

JOURNAL
OF
ROMANIAN STUDIES

Vol. 1, No. 2 (2019)

JRS editors
Lavinia Stan and Margaret Beissinger

JRS review editor
Radu Cinpoes

About the Society for Romanian Studies

THE SOCIETY FOR ROMANIAN STUDIES (SRS) is an international interdisciplinary academic organization, founded in 1973, that is dedicated to promoting the professional study, criticism, and research of all aspects of Romanian culture and society, particularly concerning the countries of Romania and Moldova. The SRS is generally recognized as the major professional organization for North American scholars concerned with Romania, Moldova, and their diasporas.

SRS is affiliated with the South East European Studies Association (SEESA); the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES—formerly known as the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies or AAASS); the American Political Science Association (APSA); the American Historical Association (AHA); and the Romanian Studies Association of America (RSAA).

SRS offers a number of programs and activities to its members, including the peer-reviewed *Journal of Romanian Studies*, a biannual newsletter, the Romanian Studies book series published in collaboration with the publishing house Polirom in Iași, a mentoring program, prizes for exceptional scholarship in two different categories, as well as an international conference organized every three years in Romania.

More information about the SRS, including current officers, the national board, and membership information, can be found on the SRS website at <https://society4romanianstudies.org>.

Editorial Board:

LAVINIA STAN (lstan@stfx.ca) and
MARGARET BEISSINGER (mhbeissi@Princeton.EDU)
JRS editors

RADU CINPOES (Radu.Cinpoes@kingston.ac.uk)
JRS review editor

Advisory Board:

DENNIS DELETANT (Georgetown University, USA)
JON FOX (University of Bristol, UK)
VALENTINA GLAJAR (Texas State University, USA)
PETER GROSS (University of Tennessee, USA)
BRIGID HAINES (Swansea University, UK)
IRINA LIVEZEANU (University of Pittsburgh, USA)
MIHAELA MIROIU (National School of Political Science
and Public Administration, Romania)
STEVE D. ROPER (Florida Atlantic University, USA)
DOMNICA RADULESCU (Washington and Lee University, USA)
PAUL E. SUM (University of North Dakota, USA)
CRISTIAN TILEAGA (Loughborough University, UK)
VLADIMIR TISMANEANU (University of Maryland, College Park, USA)
LUCIAN TURCESCU (Concordia University, Montreal, Canada)

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

Journal of Romanian Studies

Vol. 1, No. 2 (2019)

Stuttgart: *ibidem*-Verlag / *ibidem* Press

Erscheinungsweise: halbjährlich / Frequency: biannual

ISBN 978-3-8382-1349-1

ISSN 2627-5325

Ordering Information:

PRINT: Subscription (two copies per year): € 58.00 / year (+ S&H: € 4.00 / year within Germany, € 7.00 / year international). The subscription can be canceled at any time.

Single copy or back issue: € 34.00 / copy (+ S&H: € 2.00 within Germany, € 3.50 international).

E-BOOK: Subscription (two copies per year): € 35.99 / year, individual copy or back issue: € 24.99 / copy. Available via ibidem.eu.

For further information please visit ibidem.eu/jrs.htm

© *ibidem*-Verlag / *ibidem* Press

Stuttgart, Germany 2019

Alle Rechte vorbehalten

Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Dies gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und elektronische Speicherformen sowie die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Any person who performs any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

Printed in the EU

Special issue

**Romania and the Paris Peace Conference (1919).
Actors, Scenarios, Circulation of Knowledge**

Edited by Svetlana Suveica

Contents

Introduction

SVETLANA SUVEICA	9
Romania, the Paris Peace Conference and the Protection System of “Race, Language and Religion” Minorities —A Reassessment	
LUCIAN LEUȘTEAN	27
Between France and Romania, between Science and Propaganda. Emmanuel de Martonne in 1919	
GAVIN BOWD	47
Humanitarian Aid in the “Bulwark Against Bolshevism”: The American Relief Administration and the Quest for Sovereignty in Post-World War I Romania	
DOINA ANCA CRETU	65
Against the “Imposition of the Foreign Yoke”: The Bessarabians Write to Wilson (1919)	
SVETLANA SUVEICA	89
Made in Paris? Contested Regions and Political Regionalism during and after Peacemaking: Székelyföld and Banat in a Comparative Perspective	
GÁBOR EGRY	113
“A Fertile and Flourishing Garden.” A Political Assessment Ten Years after Versailles	
FLORIAN KÜHRER-WIELACH	135
Roxana Bratu, Corruption, Informality, and Entrepreneurship in Romania.	
Review by CLARA VOLINTIRU	153
Mircea Vasilescu, Cultura română pe înțelesul patrioților.	
Review by CĂTĂLIN CONSTANTINESCU	155
Review Essay: Antisemitism, Holocaust and Memory in Eastern Europe: Romania from the Peasant Revolution until Today	
Review by GEORGE KORDAS	159

