



Representations of Romania in British Public and Political Discourse, 1907–1919

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**Representations of Romania
in British Public and Political Discourse, 1907–1919**

Tessa Juliet Dunlop

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Sheffield Hallam
University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2020

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Abstract

This thesis examines representations of Romania in British public and political discourse from 1907, when an extensive and violent Peasants' Revolt erupted in Romania, to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, where the country doubled in size. Britain's detachment from southeastern Europe was briefly reversed in this period of conflict and diplomacy. Romania was eventually acquired as an Entente ally in 1916 and Britain subsequently played a considerable role in the adjudication of Greater Romania's borders and minorities.

Located between two large multi-national empires, Austria-Hungary and Russia, which were both home to extensive Romanian populations, and bordering the Balkan Peninsula, much of it governed by the Ottoman Empire until 1912-13, Romania is a complex case study in the creation of national identities. The Balkan wars in 1912-13 forced Britain to come to terms with a strategically more significant Romania, an exploration of which will demonstrate both the motivations behind and limitations of British 'expertise' and highlight the power dynamics and volatility involved in external imaging during periods of extreme dislocation.

Efforts to discover a politically useful identity for Romania were impacted by various competing national constructs, with Romania's Jewish Question and the priority accorded to the Romanians in Hungary's Transylvania reinforcing opposing ideas about the country and its status in Europe. It was the wartime propaganda generated by British-born Queen Marie of Romania that played an important part in the broader process of national legitimisation, and an examination of her work and imaging will argue for the central role of monarchy in national representations.

A decade of conflict saw European regional groupings overlap and realign, with the demands of war and Romania's contradictory features exacerbating the country's fluid place in British discourse. This malleability saw Romania's identity pivot from Eastern, through Balkan to Latin and Central European spatial groupings in a ten year period, with Britain's determination to embrace a post-war New Europe facilitated through representations of Greater Romania in which Transylvanian identity was prioritised over Old Kingdom associations.

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This thesis could not have been written without the time, support and expertise of numerous individuals. In terms of academic help and guidance, above all I would like to thank Professor Bruce Collins. I have greatly benefited from his unstinting support and the stimulating and broad-minded manner in which he discussed different aspects of my work and encouraged me to order and think about my material. Arriving at this project mid-way through my career, I have not always been the most flexible of students. But undeterred, Bruce has encouraged me to consider relevant academic dilemmas and was patiently stamping out journalistic habits and phrasing a week before submission. His help is appreciated more than I can express.

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I am very grateful to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for her gracious permission to consult and refer to the correspondence between King George V and Queen Mary and Queen Marie of Romania held in the Royal Archives. I am indebted to recently retired Senior Archivist, Pamela Clark, for accessing the relevant documents and letters. Likewise, amazing staff at the British Library have provided a constant source of support and relevant materials, ditto the archivists at The National Archives in Bucharest and London, the Churchill Archive Centre in Cambridge, the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at UCL, the London Metropolitan Archives and the LSE archive. Thank you all. Needless to say, any deficiencies in this piece of work are mine.

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Archive Abbreviations

AWAL, CA	Alexander Wigram Allen Leeper, The Churchill Archive, Cambridge University
BDBJ, LMA	Board of Deputies of British Jews, London Metropolitan Archive
BFIA	British Film Institute Archive
BL	British Library Archives, London
CA, TNA	Cabinet Papers, The National Archives, London
CRRM, RNA	Casa Regala, Regina Maria, Romanian National Archives, Bucharest
FO, TNA	Foreign Office, The National Archives, London
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States, Digital Collections, University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries
LG, PA	David Lloyd George, Parliamentary Archives, London
LSE	London School of Economics, Archives and Special Collections
MGP, UCL/SC	Moses Gaster Papers, University College London, Special Collections
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
RA	Royal Archives, Windsor
SEW, UCL/SSEES	Robert W. Seton-Watson Archive, University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies

Note on Spelling and Dating

Spelling

At the beginning of the twentieth century Romania was either spelt ‘Roumania’ or ‘Rumania’ in English. I have kept the original spellings of Romania in citations.

Elsewhere, I have retained the original spellings of place names and individuals. On the rare occasion where clarification is needed I’ve added a footnote.

Dating

The Gregorian calendar, used in this study, was the dating system that the majority of Europe followed at the beginning of the twentieth century. It was 13 days ahead of the Julian calendar that much of Eastern Europe still used, including Romania, which adopted the Gregorian system in April 1919. Queen Marie invariably dual dated her correspondence, but where Romanian politicians and newspapers only cite the Julian calendar, I have noted their dating system in brackets.

Introduction

For two years Britain coveted Romania as an ally in World War I, but when it finally joined the conflict on the side of the Entente, the results were disappointing. In December 1916, within four months of entering the war, two-thirds of the country had been occupied by the Central Powers, and although Romania held off the Germans in the north, capitulation followed in March 1918. Yet despite this challenging record, by the end of the war Romania had made territorial acquisitions that saw it double in size, to become the fifth biggest country in Europe.¹ These geographical gains were ratified at the Peace Conference in Paris where Britain played a leading role and Romania's Prime Minister, Ion Brătianu, stood out for his intransigence. The first seminal year of that Conference, 1919, was the culmination of a period of unprecedented engagement between the two countries. The range of representations that this evolving relationship generated in British discourse saw Romania inhabit numerous, often conflicting identities, including Balkan, East European, Latin, oppressive, oppressed, military, feminine and as part of a post-war New Europe – all of which will be examined here.

British–Romanian collaboration in World War I and the decade that preceded it have tended to be overlooked by historiography, an absence partially explained by the prerogatives of Britain's imperial reach in the nineteenth century, which excluded Romania. This thesis will address that oversight and establish the significance of early twentieth-century British–Romanian relations through an investigation of Romanian identity in British public and political discourse. If, pre-1914, a growing mass media saw journalists exercise a 'great influence on decision-making in Whitehall',² it was during World War I that a perfect storm of propaganda, publicity and expertise raised the stakes in the game of national identity and imaging. Romania's exceptional characteristics were refracted through partial analysis impacted by fast-moving events. It is an examination of the resulting constructs in British discourse that will shed

¹ With a population of 14.5 million and 295,049 square km of territory Greater Romania was also the second most populous country after Poland in East Central Europe. Irina Liverzeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania; Regionalism, nation-building and ethnic struggle, 1918–1930*, Ithaca, NY; London, Cornell University Press, 1995, p. 8.

² Andreas Rose, *Between Empire and Continent: British Foreign Policy before the First World War*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2017, p. 13.

new light on a little-known relationship and simultaneously provide original assessments of Western representations of the East and interpretations of nationalism.

Never directly occupied by the Ottomans, and sandwiched between the Habsburg and Russian Empires, at the turn of the twentieth century Romania evaded a straightforward Balkan identity in British discourse. Unlike other countries in southeastern Europe which were supported by the Balkan Committee, Romania lacked a specific British champion and exhibited national characteristics that complicate its inclusion in recent studies of Balkan identity. It was Edward Said's *Orientalism*, which emphasised the West's dominance and authority in constructions of the East, that inspired extensive debate over the representation of Balkan and Eastern rubrics within Europe.³ Maria Todorova and Larry Wolff have demanded that the genesis and motivations for these 'lesser' European appellations are understood as affirmations of Western superiority and civility.⁴ However, Romania is poorly served in this expanding, predominantly Balkan-focused field; an issue this study will address through an examination of Romanian identity in British thinking. It will identify the country's shifting locus westwards during the early twentieth century: in 1907 Romania was predominantly associated with a savage Eastern Europe, it had become a Balkan leader by 1913, and was part of a feted new East Central European construct by 1919. Romania was an uncomfortable bedfellow within these unstable spatial groupings, and it is the unexplored compromises and contradictions involved in this imaging which ensure that the country's identity in British discourse is an original and stimulating area of study.⁵

Widely recognised as a 'little known land',⁶ emerging Romanian 'experts' in the pre-war period had the freedom to craft Romania's identity in ways that accorded with their own British-centric worldviews. This thesis will demonstrate that the likes of conservative journalist Dr Emile J. Dillon and Habsburg nationalities expert R. W. Seton-Watson challenged Britain's ability to understand what kind of country Romania

³ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003.

⁴ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997; Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The map of civilisation on the mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1994.

⁵ For an overview of Europe's regional frameworks see Mishkova and Trencsényi, 'Introduction' in Mishkova, Diana & Trencsényi, Balázs, (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries, A Conceptual History*, New York; Oxford, Berghahn, 2017, pp.1-11.

⁶ *The Times*, 2 Nov 1916.

was before the war, and respectively undermined and facilitated later wartime representations that sought to align it with a Latin West. It is the identification of this shifting Romanian identity, subject to the vagaries of external British opinion, which will demand a reassessment of the importance of royalty in nation-building. This thesis will argue that through its British-born queen, Marie of Romania, the country acquired a degree of agency over its own image-making in Britain, with results that challenge Romania's place in a Balkan rubric that has been perceived as masculine and savage.⁷ More broadly the dilemmas and limitations associated with expertise and its political and public roles will be highlighted through the fluctuating emphasis accorded to two very different Romanian minorities – the internal Jewish 'other' and the external Romanian Transylvanians in Austria-Hungary.

The long-term presence of a disenfranchised Jewish minority complicated Romanian identity and provides a fresh opportunity to examine complex British ideas of the Jewish 'other' in the context of an East European country and ally. Jewish representations were pronounced in pre-war Romanian identity, with British coverage of the 1907 Peasants' Revolt serving as a reminder that the country's Jewish Question remained unresolved. However, it will be argued that during the war Britain deliberately sought to minimise the significance of Romania's Jewish Question, fostering a disconnection with the issue that imperilled the cause of the country's minorities, which included the Jews and in total accounted for nearly 30% of the population by 1919.⁸ In British wartime discourse the Romanian narrative was instead reshaped through one of the country's external populations, the Transylvanian Romanians, who united with Romania after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire in December 1918. This thesis's identification of an overwhelming emphasis on Transylvanian Romania at the expense of other Romanian constructs is a significant discovery. It is the presence of these complicated interconnected national representations in British thinking that demands the assessment of several, sometimes conflicting, theories of nationalism.

Rogers Brubaker's analysis of post-1918 Europe, *Nationalism Reframed*, and his three competing nationalities model will be thoroughly examined in relation to

⁷ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 13–15; Andrew Hammond, *The Debated Lands: British and American representations of the Balkans*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, p. 4.

⁸ Liverzeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*, p. 9.

Romanian representations for the first time. This assessment will apply his post-war modelling to the nationalisms of pre-war Romania in order to highlight the complexities in the country's evolving identity and to explain the conflicting tensions that were subsequently associated with Romania at the 1919 Peace Conference.⁹ Modernist theories of nationalism from the likes of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, with their stress on industrial and educational factors respectively, are a poor fit for Romania's feudal society.¹⁰ In contrast, numerous historians of East European nationalism place an emphasis on cultural identity developing independently of socio-economic conditions; this too has certain limitations in a country where, at the beginning of the twentieth century, much of the ruling elite communicated in French and the peasant population was rebellious and predominantly illiterate.¹¹ Analysing British responses to Romanian identity, this study will focus on the Czech historian Miroslav Hroch's middle-way which recognises a cultural identity that eventually reaches the masses, but is not dependent on industrial or educational stimulus. Hroch's modelling cannot always resolve the contradictions in Romanian identity but it does help to explain Britain's respective wariness and embrace of different versions of the country and the impact of war on those constructions.¹² More broadly, it is Britain's and Romania's common experience of war that makes a re-evaluation of Anthony Smith's ethno-symbolic identifiers useful for the explication of the countries' shared recognition

⁹ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question reframed in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.

¹⁰ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983; Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 2016.

¹¹ Drace-Francis acknowledges the tension between the priority accorded to cultural and economic factors: Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the development of national identity*, London; New York, Tauris Academic Studies, 2006, pp. 1-2. Historians of East European nationalism who stress the cultural include Gale Stokes, *Politics as Development: The emergence of political parties in nineteenth-century Serbia*, Durham, NC; London, 1990; Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania*; Fikret Adanir, 'Balkan Historiography related to the Ottoman Empire since 1945', in K. Karpat (ed.), *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey*, Leiden, Brill, 2000, pp. 236-52.

¹² The best concise account of Hroch's three-stage model is Miroslav Hroch, 'From National Movement to Fully-Fledged Nation', *New Left Review*, 1993, issue 198, vol. 3, pp. 3-20.

of notions of racial purity under dynastic rule, upon which the idea of a post-war Greater Romania in a New Europe was founded.¹³

The empirical evidence against which Romania's various identities in Britain will be analysed is drawn from numerous sources. The examination of publications and communications belonging to the commentators who controlled much of Romania's imagining will be at the forefront of that research. Work from publicists and 'experts', including Dillon and Seton-Watson, will be reviewed, in some cases for the first time, in relation to Romania and the country's identity in British discourse. The sources they relied on and individuals they communicated with, the evolving opinions they publicly expressed and positions of influence these 'experts' enjoyed within British public life, will be assessed, and their impact on British foreign policy-making in relation to Romania analysed. This commentator-led evaluation will be complemented with an examination of the central role of monarchy in Romanian constructs, in an assessment that focuses on the prolific propaganda and imaging generated by Queen Marie of Romania. Original research examining Marie's private correspondence and publications, as well as newsreel footage, will highlight the pivotal role of this monarch in the imaging of her adopted country and will be preceded by an analysis of the romantic oeuvre and style established by her predecessor, German-born poet-queen Elizabeth.

Individual contributions to Romanian imaging will be assessed in the context of a comprehensive review of British mainstream newspapers, as well as more niche journals and magazines and their different identifications of Romania. For cross-reference purposes, occasionally American and Romanian newspapers, memoirs and diaries will also be consulted, while a review of British Foreign Office files will yield original material regarding Britain's official perceptions of Romanian identity. The extensive combination of sources, shedding new light on both individual and national efforts to frame Romania, will provide the largest body of empirical research ever accessed in relation to this subject. This material will be examined in five chapters which adhere to the chronology of events and are divided into several sections that will analyse regionalising concepts, competing national constructs and respective commentators' impact. This comprehensive multi-angled approach will shed new light

¹³ Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism*, Hanover, NH, University Press of New England, 2000.

on Britain's often conflicting interpretations of Romanian identity and their correlation with external events.

The following introductory explanation will outline how this thesis provides an original contribution to current knowledge regarding the reception to and imagining of a country which defied conventional nationality rubrics, while simultaneously providing a timely historical assessment of British–Romanian relations. It offers a brief overview of the historiography available on those bilateral relations during the last 170 years in order to contextualise both the time frame and subjects addressed in this thesis, which begins with Britain's sensational coverage of Romania's Peasants' Revolt in 1907, and ends with an analysis of Romanian identity during the country's controversial appearance at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. It will identify Romania's inclusion in various academic works that focus on the Balkans in Western representations, and suggest that the country's exceptional features have been inadequately served by generalisations about the region.

This will be followed by an assessment of the historiography available on the various commentators, experts and royals examined here, which will serve to demonstrate that an exposition of their work in the Romanian sphere is a necessary addition to the field. It will argue that the role these individuals played in the construction of Romania draws attention to different aspects of the country's conflicted national identity and in some cases demands a re-evaluation of Saidian ideas about Western concepts of the East. Finally, an explanation of how different Romanian constructs serve to raise important issues concerning nations and nationalism will be highlighted through an analysis of several leading theories of nationalism. This assessment will seek to demonstrate that within the period under study certain theories acquire a heightened relevance in relation to British interpretations of Romania, with dislocating external events and Romania's anomalous identity serving to emphasise potential areas that may require reassessment. The introduction will conclude with a brief chapter guide that outlines the chronological and thematic structure in which the material in this thesis is analysed.

Historiography and British–Romanian Relations

It is through the identification of conflicting Romanian imaging, in a period of heightened engagement with one of Europe's Great Powers, that this thesis seeks to better understand the influences behind and impact of Romania's perceived location within various overlapping European rubrics, such as Balkan, East European and a post-war New Europe. To ascertain how that locus was affected by domestic and international events, and to contextualise the subsequent interpretations of Romania in British discourse, it is important to establish British-Romanian history in the context of available historiography, which will reflect the broader issue of relations between the two countries making 'slow progress down the centuries'.¹⁴ This introductory explanation will begin with an assessment of these histories. Through a brief outline of Britain's relationship with Romania since the latter's unification in the 1850s, it will demonstrate that the period under study witnessed unprecedented bilateral engagement between the two countries and therefore merits closer examination.

The Old Kingdom of Romania emerged from the union of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldova in 1859 and gained full independence after the Russo–Turkish war of 1878–78. British nineteenth-century relations with this emerging Romanian nation-state were hampered by imperial preoccupations with the Eastern Question and the preservation of Ottoman power in south-east Europe.¹⁵ *Anglo–Romanian Relations after 1821* addresses this period but, impacted by the nationalist policies of the Communists under whom it was compiled, overinflates the relevance of Romania in British political discourse.¹⁶ Diana Dumitru's revisionist history of Britain's involvement in the country's unification process is more useful.¹⁷ She claims

¹⁴ Alexandru Duțu, 'Glimpses of Reciprocal Perceptions', in Dennis Deletant (ed.), *Studies in Romanian History*, Bucharest, Editura Enciclopedică, 1991, p. 8.

¹⁵ For Britain's foreign policy in the period preceding Romania's unification see David Brown, *Palmerston and the Politics of Foreign Policy 1846–55*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2002.

¹⁶ Reliability issues are compounded by substandard citations in some chapters. Gh. Buzatu and Al. Pascu, *Anglo–Romanian Relations after 1821*, Romanian-English Colloquy of Historians, Iași, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1983. For an overview of relations from the early nineteenth century see Duțu, 'Glimpses of Reciprocal Perceptions', pp. 7–23.

¹⁷ Diana Dumitru, *Marea Britanie și Unirea principatelor Române (1856–59)*, Pontos, Chișinău, 2010, pp. 97–105. For a rough sketch of nineteenth-century relations between Britain and Romania see Carmen Andraș et al., *An Imagological Dictionary of the*

historiography views Britain's role too negatively, but concedes the country lacked 'direct interests in the Romanian Principalities'.¹⁸ Existing literature acknowledges that Balkan issues did crop up in late nineteenth-century British politics, and that when the British government refused to support independent Balkan uprisings, Liberal opponents quickly adopted their cause against the Ottoman infidel.¹⁹ But unlike its southern neighbours, Romania was never directly occupied by the Ottomans and did not enjoy the benefits of a defining war of independence.²⁰ The resulting lack of interest in Romania was compounded by a perception that the country belonged in the French sphere.²¹

The pattern of ambivalence was briefly ruptured in the early twentieth century when geopolitical pressures saw Romanian and British interests converge, culminating in Romania's entry into World War I in August 1916 on the side of the Entente. This study is focused on that period of mutual interest which has been curiously overlooked by wartime historiography. Glenn Torrey's *Romania in World War I*, which includes an analysis of the Entente's military negotiations that both sought to draw Romania into the war and then prevent the country from capitulating, is a rare exception.²² Britain's leading role in the ratification of Romania's considerable territorial gains in Paris has seen the Peace Conference better represented. However, the majority of attention

Cities in Romania Represented in British Travel Literature (1800–1940), Târgu Mareş, Editură Mentor, 2012, pp. 16–22.

¹⁸ Dumitru, *ibid.*, p.167.

¹⁹ Richard Thomas Shannon, *Gladstone and the Bulgarian Agitation, 1876*, Hassocks, Harvester Press; Hamen Conn, Archon Books, 1975; J. Perkins, 'British Liberalism and the Balkans, c 1875–1925', PhD thesis, Birkbeck, University of London, 2014.

²⁰ Referred to as a War of Independence in Romanian historiography, it was in an alliance with the Russians during the Russo–Turkish war 1877–78 that Romania declared full independence and ceased to pay a tithe to the Ottoman Empire. For an overview of Romania's engagement in that war see K. Hitchins, *Romania, 1866–1947*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, pp. 41–49.

²¹ France was an early backer of the Romanian project. Post-1848 exiled Romanian leaders found an 'outstanding ally' in French Emperor Napoleon III: Lucian Boia, *Romania, Borderland of Europe*, translation James Christian Brown, London, Reaktion Books, 2001, ebook, loc. 1230–65; Vesa examines French led efforts to woo Romania prior to August 1916, Vasile Vesa, *România și Franța la începutul secolului al XX-lea, 1900-1916*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Științifică, 1975.

²² Glenn Torrey, *Romania and World War I: A collection of studies*, Iași; Oxford; Portland, Center for Romanian Studies, 1998, pp. 95–120, 291–300; See also his biography of the head of the French military mission in Romania, Glenn Torrey, *Henri Mathias Berthelot: Soldier of France, Defender of Romania*, Iași, Center for Romanian Studies, 2001.

accorded to Romania at the Conference is focused on the behaviour and treatment of its assertive prime minister, Ion I. C. Brătianu,²³ and the reception Queen Marie received.²⁴ With the exception of Erik Goldstein's general analysis in *Winning the Peace*, the historiography fails to assess where Greater Romania fitted into thinking regarding a post-war New Europe.²⁵ By the 1920s Tom Gallagher notes that Britain's imperial agenda again diverted attentions away from Eastern Europe,²⁶ and in the 1930s Romania was increasingly drawn into Germany's economic orbit, culminating in a fascist alliance with the Nazis in July 1940. It is ironic that Anglo-Romanian historiography deals more comprehensively with the distant, ultimately enemy relations between Romania and Britain in the 1930s and 1940s, than the countries' closer engagement in the 1910s.²⁷

Dennis Deletant's *In and Out of Focus, Romania and Britain*, provides some insightful essays on British–Romanian relations, but the chronology, which begins in the 1930s, runs counter to the converging interests of the two countries in the earlier

²³ In Macmillan's assessment of the Conference, Romania's excessive demands and behaviour stand out: Margaret MacMillan, *Peacemaker, the Paris conference of 1919 and its attempt to end war*, London, John Murray, 2001, pp. 134–45. Spector provides an analysis of Romania's Premier Brătianu at the Conference: Sherman Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference. A study of the diplomacy of Ioan I. C. Brătianu*, New York, Bookman Associates, 1962; Keith Hitchins, *Ion I C Brătianu, Romania, Makers of the Modern World*, London, Haus Publishing Ltd, 2011, pp. 107–132.

²⁴ For a review of Queen Marie's place in historiography see pp. 27–28.

²⁵ Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British diplomatic strategy, peace planning and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916–1920*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1991, pp. 252–57.

²⁶ Lloyd George's philhellenism and concerns over a resurgent Turkey meant Greece was an exception. Gallagher argues that the Greek Crisis highlighted the danger of risky strategies in south-east Europe: Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe: The Balkans 1789–1989*, London, Routledge, 2001, pp. 73–126.

²⁷ Diplomatic relations between the two countries were suspended in 1941, and resumed in 1946 with Romania acquiring a legation in 1947; Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, 'Foreword', in Adrian Nicolescu et al. (eds), *Mutual Understanding: 125 years of Anglo–Romanian diplomatic relations*, Humanitas, Bucureşti, 2005, p. 7. For an examination of relations between the two countries in the middle of the twentieth century see Dennis Deletant and Maurice Pearton (eds), *Romania Observed: Studies in contemporary Romanian history*, Bucharest, Encyclopaedic Publishing House, 1998. World War II relations are detailed in two dated Romanian accounts. Gheorghe Paşcalău, *România şi Marea Britanie, Relaţii Politico-Diplomatice 1933–1939*, Albatros, Bucureşti, 2001; Valeriu Florin Dobrinescu and Ion Pătroiu, *Anglia şi România între anii 1939–1947*, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, R.A., Bucureşti, 1992.

part of the century.²⁸ *Mutual Understanding: 125 years of Anglo–Romanian Diplomatic Relations* looks at contact between Britain and the Romanian court in the late nineteenth century and (the historic lack of) Romanian studies in the UK.²⁹ But a failure to analyse the impact of Britain’s World War I alliance with Romania is surprising given the political agenda of the book, which was compiled from a conference hosted by the Romanian embassy in 2005 and includes a foreword from the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, who stressed the ‘special relationship’ between the two countries.³⁰ Two years later Romania joined the European Union, and contact between Britain and Romania has subsequently intensified, with Romanians becoming the second largest foreign nationality in Britain in 2017.³¹

With regards to national imaging, Alex Drace-Francis begins his study of modern Romanian culture by examining what ‘Europe’ knew of the Romanian Principalities to 1829 and identifies ‘a number of themes and ideas which became staples of the theories of Romanian identity’, including ‘backwardness, obscurantism and alienation from Europe’. Although his study focuses on the impact this imaging had on Romania’s national development, he acknowledges that these external representations ‘formed the principal public idea of the Principalities’ in European thinking.³² His analysis is a useful start point for this study’s more specific examination of British perceptions of Romania a century later, with many of the negative tropes and generalisations that Drace-Francis identifies still prevalent in pre-World War I British thinking. His later study, *The Traditions of Invention, Romanian ethnic and social stereotypes in historical context*, also makes some stimulating observations about Romania’s reaction to and assimilation of existing Western preconceptions, particularly in relation to the Romanian peasant. However, he takes a deliberately ‘long-term approach’, with case studies ranging from the late eighteenth to the late twentieth century, and the focus is again on representations of Romanian culture, rather than

²⁸ Dennis Deletant (ed.), *In and Out of Focus, Romania and Britain: Relations and perspectives from 1930 to the present*, București, Cavallioti, 2005.

²⁹ Adrian Nicolescu, ‘Royal Visits to the Court of Romania and the Court of St James in the Late 19th Century’ and Dennis Deletant, ‘Romanian Studies in the UK’, in Nicolescu et al. (eds), *Mutual Understanding*, pp. 9-32.

³⁰ Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, ‘Foreword’ in *ibid.*, p. 7.

³¹ The number of Romanians in the UK was 411,000, second to the Polish Diaspora at approximately 1 million. www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-44235867, accessed 2 Sep 2019.

³² Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, pp. 27-39.

British or Western interpretations of that culture.³³ Other histories look at projections and imaging of Romania in Britain or the West, but tend to do so within a broader Balkan or Eastern rubric, and in most cases fail to take proper account of Romania's distinct national differences when compared with its Balkan neighbours.³⁴

It was Said's seminal 1978 study, *Orientalism*, that identified a conceptual model which stressed the dominance and power of the West in 'invented' ideas of the Orient, as one of the 'deepest and most reoccurring images of the Other'.³⁵ Said's thinking has had a profound impact on subsequent theories of national imaging, including efforts to identify the othering process in a European context through the identification of different European appellations.³⁶ Although Todorova's *Imagining the Balkans* credits the influence of *Orientalism* and its identification of a 'general crisis of representation', in an analysis of a Balkan construct against which West Europe measured ideas of their own civility and advancement, she is clear that Balkanism is not merely a subspecies of Orientalism. Todorova argues that while the two constructs are similar phenomena, one of the key differentials between them is 'the geographical concreteness of the Balkans' in comparison with the 'intangible nature of the Orient'.³⁷

It is within this distinct geographical Balkan construct that Todorova includes Romania. Although she acknowledges 'the peculiarities in Romania's social and economic structures' courtesy of the 'special status of the antecedent Danubian Principalities as vassal territories', Romania is not excluded from generalisations about the image of an appellation she identifies as crystallising 'in a specific discourse around the Balkans wars and World War I'. Todorova assumes that Romania conformed to her identification of a geographical cluster which affirmed Western ideas of superiority with

³³ Drace-Francis, *Traditions of Invention: Romanian ethnic and social stereotypes in historical context*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2013,

³⁴ An exception is the analysis of British travel-writers in Romania by Carmen Andraș. However, just one chapter on post-World War II writer Alan Brownjohn addresses the twentieth century in a study that focuses on the preceding three centuries; Carmen Andraș, *România și imaginile ei în literatură de călătorie britanică: un spațiu de frontieră culturală*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 2003.

³⁵ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 1.

³⁶ The term 'Orientalism' has been criticised for privileging representation over historical contextualisation: Julia Kuehn, 'Orientalism', in Charles Forsdick, Kathryn Walchester, and Zöe Kinsley (eds), *Keywords for Travel Writing Studies: A Critical Glossary*, London, Anthem Press, 2019, ebook, loc.530.5.

³⁷ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 9–10.

its distinctively male identity, defined through ‘uncivilised, primitive, crude, cruel’ characteristics.³⁸ This thesis concurs with Romanian historian Carmen Andraş’s argument that these generalisations, particularly the idea of ‘Balkan’ as a masculine construct, cannot be consistently applied to the case of Romania. While Andraş looks at British travel-writing in an earlier period and acknowledges the exotic vestiges of Greek culture, this study will examine the role of Romania’s first two queens and their gendered impact on Romania’s identity in early twentieth-century Britain.³⁹

Romania features in Andrew Hammond’s analysis of British and American travel-writing in the Balkans, which identifies a dominant paradigm that includes ‘preternatural barbarism, congenital perfidy, inveterate cruelty and unfathomable complexity’, and Eugene Michail in *The British and the Balkans* argues that in the first decade of the twentieth century the common Balkan theme was ‘one of revulsion’, albeit ‘matched by unspoken fascination’.⁴⁰ Given Romania’s inclusion in this construct and the prominence accorded to Western perceptions of that Balkan appellation as violent and unappealing, it is significant that no reference is made to Romania’s Peasants’ Revolt of 1907, which unleashed a series of dramatic representations in Britain and is the pre-war start point for this thesis. Chapter 1 will argue that although the revolt saw Romania fulfil the primary identifiers associated with Balkanism in recent historiography, Britain did not interpret the incident in a Balkan context, which perhaps explains its omission in the aforementioned literature.⁴¹ It will suggest that the conflicted identity of Romania before World War I, which exhibited a pronounced anti-Semitic strain, saw it fit more readily into Larry Wolff’s identification of a larger, but no less savage, East European rubric that included Russia.⁴² However, Wolff’s

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 12–13, 19, 117. Mishkova also notes that the Balkan wars ‘greatly contributed to the stabilisation of the Balkans as a political concept standing for an ethnically unsettled, explosive region’; Diana Mishkova, ‘Balkans/Southeastern Europe’, in Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries: A Conceptual History*, New York; Oxford, Berghahn, 2017, p. 145.

³⁹ Andraş, *România și imaginile ei în literatură de călătorie britanică*, pp. 37–39.

⁴⁰ Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 3, 38–39; Eugene Michail, *The British and the Balkans: Forming images of foreign lands, 1900–1950*, London; New York, Continuum, 2011, pp. 6–9.

⁴¹ For a brief outline of the chapters and their respective sections see pp. 42–44.

⁴² Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*. Although Wolff has been criticised for citing historical source material that did not use the term ‘Eastern Europe’, Schenk has recently concurred with his thesis that Western scholars invented ‘Eastern Europe’ as a

Inventing Eastern Europe focuses on the Enlightenment period and therefore only provides a vague starting point for Romania's place in Europe,⁴³ the perception of which would shift dramatically during World War I when several 'experts' sought to identify Romania as part of Latin Europe and an anticipated New Europe. It is this examination of Romania's fluctuating place within different conceptual clusters in British discourse that will contribute to a better understanding of what Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi identify as the 'historicity' of 'spatial categories'.⁴⁴

Commentators, Royal Figureheads and Representations of Romania

The below outline identifies the leading publicists, influencers and royals included in this thesis who emerged as significant voices in a British discourse on Romania in the period under study, and assesses the current historiography concerning both their work and ideas around 'experts' and expertise in a wartime context. It was Said's *Orientalism* which acknowledged Western representations as a means for 'dominating, restructuring and having authority' in an analysis that stresses the premise of exteriority in this imaging.⁴⁵ The current study predominantly focuses on British-based commentators and much of the resulting imagery conforms to that Saidian model, which highlights the power imbalance between West and East. However, Queen Marie, as a British-born monarch who prioritised Romanian interests, is a complicating factor in representations of Romania. A presumed binary paradigm that prioritised the West is also confused by Mary Louise Pratt's insistence that as well as a recognition of the 'Imperial Metropole ... determining the periphery', the reverse dynamic also existed. An examination of what Pratt identifies as transcultural 'contact zones' and information exchanges, particularly in the development of wartime expertise on Romania, will highlight the complexities in representational models that have too often focused on pairings of dominance and

'space of historical backwardness'. Frithjof Benjamin Schenk, 'Eastern Europe', in Mishkova and Trencsényi (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries*, p. 193.

⁴³ Schenk touches on the period under study here but only with reference to German and French thinking, in which he identifies ideas concerning a Russian-dominant Eastern European construct that had a large influence; Schenk, *ibid.*, pp. 194–95.

⁴⁴ Mishkova and Trencsényi, 'Introduction', *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

domination.⁴⁶ It will argue that briefly the common interests and pooled ‘expertise’ of both British and Romanian politicians and commentators during war witnessed Romania’s partial elevation away from more pejorative Eastern constructs, into a feted post-1918 New Europe.

The failure to adequately represent Romania in pre-war Balkan historiography is partially explained by the early absence of a distinct British commentator seeking to burnish the country’s image. However, if in Chapter 1 the lack of commentators in 1907 suggests that Romania was not deemed sufficiently relevant to merit detailed scrutiny in British discourse, that situation changed with the 1912–13 Balkan wars and the outbreak of World War I when the country’s strategic importance led to increased interest. Chapter 2 will identify the work and significance of conservative journalist Dr Emile J. Dillon and Habsburg nationalities’ expert and publicist R. W. Seton-Watson in this period. An examination of the impact and the influence that these men had on the imaging of Romania in Britain will demand that key aspects of ‘expertise’ – access to power and the ability to influence official thinking – are assessed in relation to Romania.⁴⁷ More broadly this analysis will argue that the failure to fully recognise the role of the press in opinion-making undermined the significance of Romania’s pre-war place in British representations of southeastern Europe.

As the *Daily Telegraph*’s special correspondent based in Russia, Dillon’s decision to visit Romania twice during the Balkan wars and support the country’s entry into the second 1913 conflict, followed by his virulent criticism of Romania during its two-year neutrality between August 1914 and August 1916, have been overlooked in historiography.⁴⁸ It is the tendency to underplay the role of journalism when analysing wartime ‘expert’ networks that partially explains Dillon’s absence from British-Romanian historiography, an oversight that will be rectified through original archival

⁴⁶ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel writing and transculturation*, London, Routledge, 1992, pp. 4–8.

⁴⁷ Tomás Irish, ‘Scholarly Identities in War and Peace: The Paris Peace Conference and the mobilisation of intellect’, *Journal of Global History*, 2016, vol. 11, pp. 368–81; Volker Prott, ‘Tying Up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination: British, French and American experts in peace planning 1917–1919’, *Historical Journal*, 2014, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 727–50.

⁴⁸ Johnson offers a comparative study on Dillon’s role at the 1905 Portsmouth Conference: Paul William Johnson, ‘The Journalist as Diplomat: E. J. Dillon and the Portsmouth Peace Conference’, *Journalism Quarterly*, vol. 53, Nos 3–4, 1976, pp. 389–94.

research and a comprehensive examination of Dillon's articles and publications.⁴⁹ Chapter 2 will argue that the pre-1914 association of the Balkans with liberalism also explains why Dillon's work on feudal Romania has been sidelined.⁵⁰ Symptomatic of this liberal bias is Michail's study, which focuses on the Balkan Committee as the leading purveyor of Balkan imaging between 1900 and 1910, and does not acknowledge Dillon.⁵¹ However, by 1913 the internecine warfare of the second Balkan war ensured that the Peninsula was no longer identifiable as one sympathetic group, a change that was advantageous for previously sidelined Romania. Its anomalous position, sitting between Austria-Hungary and Russia and to the north of the Balkans, attracted Dillon's attention as a country well placed to capitalise on the fluid geopolitical situation.

Publicist and Habsburg nationalities' expert, R. W. Seton-Watson, was the other significant commentator who supported Romania during the Balkan wars. A member of the Balkan Committee who became a leading expert in the region during World War I, Seton-Watson has been better served by historiography.⁵² However, Chapter 2 will argue that his later prominence in the campaign for a post-war New Europe should not inflate his impact in the field of Romanian imaging pre-1914, and this thesis will serve to contextualise Seton-Watson's contribution to Romanian identity in an area where historiography is prone to eulogy and overstatement.⁵³ Conforming to the Saidian identification of 'exteriority' in Western image-making,⁵⁴ like Dillon, Seton-Watson was British and his representations of Romania were motivated by his idea of British interests. Seton-Watson initially thought these were best served through a peaceable

⁴⁹ Rose makes a compelling case for the influential role of journalism, including Dillon's, in pre-war London. Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, pp. 12–23.

⁵⁰ See Perkins, *British Liberalism and the Balkans*.

⁵¹ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*.

⁵² The main book is written by Seton-Watson's sons. Both historians, they focus on their father's work in relation to Austria-Hungary and its nationalities. Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: R.W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen, 1981.

⁵³ For an example of uncritical Romanian historiography see Radu Racovițan, 'Contribuția lui R. W. Seton-Watson la dezvoltarea istoriografiei problemei naționale românești', *Studia Universitatis Cininiensis, Series Historica*, 2010, Issue VII, pp. 225–43; Seton-Watson's two sons fail to acknowledge their father's anti-Semitism. H. and C. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*. For more on Seton-Watson's anti-Semitism see §2.2.1, pp.131–32, §4.3, p. 230.

⁵⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 20.

solution to the Habsburg nationalities question.⁵⁵ Chapter 2 will analyse the impact of this approach which prioritised the Transylvanian Romanians in Hungary over the identity of the Romanian kingdom, and it will compare Seton-Watson's early work with Dillon's more conservative approach. The two-volume *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii* provides a comprehensive catalogue of Seton-Watson's correspondence and articles concerning Romania and this thesis will use it as a guide for further archival research, in order to assess Seton-Watson's increasing influence over Romanian image construction in the context of 'expert' influence and Britain's shifting strategic aims.⁵⁶

Section 2.2 will examine the development of Dillon's and Seton-Watson's versioning of Romania during World War I. Between 1914 and 1916 Britain wanted neutral Romania to join the Entente and the two men's very different responses to this priority are striking. It will argue that Dillon reverted to standard Balkan disparagements when Romania refused to commit to war, exposing the vulnerability of national imaging when crafted through the prism of an external agenda. In contrast Seton-Watson, whose nationalities expertise had moved him closer to the centre of British political power, skewed Romania's national image to fit his vision for a New Europe and identified the country primarily through the Romanians living in enemy Hungary's Transylvania. Underlining the Foreign Office's pre-war lack of knowledge regarding Romania, Chapter 2 will identify an additional voice that was recruited to frame Romania in wartime discourse. David Mitrany, a Romanian Jew and political scientist based in London, is famous for his later role as the founding father of the functional approach to world government.⁵⁷ There has also been research into his study of war governments and peasant revolutions in South East Europe, which informed the

⁵⁵ On his early British priorities see Péter László, 'R.W. Seton-Watson's Changing View on the National Question of the Habsburg Monarchy and the European Balance of Power', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 2004, vol. 82, no. 3, pp. 655–79.

⁵⁶ Cornelia Bodea and Hugh Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii, 1906–1920*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 2 vols, 1988.

⁵⁷ Numerous publications examine Mitrany's later influence, including Leonie Holthaus, *Pluralist Democracy in International Relations: L. T. Hobhouse, G. D. H. Cole, and David Mitrany*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018; Per A. Hammarlund, *Liberal Internationalism and the Decline of the State: The thought of Richard Cobden, David Mitrany, and Kenichi Ohmae*, New York, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

foundations of his international theory.⁵⁸ However, Mitrany's earlier World War I work, when he acted as both a publicist for and a British government advisor on Romania, has been almost entirely overlooked.⁵⁹ Chapter 2 will rectify this through an examination of his wartime papers and publications and identify a man who was primarily concerned with assisting his host nation and framed his homeland in the press accordingly.

With the outbreak of war, a consensus gradually emerged about the idea of a conflict fought for small nations that demanded a fresh identity for Central and Eastern Europe. If the main architect for this New European construct was Seton-Watson, the vision for a future Greater Romania within it was taken up by his acolyte, British academic and later government adviser, Allen Leeper. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the impact of Seton-Watson's wartime thinking on Romania and focus on Leeper's work as the country's leading expert in Britain. These chapters will argue that Leeper spent the latter half of the war identifying and promoting an idea of a Greater Romania, in which he prioritised both the prospective and the eventual inclusion of Habsburg land, Transylvania. Part of the highly influential Political Intelligence Department in 1918, Leeper also sat on the British Territorial Commission that oversaw Romania's case in Paris the following year. However, with the exception of Goldstein's study of peace planning, which acknowledges Leeper's role within the British delegation and influence in the ratification of Romania's borders,⁶⁰ there has been no specific examination of his Romanian work.

Accessing Leeper's archive and relevant publications and British Foreign Offices files, Chapters 4 and 5 will address that absence, and reveal a man whose close cooperation with Romanian and Transylvanian émigrés in wartime London and Paris highlights Britain's dependency on partial information about Romania. It was this close collaboration between Leeper and a small wartime contingent of Romanians that helped to briefly pivot the country away from Old Kingdom Balkan associations. This thesis

⁵⁸ Andrew Coulson, 'The Agrarian Question Revisited: The scholarship of David Mitrany revisited', *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2014, vol. 41, 3, pp. 405–19; Lucian M. Ashworth, 'David Mitrany and South East Europe: The Balkan key to world peace', *Historical Review*, Jan 2006, vol. 2, pp. 203–24.

⁵⁹ An exception is Levene's reference to Mitrany's communications with Jewish Conjoint leader Lucian Wolf on Romania's Jewish Question: Mark Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe: The diplomacy of Lucien Wolf, 1914–1919*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 255–56.

⁶⁰ Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 110–19, 133–38, 253–57.

will suggest that by 1919 representations of Romania had been overlaid by a new Greater Romanian identity that sat precariously within a Central East European rubric and temporarily suited both countries' strategic goals. More broadly, an examination of Leeper's work will suggest that the transnational process of knowledge exchange in building expertise, particularly during war, requires acknowledgement in Saidian ideas that emphasise Western dominance in national representations.

The increased political significance of Romania during the period under study is highlighted by the number of British commentators prepared to champion and discuss the country. But, as mentioned, before the Balkan wars Romania lacked a prominent British advocate. Chapter 1 will argue that this vacuum was partially filled by Jewish and royal narratives, and that these had disproportionate significance in early constructions of the country. In the context of royalty and its impact on British discourse, this thesis will reassess Western concepts of the East and discover a Romania which fails to conform to the primarily male and violent Balkan indicators identified by Todorova and Hammond.⁶¹ Featured in every chapter of this thesis (with the exception of Chapter 2) the evolving promotional work of Romania's two foreign queens, German-born Elizabeth and British-born Marie, will be examined in order to better understand the roles of monarchy and gender in external representations of the country.

The literary reputation and career of Queen Elizabeth, who published under the pen name Carmen Sylva in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain, has recently benefited from the valuable research of Laura Nixon. However, by seeking to establish her literary credentials as distinct from her royal image, Nixon does not fully articulate the impact Elizabeth had on her country's image.⁶² Doina Pasca Harsanyi's broad-ranging article, 'Blue Blood and Ink: Romanian aristocratic women before and after World War One', does acknowledge the impressive international reach of both Queen Elizabeth and her successor Marie, but nothing is said about the impact their oeuvre had on British impressions of Romania or how these queens inform current historiographical debate about representations of Eastern Europe and the Balkans.⁶³

⁶¹ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 13-15; Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 3-4.

⁶² L. E. Nixon, 'The "British" Carmen Sylva: Recuperating a German-Romanian writer', PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, July 2014.

⁶³ Doina Pasca Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink: Romanian aristocratic women before and after World War One', *Women's History Review*, 1996, vol. 5, no. 4, pp. 497-511.

Chapter 1 will establish Queen Elizabeth's feminine influence over Romanian imagining in British discourse. This preceded heightened geopolitical interest in the country, and is an early challenge to Romania's presumed place in Todorova's prosaic, masculine rubric. Carmen Sylva's prolific oeuvre that promoted romantic, folkloric ideas about Romania also demands a slight revision of the colonial paradigm in Vesna Goldsworthy's book, *Inventing Ruritania*. This work emphasises 'the world's most powerful nations'' exploitation of 'the resources of the Balkans to supply its literary and entertainment industries', but it fails to adequately acknowledge the East's role in the facilitation of that colonisation, exemplified in the literature of Romania's poet-queen.⁶⁴

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 will demonstrate how Queen Marie built on Elizabeth's work and reputation through the promotion of Romania in wartime Britain and at the Paris Peace Conference. Romania's total war saw Marie, a talented propagandist, occupy the role of a war hero, a space invariably inhabited by men, while her nursing persona ensured she did not destabilise established norms of acceptability.⁶⁵ Efforts have been made to address her wartime impact by American-Romanian historians Harsanyi and Maria Bucur, with Bucur focusing on Marie's dominant domestic reputation, its negative repercussions for gender stereotyping and the Queen's celebrated association with the achievements of post-war Greater Romania.⁶⁶ However, insufficient attention has been paid to Marie's wartime capacity to generate British interest in her adopted country, confirming Rodney Mclean's argument that historiography invariably overlooks the diplomatic significance of monarchy.⁶⁷ Her appearance at the Paris Peace Conference has been better served in this context, but most analysis fails to move beyond recognition that Marie made an impact, with little

⁶⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp.13-15; Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The imperialism of the imagination*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 1998, p. 2.

⁶⁵ For more on the issue of gendered heroism and provision of a corrective on the male-dominated historiography of the Eastern Front see Nancy M. Wingfield and Maria Bucur, *Gender and War in Twentieth-century Eastern Europe*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2006.

⁶⁶ Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', pp. 497–511; M. Bucur, 'Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu: Romanian women and the gender of heroism during the Great War', *Journal of Women's History*, Summer 2000, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 30–49; Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering war in twentieth century Romania*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2009, pp. 110–12.

⁶⁷ Roderick, R. Mclean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe, 1890–1914*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

agreement over the extent of that impact.⁶⁸ My MA dissertation examined the Queen's diplomacy both during World War I and the Peace Conference but Romanian imaging in Britain is not the study's primary focus.⁶⁹ This thesis will build on my previous research, accessing Marie's archive in Bucharest, the Royal Archives in Windsor, archived newsreels and print media, to demonstrate how the Queen helped form sympathetic impressions of her country in Britain, which crystallised into a specific and effective propaganda campaign after Romania entered the war in August 1916.

Section 4.2 will argue that Queen Marie helped establish a wartime precedent for Romania that other British female writers capitalised on. The published works of socialite and traveller, Mrs Will Gordon, and British wartime nurses, Lady Kennard and Yvonne Fitzroy, among others, will be examined for the first time in the context of Romanian imagining and compared with equivalent wartime literature written by British women based in Serbia. In her book *British women of the Eastern Front*, which focuses on wartime Serbia and Russia,⁷⁰ Angela Smith examines the role of the 'female other' and acknowledges that many women working in Serbia engaged with the war in ways that challenged accepted gendered norms.⁷¹ Their experiences and literature are a useful counterpoint against which to examine the imaging generated by British women in Romania whose work and identity occupied a more conventional feminine space. This section will suggest that the wartime oeuvre Romania and its queens inspired, and in which Marie was a leading voice, continued to confound presumptions of Balkan masculinity and violence.

If in Chapter 4 a presumed British superiority (despite disappointment over Britain's failure to assist Romania) was integral to the works of Romania's female

⁶⁸ Mandache and Pakula stress the Queen's significance in Paris: Diana Mandache, *Later Chapters of My Life: The lost memoir of Queen Marie of Romania*, Stroud, Sutton, 2004, p. xxxiii; Hannah Pakula, *The Last Romantic: A biography of Queen Marie of Romania*, London, Phoenix-Orion Books, 1996, p. 295; Florescu and MacMillan are less convinced: Gheorghe Florescu, 'Regina Maria și Conferința de Pace', *Convorbiri Literare*, 2011, vol. III, p. 4, Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 143.

⁶⁹ Tessa Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy, 1914–1919', research dissertation, Imperialism and Culture History MA, Sheffield Hallam University, Nov 2012.

⁷⁰ Angela Smith, *British Women of the Eastern Front: war, writing and experience in Serbia and Russia, 1914-20*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016. There are a couple of fleeting references to British women's experiences of wartime Romania: pp. 77, 161-62.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-27.

wartime visitors, Marie's use of the same trope to promote Romania in London and Paris in March–April 1919, examined in Chapter 5, will serve to highlight the complexities of West–East identity-formation. The significance of the Romanian representations that Marie promoted will be analysed in the context of British non-settlement imperialism and Todorova's argument that Said overlooks the East's essentialising of the West as the 'hegemonic pair in the dichotomy'.⁷² It will argue that Marie used the idea of British superiority to maximum effect during the war, highlighting her own British birth to underscore ideas of Western responsibility. The resulting imagery, which was promoted with Romania's interests in mind but conformed to British ideas of the underdeveloped East, will affirm Todorova's 'Trap of Backwardness' thesis, while simultaneously insisting on a modest reassessment of the Said-style binary representational model that focuses on the West's domination of Eastern representations, in relation to the complex case of Romania.⁷³

Alongside an early identification of royal representations, Chapter 1 will seek to contextualise the anti-Semitic overtones of the 1907 Peasants' Rebellion and British responses to them. It will argue that Jewish historiography does not acknowledge the revolt in the context of Romania's Jewish Question in a field which otherwise examines British responses to Russian, Romanian and Polish anti-Semitism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷⁴ Included in this research is Mark Levene's examination of the role of the influential Conjoint Foreign Committee of British Jews and their persistent representations on behalf of East European Jews, including Romanian Jews.⁷⁵ This thesis will complement that analysis with a focus on the best-known Romanian national in Britain during this period, Jewish Rabbi Dr Moses Gaster. A prolific writer

⁷² Hammond draws on Anne McClintock and her insistence on a greater analysis of non-settlement imperialism: *The Debated Lands*, pp. 1–2; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10.

⁷³ Maria Todorova, 'The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, temporality and the study of eastern European nationalism', *Slavic Review*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2005, pp. 152–53; Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 3, 7.

⁷⁴ Sam Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews: Britain and Eastern Europe's 'Jewish Question', 1867–1925*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; David Glover, *Literature, Immigration and Diaspora in Fin-de-Siècle England: A cultural history of the 1905 Aliens Act*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012; Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews and international minority protection, 1878–1938*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

⁷⁵ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 2–19.

and theologian, Gaster's vast archive has been précised.⁷⁶ However, his prominence as a Zionist and as the Haham of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation in Britain obfuscated Gaster's identity as a Romanian Jew and his conflicted role in constructions of his homeland has been poorly served. Although referenced elsewhere in this thesis, it is §1.2 that primarily benefits from the revisiting of Gaster's archive. His work will serve to demonstrate the complexity of Romania's Jewish Question in a British context where it was subjected to the competing forces of migration, Zionism, rising nationalism and war.

In an example of the wartime compromises demanded of external 'experts', in §2.2, the aforementioned David Mitrany's public writing and work for the British government will be highlighted for its failure to fully acknowledge the issues facing his co-religionists in Romania. A comprehensive examination of British Foreign Office files, the Board of Deputies of British Jews' archive and relevant press coverage that begins in §1.2 will argue that, in line with Levene's analysis, it was the efforts of the Conjoint Committee, in particular the work of their leading spokesperson, Lucien Wolf, which kept the country's Jewish Question alive in official British thinking.⁷⁷ However, the latter's efforts were compromised by the war; Chapters 2 and 4 will examine the impact the conflict had on 'expertise' and representations of Romania's Jewish Question, and identify muted external imaging of this oppressed minority. The repercussions of a diminished Jewish identity in constructions of wartime Romania will be outlined in §5.2, which focuses on the events that led to the country's eventual signing of the Minorities Treaty in December 1919. This section will probe Levene's identification of Wolf 'in his own historical context' as 'not a loser' in the complex case of Romania,⁷⁸ in an assessment that will serve to rebalance current historiography that is predominantly focused on Poland's Jewish Question at the Peace Conference.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ *The Gaster Papers: A collection of letters, documents, etc. ... of the late Haham Dr Moses Gaster, 1856–1939*, University College London, The Library, 1976.

⁷⁷ For the establishment of this Committee and Wolf's prominent role see, Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 2–19.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. viii–ix.

⁷⁹ Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, pp. 171–264; David Kaufman, *This Troublesome Question: Poles, Jews and the Paris Peace Conference of 1919*, Edinburgh, Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012.

Theories of Nationalism and British Perceptions of Romania between 1907 and 1919

Britain's fluid classifications of Romania, which saw it ostensibly move from ambiguous, quasi-Balkan 'other' to sympathetic Latin ally in less than a decade, demand that within the broader, expert-led analysis of Romania's place in European appellations, a thorough assessment of definitions of a nation and nationalism is undertaken. Fast-moving events radically overhauled Britain's perceptions of Romania, and saw profound differences in the way the country was framed at the beginning and the end of the period under study. These tensions make Romania's external national identity an instructive one against which to compare and assess the validity of different nationality theories. Romanian historian Lucian Boia is bullish about post-war Romania, claiming 'the natural configuration of a Romanian national state' was 'more coherent and has proved more viable than Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland'.⁸⁰ Yet despite Romania's considerable territorial gains in 1919, the majority of studies that examine broader wartime nationality themes in the region skirt over the country. Naomi Chazan's emphasis on the role of conflict in the examination of Irredentism rarely mentions Romania. The primary case studies in Brubaker's useful focus on the nature of nationalism in post-war Central and Eastern Europe are Poland and Weimar Germany, and in a collection of Hroch's articles, his stress on the 'smaller' European nations, i.e. 'those without statehood', by definition excludes the Romanian Kingdom.⁸¹

An agrarian-based economy within a feudal structure, pre-war Romania is a difficult match for modernist thinking which prioritises industrial and social development in the rise of nationalism. In *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture* Drace-Francis acknowledges that the creation of Romania's national identity as predominantly the work of cultural activists in the nineteenth century is one that has

⁸⁰ Boia argues these countries were 'multinational states, not so very different in their ethnic structure from the defunct monarchy'. Poland's inclusion is hard to substantiate when Romania saw cessations of territory in World War II and there are still 1.5 million Hungarians in Transylvania. Boia, *Romania, Borderland of Europe*, ebook. loc. 1577–87.

⁸¹ Naomi Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, Twickenham, Adamantine, 1991; Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 79–135; Miroslav Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, nationalism, social change*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007.

been ‘deeply enshrined’ in many accounts of Romania’s cultural historiography.⁸² Katherine Verdery argues that by 1900 virtually all political and intellectual discourse had ‘something to say about Romanians’ essential character’, and Paul Michelson asserts that the establishment of Romanian culture was the most important achievement of the preceding hundred years.⁸³ It was a culture that from the 1860s featured several persistent dichotomous tensions – ‘West or East, Europe or the Balkans, urban civilisation or the rural spirit’,⁸⁴ with Drace-Francis noting that the issues which concerned Romanian writers were already established by 1900, including the peasant, modernity versus tradition and the Jewish Question.⁸⁵

An interpretation of those national issues in British discourse at the beginning of the twentieth century was complicated by Britain’s historic failure to prioritise Romanian imagining, a tendency which compounded confusion over what kind of country it was. While the contradictions that Romanian identity presented in 1907 British discourse were not fully resolved by 1919, the country’s rising geopolitical significance in the intervening period ensured that they had been the subject of considerable attention and were highlighted and manipulated accordingly. In this thesis that process of national image creation will be explicated through extensive, although not exclusive, engagement with the works of historian of East European nationalisms, Hroch, post-1918 nationalities analyst Brubaker, and cultural-ethnics champion Smith, in an assessment that highlights the fluidity of national identity in war, the expedience of external representation and the significance of royal figureheads.

Chapter 1’s examination of Britain’s dramatic coverage of the rebellion is a good example of the immediate problem Romanian identity poses for modernist historians of nationalism and serves to contextualise the limitations of the cultural idea of Romania in nineteenth-century thinking. Gellner insists on an industrialised society as a prerequisite for nationalism to flourish and Anderson stresses the rise of the reading public in the emergence of the ‘imagined community’ that was the lifeblood of

⁸² Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, p. 1.

⁸³ Katherine Verdery, ‘The Romanian Nation: The production and defence of the “Romanian nation” 1900–WW2’, in Richard G. Fox (ed.), *National Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures*, American Ethnological Society Monograph Series, 1991, no. 2, p. 85; Paul Michelson, *Romanian Politics, 1859–1871: From Prince Cuza to Prince Carol*, Iași, Oxford, Portland, Center for Romanian Studies, 1998, p. 15.

⁸⁴ Irina Livezeanu cited in Verdery, *ibid.*, p. 86.

⁸⁵ Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, p. 11.

nationalism.⁸⁶ Romania's predominantly serf-based economic model, exposed by the revolt, is a challenging fit for both these theories. Eric Hobsbawm's recognition of the unifying role of a national language is more easily applied to Romania, but the country's low literacy levels undermine his argument that primary education was a key facilitator of a unitary language. While Drace-Francis's study of Romanian culture and his recognition that 'Literacy is now seen not as an abstractable absolute but a process that needs to be understood in relation to its various cultural functions' is helpful for an explication of Romanian development, nonetheless undeniable contradictions in Romanian national identity existed and were played out in the 1907 Peasants' Rebellion.⁸⁷

In the British press, the revolt unleashed dramatic reports of anarchy and civil unrest which served to complicate ideas of Romania's national legitimacy. Very different from the propertied peasant model in other Balkan countries, the mass serfdom of Romania's peasantry was pitched against a few absentee feudal landowners in a structure more representative of Tsarist Russia.⁸⁸ Gellner concurs with Max Weber's argument that 'the "state" is that institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order'. During Romania's Peasants' Revolt that order appeared to have broken down, serving to undermine the validity of the country itself.⁸⁹ Chapter 1 will argue that in industrialised countries like Britain, where modernist thinking regarding nationalism finds more fertile terrain, the rebellion enforced an idea of Romania as an anomalous, underdeveloped state.

⁸⁶ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 48; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 39–48.

⁸⁷ E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 110–13; Drace-Francis notes that in Romania 'many written works would be read aloud to a large group of people. Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture*, p. 4, 44.

⁸⁸ An exposition of the different Balkan states is provided in Mark Mazower, *The Balkans*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000. For a chronological overview of the Balkans which stresses the impact of the 'indigenous landlord class' in a Romanian system where national change only affected 'a small proportion of society', see Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804–1999: Nationalism, war and the Great Powers*, London, Granta Books, 1999, pp. 57–69.

⁸⁹ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 4.

Hroch, who refutes Gellner's thinking with his argument that national identity often appeared before the arrival of modern industrialisation,⁹⁰ provides a useful three-stage model for the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe. However, Chapter 1 will argue that this model flounders when applied to external interpretations of 1907 Romania. Among East European nationalities, Hroch identifies an 'exogenous' ruling class that dominates ethnic groups which occupied compact territory but lacked their own nobility and political units. He outlines three structural stages in the emergence of a national movement with the capacity to become a self-governing nation. The first involved scholarly inquiries into linguistic and cultural ties that bound the group, the second saw a new range of activists looking to win over compatriots, and the third stage involved mass participation with the prospect of a full social structure coming into being.⁹¹

A mass rebellion against Romanian landowners that had to be crushed with extreme force and was extensively covered in the British press, suggested that 'new mass participation in a national project' was yet to materialise in Romania. Furthermore, Hroch's identification of the need 'for absolutist oppression from a foreign other' in the formation of national identity is difficult to substantiate in the case of 1907 Romania.⁹² The country's relationship with the Ottomans was defined by suzerainty pre-1881, not occupation, while the severity of the Peasants' Revolt underlined the exploitative rule of Romanian *boyars* (nobles) within the Kingdom itself. Moreover, self-definition in Romania was partly driven by reactions against an internal minority. The country's refusal to enfranchise their Jewish minority despite the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 ensured that 'oppression' within the Kingdom was Romanian and often used against 'a foreign other', an issue that international Jewish networks successfully drew attention to.

This thesis will demonstrate that it was the idea of Romania as an oppressive state which helps to explain the ambiguities in the country's pre-war image in Britain and it will argue that Hroch's model was not applicable to the version of the Romanian Kingdom identified in Chapter 1. It is in Chapter 2's examination of emerging British

⁹⁰ Gellner later admitted that his industrial focus did not work well in Eastern Europe: Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1994.

⁹¹ Hroch, 'From National Movement to Fully-Fledged Nation'.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

expertise on Romania that Hroch's model is partially vindicated. Pre-World War I, the restive nationalities in the Habsburg Empire, including the Romanians in Transylvania, had begun attracting British attention. Subject to increasing oppression, the Hungarians provided the 'foreign other' against which the Romanian population reacted and organised themselves. The emerging national movement, championed by Seton-Watson, helps to explain why Britain accorded the Transylvanians disproportionate attention in subsequent constructions of Romania. Chapter 3 which focuses on the Romanian Kingdom as a coveted neutral, will argue that the country's identity in this period was significantly impacted by ideas centred on self-determination and a just war of reunification with the Transylvanian Romanians.

Considering both the Jewish minority inside Romania and the Transylvanian Romanians beyond the country's western border, this thesis will identify competing Romanian identities circulating in British discourse. In order to explicate responses to those nationalisms it will invoke an assessment of Brubaker's study, *Nationalism Reframed*, which focuses on the state creation that occurred when the Ottoman, Habsburg and Russian Empires imploded during and immediately after World War I. Brubaker argues that the new states were the 'nationalisms that have emerged in the wake of the nationalisation of the political space'⁹³ and identifies a 'triadic nexus that involves three distinct and mutually antagonistic nationalisms' which provide a model for interpreting the state creation (including Greater Romania) that emerged post-1918.⁹⁴

This thesis will argue that an understanding of Romania's competing identities requires an earlier assessment of Brubaker's nationalisms that begins not in the post-war period, but in the pre-war period, when the country's narrative in British discourse was complicated by its dual role as both an oppressive host nation of a disenfranchised Jewish minority, and as a nation whose own minority in Austria-Hungary was being oppressed. In his model, Brubaker identifies a nationalising nationalism which involves claims made in the name of the core nation and is defined in ethno-cultural terms. His description of this nationalising nation as inherently weak 'despite its rightful 'ownership' of the state' helps explain the insecurity and chauvinism of Greater

⁹³ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 3.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

Romania in the post-war period. However this thesis will argue it is also applicable to the Old Kingdom's earlier exclusive response to its internal Jewish minority.⁹⁵

Brubaker's second nationalism involves the 'transborder nationalisms' of what he calls 'external national homelands', which emphasises a state's right to monitor, assert the rights and protect the interests of 'their' ethno-national kin in other states. He identifies external national homelands in a post-war setting when, for example, Hungary was focused on its minority existing within Greater Romania's nationalising nation.⁹⁶ However, this thesis will examine the reverse situation in a pre-1918 context and analyse representations of Romania's evolving national homeland narrative in relation to the country's feted population in Transylvania and its responses to Hungarian chauvinism.

The third nationalism in Brubaker's model belongs to national minorities. Pre-war, again Romanian identity manifests itself in a dual context. With sizeable minorities in neighbouring countries, there were several sympathetic Romanian national minority narratives, including a pronounced one in Hungary's Transylvania. This thesis will examine the Transylvanian Romanians' role in relation to Seton-Watson's framing of Hungary as an oppressor state and through the development of Romania's sympathetic national homeland claims in British discourse. Conversely, it is the identity of Romania's internal Jewish minority nationalism that serves to explicate Britain's wary responses to the country pre-war. It is the simultaneous existence of all three of Brubaker's nationalisms within constructions of Romania which explains the fluid, often conflicting interpretations of the country's identity in Britain.

Brubaker identifies minority nationalism as 'caught in the middle' between the nationalising nation and the homeland nationalism.⁹⁷ But Romania's Jews did not have a bordering country championing their cause. This minority depended on international support to highlight its plight. Here, Brubaker's identification of the national minority as having a double field of struggle which involves the need to 'impose and sustain a certain vision of the host state, namely as a nationalising or nationally oppressive state' is critical. This definition helps to explain the presentation of Romania's Jewish

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 5-6, 107.

⁹⁷ Brubaker notes the absence of a proximate homeland in the case of Poland's post-1918 Jews, Ibid., pp. 5-6, 94-95.

minority nationalism in British discourse, and the impact of its 'struggle' on competing interpretations of Romanian identity.⁹⁸

In the context of the 1907 Peasants' Revolt, §1.2 will establish the imperilled national minority agenda of Romania's Jews, supported by an international network of co-religionists which included the campaigning work of the Anglo-Jewish Conjoint Committee. Later analysis in Chapters 2 and 4 will highlight the compromises that impacted on their representations of Romania's Jewish Question during the war and the autochthonous atmosphere that facilitated a less tolerant British interpretation of the Jewish 'other'. Romania's Jewish nationalism was muted and its ability to portray the Romanian Kingdom as an oppressive nation reduced. Instead, the country was increasingly defined through the Romanian population in Transylvania - Brubaker's external homeland nationalism - the assertion of which accorded with British war aims. This focus on Transylvanian Romanians elevated the country's status as a worthy European ally, in a powerful exposition of Milica Bakić-Hayden's 'Nesting Orientalisms' theory.

In her study of post-war Yugoslavia, Bakić-Hayden refers to implicit assumptions about the 'primordial qualities' of different peoples, which are subsequently used to explicate the 'fate of nations'. In the case of wartime Romania, the Old Kingdom with its 'Balkan burden' and challenging Jewish 'national minority' was demoted and representations of the country's vaunted Transylvanian population were prioritised.⁹⁹ Section 4.3, which examines New Europe thinking in London during the last two years of World War I, will argue that this deliberate framing of Romania through its national homeland nationalism and the elevated status of the Transylvanian Romanians, highlights the unease which persisted in Britain about the type of nation Romania was, and explains Allen Leeper's focus on the Romanian population in Hungary.

Representations of Romania's Jewish Question will culminate in Chapter 5 with an examination of Romanian identity in relation to the signing of the Minorities Treaty at the Peace Conference, in an analysis that acknowledges the diminution of Romania's

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 64.

⁹⁹ Milica Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms: The case of former Yugoslavia', *Slavic Review*, 1995, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 923–24.

Jewish Question in British discourse and the problems associated with Greater Romania's chauvinism. The examination of Romania's complex identity through the evolving nationalisms identified by Brubaker will highlight the role Britain played in emphasising a particular nationalism at any given time, and it will contextualise the country's often inadequate political responses to competing Romanian representations. Chapter 5 will conclude that in 1919, Britain's eagerness to embrace a New European solution at the Peace Conference saw them fail to anticipate or understand Romania's assertive nationalising nationalism.

Complementing the work of Brubaker, in Chapters 4 and 5, *Irredentism and International Politics* edited by Naomi Chazan will help to explain responses to Romania's role in the Entente's war, through the identification of conflict and international assistance as factors which draw Irredentist claims out of their gestation period.¹⁰⁰ The year 2018 witnessed extensive and international celebrations funded by the Romanian government for the centenary of 'România Mare', in a tone that presumed the creation of Greater Romania had been inevitable.¹⁰¹ In contrast, and in line with Chazan's thinking, this thesis will argue that World War I delivered a brief period of mutual interest when Romania's acquisition of Austria-Hungary's Transylvania suited both Allied and Romanian political agendas. In Chazan's book, Donald Horowitz's observation that successful Irredentist action on the part of a retrieving state is rare provides a reminder of the potency of Romania's nationality theme, particularly in relation to the Transylvanian minority.¹⁰² Chapters 4 and 5 will argue that the identification of Transylvania as the 'cradle of the Romanian nation' partially confounds Horowitz's argument regarding 'the common reluctance of people at the centre to see nominally kindred people on the periphery as truly members of the same ethnic group'.¹⁰³ This Transylvanian exceptionalism explains why Britain was able to suspend its long-term uneasiness about Romania and imagine an improved nation-state

¹⁰⁰ Chazan, *Irredentism and International Politics*, p. 7.

¹⁰¹ Although still controversial in Hungary, Romania marked the 100th anniversary with extensive 'Great Union Centenary' celebrations, including numerous international events. In Britain they launched a website (www.romaniacentenary.org) and organised events in London, Cardiff and Edinburgh. Broader motivations behind this promotional campaign merit further research.

¹⁰² Donald Horowitz, 'Irredentas and Secessions: Adjacent phenomena, neglected connections', in Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, pp. 9–34.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.

under the influence of a Romanian population that enjoyed a more Western heritage and location.

The relocation of Romania in British discourse from a sub-Balkan or savage Eastern country to a West-facing New European construct will emerge as a prominent theme in this thesis, serving to highlight what Hobsbawm identifies as the malleability of key indicators in national constructs.¹⁰⁴ That malleability was particularly important when external representations were subject to the demands of war. In a conflict where the search for a moral *raison d'être* began early, it was important that any equivalence over Romania as a potential ally was resolved. Alongside pre-war Semitic and Balkan traits, §1.3 will identify early and deliberate efforts by Romania to stress its European heritage that would prove useful in Britain's subsequent reframing of the country.

Affirming the presence of a distinct Romanian culture in the nineteenth century which prioritised its Latin heritage, Hobsbawm notes the state's decision to dump Cyrillic in preference for Roman letters in the printing of the language.¹⁰⁵ This move was indicative of the Romanian elite's preoccupation with Western acculturation. Anderson's focus on the technology of 'print capitalism' in the emergence of the 'imagined community' is confused in Romania's case, where, by the late nineteenth century, the language of power was French.¹⁰⁶ However, what retarded a popular national consciousness at home was its strength in European diplomatic circles.¹⁰⁷ Examinations of Balkan and neutral Romania in Chapter 2 will identify Take Ionescu, a politician educated in France and married to a British woman, as one of a handful of Romanians whose politics and elegance were disproportionately endorsed in Britain as indicators of Romania's potential for civic government. Likewise §4.3 will highlight the sophisticated diplomats and émigrés from the Old Kingdom and Transylvania working with British experts in wartime London.

This thesis will argue that Romania's European politicking in British discourse was complemented by ideas of an ancient nation which rested on images that were more

¹⁰⁴ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, p. 6.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁰⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 39–48.

¹⁰⁷ Glenny points out that the close linguistic affinity between Romanian and French and the Romanian boyars' adoption of French political culture saw French revolutionary ideas adopted earlier in the Danubian Principalities than elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire: Glenny, *The Balkans*, p. 59.

traditional. In particular the efforts of Romania's two queens, who keenly asserted the romantic and Latin credentials of their adopted country's peasant society, struck a chord in Britain's reductive wartime atmosphere. It is ironic that it was first a German-born queen and then a British one who were the most effective purveyors of ideas about the Romanian peasant and his Roman heritage. In order to understand the power of this complex, potentially contradictory imaging, the thesis will employ Anthony Smith's ethno-symbolic arguments and examine how Elizabeth and Marie operated as conduits in the relationship he identifies between a modern nation and earlier 'collective cultural identities and sentiments'.¹⁰⁸

Chapter 1 will establish Elizabeth as the royal figurehead who was formative in the external articulation of a Romania symbolised by peasants and folklore, themes that will be further explored in later chapters through Marie's dual appeal in Romania and Britain. A Clausewitzian emphasis on military capacity as a benchmark for national maturity, an idea examined in Chapter 3, was confounded by the country's defeat in December 1916.¹⁰⁹ However Chapter 4 will argue that instead Marie, deliberately framed as the symbolic Mother of her people, mobilised the idea of an ancient peasant stock which straddled both the Old Kingdom and Transylvania and was willing to die for Romania's 'Empress' and Empire. Here Smith's rebuke of Gellner for only telling 'half the story' in terms of nationalism's appeal is instructive. Smith argues that Gellner's claim that the nation is a fairly recent phenomenon fails to account for the full concept of a nation as a territorial community with 'a shared history and culture'.¹¹⁰ Chapters 3 and 4 will concur with Smith and suggest that modernist thinking is ill-equipped to understand the appeal of Romania's 'shared history and culture' in a period which saw the rising appeal of folklore and fantasy genres across Europe.¹¹¹ Based on

¹⁰⁸ Smith, *The Nation in History*, pp. 63–78.

¹⁰⁹ For a recent analysis of the emergence of mass nationalism and the capacity for inter-state warfare see Lars-Erik Cederman, T. Camber Warren and Didier Sornette, 'Testing Clausewitz – Nationalism, mass mobilisation and the severity of war', *International Organisation*, vol. 65, no. 4, pp. 605–38.

¹¹⁰ Anthony Smith, 'The Nation Real or Imagined', in Ed Mortimer and Robert Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State: The meaning of ethnicity and nationalism*, London, I.B.Tauris, 1999, pp. 36–41.

¹¹¹ Peter Brock, *Folk Cultures and Little Peoples: Aspects of national awakening in East Central Europe*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1992; Michael Perraudin and Matthew Campbell (eds), *The Voice of the People: Writing the European folk revival, 1760–1914*, London; New York, Anthem Press, 2012.

traditional images of Latin peasants, martial spirit, remote monasteries and monarchy it was this idea of Romania that Marie so effectively articulated in British discourse.

Smith also challenges Hobsbawm for failing to see the other half of the story.¹¹² But through the recognition of Marie as a modern 'invention' in Romania's history, albeit one who demanded a belief in the sacred role of monarchy, Chapters 3 and 4 will provide a partial vindication of Hobsbawm's identification of 'invented' traditions comprised of national symbols, mythology and suitably tailored history that nurtured nationalism.¹¹³ However, just as Smith challenges the modernists' attempts to debunk the notion of the primordial or perennial through his emphasis on ethno-symbolic significance and proto-national communities, this thesis will argue that Britain's readiness to embrace the idea of a racially pure Romanian peasant stock demonstrates that in war, old definitions of a Western civic nationalism versus an Eastern ethnic nationalism were further diminished. Britain was receptive to Marie's other 'half of the story', which depended on Romanian 'memories, values, myths and symbols',¹¹⁴ and this commonality in approach allowed the country to be re-evaluated in a more European context.

The impact of World War I on European monarchies is rarely disputed. Miranda Carter provides a comprehensive list of royalty for whom the conflict had been disastrous, concluding that on Armistice Day George V 'was the only emperor still standing on his balcony',¹¹⁵ and yet Chapters 4 and 5 will demonstrate that wartime Romania was defined in Britain through an emboldened, Queen Marie. Rodney Barker in *Legitimizing Identities* stresses that it is individual rulers who are legitimated, not the regimes in which they serve. However, this study will suggest his argument that most rulers who practise legitimation, 'do so in relation to their own referential hinterland, rather than the wider community', demands revision in the case of Romania's Queen.¹¹⁶ An examination of Marie's imaging and work in Britain's wartime and Peace Conference press coverage will reveal that she was accorded unprecedented levels of

¹¹² Smith, 'The Nation, Real or Imagined' in Mortimer and Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State*, pp. 39–40.

¹¹³ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 1–14.

¹¹⁴ Smith, 'The Nation Real or Imagined', pp. 36–40.

¹¹⁵ Miranda Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London, Penguin, 2010, pp. 484–85.

¹¹⁶ Rodney Barker, *Legitimizing Identities: The self-preservation of rulers and subjects*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 30–31.

legitimacy in her British homeland, partially because of her reputed popularity in Romania, which by 1917 lay in stark contrast to the abdication and later murder of the Tsar and Tsarina in neighbouring Russia.

In the context of this royal success story, Chapters 4 and 5 will revisit Hroch's three-stage model, which could not be successfully applied to constructs of the pre-1916 Romanian Kingdom in British discourse. However, by the end of the war heroic Marie, as the symbol around which the peasant soldiers gathered, had become the bridging link between Hroch's second stage – 'activist looking to win over as many compatriots as possible' – and third stage – 'mass participation' – with German occupation providing the crucial ingredient of external oppression.¹¹⁷ Similarly Michael Jeismann identifies the concept of the nation developing out of an 'oscillation between two poles: self definition on the one hand and the image and idea of the enemy on the other'.¹¹⁸ While both the theories of Hroch and Jeismann focus on the domestic rise and identification of nationalism in relation to oppression or enemy action, Chapters 4 and 5 will look at the definitions in British discourse of an allied Romania that was framed against a common German adversary and led by a British-born queen.

This thesis will argue that during the latter half of the war, Romania's national story more readily adhered to recognised patterns of nationhood and would prove compelling to a British audience despite the country's defeat in December 1916 and capitulation in March 1918. By assessing the chronology of events through the nationalism debates outlined above, it will argue that Britain's strategic demands insisted Romania's complex and shifting nationalities were reframed through a Latin peasant narrative that included the Old Kingdom but prioritised the West-facing lands of Habsburg Transylvania. This facilitated a representational shift in Romania's identity, which saw previous constructions associated with an Eastern or Balkan Romania dissembled and temporarily overlaid with ideas about a New European country capable of democracy and civic government. Britain's wartime efforts to mask a persistent wariness regarding old Romania are exemplified through the alacrity with which British-born Marie was embraced as the country's exceptional figurehead and

¹¹⁷ Hroch, 'From National Movement to Fully-Fledged Nation', pp. 3-21.

¹¹⁸ M. Jeismann, 'Nation, Identity and Enmity: Towards a theory of political identification', in Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson (eds), *What is a Nation? Europe 1789–1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 17–27.

saviour. In keeping with the idea of Romania's realignment into a post-war New Europe, at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, Queen Marie was the undisputed star of the show. However, as would quickly become apparent in the interwar period, these superficial ideas concerning Greater Romania and its popular queen required the commonality of allied conflict to challenge Britain's long-term lack of interest and presumed superiority.

Chapter Outlines and Structure

The speed and dislocating impact of international conflict in the period studied here had a profound effect on regional definitions, with complex implications for Romanian identity. To facilitate an understanding of the relationship between events and national imaging in British discourse, the five chapters in this thesis adhere to a rough chronology and are split into sections focused on different themes within the relevant time periods. All five begin with an introduction that extensively outlines the aims of the chapter.

Chapter 1, 'Locating Romania and the 1907 Peasants' Revolt', focuses on pre-war constructions of Romania, in particular the impact the Peasants' Revolt had on Britain's Balkan, Jewish, European and royal interpretations of Romania.

§1.1, 'The Balkans, Romania and the Peasants' Revolt', looks at the work of Britain's Balkan Committee and analyses Romania's conflicted place within a Balkan rubric in light of the 1907 rebellion.

§1.2, 'Romania's Jewish Question and the Peasants' Revolt', recognises that Romania's refusal to enfranchise its Jewish minority had been a defining issue in nineteenth-century British discourse and examines changing attitudes towards that Jewish Question at the beginning of the twentieth.

§1.3, 'Latin Romania and its German Monarchy', examines Romania's European and royal efforts under King Carol¹¹⁹ and assesses the extent to which they were impacted by the events of 1907 and Britain's increasing Germanophobia.

Chapter 2, 'British Expertise and Romanian Imaging, 1906–1916', examines the role of British-based experts in relation to Romania, with a particular focus on the

¹¹⁹ Invariably known as Karl in German and Charles in English, Romanians referred to their prince/king as Carol; this thesis will use Carol but keep the original citations in sources.

country's identity in the second Balkan War and two-year neutrality during World War I.

§2.1, 'British Expertise and the Second Balkan War', is divided into four parts that alternate between assessments of conservative journalist Dillon and Habsburg nationalities expert Seton-Watson. Dillon's focus on the Romanian kingdom is contrasted with the priority Seton-Watson accorded the Romanians in Austria-Hungary's Transylvania.

§2.2, 'World War, Romanian Neutrality and the Changing Face of Expertise', consists of two parts that compare Dillon's public criticism of Romanian neutrality and the limitations of his 'expertise', with the rising stock of Seton-Watson who continued to champion Romania, and the more cautious promotional efforts of Romanian academic, David Mitrany.

