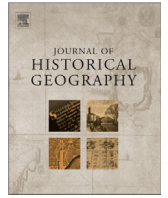




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Historical Geography

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jhg

Feature: European Geographers and World War II

Emmanuel de Martonne and the wartime defence of Greater Romania: Circle, set square and spine

Gavin Bowd^{a,*} and Daniel Clayton^b^a School of Modern Languages, University of St Andrews, St Andrews KY16 9PH, Scotland, UK^b School of Geography & Geosciences, University of St Andrews, St Andrews KY16 9AL, UK

Abstract

This essay examines how Romanian intellectuals defended Greater Romania during and before World War II, and discusses the influence of the French geographer Emmanuel de Martonne (1873–1955) on this process. De Martonne played a pivotal role in shaping the borders of Greater Romania at the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference, and geographical discourse subsequently became central to the formation of a distinctly Romanian geopolitics. Geographical arguments and practices, and not least ethnographic mapping, became linked to Romanian nation-building. Ample evidence of this can be found in the Romanian wartime review *Geopolitica și Geoistoria* (published 1941–1944), wherein intellectuals and politicians sought to defend the historic and geographic integrity of Greater Romania. The essay shows how geographical and geopolitical arguments acted as bulwarks against the traumatic dynamics of wartime occupation and conflict. It also uses the case of de Martonne to suggest that geographers' connections with World War II need to be placed in a longer interwar time frame and wider European settings.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Cartography (ethnographic); Geopolitics; Greater Romania; Emmanuel de Martonne; Nationalism

Introduction

This essay has two concerns. The first is to consider how Romanian geographers and other intellectuals defended Greater Romania during and before World War II, and how their complicity in war did not just revolve around questions of military strategy and political utility but also around ones of nation, homeland and cultural identity. The essay pursues this concern with reference to the Romanian wartime review *Geopolitica și Geoistoria* (published in three volumes in 1941, 1942 and 1944), wherein geographers, historians, linguists, politicians and sociologists defended the historic and geographic integrity of Greater Romania against its wartime adversaries, particularly Hungary, which had occupied Transylvania in 1940, but also Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. We show that geographical discourse was pivotal to Romanian geopolitics. Geographical facts, models, maps and metaphors were linked to potent and dangerous tenets about national origins and essences, and just borders.

The essay's second concern is with the long convoluted histories of these tenets in Romania: with their wartime fomentation, but also how they need to be interpreted in the light of arguments and sentiments stretching back to the interwar years and before. This concern will be pursued with reference to the French geographer Emmanuel de Martonne (1873–1955). De Martonne was a disciple and son-in-law of the founder of the French school of geography, Paul Vidal de la Blache; Professor and Head of Geography at the Sorbonne from 1909 and Director of the *Institut de Géographie* (1927–1944); adviser to French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau at the 1919 Versailles Peace Conference; and Secretary-General (1931–1938) and President (1938–1949) of the International Geographical Union (IGU). De Martonne spent the war years in France, but his war did not begin or end there, or in the 1940s. His connection with Romania was long but has been little studied.

Greater Romania refers to the territory of the Kingdom of Romania between 1919 and 1940 (Fig. 1). De Martonne was instrumental in creating this territorial entity and redrawing the

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: gpb@st-andrews.ac.uk, dwc3@st-andrews.ac.uk.