Introduction

Svetlana Suveica

At the beginning of 1919, all roads led to Paris. One hundred years ago, over 1,000 delegates and journalists hurried to the French capital to participate in the Peace Conference that ended World War I. The desideratum of the conference was to achieve a peaceful and stable post-war political order. To that end, the new state borders, established after the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman Empires, had to be recognized, and mechanisms that would ensure the implementation of the political and social order had to be established. The principle of national self-determination, based on Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points," was proclaimed as the guiding principle of the conference: states maintained the right to shape their borders based on national, strategic and economic interests.

Re-shaping East European borders was a complex task.¹ The new nation-states accommodated multi-ethnic societies with various war-time experiences. Their separation from empire did not automatically mean that they embraced an optimistic perspective on the nation-state. The immediate post-war period was marked by the confrontation of various political forces that tried to fill the power vacuum of transition, which led to an "extensive arc of post-war violence."² The newly formed governments had high expectations for the conference, as they strove for the international recognition of their recently established national borders. At the same time, the Great Powers, in charge of decision-making, were little acquainted with the history and post-war domestic situation of Central and Eastern Europe.³ Plebiscite, although recommended as a democratic exercise by various political forces from the contested regions,⁴ was applied only in several cases; in Upper Silesia, the "nation did not qualify as natural or divine entities" in people's minds, and therefore

1 Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement. Peacemaking after the First World War, 1919–1923*, 2nd edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 139–68.

2 Robert Gerwarth and Erez Manela, eds., *Empires at War: 1911–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

3 Hans Fenske, *Der Anfang vom Ende des alten Europa. Die alliierte Verweigerung von Friedensgesprächen 1914–1919* (Munich: Olzog Verlag, 2013), 89.

4 On the region as a research category, see Oliver Jens Schmitt and Michael Metzeltin, eds., *Das Südosteuropa der Regionen* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015).

the adversarial (German and Polish) propaganda, which made full use of stereotypes and the fear of Bolshevism, could not influence how people made their decisions.⁵

Another mechanism developed by the conference was the principle of minority protection, which sought to guarantee equal rights to minority groups and was created especially with regard to Jews. The League of Nations was given jurisdiction over disputes that involved minority rights.⁶ The post-war situation has shown that, although all the treaties signed in Paris included clauses on the equal treatment of minorities living in national states, the latter interpreted the issue as a limitation on national sovereignty. Nation-states constantly redefined their criteria of nationhood, thus questioning the loyalty of their citizens.⁷ As a result, Southeastern Europe became a region of constant migration,⁸ a laboratory for the implementation of forced population exchange and international refugee regime.

Romania before the Peace Conference: The Context

At Paris, Romania was considered by contemporary political figures especially favoured among the new states: the country succeeded in doubling her territory and population after the war as well as formulating and successfully negotiating territorial claims matching her interests. By entering the war on the side of the Entente in 1916, Romania secured the regions of Transylvania and the largest part of Bucovina. The revolution and civil war in Russia, which led to the disintegration of the Russian army on the Romanian front, left the Romanian army alone. This had enormous military consequences, as the local population had to

-
- 5 Brendan Karch, *Nation and Loyalty in a German-Polish Borderland: Upper Silesia, 1848–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 135; and Waldemar Grosch, "Deutsche und Polnische Propaganda in der Zeit der Aufstände und des Plebiszits," in *Oberschlesien nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg: Studien zu einem nationalen Konflikt und seine Erinnerung*, ed. Kai Struve (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2003), 63–95.
 - 6 Mark Mazover, "Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe," *Daedalus* 126, no. 2 (1997), 47–64.
 - 7 On the Bulgarian-Greek case, see Theodora Dragostinova, *Between Two Motherlands. Nationality and Emigration among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900–1949* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 77–117.
 - 8 Ulf Brunnbauer, *Politisch Bedingte Migrationen*, in *Online-Handbuch zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, no date, available at: <https://www.hgsoe.ios-regensburg.de/themen/wirtschaft-und-gesellschaft.html> (accessed on 23 February 2019); and P. Panayi and P. Virdee, eds., *Refugees and the End of Empire. Imperial Collapse and Forced Migration in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

confront the anarchy and disaster caused by the withdrawing army. The peace Treaty of Bucharest (7 May 1918) signed with the Triple Alliance, which was never ratified by King Ferdinand I, forced Romania to cede Dobrogea to Bulgaria but allowed it to retain Bessarabia. Romania's declaration of war on the Triple Alliance the day before signing the armistice of Compiègne pushed Romania on the side of the Entente. Throughout that year, the regional diets of Bessarabia (Chişinău on 9 April), Bucovina (Cernăuţi, 28 November), and Transylvania (Alba Iulia, 1 December) issued declarations of their union with Romania. In each case, the Romanian army entered the region before the declaration was issued. At the conference, the Romanian government expected to secure recognition for the country's new borders.