Chapter 3, 'Military and Royal Representations of Neutral Romania', highlights the contradictions in wartime Britain's perception of neutral Romania through an examination of aspirational military constructs and the feminine imaging led by Queen Marie.

§3.1, 'Military Representations of Neutral Romania', looks at the motivations behind idealised depictions of Romania's army in a British discourse desperate to boost national morale.

§3.2, 'A King and Two Queens; Feminine Romania and Neutrality', identifies the emergence of a distinct, albeit secondary, feminine narrative in Britain that was predominantly fostered by Romania's two queens.

Chapter 4, 'Romania at War, August 1916–December 1918', identifies Queen Marie as the main vehicle through which Romania's image was rehabilitated in British discourse and argues that her work complemented ideas about Greater Romania promoted by powerful New Europe experts in wartime London.

§4.1, 'Iconic Marie and Romania's War', examines Queen Marie's wartime imaging and propaganda and discusses the impact these gendered royal constructs had on Romanian identity in Britain after August 1916.

§4.2, '*My Country*, Female Literature and Wartime Romania', identifies literature written by Queen Marie and several British women during the last two years of war and examines the oeuvre's impact on racial and feminine constructions of Romania.

§4.3, ‘Peace-planning, Greater Romania and a New Europe’, acknowledges Seton-Watson’s influential *New Europe* thinking in relation to the work of Romanian expert Allen Leeper, and his wartime collaboration with émigré Romanians.

Chapter 5, ‘Romania at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919’, examines how public and political interpretations of Romania at the Conference were impacted by Romanian Premier Brătianu’s intransigence and the flamboyant appearance of Queen Marie.

§5.1, ‘Brătianu, Transylvanian Romania and a New Europe’, analyses British responses to Brătianu’s chauvinism in Paris and London. Public support for Romanian belligerence in Hungary will contrast with the exasperation of British officialdom and the faith placed in a Transylvanian-led idea of Romania.

§5.2, ‘Britain, the Peace Conference and Romania’s Jewish Question’, will assess the significance of Brătianu’s obstructive attitude towards the Minorities Treaty for the imaging of Romania and interpretations of its Jewish Question.

§5.3, ‘Queen Marie in Paris, London and Greater Romania, 1919’, examines Marie’s capacity to capitalise on her celebrated war work and its implications for constructions of the country she claimed to have given a ‘face’

Chapter 1

Locating Romania and the 1907 Peasants' Revolt

Introduction

Chapter 1 will argue that at the beginning of the twentieth century Romanian identity in British discourse was conflicted and ambiguous, occupying a vague shifting locus within broader Balkan and East European constructs. Despite Romania's pivotal position between the Habsburg and Russian Empires, this chapter will identify a country that lay outside Britain's sphere of interest and, unlike other states in South East Europe, lacked the specific conditions necessary to attract British commentators to its national cause. Todorova argues convincingly for an emerging Balkan identity in the West prior to World War I,¹ as do Hammond and Michail, who both focus on British perceptions of this Eastern rubric.² Tethered to the footprint of the Ottoman Empire, they insist the Balkans was increasingly seen as a barometer against which to measure European civility and progress. However, this chapter will challenge their general failure to confront Romanian exceptionalism within that appellation. Through an examination of Hroch's three-stage model of nationalism and the identification of two of Brubaker's nationalisms, it will explicate British responses to issues thrown up by Romania's 1907 Peasant's Revolt and identify a complex national identity not without European appeal, that partially resisted Balkan associations at the same time as it reinforced ideas of a savage Eastern Europe.

Section 1.1 will seek to clarify British definitions of the Balkans at the turn of the twentieth century, with particular reference to the work of the Balkan Committee, a political pressure group formed in response to the 1903 Macedonian Uprising. It will argue that Romania, never occupied by the Ottomans and with its own oppressed serf

¹ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

² Andrew Hammond, *The Debated Lands: British and American representations of the Balkans*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007; Eugene Michail, *British and the Balkans: Forming images of foreign lands, 1900–1950*, London; New York, Continuum, 2011.

majority population, has been poorly served by subsequent efforts to define Balkan from a British perspective. Neither the arguments of Hobsbawm or Hroch, which help identify the rise of nationalism on the Peninsula, fully explain Romanian national identity in the early twentieth century,³ the complexities of which often contradicted the 'Balkan' tag in British discourse. Interpretations of the Peasants' Revolt in 1907, a violent national uprising that attracted international opprobrium, will highlight the confusion associated with Romanian identity and suggest that coverage of the rebellion undermined the country's efforts at European statehood. Instead, Romania was held up as a commentary on Britain's rapprochement with Russia leaving Wolff's identification of a backward, eastern appellation including Russia, as the most instructive home for nascent Romania.⁴

Section 1.2 will examine Romania's Jewish Question as the first of two conflicting national indicators that dominated Romanian identity in the pre-war period. Hobsbawm argues that migration and non-traditional classes in urbanised societies helped develop a heightened sense of national identity.⁵ Romania was a case in point. The arrival of a large Jewish minority in the previous century, coupled with anti-Semitism as a consistent leitmotif of Romanian government, had seen Victorian Britain predominantly identify the country through its Jewish Question. Article 44 in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, which insisted that Romania enfranchise its Jews, was the result of Great Power pressure led by Britain. However, the vast majority of Romania's Jews remained disenfranchised at the beginning of the twentieth century and anti-Jewish attacks were a hallmark of the 1907 revolt.

As will be discussed, a significant shift from the more inclusive high Victorian period to a more exclusive nation-state narrative by the turn of the twentieth century coarsened debate in Edwardian Britain and complicates efforts to evaluate the impact of the Jewish Question in pre-war Romanian representations.⁶ This transnational picture

³ E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990; M. Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, nationalism, social change*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007.

⁴ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The map of civilisation on the mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1994.

⁵ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 107–9.

⁶ As useful guide for the general appropriation of nationalism by the Conservative establishments in Europe and its contradictory nature see Timothy Baycroft and Mark

was further challenged by the arrival of a sizeable East European Jewish minority in London. Focusing on Brubaker's instructive identification of national minority nationalism, which required the minority to define its host state as an oppressor, this section will examine the Semitic representations featured in the coverage of the Peasants' Revolt and seek to explicate British responses to Romania's Jewish Question. It will argue that while Romania's Jews were increasingly dependent on the work of the Conjoint Committee of British Jews for support, the latter's persistent reminders at official level that Romania was a 'persecuting power' pinned the country's identity to a larger savage Eastern rubric. It will conclude that in 1907 Romania's Jewish Question provided a timely commentary on Britain's commitment to the Anglo-Russian Convention signed the same year.⁷

Section 1.3 will argue that Romania countered these negative associations – Balkan, Slavic, anti-Semitic – through the self-conscious promotion of a European identity located in traditional imagery. The monarchy played an important part in this process, and has typically been ignored or trivialised, with Todorova in *Imagining the Balkans* querying the value of European royalty in the contested nation-states of South East Europe.⁸ Section 1.3 will challenge that trivialisation in the case of Romania, where the imported German monarchy became an early and important vehicle for articulating ideas about Romania's ancient heritage and capacity for modernisation. Arriving in a country with a French-speaking aristocracy and a distinct feudal structure, Romania lent easily to the reign of Hohenzollern Prince Carol in 1866. Although latterly the King's German nationality compromised his appeal in British discourse, the international qualities of Carol's German poet-queen, Elizabeth of Wied, proved more resistant to Britain's Germanophobia. This section will suggest that while Todorova has observed the value of foundation myths and stories in Western discourse, she fails to

Hewitson (eds), *What is a Nation? Europe 1789–1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006.

⁷ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–6; Andreas Rose stresses the importance of Russia and the Balkans in Britain's pre-war foreign policy: *Between Empire and Continent: British foreign policy before the First World War*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2017.

⁸ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 5.

credit Elizabeth (whose greatest success was among literary audiences in the West) for creating a unique Romanian construct.⁹

Section 1.3 will highlight the value of modernist theories of nationalism which expound the importance of the printing press and literacy, for the creation of a Romania in the British imagination.¹⁰ Elizabeth gave the illiterate peasant her voice, and in doing so planted the idea of a folkloric romantic land in British discourse. This imaging of the core Romanian nation was the competing other to Romania's national minority image, with the Queen responding directly to challenges of Romanian anti-Semitism. The important precedent she set challenges Saidian ideas that prioritise the premise of exteriority in representations, with Elizabeth's international fame adding to a commentary on royal ceremonial as a part of the weaponry of 'international rivalry'.¹¹ The section will conclude that her celebrated femininity emphasised Romania's difference in a corner of Europe commonly associated with masculinity and barbarity.¹²

Following these separate threads of Romanian national identity – informed, but not exclusively defined by, Balkan and East European generalisations – Chapter 1 will highlight the country's ability to confound standard nation-building tropes at the beginning of the twentieth century and help to explain the confusion over what Romania stood for both in public discourse and within the Foreign Office. While Andreas Rose has argued that historiography has overlooked or 'even deliberately ignored' Britain's policy in the Balkans in this pre-war period,¹³ Romania, with an identity in Britain that did not conform to Hroch's three-stage modelling for the rise of nationalism and which uncomfortably straddled Balkan and Russian orbits, provides a good example of how some nations resist clear definition and thus compound historiography's oversight. It is Brubaker's useful framing, which helps elucidate a distinct minority identity for Romania against which the core Romania nation was also partially defined, that serves

⁹ M. Todorova, 'The Trap of Backwardness – Modernity, temporality and the study of Eastern European nationalism', *Slavic Review*, Spr 2005, vol. 64, no. 1, pp. 151–53.

¹⁰ Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 2016.

¹¹ D. Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British monarchy and the "invention of tradition", 1820–1977', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 128.

¹² Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 14; Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 3, 38–39.

¹³ Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p. 4.

to differentiate between nationalisms. This evolving presentation of more than one Romania would assist in the country's national repositioning within British discourse by 1913, when tensions in the region and the emergence of a third Romanian nationalism in Austria-Hungary helped facilitate direct British interest and saw the creation of more sympathetic national constructs.

1.1 The Balkans, Romania and the Peasants' Revolt

'We speak another language: the Danube separates us from the Balkans and we have nothing in common with their races.' Although 'greatly taken with the idea of an exhibition in London', in 1906 when Romania's King Carol I was approached by Harold Hartley, the managing director of the London's Exhibitions, he was 'absolutely opposed to Romania being associated with any other Balkan country'.¹⁴ Hartley considered Romania sufficiently Balkan, Carol did not. The King sacrificed the benefits of a London exhibition to avoid the 'Balkan' tag (although there were 'hopes of arranging an all-Roumanian event'¹⁵). His decision was indicative of Romania's elevated self-regard in relation to its southern neighbours. This section will look at Romania's equivocal position within the Balkan appellation at the beginning of the twentieth century and suggest that the King's efforts to avoid Balkan associations in British discourse were misjudged.

It will agree with Michail and J. A. Perkins that the Balkans, although not embraced by the Foreign Office, nonetheless attracted sympathetic imaging in Britain as the staging of an exhibition suggested.¹⁶ However, these historians do not acknowledge Romania's conflicted identity in relation to Europe's southeastern Peninsula, an oversight this section will suggest is partially explained by the country's exceptional political features. It will argue that Romania's serf-style feudalism confounded traditional ideas of Balkan nationhood and exhibited a structural imbalance in

¹⁴ Harold T. Hartley, *Eighty-Eight: Not out: A record of happy memories*, [S.I.], Muller, 1939, p. 159.

¹⁵ Ibid.; for an account of the origins and staging of the exhibitions see Jill Steward, 'The Balkans in London: Political culture and the cultural politics of exhibitions at Earls Court, 1906–08', *Balkan Studies*, 2008, vol. 44, no. 4, pp. 64–89.

¹⁶ Michail, *British and the Balkans*; J. A. Perkins, 'British Liberalism and the Balkans, c. 1875–1925', PhD thesis, Birkbeck, University of London, 2014.

Romanian society that was dramatically highlighted when the Peasants' Revolt erupted in 1907. It was British coverage of this rebellion that pitched Romania's image further away from the free peasant societies of the Balkans, into a broader, less sympathetic East European rubric.¹⁷

The word 'Balkan' was inspired by the eponymous Turkish word that referred to the mountain chain running between the Habsburg Empire and the Ottoman Empire, a geographical demarcation which separated the southeastern Peninsula from the rest of the continent.¹⁸ Romania's location north of that mountain range, a physical barrier exacerbated by the course of the Danube River, highlights the geographical contradistinction between Romania and its 'Balkan' neighbours. Misha Glenny argues that many scholars regard the Danube as the northern border of the Peninsula, before conceding that Romania is not only 'in most Western studies of the Balkans but even in Romanian histories of the Balkans'. The country is one of the 'core regions' in his Balkan study.¹⁹ This geographical inconsistency is explained by Vesna Goldsworthy, who claims that 'precise details of Balkan history and geography are less important than the imaginary or near imaginary landscapes of the British concepts of the Balkans'.²⁰ Philanthropist Edith Sellers exemplified this in 1907 when she wrote, 'Roumania has little in common with the Balkan states', but included it in her Balkan poor-relief review as it 'is too near a neighbour of theirs not to claim mention here'.²¹

A political definition that includes Romania is also troublesome. The word 'Balkan' was increasingly used in Britain from the 1870s in reference to the countries that had once been part of Turkey in Europe.²² Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire's retreat was formalised in a series of independence wars and movements, the diplomatic consequences of which were overseen by the Great

¹⁷ This vaguer but no less wild construct identified in Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*.

¹⁸ Mazower gives a general overview of Balkan geography before concluding that the reference signifies more than geographical positioning. Mark Mazower, *The Balkans*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2000, pp. 1–4.

¹⁹ Although she acknowledges that Transylvania – acquired by Romania in 1918 – has a 'secondary role', Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804–1999: Nationalism, war and the Great Powers*, London, Granta Books, 1999, pp. xxi–xxii.

²⁰ Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The imperialism of the imagination*, New Haven; London, Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 2–8.

²¹ Edith Sellers, 'Poor Relief in the Balkans', *The Contemporary Review*, July 1907, vol. 92, issue 213, p. 222.

²² Mazower, *The Balkans*, pp. 2–4; Glenny, *The Balkans*, pp. xxii–xxiii.

Powers. The emerging nation states were increasingly referred to as the Balkans. However, unlike their southern neighbours, the Romanian Principalities had never been governed by the Ottomans. Their looser vassal status within a broader imperial structure reduced Romania's capacity for a defining independence movement which became a hallmark of the Balkan states. Mark Mazower includes the country in his study, *The Balkans*, with the qualifier that the Danubian principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, 'fought over by Russia and Turkey for most of the 18th century ... were the most important example of those autonomous provinces that inhabited an intermediate space between total incorporation within an empire and independence'.²³ King Carol's dispute over Romania's Balkan identity in 1906 underlines this ambiguity, and the country's exclusion from the *British Encyclopaedia*'s 'Balkan peninsula' definition in 1910 suggests his distinction was in line with some British thinking.²⁴

Diana Mishkova observes that 'the scholar who contributed the most to the cultural-historical definition of the region before World War I was Nicolae Iorga, the founder of the Institute for the Study of Southeastern Europe in Bucharest in 1914'. In outspoken opposition to 'the Balkans' and the 'Balkan Peninsula', Romania's national historian and politician traced southeastern Europe (as distinct from Eastern Europe which he considered part of the 'Eurasian World') from the Carpathians to the Aegean, in a neat exposition of Romanian nationalism which incorporated Romanians from Transylvania in the north-west to those in Greece and Macedonia in the south.²⁵ This thinking informs the paradox that contemporary Romanian historian and politician, Adrian Cioroianu, identifies at the heart of Romania's national identity, whereby the country's independence under Carol in 1881 was part of a process where 'every step towards modernisation was perceived as a step away from the Balkans', in which the culminating event was the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition.²⁶

²³ Mazower, *ibid*, p. 86.

²⁴ *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn, vol. III, New York, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1910, pp. 258–61.

²⁵ Diana Mishkova, 'Balkans/Southeastern Europe', in Diana & Trencsényi, Balázs, (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries, A Conceptual History*, New York; Oxford, Berghahn, 2017, pp. 146–47; on the national significance of Nicolae Iorga see Maurice Pearson in Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak (eds), *Historians as Nation Builders: Central and South-East Europe*, Basingstoke, Macmillan & School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1988, ch. 10, pp. 157–72.

²⁶ Adrian Cioroianu, 'Impossible Escape: Romanians and the Balkans', in D. Bejelić and O. Savić (eds), *Balkan as a Metaphor: Between globalization and fragmentation*, Cambridge, MA; London, MIT Press, 2002, pp. 209, 215.

While Romania's 'insider' cultural ideas of its own place in European constellations were pitted against a Balkan concept always 'framed more from the outside than the inside',²⁷ their resistance to Balkan associations resonates with a powerful thesis in the West that Balkan was a byword for 'chaos, backwardness, savagery and obfuscation, superstition, sloth and moral dissolution'.²⁸ Hammond convincingly argues that these were the Peninsula's defining features in British Victorian discourse. In line with Said's recognition of the construction of a lesser 'other' for self-referential purposes, Hammond agrees with Todorova that negative characteristics were demanded of a Balkan discourse which served to emphasise Western Europe's symbolic cleanliness, order and justice.²⁹ Both Todorova and Mishkova identify a 'growing criticism of the Balkans' which hardened during the Balkan wars and World War I.³⁰ In this context Romania's 'radical overhaul to become European' in the late nineteenth century, dumping first its Greek and then its Ottoman heritage, is understandable both in terms of the country's desire to distance itself from the Turk, and from the Balkan Peninsula.³¹ If the small stock of British opinions on Romania in the late 1800s failed to pick up on the country's reimagining,³² Shona Kallestrup's contention that the international forms in the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition were overt manifestations of Romania's superiority over its non-Latin neighbours, suggests Romanians took the project seriously.³³

²⁷ Mishkova and Trencsényi, 'Introduction', in Mishkova and Trencsényi (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries*, p. 9.

²⁸ Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, p. 4.

²⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 1–19; Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 4–5.

³⁰ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 118–19. Mishkova, 'Balkans/Southeastern Europe', p. 145.

³¹ L. Boia, *Istorie și mit în constiința românească*, Bucharest, Humanitaș, 1997, pp. 183–94; Verdery has written a useful chapter on the development of a 'pro-western definition' of Romania and the 'later rise of an indigenist alternative to it', Katherine Verdery, 'Moments in the Rise of the Discourse on National Identity, Seventeenth Through Nineteenth Centuries', in Agrigoroaiei, I., Buzatu, Gh. & Cristian, V., (eds), *Românii în Istoria Universală*, vol.3, Iași, Universitatea Al. I. Cuza, 1988, pp. 25–60.

³² Beatty-Kingston felt he had 'quitted the modern world' in a country where the 'people were all but savages'; W. Beatty-Kingston, *A Wanderer's Notes*, London, Chapman & Hall, 1888, vol. II, p. 10; James Samuelson, *Roumania, Past and Present: Illustrated with maps*, London, Longmans Green & Co., 1882, pp. 38–40.

³³ Shona Kallestrup, 'Romanian "national style" and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition', *Journal of Design History*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2002, pp. 147–62; for pre-war European representations of Romania see §1.3.

However, while the identification of Balkanism as a negative term is broadly accurate, the tone of British political discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries questions Romania's presumption that in relation to its national identity Balkan associations were best avoided. During this period, a liberal sympathy for the 'national question' demanded a fresh understanding of the Peninsula.³⁴ The precedent was established early in the nineteenth century, when Greek independence framed against Ottoman aggression witnessed a subsequent rise in philhellenism encapsulated through the work of Lord Byron.³⁵ Mixing morality with politics, Liberal opposition leader William Gladstone's championing of Bulgaria in 1876 was Britain's most famous response to a series of national struggles against the Turkish infidel which were frequently used to pillory Tory Foreign policy in public discourse.³⁶ It is historian of East European nationalism, Hroch, who argues that 'a clearly defined external enemy' increased pressure on the 'national acceleration' phase of nation building, when the idea of national identity spreads beyond the elite few.³⁷ Applying this observation to the Balkan rubric, it is striking that the Turkish enemy also helped define countries like Greece, Bulgaria and Macedonia in British thinking.³⁸ Romania, unlike its Balkan neighbours, lacked an equivalent 'Crescent versus the Cross' narrative and therefore missed out on the sympathetic imaging which accompanied it.

In the early twentieth century the task of representing the Balkans in Britain was assumed by the Balkan Committee, an organisation founded in direct response to the 1903 Macedonian Uprising, with the intention of 'awakening and focusing public interest and for supplying accurate information and just views to a too ignorant

³⁴ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 4–8.

³⁵ Stephen Minta, *On a Voiceless Shore: Byron in Greece*, New York, H. Holt, 1998; in 1915 the *Spectator* wrote of the enduring sympathy between the Greeks and British thanks to 'the England of Byron', *Spectator*, 27 Nov 1915.

³⁶ Testimony to the power of the press coverage during the Bulgarian uprising, much of it was later reprinted by the Balkan Committee, *Leaflets and Pamphlets, The Balkan Committee*, published by The Balkan Committee, London, 1912.

³⁷ M. Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History, Nation, nationalism, social change*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007, pp. 78–79, 95–96.

³⁸ The Greek independence movement was captured in the work of Byron. Stephen Minta, *On a Voiceless Shore, Byron in Greece*, New York, H. Holt, 1998; The *Spectator* wrote of the enduring sympathy between the Greeks and British thanks to 'the England of Byron', *Spectator*, 27 Nov 1915.

public'.³⁹ Over 300 public meetings and conferences were held in the autumn of 1903 alone, and as one disapproving publication put it, the Committee enjoyed 'adventitious advertisement ... extorted from the press',⁴⁰ and tapped into what Stefan Collini has identified as an intelligentsia driven by concerns for a liberal, humanitarian world order that was loosely aligned with the Liberal party and progressivist opinion.⁴¹

The Committee consisted of well-connected, liberal men who occupied an array of powerful positions within parliament, the established church and the liberal/radical press⁴² and had the capacity to challenge British foreign policy decision-making at the highest levels.⁴³ Invariably steering clear of the trickier nationalist conflicts that saw Christian pitched against Christian, the Balkan Committee's key argument was about freedom versus oppression, in what founding member Charles Buxton referred to as 'Europe unredeemed'.⁴⁴ Romania was not included in that unredeemed Europe, nor was it included in the oeuvre of work produced by various Balkan Committee members with specific interests in certain 'pet' Balkan states.⁴⁵

In contrast to the more straightforward claims of most Balkan countries, Romania's efforts to contest the welfare of a 200,000 strong Aromanian population⁴⁶ (a Romance-speaking people of Romanian descent spread through the southern Balkans)

³⁹ The Balkan Committee's first President, James Bryce, cited in Perkins, *British Liberalism and the Balkans*, p. 146.

⁴⁰ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 11–16; *ibid.*, pp. 105–12; 'Open Letter to the Balkan Committee', *Near East: A review of Oriental politics, finance and literature*, Mar 1908, p. 7.

⁴¹ Stefan Collini, *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 90–109.

⁴² A list of all the founding members is republished in *Leaflets and Pamphlets, The Balkan Committee*, 1912.

⁴³ Foreign Secretary Landsdowne lived in 'terror' of the Balkan Committee's ability to stir up controversy. F. R. Bridge, 'Relations with Austria-Hungary and the Balkan States, 1905–1908', in F. H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 167.

⁴⁴ C. Buxton, 'Europe Unredeemed', *Albany Review*, vol. 2, no. 10, 10 Jan 1908, pp. 373–82; The Balkan Committee, *Macedonian Massacres – Photos from Macedonia*, London, 1907, pp. 8–9.

⁴⁵ Examples include Henry. N. Brailsford, *Macedonia: Its races and their future*, London, Methuen, 1906; M. E. Durham, *High Albania with illustrations by the author and map*, London, Edward Arnold, 1909.

⁴⁶ In line with much contemporary commentary Greene referred to the Aromanians as 'Kutzo-Vlachs', British Ambassador Conyngham Greene to Foreign Secretary Edward Grey, 14 Jan 1907, File 1461, FO371/316, TNA.

had an adverse impact on relations with the Christian Greeks, not the Turks.⁴⁷ Raising the issue was regarded by the British Ambassador in Bucharest, Sir Conyngham Greene, as a piece of unwise political game-playing; he thought Romania was trying to 'establish a claim in some future settlement of the Balkan Question'.⁴⁸ The country's championing of this minority failed to resonate in a broader Balkan dialogue and drew uncomfortable comparisons with Romania's own failure to emancipate its sizeable Jewish population.⁴⁹

Further complicating the idea of Romania as Balkan was the publication of the *Near East*, a British journal established in 1908 to enlighten the public to 'matters relating to the Ottoman Empire', in direct opposition to the Balkan Committee's 'ridiculous' proposals and 'hysterical sentiment'. The publication covered a broad sweep of countries including 'the Balkan states, Egypt, Persia and India' and gave 'Latin' Romania preferential treatment over its Balkan rivals.⁵⁰ This recognised gulf in British discourse between the Balkans and their northern neighbour is reflected in recent historiography. Examining the British Liberals' relationship with the Balkans between 1875 and 1925, Perkins does not include Romania in his thesis.⁵¹ A country which by the 1900s had good relations with the Ottoman Empire, and was better known as a 'persecuting power' of its Jewish minority,⁵² did not appeal to Britain's liberal conscience. Romania is featured in Michail's *The British and the Balkans* but the country's position is ambiguous. Michail argues that without the Balkan Committee, 1900 to 1910 would have been 'a forgotten decade for the Balkans' and claims that the only other newsworthy event coming from the region was the Serbian regicide of

⁴⁷ The campaign to protect the rights of the Aromanians gained momentum in 1877–78 at the time of the Russo–Turkish war and was particularly centred on contested Macedonia.

⁴⁸ Greene to Grey, 14 Jan 1907, File 1461, FO 371/316, TNA.

⁴⁹ The Conjoint Jewish Committee cited Romania's support for its Kutzo-Vlach Diaspora under the terms of the Treaty of Berlin as an example of the country's hypocritical treatment towards its Jewish population at home. President of the London Committee of Deputies of British Jews and President of the Anglo-Jewish Association to Grey, 25 June 1908, 22161, FO371/511, TNA.

⁵⁰ *Near East: A review of Oriental politics, finance and literature*, 1908, Mar pp. 3, 7, May, p. 76, June, pp. 122–33. It dropped that subtitle in 1909 and increasingly focused on trade. Initially monthly, it became a weekly publication in May 1911. See §3.1 for an assessment of Romania as a Latin country in pre-war British discourse.

⁵¹ Perkins, 'British Liberalism and the Balkans'.

⁵² Fred. C. Conybeare, 'Roumania as a Persecuting Power', *The National Review*, Feb 1901, vol. 36, issue 216, pp. 818–37.

1903.⁵³ Although elsewhere in his book, the scope of which extends to 1950, Romania is referenced, it is significant that Michail overlooks Romania's Peasants' Revolt in 1907 and does not articulate where the country fitted into his definition of 'Balkan' during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Confusion concerning an identifiable Balkan Romania is compounded through Britain's embrace of South East Europe's most celebrated motif, the peasant. Hobsbawm identifies a 'romantic passion for the pure, simple and uncorrupted peasantry' in European nationalism,⁵⁴ and in an era when Darwinian evolutionism provided racism with a powerful set of tools against the foreigner, in Britain the peasant as the repository for racial purity had broad appeal. Military anxieties concerning the degeneration and decline of the British male fuelled this trend and the national past was celebrated in a revival of folk culture and village imagery that was used by commentators on both the left and right.⁵⁵

Martin Wiener argues that by the turn of the twentieth century the southern metaphor of Englishness as 'romantic, illogical, muddled, divinely lucky, Anglican, aristocratic, traditional, frivolous' was triumphing over the industrial idea of England. In 1902 Prime Minister Arthur Balfour's cousin, Rudyard Kipling, looked to England's rural past to assuage his imperial anxieties, writing of a happily 'primitive peasantry' in an England 'made up of trees and green fields and mud and gentry'.⁵⁶ Complementing this conservative imagery, Perkins argues that the peasant was 'at the heart of British liberal interactions with the Balkans'; it was through idealised constructions of Balkan life, they 'found something that was missing' at home.⁵⁷ This discovery of a positive Balkan construct sees Perkins attack the Saidian assumption that societies 'derive a

⁵³ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 6–7, 14.

⁵⁴ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 103–4

⁵⁵ Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850–1980*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 55–56; the popularisation of folk culture was a manifestation of the 'new romanticism' that emerged in the early twentieth century. Frank Trentmann, 'Civilization and its Discontents: English New-Romanticism and the transformation of anti-modernism in 20th century western culture', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Oct 1994, vol. 29, no. 4, p. 584; For a classic account of English ruralism and the southern English metaphor, Alun Howkins, 'The discovery of rural England', in Robert Colls and Philip Dodds (eds), *Englishness, Politics and Culture, 1880–1920*, London, Bloomsbury, 2011 [1986], pp. 85–111; see §3.1 for more on the peasant in military thinking.

⁵⁶ Wiener, *English Culture*, pp. 55–56.

⁵⁷ Perkins, 'British Liberalism and the Balkans', pp. 133–38.

sense of their identities negatively' through contradistinction with 'others'. He insists that representations of the Balkans were more nuanced and sympathetic than Todorova's and Hammond's generally inferior Balkan constructs allow for.⁵⁸ Although Perkins confines his study to Balkan Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece,⁵⁹ imagery of both Romanian and Balkan peasantry was frequently conflated in a public discourse which readily admitted its own ignorance. 'Does anyone who has not travelled in this part of Europe realise, for instance, the difference between a country like Rumania and a country like Servia? Do they understand what Greece is?'⁶⁰

Alex Drace-Francis notes that the idea of Romanians as peasants in European thinking had ancient roots, and concedes that in the mid-nineteenth century 'perhaps it was inevitably more natural for a Western author to focus on the figure of the peasant as a symbol of purity and simplicity' than it was for a Romanian writer.⁶¹ The favourable impression the peasant made in Western Europe emboldened Romania's commitment to the image of the peasant as a nation symbol.⁶² At the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris, Romania almost chose a peasant smallholding for their Pavilion, sending both the architect's plan and a selection of peasant costumes to be exhibited, and by 1876 the Romanian royal family had begun appropriating peasant clothes as a 'national costume'.⁶³ In British discourse, when Romanian aristocrat, Tereza Stratilesco, discovered the British 'knew but little' about Romania, she wrote a book in 1906 that 'simply aims at showing and describing what the Roumanian nation is, or at least the genuine and most interesting part of it, the peasants'.⁶⁴ The *Times Literary Supplement* appreciated this 'full and closely-detailed study with much historical matter, of the

⁵⁸ Ibid., 139–40, 142.

⁵⁹ Perkins notes that Albania complicated many of the liberals' civilising arguments courtesy of its Muslim population. Perkins, *British Liberalism and the Balkans*, p. 126.

⁶⁰ George Raffalovich, 'Turkey and the Balkans', *Vanity Fair*, 20 Sep 1911, pp.38-39.

⁶¹ Alex Drace-Francis, *The Traditions of Invention, Romanian Ethnic and Social Stereotypes in Historical Context*, Brill, Leiden, 2013, pp. 11-59. For Queen's Elizabeth's literary depictions of the Romanian peasant see §1.3, p. 85.

⁶² See particularly ch. 18, 'Literature, Society, Nation: The Maiorescu-Gherea polemic', for an analysis of the importance accorded to the peasant in late nineteenth-century Romanian literature; Alex Drace-Francis, *The Making of Modern Romanian Culture: Literacy and the development of national identity*, London; New York, Tauris Academic Studies, 2006, pp. 178–95.

⁶³ Drace-Francis, *The Traditions of Invention*, pp. 57-8.

⁶⁴ Tereza Stratilesco, *From Carpathian to Pindus: Pictures of the Roumanian country life ... with two maps and sixty-three illustrations*, London, T. Fischer Unwin, 1906, p. v.

Rumanian peasant in relation to the soil, the state, religion, foreigners and society'.⁶⁵ In *Vanity Fair*, writer George Raffalovich described his Romanian host as 'an enthusiast for his country's art and folk-lore' in a house with furniture 'embroidered by the peasants'.⁶⁶ If the much heralded tension with the Turk was specific to certain 'Balkan' states, the idea of a timeless peasant society was also applicable to Romania. Harold Hartley tried to solicit Romania for a Balkan Exhibition in Earls Court, memorable for the 'exoticism of village life'⁶⁷ in a region broadly known for its 'native peasants and dancers and singers'.⁶⁸

But peasant Romania had a fault line that did not exist in other Balkan states. In 1915 Balkan Committee member Noel Buxton wrote *War and the Balkans*, in which Romania sat alongside other Balkan people as 'races of peasants' which 'have the "bon sang" of those who have lived and whose ancestors have lived for many generations on the soil'. However, Buxton, an avid Bulgariophile, distinguished between the Balkan 'peasants with holdings of their own, with a consciousness of having something to fall back upon and a clear sense of the stake they hold in their country' and Romania, where 'the distribution of wealth is extremely unequal' and there is 'a degree of abject poverty not known in Sofia, Belgrade or Athens'.⁶⁹ Unlike their Balkan neighbours, Romania's dependence on vast feudal estates more closely resembled the social structure of neighbouring Russia.⁷⁰ Mazower observes, '1 per cent of the landowners held nearly 50 per cent of the arable and grazing lands, while perhaps eighty-five per cent of peasant cultivators were operating at or below subsistence level.'⁷¹

Unlike other Balkan countries, Romania's governance, without popular support and prone to intermittent upheavals, including a large rebellion in 1888, failed to conform to the nation-building models on which Hobsbawm and Hroch premise many

⁶⁵ *Times Literary Supplement*, 16 Nov 1906.

⁶⁶ Raffalovich, 'Turkey and the Balkans', p. 38.

⁶⁷ Steward, 'The Balkans in London', *Balkan Studies*, p. 82.

⁶⁸ *Daily Graphic*, 6 May 1907, cited in *ibid.*

⁶⁹ Noel Edward Buxton, Baron, *The War and the Balkans*, [S.I.], Allen and Unwin, 1915, pp. 18–19, 53.

⁷⁰ Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 40.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40; For more on the condition of the Romanian peasant see D. Hurezeanu and M. Iosa, 'Social, Economic and Political Condition of the Peasants in the Early 20th Century' in Ion Ilincioiu, *The Great Romanian Peasant Revolt of 1907*, București, Editura Academiei Române, 1991, pp. 9–41.

of their arguments.⁷² In 1906 Alfred Stead, one of the few British men who supported Romania in public discourse (and was employed to do so by the Romanian government the following year),⁷³ worked hard to counter ideas that the country's hierarchical structure was a national weakness. In an article called 'The Japan of Europe', in his father's publication, *Review of Reviews*, Stead modelled Romania on Asia's most advanced nation and its Meiji imperial restoration. 'Today the country is one of the principal grain exporting countries of the world, and the lot of the peasants, formerly so low, has been improved.'⁷⁴ The same year Stratilesco's book also played down rural divides and focused on the 'spirit' of the Romanian peasant, his vernacular verse, traditional dress and religious practises.⁷⁵

Arguably, the uncomfortable contradiction at the heart of Romania's peasant society might have gone more or less unnoticed were it not for the 1907 Peasants' Revolt, which began in the northern region of Moldova and soon engulfed the whole country. The worst uprising in modern Balkan history, claiming an estimated 11,000 lives,⁷⁶ the extreme nature of the rebellion appealed to Britain's rapidly expanding press. Extensive coverage in the leading pictorial weekly, *Illustrated London News*, epitomised the conflict at the heart of Romania's national identity. The front-page headline was 'The Bloodshed and Pillage in Roumania' and there were dramatic pictures of cavalry patrols sabring rioters and rebels burning farmhouses. Inside the same publication, rural images represented the 'Types of Agrarian Agitators', including 'a picturesque Roumanian bride and bridegroom' in embroidered wedding costumes, 'A bullock-cartful of bridesmaids', gypsy women smoking a 'peaceful pipe', and a 'quaint

⁷² Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*; Hroch, *Nation, nationalism, social change*.

⁷³ See p. 59.

⁷⁴ W. T. Stead edited the *Review of Reviews*. Alfred Stead, 'The Japan of Europe', *Review of Reviews*, July 1906, vol. 34, p. 72.

⁷⁵ Stratilesco concludes peasant-landlord relations were 'not very cordial' merely due to residual bad habits and lack of trust; Stratilesco, *From Carpathian to Pindus*, pp. 80–117.

⁷⁶ The figure of 11,000 dead is still contested: 'Răscoala de la 1907, atrocități și manipulare', *România Liberă*, 17 Mar 2007; 'Armata și răscoala din 1907. Care este cifra reală a celor uciși?', *Historia*, Mar 2007, <https://www.historia.ro/sectiune/actualitate/articol/armata-si-rascoal-a-din-1907-care-este-cifra-reala-a-celor-ucisi> accessed 12 Aug 2019; The Government mobilised all available armed forces, with *Adevărul* claiming 'about 150, 000 men are on a war footing', C. Fotino and A. Iordache, 'Suppression of the Revolt', in Ilincioiu, *The Great Roumanian Peasant Revolt*, p. 178. Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 40.

Roumanian bullock-wagon' with peasant girls carrying baskets of grapes.⁷⁷ Coverage of the prolonged revolt lasted for nearly a month and saw these bi-focal images give way to lurid reporting that hardened perceptions of Romania as violent and backward.⁷⁸

Already the men, women and children slaughtered number thousands. Heaven alone knows when these scenes of barbarous ferocity, of fire and pillage, of things worse than the vilest murder will cease ... Officers captured by the peasants have been treated with awful cruelty. Petroleum was poured over engineer Captain Botez and he was roasted alive. A captured Lieutenant's hands were cut off and he was otherwise tortured.⁷⁹

Edwardian Britain was presented with a horror story from the other side of Europe that questioned the very nature of Romanian statehood.

Within a week the *Illustrated London News* focused exclusively on efforts to crush the rebellion.⁸⁰ In the context of Gellner's reminder that 'the state is the specialization and concentration of order maintenance', Romania's image as a modern nation had been thoroughly undermined.⁸¹ The *Manchester Guardian* was pessimistic about its capacity to handle the crisis; Romanian troops had resorted to 'savagery' and 'wholesale executions' to deal with rioters. Seventeen peasants set fire to granaries and the officer, 'not being satisfied that all were dead, fired a bullet into the head of every single one'.⁸² Analysis of a 'corrupt and very far from sincere' political elite and a 'miserable' peasantry, 'treated like slaves' and living in conditions 'little better than pre-1864 serfdom', offered little hope in a country where 'the landowners and farmers hold the government of Roumania in their hands'.⁸³ *The Times* agreed in an analysis which contradicts A. Deac's conclusion that 'the prevailing British view on the revolt was reactionary'.⁸⁴ Retrospectively in 1915, even Britain's best-known Romanian 'expert' and sympathiser, R. W. Seton-Watson, could not exonerate the country, admitting that the 'agrarian problem is the weakest spot in Roumania's armour', citing

⁷⁷ *Illustrated London News*, 6 Apr 1907.

⁷⁸ For the impact of the popular press on the changing tone and focus of reporting see Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, pp. 12, 15–16.

⁷⁹ *Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times*, 6 Apr 1907.

⁸⁰ *Illustrated London News*, 13 Apr 1907.

⁸¹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983, pp. 2–4.

⁸² *Manchester Guardian*, 18 Apr 1907.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 29 Mar, 8 Apr 1907.

⁸⁴ *The Times*, 28 Mar 1907; A. Deac, 'Reflections abroad of the Great Peasant Revolt', in Ilincioiu, *The Great Romanian Peasant Revolt*, p. 280.

‘the very grave outbreak of 1907 which was put down by the military with quite undue severity’.⁸⁵

Indicative of the seriousness with which Romania took this dent to its international image was the appointment of Alfred Stead as Romanian Consul-General in London that same year. A rare voice who had previously championed the country, Stead’s appointment was a judicious one.⁸⁶ But the corrosive impact of the rebellion compounded doubts in the Foreign Office over a country they struggled to take seriously. Ambassador Greene wrote of ‘the exciting times we’ve been having here’, before conceding the Peasants’ Revolt ‘has I fear thrown back the country a long way and damaged its prestige abroad’.⁸⁷ If newspaper coverage lasted for the duration of the month-long riots, the impression of an unstable country lingered on in government circles. In May 1908 Greene insisted that ‘the agrarian insurrection of last year takes us back to the Middle Ages’. Peace only reigns ‘for a while’ and it is hard to say ‘how long this state of trance’ will last, as ‘the peasantry will wake up some day’.⁸⁸

These persistent and unforgiving representations in both public and political discourse conform to Todorova’s identification of a more general Balkan rubric associated with ‘uncivilised, primitive, crude, cruel’ men.⁸⁹ Specifically in the pre-war period, Michail identifies negative imagining in the extensive coverage of the Serbian Regicide, which also featured common themes of ‘revulsion’ and ‘unspoken fascination’ that were used to extrapolate generalisations about Serbia and the Balkans.⁹⁰ In this context Michail’s failure to acknowledge the Peasants’ Revolt is significant, suggesting that while violence was regarded as a parameter for Balkanism, violence by, for and against the peasant – repository for all that was good in the Balkans

⁸⁵ R. W Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, London, Constable & Co., 1916, p. 28.

⁸⁶ Stead explained King Carol ‘was most anxious to cultivate closer intercourse with England and to improve existing relations both political and economical’; Greene to Tyrrell, 243, 21 Oct 1907, FO800/71, TNA.

⁸⁷ Greene requests that the letter should be shown to Foreign Secretary Grey, Greene to Hardinge, 3 Apr 1907, *ibid*.

⁸⁸ Greene to Grey, 13 May 1908, FO 371/511, TNA.

⁸⁹ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 119.

⁹⁰ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 6–8.

– was a harder phenomenon to account for.⁹¹ Contemporary reports from 1907 confirm that despite Romania's 'savage' behaviour, any rare Balkan comparisons compounded the country's outsider status. Against Romania, Serbia was heralded as a 'Balkan' exception that had settled the agrarian question in favour of the peasantry, and Seton-Watson later noted of Romania, 'the situation of the peasantry is still very unfavourable compared to that of Serbia or Bulgaria'.⁹² The conservative *Spectator* cited Romania's landowning aristocratic structure as the reason why previously the country had 'been considered in Western Europe the best governed of the Balkan states' in a commentary that highlights the discrepancies between conservative and liberal/progressive thinking and underlines Romania's anomalous status in both.⁹³

In 1907 rebel Romania was not convincingly identified in a Balkan rubric, pejorative or otherwise. However, the behaviour of their peasantry with its 'element of Eastern cruelty'⁹⁴ did confirm the country's location in 'the shadowed lands of backwardness, even barbarism' that Wolff identifies as features of a broader Eastern Europe construct which included Russia.⁹⁵ By early 1907 Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey was leading a controversial rapprochement with Russia that culminated in the signing of the Anglo-Russian convention on 7 September 1907.⁹⁶ Valentine Chirol, the foreign editor of *The Times* (a paper associated with government policy and one which supplied most of the regional papers with their foreign stories), was persuaded to adopt a pro-Russian stance. But the 1903 Kishinev Pogrom and 1905 Revolution were untimely reminders of the country's instability and anti-Semitism in a British discourse which remained cautious about the political wisdom of embracing Russian Tsardom.⁹⁷

⁹¹ For the most recent assessment of the Peasants' Revolt in an Eastern European context see Irina Marin, *Peasant Violence and Anti-Semitism in early twentieth century Eastern Europe*, Basingstoke, Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018.

⁹² The article claimed Serbia was 'the only Balkan state where agrarian matters are in a settled condition' when in fact Romania's landowning/serf structure was the anomaly, not Serbia's. Inaccuracies like this were commonplace in Balkan reporting. *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times*, 6 Apr 1907; Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 28.

⁹³ *Spectator*, 30 Mar 1907.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, pp. 1–5.

⁹⁶ For the implications of the 1907 Convention see Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, pp. 344–85.

⁹⁷ For Chirol and his compromise over Russia see *ibid.* For an examination of the public antipathy towards Russia in 1905 and compromises expected of Chirol, see Raphael

The opportunity to publicly examine similar problems in neighbouring Romania (including the widely reported anti-Semitic nature of the rebellion, discussed in §1.2) provided Britain with a politically neutral context in which to air broader concerns.

The *Spectator* opined, ‘the poorer class of the peasantry in Russia are hardly better off than in Romania and we have seen with the past fortnight how swiftly agrarian despair may break through the veneer of civilisation’.⁹⁸ According to *The Times*, ‘the situation is exceedingly grave – graver than seems realised by the outer world’. The revolt exhibited ‘indications that a widespread organisation is at work’ and with the involvement of ‘anarchist societies over the Russian frontier ... the influence of Russian revolutionary movements is everywhere apparent’.⁹⁹ The *Review of Reviews* concurred: ‘Anarchist societies over the Russian frontier are said to have been stirring up the peasantry’.¹⁰⁰ Efforts to implicate Russia in coverage of the rebellion were politically motivated but, echoing the rationale of Gellner that a state must facilitate order, they also helped to explain a revolt which was otherwise hard to understand. Inverting the rules of Hroch’s ‘agitation phase’ of nation-building, the peasants were agitating against their own Romanian leaders.¹⁰¹ It wasn’t until the beginning of April that the *Manchester Guardian* dismissed the Romanian government’s attempts to blame the ‘sailors of Potemkin, trade unionists and socialists’ as a ruse to distract from the real culprits of the rebellion – ‘the absentee landlords and farmers’ who treat the peasants like ‘slaves’.¹⁰²

In 1905 Whitehall had spoken of the ‘re-establishment of Russia in “the Councils of Europe”’. London’s press and politicians were aware that ‘the real concern was to lay the foundations for a new political system for Europe’ and the *Daily*

Utz, ‘Revolution, Diplomacy and the Media: Russia and British Liberals in 1906’, in Felicitas Fischer Von Weikersthal, Frank Grüner, Susanne Hohler, Franziska Schedewie and Raphael Utz (eds), *The Russian Revolution of 1905 in Transcultural Perspective: Identities, peripheries and the flow of ideas*, Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, 2013, pp. 292–309.

⁹⁸ *Spectator*, 30 Mar 1907.

⁹⁹ *The Times*, 28, 30 Mar 1907.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 28 Mar 1907; ‘The Jacquerie in Moldavia’, Apr 1907, *Review of Reviews*, vol. 35, p. 342.

¹⁰¹ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 2–4; Hroch, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation’, p. 7.

¹⁰² *Manchester Guardian*, 10 Apr 1907.

Telegraph concluded, 'The Grouping of the Powers has begun.'¹⁰³ This geopolitical shift had direct implications for the balance of power and, more specifically, expansive Russian ambitions in the Balkans. Unsurprisingly given the timing of the Peasants' Revolt and Romania's geographical location between two opposing empires, the country's volatility served as a warning shot against further instability. In a prophetic article, the *Review of Reviews* was pessimistic about the wider repercussions of the rebellion:

Neither Austria nor Russia can afford to see an agrarian *jacquerie* blaze up, heaven high, just across their frontiers. No one can say how far such a conflagration might spread, and when, once the international fire brigades are called into action to extinguish the conflagration in their neighbours' territories, no one knows how soon they may come into collision with each other.¹⁰⁴

Although internationally discrediting Romania, the rebellion also served as a reminder of the country's potential geopolitical significance. Reports of Bulgaria and Austria dispatching steamers to evacuate their nationals and Austrian, Russian, Serbian and Bulgarian troops gathering on Romania's frontiers to prevent contagion emphasised the danger.¹⁰⁵ Hroch's and Hobsbawm's respective identification of the significant role of an 'external factor' in the emergence of the nation state or 'actual or threatened violence' in relation to 'post-imperial migratory unmixings' help contextualise British expectations of further regional instability.¹⁰⁶ Despite Romania's close allegiance with neighbouring Austria-Hungary, the *Review of Reviews* acknowledged the role of 'bands of peasants from across the Austrian frontier' and connected the Kingdom with its three-million strong minority in the Dual monarchy.¹⁰⁷ Just months earlier, the British ambassador had observed Romania's loyalty to the Hapsburgs was conditional upon the

¹⁰³ Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p. 348.

¹⁰⁴ 'The Jacquerie in Moldavia', p. 342; Deac notes that the Revolt had a 'far-reaching echo in Austria-Hungary where it was referred to as a peasant war, Deac, 'Reflections abroad of the Great Peasant Revolt', pp. 265-73.

¹⁰⁵ *Manchester Guardian*, 30 Mar, 3 Apr 1907.

¹⁰⁶ Hroch, *Nation, nationalism, social change*, pp. 80, 103; review by E. Hobsbawm, 'Reviewed Work: Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe, by Rogers Brubaker', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Nov 1999, vol. 105, no. 3, p. 845.

¹⁰⁷ 'The Jacquerie in Moldavia', p. 342.

close relationship between King Carol and Emperor Francis Joseph and should not be taken for granted.¹⁰⁸

Romania's dislocation in 1907 was a reminder of its strategic location between Austria-Hungary and Russia at a time when Britain's foreign policy was pivoting towards the latter.¹⁰⁹ Located on the crossroads between two empires and with an ambiguous political allegiance to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, Romania's status in South East Europe would rise over the next decade. However, the more immediate impact of the revolt was the confirmation of long-held Western prejudices about the eastern half of Europe. Complicating ideas that Balkanism was the natural repository for negative generalisations, the coverage of the 1907 rebellion did not frame it as Balkan, but rather underlined the profoundly disturbing nature of statehood in a more general eastern 'savage Europe'. This commentary on Romanian violence and upheaval served Britain a salutary reminder of the company it was seeking through rapprochement with Russia – 'the land of mystery, gloom and death'.¹¹⁰

1.2 Romania's Jewish Question and the Peasants' Revolt

Reviewing the image of the pre-war Balkans in 1915, renowned historian and Balkan Committee member George Trevelyan argued that 'all that the average Englishman knew about Roumania was that the Jews were denied civil rights there'.¹¹¹ In Romania's case, a persistent failure to resolve its Jewish Question predated the country's incremental journey to independent Kingdom, and defined it in a period when alternative external representations of Romania were limited. Guided by Brubaker's model for reframing nationalities, this section will suggest that two of the competing

¹⁰⁸ Greene to Grey, 1 Jan 1907, 1461, FO 371/316, TNA.

¹⁰⁹ Russian 'expert' and influential *Daily Telegraph* correspondent Dr Emile J. Dillon was to increasingly focus on Romania's critical position in the solidification of political alliances prior to World War I. See Chapter 2.

¹¹⁰ *Through Savage Europe* was the title of journalist Harry de Windt's 1907 book which included the Balkans and 'European Russia.' When de Windt crossed between Romania and Russia, 'mystery, gloom and death' were used to describe pending Russia, having said goodbye to 'the neat white homesteads and fertile fields and gardens of southern Rumania!' Harry de Windt, *Through Savage Europe. Being the narrative of a journey, undertaken as special correspondent of the 'Westminster Gazette' ... with one hundred illustrations*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1907, p. 260.

¹¹¹ G. M. Trevelyan, 'Serbia Revisited', *Contemporary Review*, Jan 1915, vol. 107, p. 273.

nationalisms he identifies in post-World War I Central and Eastern Europe found their equivalents in the very different context of pre-World War I Romania. In particular, it will examine Romania's significant Jewish population as a national minority with a double 'field of struggle', which necessitated representations of the host nation as oppressive.¹¹²

Brubaker recognises that 'external perceptions' of different nationalisms and the political stance they help justify and sustain are important.¹¹³ This section will look specifically at British perspectives of Romania's Jewish Question, including an assessment of Jewish imagery during the Peasants' Revolt, to analyse that theory. It will acknowledge that Trevelyan's comment was a product of the historian's liberal politics and argue that any examination of Romania's Jewish Question in British discourse must take into account the increasingly conflicted image of the Jew in this period.¹¹⁴ This section will identify persistent Anglo-Jewish lobbying at government level that undermined the reputation of Romania's political class. It will consider the impact of these representations against rising anti-Semitism in Britain and concerns regarding Jewish immigration that saw the volatile Romanian construct partially engulfed within a broader East European identity.

Conforming to Brubaker's identification of competing nationalisms embedded in the post-war period, in 1919 Romania the insecure nationalising nation clashed with the demands of its expanded minority population, including the Jews.¹¹⁵ If the issue was temporarily contained with the signing of the Minority Treaty in December 1919¹¹⁶, the interplay between Romania's different national fields began much earlier. Fulfilling Brubaker's national minority criteria, Romania's Jewish community was at its most effective in the late nineteenth century when its demands for enfranchisement dovetailed with a sympathetic international reception to Jewish representations of Romania as an oppressive state.

¹¹² Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 64–65.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*,

¹¹⁴ Johnson emphasises Britain's 'innately complex' attitudes towards the Jewish Question, Sam Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews: Britain and Eastern Europe's 'Jewish Question' 1867–1925*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 14.

¹¹⁵ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 2–4.

¹¹⁶ For more on the Minorities Treaty see §5.2.

Romania's contested minority were predominantly Ashkenazi Jews who arrived in the country's northern region, Moldova, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, having fled war and persecution in Russia and Galicia. Although they never represented more than 5% of the population, their rapid growth (10,000 Jews in Moldavia in 1803 compared with 269,000 in 1899) and increased visibility in towns due to discriminatory measures, coincided with the thrusting nationalism of an embryonic state keen to define itself in the face of overpowering neighbours.¹¹⁷ By 1866, despite its liberal pretensions, Romania's constitution failed to emancipate the Jews in a country where anti-Semitism had become a 'genuine state institution'¹¹⁸ and 'an integral part of the intellectual life' to the extent 'that being Romanian became synonymous with being an anti-Semite'.¹¹⁹ If, as will be discussed in §1.3, externally Romania sought to assert the Latin credentials of its core nation, internally a radical interpretation of that Romanian nationalism excluded the Jews.

In a straightforward example of what Hans Kohn identifies as ethnic nationalism in the East contrasting with civic nationalism in the West, the crystallisation of Romania's Jewish Question coincided with a period of enlightened liberalism in Western Europe which reached its apogee in the 1860s and 1870s.¹²⁰ Britain, France and Prussia had already achieved political and partial social emancipation that included their Jewish populations, and expectations ran high for the emerging nation states in South East Europe. However, Romania, with proportionally the region's largest Jewish minority, was destined to disappoint. Historian Sam Johnson argues that 'had British commentators been asked in the 1860s where in Europe the Jewish lot was at its worst,

¹¹⁷ Statistics cited in U. R. Henriques, 'Journey to Romania', in Sonia and V. D. Lipman (eds), *The Century of Moses Montefiore*, Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation in assoc. Jewish Historical Society of England, Oxford University Press, 1985, pp. 232–33; see also William Oldson, *A Providential Anti-Semitism: Nationalism and polity in nineteenth century Romania*, Philadelphia, American Philosophical Society, 1991; for a more nationalistic interpretation of Romania's Jewish situation in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see Carol Iancu, *Jews in Romania, 1866–1919: From exclusion to emancipation*, translated by Carvel de Bussy, Boulder, East European Monographs, New York, Columbia University Press, 1996, pp. 18–24.

¹¹⁸ Iancu, *Jews in Romania*, p. 10.

¹¹⁹ Oldson, *A Providential Anti-Semitism*, p. 9.

¹²⁰ Hans Kohn with a new introduction by Craig Calhoun, *The Idea of Nationalism: A study in its origins and background*, London, Routledge, 2017; Sugar borrows from Kohn's East European 'ethnic' model; see Peter F. Sugar, *East European Nationalism: Politics and religion*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1999.

there is no doubt that the majority would have pointed a condemnatory finger at Romania'.¹²¹

The issue's prominence in British dialogue was maintained through the work of the well-established Anglo-Jewish community at a time when little else was known about the country. From 1866, reports of persistent Jewish exclusion and persecution saw the Jewish Board of Deputies utilise their relationship with a sympathetic Foreign Office under Lord Stanley. Sanctioned by the British government, in 1867 the Board's octogenarian president Charles Montefiore travelled to Bucharest, enjoying official support and meetings in Paris and Austria en route.¹²² Significantly Montefiore met Romania's new German prince, Carol Hohenzollern, and the latter's reassurance regarding Romania's treatment of its Jews was published in *The Times*.¹²³ Receiving considerable press, the trip served to affirm Romania's nascent reputation as a backward other for which assurances were granted in the name of a foreign prince.¹²⁴ It was a reputation subsequently compounded through continual exposure of Romania's failure to resolve its Jewish Question by a well-organised trans-European network of Jewish organisations.

In time for the Congress of Berlin 1878, the Anglo-Jewish Association had created a shared platform with the Board of Jewish Deputies called the Conjoint Jewish Committee with the purpose of conducting Anglo-Jewish Foreign Policy.¹²⁵ Confirmation of the 'Jewish Question's' significance in political discourse was British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli's appearance at the Congress where he insisted that formal recognition of Romanian independence must depend on the promise of social and political equality for the Jews written into the treaty. The Great Powers stood in

¹²¹ Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews*, p. 16.

¹²² For a comprehensive account of Montefiore's trip to Romania in 1867 see Henriques, 'Journey to Romania', pp. 230–49.

¹²³ The *Jewish Chronicle* was unhappy with the wording of the letter which minimised the problem; *ibid.*, p. 245. Extracts of the letter were reprinted years later in *The Times*, 13 Feb 1903.

¹²⁴ Coverage included articles in the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* as well as the Jewish press and a report was sent to Lord Stanley at the Foreign Office. Henriques, 'Journey to Romania', pp. 245–46.

¹²⁵ For the establishment of the Conjoint Jewish Committee and its European network see M. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 2–7.

agreement and Romania was compelled to sign Article 44.¹²⁶ The year 1878 represented the high-water mark of international cooperation and a clear statement of Anglo-Jewry's ability to help frame Romania's independence in the context of its Jewish Question.¹²⁷

However, despite its legal obligations, Romania continued to prevaricate over Jewish emancipation and increased the legal restrictions on its Jews. Britain, which established a legation in Romania in 1880, began diplomatic relations with a country that was defined by its evasion of Article 44, an issue highlighted through ongoing communications from the Conjoint.¹²⁸ This context explains the genesis of George Trevelyan's comment. As one of Edwardian England's foremost liberal historians who blended a firm belief in the English traditions of liberty and religious freedom with a dislike of continental despotisms, he was particularly sensitive to Romania's refusal to emancipate their Jews.¹²⁹ However, Trevelyan's assumption that in the early twentieth century the public shared both his specific knowledge about Romania and his disapproval of Romanian anti-Semitism reflected the presumptions of a political figure, and should not be mistaken for British attitudes more generally.¹³⁰ By the turn of the century the existing model of Romania as a persecutor of the Jews in British discourse was clouded by several interconnected realities in the late Victorian period which implicated neighbouring Russia and that country's domination of the Jewish issue before World War I.

As discussed in §1.1, historiography has given considerable attention to the emergence of a Balkan rubric which included Romania, while much less space has been accorded to the country's shared border and history with Slavic Russia. An example of this Balkan preoccupation is historian Constantin Iordachi's framing of emerging

¹²⁶ Henriques, 'Journey to Romania', p. 247.

¹²⁷ Levene argues that the Congress of Berlin was the last time the Great Powers stood together on the Jewish Question, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 7–8.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹²⁹ Cannadine observes that Trevelyan drew on the 'liberal internationalist' traditions of his entire family and the networks they inhabited, David Cannadine, *G. M. Trevelyan: A Life in History*, London, Harper Collins, 1992, pp.59-92; See also D. Cannadine, 'George Macaulay Trevelyan (1876-1962)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition, published 23 Sep 2004, <https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezproxy2.londonlibrary.co.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36554> accessed 29 Sep 2018.

¹³⁰ Although Rose argues that British liberal opinion in this period has been underestimated; Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p. 6.

Romanian nationalism in the context of its Ottoman heritage. He argues the ‘thick’ definition of Romanian citizenship during the mid-nineteenth century had its roots in the laws of religious exclusion inherited from the early days of fifteenth-century Ottoman suzerainty when the Romanian principalities enjoyed relative autonomy in their internal affairs.¹³¹ He identifies a country that drew on previous administrative and legal practices to establish a national citizenry in the latter half of the nineteenth century that excluded the Jews. He compares Romania’s state evolution with Bulgaria’s, arguing the latter’s occupation by the Ottoman Empire resulted in a system which generally conferred rights on all permanent citizens and led to constitutional differences with Romania that would play in Bulgaria’s favour internationally as the Balkan nations rose to prominence in the early twentieth century.¹³² By focusing on the Balkans, Iordachi fails to account for Russian influence in Romania, which culminated in the invasion and occupation of the Principalities between 1828 and 1834. It was the subsequent rule of Russian Prince Kisselev that saw the implementation of a new constitution, *Réglements Organiques*, the legacy of which lived on post-1856 through the restrictive legislation that was applied to Jews.¹³³

If Romania was best known for its anti-Semitism in the 1860s, within 30 years shocking anti-Jewish violence in Imperial Russia (home to half the world’s Jewish population), culminating in the 1905 Kishinev pogrom, shifted international attention onto its much larger Slavic neighbour.¹³⁴ In her study of Russian, Polish and Romanian

¹³¹ Constantin Iordachi, ‘The Ottoman Empire – Syncretic nationalism and citizenship in the Balkans’, in Baycroft and Hewitson (eds), *What is a Nation?*, pp. 120–51; See also his recent monograph, Constantin Iordachi, *Liberalism, constitutional nationalism ad minorities: the making of Romanian citizenship, c. 1750-1919*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2019.

¹³² *Ibid.*, pp. 144–45; Iordachi’s argument that Ottoman occupation countered the ‘thick’ nationalism is challenged by the experiences of the Albanian minority in Serbia; see Djordje Stefanović, ‘Seeing the Albanians through Serbian Eyes: The inventors of the tradition of intolerance and their critics, 1808–1939’, *European History Quarterly*, 2005, 35.3, pp. 465–92.

¹³³ Iancu’s partial analysis of the Jewish Question attributes most of the blame for anti-Semitism in Romania during this period on the introduction of these Russian laws – ‘the representatives of the most anti-Semitic country of Europe inflicted special and discriminatory treatment also on the Jews of the principalities’. Iancu, *Jews in Romania*, p. 24–25.

¹³⁴ For the most recent account of the Kishinev pogrom see Steven J. Zipperstein, *Pogrom, Kishinev and the Tilt of History*, New York, Liveright Publishing, 2019; D. Dumitru, *The State, Antisemitism, and Collaboration in the Holocaust: The borderlands*

anti-Semitism, Johnson identifies how ‘crises entwined’ for Jews in these countries in the first decade of the twentieth century, but fails to acknowledge the increasing tendency in British discourse to consider the northern part of Eastern Europe as one amorphous anti-Semitic block. Russia’s annexation of the eastern parts of Bessarabia from the Principality of Moldavia in 1812 and the country’s acquisition of the whole region in the wake of the 1877–78 Turkish–Russo war helped compound the idea of Romania as part of a larger eastern identity, the hallmark of which quickly became anti-Semitism.¹³⁵ The existence of this broader, predominantly Russian construct is evident in Britain’s response to the arrival of growing numbers of Ostjuden – East European Jewish immigrants – in London’s East End, which led to the introduction of the country’s first immigration legislation, the 1905 Aliens Act.¹³⁶

A prelude to the 1905 Act, the 1903 Royal Commission on Alien Immigration identified Britain’s Jewish immigrants as being ‘practically all Russians or Poles.’ (In the ‘great year’ of migration from Romania, they still only made up 2,776 of Jewish immigrants, who numbered 30,000 a year on average.¹³⁷) The Russian Empire’s medieval treatment of their Jews was discussed at length by the Commission, with only a brief acknowledgement that Romania’s Jews were treated in the same way.¹³⁸ Major Evans-Gordon, MP for Stepney and member of the Commission, visited Romania during his investigative tour of the East, and his subsequent report (also published as a

of Romania and the Soviet Union, Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University in assoc. with United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Cambridge University, 2016, p. 28; Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants and Jews*, pp. 40–41.

¹³⁵ According to census returns in 1889, Jews made up approximately 11% of Bessarabia’s population. From 1835 the Russian-annexed part of Bessarabia was included in Russia’s Jewish Pale of Settlement (a designated area on the Western edge of the empire where 90% of Russia’s Jews were forced to reside). Dumitru, *The State, Antisemitism, and Collaboration in the Holocaust*, pp. 28–29.

¹³⁶ Glover looks at cultural representations of the Jew in the period immediately preceding the 1905 Act: D. Glover, *Literature, Immigration and Diaspora in Fin-de-Siècle England: A cultural history of the 1905 Aliens Act*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012; Johnson examines a broader period, 1867–1925, to establish who the Ostjuden were in the British mindset; Johnson, *Peasants, Pogroms, Jews*, pp. 182–202.

¹³⁷ The ‘great year’ was 1900. Major Evans-Gordon MP gave these comments and statistics: *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, vols 1–3, Report of Minutes and Evidence, London, Printed for his Majesty’s Stationary Office, 1903, pp. 817–18.

¹³⁸ Major Evans-Gordon’s evidence, *ibid.*, p. 17.

book in 1903) was comprehensive in its condemnation of Romania.¹³⁹ However, in terms of weighting and perception, his analysis predominantly concerned Russia. The *Times Literary Supplement* recommended his book as a means of forming an opinion regarding Jewish migration in Britain, America, Russia and Poland. No mention of Romania was made.¹⁴⁰

The Russian catch-all for East European Jewish migration was regularly used in the public sphere. De Maurier's Svengali, the best-known fictional Jew of the period, came from 'some remote province in Eastern Russia – out of the mysterious east!'¹⁴¹ Leo Amery, a British politician and journalist with Jewish heritage, was disdainful of 'the Jews in Poland and Russia or those who have just come from there'.¹⁴² Russia's size and political relevance guaranteed the attention of several well-established British correspondents.¹⁴³ Dr Emile Dillon, a journalist based in Russia and writing for the *Daily Telegraph* and *Contemporary Review*, was perhaps the best known. He kept Russia and its Jewish issue in the public eye when Romania received no equivalent attention.¹⁴⁴ In *Inventing Eastern Europe*, Wolff acknowledges an issue of adjacency in the eighteenth century, whereby neighbouring lands were often considered together and seen as representing a sort of geographical destiny.¹⁴⁵ He writes of Hungary, Bulgaria and Wallachia (the southern province of united Romania) occasionally being coloured together on a map of Europe due to Oriental associations under Ottoman rule and ancestral connections to Asia,¹⁴⁶ while Romania's northern province, Moldavia, which bordered Russia and had a large Jewish population originally from Russia, shared identity issues with its northern neighbour. In the late nineteenth century associations

¹³⁹ In the research Evans-Gordon submitted to the Commission, the Romanian section was summarised in two pages, *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, pp. 460–62; his book included a highly critical chapter on Romania: Major W. E. Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, London, William Heinemann, 1903, pp. 163–90.

¹⁴⁰ *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 Sep 1903.

¹⁴¹ Cited in Glover, *Literature, Immigration and Diaspora in Fin-de-Siècle England*, p. 96.

¹⁴² A 1917 letter cited in *The Leo Amery Diaries*, in *ibid.*, pp. 108–9.

¹⁴³ Rose stresses the connection between the media and diplomacy in the pre-war period, Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, pp. 12–23.

¹⁴⁴ The *Jewish Chronicle* took issue with the anti-Jewish bias in Dillon's reporting in the *Contemporary Review*; *Jewish Chronicle*, 30 Nov 1906; 11, 18 Jan 1907; *The Contemporary Review*, vol. 91, Jan 1907, pp. 124–25. For Dillon as a later Romanian champion see §2.1.

¹⁴⁵ Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 148.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

between Romania and its Jewish Question were increasingly subsumed into a larger Russian-dominated narrative which exhibited the standard tropes of ‘backwardness, even barbarism’, and chimed with the Eastern rubric identified in §1.1 during the Peasants’ Revolt.¹⁴⁷

By 1907 the impact of this anti-Semitic imaging in British discourse was complicated by increasingly contested interpretations of Eastern Europe’s Jewish Question. Sam Johnson, Alyson Pendlebury and Bryan Cheyette are three among several historians who have identified Britain’s hardening Semitic representations at the turn of the century.¹⁴⁸ East European Jewish immigrants predominantly clustered in cities and were framed as impoverished, visually striking ‘followers of that unbending orthodoxy enjoined by Rabbinical Law’.¹⁴⁹ By 1905 the unprecedented Aliens Act restricted the numbers entering Britain. The atmosphere was not conducive to sympathetic representations of Ostjuden Jews. Here it is instructive to return to Brubaker’s ‘national minority’ construct in the context of Romania’s Jews. Brubaker argues that a national minority’s successful articulation partially depends on the ability to portray its host country as oppressive. Self-evidently, if by the turn of the century Britain was focused on a more closed domestic agenda set on limiting the arrival of East European Jews, the incentive to portray the host countries as oppressive was minimised (although as the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration demonstrated, not eradicated). In 1902, the rash of additional restrictive legislation that Romania introduced against their Jews exorcised Britain’s Jewish press and attracted some attention in *The Times*.¹⁵⁰ However, the combination of domestic antipathy and a dominant Russian narrative saw Zionist Joseph Cowen at the annual meeting of the

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁴⁸ Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews*; A. Pendlebury, *Portraying ‘the Jew’ in First World War Britain*, London, Valentine Mitchell, 2006; B. Cheyette, *Constructions of ‘the Jew’ in English Literature and Society: Racial representations, 1875–1945*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

¹⁴⁹ 150,000 Jews lived in Britain. Spero argued that there was a cultural gulf between the new Eastern European arrivals and the English Jew, ‘boasting in many cases several generations of English forefathers’. D. Spero, ‘The Future of the English Rabbinate’, *Fortnightly Review*, Feb 1912, pp. 318–19.

¹⁵⁰ Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants and Jews*, pp. 71–76; *The Times*, 13 Feb 1903.

Anglo-Jewish Association in 1902 argue that a Romanian bulletin published by the Jewish press to highlight the country's discrimination would be futile.¹⁵¹

Given the entwined issues that complicated perceptions of Romania's Jewish issue, coverage of the 1907 Peasants' Revolt, which involved attacks and violence against Romania's Jews, acquires heightened significance. Moses Gaster, a prominent Jewish rabbi who settled in London after he was expelled from Romania in 1885, was a primary point of contact for Romania's Jews. In 1907 he received appeals that were uncompromising in their analysis of the horror. 'An indescribable calamity has erupted ... [T]he peasants are breaking, devastating and stealing everything from the Jews ... houses ruined, doors, windows.' Fellow Jews in the West urged action: 'something must be done and done quickly'.¹⁵² But Gaster waited a month before he spoke about the issue publicly. Then he explained that Romanian Jews, even those in England, loved their native land 'as a child loved its mother'. Their complaint was not against the peasantry for whom they had 'a deep seated affection', but rather against the government, which used the 'time honoured political titles of Conservative and Liberal as a cover for oriental despotism and persecution'.¹⁵³ Gaster ominously concluded, 'the story would be put about that the Jews had instigated all the outrages'.¹⁵⁴

Indicative of the negative stereotyping of the Jew in radical British culture, coverage in the liberal press pitched Jew against peasant.¹⁵⁵ The first edition of *The Nation* dismissed the idea of an anti-Semitic motive behind the peasants' attacks and the following week exonerated the rioters. 'The peasants are ground between the absentee landlord and the Jewish middleman who farms out their estates ... [R]evolt was a

¹⁵¹ Johnson, *ibid.*, p. 71.

¹⁵² Unless otherwise stated all translations in this thesis are by the author. Appeal in Romanian from Community of Podul Jloaei (numerous signatories), (5)18 March 1907, 215/a; appeal in French from Community of Podul Jloaei, (5)18 Mar 1907, 215/b; appeal from Romania in German asking Gaster to attend a meeting, Mar 1907, 72/215/b. Keen that their efforts to help did not clash, British-based Romanian Dulberg sent him a copy of an appeal from Iași; J. Dulberg to Gaster, 31 Mar 1907, 69/215/b, Box 91, MGA, UCL/SC.

¹⁵³ *Jewish Chronicle*, 5 Apr 1907.

¹⁵⁴ *The Times*, 20, 21 Mar 1907; *Manchester Guardian*, 21 Mar 1907; *Daily Mail*, 21 Mar 1907; *Jewish Chronicle*, 5 Apr 1907.

¹⁵⁵ Perkins has identified how British Liberals contrasted the idealised Macedonian peasantry with local enemies, including 'the Jewish tax farmers'. Perkins, 'British Liberalism and the Balkans', pp. 134–35.

terribly natural method of protest.’¹⁵⁶ The *Manchester Guardian* initially acknowledged an anti-Semitic element in the uprising, but later changed its mind and referred to the Jews ‘as the true landowners of the country’, a misleading statement given Jews could not own land under Romanian law.¹⁵⁷ The inherent bias of the coverage explicates Gaster’s statement regarding the Romanian Jew’s deep-seated affection for the peasant; his analysis anticipated interpretations of the riots which pitted the sympathetic peasant against the destabilising Jew.¹⁵⁸

It was acknowledged that the fragmentary information reaching Britain was deliberate.¹⁵⁹ This absence of facts gave publications carte blanche to say what they liked. The *Spectator* wrote that bailiffs, invariably ‘clever Jews’, obtained from the peasantry ‘the utmost they can squeeze’. These men ‘conciliate’ officials, ‘demand double, and in some cases triple the accustomed rents, which were already heavy’ and probably used their ‘position without mercy’. The Jews were as guilty as the ‘most dissolute’ Romanian landowners.¹⁶⁰ Glover argues that by the turn of the century the caricature of the Jew as an untrustworthy, avaricious moneylender or peddler was ‘becoming appreciably more threatening to the imagined community of the nation-state’.¹⁶¹ He was referring to Britain’s community, but by implication, in 1907 Romania’s Jews were undermining the Romanian nation state and its valuable peasantry. In terms of assessing the impact of these representations on British constructions of Romania, Brubaker is again informative. The Jewish minority, no longer able to depict the host state as oppressive, had been branded disloyal.¹⁶²

As discussed, the Peasants’ Revolt reaffirmed the country’s place in a more general Eastern rubric, where anti-Semitism and violence were presumed elements of ‘Eastern cruelty’. However, the dialogue in the press did not sympathise with the persecuted Jew, rather one nationality’s treatment of another impacted negatively on the identity of both, and in some cases exonerated the Romanian peasant. Cheyette argues that by the beginning of the twentieth century the British Jew’s own cultural identity

¹⁵⁶ *The Nation*, 30 Mar, 6 Apr 1907.

¹⁵⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 21, 23 Mar, 1 Apr 1907.

¹⁵⁸ *Jewish Chronicle*, 5 Apr 1907.

¹⁵⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 29 Mar 1907, *The Nation*, 6 Apr 1907.

¹⁶⁰ *Spectator*, 30 Apr 1907.

¹⁶¹ Glover, *Literature, Immigration and Diaspora in Fin-de-Siècle England*, pp. 91–94.

¹⁶² Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 64, 67.

was constructed in deliberately equivocal terms both as the embodiment of a transformable Hebraism and simultaneously an unchanging radical ‘other’.¹⁶³ This analysis contextualises press claims that the Peasants’ Revolt exhibited ‘indications that a widespread organisation is at work’ with the involvement of ‘anarchist societies over the Russian frontier’, and that those ‘anarchist societies are said to have been stirring up the peasantry’.¹⁶⁴ The role of the Jew was deliberately ambiguous. This was an uprising which, according to some reports, targeted the Jew, but references to the instigators as Russian anarchists, at a time when Britain frequently denigrated their East European immigrants as international political radicals and anarchists, implied a Russian Jewish provenance at the heart of the rebellion.¹⁶⁵ The ‘international’ Jew in relation to an emerging Romanian identity was increasingly problematic in an era which demanded clear-cut definitions of the nation state.

In this more autochthonous atmosphere, rising Jewish nationalism and Zionist thinking around the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine fractured the Jewish community’s voice. Moses Gaster personified the complications that beset the broader Jewish Question. Well connected in both Britain and Romania, he was potentially the Romanian Jews’ greatest champion. Enjoying a friendship with Romania’s German royal family, he had an audience with King Carol in 1902, when Queen Elizabeth, Romania’s most famous personality, told him, ‘we often grieve that you are no longer among us’.¹⁶⁶ He also regularly corresponded with high-prolife Romanian politicians, including Anglophile Take Ionescu and Nicolae Iorga.¹⁶⁷ In Britain, as a scholar and rabbi, he secured several prestigious positions, including such non-Jewish affiliations as

¹⁶³ Cheyette, *Constructions of ‘the Jew’ in English Literature and Society*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁴ *The Times* 28 Mar 1907; ‘The Jacquerie in Moldavia’, p. 342.

¹⁶⁵ See Pendlebury for a more comprehensive analysis of the ‘international Jew’ in the immediate pre-war period; Pendlebury, *Portraying ‘the Jew’ in First World War Britain*, pp. 112–13.

¹⁶⁶ Gaster’s article in *The American Review*, Dec 1902 referred to his royal visit in Romania cited in *Jewish World*, 5 Dec 1902; Romanian newspaper *Adevarul* advertised the meeting with the headline ‘Doctor Gaster with the King’, *Adevarul* (21 July), 3 Aug 1902; for more on the significance of Queen Elizabeth see §1.3

¹⁶⁷ In opposition, Ionescu wanted access to Gaster’s European-wide journalist contacts and requested help to suppress a report in the *Daily Telegraph*, and letters suggest they were friends. Ionescu to Gaster (23 Feb) 6 Mar 1888, (18) 31 July 1892, month/day unclear 1904; Iorga to Gaster (3) 16 Aug 1915, Box 52, MGA, UCL/SC.

a membership of the Royal Asiatic Society and President of the Folklore Society, and was regularly featured in the American and British press.¹⁶⁸

But despite Gaster's potential as an influential bridge between the two countries, Romanian Jewish identity gained less than it might have done from a man best known for his roles as Chief Rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese Sephardic congregation and president of the English Zionist Federation.¹⁶⁹ While neither position was inimical to the promotion of Romania or the plight of its Jews, both compromised his effectiveness in these fields. As the British Empire's leader of the Sephardic community, his association with the much poorer Ostjuden Jews was weakened and his passionate championing of the Zionist cause was controversial within the Jewish community.¹⁷⁰ Zionism promoted an idea of Jewish difference which ran counter to the message of assimilation that the acculturated Anglo-Jews, particularly the Conjoint Jewish Committee, had long been trying to encourage in Eastern Europe.¹⁷¹ The conflict for Romania's Jewish minority was best summed up by the Jewish American press in relation to Gaster's 1902 meeting with Romania's King Carol:

I am bound to confess that he made a mistake in speaking of Zionism to the King of Roumania ... It must be apparent it seems to me, that when you desire to have equal rights extended to the Jews in Roumania you are bound to obliterate the semblance of the fact that the Jew is a foreigner in the land where he was born ... [T]he knowledge that the Jew may have a 'home' in Palestine urges more strongly than ever the anti-Jewish agitators.¹⁷²

The ramifications of this Zionist agenda, in which Gaster was a leading player, would split the Jewish voice into rival camps during World War I and helped deliver the

¹⁶⁸ *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 Jan 1907.

¹⁶⁹ American and British publications invariably cited these titles when referring to Gaster: *The Jewish Messenger*, 22 Jan 1897, *New York Press*, 1 July 1900, *Chicago Israelite*, 20 Sep 1902, *The Times*, 1 Apr 1912.