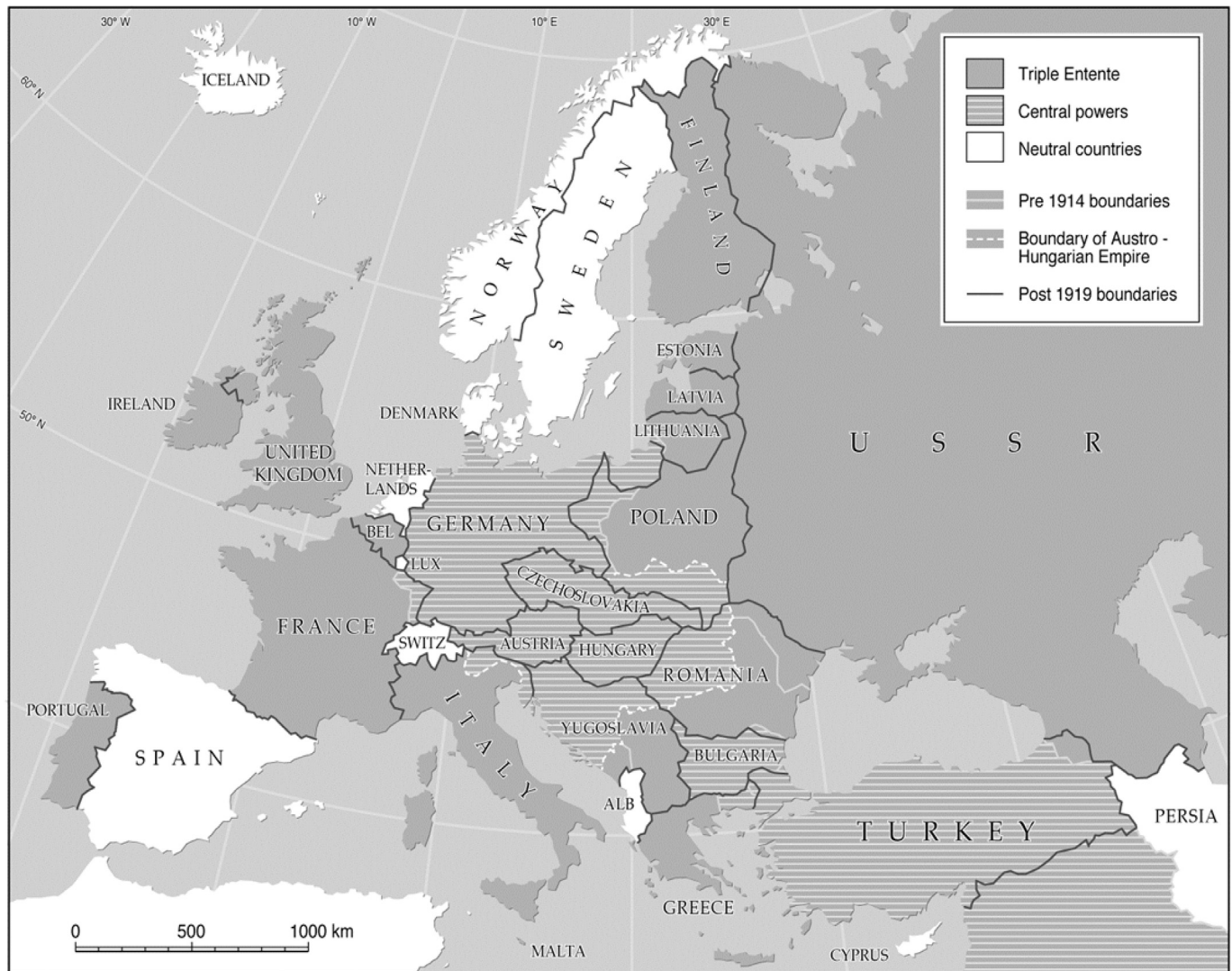


Fig. 1. Political geography of Europe before and after Versailles.

boundaries of Central Europe at Versailles.¹ In this essay we elucidate how his teaching and writing influenced a generation of Romanian intellectuals, and, in the war years, intersected with geopolitical debate.

At Versailles, Romania gained Transylvania, Maramureş, Crişana and Banat from Hungary (by the Treaty of Trianon, June 1920); Bukovina from Austria (by the Treaty of Saint-Germain, September 1919); Bessarabia (now Moldova) from Russia (by the Treaty of Paris, October 1920); and Southern Dobruja from Bulgaria (by the Treaty of Versailles, June 1919). The Romanian Kingdom (only unified in 1859) effectively doubled in size, and de Martonne's geographical, historical and ethnographic arguments concerning Romania's claims to Bessarabia and Transylvania were particularly detailed and vigorous.² Yet during the interwar years, there were

wide-ranging debates in Romania about what defined this greater nation, and thoroughgoing attempts to 'Romanianise' the country's numerous ethnic minorities of Bulgarians, Germans, Hungarians, Jews, Roma and Ukrainians, which together comprised around a third of Romania's population in 1920. Outward-looking Europeanist and inward-looking traditionalist arguments about the nation provided important poles of debate, and Orthodox Christianity and state-directed education became significant nationalist tools of assimilation.³

But the question of how interwar Greater Romania might be fashioned as a nation based on the nation-state ideal of 'a single people in a single territory constituting itself as a unique political community' spawned considerable debate.⁴ From the mid-nineteenth century, Romanian national 'sentiment' – a collective

¹ The President of the Central Territorial Commission at Versailles, André Tardieu, oversaw the ratification of Greater Romania by treaty.

² See M. Mitrasca, *Moldova: A Romanian Province Under Russian Rule*, New York, 2003, 203–236. A desire to secure a supply of oil independent of American and British companies was one important political reason for France's interest in Romania in 1919.

³ L. Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian National Consciousness*, Budapest, 2001, 83–111; K. Hitchens, *Rumania 1866–1947*, Oxford, 1994, 292–334; I. Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nationalism, Nation-Building, and Ethnic Struggle*, Ithaca NY, 1995.

⁴ J. Burbank and F. Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton, 2010, 8.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7447808>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7447808>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)