When the Romanian delegation left for Paris, the country was in a difficult situation. Local violent conflicts,⁹ along with the military confrontation between the Romanian and the retreating Austro-Hungarian and Russian armed forces, were often presented as a fight against the Bolsheviks. Various actors later instrumentalised these conflicts during the negotiations for the post-war order.¹⁰ The physical destruction of the region as well as the food crisis and scarcity of resources were complicated by the large flow of Russian and Ukrainian refugees seeking shelter and security in Romania; since they were suspected of Bolshevism, the state implemented a series of restrictive measures against these "undesirable elements."¹¹ Most important was the existence of minorities, especially Jews, Germans, Hungarians, Ukrainians and Russians, the so-called "non-Romanians," who had to be integrated into the new country. An integration strategy, which did not neglect or suppress past imperial experiences but rather made use of them, failed to materialize. Instead, the ruling National Liberal Party declared that integration

9 For a case study on Romania's western border, see Ionela Moscovici, "Violence Variables in the Banat at the End of World War I," *Banatica*, 22 (2012): 277-293; for Bessarabia, see Ion Țurcanu, *Sfatul Țării. Istoria zbuucumată a unei importante instituții politice basarabene din anii 1917-1918* (Chişinău: ARC, 2018), 73-9.

10 Jörn Leonhard, *Der überforderte Frieden. Versailles und die Welt, 1918-1923* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2018), 214.

11 The border was closed to those lacking the necessary authorization from the Allied governments. Among the active organisers of shelter and charity events for Russian refugees and invalids was the Russian ambassador S. Poklevskii-Kozell. He and Queen Mary of Romania presided over the Romanian branch of the Relief fund for Russian invalids, founded in Paris. Vadim Guzun, ed., *Chestiunea refugiaților de peste Nistru: documente diplomatice și ale serviciilor române de informații, 1919-1936* (Cluj-Napoca: Argonaut, 2012), 415; and Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking. Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

would occur under a centralized umbrella. The Romanian language was imposed within the administration, and the shares and assets of foreign nationals were seized even before the peace treaties had regulated the issue.¹²

At the conference, Romania “emerged as the special defender of East-Central Europe against Bolshevik expansionism.”¹³ The Allies emphasized the containment of the spread of Bolshevism. The local conditions following the withdrawal of the Allied troops from Russia (March 1919), escalation of the civil war in Ukraine, and instalment of the communist regime in Hungary turned Romania into an important “chain” of the European *cordon sanitaire*. The Romanian Prime Minister Ion I.C. Brătianu cleverly used the Bolshevik threat to reinforce the country’s territorial demands.¹⁴

The territorial claims that extended beyond those of the 1916 Treaty, although viewed skeptically by the Great Powers, did have a chance at success. In fact, the probability that Romania’s territorial claims over Transylvania would be satisfied grew proportionately to the diminishing chances of Hungary’s territorial claims after the communist leader Béla Kun came to power in March 1919. To the east, revolutionary Russia did not accept Romania’s annexation of Bessarabia, while an unstable Ukraine sought to obtain Bucovina. Among the decisions regarding the territories claimed by Romania, only that regarding Banat was more complicated: on 21 June 1919, the Committee of Ten divided Banat between Yugoslavia, Hungary and Romania, with the latter getting the largest part of the region. Romania’s borders were confirmed by several treaties: the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine with Bulgaria for the return of Dobrogea (27 November 1919); the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye with Austria for acquiring Bucovina and the Minority Protection Treaty (10 December 1919); the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary for Transylvania, Crişana and Maramureş, and two thirds of Banat (4 June 1920); and the Treaty of Paris for Bessarabia (28 October 1920), which was never signed by Soviet Russia. Romania’s newly established frontiers remained an irritant to neighboring Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia and Soviet Russia.

12 The sequestration of the financial capital of the oil companies Steaua Română, Concordia, Vega, and Astra Română was cancelled in January 1919. Bogdan C. Murgescu, “Anything but Simple: The Case of the Romanian Oil Industry,” in *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe*, eds. Helga Schultz and Eduard Kubů (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2006), 237.

13 Norman A. Graebner and Edward M. Bennett, *The Versailles Treaty and its Legacy. The Failure of the Wilsonian Vision* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 50.

14 Leonhard, *Der überforderte Frieden*, 879.