¹⁷⁰ 'He is the only Jewish minister of note who at any time associated himself prominently with the Zionists ... but feeling has run so high on this question that the Haham ... has to declare himself a Zionist in his own private person and not representing the Sephardic community.' The name of publication is not clear, 23 Aug 1902, Bound vol. A. Newspaper Cuttings, MGA, UCL/SC.

¹⁷¹ Gaster chaired a Zionist Federation meeting in 1908 where the guest speaker criticised the policies of the Anglo-Jews who sought to improve 'the condition of the Jews in such countries as Russia and Roumania'. *The Zionist*, May 1908.

¹⁷² *Chicago Israelite*, 20 Sep 1902.

Balfour Declaration of 1917.¹⁷³ Gaster's Zionism saw Romania's best-known Jew in Britain predominantly focused on the creation of an Israeli state, not the overhaul of Romania's flawed nation state.¹⁷⁴

Nonetheless, when Romania introduced more punitive laws against the Jews, Gaster did speak out on the 'pitiful condition of our countrymen'.¹⁷⁵ But although based in Britain, the majority of his campaigning work was featured in the American press.¹⁷⁶ The country had a greater vested interest in Romania's Jewish Question. An unofficial American Jewish consular representative visiting Bucharest in 1870 had encouraged Romanian Jews to emigrate there; within 45 years a quarter of the country's Jewish population had resettled in the States.¹⁷⁷ (The Royal Commission on Alien Immigration acknowledged the majority of Romanian Jewish migrants headed for America.¹⁷⁸) Sitting outside European power politics, the administration pushed hard for solutions from a position of relative independence.¹⁷⁹ Although the USA was not a signatory of the Treaty of Berlin, American Secretary of State Colonel John Hay sent a formal, strongly worded note to the Romanian government in 1902 proposing a naturalisation convention between the two countries and criticising the plight of the Romanian Jew.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷³ For an examination of the tense relations between the Zionists and the Conjoint Committee see Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 77–127.

¹⁷⁴ Hroch does not consider that Zionist agitation achieved its goal of mass movement within Jewish communities before World War II. Gaster, whose position enabled him to effect perceptions both within and outside the Jewish community, fits Hroch's description of a voice 'from above'. Hroch, *Nation, nationalism, social change*, pp. 73–81.

¹⁷⁵ *New York Press*, 1 July 1900; Britain's *Sunday Special*, 15 July 1900.

¹⁷⁶ *New York Press*, 1 July 1902; *Chicago Israelite*, 27 Dec 1902; *The American Review*, Dec 1902.

¹⁷⁷ On departure to Bucharest the American consular Benjamin Peixotto was told any actions on behalf of Romania's Jews would be unofficial; cited in P. Adams, *Politics, Faith and the Making of American Judaism*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2014, pp. 121–27.

¹⁷⁸ *Royal Commission on Alien Immigration*, p. 530; Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Migrant*, pp. 186–88.

¹⁷⁹ Feeling powerless in the wake of more anti-Jewish violence in Russia, President Theodore Roosevelt made Oscar Straus Secretary of Commerce and Labour, saying that the appointment of a Jew to the President's Cabinet would show 'Russia and some other countries what we think of Jews in this country.' In Adams, *Politics, Faith and the Making of American Judaism*, p. 143.

¹⁸⁰ J. Hay, Department of State, Washington, to C. Wilson, Legation of the United States, Athens, 17 July 1902, pp. 910–14, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1902> accessed 5 July 2016.

The Note was rejected outright by the Romanian government and *The Times* observed that it could only hope to induce a ‘moral effect’.¹⁸¹ However, a sign of America’s growing significance, it put added pressure on the British government to act, with Major Evans-Gordon observing that the Note brought the subject of Romania’s Jews ‘prominently before the [British] public’.¹⁸²

Courtesy of the Conjoint’s prolific communications with the Foreign Office, including a letter from millionaire banker Lord Rothschild in 1901, the British government was already aware of the situation in Romania.¹⁸³ In 1902 Britain recommended to fellow signatories that ‘some common action should be taken’, but was ‘met with no response from the other Great Powers’.¹⁸⁴ If, in Britain’s public domain, representations of Romania’s Jews were conflicted and hard to distinguish from Russian equivalents, in political discourse American pressure and the Conjoint Committee ensured the Jewish Question continued to undermine perceptions of Romania’s government. The 1907 Anglo–Russian convention, signed the same year as the Peasants’ Revolt, demanded that Britain measure its response to Russian anti-Semitism. The Conjoint Committee’s reduced leverage in Russia was compensated for in politically less significant Romania.¹⁸⁵ Lucien Wolf, an Anglo-Jewish polyglot and journalist with extensive international connections, formalised his position as the effective head of the Committee in 1908.¹⁸⁶ That year Romania responded to its Peasants’ Revolt with the attempted expulsion of Moldavian Jews in a new Rural Communes Law. The Conjoint sent numerous uncompromising memorandums to the

¹⁸¹ *The Times*, 9 Oct 1902.

¹⁸² Evans-Gordon, *The Alien Immigrant*, p. 163; Johnson argues that it was Evans-Gordon’s description of Romania’s Jewish Question to the Commission in 1902 that reinvigorated the debate. His timing, which coincided with increased restrictions in Romania, and Hay’s Note, produced a cumulative effect which was predominantly covered in Britain’s Jewish press. Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews*, pp. 69–71.

¹⁸³ The Foreign Office informed Conjoint leader Wolf of their inquiry in the wake of Rothschild’s letter; Lord Landsdowne to Wolf, 4 July 1901, ACC3121/B2/9/10, BDBJ, LMA.

¹⁸⁴ The Foreign Secretary reminded the Conjoint Committee of this impasse, Grey to Conjoint, 26 Nov 1908, 41368, FO371/511, TNA.

¹⁸⁵ Levene argues the high Victorian ideals of the Conjoint were largely out of step with the post-Liberal climate in which they operated and that they were over-optimistic about the direction of British foreign affairs. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 7–12.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 12–19.

British government, even reminding them of ‘destitute Jewish emigration which directs itself towards the United Kingdom’.¹⁸⁷

British legation reports arriving from Bucharest denied that religious persecution existed in Romania and Ambassador Greene positioned the Jewish minority as an economically destabilising presence.¹⁸⁸ But despite anti-Semitism in official correspondence, the Conjoint, peopled with influential members, had a degree of success in keeping Romania’s Jewish Question alive in the Foreign Office. Their missives always received polite, if somewhat opaque, replies.¹⁸⁹ Britain’s increasingly close relations with Tsarist Russia angered the liberal elite and had helped the Conjoint’s cause in Romania.¹⁹⁰ Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey raised the matter of increased restrictions against Romania’s Jews in the House of Commons, demanded a further report from the British legation in Romania and reminded the Conjoint of the Foreign Office’s long-term commitment reviewing the situation.¹⁹¹ At the governmental level, Romania continued to be defined as a country which had consistently reneged on its Treaty obligations.

Although resistant to reform, Romania was highly sensitive to accusations of anti-Semitism. In 1903 King Carol tried to distance himself from his government’s

¹⁸⁷ Memorandum, London Committee of Jews and Council of Anglo-Jewish Association, 26 Nov 1907, 41368; Makover to E. Grey, 4 Apr 1908, 22162; Memorandum, D. Alexander, President of London Committee of Deputies of British Jews and Montefiore, President Anglo-Jewish Association, 25 June 1908, 22162, FO371/511, TNA.

¹⁸⁸ C. Greene, ‘General Report on Roumania for the Year 1906’, 1 Jan 1907, FO371/316, TNA; Gaster used the opposite argument – that economically Romania could not afford to abandon its Jews and claimed that the King of Romania understood the importance of resolving the Jewish Question for the ‘promising economic development of the country’; *The American Review*, Dec 1902, cited in *Jewish World*, 5 Dec 1905. The Romanian administration consistently argued that, ‘among the numerous accusations brought by the Jews, none is perhaps so groundless as that of religious intolerance’; Radu Rosetti, 1909, cited in Andrei Oișteanu, *Inventing the Jew, Anti-Semitic stereotypes in Romanian and other Central-European Cultures*, translated by Mirela Adăscăliței, Lincoln; London, University of Nebraska Press for Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2009, p. 11.

¹⁸⁹ Foreign Office excuses included bad timing and a lack of agreement between the Great Powers. Mallet to Conjoint Jewish Committee, 14 July 1908; reply on behalf of Grey to Conjoint Jewish Committee, 4 Dec 1908, FO 371/511, TNA.

¹⁹⁰ See Utz, ‘Revolution, Diplomacy and the Media’, pp. 292–309.

¹⁹¹ Reply on behalf of Grey to Conjoint, 4 Dec 1908, FO371/511, TNA.

record and the American chargé d'affaires noted that the publication of Britain's 'Report of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration' caused a domestic furore, with Romania concerned 'that this report will have great weight abroad and that the country has been misrepresented'.¹⁹² During the Peasants' Revolt the Romanian government played down the anti-Jewish element and their most potent national symbol, Queen Elizabeth, set out her pro-Jewish credentials in France's *La Revue*, later abbreviated in Britain's *Review of Reviews*.¹⁹³ The Queen's argument that the Jews had benefited at the hands of persecution ('it will be the unhappiest day for the Jews when persecution ceases') was dubbed 'curious' by the journal. Nonetheless, that the poet-queen stated her philo-Semitic stance in an article entitled 'In Praise of the Jews' was indicative of the international pressure her country felt in the wake of the insurrection.¹⁹⁴

Romanian efforts to burnish their reputation were indicative of an enduring distrust that surrounded the issue. Trevelyan's identification of the overriding prominence of the Jewish Question in a pre-World War I construct, and the Foreign Office's regular acknowledgement of the subject, suggest that while the Conjoint's persistence may not have resulted in increased sympathy for the Romanian Jew, it served to undermine trust in the Romanian government. More generally, the negative tropes that the issue reinforced pegged the nation's image back to the stereotypes Wolff identifies with a broader Eastern rubric. However, returning to Brubaker's model of competing nationalisms, by 1907 there were already signs that the thorny nature of Britain's pre-war Semitic discourse facilitated sympathy for the beleaguered Romania peasant – as the soul of ethnic Romania – at the expense of the maligned Jew. It was over the next ten years that the increased validity of ethnic nationalism as an attribute of statehood would see constructions of the Romanian nation and the Romanian population in Transylvania gain ascendancy over representations of their Jewish minority in a British narrative comprised by the exigencies of war.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² The king's powerlessness in relation to Romania's Jewish Question was highlighted: *The Times*, 13 Feb 1903; C. S. Wilson (Legation, United States) to J. Hay, 15 Nov 1903, p. 707 <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1903>, accessed 5 July 2016.

¹⁹³ Based on the little official information they received from Romania, the British press decided the revolt was at most incidentally anti-Semitic; *Manchester Guardian* 23, 29 Mar 1907, *The Nation*, 6 Apr 1907; *The Times*, 28 Mar 1907; Carmen Sylva, 'In Praise of the Jews', *The Review of Reviews*, June 1907, vol. 35, p. 620.

¹⁹⁴ Carmen Sylva, *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 2–10.

1.3 Latin Romania and its German Monarchy

The 1907 Peasants' Revolt focused minds on the Romanian state as an example of Eastern cruelty. Ideas of Balkan backwardness compounded an association between Romania, anti-Semitism and ideas of the savage East that included Russia. However, these negative tropes were not the only definitions of Romania in the pre-war period. This section will examine the link between Romania's self-conscious efforts at fostering a European national identity and the reception of that identity in British discourse.

Todorova identifies a relationship between the development of nationalism in Eastern Europe which was focused on myth and history and Western Europe's obsession with the rights 'of "historic" or "non historic" peoples'.¹⁹⁶ This representational paradigm will provide the starting point for this section's examination of Romania's European nation-building efforts in Britain. However, despite Todorova's recognition of the West's commitment to foundation myths, in *Imagining the Balkans* she overlooks the external impact of Romania's deliberate focus on a Latinist primordial agenda and dismisses the country's most successful example of Western appropriation – the imported Hohenzollern monarchy.¹⁹⁷ This section will contextualise British representations of Romania's Latin 'myth' at the beginning of the twentieth century and argue that it was King Carol and Queen Elizabeth who were the country's leading European symbols and national exponents. In particular, Elizabeth's imaging and her popular published oeuvre with its emphasis on the ancient, feminine and spiritual will be assessed in order to evaluate royalty's role in the dissemination of a sympathetic, European version of Romania in British discourse pre-1914.

In comparison with emerging 'culture-communities' and 'neo-national' styles in the Balkan countries directly under Turkish rule, in Romania 'vernacular revivalism' had played a subsidiary role to the expression of Latin identity.¹⁹⁸ During the eighteenth

¹⁹⁶ Todorova, 'The Trap of Backwardness', pp. 152–53.

¹⁹⁷ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁸ Kallestrup notes the celebration of Orthodox forms was the other prominent identity in Romania. She also cites the example of neo-national styles in Finland, Hungary and Poland. S. Kallestrup, 'Romanian "National Style" and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition', *Journal of Design History*, 2002, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 147–48.

century the Ottoman-sanctioned installation of the Phanariots had incited an adverse reaction among Romanian nobility and encouraged the idea of a national “myth” of European belonging in the form of an imagined community of Daco-Roman origin.¹⁹⁹ The conquest of Dacia (Romania’s acclaimed indigenous start-point), and its inclusion in the Roman Empire, was established as the founding narrative in a Latinist primordial agenda which identified Trajan’s column in Rome as the birth certificate of European Romania.²⁰⁰ Romanians presented themselves as Roman descendants and their homeland a Latin outpost that had survived numerous onslaughts, most recently from the Hungarians, Turks and Slavs. It was an ancient narrative that resonates with Smith’s identification of ethnies as largely defined by their ‘ancestry myths and historical memories’, which both impacted on domestic ideas about Romania and had a bearing on external versions of the country.²⁰¹

Romania’s leading historian, who laboured to establish this national ‘revival’, was Alexandru Xenopol, and his multi-volume work, *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană*, was published in both Romania and France.²⁰² The rapid embrace of Western forms and foundation myths saw Europe ‘become a permanent state of mind for Romanian intellectuals.’ The elite shed their Eastern connections and the thin top layer of aristocracy blended into the large European beau-monde.²⁰³ With a colony of elite Romanian writers and artists established in Paris, including Anna de Noilles and Hélène Vacarescu, and a Romanian presence in the city’s universal exhibitions of 1867, 1889 and 1900, by the late nineteenth century Romania successfully managed to achieve a

¹⁹⁹ Boia, *Istorie și Mit*, pp. 183–86; Verdery observes that external imperial agents sought to undermine the provincial nobles in the Principalities and Transylvania, but while the native nobility lost out in the former, in Transylvania Habsburg centralisation favoured the rise of a Romanian intellectual elite. Verdery, ‘Moments in the Rise of the Discourse on National Identity’, pp. 25–28.

²⁰⁰ Cioroianu sees this as Romania’s first attempt to escape Eastern Europe: Cioroianu, ‘Impossible Escape, Romanians and the Balkans’, pp. 213–14.

²⁰¹ Smith, *The Nation in History*, p. 65.

²⁰² In Romania Xenopol published a volume of *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană* every year from 1888 to 1893. A two-volume summary was published in Paris in 1896 where 3,000 copies sold in four years. Hiemstra, *Xenopol and the Development of Romanian Historiography*, pp. 104–5, 129–31.

²⁰³ Keith Hitchins, *The Identity of Romania*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2009, pp. 272–73; Doina Pasca Harsanyi, ‘Blue Blood and Ink; Romanian aristocratic women before and after World War One’, *Women’s History Review*, Col. 5, No.4, 1996’, pp. 498–99.

Latin footnote in France, the country it regarded as both its natural antecedent and future protector.²⁰⁴

However, this idea of Romania as a ‘Latin island in a Slavic sea’, observed by Ambassador Greene in Bucharest, had less traction in Britain.²⁰⁵ There was no equivalent Romanian colony in London, and the famously ‘mongrel’ race had harboured a long-held ambivalence towards its Latin neighbours across the Channel. John Breuilly argues that a language of broad racial distinction (and a narrower ethnic distinction) was too casual, impressionistic and detached from political conflict to be significant before 1914 (with the exception of anti-Semitism).²⁰⁶ But, given the increased focus on Britain’s European relations in this period, his tendency to underplay the importance of the race card is difficult to substantiate. Inspired by a reinvigorated Victorian Empire and the growing prominence of eugenics in science, racial thinking was increasingly used to make sense of national rivalries by the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁰⁷ In 1903 Anglo–French relations were overhauled and a revived affection for all things Latin, spearheaded by King Edward VII, the darling of Parisian society, saw Britain sign the 1904 Entente Cordiale.²⁰⁸ It is in the context of this sea change in British thinking that any subsequent acknowledgement of Romania’s Latin heritage needs to be understood.

In 1907 the *Westminster Gazette*’s special correspondent, Harry De Windt, published *Through Savage Europe*, which was an odyssey throughout the *Balkan States and European Russia*.²⁰⁹ The author justified the title on the basis that ‘the term accurately describes the wild and lawless countries between the Adriatic and the Black Seas’. Todorova dismisses the travel book as an example of the ‘facile generalisations’ in which English journalism indulged, and fails to take into account De Windt’s

²⁰⁴ Kallestrup, ‘Romanian “National Style” and the 1906 Bucharest Jubilee Exhibition’, p. 147; Harsanyi, ‘Blue Blood and Ink’, pp. 501–2.

²⁰⁵ Greene to Grey, 13 May 1908, FO371/511, TNA.

²⁰⁶ J. Breuilly, ‘On the Principle of Nationality’, in G. Stedman-Jones and G. Claeys (eds), *Cambridge History of Nineteenth Century Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 103–6.

²⁰⁷ N. Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science, 1800–1960*, London, MacMillan, in assoc. with St Anthony’s College Oxford, 1982, pp. x–xii, 84.

²⁰⁸ Jane Ridley, *Bertie: A life of Edward VII*, London, Chatto & Windus, 2012, pp. 376–80.

²⁰⁹ De Windt, *Through Savage Europe*.

acknowledgement of Romanian difference within the Eastern sphere.²¹⁰ In his chapter ‘The City of Pleasure’, Bucharest stood out as an exception within the Balkans. It was a capital that could genuinely claim similarities with Paris. There were six French references in his descriptions of local culture, and Romanians were hailed as members of ‘the Latin races’ about whom ‘few will deny they are the pleasantest people to live amongst’.²¹¹

Romania’s mirroring of the dominant West with its self-conscious Latin pitch was a long-term strategy, against which the 1907 Peasants’ Revolt could be posited if not as an aberration, at least as an incentive to continue pushing for a more sympathetic narrative. (It occurred the same year de Windt’s book was published and therefore was not mentioned.) In 1908 Ambassador Greene conceded Romania was still ‘a Latin island in a Slav sea’, a ‘land of the rain and sun’.²¹² Entwined European and elemental signposts hinted at a blend of progressive and primordial strands in Romania’s exported identity. As Consul General for Romania in London, Alfred Stead was duly tasked with encouraging British investment. In a lecture at the Royal Society of Arts and in a series of *Near East* articles, he established Romania as a country that reaped the benefits from ‘centuries ago’ when ‘the Roumanian nation stood among the foremost of civilised states and played a great role in the shaping of Europe’. It ‘was the scene of exploits of the Emperor Trajan’ and the country’s early history stood ‘chiselled in undying figures on Trajan’s Column at Rome’.²¹³ Stead’s efforts were received with caution by the Foreign Office, but the tactics he used are significant.²¹⁴ A year after the Peasants’ Revolt the deliberate emphasis on a Romanian heritage rooted in the heartland of Latin Europe asserted the idea of a core nation that had more in common with the civilised West than the savage Slavic East.

Fleeting positive references in British public discourse admired Romania for both its exceptional civility – a mannered people with French pretensions – and its ‘ancient Roman’ heritage in a part of Europe more commonly associated with prosaic

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 15; Todovora, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 117.

²¹¹ De Windt, *Through Savage Europe*, pp. 247–60.

²¹² Greene to Grey, 13 May 1908, FO371/511, TNA.

²¹³ *Near East*, Souvenir Edition, July–Aug 1909, pp. 16–17, Sep 1909, p. 49, Oct 1909, p. 79, Nov 1909, pp. 94–95; Greene to Grey, 13 May 1908, FO371/511, TNA.

²¹⁴ Greene admitted that Stead had said much that was true about Romania, but also noted it was ‘an advert’. Greene to Grey, *ibid.*

traditions.²¹⁵ Given the priority accorded to the Latin aspects of Romania's national story, it is ironic that the couple who did the most to mobilise this combination of high culture and ancient myth were German.²¹⁶ In 1866 Romania welcomed a Prussian Officer, Prince Carol Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, as the dynastic ruler of the United Principalities. He and his German wife, Elizabeth of Wied, became king and queen of a newly independent Romanian kingdom in 1881, after the Russo–Turkish war. By the late nineteenth century, with the exception of Serbia, all the so-called Balkan states had imported German monarchs (Albania followed suit in 1914). They borrowed from Western Europe's most symbolically potent institution in the hope that external royal dynasties would reinforce their standing internationally and that the new rulers would rise above domestic factionalism.²¹⁷

In 1993, former US ambassador George Kennan reflected on the Balkans as monarchies whose leaders were 'as a rule somewhat more moderate and thoughtful than their subjects'.²¹⁸ Todorova objects to the presumption of Western superiority in this analysis, wondering, 'which was the rule and who were the exceptions?' She dismisses Bulgaria's King Ferdinand as 'clearly not a moderate, thoughtful monarch', likewise Serbia's Milan Obrenović, before facetiously claiming Romania's dynasty was 'moderation incarnate, especially the soap opera Carol II.'²¹⁹ That Todorova fails to acknowledge the Western recognition accorded to Romania's founding royal couple, Hohenzollern Carol and his wife Elizabeth, is perhaps because Romania's first monarchs best fitted the description attributed to Balkan royalty in Kennan's analysis.²²⁰

²¹⁵ De Windt, *Through Savage Europe*, pp. 247–60; *Near East* flagged up the difference between Romania and its Balkan neighbours. *Near East*, Mar 1908, p. 19, Apr 1908, p. 45, May 1908, p. 76, June 1908, pp. 112–13.

²¹⁶ Albeit in Carol's case, a prince recommended by Napoleon III; Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe*, loc. 1405.

²¹⁷ For a brief summation of the Balkans' transition to foreign monarchies see Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe, the Balkans, 1789–1989*, London; New York, Routledge, 2001, pp. 53–54.

²¹⁸ *The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie endowment inquiry in retrospect with a New introduction and reflections on the present conflict by George F. Kennan*, Washington, DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993, p. 4.

²¹⁹ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 5.

²²⁰ For a biography of Carol which includes a broad political overview see Ion Scurtu, *Carol I*, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 2001. Other generally flatter the ruling pair, commending Carol for his longevity and Romania's progress and stability, and Elizabeth her fame and writing. Sorin Liviu Damean, *Carol I al României*, București,

In a strategic union which gave Britain a dynastic foothold in the ‘volatile Balkans’, Marie, the 17-year-old daughter of Albert, Duke of Edinburgh and one of Victoria’s English-born granddaughters, married Carol’s Hohenzollern’s nephew, Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Romania, in 1893. The wedding was held in Germany and Marie later admitted that when they first met she asked Ferdinand no questions about his ‘far off country’ and was ‘rather vague’ about its ‘place on the map’.²²¹ However, the marriage symbolised Britain’s recognition of Romania’s founding royal couple and received comprehensive coverage in the British press.²²² Michail recognises the important ‘role in intercultural contacts’ that monarchy played, referencing both the volume of representations they attained in British popular culture and their capacity as the key ‘carriers’ of images from their respective countries.²²³ He cites a ‘colourful’ report featuring Romania’s Queen Elizabeth in the *Illustrated London News* as an example of a royal story that provided a parallel reality during the Balkan wars in 1913 and argues that the poet-queen’s romantic pose fed the ‘popular perception of Balkan Kingdoms as fairy-tale Ruritanian neverlands’ in the face of war.²²⁴ Michail is struck by the contrast between the two contemporaneous images but he does not probe further the impact of the country’s German monarchy on British perceptions of Romania.

In fact, Britain identified Romania’s new monarchy as more than mere ‘carriers’ of key national images, and invariably credited them with any progress their nation made. Ambassador Greene concluded that the King had ‘succeeded in building up a state which stands today as a monument of one man’s work’. All his subjects ‘recognise that King Charles is the founder, not just of the dynasty, but of the country itself’.²²⁵ De

Paideia, 2000; Sorin Liviu Demean, *Carol I al României: un monarh devotat*, Târgoviște, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, 2016; Sorin Cristescu, *Carol I și politica României (1878–1912)*, București, Paideia, 2007; Gabriel Badea-Păun, *Carmen Sylva 1843–1916, Uimitoarea regină Elisabeta a României*, Traducere din franceză de Irina-Margareta Nistor, București, Humanitas, 2003.

²²¹ Marie, Queen of Roumania, *The Story of My Life*, vol. 1, Cassell & Co., 1934, p. 222.

²²² Adrian Nicolescu, ‘Royal Visits to the Court of Romania and the Court of St James in the Late 19th Century’, in Nicolescu (ed.), *Mutual Understanding: 125 years of Anglo–Romanian diplomatic relations*, Bucharest, Humanitas, 2005, pp. 16–18; several publications ran supplementary/special editions to celebrate the wedding; *Graphic*, 21 Jan 1893; *Illustrated London News*, 14 Jan 1893.

²²³ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, p. 105.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 107; *Illustrated London News*, 18 Jan 1913.

²²⁵ Greene to Grey, *General Report on Roumania*, 1 Jan 1907, 1461, FO371/316, TNA.

Windt identified Carol as responsible for Romania's conversion into a 'constitutional state' and 'prominent' military power.²²⁶ In 1906 Romania's Jubilee exhibition celebrated the King's forty years as Romania's dynastic ruler; Cioroianu credits the event with powerful historical imagery where 'the Roman Emperor Trajan (the "father of the Romanian people") and the Romanian King shake hands across the centuries'.²²⁷ Taking place during the high noon of royal pageantry on a crowded European stage, Romania's Jubilee celebrations attracted minimal attention.²²⁸ (In Britain coverage focused on the erroneous arrest of two British subjects working at the Exhibition.²²⁹) But a year later, in the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt, *The Times* recalled the Jubilee, when a 'demonstration of popular enthusiasm' celebrated 'one of the best and wisest monarchs in Europe' under whom the country 'had advanced by leaps and bounds'.²³⁰ The paper observed, 'the large landowners in Rumania do not have a good reputation as landlords', but exonerated the King, Romania's biggest landowner. *The Times* saw the monarch as a solution to the peasant problem. 'We hardly need say that King Charles who has so long ruled his kingdom with judgment and with courage may be trusted to face the crisis as becomes a Hohenzollern.'²³¹

This tendency to attribute credit for Romania's progress to a Western monarch, and simultaneously excuse the same monarch for the country's failures – most significantly the Peasants' Revolt – is symptomatic of what Said identifies as 'the exteriority' of Western representations. In *Orientalism*, this is when 'the orientalist, poet, scholar makes the Orient speak' as it is unable to speak for itself, in a paradigm which prioritises the agenda of the West.²³² Romania was ruled over and represented by

²²⁶ De Windt, *Through Savage Europe*, p. 257.

²²⁷ Cioroianu, 'Impossible Escape', p. 215.

²²⁸ Romanians criticised the event for failing to attract more foreign publicity although it was well promoted among the external Romanian populations, some of whom visited the exhibition. Kallestrup, 'Romanian "National Style"', pp. 147, 159.

²²⁹ This involved extensive communication at the highest levels in the Foreign Office, including requested compensation and questions in the House of Commons; E. Grey to C. Greene, 7 Jan, Greene to Grey, 20 Feb; Grey to Greene, 24 Apr, Claimant, A. Houseman to Foreign Office, 27 Apr 1907. The matter was finally settled but Greene requested that no 'publicity should be given to the matter', condemning British 'newspapers containing highly coloured interviews describing the ill-treatment of the Englishmen'. Greene to Grey 30 Apr 1907, FO371/316, TNA.

²³⁰ *The Times*, 28 Mar, 13 Apr 1907.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 13 Feb, 1903, 28 Mar 1907.

²³² Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 21–22.

a foreign king who was exempt from association with the most ‘backward’ aspects of his adopted nation’s identity. In Britain, a country accustomed to the language of monarchy, Carol helped make the unfamiliar both familiar and acceptable. However, although Anderson argues that there was a ‘discernible tendency among the Euro-Mediterranean monarchies to sidle towards beckoning national identification’, despite more than forty years in Romania and the odd appearance in popular costume, Carol remained relentlessly German.²³³ It was Britain’s increasing equivalence towards Germany in the pre-war period that complicates interpretations of Romania’s monarch.

The King was rumoured to have ‘never recovered from homesickness for the Fatherland’, and Greene told the Foreign Office that independent Romania began life under the auspices of Germany with ‘a German prince, born in Germany, reared in the school of German military discipline and called fresh from the German mould and so it has come about, that the policy of Roumania has under King Charles steadily progressed along German lines’.²³⁴ Recognition that Carol committed Romania to an alliance system led by Germany significantly compromised his appeal.²³⁵ The King correctly identified British indifference towards Romania, urging closer relations, a bigger British legation and English companions for Crown Prince Ferdinand’s first-born, Prince Carol,²³⁶ all of which were unlikely as long as he was on the throne.²³⁷ By 1906 Stead was promoting the King’s Romanian credentials in Britain – he was ‘the best Roumanian of all the Roumanians’ – and no reference to his German homeland was made.²³⁸ When, in a deliberate diplomatic move, the Russian Tsar visited the Romanian royal family in June 1914 at the Black Sea port Constanța, the British press did not refer to the King’s nationality.²³⁹ Despite these efforts, the distinctly German

²³³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p. 86.

²³⁴ Dorothea Kirke, *Domestic Life in Rumania with Eight Illustrations*, London; New York, John Lane, 1916, p. 54; C. Greene, *General Report on Roumania*, 1 Jan 1907, 1461, FO371/316, TNA.

²³⁵ The diplomatic significance of monarchs during this period has been understated by historians: R. Mclean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe, 1890–1914*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

²³⁶ Carol II was King of Romania from June 1930 until his abdication in September 1940.

²³⁷ Vaughan to Grey, 6 Aug 1912, 219, FO371/1464, TNA.

²³⁸ A. Stead, ‘King Charles’, *Fortnightly Review*, 2 July 1906, p. 1.

²³⁹ *The Times*, 12 June 1914, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 June 1914.

Carol ensured independent Romania's first monarch was an increasingly marginal, albeit admired figure, in pre-World War I Britain.²⁴⁰

Harsanyi describes Carol as a man 'deeply aware of the task ... to modernise' Romania and that he 'undoubtedly chose his wife Elisabeth Von Wied because of her ability to participate in this project'.²⁴¹ Elizabeth did not disappoint. The Queen's appearance in the aforementioned 1913 *Illustrated London News* was testimony to a woman who was renowned internationally as a celebrity royal, a poet-queen under the pen name Carmen Sylva, and a philanthropic figure.²⁴² Conforming to standard tropes of a backward Balkans in need of external domination and improvement, Elizabeth, building on a familiar association between female royalty and charity, was widely recognised as a queen who led a life dedicated 'to raising national and moral standards in her adopted country'.²⁴³ In a 1907 review of the Balkans, Edith Sellers credited Elizabeth with the only poor-relief system she had come across that was both devised and worked by women. By the 'fire' of the Queen's 'example the great ladies of Roumania soon rallied', ensuring that 'of all the capitals in Europe, Bucharest is certainly the one in which charity most abounds'.²⁴⁴ In 1909 Elizabeth's biographer Chappell explained,

Along with much that was picturesque and charming, the young Princess of Roumania found in her realm many black spots of ignorance and superstition. Her first task was to learn to read and write the language of her people. Then she set herself to found schools, hospitals soup kitchens and other beneficent institutions of Western civilisation.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁰ By early 1914 the British press predominantly featured Romania's younger royals, including Princess Marie and her children; *Manchester Guardian*, 4, 25 Mar 1914, *Daily Telegraph*, 3 Apr 1914.

²⁴¹ Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', p. 499.

²⁴² *Illustrated London News*, 18 Jan 1913.

²⁴³ R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians* (orig. 1934), New York, Archon Books, 1963, p. 326; Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', pp. 499–500.

²⁴⁴ Edith Sellers, 'Poor Relief in the Balkans', *Contemporary Review*, July 1907, pp. 213–14.

²⁴⁵ Biographer Chappell noted 'the fact that all the money she gains by her pen is devoted to the relief of poverty and suffering among her subjects raises her higher than any literary honour which has ever been awarded her'; J. Chappell, *Women of Worth: Sketches from the lives of 'Carmen Sylva', Isabella Bird Bishop, Frances Power Cobbe and Mrs Branwell Booth*, London, S.W. Partridge & Co. Ltd, 1909, pp. 28, 53; international coverage often focused on her charity: 'Queen of Roumania Contributes Books for Cripples' Benefit', *New York Times*, 9 June 1907; 'Carmen Sylva's ministry

The precedent Elizabeth established as a German princess known for her work as a Romanian queen is significant; borrowing from standard imperial tropes, she took Western institutions and norms and applied them to her 'ignorant' Eastern realm. The Queen's publication of her philo-Semitic stance after the 1907 Peasants' Revolt needs to be understood in this context.²⁴⁶ However, renowned in her own right as a celebrity and writer, Elizabeth's broader impact on Romanian imaging demands a re-evaluation of Said's exteriority argument in *Orientalism*.²⁴⁷ As Todorova acknowledges, the Balkans were not merely a subspecies of the Orient.²⁴⁸ A contested part of a lesser version of Europeanism, Romania acquired a queen whose capacity to inhabit her adopted country through her written work as Carmen Sylva partially subsumed her German nationality.

Rodney Barker argues that in terms of ruling, 'identification is the key to understanding legitimation and legitimation is one of the principal functions of identification'.²⁴⁹ Unlike her husband, whose first love was always the 'fatherland', through her literature and self-imaging Elizabeth acquired an international identity as the legitimate Queen of Romania.²⁵⁰ Although born a German Princess of Wied, her published work was often promoted under the title 'the Queen of Roumania, Carmen Sylva'. In her thesis, 'The 'British' Carmen Sylva', Laura Nixon argues that the Queen, writing more frequently and in more detail about aspects of Romanian life than any other writer over a three-decade period, provided British readers with a sympathetic version of Romania at a time when a growing periodical press vastly increased the

to her blind subjects', *Illustrated London News*, 15 Dec 1906. The biographies in English during Elizabeth's lifetime were very complimentary of the Queen's work in Romania. Baroness Deichmann, *The Life of Carmen Sylva*, translated from the German by Baroness Stackelberg, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd, 1890; B. Roosevelt, *Carmen Sylva: A Study with two tales from the German of Carmen Sylva*, London, Chapman & Hall, 1891.

²⁴⁶ Carmen Sylva, 'In Praise of the Jews', *The Review of Reviews*, June 1907, vol. 35, p. 620.

²⁴⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 20–21

²⁴⁸ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 8–9.

²⁴⁹ Barker, *Legitimizing Identities*, p. 35.

²⁵⁰ De Windt noted that Carol's pronounced 'German methods and manners' meant he was less popular than Elizabeth in Romania; De Windt, *Through Savage Europe*, p. 149.

availability of her short stories and articles²⁵¹ (between 1882 and 1913 Elizabeth was published in 34 journals and wrote 50 books).²⁵² However, Nixon attempts to distinguish between Elizabeth's impact and value as a writer and her impact as a queen who happened to write, when it was the sum of both those parts – the poet and the Queen of Romania – that ensured Elizabeth and her oeuvre reached a wide audience.

Elizabeth visited Britain several times and had enjoyed good relations with Queen Victoria that helped facilitate the marriage between British Marie and Romania's Crown Prince Ferdinand.²⁵³ At a more intimate level than standard royal pomp and splendour allowed, connection with Romania's queen was possible through her luxurious books, which enjoyed a unique place in the literary market.²⁵⁴ In 1915 Dorothy Kirke remembered 'a pretty picture' of the 'famous Carmen Sylva' that had hung in her English schoolroom.²⁵⁵ Ambassador Greene concluded that the Queen 'has secured a niche in the gallery of celebrities, not only of Roumania but the outer world'. 'Carmen Sylva is known to us even in England and Queen Elizabeth's writings in our language are the best proof of her claim upon our appreciation.'²⁵⁶ The *Sunday Times* marvelled, 'Surely no woman and certainly no Queen enjoys such popularity as Carmen Sylva, the poetess Queen of Roumania.' Courtesy of Elizabeth's 'clever advertising of the resources of her country and her own popularity as an author ... little Roumania, formerly one of the most insignificant spots on the map of Europe, has become one of the best known and most prosperous'.²⁵⁷

²⁵¹ L. E. Nixon, 'The "British" Carmen Sylva: Recuperating a German-Romanian writer', PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, 2014, ch. 3: 'Her "authorship is but a pastime": Carmen Sylva's literary presence', pp. 86–152. Regarding the proliferation of mass publications and easy reading material in Victorian Britain see J. Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: First media monarch*, Oxford; New York, Oxford University Press, 2003.

²⁵² Nixon, *ibid.*, appendix 5.2, p. 347; Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', p. 500.

²⁵³ Nixon, *ibid.*, ch. 2: 'Carmen Sylva's Presence in Britain', pp. 71–85; Nicolescu, 'Royal Visits to the Court of Romania and the Court of St James in the Late 19th Century', pp. 16–18; See also E. D. Tappe, *Rumanian in Britain*, London, University of London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 1975.

²⁵⁴ Carmen Sylva's books had a variety of finishes, including gold ink, coloured pictures, photographs, waxed paper protectors, and the embossed royal title; Carmen Sylva, *How I Spent My Sixtieth Birthday*, Yorkshire, John H. Fearnley, 1904; Carmen Sylva, *A Real Queen's Fairy Book*, London, George Newnes Ltd, 1901; Carmen Sylva, *Thoughts of a Queen*, London, Eden, Remington & Co., 1890.

²⁵⁵ Kirke, *Domestic Life in Rumania*, pp. 54–55.

²⁵⁶ Greene to Grey, *General Report on Roumania*, 1 Jan 1907, 1461, FO371/316, TNA.

²⁵⁷ *Sunday Times*, 15 May 1910.

Anderson and Hobsbawm are key voices among nationalism's modernists who argue for education and literacy as prerequisites of the nation state.²⁵⁸ Meanwhile Smith demands that the other ancient 'half of the story' is also told.²⁵⁹ On the international stage, Elizabeth's work cleverly utilised opposing sides of this nationalism debate. Her depictions of Romania's illiterate peasant, bonded only through ancient song and Latin blood, found its binary other among literate Western audiences. *The Bard of the Dimbovitza* and *Legends from River and Mountain* bore the name of Romania's Queen and celebrated the country's most powerful motif, the peasant and his surroundings. *The Bard of the Dimbovitza* was republished four times and contained Romanian folksongs translated by Elizabeth, and *Legends from River and Mountain* featured ten folkloric tales written by the Queen, 'many of them associated with the mountains which surround her home'.²⁶⁰ In the latter, illustrations featured dancing maidens and handsome shepherds in fantasy worlds of forests, ravines, ancient Romans (Ovid), goblins, snakes and dwarfs.²⁶¹ All bore the Queen's hallmark sentimental style. Returning to Todorova's identification of the national myth and its home in the West, Elizabeth's writing had broad appeal in an industrial, predominantly urban Britain, where folk-culture was enjoying a revival.²⁶²

With a 'propensity for the theatrical' Elizabeth was also astutely aware of her own personal image in an era when the royal brand was increasingly commoditised.²⁶³ Portrait shots often accompanied the Queen's articles, in which she invariably wore distinct, loose-fitting white robes and a long white veil as a 'mark of royal dignity'.²⁶⁴ Numerous articles and biographies focusing on a royal existence were sprinkled with

²⁵⁸ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*.

²⁵⁹ Anthony Smith, 'The Nation, Real or Imagined', in Edward Mortimer and Robert Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State: The meaning of ethnicity and nationalism*, London, I.B.Tauris, 1999, p. 37.

²⁶⁰ *The Bard of the Dimbovitza, collected from the peasants by Hélène Vacaresco*, translated by Carmen Sylva, Elizabeth Queen of Roumania and Alma Strettell, London, Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 1891 (republished 1894 and 1896 by Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 1902 by Harper and Brothers). The quote is taken from the translator's introduction in *Legends from River and Mountain by Carmen Sylva, Queen of Roumania*, translated by Alma Stretton with illustrations by T. H. Robson, first published London, George Allen, 1896, facsimile reprint, Felinfach, Llanerch Publishers, 1996.

²⁶¹ *Legends from River and Mountain by Carmen Sylva, Queen of Roumania*.

²⁶² Todorova, 'The Trap of Backwardness', pp. 152–53.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 501; for more on the royal branding see Plunkett, *Queen Victoria*.

²⁶⁴ Chappell, *Women of Worth*, p. 27; Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', p. 501.

romance (marriage to her prince), heart break (the death of her only child Maria) and even scandal (she encouraged and was subsequently exiled for her role in Prince Ferdinand's affair with Hélène Vacarescu).²⁶⁵ For readers of women's literature with little reason to otherwise consider Romania, Elizabeth became the personification of her new home, a 'quaint semi-oriental town in the midst of the Carpathians', where the 'Queen's romantic nature and artistic sense' could indulge in the 'picturesque beauty of her new surroundings' amidst a people 'almost untouched by modern civilisation but showing traces everywhere of their Roman origin'.²⁶⁶ Hobsbawm argues that a crucial part of nation building – 'inventing traditions' – is 'essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past if only by imposing repetition'.²⁶⁷ Elizabeth's quaint literary oeuvre and her own exotic royal brand endured for decades; arguably there was no better carrier of Romania's imagined self on the external stage.

Elizabeth's writing and life conjured up ideas of a national idyll in a vague romantic Eastern setting. It was very different from the savage East identified through representations of the violent Peasants' Revolt.²⁶⁸ The femininity and exoticism associated with the Queen find no home among the cruel, complex and perfidious motifs Hammond claims the Balkans were primarily identified with.²⁶⁹ Todorova argues that, unlike the imaginary Orient, the Balkans induced a 'straightforward attitude, usually negative', 'totally devoid of the mystery of exoticism' and with a 'distinctly male appeal'.²⁷⁰ In this analysis Carmen Sylva's feminine Romania is Oriental before it

²⁶⁵ Biographers writing when the Queen was alive avoided the scandals, preferring to depict Elizabeth as 'a child genius, mourning mother and beloved Queen'; Nixon, 'The "British" Carmen Sylva', pp. 67, 70; but gossip reached the West. Badea-Păun claims that Victorian girls were scolded for doing a 'Carmen Sylva'; Badea-Păun, *Carmen Sylva*, pp. 7–8.

²⁶⁶ Elizabeth's writing was published in women's magazines such as *Lady's Realm*, *The Queen*, *A Woman's World*, *Good Words*; cited in Nixon, 'The "British" Carmen Sylva', p. 150; Chappell, *Women of Worth*, pp. 25–26.

²⁶⁷ Hobsbawm, 'Introduction', in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 4.

²⁶⁸ Goldsworthy focuses on a hazy idea of an eastern Ruritania in literature; Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*, pp. 1–10.

²⁶⁹ The Queen's exoticism blurred the boundaries of her perceived realm. She was included in a French book (with an American publication) of Oriental sketches, Pierre Loti (translated by Fred Rothwell), *Carmen Sylva and Sketches from the Orient*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1912; Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, p. 37.

²⁷⁰ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 13–14.

is Balkan. Perhaps Elizabeth's capacity as an exceptional national identifier has been overlooked because superficially she appears to conform to Said's identification of exteriority in dominant Western representations of 'the other'. Nixon concedes that in the build-up to World War I, Carmen Sylva's popularity in Britain was impacted by her German nationality, and witnessed a 'sharp decline' from 1910.²⁷¹ However, an overview of both Elizabeth's celebrity and her literary oeuvre demand that she is recognised for her legitimacy as the Queen of Romania in her own right, who successfully reframed her nation's image on numerous levels. That Britain proved receptive to Elizabeth and her romantic peasant kingdom left Romania's subsequent queen, English-born Marie, considerable scope for building on this image during World War I.

²⁷¹ Nixon, 'The "British" Carmen Sylva', pp. 89, 305–6.

Chapter 2

British Expertise and Romanian Imaging, 1906–1916

Introduction

Covering the 1912–13 Balkan wars and Romania's neutrality during World War I, this chapter will predominantly focus on the roles of two British commentators, journalist Dr Emile Dillon and publicist and scholar R. W. Seton-Watson, who adopted the cause of Romania at a time when the country's geopolitical significance was rising. It will suggest that pre-war 'expert' analysis has historically overlooked Romania and its conflicted identity in relation to the Balkans, and it will cite Dillon as an example of a commentator whose status as a conservative journalist has seen his impact on perceptions of Romania ignored. Dillon's work as a Russian-based correspondent with an imperialist outlook will be assessed in relation to the role of Seton-Watson. As the leading champion for the nationalities of the Habsburg Empire, Seton-Watson has been better served by history, but his framing of Romania through its Transylvanian population which this section will explore, is less well known. It will argue that pre-war, both men recognised the increased importance of Romania, identifying it as the most significant country in South East Europe. This positive construct of a Balkan Romania complicates the country's place in an appellation Torodova identifies as hardening into a pejorative entity during the same period.¹

Section 2.1, which is divided into four parts, will look alternatively at the roles of Dillon and Seton-Watson in relation to Romania's identity both before and during the second Balkan war in 1913 and argue that the work of these two commentators was hugely important for a country that had previously lacked an external champion in British discourse. Dillon's general significance as a leading conservative voice in a growing British press has recently been recognised by Andreas Rose in his study of pre-

¹ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 19.

war British Foreign Policy.² However, Eugene Michail's specific examination of experts in *The British and the Balkans*, which is heavily influenced by the profiles of the Balkan Committee's liberal members, does not mention Dillon.³ More broadly the recent attention accorded to the role of 'experts' during World War I, with Volker Prott arguing that 'expertise requires both a reliable access to decision makers and a certain freedom to develop alternative options' and Tomás Irish's emphasis on the role of scholarly networks that mobilised information, tends to overlook the influential role of journalism.⁴ This section will serve to address that imbalance through an examination of Dillon's exclusive focus on the Romanian Kingdom during the second Balkan war and the unrivalled conservative perspective of a little-known country that this provided. It will argue that his work helped to locate Romania firmly within the Balkan sphere, while his championing of its European statesmen and credentials complicate the country's place in what has been identified as a maligned Balkan rubric.⁵

Historiography has feted Scotsman Seton-Watson as the main expert championing Romania's cause in this period.⁶ However, §2.1 will argue that the perception of Seton-Watson as Romania's leading champion in British discourse prior to 1914 is misleading. Both a liberal and a member of the Balkan Committee with an overriding interest in the nationalities of the Dual Monarchy, in 1912 and 1913 Seton-Watson's primary focus was the impact of the Balkan conflict on the durability of Austria-Hungary. It was his concern regarding the Romanian majority population in Hungary's Transylvania that informed his initial relations with the Romanian Kingdom.

² Dillon was part of the 'public mind' that had a 'great influence' on decision-making in pre-war Whitehall. Andreas Rose, *Between the Empire and the Continent: British foreign policy before the First World War*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2017, p. 13.

³ Eugene Michail, *The British and the Balkans: Forming images of foreign lands, 1900–1950*, London; New York, Continuum, 2011, p. 41.

⁴ Volker Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination: British, French and American experts in peace planning, 1917–1919', *Historical Journal*, vol. 57, no. 3, 2014, pp. 727–50; Tomás Irish, 'Scholarly Identities in War and Peace: The Paris Peace Conference and the mobilisation of intellect', *Journal of Global History*, 2016, vol. 11, pp. 368–81.

⁵ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 19.

⁶ Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen, 1981; Cornelia Bodea and Hugh Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii, 1906–1920*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 2 vols., 1988; Radu Racovițan, 'Contribuția lui R. W. Seton-Watson la dezvoltarea istoriografiei problemei naționale românești', *Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis, Series Historica*, 2010, vol. 7, no. 7, pp. 225–43.

This interest in the Romanians beyond the country's Western border, and the prominence Seton-Watson accorded them in subsequent dialogue, demands a further assessment of Brubaker's nationalisms' model. Operating in a period when the Hapsburg nationalities question remained largely unrecognised in Britain, Seton-Watson identified an oppressed Romanian nation in Hungary and identified the Romanian Kingdom predominantly through its corresponding homeland nationalism.⁷ The assessment of Hroch's three-stage model in relation to this unredeemed population will serve to explicate the subsequent appeal of Romania's Transylvanian narrative in British discourse.⁸ Crucially it was the pre-war groundwork that Seton-Watson laid through his contacts with and expertise of Romanians in Transylvania that facilitated his emergence as Romania's leading British expert post-August 1914.

Section 2.2, divided into two parts, will examine the roles of Dillon and Seton-Watson, respectively, as well as the work of London-based Jewish Romanian David Mitrany, during Romania's two-year neutrality in World War I. It will identify a period when British military pressures often compromised 'expertise' and led to increasingly volatile constructions of Romania. A Saidian emphasis on representations premised upon exteriority and used as a means for 'dominating, restructuring and having authority', explicates the motivations behind neutral Romania's imaging in British wartime discourse.⁹ It will argue that journalist Dillon's pivot away from sympathetic Romanian representations to extreme criticism of the country for failing to commit to war, illustrates the relative powerlessness of the Eastern other in external Western commentary. Dillon considered himself among a 'few individuals unconnected with the diplomatic corps' that the wartime British government relied on, claiming he had 'firsthand knowledge of the secret compacts entered into by the rulers of Roumania and Bulgaria with the Habsburg monarchy'.¹⁰ However, his broad geographical range as a wartime journalist and the demands of a British conservative readership saw him abandon close and informed representations of Romania in favour of the neutral country's denigration. This opportunistic approach undermined his 'expert' reputation.

⁷ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 5–6.

⁸ Miroslav Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The nation-building process in Europe', *New Left Review*, 1993, vol. 193, pp. 3–20.

⁹ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003, pp. 3, 20.

¹⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 3 Feb 1915.

Section 2.2 will argue that Seton-Watson became Romania's leading British expert between 1914 and 1916. The country's territorial ambition to acquire Transylvania conveniently dovetailed with his adjusted geopolitical view that necessitated the demise of the Habsburg Monarchy. This section will argue that the inclusion of Romania in his recognition of the rights of 'small nations' in what later became a formal mission statement for the Allied war effort, provided the country with a flattering exposition during its compromising neutrality. This nationalities agenda was supported by the additional voice of Romanian Mitrany. Both men stressed the imperative of Romania's unification with the 'heart' of its nation, Transylvania.

This focus on a West-facing version of Romanian nationalism came at the expense of other nationalisms, including representations of the country's Jewish minority and more Easterly constructs of the old Romanian Kingdom. Their work provides a reassessment of Brubaker's competing nationalities in the earlier context of wartime Romania; in this instance the prominence of the Transylvanian narrative not only served to denigrate enemy Hungary's nationalising nationalism but it also pivoted Romanian identity away from previous, less sympathetic associations.¹¹ It is through a comparison of these three men – Dillon, Mitrany and Seton-Watson – and their political and professional perspectives that new light will be shed on external commentators' priorities and leverage in relation to national image construction during World War I. Although they all highlighted Romania's geopolitical significance, this chapter will conclude that the growing wartime authority of Seton-Watson, who enjoyed a 'certain freedom to develop alternative options' was particularly important for the establishment of Romania as a credible European ally in British discourse, despite misgivings in the Foreign Office.¹²

¹¹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–6.

¹² Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', p. 729.

2.1 British Expertise and the Second Balkan War

2.1.1 Dr Emile Dillon between the Balkan wars

By 1877 Dr Emile Dillon, an accomplished polyglot and former professor of philology, had moved to Russia and soon became an authority on Russian affairs as the correspondent for one of Britain's leading conservative papers, the *Daily Telegraph*.¹³ It was in 1910 that his focus temporarily shifted to South East Europe, where he accurately predicted the next European disturbance would occur between the Balkan nationalities and Turkey.¹⁴ Dillon wrote to the managing editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, 'Authorise me to watch the course of events in the Balkan Peninsula with a view to my going there whenever the situation begins to grow acute.' Permission was granted.¹⁵ In his recent study of pre-war British foreign policy, Rose quotes Dillon in a line that summarises the premise of his book: 'Edwardian decision makers saw imperial challenges and continental challenges as two sides of the same medal.'¹⁶ Rose argues historiography's subsequent failure to address Britain's foreign policy in the Balkans is curious given that the Anglo-Russian Convention put this European periphery back on the political agenda.¹⁷ No one understood that better than Dillon. This first part of §2.1 will examine his role in relation to Romanian imaging between the Balkan wars and establish a powerful voice that has been overlooked in Balkan historiography. It will identify a man who was capable of influencing public and political discourse in a commentary that highlighted Romania's leading status in the Balkan region. Dillon's contextualisation of Romania's role prior to the second Balkan war helped to counter previous ambiguities that had been exacerbated by the country's neutrality in the 1912 conflict and queries Romania's unequivocal place in Todorova's denigrated Balkan rubric.

The first Balkan war in 1912 was the crescendo event in nearly a decade of sympathetic representations of the European nations previously under Ottoman rule,

¹³ J. Baylen, 'Dillon, Emile Joseph [pseudo. E. B. Lanin] (1854–1933), journalist and philologist', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 24 May 2008, <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-32828>, accessed 26 June 2019.

¹⁴ Dillon to Le Sage, *Daily Telegraph*, 10 Feb 1910, no. 19, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁵ Dillon to Mr Le Sage, 31 Jan, 10 Feb 1910, *ibid*.

¹⁶ Dillon in Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p. 4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

provided by the Balkan Committee. Focused on this organisation and the events it covered, in *The British and the Balkans* Michail argues that in order to occupy the role of an 'expert' there had to be an 'information gap' about the country, with experts considering it their 'self-assumed role' to 'right the gap'.¹⁸ Romania was not a belligerent in the first Balkan war and Dillon, who visited Bucharest for the first time in October 1912, is not considered an expert in Michail's book. It seems likely the omission of the latter was partly informed by the anomalous position of the former. However, Romania's neutrality in 1912 indicated a complexity in the region's political relations which the Balkan Committee failed to grasp, in a dialogue that was invariably framed in an anti-Ottoman context. By late 1912 even the status quo cheered the Christian belligerents who had broken 'the Turk in the name of freedom and Europe'.¹⁹ Britain was poorly equipped to understand the 'undiminished tension' between individual states that led to a second war within a year.²⁰ Michail argues that experts were 'idealist and liberal' and had a 'sense of commitment to the region',²¹ but it was precisely because Dillon enjoyed a broad overview of the conflict from an imperial perspective (both British and Russian) that he identified Romania's emerging significance.

Keen to capitalise on its tactical neutrality, the Romanian delegation arrived at the London Peace Conference in January 1913 to make territorial claims against their southern neighbour, an enlarged Bulgaria. With its cause célèbre heritage and recent valiant efforts against the Ottomans, Bulgaria proved a challenging adversary in British discourse. Influenced by the pro-Bulgarian sentiments of their correspondent James Bouchier, *The Times* was hostile to Romania. The *Daily Mail* considered its behaviour ominous and *Punch* drew the 'Bayard of Bukharest' making off with 'Bulgaria's coat' as compensation for not 'stabbing you from behind in the previous bout'.²² Keen to provide a 'forecast which corresponds as fully as possible to the realities of the situation', Dillon took a very different approach.²³ Supplementing his *Daily Telegraph* correspondence with monthly 'Foreign Affairs' articles in the *Contemporary Review* (a

¹⁸ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 29–51.

¹⁹ *The Times*, 12 Nov 1912.

²⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 Dec 1912; see also *Daily Telegraph*, 11, 13, 14, 21 Dec 1912.

²¹ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 30, 32.

²² *The Times*, 27 Jan 1913; *Daily Mail*, 24 Jan 1913; *Punch*, 5 Feb 1913.

²³ *Daily Telegraph*, 10 Dec 1912.

publication among the ‘most influential papers precisely because their readership included leading decision makers’),²⁴ Dillon challenged the idea that Romania’s presence in London was unjustified. Historic mistreatment by Russia left Romania with an indefensible part of Bulgarian Dobrogea as its sole access to the sea. Their territorial claims were an understandable reward for neutrality in the first Balkan war.²⁵ This perspective prefigured the more complex implications of the second Balkan conflict and paved the way for an alternative, conservative campaign that sought to highlight Romania’s significance.

In her analysis of expertise, Prott argues that experts’ effectiveness required ‘reliable access to decision makers’.²⁶ At a time when access to and knowledge of the other side of Europe was limited, Dillon regularly flaunted his contacts with leading statesmen and diplomats in South East Europe. ‘Every man of note in the Balkans is an acquaintance of mine, when he is not a friend. I enjoy the confidence of most influential men of the day.’²⁷ Mirroring ‘his close friendship’ with the Russian Minister of Finance Sergei Witte (they worked together to win over the American press during the Portsmouth Peace Conference, 1905), in January 1913 Dillon collaborated closely with Romania’s Anglophile Foreign Minister Take Ionescu.²⁸ Ionescu, a distinguished product of Romania’s French educated elite, was married to a British woman and enjoyed long-term connections with the British press.²⁹ Dillon publicly championed this accomplished politician as proof that within the Balkan rubric, Romania was the European exception. Exemplifying Rodney Barker’s argument that ‘it is in the first place persons not systems, rulers not regimes who are legitimated’,³⁰ Ionescu was identified as a ‘statesman of special mark’, ‘endowed in a high degree with many of the qualities of the Latin race ... he is also gifted with Anglo-Saxon balance, perseverance

²⁴ Rose, *Between Empire and Continent*, p. 18.

²⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 4, 9, 13 Jan 1913.

²⁶ Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination’, p. 279.

²⁷ Dillon to Mr Le Sage, 31 Jan 1910.

²⁸ P. W. Johnson, ‘The Journalist as a Diplomat: E. J. Dillon and the Portsmouth Peace Conference’, *Journalism Quarterly*, 1976, vol. 53, p. 689.

²⁹ Ionescu was described as Romania’s ‘ablest man in Government’. *The Times*, 13 Apr 1907.

³⁰ Rodney Barker, *Legitimizing Identities: The self-preservation of rulers and subjects*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 32.

and thoroughness'.³¹ Just as Dillon had praised Witte at the expense of the Japanese Ambassador Count Komara during the 1905 Russo–Japanese Peace Conference,³² he increasingly blamed Romania's alienation from Bulgaria on the 'diplomatic methods' of the latter's Foreign Minister.

Dr Daneff's scrupulous patriotism shrank from surrendering a rood of his native soil to Roumania, while his diplomacy clothed the refusal in a form that estranged the sympathies of the nation with which his own was to have fused its forces and recomposed the Balkan world.³³

Enjoying the ear of British 'decision makers', prior to the 1905 Peace Conference Dillon had made considerable diplomatic efforts to galvanise political opinion in favour of Russia, including a visit to Prime Minister Arthur Balfour.³⁴ Once in America, Dillon planned the Russian minister's publicity campaign, telling Witte how to handle himself amidst the political elite.³⁵ Unlike Witte, Romanian Ionescu spoke English and was a more sophisticated operator;³⁶ nonetheless it is likely that Dillon liaised with him over approaches to the British government. Foreign Secretary Edward Grey and Under Secretary Arthur Nicolson met with Romania's able British ambassador Nicolae Mișu (transferred from Constantinople at the beginning of the year) and Take Ionescu.³⁷ The Romanians and Dillon shared the same opinion, arguing that

³¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Jan 1913; Dr. E. J. Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs', *Contemporary Review*, Sep 1913, vol. 104, p. 428.

³² Johnson, 'The Journalist as a Diplomat', p. 692. During the London Conference Dillon likened his situation to that of the 1905 Portsmouth Conference; *Daily Telegraph*, 16 Dec 1912.

³³ *Ibid.*; Dillon also criticised Daneff: 'Foreign Affairs', Feb, May 1913, vol. 103, pp. 278–79, 725.

³⁴ Johnson, 'The Journalist as a Diplomat', p. 692.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 689–93.

³⁶ Ionescu told the Hungarian Premier Tisza, 'I leave Roumania three times a year and pass four months in Western Europe and look upon these journeys as a necessity – a sort of intellectual hygiene'. He had numerous contacts among journalists and politicians in France and Britain. Take Ionescu, *Some Personal Impressions, etc.*, London, Nisbet & Co., pp. 168, 196–97; *The Times*'s leading Balkan correspondent, James Bouchier, was a good friend of Take Ionescu's; Barclay to Grey, Annual Report on Roumania, 4 Jan 1913, FO371/1742, TNA.

³⁷ Relations between Grey and Mișu appear to have been warm, Grey noting that 'he assented with some amusement to my statement that there would thus be three Conferences proceeding at once in London, the ambassadors, the peace delegates and the Roumanian-Bulgarian'; Grey to British Ambassador in Bucharest Sir George Barclay, 6, 10, 11 Jan 1913, FO371/1767, TNA.

Bulgaria's Daneff was “‘stiff”, taciturn and disinclined to make any concessions’.³⁸ Although favouring no side over the Bulgarian–Romanian dispute in the interests of Great Power impartiality, the Foreign Office appeared to agree with them over Bulgaria's obdurate tactics. The argument that Romania was within its rights to claim compensation from Bulgaria was implicit in official communications.³⁹

The access that Romania was granted in these meetings was recognition of the country's rising significance. Romania had felt snubbed by a skeletal staff at the British legation, a problem compounded when Ambassador Greene left in 1912 and was not immediately replaced. The Foreign Office conceded the staff might be increased ‘in view of the growing importance’ of Romania and Grey acknowledged he had ‘no desire to slight the country’.⁴⁰ Although Sir George Barclay was in twilight of his career, the transfer of this experienced diplomat from Persia to Bucharest in September 1912 was significant. He was quick to observe that the country was no longer content to sit at the tail of the two empires, but would rather assert itself in the Balkans.⁴¹ This analysis tapped into a fear that the Bulgarian–Romanian dispute would tip into war and lead to a wider conflagration, with the Foreign Office backing mediation handled by the Great Powers. Negotiations were assigned to St Petersburg in the spring of 1913 but worries persisted.⁴² With Take Ionescu unable to guarantee that Romania would not fight alongside its ally Austria-Hungary in a possible war, there was little hope of the Foreign Office making sense of Romania's ambiguous foreign relations.⁴³

³⁸ Ibid., 6, 10 Jan 1913; *Daily Telegraph*, 12 Jan 1913.

³⁹ Bulgaria was ‘unreasonable’ and Daneff's conduct ‘very discouraging’ in FO Minutes, 6 Jan 1913, 125; Grey's note, FO Minutes, 11 Jan 1913. After another meeting with Ionescu, Grey concluded Romania was asking for ‘very little’. Grey to Barclay, 11 Jan 1913; the Foreign Office believed Russia would intervene if Bulgaria was defeated in a conflict. FO minutes, 21 Jan 1913, FO371/1767, TNA.

⁴⁰ Grey's comments came after complaints from the Romanian Prime Minister Titu Maiorescu; Vaughan to Grey, received 6 Aug 1912, 219; FO Minutes on Vaughan's letter, 6 Aug 1912, 32999, FO 371/1464, TNA.

⁴¹ Barclay to Grey, 4 Jan 1913, Annual Report for Roumania 1912, 105, FO371/1742, TNA.

⁴² The Foreign Office believed Russia would intervene if Bulgaria was defeated in a conflict. FO minutes, 21 Jan 1913; Barclay to Grey, 3 Feb 1913, FO Minutes, 12 Feb 1913, 6848; Barclay to Foreign Office, 8 Jan 1913, FO 371/1767, TNA; R. J. Crampton, ‘The Balkans, 1909–1914’, in F. H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 259–62.

⁴³ When questioned by French Prime Minister Raymond Poincaré in January 1913 Ionescu was unable to guarantee that Romania would not fight with Austria-Hungary,

It was in this opaque, politically uncertain context Dillon asserted himself as a leading voice on Romanian affairs. He was one of the first commentators to articulate the significance of Romania's shifting position, predicting that an attack on Bulgaria in direct opposition to the Habsburg Empire's Balkan strategy would result in 'Romania's emancipation from the guardianship of the Dual Monarchy', which could be 'swiftly disastrous' for Austria-Hungary's 'mechanical scheme of Balkan reconstruction ... indeed one might liken it to the loss of a linchpin on a remote country road.'⁴⁴ (Tellingly his analysis prefigured the assessment of Romania in *The Sleepwalkers*, Christopher Clarke's influential book on the causes of World War I.⁴⁵) He argued a retreating Turkey would see the spread of the Austrian-Russian rivalry over the whole of the Balkan Peninsula. In that context, a moderate Romania must be allowed to stand up for herself against Bulgaria: 'an obstinate race who owe more to dogged perseverance than to dash or enterprise' which was accused of poor statecraft and over playing its hand.⁴⁶ Dillon's ability to explicate Romania's significance through the geopolitical lens of the entire region is an illuminating example of why he was considered 'Britain's premier foreign correspondent'.⁴⁷ Challenging long-term British affections for Bulgaria, Dillon pioneered a new perception of Romania as a country whose commitment to Austria-Hungary could no longer be taken for granted. His most candid articles asserted the country's significance for British aspirations of stability in the region and their titles – 'British Policy in the Near East' and 'Eastern Problems and British Interests' – made it clear where Dillon's interests ultimately lay.⁴⁸

although he thought it unlikely. After the second Balkan war he had changed his opinion. Ionescu, *Personal Impressions*, pp. 6–9; Talking to Under Secretary Nicolson, Ionescu left Romania's position between Russia and Austria-Hungary deliberately ambiguous, stating that Romania was resisting Russia's advances while simultaneously arguing the Dual Monarchy had reversed its foreign policy of 50 years. Grey to Barclay, 10 Jan 1913, FO371/1767, TNA.

⁴⁴ Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs', June 1913, vol. 103, pp. 868–869; Dillon sometimes wrote anonymously: 'Eastern Problems and British Interests', *Quarterly Review*, July 1913, vol. 219, pp. 270, 275.

⁴⁵ Christopher Clarke, *The Sleepwalkers, How Europe went to War in 1914*, (Penguin, 2012) ebook, loc.1962.

⁴⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Jan 1913; Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs', Feb. 1913, vol. 103, pp. 264–72; Vivian, 'After the War', pp. 313–14, 317.

⁴⁷ W. T. Stead, cited in Baylen, 'Dillon, Emile Joseph (1854–1933)'

⁴⁸ Dillon, anon, 'British Policy in the Near East', 'Eastern Problems and British Interests', *Quarterly Review*, vols 218–19, Apr, July 1913, pp. 565–86, 268–85.

Dillon's case for Romania was echoed elsewhere in the press. Michail identifies Herbert Vivian as a conservative writer interested in Balkan affairs, arguing that his affection for the region was profoundly impacted by Serbia's 1903 regicide. However, Michail fails to acknowledge that by 1913 Vivian was championing an enlarged Romania, envisaging it 'joined to the Triple Entente' which would 'secure Transylvania, the kernel of the Roumanian race to the present Kingdom of Roumania'.⁴⁹ This support for Romanian enlargement challenges Michail's claim that conservative writers 'invariably became fervent opponents of the dominant Balkan nationalism'.⁵⁰ In January *The Review of Reviews* conceded 'the situation of Roumania' was 'one of great interest' and that the country was 'a factor of great importance in the future development of the Near East'.⁵¹ G. Abbott in the *Quarterly Review* recognised that Romania was seeking 'some gain' from Vienna, noting 'there are many Rumanian districts under Austria-Hungarian rule'.⁵² In the *Edinburgh Review* 'the Roumanian population of Hungary is next door to the flourishing Kingdom ruled by King Charles at Bucharest' and *Nineteenth Century* was more blatant: 'From Russia and Austria-Hungary she [Romania] can obtain vast territories inhabited by Roumanians'.⁵³

These references to the Romanians in Transylvania were at least partially informed by the writings of academic and publicist R. W. Seton-Watson. The *Fortnightly Review* argued that the Balkan wars had set a precedent for the 'spirit of nationalism' which gave hope to Austria-Hungary's nationalities who wanted to govern themselves and referred specifically to the 'excellent books' of Seton-Watson that they

⁴⁹ In 1913 Vivian wrote he had supported Romania in 1904, citing a *Fortnightly Review* article which in fact only denigrates Bulgaria and Serbia and does not champion Romania: , June 1904, 'The Future of Balkistan', vol. 79, pp. 827–37, 'After the War', pp. 313, 320; Vivian's 1913 article was partially reproduced in *Review of Reviews*, Feb 1913, vol. 47, no. 278, pp. 174–75.

⁵⁰ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, p. 9.

⁵¹ *Review of Reviews*, Jan 1913, vol. 47, no. 277, pp. 9–10.

⁵² G. Abbott, 'The Rumanian Factor in the Balkan Problem', *Quarterly Review*, Apr 1913, vol. 218, p. 489.

⁵³ Geoffrey Drage, 'The Balkan Main Current', *Edinburgh Review*, Apr 1913, vol. 217, p. 199; J. Ellis Barker, 'Roumanian Policy and the Peace of Europe', *Nineteenth Century*, Mar 1913, vol. 73, p. 562. An extract focusing on Romania's history and 'excellent' armament was featured in *Review of Reviews*, Mar 1913, vol. 47, no. 279, p. 286.

described as ‘far too little known’.⁵⁴ Dillon was well aware that ‘three million Roumanians’ who ‘feel drawn as if by some potent spell towards the state ruled by King Charles’, potentially had dire implications for the Dual Monarchy and therefore the stability of Europe.⁵⁵ But unlike Seton-Watson, Dillon did not approach the issue of Romania from the perspective of its population in Austria-Hungary. Instead he focused on the rising significance of the Romanian Kingdom as a power broker in the region.

The difference between the two men’s approaches (discussed in §2.1.2 in relation to Seton-Watson) is significant and Brubaker’s identification of distinct, evolving nationalisms provides a useful means of assessing that difference.⁵⁶ Dillon primarily identified Romania through the ambitions of its core nation – the nationalising nationalism of the Kingdom of Romania. In contrast, Seton-Watson identified Romania through its external homeland nationalism focused on Transylvania and pitted against Hungary’s oppressive nationalising nationalism. It was Dillon’s identification of the Romanian Kingdom’s growing strategic importance that saw him relocate to Bucharest in the summer of 1913. He went to report for the *Daily Telegraph* when it looked likely that Romania would enter the second Balkan war. In §2.1.3 it will be argued that while the war brought international condemnation on the entire southeastern Peninsula, Dillon’s considerable public voice in the coverage of the conflict provided the Romanian Kingdom with a valuable counterpoint narrative.

2.1.2 R. W. Seton-Watson and two Romanian nations

Historian and publicist Robert W. Seton-Watson was a member of Britain’s pre-war Balkan Committee. However, unlike the majority of Committee members whose primary concern was the welfare of the Balkan Christians in relation to the Ottomans, Seton-Watson’s focus was the national minorities in Austria-Hungary and the durability of the Empire. Irish has argued that the pre-war period was a boom time for an increasingly networked, international academic scene, the pooled intellect of which would be mobilised during the war and Prott identifies ‘professional academics’ who

⁵⁴ Politicus, ‘The Problem of Austria-Hungary’, *Fortnightly Review*, June 1913, vol. 99, pp. 1049–52.

⁵⁵ Dillon, ‘Foreign Affairs’, Jan 1913, vol. 103, pp. 122–23.

⁵⁶ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

were ‘employed’ as wartime ‘experts’.⁵⁷ Seton-Watson, an Oxford educated historian, who had studied at Berlin University and the Sorbonne, was one such academic who became a wartime ‘expert’. However, this section will seek to distinguish between his later status as a ‘great authority on Balkan politics’ straddling the worlds of politics, press and academia,⁵⁸ and his earlier work inspired by a research trip to Austria-Hungary in 1905–6. Pre-World War I, Seton-Watson’s overriding priority was the oppressed nationalities within the Habsburg Empire, including the Romanians in Transylvania and their peripheral reaction to the Magyar government.⁵⁹ Understanding his approach is necessary for the later explication of a British framing of wartime Romania that prioritised a European construct, predominantly evaluated through the potential of the Transylvanian Romanians. In order to explain the appeal of the Transylvanian narrative that Seton-Watson helped establish in British discourse, this section will assess it in relation to the thinking of nationalism historians, Brubaker and Hroch.⁶⁰

Seton-Watson had a comprehensive academic grounding in the history of the Dual Monarchy and first arrived in Vienna in 1905 intending to write a history of the Habsburg Empire. However, a constitutional crisis in Austria-Hungary between the Emperor-King and the Hungarian parliament saw him divert his attention to Hungary in 1906, where his sympathies initially lay with the Hungarian Parliament, in a country that Britain considered ‘stable, progressive, liberal and anticlerical’ and the best means of maintaining Austria-Hungary as the ‘pivot of European politics’.⁶¹ Seton-Watson met both the Hungarian ruling elite who were committed to the creation of a Magyar national state and leading members of the country’s numerous and predominantly disenfranchised national minorities and he quickly revised his opinions. It was the

⁵⁷ Irish, ‘Scholarly Identities in War and Peace’, pp. 368–71; Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination’, p. 279.

⁵⁸ Prime Minister Lloyd George on Seton-Watson during the Paris Peace Conference, cited in Michail, *The British and Balkans*, p. 29.

⁵⁹ For Seton-Watson’s early political outlook see Péter László, ‘R.W. Seton-Watson’s Changing View on the National Question of the Habsburg Monarchy and the European Balance of Power’, *Slavonic and East European Review*, July 2004, vol. 82, no. 3, pp. 655–79.

⁶⁰ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*; Hroch, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation’.

⁶¹ László, ‘R. W. Seton-Watson’s Changing View on the National Question of the Habsburg Monarchy’, p. 663; *Spectator*, 24 Feb 1906.

beginning of a journey of political discovery that within two years saw him publicly denounce ‘untrammelled Magyarisation’ as a process which, unless reversed, would eventually ‘promote the ruin of the Habsburg Monarchy and a European conflagration’.⁶²

Seton-Watson began championing the democratic rights of the Romanians alongside the claims of Serbian, Croatian and Slovakian minorities within Hungary. Sometimes writing under his pseudonym Scotus Viator, Seton-Watson began promoting his opinions in a polemical pamphlet and occasional *Spectator* articles where he identified universal suffrage as a means of ultimately strengthening the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which, if allowed to collapse, ‘would be a source of endless dangers and confusion and would mean something far worse than burnt fingers for everyone concerned’.⁶³ His first significant publication was the 1908 monograph, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, in which the idea of a Hungarian nation created on the basis of a Dualist system between the Magyar and non-Magyar ‘races’ was promoted. This book focused on the Slovaks who had no potential Irredentist claims and therefore were less likely to instigate external interference.⁶⁴ In comparison, the Romanians of Transylvania were a secondary feature in a publication that was heralded by the British press for illuminating the misconduct of a ‘people which produced Kossuth and which is identified with one of the most notable movements for national freedom in Europe’. The *Pall Mall Gazette* opined it was ‘the strongest, most reasoned and most impressive indictments of Magyar policy that has ever appeared from the pen of an English writer’.⁶⁵

Seton-Watson’s arguments for urgent reform in Austria-Hungary were out of step with the residual sympathy that still existed in Britain for the Dual Monarchy⁶⁶ and

⁶² R. Seton-Watson, pseudo Scotus Viator, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, London, Archibald Constable & Co., 1908, p. xix.

⁶³ R. Seton-Watson, pseudo Scotus Viator, *The Future of Austria-Hungary and the Attitude of the Great Powers*, London, Constable, 1907, pp. v–vi; *Spectator*, 29 Sep, 20 Oct 1906.

⁶⁴ Seton-Watson argued Slovaks ‘stand most in need of help and sympathy’. But worries over exacerbating the Irredenta claims in Serbia and Romania were likely to have influenced his decision. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, preface.

⁶⁵ *Financial Times*, 15 Jan 1909; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 20 Feb 1909.

⁶⁶ On Britain’s deteriorating attitude towards Hungarian politics see F. R. Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, 1906–1914: A diplomatic history*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972, pp. 25–26, 35–38.

attracted controversy on an international scale.⁶⁷ However, it is important to contextualise his relevance and impact before 1914. Seton-Watson's writing style, bound with statistical research and political argument was not 'the ordinary reading of the man in the street'.⁶⁸ Despite the critical acclaim his publications received, his books were described as 'far too little known' and in 1911 Seton-Watson criticised British apathy towards the cause of Austria-Hungary's minorities.⁶⁹ This analysis contrasts with the opinion of Hungarian historian László Marác who blames Seton-Watson and *Racial Problems in Hungary* for delivering 'the mortal blow on the traditional British image of liberal constitutional Hungary' when 'positive Western images of Hungary turned negative in the years preceding World War I'.⁷⁰ An explanation for this discrepancy lies in the subsequent success Seton-Watson had as a publicist and expert who predicted the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the beginning of World War I and became a highly influential figure on future European realignment during the conflict.

However, if the impact of Seton-Watson's work was not fully felt until the war, crucially he had already done the groundwork. Prott argues that expert status requires both 'reliable access to decision makers and a certain freedom to develop alternative options'.⁷¹ Self-funded, Seton-Watson had the freedom to pursue passions before they enjoyed popular appeal and his early focus on the Empire's nationalities gave him unprecedented access to seminal political players. He first met the leadership of Hungary's majority Romanian population in Transylvania in 1906 and established communication and friendship with men whose political ambitions dovetailed with his own ideas about political reform within the Empire.

⁶⁷ W. Steed and R. Evans, 'Watson, Robert William Seton (1879–1951), historian and political commentator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Sept 2010, [www.oxforddnb-com.ezproxy2.londonlibrary.co.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36024](http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy2.londonlibrary.co.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36024), accessed 7 June 2019.

⁶⁸ *Glasgow Herald*, 30 Sep 1914.

⁶⁹ 'The Problem of Austria-Hungary', p.1050 ; Seton-Watson, *Corruption and Reform in Hungary – A study in electoral practise*, London, Constable, 1911, preface.

⁷⁰ László Marác, 'Western Images and Stereotypes of the Hungarians', in A. Gerrits and N. Adler (eds), *Vampires Unstaked: National images and myths in East Central Europe*, Amsterdam, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1995, p. 32.

⁷¹ Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', p. 279.

Since the Enlightenment, Romanians in Transylvania had led the way in the ‘development of Romanian national consciousness by publishing studies which emphasised the Roman origins of the Romanian people’.⁷² If, in the first half of the nineteenth century, they still ‘clearly distinguished between ‘motherland’ and ‘nation’’, the 1848 Revolution saw Hungarians and Romanians ultimately fight on opposing sides, encouraging the development of the latter’s national ideology.⁷³ By 1867 and the advent of the Dualist period, Romanian Transylvanians were well placed to respond to Hungary’s increased efforts to assert control over its national minorities and emerged as a distinctly middle-class, ambitious movement whose main goal was national autonomy. Keith Hitchins observes that these nationalists were not revolutionaries and that in all their endeavours the party had ‘as its model the great bourgeoisie of Western Europe, whose accomplishments and sense of purpose it was determined to emulate’.⁷⁴

Practical men with national claims couched in a Western democratic bias, Transylvanian politicians and journalists like Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Iuliu Maniu and Vasile Goldiș impressed Seton-Watson in 1906 and maintained contact with him.⁷⁵ He also met and became lifelong friends with Henry Wickham Stead, *The Times* correspondent in Vienna from 1903, who Seton-Watson introduced to Vaida-Voevod, a man whose political reasoning regarding the status of Romanian Transylvanians mirrored his own. By 1910 the influential Transylvanian poet and Romanian National Party member Octavian Goga and his wife had holidayed with Seton-Watson in Scotland.⁷⁶ The unrivalled knowledge that Seton-Watson accrued from these

⁷² Dennis Deletant, ‘The Debate between Tradition and Modernity in the Shaping of Romanian Identity’, in Robert B. Pynsent (ed.), *The Literature of Nationalism: Essays on East European identity*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996, p. 14.

