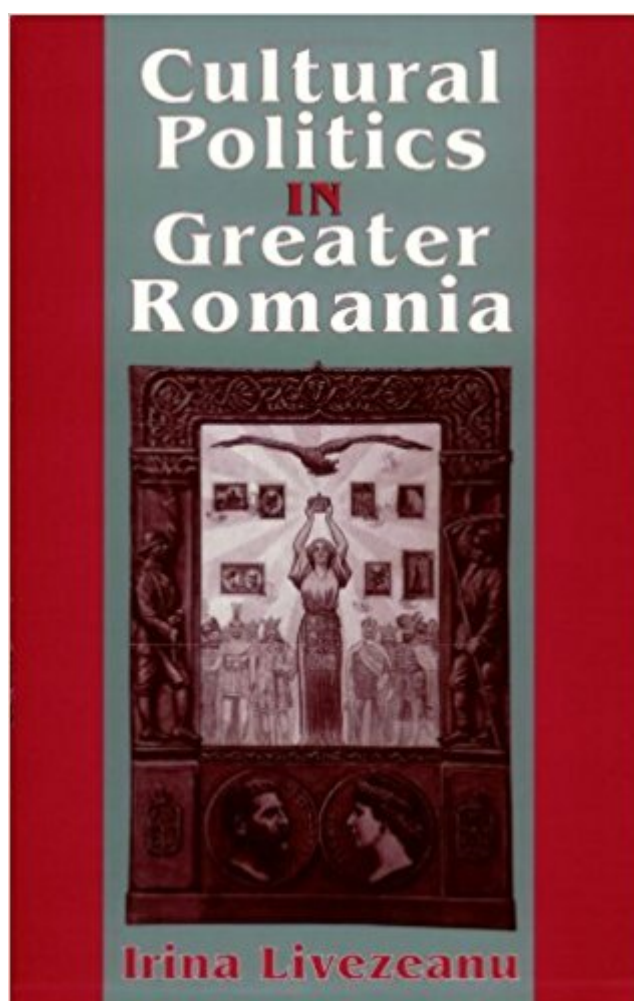


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Cultural Politics In Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, And Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930



Synopsis

Since the fall of the Ceausescu regime, Romanian politics have been haunted by unresolved issues of the past. Irina Livezeanu examines a critical chapter in Eastern European history—the trajectory of the aggressive nationalism that dominated Romania between the world wars.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Irina Livezeanu's excellent book on interwar Romania should be assigned as compulsory reading to all those who, in their understandable disdain for the Communist abuses of the past forty-five years, yearn for the 'good old days.' . . . Her masterful account . . . highlights once again how hateful a place East Central Europe was to the Jews, and how the pre-Communist past should be anything but extolled or emulated by contemporary intellectuals and politicians."—Andrei S.

Markovits, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 1997"Only since the fall of Ceausescu have Romanians been able to attempt a reconstruction of their recent past and to interrogate it. . . . Dr. Livezeanu's book is one of great relevance for an understanding of nation-building in the contemporary world. It is the first major work in any language on the efforts by Romanian governments to harmonize the divergent groups in the newly-annexed territories and to consolidate the young state."—Dennis Deletant, *Slavonic Review*"Irina Livezeanu has effectively demonstrated that there is need to re-think the interwar period in Romanian history and to free it from the terrible obfuscations perpetrated by the scholarly minions of the Ceausescu regime. She also counters the romanticized picture of interwar Romania painted by some dissident intellectuals suffering from

Communist oppression. Here is a book that is a major contribution to the recent history of Romania, as well as to the historical literature on East European nationalism and nation building." —â€œ Istvn Dek, Seth Low Professor Emeritus of History, Columbia University

After World War I, Romania acquired major portions of territory that had until then been part of other countries (Transylvania, Bessarabia, and Bucovina). Each of these territories had their own non-Romanian elite who resented the fact that they were suddenly subservient to the Romanians, who had previously been the underdogs even though they were the majority of the citizens. Now Romania wanted to reverse the centuries old practices and somehow eject the old non-Romanian elite out of their cushy positions and replace them with Romanians. But since, in many cases, Romanians represented the rural class who lived primarily in villages they were often the uneducated masses. Most of the schools, however, were in the cities and Romanian "peasants" weren't welcome (sometimes extending to violent denial). Romania felt that the only way to reverse the trend was to educate the masses of often illiterate Romanians. But at every turn, they met with resistance from the "old guard" ... teachers who refused to teach classes in the Romanian language. And so, Romania forced the issue, insisting that non-Romanian teachers either pledge their allegiance to the Romanian state or face being fired. But even when Romanian students showed up at the schools, they were faced with schools overcrowded with existing non-Romanian students. The Bucharest politicians forced the issue ... but not without a great deal of strife between the former non-Romanian and the current Romanian students. Universities were especially hard hit because they were seen as the pathway to better jobs for Romanians. But universities were only found in the larger cities ... and were already overcrowded with urban non-Romanians, including a large number of Jews. This constant conflict might have been one of the reasons, according to the book, that fascist nationalism recruited such great numbers of Romanian students, especially at the University of Iasi where Codreanu, the future leader of the fascist Iron Guard, was a law student who sat through lectures by A.C. Cuza, a vehement anti-Semitic. The book does an excellent job of covering the many pressure-cooker conflicts that existed in each of the gained territories. Each territory had a different and unique set of problems that the book covers very well.

The book was in great shape, better than advertised.

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