⁷³ Sorin Mitu, ‘Imagining Transylvania as Romanian Land. From Region to National Identity’ in Sorin Mitu (ed), *Building Identities in Transylvania, A Comparative Approach*, Clu-Napoca: Argonaut, 2014, p. 13; Keith Hitchins, *A Nation Affirmed: The Romanian national movement in Transylvania 1860-1914*, Bucharest, The Encyclopaedic Pub House, 1999, pp. 175-221.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷⁵ Other Transylvanians that Seton-Watson met included Theodor V. Păcățian, Canon Augustin Bunea, Russu-Șirianu and Aurel Vlad: ‘Notes on Transylvania’, 1906 SEW/1/1/1, UCL/SSEES.

⁷⁶ Seton-Watson praised Vaida-Voevod’s sense of humour and critical spirit and wrote that Stead would like to meet him: Seton-Watson to Vaida-Voevod, 6 July 1907; Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 181, 285–86; Goga to Seton-Watson, 15 Nov 1910, SEW/17/8/2, *ibid.*; Vaida-Voevod was the liaison for the Romanian National Party in talks with the other nationalities and Vienna; Hitchins,

relationships help explain his emerging 'expert' status and provide an interesting commentary on the process of information exchange in representations, with Transylvanians playing an influential role in Seton-Watson's external imaging of their plight and Romanian constructs more generally.⁷⁷

However, it is important to emphasise that before 1914 Seton-Watson's preoccupation was the maintenance of the Habsburg Monarchy and in that context he was more worried about the 'Slavs outside the bounds of Hungary proper' than any Romanian Irredentist ambitions.⁷⁸ This fear informed his 1911 publication which concentrated on the South Slav question and possible cooperation between the Serbs and the Croats within an enlarged Monarchy.⁷⁹ Although the Romanian Transylvania question was a 'serious obstacle to friendship between Austria-Hungary and Roumania', Seton-Watson considered it less pertinent. In 1907 he noted that Vaida-Voevod thought Romania's national historian and politician, Nicolae Iorga's Irredentist dreams fanciful, and in 1908 Seton-Watson cited Romania's earlier Prime Minister, Dimitrie Sturdza, who in 1893 had argued Irredentist claims in Transylvania 'cannot gain ground, and have no political significance whatsoever'.⁸⁰

Like the majority of the Romanian Transylvanians, initially Seton-Watson did not champion unification between Romania and its minority population in Hungary. Assessed in relation to Brubaker's triadic nexus of nationalisms, the Kingdom of Romania's homeland nationalism was muted by complex geopolitical realities. But, as their keen pre-war liaisons suggest, the capacity of the Romanians in Transylvania to highlight the oppressive nature of Magyar rule in Hungary was assisted through the campaigning work of Seton-Watson. In terms of the Romanian nation's development in

A Nation Affirmed, p. 353. For more on the political life of Goga see G. I. Bodea, *Octavian Goga: o viață, un destin*, Cluj-Napoca, Editura Limes, 2004.

⁷⁷ Seton-Watson also introduced Romania diplomat and Transylvanian Moroianu to H. W. Steed: Moroianu to Seton-Watson, 9 Aug 1908, SEW/17/18/5, UCL/SSEES.

⁷⁸ Scotus Viator, *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, p. 46; *Spectator*, 29 Sep 1906.

⁷⁹ Seton-Watson argued for a South Slav state in partnership with Austria-Hungary, believing it would improve the Monarchy's standing and weaken its dependence on Berlin. R. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question and the Hapsburg Monarchy*, London, Constable & Co., 1911, preface, pp. vii–viii.

⁸⁰ Sturdza cited in Seton-Watson, *The Future of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 48–49, reiterated in Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, p. 405; Seton-Watson in conversation with A. Vaida-Voevod, June 1907 in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. 1, p. 181.

Hungary, this Romanian minority's movement enjoyed both scholarly inquiry and political activism, with the Magyars providing the 'oppression from a foreign other'. That these Romanians appear to fulfil the first two stages of Hroch's three-stage nationalism model helps explain their later appeal as a legitimate national entity in British discourse.⁸¹ By 1890 this sympathetic nation had developed closer relations with the Romania Kingdom through the establishment of the Bucharest-based *Liga pentru Unitatea Culturală a tuturor Românilor* (The League for the Cultural Unity of the Romanian People).⁸²

Crucially it was Seton-Watson's reputation as a champion of Hungary's nationalities that led to his first contact with the Romanian Kingdom. Aware of his work, George Moroianu, a Transylvanian-born member of the Romanian legation in London, facilitated his visit to Romania in June 1909.⁸³ It was through the lens of Transylvania that Seton-Watson was introduced to Romania and its leading statesmen. Seton-Watson noted that Premier Brătianu emphasised the 'necessity of remaining on good terms with the Hungarian state' and Ionescu regarded the 'Transylvanian Question as infinitely the greatest problem for Roumanians', but that 'this dream can only be realised through the collapse of Austria-Hungary and this would create an infinitely more dangerous situation for Roumanians'.⁸⁴ Fearful of Russian ambitions, Romania was reluctant to imperil its alliance with Austria-Hungary.⁸⁵ Managing carefully balanced relations with the Romanians in Transylvania and the Dual Monarchy, the

⁸¹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 5–6; Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation', pp. 6–12.

⁸² Only with the outbreak of World War I did it become *Liga pentru unitatea politică a tuturor românilor* (League for the Political Union of Romanians).

⁸³ Based in London until April 1909, Moroianu enjoyed extensive correspondence with Seton-Watson, facilitating relationships, supplying information, corrections and translations, and promoting Seton-Watson's publications in Hungary and Romania; Moroianu to Seton-Watson, 3, 14, 16, 22 Jan, 28 Mar, 4, 10, 16, 27 Apr, 29 July, 4 Oct, 11 Dec 1908, 9, 23 May 1909, 23 Apr 1910, SEW/17/18/5, UCL/SSEES; Seton-Watson to Moroianu, 9 Jan, 13 Apr, 9 June, 15 July, 13 Aug 1908, 1, 19 Mar, 15 Apr 1909 in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 187, 197, 203–4, 207–8, 219–23.

⁸⁴ Seton-Watson, travel notes, June 1909, in *ibid.*, pp. 232–33.

⁸⁵ Romanian wariness was exacerbated after Russia's incremental annexation of Bessarabia in 1812 and 1878.

Romanian Kingdom appeared reasonable in comparison with the Hungarians who refused to relinquish the idea of a Magyar national state.⁸⁶

At the beginning of 1912 the British Ambassador in Bucharest, Sir Walter Townley noticed ‘Austro–Romanian relations are less friendly than they were when I was here before.’⁸⁷ The same year, changes in the balance of power after the first Balkan war further strained relations between the Dual Monarchy and Romania, and Seton-Watson’s attitude towards the status quo in the region began to shift in favour of Romania. Taking note of the country’s emboldened nationalism after the 1912 war, he publicly declared that the Great Powers had to both acknowledge the ‘interests of Austria-Hungary’, but also ‘Roumania as the most powerful of the five smaller states’. He claimed that during the war, Romania had behaved with restraint and deserved compensation.⁸⁸ It is significant that Dillon, a conservative journalist invested in imperial structures, and Seton-Watson a publicist with an increasing reputation for his support of suppressed nationalities in Austria-Hungary, both struck the same supportive note in the face of the negative press that accompanied Romania’s territorial claims in January 1913. There were differences between the two men’s perspectives; Dillon was committed to the Old Kingdom and its growing role as a regional power-broker, while Seton-Watson was better connected to the Romanian minority in Transylvania and the corresponding national homeland narrative in Romania.⁸⁹ However, it was the two men’s unequivocal championing of Romania during the second Balkan war that would prove a crucial factor in the emergence of a distinct Romanian identity in British discourse.

2.1.3 Dr Emile Dillon and the second Balkan war

This section (2.1.3) will argue that Dillon’s role in Romania’s image-making during the second Balkan war has been unjustifiably overlooked and it will reassert his

⁸⁶ One of the most vocal opponents of compromise was István Tisza, Prime Minister of Hungary between 1903 and 1905, President of the Lower House from 1912 and Prime Minister again from June 1913; he resigned in June 1917. Gabor Vermes, *István Tisza: The liberal vision, and conservative statecraft of a Magyar nationalist*, Boulder, East European Monographs, 1985.

⁸⁷ Townley to Grey, ‘Report on Roumania’, 4 Jan 1912, FO371/1464, TNA.

⁸⁸ *Spectator*, 9 Nov 1912; R. W. Seton-Watson, ‘Austria-Hungary as a Balkan Power’, *Contemporary Review*, vol. 102, Dec 1912, pp. 805–6.

⁸⁹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 4.

considerable hand in Romania's image recuperation in British discourse during 1913. With decades of experience as the *Daily Telegraph's* special correspondent in Russia, it will argue that his championing of Romania's role in the second Balkan war and neat avoidance of the Jewish Question are examples of a man who understood how to manipulate a nation's image. Through both praise and omission, Dillon established himself as the primary voice covering Romania in an unpopular second Balkan conflict. It is the significance of this commentary which demands the re-evaluation of journalism in the role of expertise, while the impact of Dillon's work, which emboldened ideas of the Romanian Kingdom as a leader in South East Europe, complicates the country's place within a denigrated Balkan construct.

Initially the British press were almost universal in their condemnation of Romania's belated decision in June 1913 to enter a 'Squalid War' that pitched the previous Christian victors of the first Balkan war against one another.⁹⁰ 'King Carol is holding his sword to auction ... The temptation to fish in muddied waters bids fair to overcome all moral considerations' in a conflict where the *Pall Mall Gazette* regarded 'all the combatants, including Roumania as much of a muchness' and condemned the Foreign Office for 'glossing over in paltering words Romania's action'.⁹¹ For the *Manchester Guardian* 'no one I suppose will go as far as to regard the Roumanian blow in the back with moral enthusiasm'.⁹² The *Punch* headline was 'KLEPTOROUMANIA or the Pinch of Chivalry' and Romania was a 'hyena power' in the *Nation*, who declared war on her 'distressed neighbours'. *The Times* (the paper most likely to think 'everything is for the best in the Balkans')⁹³ described Romania's intervention as 'the cheapest declaration of war on record', concluding 'political morality is not being practised with ardour anywhere in the Balkans right now'.⁹⁴

This early press commentary implicated Romania in a war that Todorova rightly argues helped crystallise the negative designation Balkanism through descriptions which frequently identified a confusing distant conflict known for its savagery and

⁹⁰ The headline 'Squalid War' was used for much of the coverage in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10 July 1913.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 1, 12, 16 July 1913.

⁹² *Manchester Guardian*, 13 July 1913.

⁹³ *Punch*, 6 Aug 1913; *The Nation*, 12 July, 9 Aug 1913.

⁹⁴ *The Times*, 12 July 1913.

‘useless slaughter’.⁹⁵ The south-eastern Peninsula’s violence was posited as a problem that needed to be solved and historians have subsequently argued it provided the binary other that served to highlight the ‘European’ qualities of those countries in the West.⁹⁶ The *Pall Mall Gazette* complained, ‘Europe is fast losing patience with these continual bickerings’, and *The Times* argued, ‘Europe is weary both of strife in the Balkans and of the quarrels of the Balkan people.’⁹⁷ The British government summed up the conflict as a ‘profound disappointment’.⁹⁸ This internecine warfare between neighbouring Christian states was the death knell of the region’s main British champion, the Balkan Committee. The 1913 war ‘seriously shook’ its ‘basic liberal-universal belief that when liberated from the worst restraints of Ottoman rule the region would automatically be set on a path to progress and civilisation’.⁹⁹ The body of experts splintered and individuals often turned against each other in favour of their ‘pet nation’.¹⁰⁰ However, while the demise of this united front was a loss for the region’s image, the subsequent fragmentation in representations worked in Romania’s favour as a country which had never been promoted by the Committee.¹⁰¹

While pro-Bulgarian sentiment prevailed in certain leftwing publications,¹⁰² Dillon, with his dual platform in the conservative press, offered unprecedented and consistent support to Romania. He identified a covetous Bulgaria that had pushed Romania into a conflict for ‘the interests of the equilibrium of the Balkans’. Ionescu’s ‘pacific and moderate ministry’ had been forced to ‘intervene and ask what Roumania has never yet demanded – compensation for the shifting of frontiers and growth of

⁹⁵ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 8 July 1913.

⁹⁶ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 19, 188; see also Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The imperialism of the imagination*, New Haven; London, Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 72–73; Mazower, *Balkans*, p. 4; Mika Suonpää, ‘Anglican Images of Eastern Orthodoxy before 1914’, in Maija Könönen and Juhani Nuorluoto (eds), *Europe-Evropa: Cross-cultural dialogues between the West, Russia and southeastern Europe*, Uppsala, Uppsala Universitet, 2010, p. 646.

⁹⁷ *Pall Mall Gazette* 14 July 1913; *The Times*, 12 July 1913.

⁹⁸ Grey to Bax-Ironside, 11 July 1913, 32496, FO371/1833, TNA.

⁹⁹ J. A. Perkins, ‘British Liberalism and the Balkans, c. 1875–1925’, PhD thesis, Birkbeck, University of London, 2014, p. 169.

¹⁰⁰ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, p. 39.

¹⁰¹ Michail identifies the emergence of two distinct groups, with Seton-Watson in the pro-Romania/Serbia camp; *ibid.*

¹⁰² Seton-Watson was critical of the *Nation*’s pro-Bulgarian coverage; see p. 118.

neighbouring states'.¹⁰³ Dillon's arrival in Romania by early July 1913 saw Romania appear almost daily in the *Daily Telegraph*, in a war that suffered from an 'absence of trustworthy correspondents'.¹⁰⁴ His subsequent eye-witness reports framed Romania's war in a moral, invigorating context. The villages were 'rejoicing, bands played national tunes, songs were chanted, flags were fluttering and the flower of the Roumanian youth was starting for the front'.¹⁰⁵ Celebrating a peasant idyll widely acknowledged in British discourse, Dillon's descriptions countered the notion of a 'Squalid War' and contrasted sharply with the predominantly Bulgarian atrocities reported in the *Daily Telegraph* and known to the Foreign Office.¹⁰⁶

With the largest army in the Balkans, Romania's two formation entry into Bulgaria brought the war to a close, and the swift victory vindicated Dillon's claim that Romania's intervention was a justifiable act of self-preservation by a country which had undergone successful militarisation.¹⁰⁷ Romania's refusal to accept Bulgaria's offer of territory in exchange for troop withdrawal proved the country was seeking peace for all belligerents: 'Romania's policy is national in its strivings and European in its wise restraint', while its newly accrued high-ranking status in southeastern Europe left Romania well placed to capitalise on 'Russia's discreet advances'.¹⁰⁸ In contrast, Bulgaria was identified as a slippery country prepared to forego her Slav identity for material advantage, and Austria-Hungary was trapped 'in masses of net which holds together the integral elements of the Dual state'.¹⁰⁹ Romania's stewardship at the

¹⁰³ Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs, July, Aug 1913, vol. 104, pp. 118, 264, 267; *Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 1913.

¹⁰⁴ *The Nation*, 9 Aug 1913.

¹⁰⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 July 1913.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 9, 15 July 1913; *Pall Mall Gazette* 4 July 1913; FO Notes on a dispatch from French Ambassador Bertie: 'Situation in Bulgaria' referring to likely Bulgarian massacres of Turks, 17 July 1913, 32979, FO371/1833, TNA. With attacks on civilian populations, accusations of atrocities were made on all sides in the Balkan wars. *The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in retrospect with a new introduction and reflections on the present conflict by George F Kennan*, Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993, ch. 5, 'War and International Law', pp. 208–34.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp. 117–18; Dillon, *Daily Telegraph*, 14 July 1913; for an analysis of Romanian military constructions see §3.1.

¹⁰⁸ *Daily Telegraph*, 21 July 1913.

¹⁰⁹ Dillon, anon., 'Eastern Problems and British Interests', pp. 272–23; *Daily Telegraph* 14, 16 July 1913.

August peace conference in Bucharest confirmed the country's exceptional status 'as moral arbitrator'.¹¹⁰

Dillon's unusual position as an 'establishment' journalist who was 'on-the-spot' in Romania during the second Balkan conflict gave him a disproportionate influence over contemporary interpretations of events. He exercised this influence both through praise for Romanian action as well as his astute handling of the country's troublesome identifiers. The Balkan wars had seen a recognisable gulf emerge between Romania's pro-Austrian monarch King Carol and the growing anti-Habsburg sentiment of the country's leading politicians.¹¹¹ Romania's subsequent attack on Bulgaria, against Habsburg advice, exacerbated tensions. Well aware of the importance of royal symbolism, Dillon did not refer to the tension between the King and his Romanian government. Instead he emphasised Carol's prowess after the Treaty of Bucharest had been signed in August 1913: 'Ingenious and resourceful', the King had courageously assumed responsibility and delivered a policy of 'brilliant success.'¹¹² Dillon signed off his last report from Romania with a resounding reminder of the country's regal civility. The only foreign journalist invited to Castle Peleş, King Carol's royal retreat, he enthused: 'If Wagner had beheld this abode of delight nestling amid the pine clad hills he might have been moved to make it the scene of yet another immortal opera.'¹¹³

Dillon employed similar tactics in his handling of Romania's Jewish Question in 1913. Romania's anticipated acquisition of Bulgarian territory in Dobrogea and the implications for Jews living in that region had led to vociferous complaints from the international Jewish community. Mark Levene credits Lucien Wolf for the extraordinary coordinated efforts sent to the Foreign Office in 1913.¹¹⁴ In January the Committee had pushed for the settlement of the Romania-Bulgaria dispute to be conditional upon the question of Jewish rights. In May when the cessation of territory

¹¹⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 19 July 1913. It was in Romania's interests to act as moderator and in doing so remain the single strongest power in the Balkans; Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, p. 123.

¹¹¹ Barclay to Grey, 'Annual Report on Roumania', 4 Jan 1913, 105, FO371/1742. The King was blamed for Romania's failure to come to terms with Bulgaria before the outbreak of the first Balkan war; Barclay to Grey, 3 Feb 1913, FO371/1767, TNA.

¹¹² *Daily Telegraph*, 30 July 1913.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 11, 12 Aug 1913.

¹¹⁴ Mark Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe: The diplomacy of Lucien Wolf, 1914–1919*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 18–19.

from Bulgaria looked inevitable, the protests grew more persistent. A letter from Lord Rothschild and additional appeals from the International Peace Committee supplemented the Conjoint Committee's reminders that Romanian assurances were not to be trusted.¹¹⁵ The British Foreign Office trod a cautious path, keen to avoid ostracising the new dominant power in the Balkans, but aware that the Conjoint Committee was an 'influential group'.¹¹⁶

For Dillon the matter was less ambiguous. Reporting in Russia had exposed him to the desperate conditions of East European Jews, but his coverage was rarely unbiased. (During the 1912 Beilis Case when a Ukrainian Jew was accused of killing a 13-year-old in order to drain his blood for religious purposes, Dillon was one of the few British journalists who did not dismiss the ritual murder accusations outright.¹¹⁷) But he was also aware of the alienating nature of anti-Jewish discourse, and in 1905 had successfully urged Russian Minister Witte to appear sensitive towards American concerns over Russian anti-Semitism.¹¹⁸ This complex appreciation of Eastern Europe's multifaceted Jewish Question saw Dillon studiously avoid one of the country's most prominent issues throughout his 1913 coverage. His casual dismissal of the American Secretary of State's Note at the Bucharest Peace Conference was symptomatic of this approach.

The United States of America has made an official communication to the negotiating governments that the treaty shall obtain a clause bestowing civil and religious liberty upon the populations of all the newly annexed territory. The members of the Conference evince no enthusiasm for this intercession which, being superfluous is more decorative than useful.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Conjoint Jewish Committee to Grey, 11, 23 Jan, 24 May 1913; National Peace Council to Grey, 28 May 1913; Lord Rothschild to Grey, 8 May 1913, American Roumanian Jewish Emancipation Committee to Asquith and Grey, 11 Aug 1913, FO371/1742, TNA.

¹¹⁶ FO minutes, 13 Jan 1913, 1832; Louis Mallet to Conjoint Jewish Committee, 17 Jan 1913, 1832; Grey to Lord Rothschild, 19 May 1913, FO371/1742, TNA.

¹¹⁷ Sam Johnson, *Pogroms, Peasants, Jews: Britain and Eastern Europe's 'Jewish Question', 1867–1925*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 129–33.

¹¹⁸ Johnson, 'The Journalist as a Diplomat', pp. 690–91.

¹¹⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 5 Aug 1913.

However, if Dillon managed to keep Romania's Jewish Question away from public discourse in 1913,¹²⁰ his silence could not compete with the persistent noise generated by the Conjoint Committee inside the Foreign Office. Here it is instructive to return to Prott's analysis of expertise, which omits the public role of journalism, identifying experts in the World War I context of politics and transnational policy-making.¹²¹ Dillon, although well known, was not a lobbyist. His journalism broadly helped anchor public opinion around the need to maintain the European status quo, but press coverage was just one factor influencing Foreign Office policy. In contrast, the Conjoint Committee provided the British government with regular uncompromising reminders of Romania's capacity for obstruction: in 'Greece, Bulgaria, Servia and Montenegro the constitutions provide for the equal rights of all religious denominations ... Roumania is a flagrant exception.'¹²² By autumn 1913 the prospect of another Great Power conference to legitimise territorial changes saw the Jewish Committee on the verge of a breakthrough with an official confirmation that the British government would consult the signatories of the Berlin Treaty to reaffirm the liberties of religious minorities. It was a commitment which the Foreign Office reiterated as late as 28 July 1914.¹²³

This disparity between Dillon's dismissal of the Jewish Question and the Conjoint's assertion of its importance is indicative of Brubaker's recognition that in order for a national minority to promote its nationalism, it needs the capacity to frame the host nation as oppressive. Both Dillon and the Conjoint were aware of the significance of that framing. Events in 1913 witnessed a power struggle between the 'competing nationalism' of the Romanian Kingdom and the international leverage of its Jewish community, one that would be temporarily resolved in favour of the Romanian Kingdom with the outbreak of World War I.¹²⁴

In terms of Romania's more general framing in 1913, because much of Dillon's thinking was in line with government policy, it's hard to discern the extent which his

¹²⁰ There was a passing reference to the matter in the *Manchester Guardian*, 18 June 1913.

¹²¹ Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', pp. 727–50.

¹²² Conjoint Committee to FO, 48433, 13 Oct 1913, FO 371/1742, TNA.

¹²³ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 18–19.

¹²⁴ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–9.

articles swayed opinion in the Foreign Office.¹²⁵ Despite a keenness to remain impartial in July 1913, the government recognised that ‘the Bulgarians are to blame for their own misfortune’¹²⁶ and British Ambassador Barclay’s sympathy for Romania’s case echoed Dillon’s.¹²⁷ The dovetailing of opinion between British officials and Dillon again explains Michail’s exclusion of the journalist in an analysis that framed ‘liberal’ experts operating pre-1914 as invariably contesting the government’s position.¹²⁸ In contrast, Dillon’s long-standing argument that Romania was now the decisive player in the Balkans tallied with Grey’s thinking. While advising against Great Power action in the Balkans, Grey expressed the hope that Romania’s move against Bulgaria ‘may precipitate peace’.¹²⁹

With the conclusion of peace in Bucharest, Dillon’s work became the touchstone for contemporary Romanian identity in public discourse. Performing a volte-face, the *Pall Mall Gazette* quoted him directly: ‘I am now convinced the Roumanian Government, which is straining every nerve to smooth away the difficulties and arrange a treaty ... is virtually certain to succeed.’ Dillon’s positioning of Romania as a power with the right to dictate Bulgaria’s territorial limits and his recognition that ‘Roumania is keen to raise its prestige above the smaller states of Europe’¹³⁰ was echoed in *The Times* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*: ‘Roumania has increased her authority in the Balkans and has raised her prestige in Europe.’¹³¹ Barclay reminded the Foreign Office that Romania was ‘seconding the efforts of the Great Powers in the cause of peace’ and had asserted her independence in the face of Austrian influence, becoming ‘in great measure the arbiter of the Balkans’.¹³² Romania’s identified ‘prestige’ and ‘status’ helped single

¹²⁵ Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, p. 129.

¹²⁶ FO minutes on a dispatch from British Ambassador in Bulgaria, Bax-Ironside, 9 July 1913, 31456. The sentiment was repeated in FO minutes 7 days later, 16 July 1913, 32785, FO371/1833, TNA.

¹²⁷ Barclay wrote, ‘I cannot but feel that the intervention of this country in the present conflict has its useful side from a European point of view’, and ‘much comfort is to be drawn from Roumania’s active policy’; Barclay to Grey, 24 July 1913, 297, FO 371/1833, TNA.

¹²⁸ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, pp. 13–15.

¹²⁹ Grey to Lloyd George, 11 July 1913, LG/C/4/14/10, PA.

¹³⁰ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 30 July 1913; *Daily Telegraph*, 22, 24, 29 July, 4 Aug 1913.

¹³¹ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 11 Aug 1913, *The Times*, 10 Aug 1913.

¹³² ‘Annual Report on Roumania’, G. Barclay to E. Grey, 11 Mar 1914, 13944, FO371/1742, TNA.

out the country as the leader in South East Europe and distanced it from barbaric lesser Balkan associations.¹³³

Recognition of Romania's increased significance, which Dillon had championed consistently from early 1913, demands an acknowledgement of the country's achievements and a reassessment of Romania's unequivocal place in Todorova's negative Balkan rubric.¹³⁴ By August 1913 Dillon's Romania was a European country that 'had tackled and performed a task which mighty Russia had attempted and failed to achieve', becoming the 'the elder sister *prima inter pares* of the Christian states' in the Balkans.¹³⁵ Romania's role in the second Balkan war, embellished through Dillon's relentless championing, had the conflicted impact of cementing the country's place in an increasingly condemned Balkan rubric while simultaneously elevating Romania's position within that cluster. Dillon's 1913 representations of Romania reinforced the complexity at the heart of the Kingdom's projected identity. Adrian Cioroianu recognises that it is strange the 'country so persistent in its effort to escape the Balkans, improved its status and emerged as a power due to the same Balkans – more precisely the Balkan wars of 1912–13'.¹³⁶ No one articulated the importance of this change in Romania's status more clearly than Dr Emile Dillon.

2.1.4 R. W. Seton-Watson and the second Balkan war

When evaluating Seton-Watson's role in interpretations of Romania in 1913, Prott's identification of experts as possessing 'reliable access to decision makers and a certain freedom to develop alternative options rather than being forced to provide a single solution to complex problems' provides a useful benchmark against which to measure his emerging 'expert' status.¹³⁷ Seton-Watson's published research on the nationalities

¹³³ Milica Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms: The case of Former Yugoslavia', *Slavic Review*, 1995, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 917–31.

¹³⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 118; Romania's military gains continue to be overlooked; Hall only recognises Serbia as the conflict's 'big winner.' Hall, *The Balkan Wars 1912–1913*, pp. 139–43.

¹³⁵ Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs', Sep 1913, vol. 104, p. 415.

¹³⁶ Adrian Cioroianu, 'Impossible Escape: Romanians and the Balkans', in D. Bejelić and O. Savić (eds), *Balkan as a Metaphor: Between globalization and fragmentation*, Cambridge, MA; London, MIT Press, 2002, p. 218.

¹³⁷ Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', p. 729.

within Austria-Hungary had acquired heightened relevance during the first Balkan war, leaving him well placed to warn of a pan-Slav, anti-Austrian agenda flanked by a justifiably restive Romania. As early as December 1912 Seton-Watson was championing the prospects of a Balkan world led by non-Slavic Romania ‘as the most powerful of the five Christian states in the Peninsula’.¹³⁸ In February 1913 he began a Balkan tour which included a visit to Bucharest in June.¹³⁹ Seton-Watson was still in Bucharest when the second Balkan war began and the conflict saw him review his previously held belief that the momentum for reform in the Dual Monarchy should come from within the Empire. This final part of §2.1 will argue that the increasing importance he placed on the smaller states that bordered the Habsburg Empire included Romania, and was inspired by his recognition of the external homeland nationalisms of those countries in relation to their nationalities in the Dual Monarchy. The reassessment of Brubaker’s nationalisms model in the context 1913 will help elucidate the difference between Dillon’s more straightforward recognition of an increasingly assertive Romanian Kingdom and Seton-Watson’s appreciation of that Kingdom through the lens of the Romanians in Transylvania.

The year 1913 saw Seton-Watson further develop his relationships with statesmen in the Romanian Kingdom, although his entry point remained those with strong Transylvanian interests. In early 1913 Seton-Watson’s pivotal contact, Transylvanian-born Romanian diplomat Moroianu, objected to the ‘exceptional hatred towards Roumania’ expressed in the British press and, recognising the Scotsman’s potential leverage to challenge the situation, continued to supply Seton-Watson’s with the majority of his Romanian introductions.¹⁴⁰ While Dillon countered Britain’s anti-Romanian sentiment through forthright copy in conservative publications, with Moroianu’s help Seton-Watson played a multilayered, longer-term game. He introduced Macedo-Romanian delegates to influential members in the British press in the hope that Romania’s Aromanian Diaspora might inspire sympathy; they included Balkan Committee members Henry Brailsford and Noel Buxton at the *Morning Post*, John

¹³⁸ Seton-Watson, ‘Austria-Hungary as a Balkan Power’, p. 806.

¹³⁹ His tour included Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. Seton-Watson to Moroianu, 21 Feb 1913; Seton-Watson, Pencil notes from visit to Roumania, 20 June 1913, in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 366–67, 381–83.

¹⁴⁰ Moroianu to Seton-Watson, 3 Mar 1913, Moroianu to Seton-Watson, 12 June 1913, SEW/17/18/5, UCL/SSEES.

Strachey at *the Spectator* and Henry Massingham and Christopher Nevinston at *The Nation*.¹⁴¹ During the second Balkan war he challenged Romanian perceptions that Britain's coverage was biased, insisting that with the exception of the *Nation*, which is 'screamingly Bulgarophil', the British press 'is showing very considerable tact and moderation towards Roumania'.¹⁴² In a reminder of the two-way exchanges in the fields of representation and expertise, he also worked to establish his own credentials among Romanians as their champion in Britain, sending Moroianu his supportive letters in the *Spectator* and *The Nation*, and asking for them to be reproduced in the Romanian press.¹⁴³

In September 1913 it was reported that 'omniscient' Dillon in his 'voluminous description of the negotiations which culminated in the Treaty of Bucharest, agrees substantially with Mr Seton Watson's eulogy of Roumanian statesmanship'.¹⁴⁴ There were clear parallels in the two men's thinking. Seton-Watson also supported Romania's intervention in July 1913, arguing Romania, 'shut in by two great powers', had little choice but to challenge the rise of a Greater Bulgaria, prevent the crushing of Serbia and claim any hegemony for itself 'as the most powerful and developed of the Balkan nations'. The country offered the Great Powers the only possible solution: 'a balance of power between the Christian states of the peninsula'.¹⁴⁵ Like Dillon, Seton-Watson identified Romania not only as *prima inter pares* in the Balkans, but also as the country which held the balance of power between Russia and Austria-Hungary, with the capacity to defect from Vienna and in the event of war, help 'confront the Dual

¹⁴¹ Seton-Watson to Moroianu, 5 Mar 1913, in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 369–70.

¹⁴² Seton-Watson to Moroianu 20 July 1913, in *ibid.*, pp. 373–75; the article cited appeared in *The Nation*, 12 July 1913. Ambassador Barclay's reference to 'the scathing utterances of many of the London papers' reflected Romania's view that the British press were predominantly anti-Romanian. G. Barclay to E. Grey, 24 July 1913, 297, FO371/1833, TNA.

¹⁴³ Seton-Watson to Moroianu 20 July 1913. Information exchanges and promotional work took place on both sides: Vaida-Voevod sent Seton-Watson 100 copies of an article about Hungarian elections in Sasca asking him to distribute to English contacts; Vaida-Voevod to Seton-Watson, 20 May 1913, cited in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 386–88.

¹⁴⁴ Robert Seton-Watson kept articles about his work as a champion of the small nations of South East Europe. Publication name not visible, 6 Sep 1913, SEW 1/7, UCL/SSEES.

¹⁴⁵ Seton-Watson, *The Nation*, 19 July 1913; *Spectator*, 12 July 1913.

Monarchy with a solid phalanx of enemies stretching from Galicia to the Adriatic'.¹⁴⁶ But Seton-Watson differed from Dillon both in terms of how he believed Romania should utilise its newly acquired status and through his engagement in behind-the-scenes political brokering to realise his emerging vision for the Balkans.

At the end of the second Balkan war Seton-Watson wrote that he had identified a 'growing determination' in Bucharest for change in Hungary.¹⁴⁷ Three months earlier he met Romanians with a keen interest in their Transylvanian kinsmen. They included cabinet ministers Nicolae Xenopol and Take Ionescu, a founding member and the vice-president of the *Liga Culturală*, Gheorghe Bogdan Duică and Virgil Arion, and opposition Liberal Party leader, Ion Brătianu. Seton-Watson observed intolerance towards Hungary's conduct in Transylvania (noting Bogdan-Duică stressed the possibility of 'joint action with the Serbs') and he encouraged Brătianu to 'assert' that Romania is 'in a position to force Austria to compel the Magyars to treat Roumanians of Hungary properly'.¹⁴⁸

It is possible to identify the imprint of Seton-Watson's discussions with Balkan leaders, including those in Bucharest, on the evolution of his opinions. By September 1913 he was publicly arguing in Britain that the 'Balkan War marks a turning point in Austro-Hungarian relations' and 'has taught both Roumania and Servia to look northwards to their kinsmen across the frontier whose emancipation from the Magyar yoke seems to have drawn insensibly nearer'. Previously wary of regicidal Serbia, in 1913 he enthusiastically referred to the country's army and its 'brilliant achievements' and argued that the 'renaissance of Serbia' and Romania's emergence as the 'most powerful and cultured of all the Christian states of the Peninsula' were developments through which 'drastic changes in Hungary and an abandonment of a Magyarising Policy' might finally be realised.¹⁴⁹ Mindful of the balance of power and still convinced of the need for a strong Dual Monarchy, he did not advocate the inclusion of the 'four million Roumanians of Hungary' into the Romanian Kingdom, but like Romanian

¹⁴⁶ Seton-Watson, 'New Phases of the Balkan Question', *Contemporary Review*, Sep 1913, vol. 104, p. 329.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Brătianu agreed that Romania was in a position to insist on the better treatment of Romanians in Transylvania but subject to timing. Seton-Watson, Pencil notes from visit to Roumania, 20 June 1913, in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 381–83.

¹⁴⁹ Seton-Watson, 'New Phases in the Balkan Question', pp. 326, 329–30.

Bogdan Duica, he identified a unity of mission with Serbia, the war having ‘revealed to the two countries their community of interests alike, inside the Monarchy and in the Balkans’.¹⁵⁰

In contrast, Dillon championed the cause he had come to support in Bucharest while ultimately remaining loyal to his conservative instincts. He identified the maintenance of Austria-Hungary as essential for stability in the region and cautioned against publicists encouraging the idea of ‘these restless little states working together’. Romania, no longer ‘drawn in the wake of the Dual Monarchy’, had made the ‘eternal Servian problem ... more acute’. Dillon warned of what a living thing ‘nationality is become in southeastern Europe’, the strong undercurrents of which have ‘never yet been measured’. Romania’s wilful behaviour had given hope to their brethren in the Monarchy and thus created another ‘Ireland’ for the Empire.¹⁵¹ Here an assessment of Brubaker’s competing nationalisms is again informative. Shifts in the geopolitical situation had made the prospects of an external homeland nationalism focused on Transylvania more viable.¹⁵² The leverage which this accorded Romania in relation Hungary’s nationalising nationalism was keenly acknowledged by Seton-Watson. In contrast, Dillon, having spent years in Tsarist Russia, was a believer in traditional imperial centres of power. He recognised the merits of a strengthened core Romanian Kingdom, but did not share Seton-Watson’s optimism over the prospect of a Balkan alliance, nor independent Romanian action that might imperil the viability of the Habsburg Empire.

In the wake of the Treaty of Bucharest, liberal idealist Seton-Watson believed a ‘Serbo-Roumanian Entente’ had the potential to expand into a larger Balkan league with common commercial and strategic interests that would not be purely Slav thanks to the addition of Romania and would be ‘freed from the intrigues and domination of Russia and Austria alike’.¹⁵³ If Todovora’s observes ‘almost total disappointment’ in the region

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 329–30; Seton-Watson, Pencil notes from visit to Roumania, 20 June 1913, in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 381–83.

¹⁵¹ Dillon, anon, ‘British Policy in the Near East’ and ‘Eastern Problems and British Interests’, vol. 218, pp. 573–74, vol. 219, pp. 274–79.

¹⁵² Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 5–6.

¹⁵³ Seton-Watson, ‘New Phases in the Balkan Question’, p. 330.

during the Balkan wars, in 1913 Seton-Watson sought to challenge that opinion.¹⁵⁴ He cited the Treaty of Bucharest as ‘fresh proof’ that the ‘reviving Christian states’ of the Balkans ‘are well able to manage their own affairs without outside interference’ and argued ‘recent events have forced the Western world to revise its judgement of all the Balkan States’ which had been stereotyped by ‘false estimates’ (including his own).¹⁵⁵ Crucially, it was Romania that Seton-Watson singled out as the country ‘entitled’ to ‘leadership in the Balkans’, concluding that ‘the moderation which she has displayed in the recent crisis proves that she desires to lead rather than to dominate’.¹⁵⁶

Not a professional journalist, in September 1913 Seton-Watson’s views were expounded in one *Contemporary Review* article. And the liberal press did not always agree with him. In the *Manchester Guardian*, Romania’s ‘robbery under arms’ in Bulgaria’s Dobrogea undermined Bucharest’s protestations over ‘the sufferings of sundry millions of Roumanians under the yoke of the Magyars in Hungary’.¹⁵⁷ Nonetheless, by the end of 1913 Seton-Watson had established his reputation beyond the Habsburg nationalities as both a Balkan and a Romanian expert. Like Dillon, he identified Romania’s growing power in the region. But unlike Dillon, who remained committed to the status quo, Seton-Watson offered a different view for the potential manifestation of that power and in doing so fulfilled one of Prott’s key identifiers in the definition of expertise. Asserting of the rights of Romanian Transylvanians, seeing the potential for a alliance with other Balkan states, and demonstrating his ability to work on both sides of the Romanian–Hungarian border to realise his political vision, Seton-Watson demonstrated what Prott identifies as ‘a certain freedom to develop alternative options rather than being forced to provide a single solution to a complex problem’.¹⁵⁸ His dedication to the region paved the way for Seton-Watson’s elevated status during World War I when Britain sought additional allies on the Eastern Front. If 1913 was the

¹⁵⁴ Todorova cites a later comment from Seton-Watson on the ‘excessive disgust’ at the Balkan wars, which underlines the limitations of his influence in 1913, Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 117

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 322–28; Seton-Watson’s exoneration of the Balkans did not include Bulgaria which he continued to blame publicly for the second Balkan war: N. Buxton to Seton-Watson (without date but probably written in early 1914), SEW/17/3/3, UCL/SSEES.

¹⁵⁶ Seton-Watson, ‘New Phases in the Balkan Question’, p. 330.

¹⁵⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 10 Aug 1913.

¹⁵⁸ Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination’, p. 729.

culmination of journalist Dillon's exclusive engagement with the Romanian kingdom, for 'expert' Seton-Watson it was just the beginning.

2.2 World War, Romanian Neutrality and the Changing Face of Expertise

2.2.1 Dr Emile Dillon – 'the semi-official ambassador'

In November 1913 *Vanity Fair* published a caricature of Dr Emile Dillon above the caption, 'the semi-official ambassador'.¹⁵⁹ Doubtless the epithet pleased Dillon, the man who had reminded readers that his fountain pen was used to sign the Treaty of Bucharest.¹⁶⁰ The peace negotiations in August 1913 marked the high point in his relations with Romania, and sealed a friendship with politician Take Ionescu that endured beyond the Conference.¹⁶¹ However, after the outbreak of World War I, Dillon's support of Romania was increasingly dependent on the country's willingness to join the conflict on the side of the Entente. This section will argue that his irate constructions of neutral Romania expose the fickleness of what Said's *Orientalism* identifies as representations 'premised upon exteriority'.¹⁶² Dillon believed Romanian inaction did not suit British military needs and roundly castigated the country, attempting to redefine Romania as another untrustworthy Balkan neutral. His opportunistic coverage between August 1914 and August 1916 will serve to underline the limitations that journalism imposed on 'expertise', with the commentator premising the needs of his own image and readership over accuracy and strategy. It will identify Romania's two-year neutrality as a period of heightened uncertainty which highlighted the contrast between Dillon's professional media voice and the more fluid position of men like Seton-Watson who occupied an increasingly powerful role that bridged academia, politics and the press.

¹⁵⁹ *Vanity Fair*, 5 Nov 1913.

¹⁶⁰ *Daily Telegraph*, 4, 7 Aug 1913.

¹⁶¹ Take Ionescu organised Dillon's wedding to his second wife Kathleen in Romania, April 1914; Dillon to Kathleen, 27 Feb, 9 Apr 1914, Acc 12382, no. 25, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁶² Said, *Orientalism*, p. 21.

Immediately after Dillon's departure from Bucharest in August 1913, Romania was relegated to his general 'Foreign Affairs' contributions in the *Contemporary Review*. For the first time he reported on the country's compromising internal issues, drawing attention to Romania's profligate landowners dependent on the peasant 'who barely receives enough to enable him to live and go on working for their behoof, and occasionally to drown his sorrows in alcohol'.¹⁶³ These were not peasants 'in the European sense'. The criticism is indicative of a superior external perspective; backward Romania still had a long way to go. However, although Dillon located the country in a second tier of Eastern nations, he remained optimistic about Romania as the 'warden of the Balkan states' and a 'veritable Power in Europe'.¹⁶⁴ He was relieved that Romania's new premier Brătianu appeared prudent and argued that under him 'reform will be a more moderate affair than promised and imagined last summer'. Dillon wanted the peasant question addressed in order that the country had a free hand to attend the 'problems of foreign policy'. Romania, 'in a position of predominating influence', was still his bright hope for peace in a Peninsula which was a vital and unresolved component in a divided continent.¹⁶⁵

In line with British foreign policy, Dillon emphasised the need for political equilibrium in Europe. Two days before the Austrian Ultimatum was presented to Serbia in July 1914, Ionescu, the former Romanian Interior Minister, was surprised by a meeting with the British Foreign Secretary when Grey insisted he did not want Italy to leave the Triple Alliance and join France and Russia, because 'the peace of Europe which rests on the balance of power would be endangered'.¹⁶⁶ In a similar vein, Dillon denied 'Roumania's alleged fundamental change of policy'. Amidst speculation that France and Russia were wooing Romania in the spring of 1914, he urged caution.¹⁶⁷ Ignoring increased Irredentist manifestations towards Transylvania, Dillon argued that

¹⁶³ Dillon acknowledged Romania's agrarian and electoral problems, but obfuscated Brătianu's failure to tackle the Jewish Question: Dillon, 'Foreign Affairs', vol. 107, June 1914, pp. 879–81.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., Mar 1914, vol. 105, p. 429.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., Mar 1914, vol. 105, pp. 430–32, vol. 107, June 1914, pp. 875–78.

¹⁶⁶ Ionescu, *Some Personal Impressions*, ch. 11, p. 102.

¹⁶⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 3 Apr 1914; *The Times*, 2 Apr, 12, 15 June 1914. The Russian Tzar's visit to Romania in June 1914 compounded these rumours. The British press was circumspect in comparison with American papers which commented freely on Romania's status as 'the most courted power in Europe'. *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 5 Apr, 3 May 1913; *Washington Post*, 3 May 1914.

‘Romania needs and covets no territory’.¹⁶⁸ By June 1914, although he was reporting from war-torn Albania, Dillon held onto the idea of Romania as a centre of reason and continued to refer to the diplomatic finesse of Ionescu (who had left office in January 1914).¹⁶⁹ This happy co-existence between journalist and Romanian ideal endured as long as Dillon felt Romania’s outlook worked in the interests of Britain. But with the latter’s entry into World War I, those interests were turned upside down and Dillon’s championing of peaceful Romania abruptly ended. The next two years witnessed a volte-face in his coverage of the country whose place in British discourse he had so enhanced.

In 1913 Dillon’s superior knowledge of Romania saw him challenge Michail’s definition of a Balkan ‘expert’ that demands a ‘sense of commitment to the region’.¹⁷⁰ But the war exposed the weakness of his role as a man who earned his living by covering the ‘great events’ in Europe.¹⁷¹ By February 1915 Dillon had moved to Italy, where he watched the former member of the Triple Alliance swap allegiance and join the Entente that May. Present at an earlier Franco-Romanian banquet in Paris, where Romania’s entry into the war was anticipated along with that of Italy’s, and following a particular line of diplomatic thinking, Dillon predicted ‘Roumania is bound by a specific engagement to cooperate with the Allies in the second phase of the war which is now impending’ and he anticipated imminent military engagement.¹⁷² That the country he thought he knew so well failed to act on the assurances given by ‘principal members of the present cabinet, as well as by the chiefs of the opposition’ was a bitter disappointment and a professional humiliation.¹⁷³ Having championed a parallel case between Italy and Romania for months, he now cautioned Britain over assumptions that the countries were similar. No longer a Latin land, Romania was a ‘Danubian

¹⁶⁸ Dillon, ‘Foreign Affairs’, June 1914, vol. 105, pp. 872–5.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 874.

¹⁷⁰ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, p. 32.

¹⁷¹ A claim Dillon made about his coverage in the *Daily Telegraph*; Dillon to Le Sage, managing editor, *Daily Telegraph*, 5 Mar 1903, no. 19, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁷² Dillon’s *Daily Telegraph* comments reiterated in the *Near East*, 21 May 1915, p. 78. Romania’s imminent entry into the war was repeated elsewhere, *Manchester Guardian* 7, 8 June 1915; the British ambassador in Bulgaria was sure Romania would enter the war with Italy; Bax-Ironside to Grey, 5, 30 Sep 1914, FO371/1901; the Foreign Office was less certain; Clerk notes Barclay Telegram, 6 May, Grey notes Barclay telegram, 24 May, Nicolson to Grey, 26 May 1915, FO371/2252, TNA.

¹⁷³ *Daily Telegraph*, 11 Jan 1915; Dr. E. J. Dillon, ‘The Irresolute Neutrals’, *Contemporary Review*, July 1915, vol. 108, p. 22.

Kingdom', where 'the masses are mostly uneducated, bereft of political rights, inert'.¹⁷⁴ Dillon ruthlessly unpicked the political legitimacy of a country he had helped construct, comparing the 'soul' of Italy's people which was capable of dictating their country's war course, with a Romanian people in the thrall of a virtual 'dictatorship' at the hands of Brătianu. The Prime Minister was a scrupulous man 'unable to make a decision'. Romania's strategic hesitancy that Dillon had praised in 1913 was damned as 'faintheartedness' in the context of World War I.¹⁷⁵

In July 1915 Dillon was briefly consoled by the idea that when Bulgaria joined the Allies, Romanian interventionists would force the hand of their government.¹⁷⁶ (The Foreign Office thought Romania was unlikely to enter the war with an equivocal Bulgarian neighbour.¹⁷⁷) Bulgaria's decision to join the Central Powers in September 1915 quashed those hopes. Dillon's response to Romania's continued neutrality was uncompromising. Contradicting his previous argument that Romania sought no additional territory, he attacked their cowardly leaders for failing to save the four million Romanians who 'vegetate and languish' in Hungary, claiming that the 'Bucharest government might have annexed the territory long ago'. The Irredentist claims he had been reluctant to acknowledge in 1913 were now used as stick to beat the inactive Romanian Kingdom with. In the *Illustrated London News* Dillon wrote that the country was run by a 'single average' brain – Prime Minister Brătianu – who waited for Transylvania to 'drop into her lap without an effort on her part, as a result of a certain magic formula uttered by himself', while his friend, pro-Entente Ionescu was 'relegated to the inactivity of unofficial life'.¹⁷⁸ Dillon's very personal attacks on Brătianu

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., *Contemporary Review*, pp. 22–33.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.; Emile Joseph Dillon, *From the Triple to the Quadruple Alliance, why Italy went to war*, S.I, Hodder and Stoughton, pp. vii–viii.

¹⁷⁶ Dillon, 'The Irresolute Neutral', *Contemporary Review*, July 1915, vol. 108, pp. 22–33.

¹⁷⁷ British ambassador in Bulgaria, Bax-Ironside to Grey, 22 Sep 1914; Romanian cooperation required 'at least the neutrality of Bulgaria'. Grey to Buchanan, 1 Nov 1914, FO371/1901, TNA; an opinion shared in *The Times*, 7 Nov 1914.

¹⁷⁸ In a later censored article Dillon acknowledged the pressure Brătianu was under, *Illustrated London News*, 6 Nov, 4 Dec 1915.

compounded the untrustworthy reputation of Romania's prevaricating leader.¹⁷⁹

Brătianu's Sphinx-like image became a catch-all used to describe the whole country.¹⁸⁰

Dillon's Romania fell further into the negative Balkan world identified by Todorova. It was an unscrupulous country in a despised Balkan rubric riddled with mutual loathing,¹⁸¹ where 'the mental and moral mechanisms' are 'worked by a set of levers that differ widely from those of the more developed peoples of Europe'.¹⁸² J. O. Baylen argues that during the war Dillon's opinions were seen as an increasing liability by Lord Burnham, the managing editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, and his work was frequently censored.¹⁸³ However, Dillon continued to write for the *Daily Telegraph*; in 1916 he was hailed as their 'well known foreign correspondent' and wrote a 'series of important articles' on the diplomatic history of the Balkans that capitalised on 'his unrivalled knowledge of political Europe to trace the course of war diplomacy during last year'.¹⁸⁴ The *Illustrated London News* flaunted his brand: 'DR E. J. DILLION the best informed authority on foreign affairs and the inner side of international diplomacy will write on the DIPLOMATIC SIDE OF THE WAR each week.'¹⁸⁵ In June 1916, the *Sunday Times* referred to Dillon as 'easily the best informed journalist we have on foreign affairs'.¹⁸⁶

Dillon continued to count himself as one among a few experts outside the Diplomatic Corp who could help the British government understand Balkan policy.¹⁸⁷ Publicly he was prepared to criticise them, pointing out that the 'pith of the matter' regarding Romania's neutrality was the Allies' injudicious decision to promise Romania the territories belonging to Austria-Hungary in exchange for mere neutrality.¹⁸⁸ In

¹⁷⁹ For Foreign Office opinions on Brătianu see p. 139.

¹⁸⁰ 'Roumania – Will the Sphinx Speak', *Manchester Guardian*, 27 Aug 1916; 'Roumania apparently maintains a sphinx-like attitude', *Near East*, 10 Dec 1916, p. 146; Kate Blakey, 'A Land then just as problematic as the Sphinx', *The English Woman*, Oct 1916, no. 94, p. 40.

¹⁸¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 4, 5 Feb 1916.

¹⁸² Dillon, 'The Irresolute Neutrals', p. 22; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 7, 116–39.

¹⁸³ Baylen, 'Dillon, Emile Joseph (1854–1933)'; *The Times*, 1 Nov 1915, *Illustrated London News*, 4 Dec 1915; Dillon to Kathleen, 22 Feb 1916, no. 25, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁸⁴ Dillon's diplomatic series ran over five days: *Daily Telegraph*, 3–7 Feb 1916.

¹⁸⁵ *Illustrated London News*, 4 Dec 1915.

¹⁸⁶ *Sunday Times*, 18 June 1916.

¹⁸⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 3 Feb 1916.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 4 Feb 1916.

London he also enjoyed access to several leading political players. One day in February 1916 he had a meeting at the Foreign Office, supper in London with the Home Secretary, the President of the Board of Trade and Lord Burnham, and talked to the Department of Trade about ‘attitudes and German intrigues in Roumania’.¹⁸⁹ In the wake of Romania’s entry into the war the censored contents of one of his articles was reported to Prime Minister Lloyd George, and Dillon also attempted to meet him regarding a separate matter.¹⁹⁰ However, Dillon’s primary outlet and priority remained the unsubtle and waspish power of his pen, the success of which he depended upon for his income.¹⁹¹ In his articles he was unbending in his criticism of Romania. Returning to Prott’s identification of expertise which required the freedom to arrive at alternative solutions, Dillon, beholden to his own rigid interpretation of events and those of his conservative readers, falls short. He could countenance only one outcome – Romania’s immediate entry into the war.¹⁹²

Within the space of a year Dillon had publicly contradicted himself and pivoted Romania’s image away from European and prestigious to undemocratic and Balkan. This is indicative of the power of external Western opinion-makers and the relative powerlessness of their Eastern subjects in a vindication of the binary dynamic Said identifies at the heart of oriental representations.¹⁹³ It was a paradigm that the propaganda-soaked atmosphere of World War I exacerbated. However, although Dillon undermined ideas of Romania as European and legitimate that elsewhere Seton-Watson continued to champion, he did not undermine the country’s relevance. Dillon’s disappointment at Romania’s failure to commit to the Entente cause and his exasperated conclusion that the country would play the game of ‘follow my leader’ and only embark on a war ‘when it can with certitude be predicated’ what the outcome will be,¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ Dillon to wife Kathleen, 22 Feb 1916, no. 25, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁹⁰ Burnham to Lloyd George, 8 Dec 1915, LG/F/5/8/1, PA; Dillon wanted to speak to the Prime Minister about the German Peace movement, Burnham to Lloyd George, Dec 1916, LG/F/5/8/2, PA.

¹⁹¹ Dillon relied on his *Daily Telegraph* salary and expenses and ran a close check on monies from other publications. Managing editor, *Daily Telegraph* to Dillon, 22 Feb 1910, no. 19; Dillon to Kathleen, 21 Feb 1916, no. 25, Dillon, NLS.

¹⁹² Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination’, p. 729.

¹⁹³ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 3 Feb 1916.

validated the idea, mooted in the Foreign Office and in the British press, that ‘to win Roumania would settle everything in favour of the Allies’.¹⁹⁵

2.2.1 Romanian neutrality, R. W. Seton-Watson and David Mitrany

Until the outbreak of World War I R. W. Seton-Watson remained steadfast in his view that a reformed Dual Monarchy was essential for the European balance of power. Even when his friend, *The Times* foreign editor, Henry Wickham Steed, led the Unionist press in its interventionist stance after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, Seton-Watson did not immediately relinquish the idea of ‘regeneration’ within the Empire.¹⁹⁶ However, once Britain declared war against Austria-Hungary in August 1914, like Dillon, Seton-Watson adapted his thinking in line with the geopolitical equilibrium he believed best suited British interests.¹⁹⁷ Capitalising on his ability to straddle different worlds and mobilise transnational contacts and networks, he became an early champion of the dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire and pushed for his vision of a reformed ‘New Europe’ which included the creation of Greater Romania.¹⁹⁸ This section will identify Seton-Watson’s framing of neutral Romania through its unredeemed westerly Transylvanian minority, which was mirrored by the work of academic Romanian Jew David Mitrany. Their ‘expert’ version of Romania will serve not only as a vindication of Brubaker’s recognition of an external ‘homeland nationalism’ ‘competing’ with opposing Hungarian ‘nationalising nationalism’, but it will also illustrate how this Transylvanian narrative replaced representations of other, less attractive, nationalisms within Romania.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁵ *Observer* journalist, Mr Garvin, cited in the *Illustrated London News*, 6 Nov 1915; The political and economic advantages were considered ‘incalculable’; GRC/FO notes on Barclay dispatch, 6 July 1916, FO371/2606, TNA.

¹⁹⁶ Seton-Watson, ‘The Archduke Francis Ferdinand’, *Contemporary Review*, Aug 1914, vol. 106, pp. 170–74.

¹⁹⁷ Seton-Watson’s evolving pre-war approach to the Habsburg Empire is in László, ‘R.W. Seton-Watson’s Changing View on the National Question of the Habsburg Monarchy’, pp. 657–59.

¹⁹⁸ *Spectator*, 15 Aug 1914; for more on the wartime development of Seton-Watson’s *New Europe* thinking see §4.3.

¹⁹⁹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

When World War I began, Seton-Watson offered ‘his pen and such knowledge as I know of the situation in the Near East’ to *The Times* and was rebuffed by Wickham Steed: ‘now that the war is general, Servia recedes into the background’.²⁰⁰ But if by August 1914 public focus had moved away from the Balkans, Irish has identified autumn 1914 as a watershed moment when ‘scholars engaged as combatants in a cultural war’ mobilising networks, pooling knowledge and establishing committees.²⁰¹ Motivated by the idea of promoting the nationalities within the Habsburg Empire, including Transylvanian Romanians, Seton-Watson had already started preparatory work on a provisional periodical to address the ‘huge gaps in English on quite a number of important political and racial problems’ which was targeted at ‘those who ‘count’ in politics, diplomacy and literature’.²⁰² By December 1914 he had written two serious contributions aimed at defining the Entente’s political *raison d’être*: a *Round Table* pamphlet and two chapters in *The War and Democracy* published by the Council for the Study of International Relations. Committed to the liberation of small nations which must rise and deliver ‘the reconciliation of the ideal of national unity with that of full liberty for racial minorities’, he identified ‘over five million Roumanians, including the very cream of the race’ who ‘still live under foreign domination’ and focused on the need for Romania to fulfil the dream of ‘Roumanian Unity’ with the Romanians in Austria-Hungary and join the Allied cause.²⁰³

In *The War and Democracy* even his academic co-authors found Seton-Watson’s style challenging. He was not writing for the general public, but rather seeking to explicate a complex situation that would both foster understanding at a top level and

²⁰⁰ Seton-Watson to Wickham-Steed, July 1914; Wickham-Steed to Seton-Watson, 4 Aug 1914, SEW/17/26/6, UCL/SSEES.

²⁰¹ Irish, ‘Scholarly Identities in War and Peace’, pp. 372–73.

²⁰² Seton-Watson to Dr J. S. Phillpotts, 13 Apr 1914, SEW/2/1, Seton-Watson Papers, UCL/SSEES.

²⁰³ Seton-Watson, ‘Race Problems in Austria-Hungary,’ *The Round Table*, no. 17, Dec 1914; R. Seton-Watson, ‘Austria-Hungary and the Southern Slavs’ and ‘The Issues of the War’, R. Seton-Watson, J. Dover Wilson, Alfred E. Zimmern and Arthur Greenwood, *The War and Democracy*, London, Macmillan and Co., 1914, pp. 121–57, 237–96. It was a ‘most instructive and suggestive book’: *Contemporary Review*, Jan 1915, vol. 107, pp. 389–90. And it ‘contains more substance to bite upon than any contribution to this war’s literature that we have seen’; *Manchester Guardian*, 29 Dec 1914.

ultimately encourage joint action.²⁰⁴ Despite his awareness that over a million Romanians lived in Russia's Bessarabia, which had been annexed from Romania in the previous century, Seton-Watson did not follow Arthur Greenwood's recommendation and insist 'Russia must give up Bessarabia to Roumania.' Instead he argued that the 'abstract theory of nationality' must first be 'reinforced by the more practical argument of sterling services to a common cause'.²⁰⁵ The *Manchester Guardian* highlighted this contradiction but conceded 'that no difficulties of detail affect the central fact that nationality is the best salve for existing wounds' and 'its application will enormously reduce the infected areas'.²⁰⁶ Seton-Watson's awareness of both Romania's priorities and Allied constraints placed him in the 'division of labour' Irish identifies in 1915, whereby scholars were 'definitively cast as national actors ... working in the national interest'.²⁰⁷

The *Oxford Pamphlets* was another product of an early scramble to find answers to a war many did not understand. It was a Jewish Romanian scholar at the London School of Economics who wrote for them about Romania, highlighting both academics' ability to identify and mobilise knowledge and the demand for specific information on Romania.²⁰⁸ David Mitrany enjoyed connections to the Balkan Committee and was keen to demonstrate loyalty to Britain, his adopted nation. He had tried to join the army but his 'alien' status led to rejection.²⁰⁹ Failing a Foreign Office interview, and encouraged to focus on Balkan intelligence,²¹⁰ he applied his Romanian expertise in the public domain. His *Oxford Pamphlet* 'Rumania, her history and her politics', was published in 1914, and he contributed a chapter to the prestigious 1915 wartime study, *The*

²⁰⁴ Co-authors Zimmern and Greenwood both highlighted the need for Seton-Watson to simplify his arguments. Zimmern pointed out that in the north of England 'people know practically nothing about Europe', so the simpler the better. Zimmern to Seton-Watson (without a date but likely written at the end of 1914) and Greenwood to Zimmern, 25 Nov 1914, SEW/17/31/4, UCL/SSEES.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., Greenwood to Zimmern; Seton-Watson, 'The Issues of the War', p. 269.

²⁰⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 29 Dec 1914.

²⁰⁷ Irish, 'Scholarly Identities in War and Peace', p. 373.

²⁰⁸ D. Mitrany, 'Rumania: Her History and Politics', *Oxford Pamphlets*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1914–15.

²⁰⁹ Prof. Orman to Prothero, 20 Apr 1915; Prothero, editor of *Quarterly Review*, thought Mitrany should renounce the idea of the army; Prothero to Mitrany, 21 Apr 1915, Folder 1, Mitrany/2, LSE.

²¹⁰ Prothero to Mitrany, 4 Oct 1914, *ibid.*

Balkans.²¹¹ Although a Romanian, in both publications Mitrany conformed to Said's exteriority paradigm and closely observed the needs of Britain's 'national interest'. Later wartime correspondence with Anglo-Jew Lucien Wolf, confirms Mitrany's concern for the welfare of his Romanian co-religionists.²¹² However, in line with Foreign Office recommendations, just as Wolf suppressed the Jewish Question during neutrality,²¹³ likewise Mitrany either avoided the subject or wrote a disclaimer:

The Jewish question in Rumania is undoubtedly a very serious one; but the matter is too controversial to be dealt with in a few lines without risking misrepresentation or doing an injustice to one or other of the parties. For which reason it has not been included in this essay.²¹⁴

The Jewish Question was tuned out and Mitrany focussed on Romania's Irredenta in Transylvania. Again, interplay between the evolving nationalisms Brubaker recognises is identifiable here.²¹⁵ In wartime Great Britain, potential ally Romania could not be portrayed as an oppressor and the nationalism of Romania's Jewish minority lost out accordingly. In contrast, an external homeland nationalism championing the rights of the oppressed Romanian Transylvanians in enemy Austria-Hungary vindicated the idea of a war for small nations and was encouraged in British discourse. Mitrany's contributions drew heavily on ideas in Xenopol's *Istoria românilor din Dacia Traiană* and imbued Romanian nationalism with the type of 'historical mobility' Smith identifies as a legitimating force.²¹⁶ Romania was an ancient land peopled by an amalgamation of

²¹¹ D. Mitrany, 'Rumania, Her History and Politics', *Oxford Pamphlets*; D. Mitrany, 'Rumania: Her History and Politics' in N. Forbes, A. J. Toynbee, D. Mitrany and D. G. Hogarth, *The Balkans: A history of Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Rumania, Turkey*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1915. The two publications were similar. Clarendon Press told Mitrany his OUP contribution was 'full and interesting' but he could have an extra 50-60 pages. I De M Johnson, Clarendon Press to Mitrany, 4 July 1915, Folder 1, Mitrany/2, LSE

²¹² Mitrany to Wolf, Jan 1917, 14 Dec 1917, no date (late 1918), ACC312E3/173/3, BDBJ, LMA.

²¹³ Wolf instructed leading Romanian Jew Labin that current agitation would not be supported by Britain and France but that, 'when the war is over and the triumph of the Allies is complete, their policy will achieve its desired ends'. Robert Cecil told Wolf his reply was 'most judicious'. Wolf to Labin, 4 Nov 1915; Cecil to Wolf, 13 Nov 1915, FO371/2443, TNA.

²¹⁴ Mitrany, 'Rumania: Her History and Politics', *The Balkans*, footnote, p. 292.

²¹⁵ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 4.

²¹⁶ Mitrany's pencil notes acknowledge a reliance on Xenopol, 'Lecture notes, 1915-1918', Mitrany/1, LSE; Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism*, Hanover, NH, University Press of New England, 2000, p. 73.

Dacians and their Roman conquerors.²¹⁷ The location of the Romanians in the Carpathians, prior to the arrival of the Hungarians in the ninth century, framed the Romanian race as the righteous heirs to what had subsequently become Hungarian Transylvania.²¹⁸ This compelling Transylvanian narrative provided the historical justification for the moral outrage sketched in Seton-Watson's descriptions of Romanian oppression by the Magyars.

In Seton-Watson's 1915 book, *Roumania and the Great War*, which received overwhelmingly positive reviews,²¹⁹ the Transylvanian Romanians were presented as a cohesive national unit whose situation had become a matter of 'life and death'. If the country entered the war 'it can only be with one objective – the conquest of Transylvania'. Pushing his self-determination agenda and with a keen eye on the post-war settlement, additional appendices were a means 'to provide exhaustive religious and ethnographical statistics of the population of Transylvania and of the Rumanian counties of Hungary proper'.²²⁰ Seton-Watson even provided a possible future boundary for Greater Romania to reduce the racial 'mix-up'.²²¹

However his concern for minorities did not stretch to the largest minority within the Kingdom of Romania. Seton-Watson's embedded anti-Semitism saw him gloss over the country's Jewish Question and assert the 'very serious economic dangers' Jewish immigration had presented in Romania. He argued that the restrictions placed on Romania's Jews were an answer to the 'agitation of international Jewish societies and

²¹⁷ Mitrany, 'Rumania: her history and politics', *Oxford Pamphlets*, pp. 5–7.

²¹⁸ Hungarians argued that the Roman descendants left with Aurelian or were destroyed and that when the Magyars arrived in Transylvania the only inhabitants were Slavonic tribes. See S. Paşcu, *A History of Transylvania*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1982, and S. Biro, *The Nationalities Problem in Transylvania 1867–1940*, New York, Colombia University Press, 1992.

²¹⁹ R. W Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, London, Constable, 1915. Positive reviews included: *Manchester Guardian*, 13 June 1915; *Observer*, 20 June 1915; *Bookseller*, 25 June 1915; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 26 June 1915; *Athenaeum*, 3 July 1915; *Evening News*, 10 July 1915; *Daily Mail*, 14 July 1915; *Glasgow Herald*, 17 July 1915; *Country Life*, 17 July 1915; *New Statesman*, 17 July 1915; *Spectator*, 17 July 1915; *The Economist*, 17 July, 16 Oct 1915; *The Times*, 15 July 1915 SEW/1/5, Seton-Watson papers, UCL/SSEES.

²²⁰ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 72–97; *The Times*, 15 July 1915.

²²¹ *Spectator*, 17 July 1915; In the nineteenth century geographic arguments were increasingly used to outline Romanian Transylvanian's identity, Luminița Ignat-Coman, 'Identity Geographies of Transylvanian Romanians in the Dualist Period' in Mitu (ed.), *Building Identities in Transylvania*, pp. 21–33

financial interests' working against the 'very existence' of the Romanian state.²²² Few publications picked up on these anti-Semitic tropes,²²³ choosing instead to focus on the creation of a Greater Romania; both *The Times* and the *Spectator* were convinced by Seton-Watson's analysis. If Romanians 'steer the right course they should come out of this war a great nation, with Transylvania and Bucovina incorporated in a Romanian kingdom'. In the *Athenaeum* Seton-Watson had drawn a 'frontier line in such a way as to liberate a very large proportion of the Roumanians without burdening Roumania with an unmanageable number of Magyars or Saxons'.²²⁴

Anderson defines nations as 'imagined communities', which are both 'limited' and 'sovereign'. His widely recognised theory is problematic when applied to the large Romanian population which lay under Habsburg rule in Transylvania and was identified as inhabiting the 'cradle' or 'heart' of Romanian civilisation.²²⁵ It is this conundrum which explains the power of Mitrany's and Seton-Watson's wartime work. The small nations parameter increasingly used to reframe the Entente's war aims, ensured that by 1915 the feted Transylvanian Romanians presented Romanian identity in British discourse with a solution, not another problem. Encouraging Romania to go to war for its oppressed kinsmen over the mountains fitted the goal of emancipating subject races from alien rule, while giving Romania a chance to fulfil the so-called 'principle of nationality'. Seton-Watson was quick to remind his audience of that nationality's European value. Romania was 'the sentinel of Latin culture in the east of Europe, a racial link with Italy and France amid a world of alien peoples'.²²⁶ *The Times* referred to Italy and Romania as 'Latin and Liberal', and an in-depth feature concluded that 'Rumania herself is a geographical anomaly and it is very curious to find a Latin

²²² Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 26-7; For more on Seton-Watson's anti-Semitism see §4.3, p. 230.

²²³ An exception was *Justice* which observed 'we venture to think that Mr Seton-Watson is like some Slavophiles, just lightly touched with anti-Semitism, when he regards 'international Jewish societies' in too sinister a light.' *Justice*, 29 July 1915, SEW/1/5, Seton-Watson papers, UCL/SSEES.

²²⁴ *Spectator*, 17 July 1915; *The Times*, 15 July 1915; *Athenaeum*, 3 July 1915.

²²⁵ Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 2016, ebook, loc. 291, 202. Increasingly in the nineteenth century Transylvania was portrayed as the 'heart of the Romanian nation', Ignat-Coman, 'Identity Geographies of Transylvanian Romanians in the Dualist Period', p. 21.

²²⁶ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 3, 8.

enclave in Eastern Europe surrounded on all sides by Slavs and Hungarians.’²²⁷ The *Manchester Guardian*, which had been unsure about entering a war on behalf of the Slavs, took consolation in Romania’s national characteristics. These people ‘originally of Italian origin’ managed to ‘keep back the Slav hordes’ and retained ‘many Italian characteristics in language, race, manners and traditions’.²²⁸

Hobsbawm observed that many of the criteria used for defining nations are fuzzy, shifting and ambiguous, noting this ‘makes them unusually convenient for propagandist and programmatic’ purposes.²²⁹ The malleability of Romania’s wartime image serves to emphasise that point. In 1907 it was a wild Eastern outpost, not worthy of its Balkan neighbours and almost indistinguishable from giant Russia, but by 1915 the Romanian nation, as defined by the apparently immutable ethnic indicators of language and race, was located as a Latin exception with particular emphasis placed on the Romanian population that sat in enemy Hungary. Seton-Watson held fast onto the public promotion of this Latin agenda in the summer of 1915.²³⁰ His timing was significant as Romania did not follow Italy and join the conflict in May 1915 and thereby confounded expectations which had been accentuated through Romania’s receipt of a £5 million British loan in January 1915.²³¹ Dillon’s wrath concerning Romania’s protracted neutrality has already been noted; elsewhere sections of the left-wing press took little persuading that Romania was no exception to the Balkan rule after all.²³²

That the Foreign Office, perhaps influenced by Dillon, had overestimated the connection between Italy and Romania was indicative of a global conflict which exposed government diplomacy as unprepared.²³³ David Kaufman has argued that shortly after the outbreak of war the Foreign Office came under attack, criticised for ‘aristocratic bias’ and its ‘small clique of professional advisors far removed from public

²²⁷ *The Times*, 3 Oct 1914, 13 Jan 1915.

²²⁸ *Manchester Guardian*, 22 Jan 1915.

²²⁹ E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 6.

²³⁰ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 3, 8, 17–18, 28.

²³¹ The loan was interpreted as a sign Romania might join the Entente, *Manchester Guardian*, 29 Jan 1915.

²³² *Manchester Guardian*, 19 July 1915; *The Nation*, 20 Nov 1915.

²³³ FO dispatch, handwritten notes, Grey, 24 May 1915; Barclay to Grey, 24 May 1915, FO371/2252, TNA.

control'.²³⁴ Problems were compounded by a world war that impacted on the flow of diplomatic intelligence at a time when statesmen were confronted with the need for additional allies in regions they knew little about. Having previously dismissed the concerns of the Balkan Committee in favour of maintaining the status quo, the war demanded a different approach. Without a specific policy for Eastern Europe, they sought external individuals who could offer expertise and relationships with local leaders that their department lacked.²³⁵ It was in this context that Seton-Watson, and to a lesser extent, Mitrany, saw their influence expand beyond public and academic realms.

It was recognition that winning Bulgaria to the Entente cause was key to Romania entering the war that saw the Buxton brothers Noel and Charles,²³⁶ go to Sofia in the autumn of 1914. The trip was a failure and the Foreign Office longed for the Buxtons to come home, but this did not deter their engagement with other Balkan experts.²³⁷ George Trevelyan recommended Seton-Watson to the Foreign Office as a man 'who has much knowledge and experience of southern Austria'.²³⁸ Seton-Watson had already sent them a chapter on the South Slavs from *The War and Democracy* and discussions began regarding a Trevelyan/Seton-Watson trip to Serbia and Romania.²³⁹ The Foreign Office decided that Seton-Watson 'as an unofficial observer and a well known Serbo-Croat sympathiser might not be without effect'. He was considered less likely to inspire mistrust in the Russians than the pro-Bulgarian Buxtons.²⁴⁰ The trip included a visit to Romania, Grey admitting it was 'impossible for His Majesty's Government to obtain a definite statement of Roumania's intentions and difficult to form a reliable estimate of them'.²⁴¹

²³⁴ The Union of Democratic Control cited in D Kaufman, "A house of cards which would not stand": James Headlam-Morley, the role of experts and the Danzig Question at the Paris Peace Conference', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 2019, vol. 30, issue 2, p. 229.

²³⁵ Michail, *The British and the Balkans*, p. 41.

²³⁶ Both men were founding members of the Balkan Committee, with Noel acting as chairman and later president in 1907.

²³⁷ FO Memo, 29 Oct 1914, 64480; FO Memo, 29 Oct 1914, 64516, FO371/2089, TNA.

²³⁸ FO Memo, 2 Oct 1914, 55136, FO371/1905, TNA.

²³⁹ Seton-Watson et al., *The War and Democracy*, ch. 4, pp. 121–57; Seton-Watson to FO, 1 Oct 1914, 55136, FO371/1905; FO Memo 81052, 11 Dec 1914, FO371/1906, TNA.

²⁴⁰ FO memo, Acland, 11 Dec 1914, 81052, FO371/1906, TNA.

²⁴¹ Grey to Hardinge, 4 Oct 1914, 55311, FO371/1905, TNA.

In January 1915, en route from Belgrade to Bucharest, Trevelyan and Seton-Watson were convinced that Romania's 'action or inaction' would prove decisive for saving Serbia.²⁴² However, the two men couched their opinions very differently. Trevelyan drew on the image of an opportunistic Romania. 'No one, Serbian or English, has any confidence that Roumania will march until after the battle has been fought and won.' While Romania 'ought to help' the 'only safe assumption' was that Romania would 'not march until she sees who is victor'.²⁴³ Seton-Watson was more circumspect. He conceded that Serbia was 'disappointed and perhaps somewhat hurt by her [Romania's] attention hitherto' and referred to, but did not affirm, the image of a self-serving Romania refusing to make any concessions.²⁴⁴

Seton-Watson's guarded analysis underlines the significance he placed on Romania, the country he considered to be the 'centre of gravity' in the Balkans,²⁴⁵ and the seriousness with which he took his 'expert' role. He considered himself both an advisor to and mediator between Britain and Romania. With the advantage of two prior visits to Bucharest, Seton-Watson, not Trevelyan, was the driving force there. At a banquet with the League of National Unity of the Romanians, he played two hands. He reassured his audience of the special interest taken by Britain in Romania. He claimed that both countries stood for the principles of nationality, and the liberty and unity of the small peoples in Europe and that both were confronted by similar obstacles; Britain's foe was 'Prussian militarism' and Romania's was 'Magyar hegemony'. In this context he urged Romania, 'to play the principal role' in the defeat of Austria-Hungary. 'I do not want to believe that his hand will tremble.'²⁴⁶ In an assertion of his power as Romania's main broker on the British stage, the same message was written more forcefully in a letter to the Transylvanian poet Goga²⁴⁷ and printed in several Romanian newspapers:

²⁴² Trevelyan to Acland, 4 Jan 1915, FO800/12, TNA.

²⁴³ Trevelyan to Grey, Jan 1915, *ibid.*

²⁴⁴ Report by Seton-Watson, 12 Jan 1915, SEW/3/1, UCL/SSEES.

²⁴⁵ Seton-Watson, 'Conversation with Crown Prince Alexander', 12 Jan 1915, SEW/3/1, *ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Seton-Watson, 'Speech at the Banquet', 24 Jan 1915, cited in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 706–7.

²⁴⁷ For an account of Goga's wartime activities and press work in Romania see Doina Rad, 'Primul Război Mondial în publicistica lui Octavian Goga', in Cătălin Negoita and Zafir Ilie (eds), *Presa primului război mondial*, Bucharest, Tritonic, pp. 365–83.

If Roumania should stand by and allow the Serbs to be annihilated – which I cannot believe – then I should be ashamed of my relations with the Roumanians. For not merely is the community of interests between Roumanians and Serbs clear beyond dispute, but I notice among this heroic people, in spite of all its miseries, the moral greatness which is the pledge of a splendid future and the possession of which the Roumanians still have to prove by action.²⁴⁸

Britain received a very different brief. In contrast with the earlier report sent from Serbia recommending ‘a strong line should be taken in Bucharest’, the Foreign Office was told there was a ‘strong hope’ Romania won’t see ‘Servia altogether crushed’, but that ‘strong pressure’ on Bucharest was ‘inadvisable’. Seton-Watson excused Romania’s hesitancy, warning that the country, overshadowed by and mistrustful of Russia, must be convinced of Britain’s commitment.²⁴⁹ Changes were made, although to what extent Seton-Watson influenced them is less easy to discern. With an additional request from Ambassador Barclay, by the spring of 1915 the Foreign Office had assigned a military attaché, Colonel C Thompson, exclusively to Romania and in March 1915 the legation had a new deputy, Frank Rattigan.²⁵⁰ Although motivated by concerns over Italian claims in Serbian Dalmatia, Seton-Watson’s meeting on 3 May 1915 with Foreign Secretary Grey encompassed the entire region and suggests his expertise was valued.²⁵¹

However, the limits of his influence were exposed when Seton-Watson’s ambition that the Great Powers should broker a pro-Entente Balkan alliance was never seriously considered.²⁵² Its dismissal by the Foreign Office was indicative of the problems individual ‘experts’ encountered when trying to steer Entente policy in the

²⁴⁸ Seton-Watson to Goga, Jan 1915, SEW/17/8/2, UCL/SSEES; *Adevărul*, (13) 26, (15) 28 Jan 1915; *Dimineața*, (13) 28 Jan 1915.

²⁴⁹ Bax-Ironside to Grey, message from Trevelyan and Seton-Watson, 15 Jan 1915, FO371/2241, Barclay to Foreign Office, message from Trevelyan and Seton-Watson, 26 Jan 1915, FO371/2242, TNA.

²⁵⁰ Barclay to FO, 14 Feb; FO to Barclay, 19 Feb 1915; Barclay to FO, 26 Mar 1914, FO 371/2443, TNA.

²⁵¹ Grey informed Seton-Watson of the danger of Romania’s ‘excessive claims against Serbia’ in the Banat, ‘Interview with Grey’ handwritten notes, 11 May 1915, SEW/3/1, UCL/SSEES; H. and C. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, p. 130.

²⁵² Despite very different emphasis, Seton-Watson and the Buxton brothers wanted an Entente-coordinated Balkan alliance. Barclay to Grey, message from Buxton, 23 Oct 1914; Grey dismissed Buxton’s suggestion that the Balkan countries should act together, led by Britain, Grey notes on FO Minutes, 23 Oct 1914, 62507, FO371/1901, TNA; Seton-Watson, ‘Simultaneous Demarche’, cited in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii*, vol. I, pp. 415–17.

labyrinthine Balkans. Seton-Watson's and Trevelyan's earlier suggestion that 'Britain should run considerable risks to save Serbia' and encourage Romania and Greece to cooperate with Serbia was also disregarded, on the basis that 'our new counsellors are giving advice without evidently a clear knowledge of the steps which can be taken at Athens and Bucharest or of the views held in these latter capitals'.²⁵³ Pessimistic about the chances of a Balkan alliance, and convinced that military victory was the most likely incentive to bring the neutral states into the war, the Foreign Office focused its strategic policy in the East on the Dardanelles.²⁵⁴

The response to Seton-Watson's Bucharest visit in the British press was also hard to control; reports of his positive reception in Bucharest were held up as evidence that Romania was on the brink of joining the Allies.²⁵⁵ Anticipating frustration, in a series of public lectures Seton-Watson worked to explain the country's prevarication. 'Romania was not ready. Her position was isolated. Her trade was cut off ... the Rumanians had more excuse than anybody else for waiting until the snow had thawed before they entered.' An arrangement was needed with Bulgaria.²⁵⁶ In *Roumania and the Great War* he placed the onus for Romania's protracted neutrality on 'the field of international policy' and that included Britain.²⁵⁷ He was concerned by suggestions that

our Government, so far from favouring Roumanian unity was dreaming of a great Hungary as an obstacle to Russian aggression. The Magyar intrigues which were so noticeable in the British press during last December and January deepened the alarm caused in Romania by such rumours.²⁵⁸

²⁵³ Bax-Ironside to Grey, from Trevelyan and Seton-Watson, 15 Jan 1915; FO minutes on Bax-Ironside dispatch, 6110, 16 Jan 1915, FO371/2241, TNA; C. and H. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, pp. 116–18.

²⁵⁴ Michael K. Ekstein, 'Russia, Constantinople and the Straits 1914–15', in Hinsley (ed.), *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey*, p. 431; Ionescu stressed that a military campaign in the Balkans would win over neutrals: Ionescu to Lloyd George, 30 Aug 1915, LG/D19/13/3, PA.

²⁵⁵ *The Times*, 13, 27 Jan 1915; the Foreign Office agreed that Romania should not be pressurised, although 'the "Times" is doing that for us'. FO minutes, 16 Jan 1915, 6110, FO371/2241, TNA.

²⁵⁶ Seton-Watson's Royal Scottish Geographical Society lecture, 'Rumania and the Rumanians', reported in *Aberdeen Daily Journal*, 23 Feb 1915; *The Scotsman*, 25 Feb 1915, *Glasgow Herald*, 26 Feb 1915.

²⁵⁷ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 71.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 61–71.

Seton-Watson was referring to the pro-Hungarian campaign featured in the conservative *Morning Post*.²⁵⁹ In a series of articles Hungarian national, Joseph Szebenyi, pushed a sympathetic image of Hungary as a reluctant member of the Central Powers. 'Every Hungarian will be grateful to the English press if it champions the cause of the unfortunate Magyar people who were unwittingly dragged into this war by cunning warlords and enemies of humanity.'²⁶⁰ Penned in London, Szebenyi pretended his articles were smuggled in from Hungary,²⁶¹ which he positioned as the victim nation keen for both independence from the Dual Monarchy and peace. Leading Romanian Transylvanians were identified as 'agitators' misleading 'ignorant people' and preparing spurious 'reasons for Roumanian intervention on the ground that Roumanian peasants are executed wholesale'.²⁶² Romania was singled out as intent upon destroying Hungary: the country 'does not want concessions' for Hungary's Romanians 'but Transylvania for herself and that is the one thing we cannot promise and will not give'.²⁶³ The paper's editor, H.A. Gwynne, shared Szebenyi's concerns over Romanian ambitions in Hungary and supported his case with editorials, urging Hungary, either as part of Austria-Hungary or 'alone', to make 'overtures' to the Entente.²⁶⁴

Seton-Watson was incensed by this campaign²⁶⁵ and his concerns were picked up in the press. *The Economist* was surprised: 'We are told many Roumanians distrusted England, believing curiously enough that we sympathised with their special foes the Magyars.' *The Evening News* referred to 'the humiliating news of how a long series of

²⁵⁹ *Morning Post*, 11 Nov, 5, 12, 24 Dec 1914, 1, 6, 8 Jan 1915. Similar sentiments were referred to in other publications: *The Spectator*, 26 Dec 1914, *Manchester Guardian*, 6 Jan 1915.

²⁶⁰ *Morning Post*, 1 Jan 1915.

²⁶¹ Frederick D. R. Shipton, 'British Diplomatic Relations with Austria-Hungary and British Attitudes to the Monarchy in the Years 1885–1918', DPhil Thesis, University of Sussex, 2012, p. 87.

²⁶² *Morning Post*, 11 Nov, 5, 12, 24 Dec 1914, 1, 6, 8 Jan 1915.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, Dec 1914.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 Dec 1914, 13 Jan 1915. The idea that an independent Hungary might 'join hands with Roumania and Italy' was mooted, 6 Jan 1915. The *Manchester Guardian* also championed the idea of a separate Hungarian peace, but conceded a future state may have to modify its borders, 'for Transylvania is in no sense Hungarian'. *Manchester Guardian*, 6 Jan 1915.

²⁶⁵ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 68–69. That as recently as 1906 Seton-Watson had been a supporter of home rule in Hungary probably inflamed his anxiety over the campaign. László, 'R.W. Seton-Watson's Changing View on the National Question of the Habsburg Monarchy', pp. 665–66.

articles from Budapest published by a London journal have been cited by an influential member of the Rumanian Cabinet as proof of our hostility to Rumanian aspirations'.²⁶⁶ More broadly Seton-Watson's book offered a stern rebuke of international policy and British diplomacy.²⁶⁷ The tendency to overlook Romania had persisted to the present day, and thus it was Britain's fault they do not know if Romania 'is for the Entente or is it for the Dual Alliance?'.²⁶⁸ The idea that Britain was both ignorant about and lacked sympathy for Romania had considerable traction in the press.²⁶⁹ Even the *Westminster Gazette*, otherwise highly critical of Romania, conceded that the country's concerns over British opposition to their national claims, and the prospect of a Russian Constantinople, were fears that 'Entente diplomacy has to work on'. The *Northern Whig* was more forthright: to win Romania, Britain had to prove it had 'the knowledge and diplomatic skill necessary to turn victory to full advantage'.²⁷⁰

Seton-Watson's focus on the 'principle of nationality as one of the chief watchwords of the great struggle' in South East Europe was his overriding concern.²⁷¹ That he inhabited a relatively unfettered position, engaging with the worlds of politics, the press and academia but beholden to no one, left him uniquely free to pursue this goal. A 1915 comparison with journalist Dillon is instructive. Seton-Watson's measured criticism of British policy, balanced with an explication of mitigating circumstances in Romania, was at odds with Dillon's uncompromising denunciation of the Romanian Prime Minister as a cowardly 'dictator' with an 'average' brain.²⁷² (Seton-Watson and other liberals tended to optimistically associate national self-determination with democracy.) The polarity between the two men's opinions, once identified as fellow champions of Romania, was stark. Dillon's primary concern was to entertain and inform his readers; a style that involved hectoring nations which did not conform to his

²⁶⁶ *The Economist*, 17 July 1915; *Evening News*, 10 July 1915.

²⁶⁷ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, pp. 1, 66–71.

²⁶⁸ A standard liberal criticism of British policy in the Balkans, Seton-Watson blamed Britain's historic commitment to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 1.

²⁶⁹ *Bookseller*, 25 June 1915; *Pall Mall Gazette*, 26 June 1915; *Country Life*, 17 July 1915; *New Statesman*, 17 July 1915; *Outlook*, 17 July 1915; *Graphic*, 24 July 1915; *Westminster Gazette*, 27 Aug 1915; *Economist*, 16 Oct 1915; *The Times*, 15 July 1915.

²⁷⁰ *Westminster Gazette*, 27 Aug 1915; *Northern Whig*, 16 July 1915.

²⁷¹ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 71.

²⁷² Dillon, 'The Irresolute Neutrals', pp. 25–27; *Illustrated London News*, 6 Nov 1915.

understanding of Britain's war agenda.²⁷³ Some of Seton-Watson's work was also in the public arena. However, his efforts to cajole the British government to pursue military and diplomatic aims that dovetailed with his ambitions in South East Europe involved a flexibility of approach that included both bolstering Romania's credentials and considered criticism of British foreign policy.

Mitrany also alluded to British 'passivity' in Romania.²⁷⁴ However, a foreign national keen to ingratiate himself with his host nation, Mitrany was increasingly drawn into facilitating Britain's relations with Romania. He was approached by Wellington House (home to the War Propaganda Bureau) to supply the Admiralty with information on Romania, translated selective British White papers into Romanian, wrote articles about the British war effort for the Romanian press and was permitted to receive 'enemy publications'.²⁷⁵ Invited to write about the 'men who are the driving force of the country today', Mitrany was more critical about Romania's leaders than Seton-Watson.²⁷⁶ But he argued that the 'obliquity' of Romanian politics imposed on the Romanian people by an 'oriental' elite, dependent on 'German and Austrian capital', might be overcome if the principle of nationality was adhered to and Transylvania was united with Romania.²⁷⁷ Mitrany's 'moral' case for a Romanian war of national unity was in line with Foreign Office thinking, where a belief in the 'moral effect' of Romanian action was a motivator behind Britain's continued push for the country's entry into the conflict.²⁷⁸

Aware of his country's military's limitations, and keen to maximise Romania's territorial gains, Brătianu's negotiations increasingly tried the patience of Entente diplomats. In May 1915 Under Secretary Nicolson repeated the French Ambassador's observation that the Romanian Prime Minister was acting like an Oriental at a

²⁷³ Dillon's articles often attacked more than one country; Dillon, 'The Irresolute Neutrals', pp. 22–42; Dillon's series on Balkan Diplomacy, *Daily Telegraph*, 3–7 Feb 1916.

²⁷⁴ Mitrany, 'Rumania, Her History and Politics', *The Balkans*, p. 301.

²⁷⁵ Wellington House to Mitrany, 10 May 1915; Montgomery (FO) to Mitrany, 9 Nov 1914; Lampson (FO) to Mitrany, 11 Nov 1914, 29, 31 Aug, 2 Sep 1916; Mitrany to Lampson, 25 Sep 1916, Folder 1, Mitrany/2, LSE.

²⁷⁶ I. De M. Johnson, editor at Clarendon Press to Mitrany, 4, 13 July 1915, *ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Mitrany, 'Rumania, Her History and Politics', *The Balkans*, pp. 278–79.

²⁷⁸ Dispatch from Petrograd, FO notes, 21 Apr 1916; Hardinge to General Robertson, 15 Aug 1915, FO371/2607, TNA.

Bazaar.²⁷⁹ By September 1915 the Entente had agreed to all Brătianu's territorial claims, (although Russia only did so in return for a definite military commitment within five weeks from Romania).²⁸⁰ Britain had granted Romania a £7 million loan on the much reduced terms that there was a prohibition on 'the transit of munitions of war' and that the monies would never be used against the Entente.²⁸¹ But Brătianu still refused to commit Romania to war. It was in this context that the Foreign Office gave consideration to Seton-Watson's analysis of Romania's Premier. As one of the few men in Britain who had met him, Seton-Watson advised that Brătianu 'needs playing up to with a blend of finesse, diplomacy and friendly vigour'.²⁸²

Couched in his appraisal of Brătianu was another critique of Allied diplomacy. Seton-Watson told the Foreign Office that the Romanian Prime Minister 'suspects the Entente of lacking a clear constructive policy and the resolute will to enforce it'.²⁸³ That Seton-Watson also thought this was the case is evidence of the publicist's ability to use his 'expertise' to further his own 'small nations' agenda at the heart of British government. Both Seton-Watson and Mitrany firmly invested in the idea of a Greater Latin Romania united through war, but it was Seton-Watson's ability to criticise British relations with Romania while maintaining a position of authority as an expert in South East Europe, that set him apart. Although an external voice representing Romania, his early affinity with the Transylvanian Romanians' cause and the nationalities of Austria-Hungary more generally, helped him develop and prioritise his own ideas about the demise of the Dual Monarchy and the creation of a New Europe. After Romania joined the Entente in August 1916, confirmation of Mitrany's more conventional path as an expert was his invitation to write the Peace Handbook for Romania on behalf of the

²⁷⁹ Buchanan to Grey, Petrograd, 13 May 1915; Clerk observation on FO notes on Buchanan telegram, 21 May 1915, 63674; Nicholson to Grey, 26 May 1915, FO 371/2522, TNA.

²⁸⁰ H. and C. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, p. 137.

²⁸¹ Romania was told that a loan was only possible in exchange for 'cooperation'; Grey to Barclay, 17 May 1915. Brătianu haggled the terms of the loan down; Barclay to FO, 17 Sep 1915, 321; Grey made do with a verbal agreement from Brătianu regarding the prohibition of enemy war munitions to Turkey. He made clear his frustration that Romania still had not mobilised. Grey to Barclay, 30 Sep 1915, 139592; Grey to Mișu, 30 Sep 1915, 139593, FO 371/2251, TNA.

²⁸² G. Clerk noted Seton-Watson's 'personal note on Brătianu is perhaps worth looking at'. Note, 5 Oct 1915, 144443; Seton-Watson to Clerk, 30 Sep 1915, FO371/2271, TNA.

²⁸³ Seton-Watson to Clerk, *ibid.*

Foreign Office's Historical Section.²⁸⁴ In contrast, and as will be discussed in Chapter 4, Seton-Watson's growing authority saw him straddle several seminal (and sometimes controversial) political and publishing roles where he influenced the 'those who count' with his small nations agenda for New Europe, including a united Greater Romania.

²⁸⁴ Prothero, Intelligence Division, to Mitrany, 31 July 1917; Undated Clipping, *Quarterly Review* on Behalf of FO, Confidential Memo, Instructions to Historical Writers, Folder I, Mitrany/2, LSE.

Chapter 3

Military and Royal Representations of Neutral Romania

Introduction

Chapter 3 will argue that during Romania's two year neutrality, Britain looked to traditional military and royal markers in an effort to define Romania as a prospective ally.¹ The ambiguities surrounding German Ferdinand, who became King in October 1914, encouraged an emphasis on the country's peasant soldier and his Latin descent which complimented the nationalities agenda of Seton-Watson. These deliberate efforts to demonstrate that Romania fulfilled the requirements of a modern nation-in-arms were both supplemented and challenged through autochthonous and feminine constructs promoted by the country's two queens. This chapter will argue that both representations of the Romanian soldier and the impact of Elizabeth and Marie in Britain underline the importance of Anthony Smith's approach to nationalism. His stress on ethno-symbolism and the need to provide the other 'half of the story' resonate in a wartime context that reinforced the appeal of traditional national identifiers.² These Romanian representations, rooted in an ancient Latin narrative and mobilised through female European figureheads, helped dissociate the country from residual ideas associated with an unsympathetic, cruel East. However, conflicting gender constructs, exacerbated in the context of Romania's neutrality, will highlight the difficulties of articulating nationhood in periods of international dislocation and uncertainty that were only resolved in Romania's case when the country committed to war.

Section 3.1 will argue that during Romania's two year neutrality the British press focused on the country's ability to mobilise a large army. The conflation of national identity with military capacity helps to explain this emphasis on Romania's

¹ For an assessment of the competing pressures on neutral Romania see, Glenn E. Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, Iași, Oxford, Portland, the Centre for Romanian Studies, 1999, ch. 1, pp. 9–28.

² Anthony Smith, 'The Nation, Real or Imagined', in Edward Mortimer and Robert Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State: The meaning of ethnicity and nationalism*, London, I.B.Tauris, 1999, p. 37.

army, with recent research affirming the French Revolutionary wars as the inauguration of an era of nationalism which dramatically expanded individual nations' ability to drive collective violence: 'a shift that can be dated with remarkable precision to the years 1770–1810'.³ However, by 1914 this military ossification of nationalism was not without complications in a war where belligerents were keen to differentiate themselves from the enemy.⁴ Section 3.1 will argue that Britain, with a Voluntary Army until 1916, was particularly susceptible to associations between military recruitment and political legitimacy, and focused on Romania's numerically superior army to emphasise the country's suitability as a potential ally.⁵

Section 3.1 will demonstrate that ideas of a militarised Romania had been highlighted during the second Balkan war. It will argue that an ongoing tendency to frame Romania's untested army as a prize national asset was facilitated by a failure to prioritise empirical military intelligence in the Balkan region generally and in Romania specifically. Highlighting the dangers of depending on politically motivated, external 'expertise', Britain saw commentators make exaggerated claims about Romania's military that went unchallenged in a political and public discourse keen for positive news. As well as deflecting attention away from issues of support and preparedness, a focus on the Romanian peasant-soldier appealed to British thinking, where an increasing emphasis placed on inherently unstable racial constructions in the late nineteenth century had seen growing concerns about an urban working class believed to produce soldiers inferior to rural labourers.⁶ In wartime the peasant motif remained a powerful one. This section will conclude that while the successful obfuscation of the Romanian army's limitations would exacerbate the disappointment that accompanied the country's rapid defeat in late 1916, the idea of soldiers descended from Romans

³ Lars-Erik Cederman, T. Camber Warren and Didier Sornette, 'Testing Clausewitz: Nationalism, mass mobilisation and the severity of war', *International Organisation*, 2011, vol. 65, no. 4, pp. 605–38.

⁴ J. Horne, 'Defining the Enemy: War and the Levée en masse from 1870 to 1945', in Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military myth and national mobilisation since the French Revolution*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 100–23.

⁵ Streets emphasises the promotion of the Voluntary Army in Britain: Heather Streets, *The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857–1914*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004, pp. 102–9.

⁶ Streets argues convincingly that the British army was deeply influenced by Victorian racial concepts; *ibid.*, pp. 87–101.

provided an enduring European marker essential for the reframing of allied Romania in the latter half of the war.

Section 3.2 will focus on monarchical representations of Romania during its two-year neutrality. Chapter 1 has already discussed the devaluation of Romania's German monarchy in Britain as a result of pre-war cooling Anglo-German relations,⁷ and the death of Carol and accession of a second German-born King, Ferdinand, did little to improve the country's equivocal wartime position. This section will examine the increasing importance of monarchs as national symbols and argue that the ambiguities surrounding Carol's Hohenzollern successor exposed Britain's lack of working knowledge regarding Romania's court.⁸ Newspapers and government officials alike, were unable to accurately quantify this weak king whose nationality was perceived as a negative. The lack of knowledge also saw Britain simultaneously fail to fully understand and articulate the relevance of his impressive British-born wife, Queen Marie.⁹ Here it will be suggested that this oversight was indicative of a gendered wartime narrative that associated masculinity with national identity and was therefore slow to respond to unconventional national indicators already compromised by the constraints of neutrality.¹⁰

The hazy political picture received in Britain, ensured Romania's royal imaging was susceptible to constructions that were both vague and contradictory. It was outside the orbit of realpolitik that Marie, Romania's new queen, reinforced a precedent

⁷ Maclean notes that Anglo-German tensions were exacerbated by poor personal relations between Edward VII and the Kaiser; Roderick McLean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe, 1890–1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 13, 142–83.

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 2006, pp. 86–87.

⁹ This chapter will draw on research which outlines the significant role of the Queen in the conduct of Romania's foreign policy: Tessa Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy, 1914–1919', MA dissertation, 2012, Sheffield Hallam University.

¹⁰ In Eastern Europe by the end of the nineteenth century, nationality had acquired an 'inescapably masculine' component; Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur (eds), *Gender and War in Twentieth-century Eastern Europe*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2006, p. 3. In Christa Hämmerle, Oswald Überegger and Birgitta Bader Zaar (eds), *Gender and the First World War*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, it is argued that the idealisation of soldierly masculinity had implications for the hegemonic gender order in all belligerent countries, although their research does not touch on Romania.

established by Elizabeth, Romania's German Dowager Queen, and saw her serve as an additional figurehead for a feminine version of her country's ancient heritage. This section will argue that the queens' oeuvre stressed a folkloric past imbued with innocence and long-standing tradition which necessitates a modest reappraisal of Vesna Goldsworthy's theories regarding the West's literary colonisation of the East and the prioritisation of external representations in Said's *Orientalism* when applied to the case of Romania.¹¹

Although foreign by birth and appealing to a British audience, the representations produced by Elizabeth and Marie, as queens of Romania, were less susceptible to the vagaries of conventional external representations, while their enduring idea of a romantic nation runs counter to more standard Balkan tropes identified by Todorova.¹² Section 3.2 will draw on recent analysis that emphasises the 'process of linguistic, historical and mythical identity formation' and its practical consequences for new nationalism in the nineteenth century to explain the potency of both queens' work beyond Romania's borders.¹³ Their writing, imaging and gender confounded ideas of Romania as a potential belligerent, at the same time as it promoted the country's ancient roots as worth fighting to preserve. This mythical Romania sat comfortably with the Latin-peasant motif identified in Romania's army and ensured that once at war, convincing imagery existed in British discourse upon which to build a sympathetic European-centric Romanian construct.

3.1 Military Representations of Neutral Romania

Mid-way through 1915, after heavy losses at the Battle of Ypres and during the first naval assaults on the Dardanelles, the British were experiencing 'war weariness'. The *Spectator*, looking for solutions to the 'depression', concluded that 'one of the reasons to feel upbeat is the likely entry into war on the Allied side, of Roumania and Bulgaria'.

¹¹ Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania, the Imperialism of the Imagination*, New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 1998.

¹² Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.

¹³ See particularly the introduction by Michael Perraudin and Matthew Campbell (eds), *The Voice of the People: Writing the European folk revival, 1760–1914*, London; New York, Anthem Press, 2012, pp. 1–7.

Six months later, after Bulgaria had joined the Central Powers, the journal observed that ‘in every rail carriage and in a remarkable number of private houses’ were men who ‘can tell you what King Ferdinand of Roumania or King Constantine [of Greece] intends to do’.¹⁴ Returning from the Balkans in May 1916, writer W. B. Forster Bovill admitted ‘the first question put to me by all and sundry was “what is Rumania going to do?”’¹⁵ In a war defined by deadlock, the significance of once obscure neutral countries assumed a striking urgency. This section will demonstrate that two years of neutrality saw increasingly wild claims of Romanian military capability disseminated in British discourse. The imaging typically resorted to vague representations of Romanian soldiers dependent on the commentaries of bias ‘experts’, in a military discourse that would leave the country exposed in the wake of its late 1916 defeat. However, the appeal of a large peasant army with an ancient heritage provided a founding image upon which a later idea of Romania as a sympathetic beleaguered European ally could be built.

Not directly involved in the Eastern Question from 1870, Romania was not a recipient of the unprecedented 14 military officers that Britain, concerned about maintaining Ottoman power, sent to the Balkans in the late nineteenth century.¹⁶ Nonetheless, throughout the Peninsula empirical analysis was still found wanting, with Richard Hall arguing that a failure to appreciate military advances in the Balkan wars compounded problems in World War I.¹⁷ If British intelligence was of poor quality elsewhere in the Balkans, it was almost non-existent in Romania. In 1913 Lieutenant-Colonel F. Lyons, the British military attaché stretched across four Balkan states – Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Romania – provided a typically vague and circumspect analysis. Although ‘a great many of the deficiencies have been made good’, the quality of Romania’s men and a lack of officers meant efforts to match Bulgaria’s military standards would take time to realise.¹⁸

¹⁴ *Spectator*, 15 June, 18 Dec 1915.

¹⁵ *Sunday Times*, 21 May 1916.

¹⁶ Reflecting a tendency in Balkan historiography, Mika Suonpää’s study of British perceptions of the Balkan military omits Romania, Mika Suonpää, ‘Britain, Balkan Concepts and the Evolving Concepts of Militarism, 1875–1913’, *History*, 2014, vol. 99, no. 337, pp. 632–51.

¹⁷ Richard Hall, *The Balkan Wars, 1912–1913: Prelude to the First World War*, London, Routledge, 2000, p. 134.

¹⁸ Colonel F. Lyons to Barclay sent to FO, 15 July 1913, 32645, FO371/1742, TNA.

During the second Balkan war Lyons was replaced by Major E. Plunkett as the military attaché to all four Balkan states.¹⁹ By April 1914 Plunkett had not spent more than a few days in Romania and despite repeat requests, only after the outbreak of World War I was his jurisdiction reduced and Military Attaché Lieutenant-Colonel H. N. Napier appointed to Bulgaria and Romania.²⁰ Napier was based in the Bulgarian capital, Sofia. He partially relied on the French military attaché for information in Romania and when he was there, Napier's exposure to the army was controlled by the Romanian General Staff.²¹ Ambassador Barclay was a 'very charming chief' but 'the Roumanian ministers' were not in the 'habit of telling him quite enough' and British Under Secretary in Bucharest, Frank Rattigan, provided contradictory military information – 'the Roumanian army is rather an uncertain quantity and they themselves do not seem very confident as to its efficiency ... but on the whole it seems to be the general opinion that the Roumanians will fight pretty well'.²² Barclay begged 'that a Military Attaché may be appointed to act solely at this post. Present Military Attaché is obliged to be much at Sofia and I have neither time nor military experience for furnishing adequate military experience.'²³ In March 1915 Colonel Christopher Thompson of the Royal Engineers was appointed exclusively to Bucharest.²⁴ He returned to England that June and was sent back to Romania in July, ordered simply to 'bring that country in'.²⁵

¹⁹ 'Notification of appointment of Major E. A. Plunkett as Balkan Military Attaché', FO to Barclay, 2 July 1915, *ibid.*

²⁰ Barclay stressed that Germany had a military attaché exclusively attached to Romania. FO notification 2 July 1913, FO371/1742; Barclay, 11 Apr, 13 June 1914, FO371/2089; G. R. Clarke, FO notification of Napier's appointment as military attaché in Romania and Bulgaria, 18 Sep 1914, FO371/1901, TNA.

²¹ During his visits Napier was generally impressed by what he saw; H. D. Napier, *Experiences of a Military Attaché in the Balkans*, London, Drane's, 1924, pp. 17–23, 32, 62–77, 99–106.

²² Rattigan to Russell, 11 Apr 1915, CAB3Y/123/2, TNA.

²³ Barclay to FO, 14 Feb 1915, FO371/2443, TNA.

²⁴ Napier, *Experiences of a Military Attache*, pp. 122–30; FO to Barclay, 19 Feb 1915, *ibid.*

²⁵ Napier, *ibid.*, p. 122; Lord Thompson of Cardington, *Smaranda: A compilation in three parts*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1926, pp. 30–31; Thompson told his mother, "I am not to come to bring Peace, but a sword", – and the measure of my success will be the number of neutral States embroiled.' Princess M. Bibesco, *Lord Thompson of Cardington*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1932, p. 77.

This lack of credible military knowledge conferred authority onto journalists and other military voices in the British press. Given Dr Emile Dillon's wide-ranging influence on constructions of Romania in 1913, it is not surprising that during the second Balkan war he also led the championing of the country's military. Romania's army had not been tested since 1878 during the Battle of Plevna in the Russo–Turkish war, (with the exception of its questionable ability to crush the Peasant's Revolt in 1907).²⁶ But Dillon was undeterred. In January 1913 he wrote that in 1912 Romania had the capacity to field 300,000 men and that 'she disposes of an army of well-nigh half a million well-trained well-equipped troops which, without firing a shot, could have neutralised the forces of the coalition'.²⁷ Six months later 'over 600 000 reserves and new recruits joyfully responded to the summons to the colours but the government, not requiring so many, sent back 100 000'.²⁸ Fulfilling his January prediction, in July 1913 Romania did not have to fire a shot. It entered Bulgaria with more than 300,000 troops in a move that ended the second Balkan war.

Dillon's vindicated depiction of a nation-in-arms was echoed elsewhere in the British press that summer. *The Times* identified 'a powerful Rumanian army' at Bulgaria's back and the *Pall Mall Gazette* commented that 'the health and spirits of the soldiers are excellent'.²⁹ Despite reservations, the *Manchester Guardian* concluded that 'the mental level and military education of its officers – both staff and regimental – is higher than that of any other state', believing Romania was 'in possession of a highly organised and untouched army of five army corps and two cavalry divisions'. And the *Pall Mall Gazette* championed Dillon's argument that Romania was the 'Deciding Factor' in the war.³⁰ This positive military framing provided a crucial differentiation between Romania and its Balkan neighbours.

²⁶ For a flattering analysis of King Carol leading his men in the 1877–78 campaign see Nic Desușianu, *Istoria militară a popului roman*, București, Vestala, 2002, pp. 376–89. The men fought well but were inadequately equipped; Keith Hitchins, *Romania, 1866–1947*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 44–47.

²⁷ *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Jan 1913.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 12 July 1913.

²⁹ *The Times*, 12 July 1913, *Pall Mall Gazette* 19 July 1913.

³⁰ *Manchester Guardian*, 10 July, 12 Aug 1913, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 25 July 1913, *Daily Telegraph*, 21 June, 7 Aug 1913.

The Balkan wars were exceptional for the atrocities they meted out on rival civilian populations and their widespread coverage in the British press.³¹ The ‘squalid’ behaviour ran counter to thinking around national militarisation at the time, with the latter seen as an indicator of political legitimacy and national cohesiveness.³² This was particularly the case in Britain where late nineteenth century efforts to widen the appeal of the army saw the propagation of a military ideal cast in the image of loyalty and service to empire.³³ The 1912–13 atrocities were a key aspect in what Todorova identifies as a hardening of the Balkan appellation in this period.³⁴ However, Dillon’s Romania, with its ordered entry into the war, was framed very differently. The country’s ‘well trained and well equipped’ recruits were ‘joyfully’ responding to the summons.³⁵ By the end of the 1913 conflict, military legitimacy and the capacity to significantly affect the outcome of war were hallmark’s of Romania’s army.

In an era when military personnel’s engagement in the formation of public opinion was commonplace,³⁶ the work of journalist Dillon was supplemented by ‘H C Woods, formerly of the Grenadier Guards’, who adopted Romania’s cause.³⁷ This self-styled ‘Balkan expert’ provided some of the leading analysis on the Romanian army before and during World War I. However, symptomatic of the paucity of voices available on Romania, Woods was an unreliable witness. An inefficient officer, he had been dismissed from the British Army and failed to win an appeal.³⁸ Resigning his commission, H. C. Woods turned to journalism in 1907, drawing on his experiences as a Lieutenant serving in the British army in South East Europe to write about that part of

³¹ Hall argues this was the first time in the twentieth century that opposing sides had targeted civilians: Hall, *Balkan Wars*, pp. 136–37. The atrocities were a motivation for the subsequent Carnegie Report: *The Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in retrospect with a new introduction and reflections on the present conflict* by George F. Kennan, Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993, pp. 208–34.

³² See §2.1 for British headlines during that period.

³³ This was also aimed at countering claims of drunkenness and disorderly behaviour etc.; Streets, *Martial Races*, p. 158.

³⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 19.

³⁵ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 July 1913. Romania was not exempt from accusations of atrocities; the subsequent Carnegie Report referred to ‘the so-called “peaceful occupation” as carried out most notably by the Roumanian army’, including acts of theft and destruction; *The Other Balkan Wars*, p. 232.

³⁶ Streets, *Martial Races*, p. 121.

³⁷ *Near East: A review of Oriental politics, finance and literature*, June 1908, p. 112.

³⁸ *The Times*, 19 Nov 1907.

the world.³⁹ There is no evidence that he subsequently returned to the Balkans.⁴⁰ In the House of Commons in May 1916, Liberal MP Joseph King raised the matter of putting H. C. Woods's 'peculiar knowledge' of the area to better use, but Under Secretary-of-State-for-War, Harold Tennant, rejected the idea. The government did not consider Woods to be of value, but Tennant did concede that this man regularly pronounced in the press on military matters in the Balkans, including Romania.⁴¹ By 1915 Woods frequently summarised the strength of the respective Balkan armies; he lectured at the Royal Geographical Society and wrote a series of articles in *The Field*, on which he based a second book on the Balkans, *War and Diplomacy in the Balkans*.⁴²

Nine years earlier in 1906, Woods had watched a choreographed military display in Bucharest designed to impress military attachés. Based on this experience, and described as 'formerly of the Grenadier Guards', he wrote an extensive retrospective feature in the *Near East* in 1908. The article established him as one of the few men who had witnessed the Romanian army first hand.⁴³ (By 1914 'on-the-spot' experience was highly prized. The *Manchester Guardian* referred to a 'special correspondent', probably Dillon, who had been 'at Roumanian Headquarters in the field in 1913.')⁴⁴ Both Dillon and Woods had been guests of the Romanian government and although not convinced by the performance he saw, Woods concluded with a focus on Romania's numerical strength that chimed with Dillon's 1913 analysis. An army of 76,000 could 'swell to an enormous force of half a million officers and men' with the right equipment. In 1908

³⁹ Ibid., 10, 25 Dec 1907.

⁴⁰ He turned down a Vice-Consulship in Asia Minor in 1911. *The Times*, 11 Jan, 1911, 27 May 1916.

⁴¹ MP Mr King and Under Secretary-of-State-for-War, Mr Tennant, House of Commons Debate, 17 May 1916, vol. 82, Hansard, <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/may/17/mr-h-charles-woods> accessed 28 Aug 2019; Woods came before a police court for 'absenting himself without when called up for permanent service'. *The Times*, 20 May 1916.

⁴² Map entitled 'Map of the Balkan States showing communications to illustrate the paper by H. C. Woods', scale 1: 1,750,000, London, The Royal Geographical Society, 1916; H. Charles Woods, 'The Armies of the Balkan Neutrals' and 'The Fighting Forces of Balkan States', *The Field, The Country Gentleman's Newspaper*, 15 May 1915, no. 3255, pp. 837–38; 10 July 1915, no. 3263, pp. 56–59; both articles were cited in the *Near East*, 21 May, 10 July 1915, pp. 78, 305; Woods claimed his military analysis was based on 'observations made during numerous tours in the Near East, and brought up to date under circumstances of utmost difficulty'. Charles Woods, *War and Diplomacy in the Balkans*, London, The Field and Queen, 1915, foreword.

⁴³ *Near East*, June 1908, p. 112–13.

⁴⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 22 Jan 1915.

Woods also wrote *Washed by Four Seas* focused on his time as an officer in the region, in which he claimed that Romania and Bulgaria would have a combined military force 'equal to some of the great powers of Europe'.⁴⁵ Streets's emphasis on Britain's increasingly desperate efforts to recruit sufficient numbers of quality soldiers into the Voluntary Army before 1914 provides context for this pre-war focus on the numerical size of the Romanian army.⁴⁶

Since the French Revolution, a nation's capacity to mobilise its people – the mythified *levée en masse* – was both an indication of military strength and a totem of political maturity.⁴⁷ At the beginning of World War I the rush to arms was symbolic for both sides and ideas associated with 'the spirit of 1914' endured.⁴⁸ By 1915 Woods was out of touch with Romania, conceding in *The Field* that 'owing to the reorganisation and the introduction of certain changes ... it is difficult to calculate the exact number who would be available for war', before arguing 'that this number would probably amount to between 500 000 and 600 000 of all ranks'. Although 'Rumania has not been compelled to test her strength in arms since the Russo-Turkish War', Woods decided that if their military entered the war it would be 'a factor of predominating importance'.⁴⁹ The *Near East* conceded statements 'very far from representing the truth' were written about Romania's army, but concluded it was the 'most important army in southeastern Europe'.⁵⁰ In his 1915 book *Rumania and the Great War* Seton-Watson

⁴⁵ H. C. Woods, F.R.G.S. (Formerly of the Grenadier Guards), *Washed by Four Seas: An English officer's travels in the Near East*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1908, p. 236.

⁴⁶ Streets argues that increasingly the army used the expanding media to sell itself and the virtues of military service. Streets, *Martial Races*, pp. 107–8.

⁴⁷ Horne stresses the intimate connection between national identity, political legitimacy and military capacity; Horne, 'Defining the Enemy', p. 101. For a re-examination of the capacity of states to wage war in the wake of the French Revolution see Cederman, Camber Warren and Sornette, 'Testing Clausewitz', pp. 605–38.

⁴⁸ On the importance of this in Germany see Jeffery Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, myth and mobilisation in Germany*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; for the different processes through which European states could demand the military allegiance courtesy of the *levée en masse*, see Horne, 'Defining the Enemy', pp. 100–23.

⁴⁹ Woods, 'The Fighting Forces of the Balkans', p. 59. In his 1915 book Woods's claims were more modest; the field army was estimated at 'a strength of about 300 000 of all ranks' but 'in war larger units would be probably be formed'. Woods, *War and Diplomacy in the Balkans*, p. 33.

⁵⁰ *Near East*, 17 Mar 1916, p. 547.

claimed 'Roumania's army takes rank immediately after those of the six Great Powers.'⁵¹

In the wake of the Balkan wars Romania was recognised as a big, populous, asset-rich country.⁵² Seton-Watson noted '13 of the 20 independent states in Europe have a smaller population than Romania, its territory vastly exceeds other Balkan states, its trade is almost equal that of Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro combined.'⁵³ But during the war, the size of Romania's army remained the preferred benchmark against which both the country and its military were judged in Britain's mainstream press. Table 1 gives an indication of this preoccupation. *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* periodically increased their estimates with no concern for training capabilities or equipment.⁵⁴ In October 1914 *The Times* concluded, 'it should be fairly easy to raise the number in the field to a higher figure than 300 000'. Eighteen months later '1 000 000 newly equipped soldiers' will be 'at the disposal of the War Minister in April'.⁵⁵ In August 1914 the *Manchester Guardian* stated Romania could put '300 000 well provided men into the field' with 'a reserve of about the same number'. By February 1916, it had 'an army of about a million men' and the following week Romania's 600,000 troops 'would be decisive for the whole war'. When Romania entered the war, the 'total number of soldiers could be raised to 700 000'.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 2.

⁵² *The Other Balkan Wars*, last page (unnumbered); the nation's asset wealth, in particular Romania's petroleum exports, was a preoccupation of trade journal the *Near East*, a publication which gained authority during the war, advertising in the *Athenaeum*, 25 Apr, 1 May, 16 Oct 1915.

⁵³ Seton-Watson, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 2.

⁵⁴ Townley noted *The Times*'s analysis of Romania's military by 'strong Bulgarian partisan' Major Bouchier, assisted by an English officer, was 'more complimentary' than that of their own military attaché. Townley to Grey, 4 Jan 1912, FO371/1464, TNA.

⁵⁵ *The Times*, 24 Sept 1914, 12 Feb 1916.

⁵⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 12 Aug 1914, 5, 20 Feb, 29 Aug 1916.

Table 1: Reported Number of Men Available to the Romanian Army

Year	<400,000 troops	<600,000 troops	600,000 troops	> 600,000 troops
1913	<i>Near East</i>	<i>Near East</i>	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	
		<i>Manchester Guardian</i>	<i>Illustrated London News</i>	
		<i>Daily Telegraph</i>		
1914	<i>Near East, The Times</i>	<i>The Times</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>	
	<i>Guardian</i>	<i>Near East</i>		
1915		<i>The Field</i>	<i>Daily Chronicle</i>	<i>Daily Mail</i>
		<i>Manchester Guardian</i>	<i>The Times</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
			<i>Spectator</i>	
			<i>The Girls' Realm</i>	
1916		<i>Near East</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
		<i>Manchester Guardian</i>	<i>Near East</i>	<i>The Times</i>
		<i>Daily Mail</i>		<i>Daily Mail</i>
				<i>Illustrated London News</i>
				<i>The Nation</i>

The newspapers' numerical predictions were not wholly inaccurate. Within a three-year period, it was estimated that Romania had doubled the number of peasant

troops it could draw on, with 800,000 men available by August 1916. But the implication that troops numbers equated to military preparedness was misleading. Many soldiers were untrained, ill-equipped and old, entering a two-year long war with no firsthand military experience.⁵⁷ *The Times* referred to Romania's 'newly equipped' troops in February 1916, but previously dependent on German munitions and with the Dardanelles closed, there was no explanation of where the equipment had come from.⁵⁸ Long wary of feudal Romania, *The Nation* observed that 'the peasantry is ignorant, poverty stricken, depressed and powerless' but nonetheless concluded the army was 'large and well equipped' and when Romania entered the war in 1916, these uneducated de-motivated men became 'a perfectly fresh army of well trained men'.⁵⁹ Seton-Watson waited until page 65 in *Roumania and the Great War* before explaining the country 'is not ready for war', with 'only enough ammunition for a three month campaign', and he argued Romania should only join the conflict once there is an assurance of 'adequate supplies from a Western source'.⁶⁰ His comments did not gain traction in the press. As Hall observes of the Balkan wars, in line with Great Power presumptions of Balkan inferiority, they did not use the 1912–13 conflicts to learn about 'the nature of modern warfare'.⁶¹ So too, in World War I, when a nation's ability to mechanise killing was paramount, Romania's military significance was not measured in technical terms.

The quality of the Romanian army was not judged on the basis of numerical strength alone. Streets stresses the deliberate construction of martial races within the British army in the late nineteenth century. Political expediency demanded that Gurkhas and Sikhs were prioritised in the British Indian Army after the 1857 Rebellion, while in Britain recruiting difficulties necessitated a focus on the Highlanders as supreme fighters.⁶² The construction of these martial races required self-conscious selection and propagation which saw the British military simultaneously 'apply and even believe

⁵⁷ Romania mobilised 800,000 men, with another 400,000 subject to call, from a population of only 8 million. Some battalions had no machine guns, experience was entirely lacking and leadership was inadequate; Glenn E. Torrey, *The Romanian Battle Front in World War I*, Lawrence, KS, University Press Kansas, 2011, pp. 14–29; Colonel Ion Cupşa, *Armata Română în Campaniile din anii 1916, 1917*, Bucharest, Editura Militară, 1967, pp. 23–27; Hitchins, *Romania, 1866–1947*, pp. 262–63.

⁵⁸ *The Times*, 12 Feb 1916.

⁵⁹ *The Nation*, 20 Nov 1915, 2 Sep 1916.

⁶⁰ Seton-War, *Roumania and the Great War*, p. 65.

⁶¹ Hall, *The Balkan Wars*, pp. 133–34.

⁶² Streets, *Martial Races*, pp. 1–13.

essentialist rhetoric about race and masculinity ... and at other times openly acknowledge the artificial nature of those very martial races and yet use the discourse to achieve military and political goals'.⁶³ There was a direct equivalence between this martial race narrative about the British army and the promotion of a nation descended from the 'fighters and rulers who under Trajan are said to have formed the Rumanian state'.⁶⁴

Darwin-inspired arguments from Victorian anthropologist and political theorist, Herbert Spencer, regarding 'a militant type of society' often took precedence over other military benchmarks in British discourse.⁶⁵ Smith's stress on the importance of ethno-symbolism, where 'the myth of being ancestrally related, even if it is purely fictive and ideological in character, endows the members of a community with a powerful sense of belonging', is vindicated in the portrayal of Romania's national story. The emphasis on the peasant and his ancient Roman heritage in both the old Kingdom and Transylvania fed into ideas of the Romanian army's suitability as an Entente ally.⁶⁶ The *Manchester Guardian* quickly recast its 1913 scepticism. By 1915 a retrospective analysis of the second Balkan war identified Romania's Officer Corps as 'highly professional and one of best instructed', in command of an infantry which 'is recruited from a sturdy, well-fed peasantry with war-like traditions'. Romania's peasant warrior improved on the Serbian model: these men were 'originally of Italian origin, fed by military colonists of the Roman legions posted to keep back the Slav hordes'.⁶⁷ An inversion of liberalism's long-standing wariness of Slav cruelty saw a willingness to embrace these 'sturdy tillers of the soil ... attacking the passes that lead to the Romanian Irredenta in which their brothers in blood and language have long endured the Austrian yoke'.⁶⁸ In World War I where increasingly the 'British saw themselves as the last bulwark of civilisation against barbarism',⁶⁹ Romania's military credentials were boosted by a Roman ancestry.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 174.

⁶⁴ *Daily Mail*, 29 Aug 1916.

⁶⁵ For a summation of Spencer's sociological theories of militarism see John Offer, *Herbert Spencer and Social Theory*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 223-52.

⁶⁶ Smith, *The Nation in History*, pp. 65-78.

⁶⁷ *Manchester Guardian*, 22 Jan 1915.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 22 Jan 1915, 30 Aug 1916.

⁶⁹ G. Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, p. 6.

Unlike his Russian allies, ‘the Rumanian Tommy’, according to the *Daily Mail*, was ‘finely chiselled and good looking’. One

might imagine that something of the prudential opportunism as well as the valour of the fighters and rulers who under Trajan are said to have formed the Rumanian state survived in her people still. History has tested and purified them and today they occupy politically, commercially and geographically a position of peculiar strength.⁷⁰

Propagated with due diligence by Mitrany and Seton-Watson, Romania’s unfulfilled small nation’s narrative was complemented with a martial *raison d’être* which equated Romania’s soldiers with ancient European prowess.

This image of the Romanian army was strengthened through the use of cinema. That these Latin-blooded Roman descendants could be seen on film, served to affirm dubious racial constructs. The Ministry of Information had identified the value of moving images, (estimates put Britain’s wartime cinema audience at about ten million),⁷¹ and complementing official patriotic feature films like *The Battle of the Somme* and *King of the Khyber Rifles*, were shorter newsreels that included images of sympathetic neutrals. By 1915 Topical Budget had released two short films about the Romanian army.⁷² The first was aired in March 1915 amidst hopes that Romania and Italy would imminently join the war. Entitled ‘Rumania while sitting on the fence keeps her army in strenuous training’, it showed footage of cavalry and troop regiments. Three months later another film – ‘Rumania’s Fine Army’ – exhibited uniformed soldiers performing drill with guns and kit.⁷³ The films provided reassuring military imagery of Romania in an exciting new medium which had the ability to ‘depict apparently realistic images’ through cinema’s ‘almost limitless plasticity and capacity for manipulation’.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ *Daily Mail*, 29 Aug, 6 Oct 1916; the *Manchester Guardian* also referred to Romania’s Trajan legacy; *Manchester Guardian*, 30 Aug 1916.

⁷¹ Adrian Smith and Michael Hammond, ‘Special issue, The Great War and the Moving Image’, *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Dec 2015, vol. 35, no. 4, introduction, pp. 554–56.

⁷² The War Office Cinematographic Committee launched a joint venture with Topical Budget in 1917, BFA Online, <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/583128/>, accessed 13 Sep 2016.

⁷³ *In Rumania*, 10 Mar 1915, 185-1; *Rumania’s Fine Army*, 2 June 1915, 197-1, BFA.

⁷⁴ Smith and Hammond, ‘The Great War and the Moving Image’, p. 557.

Prominent constructions of Romania's army contrasted sharply with the lack of commentary on its German Commander-in-Chief, King Ferdinand.⁷⁵ Britain's denigration of Kaiser Bill in his puffed-up military garb and visual celebrations of brave King Peter of Serbia were reminders of the powerful fusion of masculinity and monarchy in a war replete with chivalric symbolism.⁷⁶ Ambiguities surrounding Romania's German monarchy prevented equivalent sign-posting. Woods had acknowledged royalty's theatrical contribution in the military display he watched in 1906, but by 1913 King Carol's commitment to Austria-Hungary saw Dillon exclude the monarch from descriptions of the second Balkan war.⁷⁷ During neutrality, British discourse rarely focused on his German successor Ferdinand as a military figurehead, with Carol's death in October 1914 delivering a brief hiatus from a general absence of royal military constructions.

In October 1914 the British press took the opportunity to reminisce over Romania's first monarch. *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* returned to 1877 when, under Carol, 'the Roumanians covered themselves with glory' with a 'brilliant intervention' that rescued Russia from the Ottomans. The victory was manipulated to frame Romania as an astute military operator, which now was a state 'possessing powerful forces'.⁷⁸ According to the *Manchester Guardian*, one of Carol's 'most successful administrative efforts was the reorganisation of the Romanian army'.⁷⁹ Victory at Plevna and an efficient Prussian-styled army were just a couple of the achievements credited to the King who had overseen 'every aspect of national development'.⁸⁰ Carol's death gifted Romania's army a presumed Prussian level of efficiency in British discourse.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Ferdinand was Commander-in-Chief of the Romanian army from Oct 1914 to Dec 1917 when General Prezan, the Chief of General Staff also took the title in order that Ferdinand's name was not linked to a pending Armistice with Germany.

⁷⁶ See §4.1 for more on representations of Serbian royalty.

⁷⁷ *Near East*, June 1908, pp. 112–13.

⁷⁸ *The Times*, 11, 12 Oct 1914; *Daily Telegraph* 12 Oct 1914.

⁷⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 11 Oct 1914.

⁸⁰ *The Times*, 11 Oct 1914; Woods observed that the Bulgarian army is organised on Russian principles and Romania's 'has been framed on a German basis'; Woods, *Washed by Four Seas*, p. 236.

⁸¹ Napier told Ferdinand he credited Carol with working hard for the army, which seemed 'ready for war'. Napier, *Experiences of a Military Attaché in the Balkans*, p. 77.

Reminiscences about an imagined Prussian army were indicative of a tendency to hope and idealise rather than scrutinise. This extended to the British government, whose detachment from reality was striking given that the little information they received suggested Romania lacked military experience and equipment. After meeting Romanian politician George Diamandy, the British Ambassador in Spain warned the Foreign Office that Romania ‘has nothing like enough [supplies] for her requirements in a campaign against Austria-Hungary’. Romania was trying to acquire munitions from neutrals including ‘1 million cartridges and other arms’ from Spain. That request was unsuccessful, an ominous sign for a country that had been dependent on German munitions.⁸² Once the Straits were closed, supply options were further limited; Barclay noted in July 1916, ‘Roumania’s provision of munitions are apparently a dwindling quantity’, estimating they only had enough for a six-week campaign.⁸³

Russia expressed misgivings about the quality of Romania’s army, but their assessment was dismissed as a by-product of their anxiety about a ‘Greater Roumania’.⁸⁴ British Military Attaché Thompson was also doubtful; he ‘knew that the Roumanian Army lacked arms and ammunition’.⁸⁵ But after a spat over Romania’s considerable resources of oil and grain, which Thompson argued Germany would rather grab by force than pay for, the British military concluded that his assessment should be taken with a pinch of salt.⁸⁶ Even the head of the British army, General Robert

⁸² Rodd reminded Grey of Romania’s previously intimate associations with Germany and how Romania ‘had to keep up the appearance of good relations’ as they ‘still needed German supplies’. Sir R. Rodd to Grey, 1 Jan 1915, CAB/3Y/123/2; Hardinge to Grey 2 Oct, Grey to Hardinge, 4 Oct 1914, Clerk, Nicolson and Grey read note regarding Spain’s ‘evasive answer’ to Romania, 13 Oct 1914, FO371/1905, TNA.

⁸³ Barclay to FO, 2 July 1916, FO371/2606, TNA.

⁸⁴ General Alexieff ‘is not anxious for the Roumanian army to take to the field at present as he rather doubts its value as a fighting force and cannot afford to lengthen his front without seriously weakening it at other points’. British Ambassador in Russia, Buchanan to FO, 6 Feb 1916, FO371/2606; a further warning from Russia was a ‘most disturbing telegram’; P. Bennett to Theo, 25 July 1915, FO800/71, TNA.

⁸⁵ Bibesco, *Lord Thompson of Cardington*, p. 54.

⁸⁶ FO notes on Dispatch from Bucharest, 13 Feb 1916, FO371/2260; handwritten note, possibly Grey’s, referring to the War Office’s frustration with Colonel Thompson, 6 Sept 1916, FO800/71; Percy Bennett achieved recognition for the grain deal he helped broker with Romania in January 1916, about which he and Colonel Thompson had differing opinions. Bennett argued that, ‘in addition to the military and moral effort of Roumania’s entry into action, the loss of the Roumanian grain market will be a sledge hammer blow’ to Germany. Bennett to Theo, 24 July, 4 Aug 1916 FO800/71, TNA; Colonel Thompson believed the opposite. ‘It would be cheaper to take these things [oil

Robertson, doubted the country's military value: 'I have always been very sceptical about Roumania intervening.'⁸⁷ However, the positive case for Romania's entry into the war was sustained. George Buchanan, the British Ambassador in Russia, argued Romanian cooperation was valuable if 'only on account of the moral effect'. Foreign Secretary Grey agreed, noting that if Romania entered the war 'everything that had been lost in the East by the failure at the Dardanelles and the collapse of Serbia would be redressed'.⁸⁸ Prime Minister Brătianu's insistence that his offensive into Transylvania was backed up by a British-led offensive from Salonika was privately dismissed and Grey argued that the Romanians were 'perfectly secure from any attack on the Austria-Hungarian side'.⁸⁹ He thought Romania's immediate entry might bring Germany 'down before 1917'.⁹⁰

When Romania finally entered the war in August 1916 it became the public barometer against which the Allies determined the likely end of the conflict, with a declaration that will 'reverberate as a death-knell throughout the Hapsburg Monarchy'.⁹¹ *The Nation* predicted it might be the 'beginning of the end'.⁹² *The Times* identified a country which had 'provided ammunition in abundance, equipped herself with every modern weapon and now stands ready'. In the *Daily Mail*, Romania had prepared for 'war on a modern scale and now knows that she can defy Germany and Austria-Hungary. Very rarely in her history has Rumania miscalculated.'⁹³ Romania was not just a metaphor for the Allies 'good' war', it was also a worthy addition to the Entente's military capacity and one which 'gives lie to the Germanic theory of victory'.⁹⁴ Neutrals Holland, Greece and America were surely taking note.⁹⁵

and grain] by force from a weak State backed by a doubtful ally, than to buy them from that same weak State.' Bibesco, *Lord Thompson of Cardington*, p. 54.

⁸⁷ Robertson, War Office to Hardinge, FO, 8 Aug 1916, FO371/2607, TNA.

⁸⁸ Buchanan to FO, 20 Apr 1916, Grey to Buchanan, 11 Jan 1916, FO371/2606, TNA.

⁸⁹ FO notes on Barclay Dispatch, 2 July 1916; FO to Barclay citing 'Grey's opinion', 11 Aug 1916, FO371/2607, TNA.

⁹⁰ Grey handwritten note, no date or recipient, probably written in Aug 1916 for Ambassador Buchanan in Russia, FO371/2607, TNA.

⁹¹ *The Times*, 28 Aug 1916.

⁹² *The Nation*, 2 Sep 1916.

⁹³ *The Times*, 29 Aug 1916; *Daily Mail*, 29 Aug 1916; 'The Beginning of the End', *Daily Telegraph*, 31 Aug 1916.

⁹⁴ *Graphic*, 2 Sep 1916.

⁹⁵ *The Times*, 29 Aug, *Daily Telegraph*, 30 Aug 1916, *Graphic*, 2 Sep 1916.

This optimistic coverage endured for a couple of weeks while Romania's military took unguarded Transylvanian passes. However, within a month successes became undignified reverses on two fronts.⁹⁶ The ensuing military collapse, which saw the occupation of Romania's capital, Bucharest, by 5 December 1916, left the British government and press with few face-saving options. The public had been served an idea of a martial country that did not exist. Romania's retreat in the winter of 1916 was given minimal coverage; there were predictions that soon Britain would be 'leaving the Rumanian news' and stories of defeat and evacuation were tucked into discreet war columns.⁹⁷ Post-August 1916 Romania's image was pivoted away from military representations prevalent in British discourse. Instead the country was framed as a sympathetic victim assaulted by German invasion and occupation.⁹⁸ As will be discussed in the next section, during the country's neutrality, counter-imaging and gender constructs propagated by Romania's two female queens ensured there was scope for this national recasting in the last two years of war. It was within a reconfigured feminine version of Romania that military ideas of peasant-soldiers imbued with an ancient Latin heritage endured as unifying European symbols of a future Greater Romania.

3.2 A King and Two Queens: Feminine Romania and Neutrality

When Romania entered World War I, their Hohenzollern King, Ferdinand, was briefly catapulted to glory in the British press. What better way to vindicate the Entente's war effort than to flaunt the extraordinary credentials of their newest recruit – a monarch

⁹⁶ For a comprehensive military account of Romania's war see Torrey, *The Romanian Battlefield in World War I*.

⁹⁷ *Spectator*, 11 Nov 1916; this was especially the case in the *Daily Telegraph*, where Dillon had been uncompromising about Romania's entry into war. Muted headlines underplayed the scale of the defeat: *Daily Telegraph*, 'Improved Outlook – Defence of the Frontier', 'Enemy Loses – Bucharest', 2 Nov, 'Roumania – Pivot of the War – Need for Allied Energy', 3 Nov, 'Improved Situation', 4 Nov, 'Position Still Grave', 7 Nov 1916.

⁹⁸ Susan R. Grayzel argues that 'technological advances in weaponry in World War I transformed conventional gendered notions of warfare', in 'The Baby in the Gas Mask: Motherhood, wartime technology, and the gendered division between the fronts during and after the First World War', in Hämmerle, Überegger and Bader Zaar (eds), *Gender and the First World War*, p. 129.

who was leading Romania into war against Germany, the country of his birth? *Punch*'s front page epitomised the hero's welcome he received. Ferdinand pictured in full military uniform stands up to an angry Kaiser:

Kaiser: 'SO YOU TOO ARE AGAINST ME! REMEMBER, HINDENBURG FIGHTS ON MY SIDE.'

King of Roumania. 'YES, BUT FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FIGHT ON MINE.'⁹⁹

While Hindenburg personified militaristic Germany, Romania was framed as a country so sure of its national *raison d'être* that its king had abandoned the demands of his homeland. In a reminder of the appeal of monarchical symbolism, Romania's decision to enter the war witnessed a sharp focus on a king whose German heritage had otherwise compromised his country's reputation in Britain.

This section will demonstrate that monarchy mattered in a war where increasingly gendered and racial conventions impacted on perceptions of nationhood, particularly in relation to the less well-known countries in Eastern Europe. The significance of royalty as a symbol of nationhood will help explain why rumours about an undecided German king undermined Britain's ability to clarify an idea of neutral Romania and obscured the significance of Ferdinand's queen, British-born Marie.¹⁰⁰ However, it will also argue that the failure to embrace Romania's royal couple in the first two years of the conflict did not prevent Marie from establishing a secondary narrative. As with the characterisation of the country's Latin army, it is an assessment of Smith's ethno-symbolism that will explicate the appeal of this queen's version of Romania. Directly challenging conventional wartime parameters, the feminine and sympathetic imaging she helped create would facilitate a later reappraisal of the country in the wake of military defeat that contests ideas of Eastern cruelty and partially undermines Todorova's inclusion of Romania in a masculine Balkan rubric.

⁹⁹ *Punch*, 6 Sep 1916.

¹⁰⁰ David Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British monarchy and the "invention of tradition", c.1820–1977', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 101–64; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 86–87.

Under King Carol's rule, Britain thought it very unlikely that Romania would fight against Germany.¹⁰¹ But two months after the outbreak of World War I, the old king was dead and attention focused on Romania's new monarch, Carol's German-born nephew, Ferdinand. Very few publications framed this change as unambiguously positive.¹⁰² *The Times* declared that Carol's death had created a detente, but suggested it was politicians who were pushing to join the Entente, and referred to the new king as Germanophile, although he lacked his uncle's influence. The *Manchester Guardian* believed Ferdinand was less of a Hohenzollern and 'more of a Roumanian' than his predecessor¹⁰³ but scepticism regarding Romania's monarchy persisted. 'Prince Ferdinand will have to decide whether he will be King of Roumania or a German Prince.'¹⁰⁴

This inability to convincingly identify Ferdinand as either German or Romanian was significant. The gradual redefinition of power, the roots of which lay in the French Revolution and the emerging ideologies of nationalism, meant that monarchy was expected to take advantage of the political masses and seek popular legitimacy.¹⁰⁵ The year 1848 was the break-point after which continental royalty began to be national symbols. Anderson observes that by the mid-nineteenth century 'there was a discernible tendency among the Euro-Mediterranean monarchies to sidle towards a beckoning national identification'.¹⁰⁶ Romania did not acquire its German prince until 1866 and Carol proved particularly resistant to adopting a Romanian identity; his loyalties and persona remained relentlessly pro-German despite Romania's increasingly ambiguous foreign policy.¹⁰⁷ This was problematic in a British discourse which had long credited the King for all the positive changes in Romania. World War I demanded that Britain

¹⁰¹ 'Roumania cannot and will not join Russia against Germany and Austria as long as King Carol sits on the throne of Roumania.' *Outlook*, 5 Sep 1914; *Morning Post*, 14 Sep 1914.

¹⁰² Unlike his uncle, Ferdinand 'may take up arms at any moment'. *Review of Reviews*, Nov 1914, vol. 50, p. 303.

¹⁰³ *The Times*, 7 Nov 1914; *Manchester Guardian*, 13 Oct 1914.

¹⁰⁴ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 Oct 1914.

¹⁰⁵ Burak Kadercan, 'Military Competition and the Emergence of Nationalism: Putting the logic of political survival into historical context', *International Studies Review*, Sep 2012, vol. 14, p. 402.

¹⁰⁶ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 86–87.

¹⁰⁷ See §1.3. Britain knew Romania's decision to remain neutral at the beginning of World War I met resistance from the King who had committed the country to the Triple Alliance. *The Times*, 11 Oct 1914.

discovered Romania as a potentially sympathetic ally in a discourse where Seton-Watson encouraged the idea of a united Romanian nation, and the press talked up a large Latin peasant army. In this context, the accession of a second German monarch was decidedly unhelpful.

The longer Romania remained neutral, the more negative British coverage of Ferdinand became. When the country did not enter the war alongside Italy, the *Manchester Guardian* ran the headline 'Kings Made in Germany' and cited the German Ambassador in Constantinople, Prince Hohenlohe, visiting his brother-in-law, Ferdinand of Romania, as an example of German reach. As 'marriage brokers and king purveyors' the country was 'obviously unmatched'.¹⁰⁸ Even the pro-Romanian *Near East* began to doubt the value of installing foreign monarchs on East European thrones. 'In Roumania, Bulgaria and Greece ... we find divided counsels and national paralysis and we are tempted to ask whether it is only a coincidence that each of these countries should have a foreign dynasty.' They identified a cleavage of opinion between the people and the crown in Romania. Ferdinand 'remains a Hohenzollern and can have little desire to lead a war against the head of that House'.¹⁰⁹

Bulgaria's entry into the war alongside the Entente at the instigation of their King Ferdinand in November 1915 compounded the royal image problem. Dillon lamented that 'of all the recognised agencies for penetrating international opinion and swaying international sentiment one of the most abiding and decisive is that of the royal courts'. In the wake of Carol's death Dillon knew power sat with Brătianu and was a vocal critic of the Romanian Prime Minister. He even cited a preference for the late German King over Brătianu, as 'one knew exactly what to expect'.¹¹⁰ Nonetheless Dillon included Romania in his swipe against German monarchs. 'Roumania was governed by a Hohenzollern, the Queen of Sweden is a daughter of the Grand Duke of Baden, the Consort of the Queen of Holland is a Duke of Mecklenburg, the Queen of Greece is the Kaiser's own sister and the King of Bulgaria is an ex-officer of the Austria-Hungarian army.'¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ *Manchester Guardian*, 21 July 1915.

¹⁰⁹ *Near East*, 23 July 1915, p. 330.

¹¹⁰ *Illustrated London News*, 6 Nov 1915; Dillon talked about Brătianu and his intention to pick the winning side, *Daily Telegraph*, 7 Feb 1916.

¹¹¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 Oct 1915.

Examining Europe's three largest royal houses – British, Russian and German – prior to the outbreak of World War I, Roderick Mclean stresses the importance of royal diplomacy in an argument which mirrors Dillon's sentiment that monarchies were an important tool for swaying international opinion.¹¹² In the smaller countries Dillon referred to, where internal power hierarchies were less well known, the attention that royalty accrued on the international stage was particularly significant.¹¹³ Within the Foreign Office they recognised that Ferdinand was no match for Brătianu, he was even referred to as a 'non-entity'.¹¹⁴ However, Britain was a constitutional monarchy with a diplomatic system that partially relied on dynastic relations with other countries. Keen to impress the Romanians with a royal envoy who could bolster the perception of the British armed forces, the Foreign Office wanted to send Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught, to visit Ferdinand in November 1915. The approach was turned down. 'If Prince Arthur visited Bucharest it would encourage proposals for visits from German Princes' and put the King in an awkward position with his own (German) brother.¹¹⁵ The impact of the rejection was exacerbated by the knowledge that Ferdinand had already hosted Prince Hohenlohe, as well as the Kaiser's representative, the Grand Duke Mecklenburg. News that the King had gone shooting with one of Romania's staunchly pro-German politicians, Petre Carp, drew the conclusion that Ferdinand 'did not instil confidence'.¹¹⁶ War increased the demand for conventional, masculine representations of power in both a political and a military context. German Ferdinand did not fulfil this role in British discourse.

The impact of this failure was exacerbated by a hardened gender narrative. Susan Grayzel recognises that 'technological advances in weaponry in World War I transformed conventional notions of warfare'. The nation morphed into a 'collective body of warriors in combat' and the resulting ideological blindness was distinctly

¹¹² Mclean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe*.

¹¹³ *Daily Telegraph*, 12 Oct 1915.

¹¹⁴ Bennett to Mr Russell, Nov 1915 (no specific date), F0800/71, TNA; It was Brătianu's name that was associated with Romania's neutrality 'throughout Europe': N. V. Vinogradov, 'Romania in the First World War, the years of neutrality,' *The International History Review*, vol.14, No.3, Aug 1992, p. 460.

¹¹⁵ Barclay tried to play down the incident, adding that the Duke of Mecklenburg had been passing through, which is why that visit had been deemed permissible. Barclay to FO, 4, 6 Dec 1915, F0800/71, TNA.

¹¹⁶ Barclay to FO, and Clerk, FO notes on Barclay dispatch, 6 Jan 1916, F0371/2606, TNA.

masculine.¹¹⁷ This focus contextualises the length of time it took Britain to acknowledge the emerging significance of Romania's British-born Queen Marie. In October 1914 it was the *New York Times* that observed Ferdinand is

said to be altogether under the influence of his brilliant wife, the English-born Crown Princess Marie, daughter of the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg, (the Duke of Edinburgh), second son of Queen Victoria. She is an extremely able woman and it is to her, it is said, that the Rumanian people look for the future of their kingdom.¹¹⁸

Not only did the popularity of Marie's predecessor, poet-queen Elizabeth, guarantee her a willing audience in America, but the country's neutrality permitted a detached appreciation of the Romanian court. Preoccupied with ideas of nationality bound up in a military construct and focused on German proclivities of her husband, British commentators were slower to recognise Marie's changing status.¹¹⁹ Reflecting this ignorance, the *Graphic* was one of the very few British publications that acknowledged the significance of Marie's arrival on the Romanian throne in October 1914.¹²⁰

Britain's initial failure to recognise Queen Marie's diplomatic potential was further compromised by her earlier reputation. Although Britain had hailed Marie's 1893 marriage to Ferdinand as a diplomatic victory,¹²¹ initially she failed to live up to expectations. Pigeonholed by the British press as a flirtatious princess, albeit a relatively well-known one,¹²² her image problem was compounded by King Carol, who refused to send her on a proposed diplomatic trip to Britain as late as 1907.¹²³ Even when the astute choice of renowned courtier Barbu Știrbey (the brother-in-law of Brătianu) as her long-term lover improved Marie's domestic status and influence, British diplomats dismissed rumours that she would be 'the true ruler' when her husband came to the

¹¹⁷ Grayzel, 'The Baby in the Gas Mask', p. 129.

¹¹⁸ *New York Times*, 11 Oct 1914.

¹¹⁹ Already by the end of the nineteenth century 'male gender identity and the construction of male national identity were in fact inextricably linked'; Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur, 'Introduction', in Wingfield and Bucur (eds), *Gender and War*, p. 3.

¹²⁰ *Graphic*, 17 Oct 1914.

¹²¹ See §1.3.

¹²² Marie was 'exceedingly pretty and winsome, in addition to which she excels in all the arts of coquetry and flirtation'. 'Beauties of Royal Blood', *Cosmopolitan*, June 1900, pp. 35–36.

¹²³ Carol said he could not trust the Princess; she would probably 'want to run about and amuse herself as she had done before'. Greene to Tyrrell, 21 Oct 1907, FO800/71, TNA.

throne.¹²⁴ Despite Ambassador Barclay's observation in October 1914 that the new queen received a parliamentary ovation in Romania 'for which her connection with the British and Russian royal houses and her known sympathy with the cause of these powers, is no doubt largely responsible',¹²⁵ British officials were slow to take her seriously. In October 1914 Military Attaché Napier frivolously recommended the Buxton brothers kissed the royal hand and was himself assured of a 'very jolly' queen.¹²⁶ Only after meeting her did Napier revise his opinion; England was fortunate that she was Romania's queen and he noted she was 'quite serious and very interested in politics'.¹²⁷

The constraints of neutrality impinged on Marie's advocacy for the Entente. The Queen likened the period to walking on eggshells¹²⁸ and in order to ensure Romania could 'reap equal profits from each' side, she became a master of tact – 'dealing out smiles to both sides, attending legation parties of both camps'.¹²⁹ Nonetheless, France quickly identified Marie's prowess, dispatching their impressive diplomat Charles de Beaupoil, comte de Saint Aulaire, to Romania at the outbreak of war.¹³⁰ He referred to Marie as his best ally and France justified a large legation because of the need to influence the royal family, 'especially Queen Marie, considered to be an essential political factor'.¹³¹ Likewise, the Romanian government was quick to utilise the Queen's relationship with her first cousin, British George V. She wrote to the King firmly stating her country's territorial and military demands.¹³² But with a royal family of their own and a Queen-Consort, Mary of Teck, who had limited appeal as 'a one woman coordinating body for the administration of wartime charity', British responses

¹²⁴ 'Princess Marie's beauty and powers of fascination are too well known to need any record here.' Greene's 'Annual Report on Roumania', 14 Jan 1907, FO371/316, TNA.

¹²⁵ Barclay to FO, 9 Oct 1914 (date written on FO stamp cites 7 Nov 1914), FO/371/2089, TNA.

¹²⁶ Napier, *The Experiences of a Military Attaché in the Balkans*, pp. 61–62.

¹²⁷ Ibid., pp. 82–83.

¹²⁸ Marie, Queen of Romania, *The Story of My Life*, vol. III, London, Cassell, 1935, p. 24.

¹²⁹ Princess Anne-Marie Callimache cited in Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and Romania's Foreign Policy', p. 18.

¹³⁰ Auguste Félix Charles de Beaupoil de Saint-Aulaire, *Les Débuts d'une carrière*, Souvenirs, 1948.

¹³¹ St Aulaire and Romanian politician Constantin Argetoianu cited in T. Dunlop, 'Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy', pp. 17–18.

¹³² Marie's diplomatic missives to George V cited in *ibid.*, pp. 9, 12–13.

were blinkered.¹³³ The gendered and constitutional limitations of Britain's monarchy appear to have impinged on their attempts to understand the diplomatic significance of the new situation in Romania's court.

When Romania entered the war Britain's press were still identifying Marie in the context of her husband. In *The Times*, she was introduced as Ferdinand's 'wife, Queen Marie' before her British heritage was referenced. The *Graphic* presented the couple as 'The King and His Consort ... a cousin of King George', and in the *Daily Mail* a tiny footnote acknowledged Marie's 'British and Russia descent'.¹³⁴ The priority Britain accorded representations of Ferdinand adds a wartime imperative to George Mosse's argument that manliness symbolised 'the nation's spiritual and material vitality'.¹³⁵ An exception was the *Illustrated London News*, which overlooked Ferdinand in favour of a large feature on 'OUR NEW ALLY – THE QUEEN OF ROUMANIA AND HER CHILDREN'.¹³⁶ This was a timely reminder that an alternative royal narrative in the context of Romania existed by August 1916.

Alongside the importance of manliness, Mosse explains that women played a symbolic role in a nation's mystique with symbols like Germania, Britannia and Marianne in Germany, Britain and France, respectively, providing alternative gendered frameworks. These female symbols were sedate rather than dynamic, standing for immutability rather than progress and providing a backdrop against which men determined the fate of nations.¹³⁷ Complementing this argument, Catherine Hall suggests that theories of nationalism which do not consider gender fail to give an adequate account of how nations are constructed or nationalisms rooted in the political and emotional lives of men and women. Citing Virginia Woolf, who argued there was no way to be outside war as a man or a woman, Hall claims gender issues in relation to the nation were most sharply pronounced during periods of military conflict.¹³⁸ It is in

¹³³ Frank Prochaska, *Royal Bounty: The Making of a Welfare Monarchy*, New Haven; London, Yale University Press, p. 180.

¹³⁴ *The Times*, 29 Aug 1916; *Graphic*, 2 Sep 1916; *Daily Mail*, 29 Aug 1916.

¹³⁵ George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and abnormal sexuality in modern Europe*, New York, H. Fertig, 1985, p. 23.

¹³⁶ *Illustrated London News*, 2 Sep 1916.

¹³⁷ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, p. 23.

¹³⁸ Catherine Hall, 'Gendered Nations and the State', in Mortimer and Fine (eds), *People Nation and State*, pp. 49–52.

this polarised context that Marie's contribution to representations of neutral Romania in British discourse is best understood.

Compromised politically and limited by the idealisation of masculinity in the mainstream press, Romania's new queen focused her energies on an oeuvre which embodied ancient and pacific ideas attributed to a fantastic Eastern realm. Between 1913 and the first half of 1916 Marie published three books in Britain and in all of them she mined a fairytale genre. The year of the second Balkan war, *Lily of Life: A fairy tale by the Crown Princess of Roumania* was published, followed in 1915 by the *Dreamer of Dreams*.¹³⁹ The latter was a spiritual fantasy about the wanderings of Eric Gundain – an artist to the court of the great Northern King Wanda – after he had been enchanted by a dream.¹⁴⁰ Her third book, *Stealers of Light*,¹⁴¹ was another legend, this time more adult in its dramatic portrayal of love and sacrifice. Marie remained loyal to the fantasy trope, blending exotic, Eastern imagery with spiritualism and magic. The protagonist breaks free from an 'old forsaken monastery' in 'his clothing of an Eastern cut' arriving at a 'small forsaken Eastern-looking harbour'.¹⁴²

From the outset, Marie's books found a 'high place among the fairy tales of the publishing year',¹⁴³ in an England with a popular neo-romantic movement and where the war had witnessed a nostalgic return to more traditional literary forms.¹⁴⁴ *The Voice of the People* has identified recurrent nineteenth-century interest in the fairytale with the

¹³⁹ *The Lily of Life: A fairy story by the Crown Princess of Roumania, with a preface by Carmen Sylva, illustrated with Helen Stratton*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1913.

¹⁴⁰ Marie, Queen Consort of Ferdinand, King of Roumania, *Dreamer of Dreams*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1915.

¹⁴¹ Marie, Queen Consort of Ferdinand, King of Roumania, *Stealers of Light: A legend*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1916.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 3.

¹⁴³ *Scotsman* review cited in Marie's 1915 book *Dreamer of Dreams*; other positive reviews include *Daily Mail*, *World*, *Daily Express*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Spectator*, *Northern Whig*, cited in Marie, Queen Consort of Ferdinand, King of Roumania, *Dreamer of Dreams*.

¹⁴⁴ In Britain Mayday celebrations featuring May Queens were increasingly popular. In 1913 the All England May Queen festival began in Bromley's Hayes Common; three years later the celebration with its garlands and decorated cart and bedecked 'queen' was filmed. London's May Queen, Topical Budget 246-1, 1916, BFI online, <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-londons-may-queen-1916-online>, accessed 2 July 2016; Fussell addresses the re-emergence of traditional literary styles, Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975, pp. 155-190.

old forms married to the ‘new mythology’ which romanticism sought.¹⁴⁵ During the war a surge in spiritualism saw this genre grow.¹⁴⁶ Marie’s books had contemporary appeal and while Romania was not specifically named in the prose, allusions to an Eastern outlandish world laid claim to an idea of her realm as a fantasy Ruritania, in books embossed with their author’s royal title. The publications’ vogue was affirmed through their high-profile artists. The illustrator of the acclaimed art nouveau edition of *The Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen*, Helena Stratton, drew the pictures in *Lily of Life*,¹⁴⁷ and Marie’s two wartime fictions were illustrated by Edmund Dulac. In 1915 Dulac had enjoyed an exhibition of his work in London’s Bond Street that included illustrations from *Dreamer of Dreams* and ‘no colour books have been more sought after than those containing reproductions of his work’.¹⁴⁸

The success of Marie’s books and the appropriation of her own realm and role as queen within the literature is an example of what Goldsworthy identifies as literary colonisation, through ‘the imaginary or near imaginary landscapes of the British concepts of the Balkans’. Just as Marie does not specifically cite Romania, Goldsworthy argues that ‘precise details of Balkan history and geography’ are not important in these imaginary landscapes.¹⁴⁹ However, crucially Marie, as the Queen of Romania, was reflecting a fictionalised idea of her own – albeit adopted – country (and herself) back to Britain. Conforming to Todorova’s recognition that the East essentialised its own narrative to appeal to Western expectations and appetites, Marie was capitalising on a pre-existing British appetite for folklore and fairytale to further ideas of a Romanian fantasia, using an oeuvre which her predecessor Carmen Sylva had already claimed for their country. In this context, literary colonisation, as identified by Goldsworthy, was a concept that could be exploited by the East in the West. The identification of Romania as the place initiating and encouraging ‘imaginary colonisation’, as opposed to a

¹⁴⁵ Michael Perraudin and Matthew Campbell, ‘Introduction’, in Perraudin and Campbell (eds), *The Voice of the People*, pp. 1–7.

¹⁴⁶ Spiritualism and religious quest rose during the war, for a pioneering account of this phenomenon see Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 54–77; A general overview is provided in Adrian Gregory, *The Last Great War: British society and the First World War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 157.

¹⁴⁷ A. C. Anderson, *The Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen with upwards of four hundred illustrations by Helena Stratton*, London, George Newnes Ltd, 1899.

¹⁴⁸ *Sunday Times*, 25 Nov 1915.

¹⁴⁹ Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*, pp. 2–6.

straightforward Western appropriation of the Eastern imagery for the West's gratification, insists that the colonisation process is recognised as a more nuanced commercial and nation-building tool than Goldsworthy acknowledges.¹⁵⁰ Romania was Marie's priority, not Britain. Like Elizabeth before her, this complicates Marie's place in the binary West–East representational paradigm recognised by Said, while ensuring the genesis, if not the reception, of her representations was less vulnerable to the vagaries of British discourse.¹⁵¹

The Queen's oeuvre fed into a broader folkloric idea of Romania. The *Jewish Chronicle* celebrated the election of Romanian Jew, Moses Gaster, as President of the Folklore Society in 1907. They remarked upon the appointment of a Jewish rabbi of foreign birth to 'a society so essentially English'.¹⁵² Underlining that significance was the English publication of his book *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories* in conjunction with the Folklore Society.¹⁵³ In it, Gaster explicitly associated Romania with an exceptional folkloric heritage, claiming their animal tales, 'which appear here for the first time outside Rumania are so weird, so different from any known to the folklore of the West, that they arrest our attention and invite close examination'. Analysing the impact of folklore, *The Voice of the People* argues that 'after the nineteenth century the paths of various national revivals increasingly diverged and that is very much how they tend to be seen now, as isolated national phenomena rather than as aspects of a pan-European process'.¹⁵⁴ Through Gaster's book, folkloric Romania defied that isolationist trend. Like Marie's oeuvre, his work affirmed Romania in the British imagination as a distant fantasy realm untouched by, and arguably ill-equipped for, war. However, both authors also framed Romania as an ancient immutable land, in which 'the people are pure at heart and in the stories their simplicity and purity appear most beautifully'.¹⁵⁵ This racial prerogative lent easily to ideas of salvation, unification and Latin-blooded soldiering. The transnational appeal of the latter was summed up by *The Girls' Realm*,

¹⁵⁰ Goldsworthy's book focuses on an exploration of 'the way in which one of the world's most powerful nations exploited the resources of the Balkans to supply its literary and entertainment industries', *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵¹ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 3–5.

¹⁵² *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 Jan 1907.

¹⁵³ M. Gaster, *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories*, London, Folklore Society, 1915, pp. 1, 23.

¹⁵⁴ Perraudin and Campbell, 'Introduction', p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

in a 1915 article which credited Romania's best-known curator, 'Carman Sylva', for preserving the folklore of a people who now 'have great aspirations'.¹⁵⁶

In Marie's first fairytale published in 1913, the foreword was written by Queen Elizabeth, and Gaster's *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories* was dedicated to 'Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth of Rumania – Carmen Sylva to whom the soul of the Rumanian people is an open book.'¹⁵⁷ Her headline presence in both affirmed Elizabeth's place as Romania's chief storyteller. The extent of her appeal in British discourse as Romania's original poet-queen was highlighted when she died in March 1916. 'Death of Carmen Sylva – Queen and Poetess – Her Work Rumania', read *The Times* headline. Beyond the specifics of her writing, the press hailed the Queen as a monarch famed for artistic accomplishments, charitable works and a 'love of Roumania'.¹⁵⁸ Dying six months before Romania committed to the Entente, Carmen Sylva was remembered as the saviour of her ancient nation. The appeal of a primordial country on a journey to greatness was prevalent in the coverage, with the poet-queen posited as the agent of change who received up to twenty begging letters a day and lived in a high-tech castle.

The great peculiarity is the contrast between the lavish luxury of Castle Pelesch and the wild rugged beauty of the ancient forests and snow-capped mountains surrounding it ... only the white robed peasants, sometimes with their ox carts are to be met in the surrounding forests.¹⁵⁹

Wartime Britain's appetite for an ancient, mythical land, available in the prose of Marie and Gaster and celebrated in the commemoration of Queen Elizabeth's life, is a reminder of the potency of Smith's other half of the story, when explaining the appeal of nationalism.¹⁶⁰ It challenges Romania's place in a Balkan rubric Todorova identifies as both masculine and prosaic while simultaneously affirming her recognition of the 'trap of backwardness' that saw the East respond to West Europe's obsession with

¹⁵⁶ Amy Bernard, 'Roumania, its princes and its people', *The Girls' Realm*, May 1915, vol. 57, no. 199, pp. 431–32.

¹⁵⁷ Foreword, *The Lily of Life*; Gaster, *Rumanian Bird and Beast Stories*.

¹⁵⁸ *The Times*, 3 Mar 1916; *Manchester Guardian*, 3 Mar 1916; *Illustrated London News*, 11 Mar 1916.

¹⁵⁹ Baroness Deichmann, 'Carmen Sylva, Poet-Queen of Roumania', *Country Life*, 18 Mar 1916, pp. 357–59.

¹⁶⁰ Smith, 'The Nation Real or Imagined', in Mortimer and Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State*, pp. 36–37.

foundation myths and the ‘historic’ rights of peoples.¹⁶¹ The otherworldly narrative had a unique appeal in Britain, a country fast submerging in the quagmire of a modern war. The inherent instability of racial identifiers in this context is noteworthy. Elizabeth ‘may be said to have belonged to all European nations’. It was ‘difficult to think of her as a German’. Her nationality eradicated upon her death, Elizabeth’s English credentials were embellished: the Queen’s ‘knowledge of English, which she spoke so perfectly, and her love for English literature grew’. She wintered in London and Paris.¹⁶² Upon her husband’s death, King Carol’s German identity had been used in British discourse to validate his development of the Romanian army. Elizabeth’s death demanded the reverse – an eradication of her German identity in order that she could be claimed as a universal queen who spread the word of her ancient Romanian lands and people.

That Queen Marie had already started to replicate and build on Elizabeth’s role was acknowledged by several writers during Romania’s neutrality. In Dorothea Kirke’s *Domestic Life in Rumania*, only one Romanian figurehead stood out – Princess Marie.¹⁶³ Kirke’s account was a curious retrospective of ‘familiar chatty letters’ sent to a cousin in Devonshire from a British nanny, Millie Ormonde, around the turn of the century.¹⁶⁴ A young, fresh version of Marie was introduced to a British audience just months before Romania committed to war in August 1916; the timing of the book’s publication ensured it received a critical reception.¹⁶⁵ The ‘lovely Crown Princess’ appeared amidst antediluvian brown-faced rose-vendors in ‘glorified pyjamas’ and ‘herds of pigs’.¹⁶⁶ Marie,

has a summer-house made for herself in a tree, and often sits up in it with a lady-in-waiting ... she calls it ‘The Nest.’ Many Rumanians complain that she is too

¹⁶¹ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 14–15; Maria Todorova, ‘The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, temporality and the study of Eastern European nationalism’, *Slavic Review*, 2005, vol. 64, no. 1, p. 153.

¹⁶² Deichmann, ‘Carmen Sylva, Poet-Queen of Roumania’, p. 357; *The Times*, 3 Mar 1916.

¹⁶³ Dorothea Kirke, *Domestic Life in Rumania with eight illustrations*, London; New York, John Lane, 1916.

¹⁶⁴ Description in an advertisement, *Times Literary Review*, 24 Feb 1916.

¹⁶⁵ Reviews in the *Graphic*, 15 Apr 1915; *Domestic Life in Rumania* was cited as one of the ‘Authorities’ in the writing of Rumania; Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, Dec 1918, FO373/2/6, TNA.

¹⁶⁶ Kirke, *Domestic Life in Rumania*, pp. 16, 42, 49.

free in her ways; it is most inconsistent of them with all their talk about democracy. She has a most gracious bow.¹⁶⁷

Mrs Will Gordon, a well-connected British socialite, published her favourably reviewed *Women in the Balkans* a couple of months after Kirke's book in June 1916.¹⁶⁸ Gordon had enjoyed audiences with both Queen Marie and the Dowager Queen and in the chapter 'Two Queens', Romania was celebrated through its female monarchs. Elizabeth was photographed in her hallmark white gowns and the prose describes her hosting a musical programme in a 'Salon de Musique', reading her own poetry in a lilting voice and working up a 'beautiful altar curtain'. But it was Marie who led the narrative; appearing first and photographed alone in a tiara, together with her husband Ferdinand and as a young beauty in Romanian peasant dress. She was 'regal yet full of grace', with an exquisite complexion thanks to her 'English inheritance' and as a woman who 'like her environment, is picturesque in the extreme'.¹⁶⁹

Smith argues that his ethno-symbolic approach to nationalism goes beyond the 'top-down' approaches of modernisation to bring 'popular, emotional and moral dimensions of national identity back into focus'. Crucially, although the monarchy was a recent imported 'invention' in Romania, Marie as a queen of British descent gifted her adopted nation a figurehead who enjoyed the mystique and credibility associated with Britain's most revered dynasty. Echoing Smith's analysis, the persona of Marie enabled Britain 'to recognise the great variety of historical and symbolic components' of Romanian nationalism during the 'specific historical juncture' of war.¹⁷⁰ This began in neutrality, when Marie was consolidating her reign as a new monarch in Romania. The emerging romantic identity she promoted in British discourse was one she would capitalise on once Romania was at war.

While neutrality demanded of Romania political ambiguity, Britain, framing the country as a prospective ally, looked for national markers that conformed to those of a sympathetic European co-belligerent. As discussed, emphasis was placed on the

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 86–87; Marie's 'curious little nest' had been photographed and written about elsewhere: 'A Roumanian Royal Retreat', *The Bystander*, 7 Aug 1907.

¹⁶⁸ Mrs Will Gordon, *Women in the Balkans*, London, Hutchinson & Co., 1916; the *Times Literary Supplement* included a positive review from the *Globe* – 'it is charming; a real book of travel through lands which to most of us are wholly unknown'. *Times Literary Supplement*, 29 June 1916; for more on Mrs Gordon see ch.4.2, p. 202.

¹⁶⁹ Gordon, *ibid.*, picture facing p. 127, ch. 13, pp. 172–89.

¹⁷⁰ Smith, *The Nation in History*, pp. 77–78.

nation's military progress and the identification of a large Romanian peasant army. Against this masculine construct, it is significant that a counter Romanian narrative emerged. With an emphasis on Romania's ancient purity, the country's folkloric identity under the umbrella of two queens both conflicted with, and conformed to, ideas of Romania as a suitable military ally. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, the instability of national constructs during war and Romania's multi-faced identity in neutrality ensured that there were options to draw on when Bucharest fell to the Germans in December 1916. The ancient Latin soldier would be repositioned and Romania's military capacity reframed in order that Romania could be 'saved' by a British-born queen. This was possible courtesy of a sympathetic secondary feminine narrative that appeared in British discourse and had its genesis in neutral Romania. It is the existence and later development of this imagery that both complicates a Saidian emphasis on the premise of exteriority in Western representations of the East in the case of Romania and confuses the country's imagined place in a masculine, prosaic Balkan rubric.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 21; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 14–15.

Chapter 4

Romania at War, August 1916–December 1918

Introduction

This chapter will focus on representations of Romania in British discourse after the country's entry into war, many of which sought to mitigate public fall out in the wake of Romania's partial defeat and the occupation of Bucharest in December 1916. It will emphasise Queen Marie's deliberate efforts to frame herself as the iconic figurehead of her country and argue that her work and royal image helped mobilise a popular idea of Romania that did not threaten accepted gender norms.¹ In an effort to explain the significance of this imagery in British discourse, it will argue that the appeal of Hobsbawm's 'invented traditions' and Smith's emphasis on ethno-cultural indicators need to be understood in a broad context which requires a reassessment of Hroch's three-stage model of nationalism in relation to wartime Romania. It will suggest that heroic constructions of the beleaguered country were conflated with ambitions for a post-war Greater Romania in political discourse. In a further identification of Brubaker's evolving nationalisms, this chapter will argue that Britain's political representations of wartime Romania continued to prioritise the Romanians in Transylvania in a narrative which conveniently dovetailed with Marie's identity as 'Empress of All Romanians'. It will conclude that this emphasis on a feminine figurehead and an optimistic external homeland nationalism temporarily undermined Romania's location in traditional Balkan and Eastern rubrics, in anticipation of the country's relocation in a post-war New Europe.²

Section 4.1 will examine the impact that Marie had on interpretations of her adopted country in Britain between August 1916 and November 1918 and argue that

¹ For more on female heroes in Eastern Europe whose deeds were considered 'unfeminine' or 'abnormal' see Nancy Wingfield and Maria Bucur (eds), *Gender and War in Twentieth Century Eastern Europe*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2006, p. 7.

² Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 13–15; Andrew Hammond, *The Debated Lands: British and American representations of the Balkans*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, p. 2.

through its queen, Romania played a significant role in the essentialising of its own identity in British discourse. Cannadine argues that a rediscovery of the ‘meaning’ of royal ritual at the beginning of the twentieth century saw the British monarchy become a ‘unique expression of continuity in a period of unprecedented change’.³ Romania’s total war, which saw the richest two-thirds of the country occupied and its population ravaged by typhus, gifted Queen Marie an opportunity to harness that ‘continuity’ narrative for the benefit of her desperate country, in a series of heroic and feminine representations that were frequently profiled in Britain’s national press. Framed as the mother of her people, British-born Marie slotted Romania into a familiar imperial construct. However, this section will argue that the Queen’s success in British discourse suggests a deeper resonance with her audience than that afforded by royal cachet and imperialism alone. It will propose that Marie was increasingly depicted as the Romanian figurehead around which the peasant-soldier mobilised in a British version of Romania that appears to fulfil the final mass mobilisation stage in Hroch’s three-stage model of nationalism.⁴ Wrapped in a conventional national package that pre-war Romania had resisted, this sympathetic wartime construct could be more easily manipulated for political purposes.

Section 4.2 will focus on an oeuvre published in Britain about wartime Romania that was partially inspired by the writings of Queen Marie and which distracted from the fictions of a bullish Romania so recently peddled in the British press. It will identify a tone and type of national construct predominantly penned by British women that drew heavily on ideas of Romania as a feminine ancient land and in doing so distanced the country from untrustworthy masculine identifiers commonly associated with the Balkans and Eastern Europe. It will argue that the depiction of women in conventional roles contrasted sharply with the British women writing in Serbia who challenged gender norms and reinforced Serbia’s military heroism. If Marie was a catalyst for the Romanian oeuvre, the resulting national themes leant heavily on the racial constraints of

³ David Cannadine, ‘The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British monarchy and the “invention of tradition”, c.1820–1977’, in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 101–64.

⁴ Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism*, Hanover, NH, University Press of New England, 2000, pp. 66–78; Miroslav Hroch, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The nation-building process in Europe’, *New Left Review*, 1993, 193, pp. 3–20.

war which simplified the country's image and pushed an exclusive national agenda harder than the Queen's more judicious imaging. Michael Jeismann's recognition that there was an intensity in national demarcations during war which encouraged a focus on the idea of a nation's 'humanity' will explicate the appeal of the emerging Romanian construct to a British readership,⁵ while an analysis of this literature will suggest engagement with the idea of a Romania that was poised for greatness at the same time as it was threatened both internally and externally.

It is an assessment of Bakić-Hayden's 'Nesting Orientalisms' which examines race in post-World War I Yugoslavia and the assertion of their respective European qualities, that will serve as a guide to definitions of Romania against encroaching 'others', in this case identified by British writers.⁶ Specifically in the context of Romania's Jews, applying the nationalisms identified in Brubaker's *Reframing Nationalism* to the case of wartime Romania will help explicate the impact of this minority's denigration. Pitted against the Jewish 'other', ideas of Romania that celebrated the peasant, in particular the Transylvanian peasant, were prioritised in a narrative that highlighted the racial qualities of the Romanian kingdom (and therefore served to burnish Romania's nationalising nationalism) and the dream of Greater Romania (where the sympathetic external homeland nationalism was framed against the oppressive Magyar enemy).⁷

Section 4.3 will discuss how this sympathetic re-versioning of Romania found its political expression among Britain's leaders and experts who needed their Eastern ally to conform to an emerging idea of a war fought on behalf of small nations that would be vindicated through the creation of a New Europe.⁸ It will examine the increased influence of R. W. Seton-Watson and a coterie of like-minded thinkers whose reconceptualisation of Central Europe impacted on government peace-planning, with

⁵ M. Jeismann, 'Nation, Identity and Enmity: Towards a theory of political identification', in T. Baycroft and M. Hewitson (eds), *What is a Nation? Europe 1789–1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 17–27; Alyson Pendlebury, *Portraying 'the Jew' in First World War Britain*, London, Valentine Mitchell, 2006.

⁶ Milica Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms: The case of former Yugoslavia', *Slavic Review*, 1994, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 917–31.

⁷ R. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 4–5.

⁸ A comprehensive examination of war aims and peace planning during the conflict is Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British diplomatic strategy, peace planning and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916–1920*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991.

Romania's primary British champion, Allen Leeper, becoming a member of the influential wartime Political Intelligence Department. Again, an assessment of Brubaker's distinct, evolving nationalisms will serve to highlight the PID's simplified agenda for a projected Greater Romania.⁹ The binary politics of war which reinforced convenient racial profiling of enemy nations and aliens ensured that within the context of a post-war New Europe Romania's homeland nationalism, embedded in the West-facing lands of the Habsburg Empire, was prioritised. This narrative was assertively pushed by the Romanian legation in London, with contact between British government official, Leeper, and Romanian émigrés highlighting the role of the Eastern 'other' in its own external representations. A common need for a credible post-war Romania saw Britain adopt a single-minded approach that framed the historic nationalism of the core 'Romanian' nation optimistically, while deliberately sidestepping Brubaker's third minorities nationalism in a political mirroring of the oeuvre identified in §4.2.¹⁰ In 1917 Britain's recognition of a Jewish nationality with its own state, as constructed by wartime Zionists, coupled with an eagerness to dissociate Romania from its revolutionary neighbour Russia, will help explain why the country's long-term Achilles heel – 'the Jewish Question' – was relegated to a side issue.

By the end of 1918, a political equivalent of Marie's sympathetic version of wartime Romania had found its voice among London's ruling classes. Bakić-Hayden reminds us that in Said's *Orientalism* discourse 'East' like 'West' was much more a 'project than place'.¹¹ But this chapter will conclude that war insisted it was in the interests of Romania and Britain to identify the country as both in British discourse. A projected Greater Romania was identified as an important 'place' between Russia and Germany, the implications of which demanded additional expectations of, and investment in, the country as a 'project'. Romania was complicit in its positioning as both biddable and sympathetic in British discourse. This was an ancient nation with a European queen and an unredeemed Latin population that war had fortuitously thrown into the arms of the civilising West.

⁹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–6.

¹¹ Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms', p. 917.

4.1 Iconic Marie and Romania's War

Doina Pasca Harsanyi suggests that Queen Marie, through her wartime networking, cultural activities and journalism, left a 'mark on important events'.¹² This section will examine Marie's ability to both inhabit a version of Romanian identity and transport it to a British audience and suggest that in the context of Romanian imagining in Britain, she did more than that. Cannadine argues that in twentieth-century Britain as monarchy's real power waned, 'the way was open for it to become the centre of grand ceremonial once more'. Edward VII's carriage on his coronation day in 1910 is 'emphatic proof of the monarchy's new and unique capacity to call in the old world to redress the balance of the new'.¹³ But by 1916 the tableau of international war not only demanded a contrast between the old world and the new but also juxtaposition between darkness and light, evil and innocence, masculinity and femininity.¹⁴ Romania's Marie, as a queen, a mother and a nurse proved adept at fulfilling that role in British popular discourse in a manner that would also facilitate the rehabilitation of her German husband, King Ferdinand.

Marie's harnessing of the multi-form British media to promote her use of costume, imagery and prose saw the Queen establish her own rules for monarchy that moved beyond standard imperial norms, in a war which has generally been recognised as a disaster for Europe's crowned heads. In an effort to understand Marie's value in the context of her country's imaging, this section will assess both Hobsbawm's analysis of invented tradition and Smith's identification of ethno-symbolism in the articulation of nationalism. However, it is Hroch's three-stage nationalism model that most fully encapsulates the potency of Marie's appeal in British discourse, with the Queen establishing herself as the active agent around which the feted Romanian peasantry mobilised.¹⁵ It will be argued that English-born Marie not only represented a personal wartime success story in which the British could share, but that the imaging of a

¹² Description of the impact Queen Marie and Helena Văcărescu had on Romania's World War I: Doina Pasca Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink: Romanian aristocratic women before and after World War One', *Women's History Review*, 1996, vol. 5, no. 4, p. 497.

¹³ Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual', pp. 120–32.

¹⁴ Pendlebury makes a strong case for the 'revival of religious notions of national identity' and the war as a moral crusade: *Portraying 'the Jew'*, pp. 1–3.

¹⁵ Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation', pp. 3–20.

mobilised peasantry fighting for and saved by their queen also gave Romania's national narrative a legitimacy it had previously lacked.

Romania's humiliating and rapid defeat in the last three months of 1916 impacted badly on the Entente Powers. Already overstretched and undermined by discontent, Russia was worst affected but there were tensions and recriminations in London and Paris, with the defeat influencing the demise of both the Briand and Asquith Cabinets.¹⁶ In the British Parliament the resounding silence that met the rapid defeat was challenged and the new Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, referred to the Romanian conduct of war as 'incompetent to the verge of a crime'.¹⁷ A new space had to be found to reframe a disappointing ally that had failed to live up to military projections. This section will demonstrate that a subsequent national 'project' did emerge under the stewardship of Queen Marie.¹⁸ Romania's total war, defined by retreat, occupation, starvation and typhus,¹⁹ provided Marie with extensive opportunities to capitalise on pre-established imperial norms. It was her regal English heritage and feminine philanthropic disposition that facilitated the reframing of Romania as a sympathetic repository for British aid and attention. Most visibly in this context was the almost immediate transformation of the Queen's own identity into the saviour and nurse of her nation.

Marie's self-confessed concern about losing her looks (she was 40 when Romania entered the war) was indicative of a keen awareness that her image mattered.²⁰ Saddled with stodgy Queen Mary, during the war the British press was appreciative of the Romanian Queen's aesthetics. *Everywoman's*, a popular penny weekly, conceded that 'Romania's royal family is undoubtedly the most beautiful in Europe. Queen Marie, the daughter of the late Duke of Edinburgh, was always renowned for her good looks.'

¹⁶ Glenn E. Torrey, *The Romanian Battlefront in World War I*, Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas, 2011, pp. 168–69.

¹⁷ Balfour cited in *ibid.* Several MPs had pressed Prime Minister Asquith and ministers Lloyd George and Bonar Law on the situation in Romania and received non-committal responses: *Near East*, 13 Oct 1916, p. 570, 3 Nov, 1 Dec 1916, pp. 15, 105.

¹⁸ A reference to the East as a 'project' as identified by Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003 edition, p. 3.

¹⁹ Within three months over 300,000 Romanian soldiers were dead and a typhoid epidemic killed 100,000 people in a war that impacted on all Romanians. Maria Bucur, 'Women's Stories as Sites of Memory: Gender and remembering Romania's World Wars', in Wingfield and Bucur (eds), *Gender and War*, p. 173.

²⁰ Marie Diary, 29 Oct 1918, p.107, 115/III, CRRM, RNA.

The *Observer* premised an article about the ‘War Work of the Royal Family’ with the observation ‘The Queen has woman’s greatest asset in life: beauty.’²¹ When American journalist for *The Times*, Stanley Washburn, first met Marie in the autumn of 1916 he recalled, ‘I found her to be a wonderfully beautiful woman with the most gorgeous hair and very blue eyes with constantly changing expression.’²² It was the very public subordination of this renowned beauty to the service of her nation, more specifically the vocation of nursing that provided the perfect juxtaposition between royal glamour and national sacrifice, with Marie fastidious in the application of that image.

Historians Alexander Michael and Stefan Goebel have written about the appeal of medievalism during the war and Allen Frantzen in *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice and the Great War*, notes that so often ‘chivalry looks best on the offensive’. Wartime postcards showed cavalry charges and mounted warriors fighting with a crusade-like zeal.²³ Serbia’s elderly King Peter, frequently pictured resplendent and brave on the front line in his military uniform, was a good example of this.²⁴ Marie provided a feminine juxtaposition to his warrior through her conversion into a Madonna-style icon for the wounded.²⁵ From the outset of war she was obsessed with the need for head-to-toe luminous nurse’s whites. In her diaries she referred to her ‘white nun-like head-dress’ keeping her tidy, was aware of her popular appeal in the ‘white nurse’s costume’, liked to be seen in it, and insisted that her daughters and female entourage followed suit. The day war was declared, Marie arranged the conversion of palace rooms into a

²¹ *Everywoman’s*, 8 Sep 1917, pp. 980–81; the *Observer* went on to extol the Queen’s ability to ‘work day and night’ for her beleaguered country; *Observer*, 25 Nov 1917.

²² S. Washburn, *On the Russian Front in World War I: Memoirs of an American correspondent*, New York, R. Speller and Sons, 1982, p. 232.

²³ M. Alexander, *Medievalism in Modern England*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2007; Stefan Goebel, *The Great War and Medieval Memory: War, remembrance and medievalism in Britain and Germany, 1914–1940*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007; A. J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, sacrifice and the Great War*, Chicago; London, University of Chicago Press, 2004, p. 63; Mark Girouard, *The Return To Camelot, Chivalry and the English Gentleman*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1981, pp. 275–293; Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975, pp. 155–190.

²⁴ *Illustrated London News* frequently covered stories about King Peter invariably in uniform, either watching, advancing or retreating with his army. *Illustrated London News*, 9 Jan, 4 Dec, 25 Dec 1915, 8 Jan 1916.

²⁵ The American press also featured Marie as a ‘Soldier Queen’; Dr. William Ellis, ‘Rumania’s Soldier Queen’, *Century Magazine*, 1918, vol. 96, pp. 330–31; *New York Times*, 10 May 1918.

hospital and promised to ‘show myself as much as I can so that the people should well see that I have remained amongst them’.²⁶ Her domestic success in asserting this image is in no doubt, with Maria Bucur criticising the exclusive focus Marie the nurse received, arguing that it perpetuated normative gender roles and detracted from Romania’s ill-equipped nursing profession.²⁷

However, what Bucur does not acknowledge is that the exclusive focus on Marie as Romania’s nurse facilitated the successful assertion of that image abroad. Challenging Wingfield’s and Bucur’s claim that Eastern European propaganda efforts were ‘limited and generally unsuccessful’, especially ‘with regard to gender’, the Queen demonstrated a remarkable awareness of the importance of international approval.²⁸ Constantly making herself available to foreign dignitaries, medics and soldiers, within a month of war she had also received ‘an English correspondent, who wants to make an appeal on our behalf to the English and American public’, and had been ‘photographed with the hospital by an Englishman for English newspapers’. Marie made sure the light was good for pictures.²⁹ In order to evaluate the meaning of royal ‘ritual’, Cannadine outlines a series of criteria against which to measure the monarchy’s role and he includes royal dress and its ability to enhance ‘mystery and magic’.³⁰ Marie was a case in point. The Romanian Queen’s orthodox-style floor-length whites and nun-like head dresses – a far cry from the modest cap and apron worn by British nurses – were reminiscent of a symbolic Britannia-style figure.³¹

Formalised with the advent of photo-journalism and Florence Nightingale’s endeavours during the Crimean War, by World War I nursing, unlike most other war

²⁶ Marie Diaries, 28 Aug 1916, pp. 32–33, 102/III, 18, 22 Sep, 6, 9 Oct 1916, pp. 11–13, 20, 63, 75, 103/III, 15, 23 Apr 1917, pp. 83, 106, 108/III, 7 Apr 1918, pp. 255–56, 112/III, 13 May 1918, pp. 175–76, 113/III, CRRM, RNA.

²⁷ M. Bucur, ‘Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu: Romanian women and the gender of heroism during the Great War’, *Journal of Women’s History*, vol. 12, no. 2, Summer 2000, pp. 30–49. Despite the impact of Romania’s total war on women, this did not translate into female enfranchisement in Greater Romania’s 1923 Constitution. Partial enfranchisement was granted in 1929: Bucur ‘Women’s Stories as Sites of Memory’, p. 174.

²⁸ Wingfield and Bucur, ‘Introduction’, p. 9.

²⁹ Marie Diaries, 22, 24 Sep 1916, pp. 17, 26, 103/III, CRRM, RNA.

³⁰ Cannadine, ‘The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual’, p. 106.

³¹ The image of Britannia was used in recruiting posters during World War I; see John Christopher, *British Posters of the First World War*, Stroud, Gloucestershire, Amberley Publishing, 2014, p. 39.

work for women, met with universal approval. *Everywoman's* noted 'nursing is so pre-eminently the profession of devotion for women, and the one in which they appear at their very best'.³² By 1915 Edith Cavell's shocking murder reinforced the idea of nursing as a sacred profession for women. The British press used Cavell's death to castigate the Germans for their barbarity and simultaneously boost the appeal of nursing.³³ By inhabiting this mythologised role in 1916,³⁴ when Germany was on the cusp of occupying her country, Marie established herself as an international icon who a British audience could relate to on numerous levels. Another of Cannadine's criteria for successful royalty is a conservative national press that is sympathetic to monarchy. He identifies this as the key to the British royal family's rejuvenation in the early twentieth century.³⁵ Leading that newspaper pack during the war with a circulation of over one million was Lord Northcliffe's *Daily Mail*. The self-styled 'Soldier's Paper' predominantly focused on the home front and the welfare of British troops, but it also featured Marie – a foreign monarch – in her whites twice in January 1918, the month Romania was on the brink of capitulation, in a clear indication of the Queen's ability to make an impact.³⁶

Cannadine restricts his view of the media to a print press. However, Marie, and her predecessor Queen Elizabeth, also understood the potential power of cinema. In 1913 'Queen "Carmen Sylva"' had 'written a drama for the cinematograph dealing with Romanian scenery and customs' and by January 1916 the *Near East* observed that Queen Marie 'has joined the ranks of that very modern class of Litterateurs who supply texts for cinematograph film' which represented 'the daily life of the Roumanian peasantry'.³⁷ Once at war Marie was well placed to prioritise film and her role in it. Several times in 1917 the Queen met foreign 'cinematographers'. She talked to them,

³² *Everywoman's*, 2 Mar 1918, p. 772.

³³ A state funeral at Westminster Abbey was held for Cavell and within a year at least four biographies appeared; D. Blackburn, *The Martyr Nurse: The death and achievement of Edith Cavell*, London, Ridd Masson Co., 1915; A. Pearson, *Nurse Cavell: The story of her life and martyrdom*, London 1915; W. Thompson Hill, *The Martyrdom of Nurse Cavell: The life story of the victim of Germany's most barbarous crime*, London, Hutchinson & Co., 1915; C. Sarolea, *The Murder of Nurse Cavell*, London, G. Allen & Unwin, 1915.

³⁴ Take Ionescu's English wife Bessie started a fundraising appeal in memory of Edith Cavell in Romania; *Near East*, 7 Jan 1916, p. 258.

³⁵ Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual', pp. 106, 123.

³⁶ *Daily Mail*, 18, 24 Jan 1918.

³⁷ *Near East*, 12 Sep 1913, p. 538, 21 Jan 1916, p. 312.

ate with them, entertained them and was filmed by them ‘among the wounded’ and in hospitals.³⁸ Chapter 3 has already discussed the impressive reach British cinema achieved during the war. It was Pathé News, with French origins and artistic flare that embraced more visual and outlandish events (they covered Edith Cavell’s state funeral at Westminster Abbey in 1915).³⁹ By 1917 Pathé News ran a one minute film focused on Queen Marie dressed in blazing whites. The carefully choreographed footage framed the Queen as the physical saviour of her country and conforms to the sanitised version of war that Rebecca Harrison identifies in her article about World War I’s British Ambulance Train films.⁴⁰ Invested with ‘qualities superior to regular journalists’, moving images were identified as purveyors of truth and the official status of newsreel was carefully fostered by film production units, distributors, exhibitors, the daily press, and in Marie’s case even queens.⁴¹

Sharon Ouditt has compellingly argued that in Britain ‘the loudest and most persuasive call to women was to come from the Red Cross and Order of St John via the VAD organisation’.⁴² A ‘beautiful Red Cross nurse looking heavenward’ was pictured on Britain’s sheet music for ‘The Rose of No Man’s Land.’⁴³ The Red Cross was the darling of the conservative press throughout the war, with the *Daily Mail* regularly running campaigns and features.⁴⁴ By the end of 1918 over 70,000 predominantly middle-class women had volunteered as Voluntary Aid Detachments organised under

³⁸ Marie Diary, 3, 11 July 1917, pp. 95, 118-19, 109/III, 5 Sep, Oct 11, 13 1917, pp. 12, 112-15, 110/III, 19 Dec 1917, pp. 137-38, 111/III, CRRM, RNA.

³⁹ *Homecoming of a Heroine*, 1915, Film ID 2354.16, British Pathé Archive, www.britishpathe.com, accessed 5 Sep 2017.

⁴⁰ *Queen Marie Of Roumania*, 1917, Film ID 1886.06, British Pathé Archive, *ibid.*; R. Harrison, ‘Writing History on the Page and Screen: Mediating conflict through Britain’s First World War ambulance trains’, *Historical Journal of Film, Television and Radio*, Special issue the Great War and the Moving Image, Dec 2015, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 559–73.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 564.

⁴² S. Ouditt, *Fighting Forces: Writing women, identity and ideology in the First World War*, London, Routledge, 1994, p. 9; Ouditt cites numerous non-fiction books and novels which included Red Cross references and plotlines in S. Ouditt, *Women Writers of the First World War: An annotated bibliography*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp. 15, 30, 42, 48, 50, 56, 59, 73, 94.

⁴³ Cited in George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, p. 41.

⁴⁴ At the beginning of 1918 the *Daily Mail* championed the Red Cross sale at Christies and wrote hectoring articles insisting people send ‘life-saving money’ to the Red Cross; *Daily Mail*, 26 Jan, 15, 18 Feb 1918.

the auspices of the British Red Cross Society.⁴⁵ When Romania entered the conflict Queen Marie claimed that universal badge for herself and for the promotion of Romania in Britain. In her heavily publicised wartime book, *My Country*, there was a full-page photograph of Marie dressed as a Sister of Mercy with a Red Cross on her sleeve. Both the postscript and appendix declared all proceeds would go to ‘the British Red Cross Society for work in Roumania’.⁴⁶ In November 1916 British miners delivered a hospital unit and ambulance to Queen Marie’s Red Cross and within a year her English cousin George V sent her ‘the Red Cross Order’ as a ‘precious token of his sympathy for her work’.⁴⁷ Harrison notes that throughout the war, cinema-going intersected not only with ‘notions of public duty but also charity’. Captioned ‘Help Roumania’, Pathé released a film in 1916 featuring a woman in traditional costume collecting proceeds for the ‘Roumanian Red Cross’.⁴⁸ The Foreign Office went out of their way to track a Red Cross delivery on Marie’s request, with the British-born royal providing a reassuring counter to Ambassador Barclay’s assessment that the Romanian government lends ‘itself in a peculiar degree to corruption and favouritism of all kinds’.⁴⁹ Thanks to Marie, who was also head of the Romanian Relief Fund, the country quickly became a leading charitable cause.⁵⁰

If for Larry Wolff, Eastern Europe was a barometer against which the West could gauge its own civility, the Queen of Romania was the figurehead who neatly straddled both worlds. In doing so Marie provided a positive reinforcement of Todorova’s argument that the Balkans serviced the West of Europe with a point of

⁴⁵ Christine E. Hallet and Alison S. Fell, *First World War Nursing: New perspectives*, New York; London, Routledge, 2013, p. 1.

⁴⁶ Queen of Roumania, *My Country with illustrations*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, p. 69.

⁴⁷ *The Times*, 17 Nov 1916; Marie to George V, 15 Oct 1917, RA PS/PSO/GV/C/Q/1550/141; ‘She was dress in the Red Cross uniform’ was the first thing that *The Times* journalist Washburn recalled about his initial meeting with Queen Marie; Washburn, *On the Russian Front*.

⁴⁸ Harrison, ‘Writing History on the Page and Screen’, p. 565; *Help Roumania*, 1916, Film ID 1856.41, British Pathé Archive, www.britishpathe.com, accessed 5 Sep 2017.

⁴⁹ Tessa Dunlop, ‘Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy, 1914–1919’, MA, Sheffield Hallam University, pp. 20–23.

⁵⁰ London observed the Romanian Flag Day in Oct 1916, and the Relief Fund was launched in Edinburgh courtesy of Marie’s status as the daughter of the late Duke of Edinburgh; *Near East*, 20, 27 Oct 1916, pp. 587, 616.

difference within one type.⁵¹ In line with Hammond's application of Mary McClintock's emphasis on non-settlement imperialism, from her presumed position of superiority, Marie as Queen of Romania was the ideal repository through which to reinforce ideas of Romanian inferiority and dependency.⁵² The *Near East* noted 'Princess Marie of Edinburgh won Romanian hearts by the freshness of her essentially English character. She has proved herself no less English in playing her part as Roumania's Queen in the war.'⁵³ That she was entirely complicit in this construct requires a slight adjustment of emphasis in the Saidian argument that Western depictions of the East are 'premised on exteriority' in the case of wartime Romania.⁵⁴

Marie, encouraged by prominent Romanians and Britons alike, deliberately flaunted ideas of a desperate Romania in need of charity and dependent on an English queen.⁵⁵ This international versioning in her own image underscores Todorova's point that more attention should be given to the East's essentialisation of an idea of the West 'as the hegemonic pair in the dichotomy'.⁵⁶ In the case of wartime Romania, the country needed help and recognition from its more powerful ally Great Britain and it was through Queen Marie that Romania most effectively distributed this message. However, Marie's prominence should not be confused with modified power dynamics. It was precisely because the imagery Marie promoted conformed to ideas of a worthy, weaker ally, that it found a receptive British public. Said argues that the Orient was orientalist 'also because it could be'. In World War I Marie pushed the idea of a dependent country in her image because Romania was desperate (after December 1916, the country fought

⁵¹ Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, pp. 1–13; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 19.

⁵² Hammond, *Debated Lands*, pp. 1–2.

⁵³ *Near East*, 27 Oct 1916, p. 616.

⁵⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 20–21.

⁵⁵ Marie worked closely with Romania's politicians. During neutrality Premier Brătianu encouraged her to write to King George, to whom she explained that 'a small country with an English Princess at its head is perhaps playing for its existence'; Dunlop, 'Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy', pp. 12–13; the Ambassador's wife Lady Barclay encouraged her to promote Romania in Britain. Marie's Diaries, 2 Sep 1916, p. 48, III/102, CRRM, RNA; For more on the philanthropic work of female members within the British royal family see Frank Prochaska, *Royal Bounty: The Making of a Welfare Monarchy*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 100–135.

⁵⁶ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10.

on without two-thirds of its territory) and she believed 'it is around the throne help can be found'.⁵⁷

Marie's application of her royal status was not unprecedented. The Serbian royal family also used their position to manipulate ideas regarding Serbia and its position in a broader Balkan paradigm, with war providing the guise under which to formally impute the responsibility for improvement of the more 'backward' East onto stronger Western belligerents.⁵⁸ King Peter's son, Crown Prince Alexander, took a Serbian delegation from Corfu to London in February 1916 'to apprise the British of how they had abandoned Serbia'. Alexander's adept use of the British media to portray Serbia's war as a continuation of its centuries' long national fight against the barbaric 'other' laid the groundwork for a successful London Exhibition in June 1916.⁵⁹ But while Serbia's military record outshone Romania's chequered efforts, the Serbian dynasty lacked familial connections with London, and crucially, they lacked women. Mrs Will Gordon's 1916 book on the Balkans noted there was 'neither a queen nor a crown princess at the Serbian court'.⁶⁰ Marie was uniquely well placed to develop and promote a feminine narrative rarely associated with Balkan nation-building.

The prominence of Marie's role among the soldiers near the frontline, contrasted with the understated female efforts in the British royal family. The Windsors included women with considerable nursing and charitable track records. Associated with several nursing charities, the Dowager Queen Alexandra was the British royal who lent her name alongside Marie's to the Romanian Relief Fund established in 1916, but in her seventies, age and energy inhibited her wartime effectiveness. Although an impressive charity worker, there was no frontline for Queen Mary to visit in Britain and she was

⁵⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 6; Marie Diaries, 6 Feb 1917, p.38, III/107, CRRM, RNA; Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy', pp. 11–13, 23.

⁵⁸ Both the Serbian and Romanian royal families' wartime efforts in Britain focused on the West helping the East. Wolff sees the *Invention of Eastern Europe* as a project, but less is said about the role of the West in addressing the so-called backwardness or plight of the East. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, pp. 4–6.

⁵⁹ M. Bokovoy, 'Serbia's Wars of Liberation, 1912–1918: Framing violence, creating heroes', in Mark Cornwall and John Paul Newman (eds), *Sacrifice and Rebirth: The legacy of the last Habsburg War*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2015, ebook, 316.6.

⁶⁰ M. C. Gordon Winifred, *A Woman in the Balkans ... with fifty-four illustrations ...and a map*, London, Hutchinson & Co., 1916, pp. 18–19.

slow to visit French trenches.⁶¹ Despite the best efforts of the media, her only daughter Princess Mary was too young (17 at the outbreak of war) and gauche to stand out.⁶² This left both space and appetite to celebrate the unapologetic ostentation with which Marie tackled her role as nurse and queen of a suffering country.

Hobsbawm argues that invented traditions were the ideal vehicles around which to rally national sentiment, and Marie, as part of a royal family imposed on a relatively new country, was a good example of this 'invention'. However, Hobsbawm also acknowledges that conscious invention succeeded mainly in proportion to its ability to broadcast on a wavelength that the public was ready to tune in to. He cites the combination of king and church and their ability to mobilise the peasantry in the south of Italy beyond their localities,⁶³ but could as easily have pointed to the success of Queen Marie at galvanising national sentiment in wartime Romania. Bucur concedes that Marie's availability as a nurse in Romania was 'unparalleled by any other female royalty during the war in either Western or Eastern Europe' and acknowledges that her representation was 'unique in Europe' because female heads of state were normally with their husbands or nursing, not 'presented as a symbol of the state among the troops'.⁶⁴ However, Bucur does not visit the impact of Marie's occupation of this 'unique' space outside Romania.

Captured on British newsreel, in head-to-toe whites Marie entered a hospital, gifted wounded soldiers flowers and sugar and allowed them to kiss her royal hand.⁶⁵ In

⁶¹ It took three years for Queen Mary to visit the frontline in France: J. Pope-Hennessy, *Queen Mary 1867–1953*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1959, p. 507; *Everywoman's* ran a double page spread with photographs entitled 'Queen Mary – Our Ideal Homemaker', *Everywoman's*, 28 July 1917, pp. 740–42.

⁶² *Everywoman's* tried to stimulate interest in the young princess, running a four-part series, including photographs about Mary and her life. Her only notable involvement in the war was a Christmas Present Fund for the armed services, 'The Princess Mary Fund', in 1914. *Everywoman's*, 13, 20, 27 Oct, 3 Nov 1917, pp. 112–14, 144–46, 165, 166, 207, 208; the *Daily Telegraph* reported that Princess Mary 'paid an informal visit yesterday to the new 'Victoria Hut', a war canteen and rest room ... [T]he Princess was much interested in all she saw.' *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Nov 1916.

⁶³ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions', in Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 263–66.

⁶⁴ Bucur, 'Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu', pp. 41–43.

⁶⁵ *Queen Marie of Roumania*, 1917, Film ID 1886.06, British Pathé Archive, www.britishpathe.com, accessed 5 Sep 2017.

another film nurse Marie read to injured troops.⁶⁶ Romania's queen, whose wartime resemblance with Marian imagery was striking, commandeered a carefully choreographed version of her vulnerable country, where the peasant-soldiers were clean, grateful and recovering. Returning to ideas of statehood associated with militarisation discussed in the last chapter, British representations of Romania's military efforts were revised and humanised through the role of Queen Marie in series of moving images, the ideas behind which were reinforced in her published wartime prose.

Discussed in §4.2, Marie's best-selling book *My Country*, serialised in *The Times*, established a bucolic Romania, which adeptly mobilised the image of man in his purest form – the peasant – for the construction of an ancient people over whom she reigned. The celebration of that connection between male Romanian subject and female sovereign was at the crux of much of Romania's own wartime imagining. Marie regularly wrote in the popular frontline newspaper *România*, and four of her articles were also selected for a female, middle-class, English readership and duly published in wartime Britain (and America).⁶⁷ Key themes in the Queen's prose were the infantilisation of Romania's soldiers, their divine dependency on their feminine 'empress' and their dream of a Greater Romania. In 'From My Soul to Theirs' Romanian troops are childlike in their adoration of Marie; their success promising to convert her into 'Empress of all the Roumanians'.⁶⁸ The soldiers 'grope' for her, dying in 'crimson-stained rags', still clinging to a national dream, hoping to share the 'glory beyond the grave' that she represented.⁶⁹ 'The Coming of Spring' identifies a rich fertile motherland, waiting for the return of its children and flowers. Against this tableau Marie introduces her own pain. In 'My Child' her son Mircea's death (discussed below) becomes the symbol of Romania's tragedy, with this personal 'sorrow' 'an added link between me and my people'.⁷⁰ 'Bucharest' closes with an optimistic rallying cry – the

⁶⁶ It is unclear which company made this film, although shared footage with the 1917 British Pathé film suggests it might have come from Pathé, www.tkinter.smig.net/QueenMarie/MammaRegina, accessed 6 Sep 2017.

⁶⁷ They were reproduced in Will Gordon's 1918 book published in New York and London in 1918: *The Queen of Roumania*, 'From My Soul to Theirs' and 'A Queen and her People' in Mrs W. Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day, with an Introduction and two Chapters by HM, the Queen of Roumania and Illustrations*, London; New York, John Lane, 1918, pp. 149–58, 208–17.

⁶⁸ *The Queen of Roumania*, 'From My Soul to Theirs', pp. 149–53.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷⁰ *The Queen of Roumania*, 'A Queen and Her People', pp. 208–12.

belief that Mircea was a sacrifice and that Romanians will return to their capital. ‘One day their arms will be opened wide to receive us, O-Mother-town!’⁷¹

The Queen who never imagined she would write articles ‘that the world at large would sanction’,⁷² portrayed Romania endorsing the idea of Marie as their Saviour in front of a British audience.⁷³ When considered in relation to the explicit messaging in newsreels featuring Marie, this imaging has significant implications for some of the leading assessments deployed by historians and analysts of nationalisms. In terms of Romania’s agency in perceptions of its own identity, the articles and newsreels are a prime example of what Todorova’s describes as the self-essentialisation of the East which appeared in the West. Romania is helpless and hopeful in an expression of national sentiment rendered more powerful courtesy of its authorship by an English-born queen.⁷⁴ Within that imperial construct, Marie’s emphasis on a symbolic, innate bond between herself and her soldiers resonates sharply with Smith’s ethno-symbolic approach to understanding nationalism. His focus on the ‘sentiments and bonds’ of national identity, which are nowhere ‘more palpably expressed than in the common grief and collective piety for the sacrifice of war heroes’ helps explain the appeal of Marie’s words and iconography, not just in Romania, but also in wartime Britain.⁷⁵ In Marie, Greater Romania had its own version of Britannia, where the Queen was a national symbol who transcended borders and personified a popular feminine expression of her country’s suffering and ambition. Todorova’s and Hammond’s masculine, violent Balkan identity does not find an obvious home in this version of wartime Romania.⁷⁶

The broader significance of Marie as a figurehead for Romania in Britain is best explicated through a reassessment of Hroch’s three-stage model for the development of nationalism. As discussed in Chapter 1, in pre-war constructs of Romania the nation’s image was undermined by a lack of popular support (particularly apparent during the

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 213–17.

⁷² Marie also wrote for Nicolae Iorga’s *Neamul Românesc* during the war; Marie Diaries, 22 May 1917, p. 215, III/107, CRRM, RNA.

⁷³ Marie worked closely with newspaper editors – Octavian Goga and Iorga – in the selection and translation of her prose for a Romanian audience. Marie Diaries, 17 Feb, 5, 7 Mar 1917, pp. 60, 103, 106, III/107, 24 Mar 1917, p. 11, III/108, CRRM, RNA.

⁷⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10.

⁷⁵ Smith, *The Nation in History*, pp. 66–78.

⁷⁶ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 13–15; Hammond, *Debated Lands*, pp. 2–3.

Peasants' Revolt). It appeared that Romanian nation-building had failed to move beyond the second phase which Hroch associates with a new range of activists who sought to win over as many of their ethnic group as possible.⁷⁷ Only when Romania entered the war in August 1916 was the country's 'national consciousness' portrayed as fully awakened through the figure of Marie, a royal 'activist' with international appeal. The Queen was acutely aware of her role in this process. When the Tsar and Tsarina abdicated, she observed that in contrast to the Empress who 'never showed herself', Romanian soldiers were fabricating M and F on the front of their caps and M on buttons – a sign her 'word has touched their hearts'.⁷⁸ While her indisputable domestic popularity delivered the manifestation of 'mass mobilisation' that Hroch demands for the development of a modern nation,⁷⁹ it was Marie's capacity to articulate her mass appeal in film and prose that legitimatised both her and her country in a second, British hinterland. That Romania and Britain were experiencing 'absolutist oppression' from the same 'foreign other' (with foreign oppression a key component in Hroch's nationalism model)⁸⁰ provided further ground for understanding between the two allies.

Framed in the context of a ubiquitous German enemy, war simplified national debate in both countries and saw them share celebrated national identifiers. Marie as the maternal repository for the Romanian peasant's metamorphosis into a passionate nationalist soldier resonated with ideas of the British Tommy and his duty for king and country.⁸¹ It was her feminine iconography in the context of the peasant soldier that helped to articulate the country's national 'dream' with its imagined ancient heritage. Bulgarian sympathiser, James Bouchier, reviewed Will Gordon's book, in which Marie's articles appeared. Published in the *Times Literary Review* and aptly named 'A Paradise Lost', Bouchier focused on the Queen's contribution. Her 'simple touching style', and her bravery in the face of 'double tragedy' impressed him, but it was the idea of Romania's troops willing her to 'become Empress – Empress of all the Rumanians!' that convinced Bouchier that 'the deeply implanted desire for national unity' among the

⁷⁷ Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation', p. 7.

⁷⁸ Marie Diaries, 16 Mar 1917, pp.120-22, 107/III, CRRM, RNA.

⁷⁹ Bucur identifies Marie's role as a surrogate mother to Romania's mobilised youth and her enduring popularity among the soldiers; Bucur, 'Between the Mother of the Wounded and Virgin of Jiu', p. 44.

⁸⁰ Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation', p. 12.

⁸¹ This chimes with Hammond's identification of Serbia's salt-of-the-earth soldiers mirroring the valour of the British Tommy; Hammond, *Debated Lands*, pp. 120–21.

Balkan peoples must not be left unsatisfied.⁸² This pan-Romanian vision was particularly important in political articulations of a future New Europe, as will be discussed in §4.3.

Marie's ability to express the sentiments of her nation – on both sides of the Carpathians – was enhanced by events. Both Hroch's acknowledgement of the need for a foreign oppressor and Jensiën's exposition on the role of the enemy in war against which nations could define themselves, serve as reminders of the external aspects of nation-building which lie outside a country's control.⁸³ In Marie's case her rising popularity in both Romania and Britain was facilitated by the Germans' advance. In *The Times*, where Marie was heavily featured as the author of several pen portraits on Romania,⁸⁴ she was also the victim of German 'Frightfulness' when a bomb landed in the royal residence on the outskirts of Bucharest. 'Peaceable inhabitants especially women and children' were targeted including the Queen and Princesses. As well as aiming at the 'peasants working in field' the Germans were framed as having attempted to kill the royal family. This tragic tableau was exacerbated by the death of Marie's youngest son, Mircea, in the same month.⁸⁵

Claire Tylee articulates the contradiction at the heart of motherhood during war. Conflict turned a mother's primary life-giving role on its head by demanding the sacrifice of sons and husbands. To overcome this contradiction, a son's death was portrayed as the greatest sacrifice a mother could make.⁸⁶ Marie's conversion from frivolous princess to nurse and mother of the nation was completed with the loss of her youngest son to typhoid fever in November 1916. The *Observer* concluded the Queen 'has grasped her nettles of public and private grief in a firm hand'.⁸⁷ The significance of Mircea's death was heralded by two British female writers, whose books on Romania were published in 1917–18. For Lady Kennard the loss 'seems more than a woman should be asked to bear. Nevertheless his mother still works at the hospital and her soldiers love to see her.' The rest of the Queen's children were evacuated from

⁸² *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 Aug 1918.

⁸³ Jeismann, 'Nation, Identity and Enmity', pp. 17–27; Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation', p. 12.

⁸⁴ See §4.2, pp. 201–03.

⁸⁵ *The Times*, 16, 17 Nov 1916.

⁸⁶ Claire Tylee, *The Great War and Women's Consciousness: Images of militarism and womanhood in women's writing*, Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 1990, p. 68.

⁸⁷ *Observer*, 25 Nov 1917.

Bucharest but ‘she herself intends to remain here until the last minute and is wonderfully plucky and calm’. The needs of Romania’s soldiers replaced the needs of her son, Mircea. Reinforcing ideas of Romania as the sympathetic ‘project’, in Mrs Will Gordon’s book Mircea’s nursery becomes a metaphor for the infantilisation of his country. ‘The bright toys, the rocking horse, the gay cheerfulness of the nursery – and close and ever closer the muffled footsteps of approaching death.’⁸⁸ In a vindication of the Queen’s symbolic importance, her vulnerability had become Romania’s and Romania’s hers.

Bucur observes that Marie was the only titular female head of state presented as a symbol of her country independently of her husband.⁸⁹ However, the gender constraints of war demanded that Romania also had a credible king and Commander-and-Chief of its army. When Romania entered the war, Ferdinand was briefly hailed in the press as a heroic leader.⁹⁰ But in the wake of Romania’s military collapse, the German King quickly disappeared from view. Arriving in Bucharest in October 1916, *The Times* journalist Stanley Washburn recognised Romania had an image problem as a nation associated with an ‘expedient ignoble war’ and he understood the importance of the King in reclaiming a positive narrative.⁹¹ It was Queen Marie who helped Washburn re-establish Ferdinand’s credibility. Together they convinced the King to publicly set out Romania’s case for war.⁹² Ferdinand’s words, written by Washburn and meditated through the Queen were wired to Britain; they were published in *The Times* and Prime Minister Asquith referred to Romanian people and their King ‘spilling their best blood on behalf of the threatened independence of small nationalities.’⁹³ Washburn believed

⁸⁸ Lady Kennard, *A Roumanian Diary 1915, 1916, 1917*, London, William Heinemann, 1917, pp. 83, 89; Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, pp. 201–3.

⁸⁹ Bucur, ‘Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu’, p. 43.

⁹⁰ See §3.2.

⁹¹ Washburn noted that the Allies thought ‘Romania had joined the fray for purely expedient reasons’ and saw Ferdinand’s image as key to the country’s recovery. Washburn, *On the Russian Front*, p. 233.

⁹² Marie Diaries, 1 Sep 1916, p. 35, 103/III, CRRM, RNA; Washburn considered Ferdinand ‘naive’; Washburn, *On the Russian Front*, p. 233.

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 235–38; Asquith to the Commons, 11 Oct 1916, Hansard Archive, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1916/oct/11/statement-by-prime-minister#S5CV0086P0_19161011_HOC_82 accessed 20 Aug 2018; *The Times*, 13 Oct 1916, *Near East*, 20 Oct 1916, p. 581.

this statement played an ‘important role’ for Romania’s cause.⁹⁴ Although he was deeply impressed by the Queen, in a subsequent article Ferdinand was again the focus. ‘The figure of the King, who is full of optimism and confidence, is gradually looming larger and larger.’⁹⁵

When Washburn first arrived in Romania he was told by British military attaché, Colonel Thompson, that Queen Marie was ‘the most important man in Roumania’, a comment he heard ‘everyday thereafter’. It was a statement echoed by Lady Astor’s proclamation ‘Queen Marie is the strongest woman in Europe since Catherine the Great’.⁹⁶ Ironically, that these comments could be made and in flattering terms serves to underline the limits of Marie’s power as a queen. She knew she must not be seen to overplay her hand. Although Marie lamented, ‘if only I was a man with a man’s rights’, equally significant was her criticism of the dethroned Russian Tsarina for her ‘complete influence’ over Nicky.⁹⁷ Washburn’s description of Marie as ‘universally beloved for her democratic ways and her charities’, feared not for her power but her ‘dynamic energy’, helps to explain Marie’s unthreatening appeal both in Romania and Britain. It was within this carefully cultivated and crucially, popular brand of monarchy, that Ferdinand’s image was rehabilitated.

In June 1917 Marie and Ferdinand were one of the few royal couples that London cigarette manufacturers Messrs H. L. Savory and Co., had retained on their boxes.⁹⁸ If in America the more unconventional image of Marie ‘Rumania’s Soldier Queen’ was given occasional preference,⁹⁹ Britain relied on traditional gender norms to enhance the roles of Marie the nurse and Ferdinand the soldier.¹⁰⁰ Representations of their appeal and popularity were particularly important after Bolshevik Russia pulled out of the war in the winter of 1917–18, when *The Sphere* identified Romania’s

⁹⁴ Washburn, *On the Russian Front*, p. 232; Iorga thought that the declaration in *The Times* showed a hidden ‘determination of steel’, Nicolae Iorga, *Războiul nostru în note zilnice, 1914-1916*, vol. I, Craiova, Editura ‘Ramuri’, S. A., 1925, p. 254.

⁹⁵ *The Times*, 6 Nov 1916.

⁹⁶ Lady Astor also cited in Washburn, *On the Russian Front*, pp. 225, 232.

⁹⁷ Marie Diaries, 16 Mar, p. 121, III/107, 4 Dec 1917, p. 97, III/111; CRRM, RNA.

⁹⁸ *The Times*, 26 June 1917.

⁹⁹ Ellis, ‘Rumania’s Soldier Queen’, p. 330.

¹⁰⁰ In *The Times History of the War Annual* King Ferdinand and Crown Prince Carol are photographed examining war maps and ‘The Queen of Rumania as Nurse cutting up the dinner of a disabled man.’ *The Times History of the War, 1914–21*, London, The Times, vol. 11, pp. 217–18.

monarchy as symbols of hope and stability. ‘The Brave Effort of the Roumanian Royal Family under the Welter of Eastern Europe’ pictured Marie in nurses’ whites decorating Romanian troops alongside Ferdinand in military uniform.’¹⁰¹ Eastern chaos and untrustworthiness were pitted against the pluck of Romania’s royal couple. Marie understood that the Russian Revolution provided Romania with an ideal opportunity to address its long standing, undemocratic, repressive reputation. She encouraged Ferdinand to promise the peasants land and electoral reform after the war¹⁰² and noted ‘England and America are very attentive re the Jews.’¹⁰³ This awareness would inform her conduct and messaging at the Paris Peace Conference after the war.¹⁰⁴

Historians have focused on King George’s unwillingness to offer the Tsar and Tsarina sanctuary in Britain in the wake of their abdication.¹⁰⁵ Much less attention has been given to the reassurance the British King offered the Romanian monarchy. He told Marie ‘Whenever you consider the necessity has arisen, you and your children will be given a warm welcome in this country.’¹⁰⁶ Marie reassured George that with Ferdinand, she kept ‘our people steady amidst the state of anarchy’ while Romania’s political men ‘are a bit excitable and rowdy’.¹⁰⁷ The Russian Revolution and its fall out served to underscore the value and reliability of Romania’s monarchy.

Romania’s capitulation in March 1918 (which the Allies strongly advised against despite the country’s isolation) gave Marie further opportunities to elevate the monarchy above the political fray.¹⁰⁸ She insisted that neither she nor the King would sign the Treaty of Bucharest forced upon Romania (‘Nando cannot sign that peace, he cannot’).¹⁰⁹ In *The Times* German reports that Ferdinand refused to sign the peace and

¹⁰¹ ‘The Brave Effort of the Roumanian Royal Family’, *The Sphere*, 9 Mar 1918.

¹⁰² Marie Diaries, 24 Aug 1917, pp. 249–50, 109/III, 6 Nov 1917, p. 127, 115/III, CRRM, RNA; Marie’s calendar for the troops promoted Ferdinand’s commitment to land reform. *Calendarul Regina Maria*, Iași, Tipografia serviciului geographic, 1918, pp. 127–31.

¹⁰³ Marie Diaries, 11 May 1917, p. 178, III/108, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁰⁴ See §5.3.

¹⁰⁵ K. Rose, *King George V*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1983, pp. 211–15, 217–18.

¹⁰⁶ George to Marie, 29 Nov 1917, RA PS/PSO/GV/C/Q/1550/151.

¹⁰⁷ Marie to George, 25 Nov 1918, RA PS/PSO/GV/C/Q/1550/181.

¹⁰⁸ Torrey, *Romania in World War I*, pp. 291–300.

¹⁰⁹ Marie Diaries, 4 Mar 1918, p. 260, III/112, CRRM, RNA.

references to his unsuitability as king added to an air of royal defiance.¹¹⁰ But if the ‘King has undoubtedly proved himself a great man in this war ... it is also remembered that he has had to help him a woman who is beautiful and brilliant and who is besides his Queen.’¹¹¹ The Foreign Office was likewise informed that ‘the spirit of resistance is personified in the Queen ... Mackensen exclaimed recently ‘she has been and still is our worst enemy’. It was thanks to the Queen’s ‘dangerous popularity’ that the Romanian monarchy resisted revolution.¹¹²

In November 1916 there was a pro-Romania rally in London’s Trafalgar Square attended by a large crowd and led by two nationalistic figures from the Women’s Social and Political Movement. A newsreel proclaimed, ‘Mrs Pankhurst and Mrs Dacre Fox address a meeting on the Government’s policy in Rumania and Greece.’¹¹³ Early on Romania’s national plight struck a chord with women and this section has argued that it was the familiar, uncontroversial figure of Queen Marie who ensured that her country maintained a prominent position in wartime Britain. The dramatic nature of Romania’s defeat in late 1916, neighbouring Russia’s Bolshevik Revolution and Romania’s capitulation in March 1918 underlined the country’s need for Marie as an exceptional figurehead, and simultaneously served to enhance her appeal both domestically and internationally. It is unsurprising that Cannadine’s thesis on ritualised British monarchy as a powerful vehicle for national identity is also applicable to the Queen of Romania’s efforts in Britain. In a vindication of Hroch’s three-stage model of nationalism, through Marie an idea of the Romanian ‘Tommy’ and his loyalty was successfully articulated. Posing a direct challenge to standard Balkan motifs of savagery and barbarity but still working within presumed West–East paradigms of superiority and dependency, Marie’s Romanian soldiers appeared in British discourse as men ready to die for their own English-born queen and her dream of a Greater Romania. Packaged in iconic feminine form, this national messaging would gift the political elite, both Romanian and British,

¹¹⁰ *The Times*, 1 Mar 1918.

¹¹¹ Lady Kennard, *A Roumanian Diary*, pp. 188–89.

¹¹² This report was accompanied with a note confirming that it corroborated what the Foreign Office had already been told by Romania’s Colonel Rossetti. Horace Rumbold Report containing Mrs Belbin Report to FO, 23 July 1918, 283, FO371/3141, TNA.

¹¹³ *Trafalgar Square Meeting*, 8 Nov 1916, Topical Budget Film, 272-1, BFIA.

a sympathetic canvass onto which an idea of a post-war Greater Romania in a New Europe could be crafted.¹¹⁴

4.2 *My Country*, Female Literature and Wartime Romania

Marie's wartime book, *My Country*, published by Hodder and Stoughton and serialised in *The Times* at the end of 1916, was erroneously dismissed by her biographer Hannah Pakula as 'sentimental in the extreme'.¹¹⁵ In fact the book represented a significant departure in terms of the distinct Romanian imaging it generated in British discourse, directing Romania's royal oeuvre away from fiction and folklore with a factual account that described the country through permanent and ancient identifiers.¹¹⁶ Both distinct and feminine, this identity was also championed by other British, predominantly female, writers. However, the Romania they described was increasingly defined as a country in relation to the 'idea of the enemy' in texts that focused on the German external threat or the perceived threats that came from bordering and internal minorities. In this section, the impact of those tensions on the development of Romania's national identity will be discussed in relation to Jeismann's identification of enmity in the role of national development, while Bakić-Hayden's 'Nesting Orientalisms' will serve as a guide to external definitions of Romania against the encroaching 'other' in a series of comparisons which underlined Romania's European qualities.¹¹⁷ The specific denigration of Romania's Jewish national minority, evidenced in this oeuvre, will require an assessment of Brubaker's nexus of competing nationalisms to explicate the dominant Romanian constructs in this British discourse.

This section will argue that more Britons were encouraged to engage with ideas about Romania than ever before, in a series of depictions which stressed the country's

¹¹⁴ See §4.3.

¹¹⁵ Marie, Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, London; New York; Toronto, published for *The Times* by Hodder and Stoughton; *The Times*, 2, 3, 9 Nov 1916; Hannah Pakula, *The Last Romantic: The biography of Queen Marie of Romania*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984, p. 200.

¹¹⁶ In the context of 1914–19 Harsanyi underlines both the significance of Elena Văcărescu, operating in Paris for Romania, and Queen Marie: Pasca Harsanyi, 'Blue Blood and Ink', p. 497.

¹¹⁷ Jeismann, 'Nation, Identity and Enmity', pp. 17–27; Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms', pp. 917–31.

femininity, spirituality and vulnerability in a tone and form which differed significantly from the Serbian-generated equivalents also discussed here. These constructions challenge Romania's place in generalisations pertaining to Balkanism and Eastern Europe, rubrics that were temporarily played down by the divisions of war. The literature fostered quasi-imperial ideas of Britain as Romania's mentor and potential saviour, which complemented the iconography surrounding Queen Marie and suited the emerging political consensus about Greater Romania's place in New Europe discussed in §4.3. No longer was Britain simply a yardstick against which to measure Romania's failings and charms. It will be suggested that the alliance of war demanded a presumption of responsibility, replete with echoes of a Western 'project', first identified by Said.¹¹⁸

Ion Duca, a member of Romania's wartime government, lamented in the winter of 1916 that Romania was 'without a press organisation in Paris, London, St Petersburg or Rome'.¹¹⁹ This absence of an official Romanian presence serves to emphasise the singular and exceptional success of Marie's book in December 1916. Written prior to Romania's entry into war, her forward planning proved astute and her judgement – 'we found it good, attractive descriptions of attractive things' – correct.¹²⁰ As Romania's attack collapsed, and over-optimistic headlines claiming the 'beginning of the end' morphed into talk of 'a time of crisis',¹²¹ *My Country* appeared in Britain to rave reviews. The *Daily Mail* enthused,

One of the most beautiful of the war books. Queen Marie writes simply yet entrancingly of the widely diversified life in Rumania and her descriptions of pastoral and historic scenes form wonderful pen pictures, enhanced in their vividness by extremely good photographs taken by the royal hand.¹²²

Impressive wartime photo-journalism was highly prized, with travel and history books quick to flaunt their photographs. *My Country*, advertised with 60 pictures,

¹¹⁸ Todorova argues that the West was the barometer against which all 'Others' seem to define themselves; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10; Said, *Orientalism*, 2003 edition.

¹¹⁹ I. G. Duca, *Memorii*, vol. III, București, Editura Machiavelli, 1994, p. 150.

¹²⁰ Marie Diaries, 22 Jan 1917, p. 67, III/106, CRRM, RNA.

¹²¹ *Daily Telegraph*, 31 Aug 1916; *The Nation*, 2 Sep 1916; *New Statesman*, 14 Oct 1916; *Near East*, 20 Oct 1916, p. 595; *The Times*, 6 Nov 1916.

¹²² *Daily Mail* review cited in *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 Jan 1917.

trumped most.¹²³ *The Times* felt ‘one has seen Rumania with one’s own eyes’. The *Daily Mail* exclaimed that the stories were ‘enhanced in their vividness by extremely good photographs’.¹²⁴ Months earlier, the Serbian photographic exhibition in London underlined the power of photography, displaying 260 photographs which ‘illustrated the terrible suffering of Serbia during the last three years’.¹²⁵ Melissa Bokovoy convincingly argues that the exhibition, ‘Official Serbia’, ‘consciously and with great care presented the violence of war and the shame of defeat and retreat as tragedy, martyrdom, resurrection and redemption’.¹²⁶ In contrast, *My Country* made no reference to the war. Instead the British reader was presented with the story of a ‘wholly unknown’ land,¹²⁷ signposted through rural vistas – nuns, peasants, gypsy children, monasteries and wooden icons.¹²⁸ It deflected attention away from Romania’s military defeat and struck a chord in war-weary Britain – ‘a book very full of charm which will make an instant and pathetic appeal to the whole British race’.¹²⁹

My Country presented Romania in its pre-existing form; the country’s original ‘draft’ that Jeismann identifies, before the conflict between national identity and enmity takes place, with the subsequent development of nationality focused through an oscillation between these two poles.¹³⁰ The primary relationship was between the Queen and Romania, encapsulated in the book’s opening line: ‘The Queen of a small country!’

¹²³ The full title of Dorothea Kirke’s book was *Domestic Life in Rumania with eight illustrations*, London; New York, John Lane, 1916; Mrs Will Gordon’s *A Woman in the Balkans* was advertised with ‘50 illustrations on Art Paper’; *Times Literary Supplement*, 29 June 1916; *My Country* was advertised with ‘60 photographs’; *Times Literary Supplement*, 21, 28 Dec 1916, 4, 11, 25 Jan, 1, 8, 29 Mar, 5 Apr 1917.

¹²⁴ *The Times*, cited in Dunlop, ‘Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy’, p. 28; *Daily Mail*, cited in *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 Jan 1917.

¹²⁵ *The Times*, cited in Bokovoy, ‘Framing the Hero in Interwar Yugoslavia’, loc. 315.1/901.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ The TLS description for the Balkans in a review of Mrs Will Gordon’s book, *A Woman in the Balkans*, *Times Literary Supplement*, 29 June 1916.

¹²⁸ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*.

¹²⁹ *Daily News* review, cited in TLS advertisement, *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 Jan 1917; *My Country* was translated into Romanian and French, Marie Diaries, 25 Mar 1917, p. 14, 108/III, 9 Dec 1917, p. 113, 111/III; two editions were published in America, with Marie reminding Americans they had joined the war ‘for the rights and principles of smaller nations’ such as her own ‘small suffering country’. ‘Chapter 1 written for the Americans’, p. 1, III/5, CRRM, RNA.

¹³⁰ Jeismann, ‘Nation, Identity and Enmity’, pp. 17–19.

... It means work and anxiety and hope and great toiling for small results.'¹³¹ The line was quoted in the *Sunday Times*' 'Some Words of the Moment' feature.¹³² Marie had neatly tied herself to an uncompromising vision of a 'small' country. (Romania was in fact the biggest Balkan country in terms of size, revenue, trade and population.¹³³) The Queen toils and her 'peasants toil beneath scorching suns, a country untouched by the squalor of manufactories, a country of extremes where winters are icy and the summers burning hot'.¹³⁴ Her tableau deliberately excluded politics in order to focus on the nation's 'soul'.¹³⁵ It was an elemental portrayal that again underlines the importance of Smith ethno-cultural focus, binding a simple version of a working queen to a nativist and ancient idea that lay behind the less flattering claims of Romania as a political entity.¹³⁶

My Country, with dazzling descriptions of cornfields and full of bucolic sentiment, promoted a timeless Romania. It was upon this foundation that British writers built with their later contributions (including the Queen in her extracts for Mrs Gordon's *Roumania Yesterday and Today* published in 1918).¹³⁷ Their work added what Jeismann identifies as the angles or 'oscillations' that emerged in the process of war, onto the original Romanian 'draft'. Several books about Romania were published after *My Country* in 1917 and 1918, and the texts often included their authors' experiences before the country entered the war. Discussed in Chapter 1, Bucharest's spendthrift Parisian reputation had been reported as early as 1906, with Harry de Windt's

¹³¹ She deliberately avoided controversy, writing, 'I am not going to talk of my country's institutions, of its politics, of names known to the world'; Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, pp. 5, 8.

¹³² *Sunday Times*, 31 Dec 1916.

¹³³ *In the Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in retrospect with a new introduction and reflections on the present conflict*, by George K. Kennan, Washington, D.C., Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1993, last page (unnumbered).

¹³⁴ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, p. 6.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³⁶ Marie was involved in the pre-war negotiations and aware of the unpopularity of Romania politicians and their excessive claims; Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy', pp. 11–13, 23.

¹³⁷ Marie wrote the 'touching and wonderfully pathetic introduction' and two chapters for Gordon: *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, p. xi; see §4.1 for a description of Marie's contribution.

descriptions of ‘a miniature Paris’ and a veritable ‘city of pleasure’.¹³⁸ If Marie’s ‘draft’ Romania tactfully ignored the profligacy of peacetime, British women were quick to remember the bright side of the country’s very recent past.

The effect was to reframe Romania as a nation on a journey towards maturity, with the excesses of neutrality couched in nostalgic, forgiving terms. English woman, Dorothy, Lady Kennard, was the daughter of the elderly British Ambassador in Bucharest, Sir George Barclay. She visited neutral Romania ‘to experience life in this far off country’ where hats still arrived from Paris and ‘the clothes are wonderful and even more wonderfully expensive ... the country must be made of money’.¹³⁹ In *A Roumanian Diary 1915, 1916, 1917* ‘we ourselves had almost forgotten the war’, with Kennard recalling that ‘The Roumanians are all rather rich (I am speaking of the ones who live in cities) and love to dawdle here at noon.’ Mrs Will Gordon, who had married into a family of British financiers, was another adventuresome socialite; testament to her British significance as a ‘traveller and a writer’, *Everywoman’s* dedicated a full-page feature to this ‘Gifted War Worker’, including a headshot, in May 1917.¹⁴⁰ In her 1916 book, *A Woman in the Balkans*, Mrs Gordon concluded that Belgrade did not compare to Bucharest, ‘one of the gayest and brightest capitals to be found anywhere’.¹⁴¹ Two years later in *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, Gordon remembered Bucharest as the ‘gayest, brightest, light-hearted little sister to the elder Paris’.¹⁴² A duo serialised in the *Fortnightly Review* – Mr W. F. Bailey, an established travel writer¹⁴³ with female collaborator Jean V. Bates – recalled ‘fashionable beauties of the City of Joy lie amongst their pillows – unthinking, careless, unknowing. Such was Bucharest

¹³⁸ Harry de Windt, *Through Savage Europe. Being the narrative of a journey, undertaken as special correspondent of the ‘Westminster Gazette’ ... with one hundred illustrations*, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1907, p. 247.

¹³⁹ Lady Kennard, *A Roumanian Diary*, pp. 4–5; Kennard’s mother, Lady Barclay, was a well-connected woman from America, where the book was also published; Lady Dorothy Katherine Barclay, *A Roumanian Diary 1915, 1916, 1917*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1918.

¹⁴⁰ *Everywoman’s*, 12 May 1917, p. 281.

¹⁴¹ Referring to Bucharest, ‘City of Pleasure and Light’, is a chapter name in Gordon, *A Woman in the Balkans*, pp. 12–17, 125–42.

¹⁴² In a chapter entitled ‘A Latin Oasis’, Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, pp. 23–24. By October 1917 Mrs Gordon was giving lectures on ‘Rumania’s Ordeal’ in Britain, with slides ‘many of them specifically sent for the purpose by the Queen of Roumania’; *The Times*, 17 Oct 1917.

¹⁴³ W. F. Bailey had already written about the Balkans in *The Slavs of the War Zone*, London, Chapman & Hall Ltd, 1916.

when the war came.’¹⁴⁴ Memories of old decadent Romania served to remind British readers of the sacrificial path the country had chosen.

Marie’s own development was a marker on that journey. Kennard witnessed the National Troop Review in May 1916, three months before Romania entered the war. The King, Queen and Crown Prince were at the head of this ‘splendid parade’, which ‘did not stand for warfare as it has developed during the last two years’.¹⁴⁵ The royals were the figureheads in the nation’s colourful narrative, where the army was only just ‘waking from a sleep of infancy to watch interestedly the games of older children’.¹⁴⁶ During neutrality, Romania was remembered as under-developed; excessive and childlike, or, contradictorily, occasionally chastised for being part of the disappointing Balkans. ‘When one has known and loved the Furthest East, one meets with daily disappointment in these Balkan states.’ At their worst the peasants were dirty children who scarcely knew the world was at war.¹⁴⁷ Those same peasants had been feted in the British press during Romania’s neutrality as a benchmark for the country’s military preparedness. In a reminder of the malleability of the ubiquitous peasant in imagery of Romania, once at war they would re-emerge in British literature as the primary indicator of their country’s developing nationhood, cruelly and suddenly advanced through the impact of conflict.¹⁴⁸

Marie’s self-conscious image as the Mother and Nurse of her peasant nation was facilitated through the early publication and success of *My Country*.¹⁴⁹ *The Times* serialised the book and led with an article about ‘The Peasantry of a little known land, by the Queen of Rumania.’¹⁵⁰ ‘They are poor, they are ignorant these peasants, neglected and superstitious but there is a grand nobility in their race.’ Romania’s previously problematic serf population was imbued with an innocent vulnerability. ‘The Rumanian peasant is never in a hurry ... He is as picturesque in his rough sheep-skin coat as he is in summer in his white shirt and broad felt hat.’¹⁵¹ Her prose celebrated an

¹⁴⁴ W. H. Bailey and Jean V. Bates, ‘Bucharest When War Came’, *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 100, Jan 1917, pp. 87–99.

¹⁴⁵ Lady Kennard, *A Roumanian Diary*, p. 36.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 20.

¹⁴⁸ For the significance of the peasant in British wartime thinking see §3.1.

¹⁴⁹ See §4.1 for more on the Queen’s wartime persona.

¹⁵⁰ *The Times*, 2 Nov 1916.

¹⁵¹ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, pp. 9, 11.

idea of peasant-man in his original form, unsullied by conflict, leaving space for the metamorphosis of these ‘noblemen’ into chivalrous soldiers. The *Manchester Guardian* noted ‘a high tribute is paid to the Roumanian peasantry’.¹⁵²

During neutrality Kennard promised to do an ‘investigation’ of the Romanian peasants, who were ‘children: happy, well clothed and well fed’ but, stuck in what Mary Louise Pratt identifies as a ‘contact zone’ where ‘imperial encounters’ between subject and traveller invariably take place, she did not carry it out. Instead Kennard assumed the peasant lived beyond the ‘standards of labourers of the West’, but despite his wealth was unable to shake off his primitive ways.¹⁵³ Bailey and Bates cultivated the idea of these peasants on a journey: ‘Roumanians, sons of a race whose glory has been long in dawning but whose noon day will probably be all the more splendid because of its tardy coming.’¹⁵⁴ By 1917 historian and Romanian politician Nicolae Iorga, demanded that the West proclaimed ‘the superb sacrifice’ the Romanian peasant ‘has made for his country which he only knows instinctively without its ever being made clear to him by word or writing’. Published in Seton-Watson’s political journal, *The New Europe*, Iorga eschewed what modernist theories of nationalism would later declare as necessary for successful nation-building – literacy. Instead he focused on an innate sense of belonging where ‘only the means failed them’.¹⁵⁵ This articulation of a profound, deeply embedded Romanian nationality vindicates Smith’s reiteration of the ‘popular, emotional and moral dimensions of national identity’ and chimes with Marie’s descriptions of Romania’s peasants in *My Country*.¹⁵⁶

In *The Times*, ‘Lonely Shrines and Holy Places’ saw Marie’s Romania swarm with ‘nuns making humble gestures’, ‘hoary old monks’, ancient monasteries and

¹⁵² *Manchester Guardian*, 8 Jan 1917.

¹⁵³ Lady Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, p. 21; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel writing and transculturation*, London, Routledge, 1992, p. 8.

¹⁵⁴ Bailey and Bates, ‘People and Places from the Roumanian Danube’, p. 797.

¹⁵⁵ N. Iorga, ‘Roumania and the West’, *The New Europe*, 11 Jan 1917, vol. 1, no. 13, pp. 387–88; E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 110–15; Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, London, Verso, 2016, pp. 39–48.

¹⁵⁶ Smith, *The Nation in History*, p. 7; Iorga worked closely with Marie and translated and published *My Country* in Romania, 17 Feb, 22 May 1917, pp. 60, 215, III, III/107, 24 Mar 1918, p. 14, VII, III/108, CRRM, RNA.

‘village churches in faraway corners’.¹⁵⁷ *My Country*’s numerous pictures evidenced a biblical spiritualism: ‘a lonely little cemetery filled with crosses of wood’; monks and nuns of whom ‘some were so bent, that they could no more raise their heads to look up at the sky above’.¹⁵⁸ Orthodox Romania’s unreformed practices and architecture lent easily to an Eastern mysticism. If nineteenth-century efforts at reunification had foundered, Anglicans who claimed Orthodoxy was stagnant were simultaneously confronted with the successful preservation of virtually unchanged ancient orthodox traditions.¹⁵⁹ Scrutiny of the Eastern Church was partially inspired by falling church attendance in Britain. However, Adrian Gregory has observed that during the war that decline was briefly reversed. Although conventional religion was criticised for not having sufficient answers, more women went to church and sought solace through a broad sweep of spiritual practices.¹⁶⁰ By avoiding official religion and emphasising ancient forms of worship and ‘rustic testimonies of faith’, Marie’s descriptions resonated with that spiritual quest.¹⁶¹ It was onto this unimpeachable canvass that the enemy would brutally encroach.

Jeismann highlights the relationship between national self-definition on one hand and the idea and impact of the enemy on the other. He argues that ‘every nation believed that it embodied the greatest attributes of “humanity”’ and that when the interests of that ‘humanity’ came under threat, then a common ‘national interest’ emerged and competition was activated ‘by a spiral of emotionally charged claims’. Germany’s crushing military success over Romania in their first three months of war provided the enmity against which Romania was able to both define its own ‘humanity’ and also, through the voices of onlookers, find a common ‘humanity’ with allied Britain.¹⁶² That the unfolding scene was described by British women who were exposed

¹⁵⁷ *The Times*, 3 Nov 1916.

¹⁵⁸ Queen of Romania, *My Country*, pp. 19–24, 31.

¹⁵⁹ Mika Suonpää, ‘Anglican Images of Eastern Orthodoxy before 1914’, in Maija Könönen and Juhani Nuorluoto (eds), *Europe-Evropa: Cross-cultural dialogues between the West, Russia and southeastern Europe*, Uppsala, Uppsala Universitet, 2010, pp. 258–71.

¹⁶⁰ Liberal politician Charles Masterman claimed in war the church had failed ‘to stand above the melee’; cited in A. Gregory, *The Last Great War: British society and the last Great War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 152–83.

¹⁶¹ *The Times*, 3 Nov 1916.

¹⁶² Jeismann, ‘Nation, Identity, Enmity’, p. 19.

to the violence underscored this shared good–evil dichotomy with a gendered dimension.¹⁶³

Kennard, a society lady, became a wartime nurse in Romania. Borrowing heavily from the familiar trope of German frightfulness, she wrote a graphic letter published in *The Times*, which described Romania's unexpected Armageddon. German taubes – 'devils' or 'beasts' – daily 'flew around and around' picking off innocent life under a pretty blue sky adorned with 'puffs of white smoke like cigarette rings'.¹⁶⁴ (Mirroring this juxtaposition, Mrs Gordon described Romania the hour war broke out: 'the twilight of a wonderful summer day, falling softly over the woods and mountains'.¹⁶⁵) Kennard's days became nightmares or dreams, the mania in the hospital felt like 'a pistol to your head' and death was all around. 'A woman was killed at the gate of the hospital, another man on the doorstep.' 'In the market, people's arms were blown off and one man's head.' Patients arrived limbless ('three of the poor legless fellows died') and a child was killed in Kennard's street.¹⁶⁶ By the time these descriptions were published in Britain, the notion of war as a valorous Christian adventure was wearing thin. Many writers stayed loyal to the chivalric trope but first-hand experience demanded a fresh narrative that was provided in these accounts about Romania.¹⁶⁷ The spiritual idea of unblemished Romania so effectively articulated by Queen Marie had been blown up, providing a grim answer to Jeissman's question 'where does the intensity of such national demarcation come from?'¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ For more on the significance of women's bodies as the site of conflict see Catherine Hall, 'Gender, Nations and Nationalism', in Edward Mortimer and Robert Fine (eds), *People, Nation and State: The meaning of ethnicity and nationalism*, London, I.B.Tauris, 1999, p. 51.

¹⁶⁴ *The Times*, 26 Oct 1916.

¹⁶⁵ Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, pp. 159–61.

¹⁶⁶ *The Times*, 26 Oct 1916.

¹⁶⁷ Tylee has identified the role of literature's female outsiders – New Zealander Katherine Mansfield and America's Ellen La Motte and Mary Borden – as better able to cut through the imperial hyperbole and identify the grim reality of war, but unlike Kennard's article and diary their work was not available in wartime Britain; Tylee, *The Great War and Women's Consciousness*, pp. 83–102.

¹⁶⁸ Jeissmann, 'Nation, Identity, Enmity', p. 19.

Total war in Romania depicted as impacting women, children and queens, served to underline the feminine constant in much of the writing examined here.¹⁶⁹ British nurse Yvonne Fitzroy, who was working in Romania, observed ‘not an army but a whole country, women and children and beasts’ were in retreat.¹⁷⁰ In Serbia British women also wrote about their experiences, but with very different effect. Historian Angela Smith argues that these ‘women illustrate the importance of Serbia as a battleground for sexual politics during the First World War.’¹⁷¹ Mabel St Clair Stobart’s book, *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere*, underlined woman’s military value and professionalism in a coded statement about female enfranchisement. In charge of a Serbian Field Hospital Column, Stobart tied her valour to the bravery of the army she travelled with and duly became the first woman to ever be given the rank of major.¹⁷² By 1917 her exceptional performance had been publicly commended by former Prime Minister Asquith.¹⁷³ Likewise, vicar’s daughter Flora Sandes used her book to highlight her status as a military hero. Serbia’s desperate retreat through the mountains was depicted as one of rearguard defence; Sandes smoked, talked war and shot the enemy with her Serbian comrades.¹⁷⁴ In both cases, the women inhabited a man’s world. The Serbian Army escaped to the coast with Stobart claiming ‘Serbia is ahead of other nations in her power of sacrificing herself for ideals.’ Sandes, the only British woman to see active service as a soldier in World War I, became a corporal and anticipated

¹⁶⁹ The victim sentiment is heavily underlined in Kennard’s writing, particularly in *The Times*, a paper which also reported the bombing of Queen Marie’s palace; *The Times*, 26 Oct, 16 Nov 1916.

¹⁷⁰ Yvonne Fitzroy, *With the Scottish Nurses in Roumania, with illustrations and map*, London, John Murray, 1918, pp. 51–52.

¹⁷¹ Angela Smith, *British Women of the Eastern Front: war, writing and experience in Serbia and Russia, 1914-20*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016, p. 26.

¹⁷² Mabel Annie St Clair Stobart explained she wanted to ascertain what the role of women should be in a war in a question that was linked to women getting the vote; an issue she conceded would be disregarded during the conflict. Stobart, *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere*, London; New York, Hodder & Stoughton, 1916, pp. 1–3; the *TLS* was unsettled by the suffrage message. *The Times Literary Supplement*, 28 Dec 1916.

¹⁷³ B. Maclaren, *Women of the War with an Introduction by the Right Hon H. H. Asquith*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1917, pp. 32–36.

¹⁷⁴ F. Sandes, *An English Woman-Sergeant in the Serbia Army with an Introduction by S. Y. Grouitch*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1916, pp. 47, 55, 141–42.

rejoining the Serbs for ‘another whack at the enemy and march victoriously back into Serbia’.¹⁷⁵

In comparison, Romania was a country still in military infancy – the wounded peasant soldiers ‘are all children’ tended by British women who occupied conventional feminine nursing roles.¹⁷⁶ Unlike the Serbia’s more radical depictions which affirmed the country’s place in a masculine Balkans, albeit a heroic one, constructions of Romania, although shocking, were located within accepted gender norms. Kennard’s article in *The Times* struck a chord. *The Times History of the War* album noted ‘a vivid picture of those days was given in letters written by an English lady who worked in a Bucharest hospital’ and quoted several graphic scenes.¹⁷⁷ Kennard reproduced much of the original article in her published diary and in 1918 Mrs Will Gordon used Kennard’s descriptions of men with bleeding stumps to embellish her chapter on Romania’s war.¹⁷⁸

Evaluating the impact of these representations in British wartime discourse is challenging. Kennard was distraught by the lack of attention Romania received, noting that in the British press only ‘one amongst fifteen papers mentioned Roumania – just that and no more. It made us all rather angry at first to realise that we must appear so utterly unimportant.’ Two months later the situation had not changed.¹⁷⁹ Arguably this paucity of news strengthened the impact of those who did publish on Britain’s newest ally. A *Times Literary Supplement* comment on Bailey’s descriptive writing as ‘perhaps more likely to correct preconceptions than works written with a political purpose’ suggests the wartime oeuvre on Romania was well pitched.¹⁸⁰ The *Sunday Times* argued Mrs Gordon’s 1918 book added to an already extant knowledge of the country.¹⁸¹ In terms of political influence, as will be discussed in §4.3, *The New Europe* was read in

¹⁷⁵ Stobart, *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere*, pp. 310, 242.

¹⁷⁶ Lady Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, p. 59.

¹⁷⁷ *The Times History of the War*, vol. II, p. 235.

¹⁷⁸ Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, pp. 56–59; Gordon believed that the woman who wrote to *The Times* was diplomat’s wife Lady Barclay. Inaccuracies were commonplace in her book and in reports on Romania generally. Gordon wrote Marie became queen in October 1916 not October 1914; Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, pp. 27, 188–95; Bouchier took issue with Gordon’s loose, favourable interpretation of Romania’s role in the Balkan wars; *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 Aug 1918.

¹⁷⁹ Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, pp. 132, 156.

¹⁸⁰ This was a comment on Bailey’s 1916 book, *The Slavs of the War Zone* in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 6 July 1916.

¹⁸¹ *Sunday Times*, 21 July 1918.

the Foreign Office, with Iorga's article about Romania's appearing when British officials were debating a possible evacuation of Romania's remaining troops into Russia in January 1917.¹⁸²

In the wake of Romania's 1916 defeat, the Foreign Office fell back on standard Balkan tropes to denigrate the Romanian soldier.¹⁸³ But as an ally, and one projected to make significant territorial gains in the wake of an Entente victory, Romania needed to inspire hope. In 'Nesting Orientalisms' Bakić-Hayden identifies implicit assumptions about the 'primordial qualities' of different peoples, which are used to explicate the 'fate of nations'.¹⁸⁴ In Romania the peasant was the main repository for those primordial qualities in a country where other nationalities 'jostle'. Astutely political, Marie was aware of the need to merge the ethnic validation of her country's nationhood with a civic, multinational gloss. 'It is especially in the Dobrudja that these different nationalities jostle together: beside Rumanians, Bulgarians, Turks, Tartars, Russians, in places even Germans live peacefully side by side.'¹⁸⁵ The only minority race whose primordial qualities Marie explicitly tied to Romania was the romantic gypsy. Imps, beauties and hags, they were less 'thieving criminals' and more 'an unending source of interest'.¹⁸⁶ If, in Britain 'a nostalgia for the past' demanded a place for the 'exotic, strange and mysterious gypsy',¹⁸⁷ Marie's Romania with its claim on folkloric otherness was the country to find them.¹⁸⁸

However, while the Queen avoided further explication of Romania's other races, visiting writers felt no such compunction. Bakić-Hayden refers to the appropriation and manipulation of the designation of the 'other' by those who had already been labelled as such in Orientalist discourse, with different races seeking to demonstrate their superior

¹⁸² Iorga, 'Roumania and the West', pp. 387–94; there was much discussion about whether Romania should evacuate its troops to Russia. Hardinge argued that it would 'create an unfortunate impression'. It was eventually decided the army should remain in Romania. FO Notes of Barclay dispatch re Evacuation of Iași, 3 Feb 1917; Barclay dispatch to FO, 8 Apr 1917, 204, FO 371/2880, TNA.

¹⁸³ Rattigan, the British Under Secretary in Bucharest, comprehensively mauled the Romanian character; 'Report on Roumania', Jan 1917, pp. 247–52, FO 800/384, TNA.

¹⁸⁴ Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms', p. 919.

¹⁸⁵ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, p. 10.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

¹⁸⁷ D. Mayall, *Gypsy Identities, 1500–2000: From the Egyptians and Moon-men to the ethnic Romany*, New York, Routledge, 2003, pp. 119, 137.

¹⁸⁸ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, p. 54; Gordon also focuses on the 'distinctive and interesting' gypsies; Mrs Gordon, *A Woman in the Balkans*, pp. 190–204.

European qualities in post-war Yugoslavia.¹⁸⁹ In the middle of World War I this tendency to define rival groups against each other was pronounced, with the German enemy ensuring the European hierarchy could be temporarily eschewed in favour of a model that flattered allied countries, Balkan or otherwise. It is significant that while Bakić-Hayden focuses on the ‘nesting’ or divisions created by those within the ‘Orientalist discourse’, in the cases studied here, it was British writers who defined Romanians against dubious ‘others’. Bailey and Bates negotiated the contours of Romania and its bordering countries and peoples. Romanian peasants in a Hungarian inn – men in linen shirts, garments that are ‘worn with indescribable dignity’ – were the beleaguered minority in a contested land, surrounded by condescending Saxons gobbling sauerkraut and the Magyar making violent love to his sweetheart. These were coarse tropes in a country ‘where war has increased tension’ and against which the purity of the Romanian was posited. ‘1800 years have not robbed the Roumanians of their Latin physiognomy and language.’¹⁹⁰

As Jeismann’s arguments predict, Romania’s innocence and femininity were exacerbated through contact with the ‘other’. Borrowing Marie’s idea of a jostling, yet peaceable, Dobrodgea (despite reports on Bulgarians and Jews that suggested the reverse),¹⁹¹ Bailey and Bates identify a Romanian wedding party as the ‘most brilliant’ of all the groups in that region. In comparison ‘the Bulgars are the most disagreeable people ... ugly of disposition, they are also distressingly unprepossessing of countenance’.¹⁹² Mrs Gordon also differentiated between the Romanian and his neighbours.

The crafty impetuous Hungarian, the imperturbable slow moving Serb, the stolid Bulgar might be perhaps mistaken for brothers if dressed alike ... but never could one mistake the Latin origin of the Roumanian ... Slender with dark eyes in which a sombre fire mingles with much latent fun and good humour, graceful

¹⁸⁹ Bakić-Hayden, ‘Nesting Orientalisms’, pp. 917–31.

¹⁹⁰ Bailey and Bates, ‘Places and People from the Roumanian Danube’, p. 797.

¹⁹¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 18 June 1913; Conjoint Committee to Grey, 24 May 1913, 23648, FO371/1742, TNA.

¹⁹² W. H. Bailey and Jean V. Bates, ‘The Roumanian Danube from Widdin to the Black Sea’, *Fortnightly Review*, Dec 1916, vol. C, pp. 960–62, 965; Mrs Gordon quotes Marie in *My Country* on Dobrodgea’s nationalities. Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, p. 84.

figures and courteous ways, they are Latin through and through – a Western power in an Eastern setting.¹⁹³

Ideas of Romanian racial superiority fed off Romania's classical associations with the Dacians and Trajan's Roman conquerors. Bailey and Bates went to the Danube where 'the legions of Caesar' and the 'legions of Emperor Trajan passed by!' and Gordon carried the analogy further. The shepherds are the 'steadfast preservers of the ancient Daco-Roman traditions and blood of the original pastoral ancestors of Roumania' in prose certified through references to Pliny and Herodotus, Ovid and Trajan's column in Rome.¹⁹⁴ While Bouchier criticised Gordon's tendency to see Roman ancestry 'in everything',¹⁹⁵ these very deliberate efforts to pitch a European Romania out of a Balkan/Eastern setting were assisted by events on the ground.

The Entente's Russian allies were in revolt by 1917 and out of the war by early 1918. This military disappointment impacted most acutely on Romanians, whose entry into the war had been premised on the help of allied Russia and whose remaining ear of land in Moldova was full of Russian soldiers. British writers were quick to depict these Russian turn-coats as giant parasites that caused friction, cluttered streets and ate all the food. The *Daily Mail*'s correspondent, Hamilton Fyfe, was struck by the difference between the Russians and the Romanians who 'have steadily refused, in any respect, to be Easternised'. Kennard concurred. The Romanians unlike the disloyal Russians, had identified the ideal of a fight for peace and

one had only to watch them march by nowadays to mark the difference in their carriage and the concerted drumming of their hobnailed boots. And they have borrowed cadence songs from the Russians who sing no longer now that they no longer march.¹⁹⁶

She observed that 'it is curious to contrast the present attitude of mind in Russia with the one that has gradually crept over the Roumanian population'.¹⁹⁷ The differences

¹⁹³ Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, p. 12; Romania was also described as 'though in the East, not of the East'; Bailey and Bates, 'The Roumanian Danube from Widdin to the Black Sea', p. 966.

¹⁹⁴ Bailey and Bates, 'Places and People from the Roumanian Danube', p. 795; Gordon, *ibid.*, pp. 22, 46–48.

¹⁹⁵ *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 Aug 1918.

¹⁹⁶ *Daily Mail*, 6 Oct 1916; on five separate occasions Kennard referenced the excessive number of Russians in Romania. Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, pp. 93, 103, 112, 124, 160, 183.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

between the two served to exacerbate Romania's specialness to a British audience long wary of Tsarist Russia and underlined another stage in Romania's journey westwards towards military maturation and civility.¹⁹⁸

A second, and more insidious enemy identified as threatening Romania from within, was the Jew. In *My Country* Marie deliberately omits any reference to her country's largest minority. Significantly the Jewish narrative is also left out of David Mitrany's and Herșcovici Hurst's political accounts published during Romania's war.¹⁹⁹ Political men and Romanian Jews by birth they, like the Queen, were aware of heightened international sensitivities around the Jewish Question, and avoided the subject. Literary constraint among British writers was rarer. Pendlebury has identified a 'revival of religious notions of national identity' which saw the emergence of a sharpened anti-Semitic discourse in Britain.²⁰⁰ Mrs Gordon was careful to dissociate the 'Jews of London, Paris, Berlin or Vienna to whom one could assuredly never refuse any civil or political rights, with the Jews of Serbia, Roumania ... who are a veritable scourge for the indigenous population', but admitted that it was 'very strange' Western Jews showed such a 'curious interest' in their 'flotsam and jetsam' coreligionists in the East. These 'unscrupulous' Jews, who cared only about their 'own material gain' and arrived in Romania to 'evade military service' in Russia, were blamed for both the peasants' economic instability and Romania's economic woes.²⁰¹ This economic attack was echoed by Bailey and Bates. 'Jews carry things off with a high and irritating hand ... jingling their pockets.' The only 'unclean place' in Bucharest was the Jewish quarter, full of 'bulbous nosed ... Jews Pendi (pigs)'.²⁰²

In his book *Constructions of the Jew*, Bryan Cheynette is 'at pains to show the way in which racialised constructions of Jews were at the heart of [British] domestic liberalism'. Using the model Edward Said first articulated, he identifies British writers inside an imperial culture who were able to define 'the self' in relation to the Semite

¹⁹⁸ On British ambivalence towards its Russian ally see: C. Keeble, *Britain, the Soviet Union and Russia*, Basingstoke; London, Macmillan, 2000, pp. 10, 12–14.

¹⁹⁹ D. Mitrany, 'German Penetration in Roumania', *Quarterly Review*, Oct 1916, pp. 387–410; A. Herșcovici Hurst, *Roumania and Great Britain*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1916.

²⁰⁰ Pendlebury, *Portraying 'the Jew'*, pp. 1–5.

²⁰¹ Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, pp. 13, 62–63, 70, 102–6.

²⁰² Bailey and Bates, 'Bucharest When War Came', pp. 90–92.

‘other’.²⁰³ By relocating the literary subject to illiberal Romania, the broader imperial construction remains British, but the ‘others’ have multiplied, and their antagonisms have intensified, conforming to Bakić-Hayden’s model of Nesting Orientalisms, with hatred for the Jew the most consistent and prevalent expression of ‘Other’ in wartime Romania. Unlike Gordon and Kennard, British nurse Yvonne Fitzroy had little sympathy for the Romanian soldiers. ‘They are unattractive, complaining creatures with very little self control.’ But she was more appalled by the Jews, identifying them as German and working for the Germans. In the nesting order, the Romanian is ‘ground down by the Jew’. A fight in a hospital ward saw a Jew nearly get ‘torn to pieces’ and Fitzroy ‘found my sympathies at the time were distinctly Christian’.²⁰⁴

As will be discussed in §4.3, the position of the Jew in Allied countries (more specifically Russia and Romania) was contested throughout the war, with an eventual identification of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, a compromise which highlighted their complex status. However, while the Foreign Office had to tread carefully, there was a kinship between British writers and Romanians over the Jews, with the former articulating anti-Semitic sentiments that mapped out the Romanian against his most unsympathetic other.²⁰⁵ Trevelyan had concluded in 1915 that Romania was only known for its treatment of the Jews. However, the tone of British writers publishing during 1917 and 1918 suggests that if he was right about the conflation of Romanian identity with the Jewish Question (which seems unlikely in the public domain),²⁰⁶ the thickening racial discourse exonerated, rather than condemned, Romania. Heightened attitudes towards the Semitic other in wartime Britain facilitated understanding with its East European ally. This diminishment of the Romanian Jew as a credible national

²⁰³ Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of ‘the Jew’ in English Literature and society: Racial representations, 1875–1945*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp. xii, 8–9; David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: English Political Culture and Jewish Society, 1890–1914*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, pp. 28–47.

²⁰⁴ Fitzroy, *With the Scottish Nurses in Roumania*, pp. 61, 72–73, 150.

²⁰⁵ Frequent references were made regarding the Jews’ prolific presence. Gordon, *Roumania Yesterday and To-day*, p. 106; Fitzroy, *With the Scottish Nurses in Roumania*, p. 24.

²⁰⁶ English nurse Florence Farmborough wrote that she and her Red Cross unit arriving from Russia in 1917 were ‘surprised’ to discover ‘such a large community of Jews’ in Romania, suggesting that Romania’s Jewish Question was not common knowledge. F. Farmborough, *Nurse at the Russian Front: A diary 1914–18*, London, Constable, 1974, p. 299; G. M. Trevelyan, ‘Serbia Revisited’, *Contemporary Review*, Jan 1915, vol. 107, p. 273.

minority has implications for the positioning of Romanian identity within British discourse. Returning to Brubaker's nexus of competing nationalisms, which asserts that the national minority nationalism depends on an ability to portray the host nation as an oppressor, in the context of Romania's war this ability was undermined.²⁰⁷ The Romanian Jew was framed as the oppressor and the Romanian Kingdom, represented by its 'core nation' through the peasant, the oppressed. This distinction reversed previous framing of Romania as a cruel Eastern 'other', and instead positioned the country as a sympathetic vulnerable ally.

Bakić-Hayden reminds us of the 'project' aspect that defined West/East relations and Todorova is adamant that ultimately for all 'others', whether Balkan or otherwise, the West was the yardstick against which they judged themselves.²⁰⁸ However, the imperial constructs that underpinned these presumptions acquires additional nuance in British literature inspired by Romania during the war. If Britain was the higher 'culture' in the name of which these writers defined and excluded, it was also a culture rebuked for its relative complacency. Queen Marie started Romania's war wanting outsiders to learn to love the country that she had once found 'alien'. Within two years that sentiment hardened. Fitzroy wrote in 1918 'I wish that certain people living securely in a certain island could see a country in retreat ... [I]t is not a pretty sight but it's a very fine lesson.'²⁰⁹ Having used childlike referencing throughout her book, in the postscript Kennard decided Romania 'no longer required' leadership and help from foreigners. She committed fully to the idea of Romania's maturation through war, declaring 'we outsiders feel that we want to go home and tell the family of Allies that our little brother Roumania has grown into a man of whom we have reason to be very proud'.²¹⁰ This idea of national fruition was reinforced by Marie who, writing in Gordon's 1918 book, shifted her attention from the rustic peasant to the soldier peasant prepared to die for his queen. He had no face, no eyes, and wore blood-stained clothes but reiterated 'the same

²⁰⁷ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 5–6.

²⁰⁸ Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms', p. 917; Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10.

²⁰⁹ Queen of Roumania, *My Country*, pp. 5–6; Fitzroy, *With the Scottish Nurses in Roumania*, pp. 51–52.

²¹⁰ Kennard, *Roumanian Diary*, pp. 191–92.

brave words: “may the Great God protect you, may he let you live to become Empress””.²¹¹

This construct sees Romania’s identity conform to Jeismann’s conclusion that civil and ethnic definitions of nation-building alone prove insufficient when explaining national development during war.²¹² It was in the face of the enemy, surrounded by hostile others that Romanians learnt to sacrifice for queen and country. This flattering exposition of Romania’s ‘mass mobilisation’ was the crux of the message relayed in British discourse. Romania had transitioned from vulnerable and backward, to fulfil its ‘noble’ potential. That this change was imagined through predominantly female writing and experiences distanced Romania from prosaic masculine ideas that historiography has associated with the Balkans.²¹³ Ancient, sympathetic imagining worked to exempt Romania from military failure and unflattering comparisons with heroic Serbia, while demanding action and re-evaluation from Britain, the home of these projections. This new version of Romania, firmly rooted in a European heritage and guided by an English-born queen, complemented the bold political direction envisaged for a New Europe by those in Britain negotiating the last years of war, an idea that will be pursued in the next section.

4.3 Peace-planning, Greater Romania and a New Europe

In January 1917 influential wartime academics Arnold Toynbee and Alfred Zimmern recognised that ‘organised information will also be of the highest importance in the actual making of peace’.²¹⁴ This section will look at Britain’s emerging peace strategy with particular reference to Romania, an allied belligerent due to make considerable post-war territorial gains. It will identify a Romanian construct in British political discourse influenced by the thinking of Seton-Watson and his journal, *The New Europe*, which argued for a total war that would dismantle Austria-Hungary, replacing the threat of Pangermanism with a political framework of small nations in Central and Eastern Europe based on the principles of self-determination. Although this ambitious

²¹¹ Queen of Roumania, ‘A Queen and her People’, p. 152.

²¹² Jeismann, ‘Nation, Identity, Enmity’, p. 17.

²¹³ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 14–15.

²¹⁴ Cited in Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, p. 9.

nationalities project suited a coarsening British discourse focused on ethnicity as a primary national qualifier, it nonetheless required an image overhaul for the ‘cut-throats of Eastern Europe’.²¹⁵

This section will argue that in Romania’s case, as a country with a conflicted wartime record and a compromised political reputation, image overhaul was a complex process. It will identify Allen Leeper, one of a new breed of British academic-cum-government experts, as the man who assumed that task on Romania’s behalf. An examination of his war work will highlight the influence of *New Europe*-style ‘expertise’ in political representations of Romania, including his impact on public discourse, an area which recent analysis of wartime experts has tended to overlook.²¹⁶ That his knowledge of Romania partially depended on information sourced from Romanian politicians operating in London between 1916 and 1918 will highlight the complexities in national image-making, ill-served by presumed Western hegemony.²¹⁷ In the context of Brubaker’s competing nationalisms, these British and Romanian men added legitimacy to Romania’s national homeland narrative, framed against oppressive Magyar nationalism. They focused on Transylvania within a reformed Romanian kingdom, while the country’s Jewish minority agenda was compromised by the exigencies of war and increased intolerance in British thinking.²¹⁸ This section will demonstrate that the emerging political construct relied on ideas of Romania as a European nation with sufficiently vaunted racial heritage and political potential to shift its axis from an untrustworthy Eastern rubric into an imagined New Europe.

Prott identifies the role of ‘academic experts’ in the creation and application of ‘a publicly announced programme of national self-determination’ that was articulated by both Prime Minister Lloyd George and President Wilson in January 1918. However, he is heavily influenced by the American *Inquiry* team whose genesis was primarily academic, when he describes expertise as ‘a hybrid form of applied knowledge that is

²¹⁵ *Morning Post*, 23 Apr 1917.

²¹⁶ Prott overlooks the role of publicity: V. Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination: British, French and American experts in peace planning 1917–1919’, *Historical Journal*, 2014, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 727–50; Goldstein acknowledges the central role of the *New Europe* coterie in peace planning but his examination focuses on operations within government; Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*.

²¹⁷ Said is the leading proponent of this model: Said, *Orientalism*, 2003 edition.

²¹⁸ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–10.

located in the space that resides between science and politics'.²¹⁹ In wartime Britain, the role of campaigning journalism and propaganda continued to occupy a seminal place among a Pantheon of 'experts' led by Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed. Long before the establishment of the Intelligence Bureau in 1917, and its successor the Political Intelligence Department as a corollary to the Foreign Office in 1918, Seton-Watson continued his public championing of the minority nationalities within the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.²²⁰ In his reconception of post-war Europe he identified the nationalities within the Habsburg Empire providing a bulwark against what *New Europe* thinking identified as 'Pangermanism'- the close unification of Germany and Austria-Hungary and the eventual 'union of Central Europe and the Near East'.²²¹ Holding fast to his conviction that Britain had forgotten 'that the programme of nationality and the rights of small nations to control their destiny... if it means anything at all, involves the emancipation of the Slav nations of Austria-Hungary and their detachment from German control',²²² Seton-Watson maintained a prolific press campaign consisting of lectures, articles and books. He was the Honorary Secretary of the Serbian Relief Fund from 1914 and key to the establishment of what became London School of Slavonic and East European Studies in 1915. However, although Romania, with its sizeable minority in Hungary's Transylvania, fitted into his campaigning agenda, Seton-Watson prioritised the Czecho-Slovak and Southern Slav causes.

Bakić-Hayden has convincingly argued that the construction of 'essences' is ultimately motivated by political (or other) power, thus demonstrating the 'force that cultural constructions have in directing human action'.²²³ The idea of the historic Czecho-Slovak nation suffocated by German designs, or the valorised Serbian nation's sacrifice for its peoples within the stranglehold of Austria-Hungary, were two constructs

²¹⁹ Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', pp. 728–32.

²²⁰ R. W. Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar: A study in the origins of the Great War*, London, Williams & Norgate, 1916, pp. 46–47.

²²¹ Tomáš Masaryk, 'Pangermanism and the Eastern Question', *The New Europe*, 16 Oct 1916, vol. 1, pp. 4–14; For a summary of the concept of Mittel-Europa in wartime German thinking and the responses it provoked on both sides, including some Romanians who were against entering the war and based their argument on a geopolitical counter-position of Russia and Central Europe, see Balázs Trencsényi, 'Central Europe', Mishkova, Diana & Trencsényi, Balázs, (eds), *European Regions & Boundaries, A Conceptual History*, New York: Oxford: Berghahn, 2017, pp.167–69.

²²² Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar*, pp.46–47.

²²³ Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms', p. 930.

Seton-Watson was well known for promoting. While Bakić-Hayden identifies ‘nesting variants’ within Yugoslavia (Europe, Asia, Balkans, Christian, Muslim), in Seton-Watson’s book, *German, Slav and Magyar*, he employed cultural differentiation to highlight both the fledgling nature of nationhood in Central and Eastern Europe and the discrepancies within it, citing the superior qualities of the Slavs in comparison with their Magyar overlords.²²⁴ Romania, which in early 1916 was still prevaricating about whether to join the war, was more or less excluded from this narrative. The country was a ‘Balkan’ other whose minority in Austria-Hungary could not claim a historic national precedent, as in the case of the Czechs, Croats and Poles. Instead, the Romanian Transylvanians relied on the idea of unification with the Kingdom of Romania, a county that unlike Serbia was yet to spill sacrificial blood for the Entente cause.²²⁵

After Romania committed to war, it remained complicated among the ‘nesting variants’ within the East and military failure compounded the problem. In late 1916 Seton-Watson was one of the few publicists prepared to speak out against the Allied failure to support their newest recruit’,²²⁶ but he did not have a role in the Romanian Relief Fund. His paucity of contacts within the Kingdom of Romania and Premier Brătianu’s ‘sphinx-like’ oriental reputation²²⁷ meant he had no obvious Romanian equivalent of Tomáš Masaryk, the Czech exile in London (and later the country’s first president) to work with. Masaryk gave the inaugural speech in 1915 at Seton-Watson’s newly opened School of Slavonic Studies in Kings College at the University of London

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 931; Seton-Watson, *German, Slav and Magyar*, p. 17.

²²⁵ When Transylvanian-born Romanian Moroianu arrived in 1918 London he was struck by Serbia’s efforts to popularise their territorial claims in British public opinion, occupying every diplomatic salon and taking tea with the editor of *The Times*. He also noted they had been in London since the beginning of the war. George Moroianu, *Legăturile noastre cu Anglia*, Cluj, 1923, p. 62.

²²⁶ Seton-Watson wrote in an unidentified broadsheet, ‘the whole question of Roumania’s entrance was bungled unspeakably ... It was nothing less than madness to allow the Roumanians to abandon neutrality and no criticism can be too severe for those responsible for prompting them’; newspaper clipping, 10 Dec 1916, SEW 3/7, UCL/SSEES; ‘The Conquest of Wallachia’, *The New Europe*, 30 Nov 1916, vol. 1, p. 222.

²²⁷ By the end of neutrality the term Sphinx was not only used to refer to the Romanian Premier Brătianu, but also the country, §2.2, p. 123.

and wrote the first article in Seton-Watson's journal, *The New Europe*, entitled 'Pangermanism and the Eastern Question'.²²⁸

However, it was Seton-Watson's publication of that weekly journal, *The New Europe*, from October 1916, with the declared aim of standing up for 'the rights of small nations',²²⁹ that offered a new space in British discourse for a positive interpretation of Romania's claims. Privately funded, the journal provided a platform for Seton-Watson's conviction that the liberation of 'Slavs, Roumanians and Czecho-Slovaks from foreign domination' would only be possible as 'the result of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary'.²³⁰ *The New Europe* 'was "Wilsonian" long before Wilson himself'.²³¹ Although it had an initial circulation of just over 4000, with an impressive range of contributors and boasting *The Times*'s Foreign Editor, Henry Wickham Steed, on its board, the publication was highly influential. A number of *The New Europe*'s British writers were recruited into political roles.²³² It received flattering reviews in the press and was commended for its use of foreign contributors, with three Romanians on the journal's initial list: 'Octavian Goga of the Roumanian Academy, Take Ionescu, Roumanian Minister without Portfolio, Professor Nicholas Iorga, Bucharest University'.²³³

²²⁸ Masaryk was appointed the Professor of Slavic Research at Kings College during the war. His speech was later printed in pamphlet form by a series, the first edition of which was dedicated to Seton-Watson: 'Foreign Series', vol. 2, *The Council for the Study of International Relations*, Jan 1916; Tomáš Masaryk, 'Pangermanism and the Eastern Question', *The New Europe*, 19 Oct 1916, vol. 1, pp. 4–14.

²²⁹ As declared on a publicity pamphlet for *The New Europe*, SEW/2/2/1, UCL/SSEES. In an additional *New Europe* contribution, 'Pangermanism and the Zone of Small Nations', Masaryk outlined his 'ethnographic and cultural vision of Europe' and identified Romanians as one of ten nationalities inside an 'entirely artificial' Austria-Hungarian state. Tomáš Masaryk, *The New European*, 14 Dec 1916, vol. 1, pp. 271–7; For an annotated version of this essay see Alex Drace-Francis, *European Identity: A Historical Reader*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, pp. 163–67.

²³⁰ Leader article 'The Allies' Programme', *The New Europe*, 18 Jan 1917, vol. II, p. 5.

²³¹ Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: R. W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen, 1981, p. 193.

²³² Constable to Seton-Watson, 16 Oct 1916, SEW 2/2/1; Rex and Allen Leeper, James Headlam-Morley, Arnold Toynbee and Lewis Namier were *The New Europe* contributors who worked for the PID by 1918; Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, p. 118; reviews in the *Observer* and *Punch* featured in a pamphlet advertising *The New Europe*, SEW 2/2/1, UCL/SSEES.

²³³ Contributor List: *The New Europe*, 18 Oct 1917, vol. 5, p. 1; Letter of invitation to contribute to a publication with two aims: '1 La Victoire Integrale, 2 the prevention of

In *The New Europe* Seton-Watson sought to shape foreign policy at the highest level with his call for a ‘new era in Central Europe’ that demanded the dismantling of Austria-Hungary and the creation of a series of small nations.²³⁴ The job of identifying Romanian specifics within this projected New Europe was left to one of Seton-Watson’s disciples, Allen Leeper. The son of an Australian-based Victorian imperialist, with a brother, Rex Leeper, who was also part of the *New Europe* coterie, by 1916 Allen Leeper had left an academic post at the British Museum to work for the Propaganda Department in Wellington House. There he used his prolific knowledge of foreign languages to survey international newspapers, in particular the Balkan press.²³⁵ That same year Leeper met Seton-Watson:

our greatest authority on Hungarian and Jugo-Slav questions ... I had been dying to meet him for some time ... Seton-Watson knows everyone worth knowing in Hungarian, Serbo-Croatian, Rumanian and Czech political circles ... I was of course just like a child with him. And most of the little knowledge I have is based on his books ... I hope to see much more of him later and learn a lot more from him.²³⁶

Under the tutelage of Seton-Watson, Leeper adopted Romania as his specific cause. Of Romania’s entry into the war he wrote to his mentor: ‘I do not think that I ever saw a poster which gave me more pleasure than “Rumania declares war” on Monday last ... I sent you my article in the *New Statesman* ... It is of course simple propaganda as it seemed hardly the moment to be critical of our new ally.’²³⁷

Leeper’s Romanian role was formalised through his engagement with the British government’s wartime propaganda and peace planning, prioritised under Lloyd George. By 1917 both Seton-Watson and Leeper were part of an impressive team that worked

discord among the Allies’, Seton-Watson to Ionescu, 27 Oct 1916; Letter of invitation to contribution to his publication, Seton-Watson to Iorga, 27 Oct 1916, SEW/3/3/1, UCL/SSEES.

²³⁴ Leader article, ‘Wanted – A Foreign Policy’, *The New Europe*, 16 Dec 1916, vol. 1, pp. 257–69.

²³⁵ E. Goldstein (2004-09-23), ‘Leeper, (Alexander Wigram) Allen, (1887–1935)’, diplomatist, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy2.londonlibrary.co.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-40928>, accessed 16 July 2016.

²³⁶ Leeper to his father Alexander Leeper, 3 Feb 1916, Leeper 3/4. In his diary Leeper references meetings, lunches and dinners with Seton-Watson; Leeper Diaries, 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA.

²³⁷ Leeper to Seton-Watson, 5 Sep 1916, SEW 17/14/5, Seton-Watson Papers, UCL/SSEES.

for the Department of Information's Intelligence Bureau.²³⁸ In March 1918 the majority of them moved to 'a new Political Intelligence Department' absorbed 'into the central machinery of the Foreign Office'. 'This 'Ministry of all Talents' under the direction of Sir William Tyrell was 'frequently shown papers and invited to comment before action was taken'.²³⁹ Seton-Watson, wary of Foreign Office control, refused to join the PID, opting instead for Lord Northcliffe's Propaganda Department in Crewe House, but Leeper, by now Britain's leading Romania 'expert', was an integral member of the department and ideally placed to influence government thinking and public discourse.²⁴⁰

Goldstein identifies the PID's most important activity as the 'preparation of special reports on the political situation in a wide variety of states'.²⁴¹ Three were written about Romania: 'Memorandum on the Bessarabian Question and the Act of Union with Rumania' which addressed Romania's unanticipated expansion eastwards in the wake of Russia's withdrawal from the war. The 'Memorandum on Conversations with Two Transilvanian Leaders' focused on the heralded Transylvanian Irredenta and 'Memorandum on the Meaning and Effect of the Bucharest "Peace Treaty"' defined Romania in the face of Germany's rapacious 'peace'.²⁴² However, the PID enjoyed a reach beyond the confines of reports, influencing both political decision-making and public debate. Leeper's was often the final word on Foreign Office dispatches concerning Romania²⁴³ and when accused of publicly divulging details of the Secret Treaty that brought Romania into the war, the Foreign Secretary defended him.²⁴⁴ In a

²³⁸ H. Nicholson, 'Allen Leeper', *Nineteenth Century*, July–Dec 1935, vol. 118, pp. 473–83.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 478.

²⁴⁰ J. R. Poynter, *Doubts and Certainties: A life of Alex Leeper*, Carlton South, Melbourne University Press, 1997, p. 381; *Sir James Headlam-Morley: A memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, ed. Agnes Headlam-Morley, Russell Bryant and Anna Cienciala, London, Methuen, 1972, pp. xx–xxi.

²⁴¹ Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, p. 63.

²⁴² Rumania/001, PID, pp. 2–5; Rumania/003, PID, pp. 7–11; Rumania/002, pp. 13–17, FO371/4367, TNA.

²⁴³ Leeper opposed the retrocession of part of South Dobrodgea to Bulgaria, and although Hardinge had reservations, he backed Leeper's plan; FO notes on dispatch from a Charge de Affaires re a letter from Central National Council of Dobrudjea, 25 Nov 1918, FO371/3160, TNA.

²⁴⁴ *The Nation*, 25 May 1918; MP Richard Lambert asked the Foreign Secretary 'whether he is aware that an official in the Foreign Office ... has recently been writing ... on a treaty with Roumania'. Extract from Parliamentary Debate, 20 June 1918, filed in FO notes, 28 June 1918, 114608, FO371/3157, TNA.

Commons exchange Balfour described Leeper's role as 'a member of one of the special organisations ... created during the war with a view to meeting special needs'. Leeper was permitted to write a follow-up article reiterating his defence of Romania's 1916 territorial claims.²⁴⁵ Two month later in July 1918, Tyrrell produced a document outlining the exceptional permission granted to members of the PID to write for the press, based on the need to 'build up sound public opinion, and this can only be done by providing to the educated and interested members of public full information'.²⁴⁶

One of Leeper's earlier articles in the *New Statesman* 'made a good impression' on the Romanian delegation in London and led to closer collaboration between the two groups.²⁴⁷ By March 1917 Leeper was writing a short promotional book – *The Justice of Rumania's Cause* – for which he received help from 'Prince Antonie [*sic*] Bibescu', the First Secretary of the Romanian Legation.²⁴⁸ The importance of academic networks, including the transnational exchange of information, in particular between the British and the Americans, has been recognised, but experts' relations with foreign nationals from smaller allied countries is less well-served.²⁴⁹ This oversight is indicative of a broader Western bias in the interpretation of national constructs. The idea of Eastern 'submission' to Western ideas is inadequate in the context of wartime exchange.²⁵⁰ Leeper did not visit Romania during the war, despite his keenness to go there.²⁵¹ He was dependent on Romania's London-based elite for much of his information about the country. Sherman Spector noted Premier Brătianu's awareness of the need for good

²⁴⁵ Extract from Parliamentary Debate, *ibid.* In his diary Leeper noted that he 'wrote an answer to *The Nation* and got it past Tyrrell and Nicolson', and 'more discussion of my *Nation* letter with Nicolson'; Leeper Diaries, 27, 28 May 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA; *The Nation*, 8 June 1918.

²⁴⁶ Leeper's articles were listed, including anonymous material he supplied to the *Manchester Guardian* about Romania; Sir William Tyrrell, 'On the permission given to members of the PID to write for the press', pp. 202–11, FO371/4366, TNA.

²⁴⁷ Leeper to Alexander Leeper, 7 Sep 1916, 3/4, AWAL, CA.

²⁴⁸ A. W. A. Leeper, *The Justice of Rumania's Cause*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1917; Leeper to Madre (Stepmother), 21 Feb 1917, 3/5, AWAL, CA.

²⁴⁹ Fairly consistent communication was maintained with the American *Inquiry* team, but correspondence between the French and British expert teams was almost non-existent and a central committee between the three never materialised; Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', pp. 741–42.

²⁵⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

²⁵¹ A prospective trip never materialised. Leeper did not visit Romania until 1919; Leeper to Alexander Leeper, 20 June 1917, 3/5, AWAL, CA.

overseas publicity²⁵² and with a ruling class educated in the capitals of Western Europe, Romania had scope to choose well. Leeper was impressed by ‘wonderful’ multilingual Romanian Ambassador Nicolae Mișu,²⁵³ and developed a firm friendship with Bibescu. By 1918 the two men had met at least 26 times.²⁵⁴ Leeper enjoyed Bibescu’s impressive social circle and his house in Windsor.²⁵⁵

By August 1918 Leeper was anticipating the arrival of Anglophile Irredentist Take Ionescu; hailed as the former ‘vice president’ of Romania, Ionescu’s virtues were extolled in *The Times*.²⁵⁶ (Although Brătianu did not share Ionescu’s staunchly pro-Entente views, aware of his popularity in the West, he did endorse the latter’s trip there in 1918.²⁵⁷) By September 1918 two leading Romanian Transylvanians, Octavian Goga and Sever Bocu, had also arrived in London and wrote a memorandum on Romania with Leeper.²⁵⁸ In Northcliffe’s Propaganda Department Seton-Watson was joined by his Romanian friend George Moroianu, who had been tasked by the Romanian Government to oversee issues concerning the Romanians in Austria-Hungary.²⁵⁹ Hroch argues that all national movements depend on the ‘external factor’, primarily in the support they receive from neighbours and Great Powers.²⁶⁰ United for the first time through a common allied cause, Romania was quick to capitalise on that ‘external factor’ in Britain.

²⁵² Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 56–58.

²⁵³ Leeper to Alexander Leeper, 29 Nov 1916, 3/4, AWAL, CA.

²⁵⁴ Leeper Diary, 1918, 1/1, *ibid*.

²⁵⁵ Leeper to Alexander Leeper, 21 Sep 1917, 3/5, *ibid*.; Bibescu was in the social circle of the former Liberal Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, whose daughter he married in early 1919.

²⁵⁶ Leeper Diary, 31 July 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA; *The Times*, 26 July, 3 Aug 1918.

²⁵⁷ Ionescu entered Brătianu’s wartime government in November 1916 as Minister without Portfolio; he became Vice-President in June 1917. When Romania capitulated he left the government and visited the Allied capitals, arriving in Paris and London July/Aug 1918. Anastasie Iordache, *Take Ionescu*, București, Editura Mica Valahie, 2001, pp. 221–50; Constantin Xenii gives an account of his 1918 movements in Paris and London: C. Xenii, *Take Ionescu*, București, Tritonic, 2004, pp. 169–203.

²⁵⁸ ‘Memorandum on Conversations with Two Transylvanian Leaders’, 25 Sep 1918, PID, FO371/4367, TNA.

²⁵⁹ Moroianu arrived in London in May 1918, Moroianu, *Legăturile noastre cu Anglia*, pp. 73–4, 76–80.

²⁶⁰ M. Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, nationalism, social change*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007, p. 80.

Pratt is concerned with the possibilities and perils of travel writing in what she calls ‘contact zones’ – ‘that is social spaces where disparate cultures meet’. She argues that while the ‘imperial metropole tends to imagine itself as determining the periphery ... it habitually blinds itself to the reverse dynamic’.²⁶¹ During the war that ‘contact zone’ was London and at a time when information about and access to Romania were restricted, Romanians had considerable influence over the creation of their country’s image. Their elite entertained a young man employed by the British government to represent Romania and its Irredentist ambitions. Leeper’s treatment of enemy Bulgaria provides a useful counterpoint. Minus a Bulgarian colony in London to convince him otherwise, and disparaging of the country’s former British champions, Leeper frequently wrote critical articles about Bulgaria and was in charge of compiling regular dossiers against the country.²⁶²

Evidenced in his memorandums, correspondence and articles, Leeper’s thinking regarding Romania mirrored Seton-Watson’s preoccupation with the liberation of the Habsburg nationalities. In October 1916 Seton-Watson wrote about ‘The Rumanians of Hungary’ in *The New Europe* and their subjected status at the hands of the ‘vampire’ Magyars.²⁶³ In the *New Statesman* and the *Westminster Gazette* Leeper also focused on this minority, with Romania identified through a prospective racial union with their Transylvanian kinsmen. ‘Every Rumanian soldier as he crosses the Carpathians knows he crosses them on a crusade of liberation.’²⁶⁴ Leeper argued that Romania’s westerly minority were ‘some of the most vigorous and progressive portions of a race’ who had benefited from competition with ‘energetic neighbours’. These men would ‘bring to

²⁶¹ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, pp. 7–8.

²⁶² Leeper frequently referred to working on Bulgarian propaganda and by 1918 this was done under the auspices of the Foreign Office; Leeper Diary, 2 Apr, 1, 15 May 1918, 1/1. In a letter to his father Leeper noted that pro-Bulgarian Bouchier at *The Times* ‘ought to be hanged’. Leeper to Alexander Leeper, 2 Mar 1916, Leeper 3/4, AWAL, CA. In Leeper’s first article for *The New Europe* written under the pseudonym Belisarius, ‘The Russian Revolution and the Balkans’, he extolled the potential for reform in Romania and simultaneously denigrated Bulgaria for wanting hegemony over its neighbours. After April 1917 Belisarius frequently attacked Bulgaria: *The New Europe*, 19 Apr, vol. 3, pp. 16–21, 19 July, vol. 4, pp. 16–18, 25 Oct 1917, vol. 5, pp. 56–57, 18 July 1918, vol. 8, pp. 4–5.

²⁶³ Seton-Watson, ‘The Rumanians of Hungary’, *The New Europe*, 19 Oct 1916, vol. 1, pp. 20–27.

²⁶⁴ *New Statesman*, 2 Sep 1916; *Westminster Gazette*, 4 Sep 1916.

Rumania the vitalising force that only democratic feeling and education can give'.²⁶⁵

This idea of an oppressed educated Transylvanian minority was reiterated in a 1918 PID memorandum, when Goga spoke of Hungary's suppression of Transylvanian Romania's educational and Christian organisations.²⁶⁶ The 1918 unification of the Russian province Bessarabia with Romania was also the subject of a PID memorandum, in which reservations about Romania's conduct in the region and concerns regarding the union among the 'non-Romanian population, in particular the Jews', were expressed.²⁶⁷ However, although the annexation of Bessarabia involved over 1.6 million inhabitants including 1 million Romanians, Leeper rarely mentioned Romania's eastern acquisition from a discredited Russia.²⁶⁸ This omission reinforced the idea of a Western-facing Greater Romania.

The moderate tone of the PID's memorandums was very different from the few reports the Foreign Office received about Romania. In those, the country's capacity was doubted, both militarily where 'methods more closely resembled AD 1800', and more generally: 'it is impossible that any nation can be so utterly incapable as the Roumanians appear to be'.²⁶⁹ But these reservations were secondary to Britain's political agenda for a new post-war Europe. In January 1918 Lloyd George had recognised that 'national self-determination' was to be a general principle in the Allied peace terms; five days later in Wilson's 14 points, the American President acknowledged the need for 'genuine self-government on true democratic principles' for the nationalities of Austria-Hungary.²⁷⁰ That the Entente's war aims increasingly dovetailed with Seton-Watson's thesis for a New Europe and the Irredentist ambitions

²⁶⁵ *New Statesman*, *ibid.*

²⁶⁶ 'Memorandum on Conversations with two Transilvanian Leaders', 25 Sep 1918, PID, Rumania 003, p. 8, FO371/4367, TNA.

²⁶⁷ 'Memorandum on the Bessarabian Question and the Act of Union with Rumania', 12 Aug 1918, PID, Rumania 001, pp. 2–8, *ibid.*

²⁶⁸ An exception was an article under Leeper's pseudonym Belisarius, anticipating Bessarabian relations with the 'Roumanian Mother-country, there can be no doubt that they must become closer and closer'; Belisarius 'The Bessarabian Question', *New Europe*, 10 Jan 1918, vol.5, pp. 405–11.

²⁶⁹ Report on the General Situation in Roumania by Major J F Neilson, 10th Hussars, 24 Feb 1917, pp. 216, 221; Colonel Norton-Griffiths, who was sent to Romania to destroy the oil fields in late 1916, also filed a highly critical report; 14 Mar 1917, 169, FO371/2880, TNA.

²⁷⁰ Three of Wilson's 14 Points concerned Austria-Hungary, Italy and the Balkans; see H. and C. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, p. 243.

of the Romanians in London, served to validate the selective parameters of Leeper's Romanian construction in British discourse.

Five Romanians, including two Transylvanians, attended the 'almost semi-official' Rome Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in May 1918 (an Entente gathering that Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed were 'instrumental in organising')²⁷¹ and in April 1918 Leeper travelled to Paris to meet France's Romanian contingent. In his diary he noted that heated arguments with significant players including Pavel Brătesănu, former president of France's prestigious Romanian Academy and proprietor of *La Roumanie*, yielded results. 'We finally got our idea of a new non-party democratic Rumania into their heads.'²⁷² Although Leeper was dependent on Romanians for his information about the country, the smaller Eastern ally had to pay lip service to Leeper's prioritising of a Western nationality model for their imagined Romania. This construction conformed to Leeper's 'determination to secure for all nations the free choice to secure their own destiny'. His modus operandi credited Britain with a supervisory role over a new Romania in a confirmation of Said's recognition of the West 'dominating and restructuring' through representations of the East.²⁷³

To develop Anglo-Romanian relations Leeper helped established an Anglo-Romanian Society in August 1917.²⁷⁴ Its membership included Liberal MP A H Whyte (who temporarily replaced Seton-Watson as the editor of *The New Europe* in May 1917) and Lord Bryce, well-known historian, radical, and the first President of the Balkan Committee, as well as several Romanians including Ambassador Mișu and the academic Mitrany.²⁷⁵ By July 1918 the Anglo-Romanian Society shared a stage with Serbian, Italian and Hellenic equivalents in the House of Commons.²⁷⁶ In August 1917, just after Romania's unexpected military come-back at Mărășești, Leeper outlined the

²⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 264–65.

²⁷² Leeper Diary, 28 Apr 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA.

²⁷³ *The Times*, 27 Aug 1917.

²⁷⁴ Leeper mooted the idea of improved Anglo-Romanian relations a year earlier; *New Statesman*, 2 Sep 1916; the Society was announced in *The Times* on the anniversary of Romania's entry into the war; *The Times*, 27 Aug 1917.

²⁷⁵ Leeper notes, undated, 3/35, AWAL, CA; Wolf persuaded Mitrany to join the Committee as 'a pledge of the desire of the British Jew to assist in every possible way an ally of this country'. He also suggested it was a means of ensuring funds were distributed to all 'races and creeds' in Romania. Wolf to Mitrany, 21 Mar 1917, E3/173/2, ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA.

²⁷⁶ Leeper Diary, 17 July 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA.

organisation's aspirations.²⁷⁷ He insisted Britain must come out of its 'splendid isolation' and help this nation which was committed to agrarian, electoral and Jewish reform. He anticipated a 'future of intellectual, social, economic and political cooperation'.²⁷⁸ In 1916 when the Czech exile, Professor Masaryk, delivered his lecture at Kings College's new School of Slavonic Studies he observed 'there is a striking difference' between nationhood in the East and West of Europe, with the former consisting of many racial fragments and lacking the latter's nation-state coherence.²⁷⁹ In Leeper's imagined Romania, the racial 'fragment' in Transylvania provided the oppressed ethnic narrative that legitimised Romania's nation-building project, with Britain's guidance needed for the purpose of improved civic development.

Brubaker's model for reframing nationalism is instructive in terms of explicating Leeper's nation-building efforts. Romania's Transylvanian minority gifted Romania a homeland nationalism that was elevated above Romania's other national identities and served to further denigrate enemy Hungary.²⁸⁰ In Britain, a wartime focus on national legitimacy and race supported this agenda, with Leeper insisting that 'the sole criterion of nationality worth respecting is that of the consciousness of a certain origin or tradition. This the Rumans of Hungary possess very strongly.'²⁸¹ Again the ubiquitous appeal of Smith's ethno-symbolism is apparent, with Romania's blend of two exemplary races – the Dacians and the Romans – considered sufficient to justify union with their kinsmen in Hungary. Juxtaposed against this notion of racial purity and ancient heritage was the Magyar's history as interlopers and oppressors. 'We have seen that there are few better instances of a clear cut issue between right and wrong, justice

²⁷⁷ Leeper noted that he spoke well about 'Anglo-Roumanian relations' at a Women's Club in front of 90 people; Leeper to Stepmother Madre, 27 Sep 1917. He was planning a big inaugural meeting for the Society at the Mansion House; Leeper to his father, 21 Nov 1917, 3/35, AWAL, CA.

²⁷⁸ In notes on a speech for the Society Leeper observes there were previously no relations between Britain and Roumania but that the time was ripe to change this. Undated (probably late 1917 as referred to Battle of Mărășești and how 'this Roumanian army is in fine form'), 3/35, AWAL, CA.

²⁷⁹ Speech reproduced in 'Foreign Series', vol. 2, *The Council for the Study of International Relations*, Jan 1916.

²⁸⁰ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 3–10.

²⁸¹ Leeper, *The Justice of Rumania's Cause*, p. 7.

and injustice, oligarchic tyranny and democratic aspirations than between the Magyar rulers and the Ruman oppressed subjects of Eastern Hungary.²⁸²

However, despite the overwhelming focus on Romania's Transylvanians, concerns persisted over the reputation of the Entente's newest ally, particularly in relation to Romania's Jewish Question and the views of neutral America.²⁸³ In January 1917 the *New York World* raged that the Entente 'contemplate the seizure of territory that never belonged to Italy or Roumania in order to pay bribes that these two eminently sordid governments exacted as their price for entering the war'.²⁸⁴ Writing to Seton-Watson the next day, Leeper argued it was vital to 'get this Rumania question straight for the American public'. Avoiding any reference to Romania's long-standing Jewish issue, Leeper outlined the need to emphasise 'the gross inequalities and injustice the Transylvanian Rumans suffer and the impossibility of any proper settlement of these except by union with the Kingdom'. In a validation of Hroch's and Jessiman's assertion of the role of the oppressor or enemy in national identity, he again took the idea of the Transylvanian Romanians as both oppressed and democratically advanced to encourage Seton-Watson to invert the idea of 'sordid government' away from the Romanians and onto the Hungarians through a press campaign in America.²⁸⁵

In Britain, the Conjoint Jewish Committee's efforts to keep Romania's Jewish Question alive in the Foreign Office had been complicated by war and a rival Zionist cause. A belief that Jews were behind the Bolshevik Revolution, combined with fears that Russia would pull out of the conflict led to the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 which recognised the idea of a Jewish state in Jerusalem. Russian-born Jew Chaim Weizmann's successful presentation of the Jewish Question as an issue of national self-

²⁸² Ibid., p. 15.

²⁸³ America had long been critical over the Entente's alliance with Russia. The influence Britain exercised over Russia to prevent Jewish genocide in 1915 was designed to placate American opinion. M. Levene, 'The Enemy Within? Armenians, Jews, the military crises of 1915 and the genocidal origins of the "Minorities Questions"', in H. Ewence and T. Grady (eds), *Minorities and the First World War: From war to peace*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 143–64.

²⁸⁴ *New York World*, 12 Jan 1917, cited in Leeper, *The Justice of Rumania's Cause*, p. 3.

²⁸⁵ Leeper to Seton-Watson, 13 Jan 1917, SEW /17/14/5, UCL/SSEES; Hroch, 'From National Movement to Fully-Fledged Nation', pp. 3–20; Jeismann, 'Nation, Identity and Enmity', pp. 17–27.

determination with a territorial solution,²⁸⁶ publicly endorsed by Zionists and anti-Semitic commentators alike,²⁸⁷ was a blow to Lucien Wolf's assimilation ambitions for Romania's large Jewish minority. That Moses Gaster, President of the Roumanian Jewish Association, focused his efforts on Weizmann's Zionist cause was a loss for those championing improved rights for Jews in Romania.²⁸⁸

The Zionist issue compounded the ambiguous attitude of the British government towards Romania's Jewish Question. Leeper acknowledged that 'in spite of the stipulations of the Treaty of Berlin, the Rumanian government refused to facilitate for Jews the acquisition of citizenship', but was quick to conflate King Ferdinand's December 1916 promise of agrarian and electoral reform with anticipated emancipation of the Jews. 'There is not the faintest doubt that agrarian and franchise reform will be followed by relief for the Jews.'²⁸⁹ Here, it is again instructive to refer to Brubaker's identification of the national minority nationalism needing to both assert itself in the face of the host state as well as construct the idea of the latter as oppressive.²⁹⁰ Neither was permissible in a war that required Britain to burnish its Romanian ally. This was particularly the case after the Russian Revolution when Leeper publicly identified Romania as 'a smaller, less developed state, monarchical' and 'non-socialist'.²⁹¹ Keen to play down the impact of losing Russia and possibilities of contagion, Romania was defined as a reliable counter to its giant neighbour's otherness, in an Eastern region where the two countries' identities had previously been conflated.

Leading British Jew, Lucien Wolf, believed he enjoyed the support of the Foreign Office, describing Leeper as 'a personal friend of mine'. This optimism was

²⁸⁶ For an effective analysis of Jewish Irredentist claims on the grounds of historical and religious significance see Hedva Ben-Israel Kidron, 'Irredentism: Nationalism re-examined', in N. Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, Twickenham, Adamantine, 1991.

²⁸⁷ Particularly instructive is Liebich's analysis of Wickham Steed's Zionism. As Foreign Editor of *The Times* he ensured the paper was fully supportive of the Zionist position. Andre Liebich, 'The Anti-Semitism of Henry Wickham Steed', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 2012, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 187–93.

²⁸⁸ Gaster to Weizmann, 7 May 1917, Box 49, 3/C/3 (4). As President of the Roumanian Jewish Association Gaster wrote to Romanian Jews in Britain drawing their attention to the plight of their co-religionists; Memorandum, 6 July 1917, Box 51, 3/E, MGP, UCL/SC.

²⁸⁹ Leeper, *The Justice of Rumania's Cause*, pp. 19–21.

²⁹⁰ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 64.

²⁹¹ Leeper, 'Roumania in Extremis', *The New Europe*, 14 Feb 1918, vol. 6, pp. 131–37.

misplaced.²⁹² Although Leeper was not hostile towards the Jews, he was the devoted disciple of Seton-Watson, a pronounced anti-Semite.²⁹³ (Seton-Watson's blind-spot regarding Romania's Jewish Question mirrored an increasingly truculent anti-Semitism in official British thinking.²⁹⁴) Leeper and Wolf met in London, but Wolf was not described in the warm terms reserved for Romania's delegates.²⁹⁵ The assimilationist version of civic nationalism championed by Wolf made little headway in the face of ethnic Romania's charm offensive. Leeper took Ionescu's blithe public assurance that 'the Jewish question will be settled in Rumania in the broadest possible way' at face value. When repeatedly confronted with Wolf's fears regarding pogroms, Leeper observed 'Mr Take Ionescu's plan appears eminently reasonable and the best way out of the difficulty.'²⁹⁶ In contrast, Wolf identified the problematic aspects in Ionescu's commitment to the principle of Romanian nationality for Romania's Jews, an issue that was usurped when chauvinistic Liberal Party leader, Brătianu, returned to power in

²⁹² Wolf to Sir Stuart Samuel / Claude Montefiore, 13 Sep 1918, C11/4/1/6, ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA. For Levene's comprehensive analysis of Wolf's efforts in wartime Romania see Mark Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe: The diplomacy of Lucien Wolf, 1914–1919*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 249–61.

²⁹³ As well as his published comments noted in §2.2.1, pp.131–32, Seton-Watson's archive is peppered with anti-Semitic comment. E.g. in his letter warning of pogroms in Budapest, Jews were 'the rich middlemen and war profiteers, the small shop-keeping class and the freebooters who are now in control, but have taken care to send abroad large sums for their own use'. He was wary of Jewish involvement in high finance: 'I would put it to those international cryptic elements which are at least credited with so much influence behind the scenes' to do something. Seton-Watson to Headlam-Morley, 26 May 1919, SEW/17/9/3. He was identified as prone to anti-Semitic thought; *Justice*, 29 July 1915. The wife of Conjoint member Lord Swaythling cancelled her *The New Europe* subscription 'owing to the anti-Semitic tendency of the paper'; Lady Swaythling to Seton-Watson, 16 Jan 1920, SEW 2/3/5, UCL/SSEES.

²⁹⁴ Writing about a pogrom in Russia, the Director of Military Intelligence added, 'I'm no champion of the chosen race.' Director of Military Intelligence to Under Secretary FO, 16 Jan 1917, FO 371/3003; Ambassador Barclay emphasised the Jews' shifting loyalties in wartime Romania; Barclay to FO, 17 Dec 1918, 385, FO371/3160, TNA; 'Anti-Jewish stereotypes were reshaped, linking already prevalent stereotypes of Jews as "aliens" and "Germans" with a new one as Bolsheviks' by the end of the war in Britain. Sarah Panter, 'Between Friends and Enemies: The dilemma of the Jews in the final stages of the war', in Ewence and Grady (eds), *Minorities and the First World War*, p. 74.

²⁹⁵ Leeper Diary, 20 Sep, 1 Oct 1918, 1/1, AWAL, CA.

²⁹⁶ Take Ionescu interviewed by the *Morning Post* on Romania's Jewish Question. The interview was noted by the Foreign Office. *Morning Post*, 29 Nov 1918, in FO file 380; Wolf missives to Foreign Office 27, 28 Nov 1918, in which he referred to a letter sent to Leeper on 18 Nov 1918 and another report sent 21 Oct 1918; Leeper note on Wolf's 28 Nov 1918 report, 7 Dec 1918, 196427, FO371/3160, TNA.

November 1918.²⁹⁷ Leeper remained optimistic: ‘it may be conjecture that it will be found absolutely impossible to arrive at any agreement with Mr Brătianu over the question of the Jews who entirely distrust him’ and he continued to believe the matter would be solved by a ‘spontaneous’ settlement, urging Wolf to be satisfied with the Romanian decree-law as late as February 1919.²⁹⁸

The pressure to downplay the Jewish Question in Britain’s official representations of Romania is evident in the work of Romanian-born Jew Mitrany. As discussed in Chapter 2, Mitrany minimised the Jewish Question during Romania’s neutrality. Likewise, in 1918 with a job in the British government’s Historical Section writing the official history of Romania for the Peace Conference, he apportioned some of the country’s long-term inflexibility over the enfranchisement of their Jews to German Chancellor Bismarck’s commercial back-channelling.²⁹⁹ By defining Romania as the paradigmatic other to encroaching, sinister German power, Mitrany evaded a compromising analysis of Romanian politics. That he was simultaneously maintaining a private correspondence with Wolf regarding improved Jewish rights makes this dissembling tactic particularly noteworthy.³⁰⁰

Leeper’s convenient disregard of the Jewish Question was paralleled by the faith he persuaded the Foreign Secretary to place in Ionescu’s ‘National Council of Roumanian Unity’ which boasted two vice-presidents from Transylvania. Leeper argued

²⁹⁷ Wolf had several interviews with Ionescu during the summer/autumn 1918, concluding the results were ‘not as satisfactory as I had hoped’. In December Wolf was visited by a member of FO explaining that Brătianu’s reinstatement as prime minister meant the Jewish Question would have to be left to the Peace Conference; Wolf’s communications with Take Ionescu 10 Aug, 18 Sep, 7 Oct 1918; Wolf Minutes for the Conjoint Committee; Wolf meeting with FO Secret Service Mr M, Memorandum 5 Dec 1918 to Conjoint Committee. E3/173/4, ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA.

²⁹⁸ Leeper Note on Derby dispatch concerning the Jews in Romania, 9 Dec 1918, 202830, FO371/3141; Leeper Note on dispatch regarding Romania’s degree-law regarding Jewish Question, 23 Jan 1919, 6132, FO371/3586, TNA. For an analysis of the deliberations which took place between Wolf and Leeper see Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 261.

²⁹⁹ Rumania, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, December 1918, pp. 34–35, FO373/2/6, TNA. For more on the role of the Historical Section and Peace Books see Goldstein, *Planning the Peace*, pp. 30–47.

³⁰⁰ Privately Mitrany kept Wolf up to date on Romanian news and argued that Wolf was too quick to agree with the Foreign Office’s dismissal of the German Treaty of Bucharest which went some way to alleviating the predicament of the Jews; Mitrany to Wolf, no date, presumably late 1918, C11/4/1/6, ACC 3121, BDBJ, LMA.

it 'was the first body ever successfully formed to represent the aspirations of the Roumanian race as a whole', Balfour told Ionescu how pleased he was to enter relations with both the man and his organisation³⁰¹ and Moroianu observed that the Council was the main body with whom the Allies discussed Romanian claims until the opening of the Peace Conference.³⁰² This willingness to believe in a Greater Romanian narrative which disregarded the existence of separate competing nationalisms would undermine Britain's ability to understand the motivations of an assertive Romanian Kingdom under Brătianu's leadership at the Peace Conference. Brubaker's nexus of nationalisms identifies homeland nationalism in 'mutually antagonistic' competition with a rival country's nationalising nationalism.³⁰³ However, in Romania dominant wartime representations of an external homeland narrative focused on a feted minority in Hungary had served to diminish ideas of Romania as an oppressive nationalising nation in British discourse. Hobbled by its dependency on a handful of Romanian émigrés in London and the need to believe in expedient political solutions, Britain was tuned in to just one version of Romanian identity.

Scant information was forthcoming from wartime Romania,³⁰⁴ and that which did arrive from the British Ambassador was disregarded. Barclay warned that Premier Brătianu was disparaging about Ionescu and thought his National Council would soon become a 'superfluous body'. He insisted that Brătianu, who was 'far superior to him [Ionescu] as a statesman, is as I have often said the only man who could have brought the King to take our side in war and it would be unfair to deny him his place at Congress'.³⁰⁵ The Foreign Office dismissed these comments, assumed Barclay was in Brătianu's 'pocket' and believed the latter's Liberal government was only transitional, and that possibly 'Take Ionescu will succeed it. He has more support in the country than Brătianu.' Leeper added that Barclay's telegram regarding the National Council was 'extraordinary' and perhaps 'not serious', pointing out the close contact they had with

³⁰¹ Ionescu's memo on the National Council, sent by Leeper to FO, 2 Nov 1918, 385; Ionescu to Balfour, 'The National Council of Roumanian Unity', 7 Nov 1918; Balfour to Ionescu, 11 Nov 1918, 391; FO371/3141, TNA.

³⁰² Moroianu, *Legăturile noastre cu Anglia*, p. 63.

³⁰³ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 5.

³⁰⁴ *The Times* complained of the 'complete lack of Roumanian news' to the War Office and the Foreign Office conceded, 'We are not overburdened with news from Roumania.' War Dept to FO, 23 Nov 1918, 197509, FO371/3141, TNA.

³⁰⁵ Barclay to Foreign Office, 2 Dec and 8 Dec 1918, 540, *ibid*.

Ionescu and his standing among his countrymen, Transylvanians and neighbouring countries.³⁰⁶ A ‘statesman of special mark’,³⁰⁷ regularly held up as ‘that old friend of England’ and the unequivocal ‘European’ face of his country,³⁰⁸ Ionescu’s perceived legitimacy in the West explains British acceptance that a Greater Romania based on ethnic criteria would be capable of civic government.³⁰⁹ This imagined reality or ‘project’ conceived in Britain, acquired additional legitimacy because of the leading role played by Romanians. In an extension of Todorova’s claim that the East essentialised ideas of the West as a barometer against which to judge themselves, the Romanians in London modelled the civic potential of their own country on the expectations of their British allies in order to push their ethnic agenda.³¹⁰

Leeper was the recognised authority behind this construct. Initially under the tutelage of Seton-Watson, he became a devoted champion of the idea of a Greater Romania within New Europe. Consistently articulating his vision for Romania in the public domain, by 1918 Leeper was also the leading Balkan expert in the PID, writing the comprehensive report for that region with Under Secretary Nicolson ahead of the Peace Conference.³¹¹ The assertion of what was often little more than propaganda under the guise of expertise has been routinely overlooked in recent analysis of wartime experts that stress historical, political and scientific knowledge.³¹² Complicating ideas of Western domination in Eastern representations, wartime London was a contact zone where Romanians played a significant role in the crafting of Romania’s identity.³¹³ However, their influence was dependent on a willingness to promote an idea of Romania that conformed to British peace plans.

³⁰⁶ FO notes on Barclay dispatch, 2 Dec 1918, 198694, *ibid*.

³⁰⁷ Dillon, *Daily Telegraph*, 4 Jan 1913.

³⁰⁸ *Manchester Guardian*, 27 Aug 1916, *The Times*, 29 Aug 1916.

³⁰⁹ Even when his predictions about Romania entering the war failed to materialise, the British press held onto the idea that Ionescu was the political ‘face’ of Romania; *Manchester Guardian*, 27 Aug 1916, *The Times*, 29 Aug 1916.

³¹⁰ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 10.

³¹¹ Although Leeper publicly supported the 1916 Treaty claims, this report argued that ‘the frontiers of the new state [are] to be drawn as far as possible on ethical lines and not on those of the 1916 Treaty’; Leeper and Nicolson, ‘South-Eastern Europe and the Balkans’, 13 Dec 1918, p. 68, FO371/4355, TNA.

³¹² Prott, ‘Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination’, pp. 727–50; Tomás Irish, ‘Scholarly Identities in War and Peace: The Paris Peace Conference and the mobilisation of intellect’, *Journal of Global History*, 2016, vol. 11, pp. 365–86; Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 368–81.

³¹³ Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

That the British Government presumed the Romanian nationals they were working with had leverage in post-war Romania is evidenced in the Foreign Office's efforts, (with only partial success), to name their preferred men – Romania's Ambassador in London, Nicolae Mișu, and former member of Romania's wartime government, Take Ionescu – as the country's delegates in Paris.³¹⁴ From the comfort of their wartime 'contact zone', Britain willingly embraced the idea of the Romanian nation's maturation through war and unification, attributing disproportionate power to Romania's unredeemed West-facing Transylvanian population in a construct which chimed with the sympathetic projections of Romania's suitably English queen as 'Empress of all Roumanians'. But as Wolf was aware, just one version of the country had been propagated. Romania the European 'project', conceived and legitimised in the West would have to fit into a new framework dictated by the Great Powers at the Peace Conference, and compete with both its own Eastern alter ego and the nationalities which inhabited and surrounded it.

³¹⁴ Foreign Office to Barclay, Dec 1918, 532; Memo, Harold Nicolson, 2 Dec 1918, 198694; FO notes on Barclay dispatch, 8 Dec 1918, 201981, FO371/3141, TNA; Moroianu lamented that Take Ionescu was not part of the official Romanian delegation in Paris, Moroianu, *Legăturile cu Anglia*, p. 62.

Chapter 5

Romania and the Paris Peace Conference, 1919

Introduction

Re-entering the war in November 1918 with the ‘express purpose of benefiting from the Allies victory’, Romania’s use of force and undemocratic assemblies to lay claim to Bucovina, Transylvania and Bessarabia in the immediate aftermath of World War I, left the delegations convening in Paris at the beginning of 1919 in no doubt over the country’s territorial ambitions.¹ Here it will be argued that the presentation of Greater Romania as a *fait accompli* provided the Great Powers with a tempting solution for their goals of peace and stability in Central and Eastern Europe. However, the realities of Romanian chauvinism and unaccountable government demanded that the Conference tempered the latter’s overbearing approach, sometimes with dramatic results. This chapter will look at British interpretations of Romania in that first seminal year of the Conference and assess the fall out when Prime Minister Brătianu led his country’s demands for expansion both East and the West.

Brubaker wrote *Nationalism Reframed* with particular reference to the redrawing of political boundaries in Central and Eastern Europe after the war, but he does not focus on Romania.² This chapter will partially address that omission and use his nationalisms model to understand how Britain misread Romanian ambitions in 1919. It will employ Hroch’s three-stage model for the rise of nationalism to explain the impact of Queen Marie on Romanian imaging at the Peace Conference and suggest that the inclusive idea of Romania she projected, helped Britain ignore the political realities

¹ Fink argues that Romania was South East Europe’s most notorious example of a country trying to resolve its territorial and minority issues without external interference. Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and international minority protection*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 135.

² Brubaker occasionally references post-war Romania but his main cases studies are Poland and Weimar Germany; R. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 179–235.

which a consideration of Brubaker's analysis exposes.³ Through an assessment of these models, this chapter will demonstrate that Britain found itself wrong-footed when the civic pressures couched within Wilson's 14 points were juxtaposed against the stark reality of Romanian self-determination on the ground. To surmount this political problem and present an idea of Romania that chimed with the public appetite for geopolitical security and peace in Europe, it will argue that the British delegates continued to prioritise representations of Romania that identified the country through its newly acquired Transylvanian population.

Section 5.1 will identify the changing status of Romania's three nationalisms - 'nationalising nationalism', 'national minorities' nationalism' and an external 'homeland nationalism' - using Brubaker's model.⁴ It will argue that in the process of acquiring extensive new territories, Romania conformed to the chauvinistic, insecure qualities of Brubaker's nationalising nation distinction, where the state makes claims in the name of a core nation that is sharply distinguished from the citizenry as a whole.⁵ However, the propaganda pressures of war ensured that the British Foreign Office failed to anticipate the depth of Romania's preoccupation with border security and expansion. Instead they continued to identify the country through its pre-existing West-facing external homeland narrative that was focused on the Romanian nationality in Hungary and upon which Romania's war had been premised. This perspective allowed Britain to overestimate the country's capacity for future change.

To understand Britain's framing of Romania in 1919, §5.1 will look specifically at the characterisation of Ion I. C. Brătianu. Returning to power unelected in November 1918, the Liberal prime minister was renowned for his 'politics of national ego' and had staked his reputation on the territorial aggrandisement of Romania.⁶ Key Conference negotiators denigrated, even mocked, the Romanian leader, often refusing to accept that Brătianu represented the status quo in a country that had long proved resistant to democratic change. This section will draw on the arguments in Naomi Chazan's

³ Miroslav Hroch, 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The nation-building process in Europe', *New Left Review*, 1993, 193, pp. 3–20.

⁴ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 4–5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶ Brătianu's 'politica egoismului național', an expression he first coined in a letter to the Italian ambassador in 1914, was the hallmark of his foreign policy. For more on his external politics and political chauvinism see Ion Novăcescu, *Ion I. C. Brătianu și opțiunea occidentală a României*, București, Mesagerul, 1996, pp. 54–92.

Irredentism and International Politics which acknowledge the possible fluidity of Irredentism in specific contexts.⁷ It will suggest that the British delegation in Paris, aware that the nation-building process in Romania was in transition, naively attributed too much power to the Romanian population in Transylvania, whilst failing to comprehend Brătianu's significance and his motivations. In contrast, the majority of the British press – derided as jingoistic by at least one member of the Peace delegation⁸ – sympathised with the pressures that saw Romania forcefully play its hand in Paris. This section will argue that the media's concerns about Bolshevism and the possibility of a revanchist Germany dovetailed with the chauvinism of Brătianu at the Conference and on the ground in Hungary, and helped facilitate a political climate that allowed Britain's representatives in Paris to dissemble or ignore the less palatable aspects of Romanian identity.

Section 5.2 will argue that despite the Peace Conference's overriding emphasis on the nation state, its work created a Romania where 29% of the population were minorities, a reality that the country was ill-equipped to manage.⁹ It will frame Romania's minorities debate through the 'national minority nationalism' of the country's Jews.¹⁰ Issues centred on their persecuted status and treatment had long impacted the country's identity in British discourse and American pressure helped ensure the Jewish Question led the minorities' agenda in Paris. Mark Levene contends that Lucien Wolf's achievements at the Conference, as an advocate for national minorities' rights, in particular those of East European Jews, have not been sufficiently acknowledged by history, but this section will suggest that in the context of Romania, Wolf's was a pyrrhic victory.¹¹

The stand-off with Brătianu over the Minorities Treaty saw the Peace Conference initially refuse to compromise in the face of Romanian intransigence.

⁷ N. Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, Twickenham, Adamantine, 1991.

⁸ H. Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919*, London, Constable & Co., 1945, p. 18.

⁹ Dennis Deletant, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/european-institute/news/2018/apr/romania-creating-nation-state-1918-and-beyond>, accessed 29 Sep 2019.

¹⁰ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 6.

¹¹ Levene identifies his position as a corrective to Zionist historiography, which focuses on the Zionist victory of 1914–19; M. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe: The diplomacy of Lucien Wolf, 1914–1919*, London, Littman Library of Jewish Civilisation, 1992, pp. viii–ix.

However, it was highly unlikely that a prime minister of a nationalising nation, who was known for his contempt of the Jews, in a country that had long been defined by its Jewish Question, would find easy accommodation with its minorities. Brătianu was temporarily sacrificed in order that the Conference and Romania could reach an agreement and save face. It will be argued that the post-war emphasis on self-determination and a resistant anti-Semitic strain among most British officials, allowed Romania to emerge from its tarnished history without any evidence of real change. Britain's compliance in this pretence was indicative of their keenness to dissociate the new Greater Romania from ideas of Eastern cruelty.

Section 5.3 will analyse the impact of Queen Marie at the Conference and argue that Rodney Barker's contention that nationalism seeks exceptional representatives is corroborated through Romania's deliberate use of their queen on the international stage.¹² However, his premise that the principal audience for a leader's legitimation is the ruler and her surrounding elite is challenged in the case of Marie.¹³ While Brătianu sought and failed to convince the international elite in Paris of his legitimacy, §5.3 will demonstrate that the Queen's authority in the West was rooted in her perceived popularity in Romania. Chapter 4 recognised that it was Marie's association with Romania's peasant-soldier in British discourse that helped legitimise ideas of the country as a modern nation state. But if the final stage of Hroch's three-stage model appeared to have been realised through Marie's connection with the peasant in war, it was her arrival in Paris and London in March and April 1919 that allowed her to capitalise on that success story. In a period widely recognised as disastrous for monarchy, at the Peace Conference Marie won approval from the largest possible audience, and in doing so this section will conclude that she softened the image of a nation that had politically re-entered the Balkan 'gang' in Paris.¹⁴

In 1919 Marie provided a cultural bridge between a wary British elite and the Romanian government. Section 5.3 will discuss how Britain understood the language of

¹² R. Barker, *Legitimizing Identities: The self-preservation of rulers and subjects*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 62.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 41–58.

¹⁴ British delegate Nicholson referred to the Romanian and Serbian leaders in Paris with the exclamation 'What a gang!'; Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, p. 25; Rattigan reassured the Foreign Secretary that Romania's 'gang of unscrupulous politicians shouldn't put us off'. Rattigan to Curzon, 8 Oct 1919, 123, FO68/50, TNA.

monarchy and that Marie's gender, personal quirks and wartime success enhanced her appeal as a queen from one of the 'lesser' East European states. This inferior positioning, matched by Marie's descriptions of Romania as 'small' and vulnerable', provided an effective counterpoint to the country's recalcitrant behaviour over Hungary and the Minorities Treaty, and served to affirm the comforting idea of British hegemony within a standard West–East paradigm.¹⁵ More broadly, Marie's significant presence on the international stage in 1919 is a further indication that the public contributions of Romania's early twentieth-century queens contradict Todorova's dismissive tone regarding Balkan monarchs, as well as her claim that Balkan imagery was predominantly male and frequently violent.¹⁶

This chapter will conclude that the dramatic appearance of Marie at the Conference softened the country's compromised image. Neither a conventional 'external representative' as identified in Saidian thinking, nor a Romanian, this English-born queen bridged Romania's and Britain's political and cultural spheres and manipulated constructions of her adopted realm for maximum impact in British discourse. Marie reinforced an idea of a legitimate Romanian nation based on broad support, a construct that complemented the idealised version of post-war Romania which British officials prioritised over a more nuanced reality. Contrary to Todorova's argument that the Balkans' 'imputed ambiguity' rendered them more susceptible to classifications which 'condemns them',¹⁷ by framing Brătianu as the Balkan scapegoat for his nation's refusal to conform to Conference demands, Romania in 1919 was granted a reprieve. As demanded by realpolitik, an imagined Romania emerged as a suitably pliant learner-nation in a New Europe, its 'Eastern' flaws repackaged as a temporary state of backwardness and conveniently sugar-coated in a peculiar optimism courtesy of its British queen.

¹⁵ Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The map of civilisation on the mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1994, pp. 4–5; Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, p. 10.

¹⁶ M. Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 3–5, 14–15.

¹⁷ Todorova cites Mary Douglas's argument that 'objects or ideas that contradict cherished classifications provoke pollution behaviour that condemns them'. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

5.1 Brătianu, Transylvanian Romania and a New Europe

This section will argue that the political idealism cultivated during the war coupled with the strategic realities on the ground in 1919, ensured that Romanian chauvinism exhibited in Paris, and the Romanian Prime Minister's conduct in particular, were a challenge that required a political solution. Peace Conference histories including Sherman Spector's *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, Erik Goldstein's *Winning the Peace* and Margaret Macmillan's *Peacemakers* have mainly analysed Romania's performance in Paris through the personality and diplomacy of Ion Brătianu.¹⁸ His recalcitrance certainly drew the wrath of the Supreme Council, but this section will demonstrate how it also provided scope for disassembling Romania's political reality. For British delegates, especially Allen Leeper who oversaw much of the technical side of Romania's case, the focus was not on Brătianu but rather an idealised version of the country identified by Romanian émigrés in London during the war. It will argue that the demonisation and eventual disappearance of Brătianu helped Britain simplify and legitimise the idea of a European Romania embedded in historic and democratic narratives associated with its Transylvanian minority. While this model served to vindicate Greater Romania's place in a New European confection, engagement with the assessments of Donal Horowitz will suggest that the possibility of Transylvania dominating Romanian politics in the long term was unlikely.¹⁹

In early 1919 the British Empire Delegation convened in Paris where all matters were ultimately decided by the Council of Four.²⁰ In the wake of Austria-Hungary's collapse, the need for an East European Settlement was a priority. Britain, which did not

¹⁸ Sherman D. Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference: A study of the diplomacy of Ioan I. C. Brătianu*, Iasi, Centre for Roumanian Studies Romanian Cultural Foundation, 1995; Goldstein provides an interpretation that includes an analysis of Leeper's work: Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British diplomatic strategy, peace planning and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916–1920*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1991, pp. 252–57; Margaret MacMillan, *Peacemakers: The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and its attempts to end war*, London, John Murray, 2001, pp. 134–45.

¹⁹ Donal Horowitz, 'Irredentas and Secessions: Adjacent phenomena, neglected connections', in Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, pp. 9–34.

²⁰ By the end of March the Supreme Council had shed its foreign ministers and Japan and become the Council of Four, also referred to as the Big Four: Lloyd George, Clemenceau, Wilson and Orlando. It became the Big Three when the Italians left the Conference over territorial disputes in late April; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, pp. 61, 288–314.

share the strategic concerns of France, or territorial interests of Italy, and had more in common with America's ideological stance, was keen to secure a durable peace without excesses in the distribution of spoils.²¹ Heavily staffed with former members of the PID, the delegation's Political Section was dominated by *New Europe* ideals, the thought of which 'made our hearts sing at heaven's gate'.²² Delegate Harold Nicolson explained that this refrain referred to the 'new Serbia, the new Greece, the new Bohemia, and the new Poland'.²³ He made no mention of a new Greater Romania. If Greece could rely on philhellenism within the delegation, the other 'new' countries, predominantly carved from the former lands of the Habsburg Empire, gifted the rubric a central European bias that tilted it away from Balkan and Eastern associations. This bias helps to explain Nicolson's omission of Romania. The country's acquisition of Transylvania did not negate the legacy or geography of the Old Kingdom.

Unlike Romania, the other New European countries had historic roots but were new creations. Even Serbia's strident nationalism was partially disguised amidst hopes for a Yugoslavian state. It is historian Ben-Israel Hedva's observations on the appeal of young nationalism that help to further differentiate between the newly created countries and Romania. Hedva argues that nascent nationalism is initially perceived as a liberating, generous force and only later morphs into a xenophobic, aggressive construct. What is identified as an admirable quality gives way in the face of mature nation-building processes because 'the area has to be cleared for political, social and military activities and above all the pursuit of a foreign policy'.²⁴ Unlike most other nations in New Europe which were arguably still in the earlier, more sympathetic stages of nationalism,²⁵ by 1919 Romania incorporated both ends of this nationalising paradigm and would demonstrate its national 'maturity' at the Conference in a display of force and political inflexibility that was impossible to ignore.

²¹ British Nicolson and American Seymour commented on the general compatibility of their two delegations. Nicholson, *Peacemakers*, p. 257; Charles Seymour, *Letters from the Peace Conference: Edited by Harold Whiteman*, New Haven, CT; London, Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 152–53.

²² Nicolson, *Peacemakers*, p. 33.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Ben-Israel Hedva, 'Irredentism: Nationalism Reexamined', in Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, pp. 32–33.

²⁵ In Serbia's case the creation of a new country – Yugoslavia – and its component parts distracted from ideas of 'old' Serbia; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, pp. 124–26.

The prospect of disproportionate Romanian gains worried British diplomats, especially when the extent of Romania's chauvinism was revealed in early 1919.²⁶ However, Macmillan's conclusion that Romanians had 'a high opinion of their own importance' in Paris misreads the situation.²⁷ In this instance Brubaker's analysis of a 'nationalising nation' is particularly instructive. The nationalising nation 'despite having its own state' is conceived as being in a 'weak position' which is 'held to justify the 'remedial' or 'compensatory' project of using state power' to promote specific interests of the core nation.²⁸ Prime Minister Brătianu arrived in France bruised by what he regarded as a negation of the Allies' commitment to Romania during the war and the suggestion that Romania would only have associate status at the Conference.²⁹ The Prime Minister was determined to control his country's agenda and this involved blatantly bending idealism to secure the existence of Greater Romania. Dependent on information from partial Romanians and blinkered by an idea of a New European order, Britain failed to anticipate Romania's diplomatic gear-change. Allen Leeper exhibited political naivety when he observed that Brătianu was using the 1916 Treaty 'which he knows perfectly well no longer holds good' as his primary negotiating card, rather than 'a principle'.³⁰ Brătianu was trying to claim as much Romanian territory by whatever means possible and reference to the over-generous terms of the 1916 treaty upon which he had staked his reputation was one obvious, legalistic way of doing this.³¹

²⁶ Hardinge asserted that 'Romania was gaining a great deal' when confronted by Romanian concerns over the Banat region. Hardinge note on Greenly Military Report from Roumania, 26 Feb 1919, FO608/48. By March there were reports about the 'defective Roumanian administration' in Bessarabia and to a lesser extent Bukovina; Gen. Greenly Report to FO, 'Present Situation in Roumania and Occupied Territories', 12 Mar 1919; Appendix from Col. Foster on same report, 4090, FO608/51, TNA.

²⁷ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 134.

²⁸ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 5.

²⁹ Glenn E. Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, Iași; Oxford; Portland, The Centre for Romanian Studies, 1999, pp. 212–30; Brătianu came to Paris because he believed it was the only way Romania would get a fair hearing. Barclay to FO 19 Jan 1919, FO608/48, 20 Jan 1919, FO608/49. The legation in Bucharest continued to warn the British that Brătianu felt 'very lonely and dejected' in Paris; Legation to Balfour, 22 Feb 1919, 39, FO608/48, TNA.

³⁰ Leeper Note on FO Dispatch, 13 Jan 1919, *ibid*.

³¹ Depending on his audience Brătianu adapted his arguments. Seymour thought that Brătianu negotiated 'skilfully' on the 'grounds of justice and future peace' and not 'stressing' the 1916 Treaty. Seymour, *Letters from the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 142; Lloyd George wrote Brătianu claimed the Banat on 'geographical and economic

It is striking how much Western officials disliked Brătianu.³² Before he arrived in Paris, the Prime Minister had already incensed British Vice-Admiral Ernest Troubridge, head of Allied forces in South East Europe, who met him in Serbia where discussions centred on the Banat region, formerly in the Habsburg Empire and contested by Serbia and Romania. Troubridge complained that the Premier's claims were not based on ethnic grounds but on the necessity 'that the Roumanian people should have room for development in a westerly direction to fulfil their natural life and destiny'. The Admiral sided with Serbian Prince Peter ('he stated his views in opposition to M. Brătianu's very neatly') and concluded that the Romanian Prime Minister 'is apparently several rungs lower on the ladder of statesmanship than I had imagined'. He repeated Peter's observation that Brătianu was a 'haggler', concluding this was 'a man cunning rather than clever, conscious of the weakness of this case and become an extremist with intention not conviction'.³³ This reaction to Brătianu was a precursor to Paris, where his chauvinism and efforts to play the part of a sophisticated leader stood out.

What Macmillan identified as self-importance cloaked Brătianu's insecurity as a Balkan statesman of a minor nation in a Western city full of international leaders. In Harold Temperley's account of the Conference, historian Robert Laffan noted Brătianu's isolation both during the war and in Paris.³⁴ Virtually the only Western official who appreciated the Romanian Prime Minister was diplomat Charles Seymour (although others grudgingly admired his tactics). A historian from Yale University and new to politics, Seymour was struck by Brătianu's efforts to impress his own entourage.³⁵ The British delegation, familiar with Brătianu's political bargaining over

grounds'. D Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1939, p. 619.

³² Histories which cover Romania at the Peace Conference focus on responses to Brătianu: 'Intractable, rigid, and ruthlessly calculating – such words are used to describe this leader.' Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 18; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, pp. 134–45.

³³ Reported in a letter from C. de Gras, Diplomat in Belgrade to Hardinge, 14 Jan 1919, 360, FO608/48, TNA.

³⁴ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 15; R. G. D. Laffan in 'Redemption of Rumania', in H. W. V. Temperley (ed.), *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, London, Henry Frowde, Hodder & Stoughton, 1920–24, vol. IV, pp. 213–36.

³⁵ Seymour was struck by Brătianu's magnificent accommodation on the Champs Élysée and admired his negotiating skills; *Letter from the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 142–44. Leeper admitted Brătianu's case was 'cleverly done after a fashion'; A. Leeper

the 1916 Treaty, and well versed in standard tropes about Balkan politicians, were quick to criticise the Romanian Prime Minister and Brătianu's attempt to ingratiate himself in Paris society made matters worse.

'Handsome and exuberant he flings his fine head sideways catching his own profile in the glass. He makes elaborate verbal jokes imagining them to be Parisian.' According to Nicolson Brătianu was a 'bearded woman, a humbug, a Bucharest intellectual, a most unpleasing man', even a 'silly ass', 'very verbose and unconvincing and Balkan'.³⁶ Sir Eyre Crowe, the British delegate appointed alongside Leeper to the Romanian Territorial Commission, decided 'Mr Bratiano ... plays his game very unskilfully here.'³⁷ Nor did the Big Three bother to hide their contempt. Brătianu noted his meeting with Lloyd George went badly and complained statesmen did not like him, especially 'Lloyd George, Mr Balfour and Mr Clemenceau'.³⁸ Likewise, 'one of President Wilson's marked dislikes is his aversion to Brătianu, the beetle-browed Prime Minister of Rumania with the notorious Byzantine background'.³⁹ It was after listening to Brătianu's verbose claims that Lloyd George proposed preliminary investigations should be 'carried out by experts'.⁴⁰ The Territorial Committees were duly set up.

Barker in *Legitimizing Identities* argues that 'the principal way in which people issuing commands are legitimated is through their identification as special, marked by particular qualities, set apart from other people'.⁴¹ Brătianu was certainly 'set apart' in Paris. Seton-Watson avoided him entirely and Leeper met him for the first time in February 1919. 'I was not very favourably impressed. He's quite a fish out of water

to R. Leeper, 2 Feb 1919, 3/1, AWAL, CA; Spector notes '[H]is pensive and sometime nonchalant appearance inspired respect', *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 18.

³⁶ Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, pp. 248–49, 254–55.

³⁷ Crowe note on a dispatch from Barclay to FO, 8 Feb 1919, FO608/49; see also Hardinge Note on Greenly Military Report, 26 Feb 1919, FO608/48, TNA.

³⁸ Keith Hitchins, *Ion I C Brătianu: Romania, Makers of the Modern World*, London, Haus Publishing, 2011, p. 110; Rattigan to Curzon, 12 Aug 1919, 168, FO608/50; Crowe noted Clemenceau was 'especially outraged' that the Council's authority had been 'flouted by Monsieur Bratiano'; Crowe to Curzon, 12 Nov 1919, 237, FO608/50, TNA.

³⁹ Stephen Bonsal, *Suitors and Supplicants: The little nations at Versailles*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1946, p. 169. This contempt was common knowledge; E. J. Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, London; New York, Harper & Bros, 1920, p. 234.

⁴⁰ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Office of the Historian, United States Department of State, vol. III, pp. 841–42.

⁴¹ Barker, *Legitimizing Identities*, p. 35.

here.⁴² Brătianu's efforts to essentialise the West and appear Parisian failed, and comparisons with the Entente's favourite 'eloquent' Romanian, Take Ionescu, who was excluded from his country's delegation but remained a prominent player in Parisian society, exacerbated the problem.⁴³ Beside his Balkan colleagues Brătianu was perceived as the worst kind of Eastern stereotype; untrustworthy, second-rate, even repulsive. Lloyd George concluded that the white-bearded Serbian nationalist Pašić was 'one of the craftiest and most tenacious statesmen in southeastern Europe', but Brătianu was 'a damned fool!'⁴⁴ He compared particularly badly with the 'charm and genius' of Greek Prime Minister Venizelos.⁴⁵ Barker's theory finds its inverse in Brătianu. Romania's national leader had particular qualities, but cast through the prism of the West–East paradigm identified by Wolff, whereby the East of Europe is a useful stick against which to measure the civility of the West, they were deemed all the wrong ones.⁴⁶

The discrediting of Brătianu posed a problem for the British.⁴⁷ After all, Greater Romania was an unavoidable and integral part of the New Europe upon which the British delegates premised their hopes for future peace. Initially, on the advice of outgoing ambassador Barclay, they tried to work with him, acknowledging that Brătianu

⁴² Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: R.W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen, 1981 p. 365; A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 2 Feb 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

⁴³ Leeper referred to a 'wonderful' speech from 'eloquent' Ionescu; A. Leeper to R. Leeper, *ibid.*; Ionescu stayed in a different hotel from Brătianu 'shaking his neat head ... over the follies, the vanities and the obstinate blindness of M. Brătianu'. Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, p. 136. Other than an exchange of visiting cards between hotels there was no contact between the two men in Paris; Constantin Xenă, *Take Ionescu*, Bucureşti, Tritonic, 2002, p. 187; Romanian biographer Iancovici referred to Ionescu as Romania's European saviour in the otherwise 'fog of the East' as seen from Paris. D. Iancovici, *Take Ionescu*, Paris 1919, traducere de Rodica Rabb, Timişoara, Editura de Vest, 2004, pp. 7-14.

⁴⁴ Macmillan, *Peacemaking*, p. 120; Lloyd George whispered this to Clemenceau, 31 May 1919; L. Aldrovandi Marescotti, *Guerra Diplomatica. Ricordi e frammenti di diario, 1914–1919*, Milano, Mondadori, 1938, p. 453.

⁴⁵ Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, pp. 249–51, 255.

⁴⁶ Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, pp. 12–13; Spector notes some at the Conference thought Brătianu's 'physiognomy could not shield an oriental indolence and they likened him to a Tibetan lama.' Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 18.

⁴⁷ Journalist Dillon claimed that Brătianu and what he stood for were despised in Paris. His analysis will be further examined in §5.2, which deals with the Minorities Treaty. Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 234.

felt poorly treated.⁴⁸ Even men-on-the-spot (generally inimical to the new order intended for Europe),⁴⁹ led by General Greenly, the military attaché in Bucharest, agreed that Romania required support.⁵⁰ What Macmillan dismisses as ‘the diffuse threat of Revolution’ in 1919, appeared very real on Romania’s borders.⁵¹ According to Glenn Torrey, the preservation of the Romanian army as a fighting force in the wake of the country’s March 1918 capitulation was a vital factor ‘which forced the Entente to accept the creation of Greater Romania’.⁵² Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary in London, noted that Romania was ‘peculiarly exposed to Bolshevik danger and she constitutes one of the few remaining barriers against Bolshevism’. Both Leeper and Crowe agreed with him.⁵³ This was especially the case in April 1919, when Bela Kun’s communist takeover in neighbouring Hungary exposed Romania to Bolshevism on two fronts. By legitimately presenting itself as the solitary bulwark against communism in the East, Romania served the Conference with a military *fait accompli*. Some felt Bela Kun’s coup was partially the result of Romania’s territorial encroachment of Hungary

⁴⁸ Barclay to FO, 19 Jan 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

⁴⁹ A point made by Bakić who uses Admiral Troubridge as an example. Gragan Bakić, ‘Great Britain, the Little Entente and Security in Danubian Europe, 1919–1936’, PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2010, pp. 15–16. The sympathy exhibited by the British military towards Romania is partially explained by the acquaintance between Major R. Goodden, who accompanied General Greenly to Romania in December 1918, and Seton-Watson. The latter ensured they were introduced to ‘sympathetic personalities’ in Romania (including the Transylvanian contingent) and given ‘reliable information’. Seton-Watson to Col. Rosetti, 1 Dec 1918, 274, in Cornelia Bodea and Hugh Seton-Watson (eds), *R.W. Seton-Watson și românii, 1906–1920*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1988, vol. I, pp. 442–43.

⁵⁰ Letter from Bucharest Legation, on Greenly’s opinion, to Balfour, 22 Feb 1919, 39, FO608/48; Greenly Military Report, 21 Mar 1919; Leeper agreed with Foreign Secretary Curzon that ‘Rumanians feel themselves much neglected by this country’; Leeper to Hugessen, 24 Apr 1919, 8274, FO608/51, TNA; but he also thought Greenly was ‘rather duped by Brătianu’; A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 21 Feb 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

⁵¹ Macmillan uses this description when comparing 1919 with the distinct threat posed by the Soviet Union post-1945; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 69. The British military in Romania consistently emphasised the threat facing the country at the beginning of 1919; British Legation to Balfour, 22 Feb 1919; Greenly to FO, 26 Feb 1919, 2927, FO608/48, TNA.

⁵² Torrey refers to the Romanian army’s ability to occupy Bessarabia in January 1918 and Transylvania from November 1918. G. Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, p. 300.

⁵³ Greenly cited Romania as the ‘ideal bulwark against Bolshevism and Teutonism’, talked about Romania’s ‘fine army’ and referred to the country as an ‘anchor of democracy in the Near East’; Greenly Military Report 21 Mar 1919; Curzon’s note on Greenly’s report circulated to King and Cabinet, 26 Mar 1919, 5284; Crowe and Leeper notes on Greenly Report, 24 Mar 1919 5284, FO608/51, TNA.

beyond the agreed demarcation line, but this suggestion merely served to underline Romania's ability to dictate events on the ground, while simultaneously exposing the Conference's impotence.⁵⁴

The *Daily Telegraph* blamed the Entente for the Communist coup in Hungary, and their special correspondent Dr Emile Dillon returned to pre-World War I form with his support of Romania. He balanced a realistic appraisal of the competing demands that faced the Conference with an articulation of the pressure on Romania's Brătianu, 'whose name is indissolubly associated with the large increase of his country's territorial desires'.⁵⁵ Dillon acknowledged the pitfalls that faced 'generous idealists' and in January 1919 was already writing of 'the gravity of the Bolshevik danger'.⁵⁶ Although most publications lacked Dillon's more detailed knowledge and were kept at arm's length by the Conference – 'the newspapers are entirely ignorant of 99% of the subject'⁵⁷ – the majority were consistent in their portrayal of Romania as part of a solution to what they considered the new balance of power on the Continent. The *Spectator* packaged Romania as one of the 'brave little nations' whose claims were 'infinitely superior to that of the enemy peoples'. The Allies were 'extremely remiss' for failing to help countries which were the essential replacement to Mittel-Europa and had to be protected from the Germans and the Magyars. The *Daily Mail* used the Bolshevik threat over Romania to highlight Allied prevarication and poor decision-making. Brătianu was scarcely mentioned and the *Spectator* brushed over any 'little' local quarrels that got in the way of an Entente versus enemy (German or Bolshevik) vision. Romania's unauthorised occupation of Budapest in August was hailed as a 'prompt and vigorous' solution for which the Magyars and Allies 'should be grateful'.⁵⁸ The idea of a united, friendly nation, deftly pushed during the war, was hard to shift and the need for a bulwark against Teutonism and Bolshevism keenly emphasised. That

⁵⁴ Hamilton Fish Armstrong, America's diplomat in Serbia, claimed that the Bolshevik's success in toppling Karolyi's government was due to military pressure from Romania. Regarding Romania in Hungary he concluded 'either that the Allies were in disagreement as to whether or not to stop them or were too weak to do so'. H. Fish Armstrong, *Peace and Counterpeace: From Wilson to Hitler: Memoirs of Hamilton Fish Armstrong*, New York, Harper & Row, 1971, pp. 67–68.

⁵⁵ Dillon, *Daily Telegraph*, 17 Jan 1919. In their one article that mentioned Brătianu, *The Times* was also supportive; *The Times*, 23 Jan 1919.

⁵⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 14, 15 Jan 1919.

⁵⁷ A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 21 Feb 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

⁵⁸ *Spectator*, 26 Apr, 16 Aug 1919, *The Daily Mail*, 25, 26 Mar 1919.

summer *The Times* printed Romania's list of complaints regarding Allied short-sightedness.⁵⁹

This support for Romania (much taken from French publications *Le Matin* and *Le Temps*)⁶⁰ posed an additional problem for the delegates in Paris. By August the occupation of Budapest (and accompanying requisitioning) was just one issue that clouded relations between Romania and the Conference.⁶¹ The Minorities Treaty was another major sticking point, with Romania arguing that to sign the clause in the Austrian Treaty would infringe their sovereignty.⁶² In July Brătianu returned to Bucharest, and relations with the Conference further deteriorated. Hitchins writes the Supreme Council 'responded menacingly' to Romanian intransigence that summer and Torrey concludes the Conference 'tended to treat the Romanians as erring children'.⁶³ Relations were acrimonious, with historians subsequently arguing that Romania only emerged as a victor from the Conference because, on the one hand the idea of an enlarged friendly Romania suited Britain's New Europe experts, and on the other Romania represented a security fait accompli.⁶⁴ Both arguments carry some weight, and

⁵⁹ *The Times*, 4 July 1919. Sorin Arhire's recent discursive article draws heavily on *The Times* and concludes there were only 'a few minor differences' between Britain and Romania, Sorin Arhire, 'The British Political Media and the Romanian Issue, (1918-1920), A Discourse Analysis' in Sorin Arhire & Tudor Roşu (eds), *The Paris Peace Conference (1919-1920) and its aftermath: Settlements, Problems, Perceptions*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020, pp. 29-50.

⁶⁰ The *Manchester Guardian* complained that the Parisian press took up cudgels on behalf of Brătianu's government. *Manchester Guardian*, 6 Nov 1919.

⁶¹ Allied military weakness resulted in mixed opinions over the prospect of Romania occupying Budapest. Initially Crowe and Hardinge were in support of the Romanian army continuing its advance into Hungary; Crowe and Hardinge notes on FO dispatch, 2 May 1919, FO608/49, TNA. Historians agree that Allied policy towards Romania in Hungary was shifting and contradictory; Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, p. 379; Alfred D. Low, 'Soviet Hungary and the Paris Peace Conference', in Iván Völgyes (ed.), *Hungary in Revolution 1918-1919*, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1971, p. 116.

⁶² See §5.2 for more on the Minorities Treaty.

⁶³ Hitchins, *Ion I C Brătianu*, p. 111; Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, p. 384.

⁶⁴ Sakmyster argues *The New Europe* idealism almost single-handedly pushed through the harsh peace settlement with Hungary. Bakić disagrees, claiming the actual settlement on the ground predetermined the Peace Settlement with Hungary. Thomas Sakmyster, 'Great Britain and the Making of the Treaty of Trianon', in Bela Király, Peter Pastor and Ivan Sanders (eds), *A Case Study of Trianon*, Social Science Monographs, New York, Brooklyn College Press, 1982, pp. 107-29; Bakić, 'Great Britain, the Little Entente and Security in Danubian Europe', p. 15.

therein lay the difficulty for the British delegation. They wanted and needed to believe in Greater Romania and yet found Brătianu impossible to deal with.

However, although Brătianu was keenly associated with his country's identity in Paris, for the British delegates he only represented one version of Romania. In this context it is important to recall the pronounced nature of the 'mutually antagonistic nationalisms' Brubaker identifies in the post-war sphere of nation-making. According to Brubaker's definition Romania was a nationalising nation, but crucially the British delegation continued to identify the country through its wartime homeland nationalism and the potential of the Romanian minority in Transylvania.⁶⁵ Chazan underlines Irredentism as 'a by-product of transition and uncertainty in the international order'. She argues that in pursuit of Irredentism there is a point of transition 'from nation to communal state construct'. This uncertainty insists that the nation's elite are under 'real or perceived pressure ... with threats from opposing domestic forces and opportunities offered by regional circumstances'.⁶⁶ Brătianu felt under pressure hence his heightened intransigence in Paris. It was this rigidity in the face of a fluid regional scene of competing nationalisms that enabled Britain's diplomatic team to cast the Romanian prime minister as the temporary (unelected) face of Greater Romania.⁶⁷

Goldstein rightly argued that Romanians 'could hardly have hoped for a better choice' than Leeper as their main British representative at the Conference. He had been 'primarily responsible for Romania during the preparatory phase' and once in Paris, as a leading member on Romania's Territorial Commission, Leeper was a negotiator in his own right.⁶⁸ Having spent the latter half of the war promoting an European idea of Romania focused on Transylvania with its high value, reforming Irredenta, Leeper considered Brătianu 'absolutely suranné' and representative of an old, Eastern version

⁶⁵ Brubaker, *Reframing Nationalism*, pp. 3–10.

⁶⁶ Chazan, 'The Development of Irredentist Concepts', pp. 142–43, 147.

⁶⁷ Brătianu resumed the Premiership in November 1918 but elections were not held for 12 months. Iorga observed that Brătianu was an autocrat for whom 'the parliamentary system was a mere form'; Nicolae Iorga, *România contemporană de la 1904 la 1930*, ed. II, București, 1932, p. 370.

⁶⁸ Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, p. 254. On 'peak intensity' expert influence in Paris see D. Kaufman, "A House of Cards which Would Not Stand": James Headlam-Morley, the role of experts and the Danzig Question at the Paris Peace Conference', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 2019, vol. 30, issue 2, pp. 228–52.

of the country.⁶⁹ The Foreign Office's Romanian Peace Handbook written by Mitrany, also identified the Romanian Transylvanians as a group where 'the common language has been the cultural language', which allowed the peasant to 'rise much above the level of his brethren' in a region where the ruling class had not been under the 'evil influences' of 'foreign and especially Greek elements'.⁷⁰ This thinking found its British genesis in the arguments long espoused by Seton-Watson,⁷¹ and in December 1918 when the Romanian Transylvanians established a National Government and issued a declaration of independence, *The New Europe* hailed them as 'extremely well organised' leaders who have 'always presented an united front to their oppressors'. Their Declaration was identified as tolerant and democratic and a good example of 'political maturity'. Seton-Watson looked forward to seeing 'my friends MM. Vaida and Maniu and others in Paris during the Peace Conference as representatives of free Transylvania' and by May 1919 he predicted that the 'rotten structure' which Brătianu and Mișu supported would imminently collapse.⁷²

Seton-Watson remained highly influential behind the scenes at the Conference and Leeper was an integral part of his social circle.⁷³ The latter observed 'Paris is full of Roumanians at present which give us the advantage of many conversations with representatives of various views on more than one subject' and he hoped this would be a 'symbol of real practical cooperation in the future'.⁷⁴ Leeper concluded that Brătianu's regime was 'inviting a catastrophe' and continued to dismiss the opinions of the outgoing, long-serving diplomat Barclay.⁷⁵ Sir George Clerk, the senior Foreign Office official who was sent to Romania to deliver an ultimatum from the Conference in September 1919 referred to Leeper's 'great knowledge of Roumanian men and parties

⁶⁹ A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 2 Feb 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

⁷⁰ Rumania, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, Dec 1918, pp. 75–6 FO373/2/6, TNA.

⁷¹ The American *Inquiry* credited British experts in Paris as those who 'know their subjects and have known them for many years'; Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', p. 738.

⁷² 'The Roumanians of Hungary', *The New Europe*, 5 Dec 1918, vol. 11, pp. 186–87; Seton-Watson to Col. Rosetti, 1 Dec 1918, 274, in Bodea and Seton-Watson (eds), *R. W. Seton-Watson și românii, 1906–1920*, vol. I, p. 443; H. and C. Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe*, p. 365.

⁷³ Leeper Diary, 7, 8, 10, 15, 18, 20, 21, 29 Jan 1919, 1/2, AWAL, CA.

⁷⁴ Leeper to Greenly, 3 Feb 1919 (inspired by FO Memo 'Educational Needs of Roumania', 27 Jan 1919), FO608/48, TNA.

⁷⁵ Leeper note on Barclay's dispatch, 8 Feb 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

and his objective and impartial insight into their real aims and intentions' which were 'of the highest value'.⁷⁶ But Leeper's first visit to Romania was when he accompanied Clerk that September and his views were heavily influenced by the narrow coterie of Romanian émigrés and *New Europe* thinkers he met in wartime London. A more accurate way of framing Leeper's contribution would be American journalist Walter Lippman's observation of the British delegation: 'each expert seems to have some pet nationality of his own'.⁷⁷

Leeper needed to find an alternative to Brătianu for his 'pet' nation; someone who could tackle 'the Roumanian question from a moderate Roumanian standpoint'.⁷⁸ American suspicion of Romania, exacerbated by the Jewish Question, heightened this need.⁷⁹ By May 1919 Sir Frank Rattigan, the new British chargé d'affaires in Bucharest, was 'certain that the centre of political power must move to Transylvania'. He argued they were 'more advanced politically than the Old Roumanians', and that Transylvanian men such as I. Maniu and M Popp had 'a more Western training than is found in Roumania proper'.⁸⁰ Leeper was encouraged, referring to Rattigan's analysis as 'an exceedingly interesting and valuable report', arguing that 'there seems no doubt that a Maniu–Take Ionescu–Averescu Government would be ideal for the British and desirable from the Roumanian point of view'.⁸¹ Although the form of union between Transylvania and the Old Kingdom had not been agreed, the desirability of this political combination was frequently cited during the summer of 1919.⁸² In comparison, Rattigan

⁷⁶ Clerk to President of the Council, Oct 1919, 19424, FO608/50, TNA.

⁷⁷ Cited in Prott, 'Tying up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination', p. 729.

⁷⁸ In February while dismissing Brătianu's political prospects, Leeper also acknowledged that General Averescu although preferable was 'a demagogue' and by March was extolling the credentials of Dr N. Lupu, a political outsider of peasant stock, as someone with a 'moderate Roumanian standpoint'. Leeper notes on report Rattigan to Curzon, 21 Apr 1919, 343; Leeper notes on FO Dispatch including Pamphlet from Dr N. Lupu, 26 Mar 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

⁷⁹ America sided with Bulgarian claims in the Dobrudja, a country they did not suspend diplomatic relations with during the war. Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 57–58; Nicholson, *Peacemaking*, p. 347.

⁸⁰ Rattigan to Curzon, 21 Apr 1919, 343, FO608/49, TNA.

⁸¹ Leeper notes on Rattigan Report, 9 May 1919, *ibid.*

⁸² Although he had only just arrived in Bucharest, Rattigan's optimistic analysis that a national government would soon replace Brătianu was endorsed by Leeper; Rattigan dispatch and Leeper notes on same dispatch, 11 June 1919. Leeper referred to such a coalition as 'eminently desirable' although conceded 'their position would be difficult at present'; Leeper notes on letter from British Banker in Bucharest, Mr H. Locke to FO,

acknowledged that Romania's administration of Bessarabia 'had not been a great success' and conceded that in this former Russian province a 'Bolshevik advance may be welcome'.⁸³ Although there was a Bessarabian representative on Brătianu's negotiating team in Paris, the British delegation's references to Romania's acquisition of Bessarabia were noticeable by their absence.⁸⁴ Unlike East-facing Bessarabia, westerly Transylvanian offered the British an alternative to Balkan Romania and its political leaders with their 'methods of the bazaar'.⁸⁵

Beyond the short term, a belief in this Transylvanian-led construction of Romania, heavily promoted by 'Romanians abroad', and to an extent encouraged by Brătianu, who chose Transylvanian Dr Vaida-Voevod as a delegate in Paris, was naive. Horowitz in Chazan's *Irredentism and International Politics*, argues that it is difficult for leaders from a newly annexed region without the necessary knowledge and experience, to break into 'a crystallised political situation'. He claims Irredentism is less common than secession because it is hard for peripheral leaders to enter an already established political structure, and yet the British delegation not only expected the Transylvanians to enter Romania's political structure but to fundamentally reform it. While the exceptionalism of Transylvania 'as the cradle of Romanian civilisation' in the historic narrative of the Romanian nation counters Horowitz's argument that the new ethnic area is likely to be 'regarded as at least sub-ethnically different in its composition' (a status that was saved for Bessarabia),⁸⁶ the control that the Old

30 June 1919. Leeper referred to the idea of a pro-Entente, pro-British Romanian government as 'a very valuable suggestion'; Leeper notes on Rattigan report 7 July 1919, FO 608/49, TNA. In January Nicolson observed that the terms on which Transylvania would join Romania were 'all rather in the air'; Nicholson, *Peacemaking*, p. 244.

⁸³ Rattigan to Curzon, 21 Apr 1919, 343, FO 608/49, TNA.

⁸⁴ Russia's absence at the Conference simplified Romania's claims in Bessarabia which Britain was prepared to recognise on the proviso that the 'reunion with Roumania shall be the ethnic principle not the military occupation or the conquest of the country'. The report estimated that 60–66% of the province was Romanian. 'Commission on Roumanian Claims, British Recommendations', 10 Feb 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

⁸⁵ Laffan, 'Redemption of Rumania', p. 216.

⁸⁶ Horowitz, 'Irredentas and Secessions: Adjacent phenomena, neglected connections', in Chazan (ed.), *Irredentism and International Politics*, pp. 16–17.

Kingdom's oligarch exercised over Romania, in particular Brătianu and his Liberals, was a long-term issue.⁸⁷

During the game of brinkmanship between the Conference and Romania in the autumn of 1919, the extent to which the delegates regarded Brătianu as the repository for all his country's ills became clear. After his trip to Bucharest, Leeper recommended that the Conference exercised 'unequivocal action' over Romania, arguing that if Brătianu refused to comply, the accession of Ionescu and Maniu would be secure.⁸⁸ He claimed Romania would then have better relations with their neighbours, good collaboration with the Conference and the prospect of 'some measure of independence and progressive government in the country'.⁸⁹ The *Daily Telegraph* sounded a 'grave' warning note at Romanian insouciance in September, while the *Manchester Guardian*, like the British delegation, pinned the blame for poor Romanian relations on Brătianu. 'The Council finds all its difficulties in the Government of M Bratiano.' They advised Romania that 'to replace this turbulent statesman and his ministry by another, with a real existence of its own, the whole of the difficulties between Roumania and the world would soon be resolved'.⁹⁰

The latter was a moot point which delegates skirted over. The British delegation knew that beyond Brătianu, the idea of a democratic tolerant Romania required

⁸⁷ In 1922 Brătianu and his Liberal Party returned to power and he was the dominant figure in Romanian politics until his death in 1927. For a concise account of Brătianu's career see Hitchins, *Ion I C Brătianu*; for an analysis of Brătianu's internal power politics and chauvinism see Ion Novăcescu, 'Politic și Puterea în Concepționalui Ion I. C. Brătianu', <http://www.historica-cluj.ro/suplimente/SuplimentHistorica2013/2.pdf>, accessed 28 Nov 2019.

⁸⁸ During his 12 days in Bucharest Leeper recorded two meetings with Brătianu, one of which he described as unsatisfactory; the rest of the time was spent with Transylvanians and Ionescu and his political allies. Leeper Diary, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23 Sep 1919, 1/2, AWAL, CA.

⁸⁹ Bakić misunderstands the British delegation's efforts to replace Brătianu, arguing they opted for brinkmanship with him rather than granting concessions to Transylvanian Iuliu Maniu. In fact Maniu had been politically outmanoeuvred by Brătianu in September, when the King summoned a government which remained under the leadership of Brătianu in all but name. Bakić, 'Great Britain, the Little Entente and Security in Danubian Europe', p. 47; Notes on Rumanian Question by Leeper, 1 Oct 1919, 19306, FO608/50; Rattigan to FO, 29 Sep 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

⁹⁰ Irrespective of political bias, the British press, with the exception of *The Times*, was generally critical of Romania's behaviour in September. *Daily Telegraph*, 5 Sep 1919; *Manchester Guardian*, 6 Nov 1919, *The Nation*, 6, 13 Sep 1919, *The Times*, 6, 15 Sep 1919.

considerable window dressing. As early as January 1919, Nicolson observed that only Ionescu would ‘suggest a reasonable solution’ to Romania’s outstanding issues, concluding ‘we shall have to impose one’.⁹¹ The Foreign Office were aware that Romanian corruption and chauvinism were endemic⁹² and Rattigan warned them that any suspension of Liberal power was unlikely to last long and held out little hope for the ‘purification of public life’.⁹³ However, Leeper disregarded reports of Romanian atrocities in Bessarabia as ‘extremely disputable’ and suggested that if Brătianu was replaced with a coalition government, then the Conference would be prepared to water down their demands, especially with regards to the Minorities Treaty.⁹⁴ As will be argued in §5.2, considerable bargaining eventually bore fruit when Brătianu lost his grip on power after the November elections, and a Bloc Government led by Transylvanian Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, dealt with the remainder of the Treaty negotiations.⁹⁵

Spector argues that ‘any study of Rumania’s policy during and after the World War hinges upon the personality and character of her Premier Brătianu’.⁹⁶ Certainly Brătianu’s political chauvinism laid down ambitious parameters for Greater Romania that the Conference could not ignore. But his obstructions and inflexibility had an

⁹¹ Meeting Transylvanians Goga and Tilea in January, Nicolson wrote, ‘they are too ashamed to speak of internal questions’ but on external ones ‘they show no shame at all’. Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, pp. 227–31.

⁹² Throughout 1919 reports of heavy-handed behaviour by Romanian officials and the army in newly acquired territory, including Bucovina, Bessarabia and Hungary, reinforced the impression of endemic corruption against which, with the exception of Hungary, the Conference did nothing to counter. Gen. Greenly Report to FO, ‘Present Situation in Roumania and Occupied Territories’, 12 Mar 1919; Appendix from Col. Foster on same report, 4090, FO608/51, TNA.

⁹³ Rattigan came to these conclusions after speaking to Brătianu’s brother-in-law and political advisor, Barbu Știrbey. Rattigan to Curzon, 2 June 1919, 12197, FO608/49. Indicative of the need to remain optimistic, a few days later he told the Foreign Office that Ionescu and the Transylvanians ‘are sincerely anxious to do away with the corruption for which this country is so notorious’; Rattigan Report, 9 July 1919, 405, FO608/49, TNA.

⁹⁴ A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 17 Mar 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA. In June Leeper suggested a new government might lead to the possibility of ‘conciliating Roumanian sentiment’; Leeper Notes on Rattigan to Curzon Dispatch, 27 June 1919. In July he referred to ‘giving them a chance of securing more generous treatment’ than Brătianu deserved’; 7 July 1919, FO608/49. After his trip to Romania in September Leeper concluded that the Minorities Treaty, not Hungary, was the outstanding issue in Romania; Leeper Minutes to Crowe, 1 Oct 1919, 19306, FO608/50, TNA.

⁹⁵ In a protest against election rigging neither Take Ionescu nor Iuliu Maniu stood in the election. Election Memorandum, Rattigan to Curzon, 10 Nov 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

⁹⁶ Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 18.

additional impact. Brătianu's behaviour cast Romania's political alternatives in a sympathetic light, and facilitated the pretence that these men offered Greater Romania a different democratic future. British delegates conferred considerable political credibility on an untried Transylvanian minority alongside their favourite, Take Ionescu. Political potential was held up as a reality, ideals were watered down, and 'Britain was willing to acquiesce in most Romanian demands' including the acquisition of much coveted Transylvania agreed in the 1920 Treaty of Trianon.⁹⁷ By the time the work of the Conference was concluded Romania had more than doubled in size.

Todorova, when describing Balkan imaging from a Western perspective, imbues it with a 'transitory status'. She argues the region was not only identified as a geographical crossroads between Europe and Asia but also as a bridge 'between stages of growth'.⁹⁸ In 1919 the idea that Romania was still on a journey towards civilisation served in the country's interests. Immediate expectations were lowered; British politicians argued that Romania would become an 'outpost of Western civilisation' against Bolshevism and Conference historians wrote of the country's 'redemption'.⁹⁹ Concerns that progress was unlikely to be sustainable proved less important than the ability to imagine a future European Romania. In a reminder of the expediency of external representatives and 'expertise', at the end of 1919 even Leeper was looking to shed his role as secretary of the Anglo-Romanian society, instead eyeing a permanent job in the Foreign Office, with a CBE pending.¹⁰⁰ Britain's long-term sphere of interest had never been South East Europe and once the political issues in Paris were settled, attention was turned elsewhere, Romania's behaviour in 1919 having done little to convince them to change course.

⁹⁷ The exception was the former Habsburg lands in the Banat which was partitioned between Yugoslavia and Romania; Goldstein, *Winning the Peace*, pp. 252–57.

⁹⁸ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 15.

⁹⁹ Romania 'will inevitably develop into the outpost of Western civilisation against the disruptive tendencies of Bolshevism'; Rattigan to Curzon, 8 Oct 1919, 123, FO608/51, TNA.

¹⁰⁰ Leeper hoped Transylvanian Vaida-Voevod would replace him as the secretary and by November he had resigned his post; Leeper Diary, 14 May, 2 Nov 1919, 1/2; Leeper 'passed for Second Secretary in the Diplomatic Service and was awarded a CBE the same month. Leeper Diary, 19, 31 Mar 1920, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

5.2 Britain, the Peace Conference and Romania's Jewish Question

Romania finally signed the Minorities Treaty on 9 December 1919, joining Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia in agreeing to terms drawn up by the Peace Conference which were to be overseen by the League of Nations. Levene has argued that Anglo-Jewish Conjoint leader, Lucien Wolf, working in conjunction with the British head of the Small States Committee, James Headlam-Morley, to shape the 1919 Minorities Treaties, was more successful than history has previously acknowledged.¹⁰¹ However, this section will argue that the political atmosphere immediately after World War I solicited a British response to Romania's Jewish Question that was more complex than the country's December 1919 acquiescence suggests. Prime Minister Brătianu's aggressive national agenda in Paris focused on two issues; the aggrandisement of Romania's borders and a refusal to submit to the Minorities Treaty. His obdurate behaviour regarding the latter strained relations in Paris and the Conference had no intention of being outplayed by the Romanian Prime Minister. In that context the Jewish Question mattered. However, an assessment of Brubaker's competing nationalisms will demonstrate that while the Supreme Council refused to pander to Brătianu, framing Romania as an oppressor of its minorities it did not suit Britain's political purposes in 1919.¹⁰²

It was the Americans in Paris, committed to a Wilsonian peace, who were adamant that the application of self-determination must be modified in accordance with a recognition of minority rights. However, they met with early disappointment when Wilson failed to insert a global solution to the minorities question in the Covenant of the League of Nations. In February 1919 the establishment of 'expert committees' to decide most technical and political questions – 'an ominous development for dealing with the separate fragments of Eastern Europe' – compounded the lack of priority accorded to minorities.¹⁰³

Determined to counter apathy on the question of the Jews, Wolf was in Paris from the beginning of 1919, where Russia's absence focused attention on the anti-

¹⁰¹ Levene argues that in his 'own historical context' Wolf 'was not a loser'; Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. viii.

¹⁰² Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 64.

¹⁰³ Wilson insisted that the Council had not relinquished its power to decide major political questions. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, pp. 144–45, 152–60.

Semitism in a new Poland and the inadequacy of Romania's promised safeguards for its Jews. Wolf made regular appeals to Allen Leeper and Sir Eyre Crowe, the two British men on the Romanian Territorial Commission. His efforts met with resistance. Crowe noted 'it will be well to continue to maintain the position that the Committee on Roumanian frontiers has nothing to do with the Jewish Question'.¹⁰⁴ Likewise Leeper, who pressed for a 'solution to be found with Rumania's own consent',¹⁰⁵ did not consider minority rights a matter for the Committee and argued that it should be referred to the Supreme Council.¹⁰⁶ Crowe was more cynical than Leeper about the prospects of a workable Minorities Treaty in Romania's case, with Under Secretary Charles Hardinge agreeing 'that in practise the guarantees are useless'.¹⁰⁷ Compounding the problem, dispatches arriving from Romania were unsympathetic towards the Jews.

The Jew of Roumania, unlike the Jew of England or France does not ... identify himself to the country of his adoption but remains above all a Jew, a person of foreign and apathetic nationality accentuated by the inveterate exclusiveness of the Hebrew. In Roumania the bourgeoisie commercial class does not exist, this gap has been filled up by the Jews who have endeavoured to exploit their advantage to the detriment of Roumanian nationalism.¹⁰⁸

Britain's official Peace Handbook on Romania noted that 7% of the Old Kingdom's population (mainly Jews) were still denied political rights.¹⁰⁹ While the Jewish Question continued to define Romania's minority issue, by 1919 Hungarians, German Saxons, Serbians and Russians in the new territories saw Romania's minority

¹⁰⁴ Crowe, FO note, 18 Apr 1919, 89, on Dispatch from Lucien Wolf concerning 'Report no. 1 Presented to the Supreme Council of the Allies by the Committee for the Study of Territorial Questions relating to Rumania and Yugoslavia', 6 Apr 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

¹⁰⁵ Leeper notes on FO Dispatch, 21 Apr 1919, 103, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁶ Note from Leeper regarding visit from Wolf, 17 Apr 1919, Leeper to Wolf, 18 Apr 1919, 90; Leeper Note on Dispatch 'Provision Made for Jews in the Report of the Commission on Roumanian Territorial Claims', 21 Apr 1919, 103, FO608/49, TNA.

¹⁰⁷ FO Note on 'Protection of Minorities in Roumania', 30 May 1919, FO608/51, TNA; Wolf submitted the Alliance-Conjoint Foreign Committee Memorials directly to the Peace Conference in February 1919; Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 271.

¹⁰⁸ Foster acknowledged that Jews in new territories were worried that life in Romania would be 'less liberal, their social position perhaps deteriorated and their political rights restricted'. Appendix by Lieutenant-Colonel Foster in General Greenly dispatch, 12 Mar 1919, 4090; Greenly's report, which Leeper noted was 'extremely interesting', claimed the Romanian Jews had sided with the Germans during the war; 'Greenly Report on Roumania', 5156, 25 Mar 1919; FO note on report, 26 Mar 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

¹⁰⁹ Rumania, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, December 1918, p. 72, FO373/2/6, TNA.

population rise to 29%.¹¹⁰ Britain's resistance to Wolf's appeals, who worked on behalf of all minorities, can be explained through an interpretation of Brubaker's nationalism of 'national minorities', representations of which were overridden by a desire to fulfil the ambitions of Romania's homeland nationalism. Imbued with *New Europe's* self-determination principles and 'trying to get together the peoples of South-Eastern Europe to form a bloc' against future German and Russian threats, Leeper's priority was Romania's new frontiers, not its minorities.¹¹¹ By April 1919 British delegate, E. H. Carr, who had submitted a report on 'Minority Rights' in November 1918, wisely suggested Romania's Jewish Question 'needs its own special committee'.¹¹² A few weeks later the matter was taken out of their hands when the Supreme Council committed to a Small States Committee to deal with a Minorities Treaty.

Wolf was mistaken when he claimed the inception of this committee was his victory.¹¹³ The driving force came from the Americans. Louis Marshall, leader of the American Jewish Comité, arrived at the Conference two months after Wolf, but he enjoyed direct access to five of the top American delegates, leaving him well placed to push the minorities issue onto the presidential agenda.¹¹⁴ Levene acknowledges that unlike well-connected Marshall, Wolf lacked direct contact with the leading British politicians and was many steps removed from Lloyd George, instead relying on slower, official channels.¹¹⁵ Although Carole Fink argues that Wolf was 'considered by his critics as a "wise" and "prudent" diplomat', there is plenty to suggest that the close ties

¹¹⁰ Dennis Deletant, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/european-institute/news/2018/apr/romania-creating-nation-state-1918-and-beyond>, accessed 29 Sep 2019.

¹¹¹ A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 21 Feb 1919, 1/3, AWAL, CA.

¹¹² Carr note on FO dispatch, 21 Apr 1919, 103, FO608/49. For Carr's report and Headlam Morley's response see Alan Sharp, 'Britain and the Protection of Minorities at the Paris Peace Conference', in A. C. Hepburn (ed.), *Minorities in History*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1978, pp. 170–88.

¹¹³ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 285.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 182; Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, pp. 202–8; Dillon stressed that America's Jewish contingent was 'the largest and the most brilliant'; Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 12.

¹¹⁵ Fink and Levene refer to the access that Marshall enjoyed. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, pp. 202, 207–8; Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 182.

she identifies between him and the British delegation were not affectionate.¹¹⁶ By April Crowe lamented 'it is a pity that Mr Lucien Wolf cannot be deported to Roumania'.¹¹⁷

Coming from a country where Democratic politics was dependent on Jewish votes in key states, Marshall enjoyed considerable influence as leader of the American-Jewish contingent working to a Democratic president. Jewish minority rights were a pressing issue in a way that they were not in Britain. Carr noted 'no one knows how far the Americans, who are having strong Jewish influence brought to bear on them, may press the question of Jews' rights'.¹¹⁸ President Wilson, aware of America's 3,300,000 Jews, most of whom were recent arrivals from Eastern Europe, was receptive to Marshall's pressure.¹¹⁹ At a Paris dinner with Romania's Queen Marie, Lloyd George and Balfour did not mention the Jews,¹²⁰ but when she met President Wilson on 11 April 1919, the two clashed over Romania's Jewish Question.

He very sanctimoniously preached to me about how we should treat our minorities, demonstrating how very important this was, and expanded at great length upon this topic, becoming exceedingly unctuous and moral as he warmed to his subject, treating me all the while as a rather ignorant beginner who could profit from his advice ... I mildly suggested that he was evidently well acquainted with these difficulties because of the Japanese question in the United States. Upon this he bared his rather long teeth in a polite smile, drew up his eye brows and declared he was not aware that there was a Japanese question in America!¹²¹

This exchange highlights the importance Wilson attached to Romania's minorities issue, and a reciprocal concern on the part of the Romanian delegation, who had briefed their queen regarding Japanese concerns about workers' rights in America, an issue which

¹¹⁶ Fink, *ibid*, p. 149.

¹¹⁷ Crowe, FO note, 89, 18 Apr 1919 on Dispatch from Lucien Wolf, 'Report no. 1 Presented to the Supreme Council of the Allies by the Committee for the Study of Territorial Questions relating to Rumania and Yugoslavia', 6 Apr 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

¹¹⁸ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 281.

¹¹⁹ American Jewish Delegate Cyrus Adler pointed out any decision in Paris would directly implicate the Jewish immigrant population in America. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, p. 202.

¹²⁰ For more on Marie's lunch with Lloyd George see §5.3, p. 268-69

¹²¹ Marie, Queen, consort of Ferdinand I, King of Romania, *The Later Chapters of My Life: The Lost Journal of Queen Marie of Romania*, ed. Diane Mandache, Stroud, Sutton, 2004, p. 74.

had helped scupper Wilson's desire for a global solution to the Minorities Question.¹²² Within three weeks, the Small States Committee was established. Fink cites the convergence of press and political attention in Paris over the Pinsk pogroms in Poland and the impact of pressure from both East European and Western Jewish organisations, to help explain the establishment of this Committee. However, her analysis serves to over-inflate the significance of minorities beyond the confines of the American delegation.¹²³ Although the British recognised that a resolution was needed, a *Manchester Guardian* article, an anti-pogrom demonstration in London and an acknowledgement from Lloyd George that the Peace needed to be durable did not amount to a vociferous demand for minority rights.¹²⁴

It was Marshall's prompt return to America that saw Anglo-Jewish Wolf undertake much of the subsequent work done by the Small States Committee. His effectiveness was facilitated by the appointment of British liberal, James Headlam-Morley, as the 'dominant element' on the Small States Committee and 'the Jews most reliable friend'. A classicist and former member of the PID, Headlam-Morley, who operated within the orbit of the British Prime Minister and his Private Secretary Philip Kerr, had a constructive working relationship with Wolf and together they drove British thinking behind the Minority Treaties.¹²⁵ Both men recognised the limitations of a Jewish national agenda and shared assimilation ambitions for East European Jews.¹²⁶ Their united front was important in the face of proposals that exclusively targeted new states and those with dramatically extended borders (Romanian and Serbia). It was

¹²² For more on the Japanese issue, see Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, pp. 152–59; Marie suggested Wilson was 'in the hands of the Jews' who, with the Germans, were behind the Bolshevik Revolution; Marie Diary, 11 Apr 1919, p. 75, III/117, CMMR, RNA.

¹²³ Fink, *ibid.*, pp. 202–8.

¹²⁴ Fink argues the Pinsk pogrom attracted international press opprobrium but only cites one British article; *Manchester Guardian*, 1 May 1919. The anti-pogrom march in London, 9 Apr 1919, took place on the same day Lloyd George met the Polish leader Ignacy Jan Paderewski; *ibid.*, pp. 184, 186–87.

¹²⁵ For more on Headlam-Morley's network in Paris see Kaufman, 'A House of Cards which Would Not Stand', pp. 228–52.

¹²⁶ Although both men abhorred Jewish nationalism, Headlam-Morley was a champion of the Sabbath clause in the Polish Minorities Treaty; Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 285–89. Indicative of their close working relationship, Headlam-Morley telephoned Wolf after the Romanians signed the Treaty; Wolf to Montefiore, 15 Dec 1919, CII/2/14, ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA.

correctly predicted that Romania's Brătianu would 'deliver a vigorous protest' with other states supporting him, leading to 'a very serious situation'.¹²⁷

Aware his country had made its own peace after the Balkan wars, and emboldened by continued conflict in the East throughout 1919, Brătianu focused his argument on the infringement of sovereignty in East European countries.¹²⁸ Even Temperley, in his cool-headed history of the Conference, conceded 'the reasons for the wrath shown by the small powers on 31st May are not difficult to fathom'.¹²⁹ Romania emerged as the cause célèbre for pugnacious ethnic nationalism and state sovereignty, pushing back against the presumption of Great Power superiority, exemplified in Wilson's retort that while there was 'no intention of humiliating anyone', it was necessary to remember 'that in the matter of minorities, everyone's history has not been quite the same'.¹³⁰ Lloyd George's loud aside delivered while Brătianu spoke – 'this damned fellow; he cannot even get coats for his soldiers without us!' – serves as a reminder of the unchanged presumptions at the heart of power-brokering in 1919.¹³¹

Temperley perhaps best articulated the main contention between Romania and the Conference regarding the Minorities Treaty when he conceded that in the wake of the showdown, 'the Supreme Council were now formally committed; they could not recede from the position they had taken up; the principle of the treaties was to be applied not only to the new states – Poland and Czech-slovakia but to the older Balkan states'.¹³² The authority of the Conference was at stake in a West versus East showdown. Brătianu, as the Treaty's loudest opponent and leader of the country notorious for its persistent negation of the Treaty of Berlin, returned to Romania and cut off communication. The subsequent brinkmanship was more a commentary on the Conference's ability to control events, further complicated by Romania's occupation of Hungary, than it was an exposition of their concern for minorities. From the Supreme Council's point of view, a line had been crossed and Romania needed to be punished.

¹²⁷ Dispatch on Brătianu's conditional response to Headlam-Morley's proposed Minorities Treaty, 30 May 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

¹²⁸ *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. III, pp. 394–409.

¹²⁹ Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. IV, p. 138.

¹³⁰ *FRUS*, vol. III, p. 339.

¹³¹ Sir James Headlam-Morley, *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference 1919*, ed. Agnes Headlam-Morley, Russell Bryant and Anna Cienciala, London, Methuen, 1972, p. 136.

¹³² Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference*, vol. V, p. 132.

However, before his departure Brătianu had reminded the Conference of the reality on the ground, pointing out that Romania's 'own troops' provided 'the defence for the whole of central Europe'.¹³³ Beyond the specifics of the Council's negotiations there was a broader recognition that militarily it was not possible to fully control Romania, and nor was a weak Romania desirable.¹³⁴

Further criticism came from the *Daily Telegraph's* Dillon. He condemned what he saw as the 'moral guidance of the world by Anglo-Saxondom' which stood 'above the new law' while 'maxims proclaimed to be of universal application were restricted to the second class nations'. Romania was the David who slayed the arrogance of an ineffective Wilsonian Goliath by quitting the Conference 'in disgust' and striking out 'their own policy' and 'courteously' ignoring the Great Powers.¹³⁵ In doing so Dillon believed they won the 'substantial sympathy of the largest and most influential section of the world's press'.¹³⁶ While Brătianu worked hard to impress his case on a domestic audience in Romania, claiming that his political rivals would 'humiliate the country' by permitting foreigner interference,¹³⁷ the Foreign Office encouraged Wolf to take up journalistic cudgels in favour of minority protection (Leeper pressed this point).¹³⁸ The request was indicative of the delegation's anxiety over the Conference's media image in Britain, where coverage was sympathetic towards Britain's smaller allies and increasingly paranoid about the role of the Jews.¹³⁹

¹³³ *FRUS*, vol. III, p. 409; Queen Marie pointed out to Conference delegate Clerk that Romania had the 'whip hand' because of their troops in Hungary; Marie Dairy, 19 Sep 1919, p. 205, vol. III/118, CRRM, RNA.

¹³⁴ Rattigan referred to the possibility of revolution in Romania if Brătianu's fall imperilled the monarchy; Rattigan to Curzon, 22 Sep 1919, 196, FO608/51, TNA.

¹³⁵ Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, pp. 184–85, 193.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹³⁷ Rattigan noted the 'press was full of violent articles'; Rattigan to Curzon, 7 July 1919, FO608/49. In his party paper *Viitorul* and French *Le Temps* Brătianu stridently outlined his case; a point reinforced in his October election manifesto as observed by the British delegation. Leeper to Crowe, 19586, 14 Oct 1919, FO608/50, TNA; *Le Temps*, 13 Oct 1919.

¹³⁸ Wolf, Conjoint Foreign Committee to Leeper, 31 Oct 1919, 331, FO608/48, TNA; Headlam-Morley and the British delegation Press Section also encouraged Wolf to 'defend and explain the treaties'. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 304.

¹³⁹ George Moroianu noted the support Northcliffe's publications gave Romania at the Conference, *Legăturile noastre cu Anglia*, Cluj, 1923, pp. 76–80. The *Jewish Chronicle* regularly complained about anti-Semitism in British papers, and was particularly indignant about *The Times's* coverage; *Jewish Chronicle*, 5, 12 Dec 1919.

Wolf had already written to Lord James Bryce who was wary of *The New Europe* nation-builders, and asked him for supportive coverage. Bryce was not unsympathetic, arguing no one 'could ever count on such a country' as Romania. However, he was more concerned about the Hungarians and Szeklers in Transylvania than the Jews, and was too busy to write to *The Times*. He only managed to remark that 'fair and equal treatment is being cynically denied to the minorities that have fallen into' Romania's 'custody' in 'a little speech' at the National Liberal Club. Leaving Wolf without much to go on, Bryce's response was indicative of a wider lack of concern regarding Jewish rights.¹⁴⁰ If Romania's anti-Semitism had once provoked indignation, by 1919 apathy was often the best that could be hoped for. A Jewish correspondent wrote in the *New Statesman*, 'if ever there were a just cause which the Paris Conference should uphold and fight for to the end it is the cause of the 300 000 Jews in the enlarged Romania', and Wolf's *Westminster Gazette* article outlined the need to counter Romanian chauvinism.¹⁴¹ But beyond specific interest groups, attitudes hardened, with British delegate Nicolson declaring in September 1919 'we have heard more than enough about the Jews in Roumania'.¹⁴² Dillon's analysis that the Conference was in hock to Jewish influence served to underline broader concerns about Jewish power in the immediate aftermath of World War, rather than the reality of Jewish powerlessness in Eastern Europe.¹⁴³

Observing relations between the Conference and Romania, Dillon identified the Council's 'repugnance to her whole system of government, with its survivals of feudalism, anti-Semitism and conservatism'. He believed this attitude motivated the Conference to seek

radical and as they thought beneficent change in the entire regime by getting rid of its chiefs. This plan had been successfully tried against MM Orlando and Sonnino in Italy. Their solicitude for this latter aim may have been whetted by a personal lack of sympathy for the Rumanian delegates with whom the Anglo-Saxon chiefs hardly ever conversed.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Bryce to Wolf, 24 Oct 1919, E3/173/5; Memorandum by Lucien Wolf (no date, presumably late 1919), CII/2/14, ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA.

¹⁴¹ *New Statesman*, 20 Sep 1919; *Westminster Gazette*, 12 Sep 1919.

¹⁴² Nicholson Note on FO Dispatch 'Jews in Roumania' from the Committee for the Protection of Jews in Roumania, 16 Sep 1919, 301, FO608/48, TNA.

¹⁴³ Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, pp. 496–98.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

As discussed in §5.1, the British delegates made no secret of wanting ‘the defeat of the Liberal Party and his [Brătianu’s] disappearance’.¹⁴⁵ Returning from his September trip to Bucharest, Leeper argued that Brătianu had ensured the Minorities Treaty had become ‘the burning issue’ in Romania by ‘inflaming public opinion’ and giving the impression that the requirements ‘the treaties proposed are quite different from what they really are’. After Brătianu’s resignation, Leeper claimed, ‘Roumanians who have discussed the matter with an open mind are quite willing now to admit the Treaty itself involves no infringement of Roumanian sovereignty or violation of Roumanian interest.’¹⁴⁶ However, during the same trip Clerk told Queen Marie that ‘the actual form’ of the Minority Question ‘could be modified’ and Iuliu Maniu followed Ionescu in admitting he was concerned about public opinion regarding the Treaty. The more tolerant image of a future Romania which Leeper projected fell short in reality.¹⁴⁷

The British delegation knew most Romanians regarded the treaty as toxic from both a sovereign and a racial perspective and that they would have to moderate their terms accordingly.¹⁴⁸ After successive delays Romania, now under the new premiership of Transylvanian Vaida-Voevod, was granted an additional five-day extension and requested modifications to the Minorities Treaty.¹⁴⁹ As with the Serbian case four days earlier, the modifications were granted, including the removal of two specific Jewish Clauses and a reference to the Treaty of Berlin (although Wolf was pleased these concessions were exchanged for Romanian recognition of ‘all Jews resident in the

¹⁴⁵ Brătianu heard Crowe said this about him; Rattigan to Cruzon, 2 Nov 1919, FO608/50, TNA.

¹⁴⁶ Minutes from Leeper to Crowe, ‘General Impression Acquired during Our Stay’, 1 Oct 1919, 19306, FO608/50, TNA.

¹⁴⁷ Marie Diaries, 19 Sep 1919, p. 205, vol. III/118, CRRM, RNA. Iuliu Maniu expressed concern that he would be totally discredited if he signed the Minorities Treaty; Rattigan to Curzon, 15 Sep 1919, FO608/50. Ionescu had already said he could not sign the Treaty because of the state of public opinion; Rattigan to Curzon, 8 Aug 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

¹⁴⁸ Early on British delegates realised they would have to offer alternative leaders – Maniu, Take, Averescu – ‘a chance of securing more generous treatment’ than Brătianu was offered; Leeper note on Rattigan Dispatch ‘Political Situation in Romania’, 7 July 1919, FO608/49, TNA.

¹⁴⁹ FO notes on Rattigan Dispatch, ‘Rumanian attitude towards Allied Ultimatum’, 28 Nov 1919; Paris Delegation to Rattigan, 28 Nov 1919; Rattigan to Foreign Office, 29 Nov 1919, 20822; Rattigan to Paris delegation, 4 Dec 1919, 20977, FO608/50, TNA.

country and not subject of foreign states as ipso facto Rumanian nationals’).¹⁵⁰ Communications between Headlam-Morley and Wolf shortly after 9 December 1919 were indicative of how important the public presentation of the case was to both sides. Headlam-Morley telephoned Wolf: ‘very pleased with *The Times* report this morning’.¹⁵¹ Wolf explained the modifications were necessary in order that the Romanians could claim the signing was a victory.¹⁵² The *Jewish Chronicle* took him at his word: ‘so far as it could be solved on paper, the Treaty provided a complete solution of the Jewish Question in Roumania’.¹⁵³

Although Wolf convinced himself that the Treaty delivered everything that his February memorial had demanded, it was a hollow victory. Romania had stalled for months, employed all available tactics including the diplomacy of their queen and only signed under extreme duress.¹⁵⁴ This was an agreement in which the Romanians would acknowledge the letter but not the spirit of the law. Irina Livezeanu observes that in Romania ‘the imposition of Western democratic processes such as the equal rights of minorities ... were widely perceived as illegitimate alien grafts and clear demonstrations of disunity within the ethnic Romanian community’ during the interwar period when the country was defined by the emergence of an extreme nationalism that was backed by mainstream politicians.¹⁵⁵ Brubaker observes that if there was recognition of national minorities in the new European states, ‘the civic principles’ that demanded it would ‘remain external’.¹⁵⁶

The Conference, and more specifically the British contingent, allowed themselves to be ‘played’ for appearances’ sake. As Headlam-Morley explained to Seton-Watson, the tussle with Romania and other East European countries over

¹⁵⁰ Wolf to Montefiore, 15 Dec 1919, CII/2/14/ ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA; Germans and Hungarians in Transylvania were granted autonomy in education. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, p. 270; Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 303–5.

¹⁵¹ Wolf to Montefiore, 15 Dec 1919, CII/2/14/ ACC3121, BDBJ, LMA.

¹⁵² Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 304–5.

¹⁵³ *Jewish Chronicle*, 19 Dec 1919.

¹⁵⁴ The Queen made forceful representations to Rattigan on the need for a delay to ensure Romania signed the treaty; Paris delegation to Curzon, 3 Dec 1919, 209633, FO608/50, TNA.

¹⁵⁵ Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, nation-building and ethnic struggle, 1918–1930*, Ithaca, NY; London, Cornell University Press, 1995, pp. 6–7; see also Maria Bucur, *Eugenics and Modernisation in Interwar Romania*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002.

¹⁵⁶ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, pp. 105–6.

minority rights was a historic one about ‘maintaining continuity of policy in the Foreign Office’.¹⁵⁷ The Minorities Treaty, by concluding an issue which had defined Romania in British discourse during the Arnoldian, high Victorian period, was paying lip service to the past. But amidst the political realities of 1919, the real significance of the Jewish Question was scuttled by broader nationalist agendas. Again Brubaker’s analysis is pertinent. In Romania, the nationalising nation sought to quash the national minority issue which looked to portray it as the oppressor state, and Britain’s less tolerant post-war climate worked in favour of the Romanian Kingdom.¹⁵⁸ With the Zionists controversially claiming the national Jewish narrative for Palestine, and Romania seen as ‘an essential bulwark for the preservation of European peace’,¹⁵⁹ British politicians could pretend that the Jewish Question had been resolved, and that an ‘inferior’ Eastern country had been ‘taught to imitate the progressive nations of the West’.¹⁶⁰

5.3 Queen Marie in Paris, London and Greater Romania, 1919

Marie’s high-profile arrival in Paris and London in spring 1919 has attracted considerable historical debate. She has either been portrayed as a vital element in Greater Romania’s success story or a temporary boon with little lasting influence.¹⁶¹ This section will build on previous arguments that the Queen was an important propagandist and seek to ascertain the extent to which Romania was essentialised through her wartime reputation and image on the world stage in Paris, and in the more intimate setting of London’s Buckingham Palace.¹⁶² Cannadine underlines the importance of regal ceremony and ritual in the political arena but wonders ‘what form

¹⁵⁷ Headlam-Morley to Seton-Watson, 21 July 1919, SEW/17/9/3, UCL/SSEES.

¹⁵⁸ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p. 64.

¹⁵⁹ Rattigan talked of ‘the immense importance of Roumania to the cause of civilisation’; Rattigan to Curzon, 2 Nov 1919, FO608/50, TNA.

¹⁶⁰ Dillon, *The Inside Story of the Peace Conference*, p. 241.

¹⁶¹ Her biographers Mandache and Pakula agree she put ‘Romania on the map’; Diana Mandache, *Later Chapters of My Life: The lost memoir of Queen Marie of Romania*, Stroud, Sutton, 2004, p. xxxiii; Hannah Pakula, *The Last Romantic: A biography of Queen Marie of Romania*, London, Phoenix-Orion Books, 1996, p. 295. Florescu and Macmillan considered her impact more superficial: Gheorghe Florescu, ‘Regina Maria și Conferința de Pace’, *Convorbiri Literare*, 2011, vol. III, p. 4; Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 143.

¹⁶² Tessa Dunlop, ‘Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy, 1914–1919’, MA thesis, Sheffield Hallam University, 2012, pp. 37–46.

of power it is?’¹⁶³ Marie questioned how much the promises and attention lavished upon her would translate into hard political and economic currency for Romania, but was in no doubt Paris ‘received me and honoured my country through me’.¹⁶⁴ Regarded as the focal point for the ‘pro-English idea’ in Romania, it will be suggested that Marie’s brief sojourn in Paris and London in March and April 1919 was critical for the image of her country in British discourse. On the Queen’s return to Greater Romania, the success of the trip also helped to facilitate her symbolic role as the figurehead of the country’s union with Transylvania.¹⁶⁵

Romania’s flamboyant queen would have always played well amidst the personality politics and mass media scrutiny that haunted the Conference. However, this section will demonstrate that her significance for Romanian imagining went beyond the impact of her personality and it will stress the importance of Smith’s ethno-symbolic arguments in an assessment of her effectiveness.¹⁶⁶ Having mobilised an idea of the Romanian peasant fighting for his queen during the war, Marie’s arrival in Paris saw her deliberately reinforce this national construct in an international context. Hroch recognises the importance of activists in the instigation of mass participation behind a national idea; this section will look at the impact of that nationalising process when articulated by a queen who talked directly to the British press, and it will discover a sympathetic feminine version of Romania. It will argue that Marie’s effectiveness was enhanced through her ability to capitalise on her British heritage and her framing of Romania as a dependent country. The reinforcement of this imperial-style construct acted as a counterbalance to ideas of Romanian belligerence fostered by Brătianu, leaving the Queen well placed to define and simplify Romania’s imperatives of national consolidation and unification.

¹⁶³ David Cannadine, ‘The Divine Right of Kings’, in David Cannadine and Simon Price (eds), *The Rituals of Royalty: Power and ceremonial in traditional societies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 17.

¹⁶⁴ Queen Marie in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 66. She hoped ‘that the whole thing should be crowned with real and lasting results’. Marie Diaries, 26 Apr, pp. 114–15, 28 Mar 1919, p. 18, III/116, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁶⁵ General Greenly, ‘Report on Roumanian Mission’ 10 Jan 1919, dispatched 25 Mar 1919, 5156, FO608/51, TNA.

¹⁶⁶ Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism*, Hanover, NH, University Press of New England, 2000, pp. 63–78.

Marie's arrival at the Peace Conference in March 1919 was a clever piece of political strategising by her unpopular Premier. Diana Mandache argues that her visit to the French capital was part of a 'new' diplomatic game by Brătianu, but Spector notes that the Prime Minister showed an appreciation of effective propaganda during the war when he sent missions peopled by sympathetic Transylvanians to both Washington and Paris in 1917.¹⁶⁷ Brătianu had also understood and capitalised on Marie's value throughout the war. He used the Queen's dynastic channels to broker diplomatic negotiations during neutrality, and after Romania joined the conflict the Queen was promoted as a symbol of the state among the troops and encouraged to flaunt that image abroad.¹⁶⁸ The invitation to Paris was the culmination of Marie's exceptional war, perhaps best summed up by the *New York Times* which described her as one of the 'vivid and unforgettable figures' to emerge from the conflict.¹⁶⁹ Marie considered it fitting that she had been invited to the Conference, noting in her diary: 'I? Yes of course; I was the one designated – yes I think I felt capable of holding my own, even with the "Great Three"!'¹⁷⁰

World War I had been disastrous for monarchy. Four of Europe's five leading royal houses were destroyed (the Russian Tsar did not have to lose the war to forgo his throne and then his life) and even the British royal family thought it prudent to change their German name, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, to Windsor.¹⁷¹ Against this querulous background Marie's success story was outstanding and her triumphant appearance in Paris served to underline her exceptional status. Combining democratic levels of popularity with the privileges and recognition accorded to monarchy, Marie arrived in a city where the British ambassador, Lord Derby, had been lamenting France's lack of royalty: 'Here the crowds have wandered aimlessly about the streets with no particular objective.' He compared the French capital to London where 'the whole lot seem to

¹⁶⁷ Diana Mandache, 'Introduction', in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. xxxii; Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 56.

¹⁶⁸ M. Bucur, 'Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu: Romanian women and the gender of heroism during the Great War', *Journal of Women's History*, Summer 2000, vol. 12, no. 2, p. 43; Dunlop, 'Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy', pp. 17–26, 27–36.

¹⁶⁹ *New York Times*, 13 Oct 1919.

¹⁷⁰ Queen Marie, *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 19.

¹⁷¹ Miranda Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London, Penguin, 2010, pp. 484–85. Regarding the British royal family's decision to change their name in 1917 see Kenneth Rose, *King George V*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1983, p. 174.

have concentrated on the one place, Buckingham Palace, with a view of cheering the King as the representative of the nation'.¹⁷²

Britain was a constitutional monarchy accustomed to the 'functional relationship between power and ceremonial'.¹⁷³ What the British missed in France, Marie more than delivered for Romania. The *Daily Mail*'s picture page went into overdrive; the Romanian Queen was even photographed inside her royal train arriving in Paris.¹⁷⁴ She was immediately struck by the press pack. 'All the journalists of the "universe" try to get hold of me, like a swarm of bees they buzz around me.'¹⁷⁵ Brătianu had been 'envious of the lavish receptions accorded in Paris to such heroes of resistance as King Albert of Belgium' and 'Prince-Regent Alexander of Serbia'.¹⁷⁶ Marie was his solution; she arrived in Paris at the beginning of March when the Big Four were due to reconvene and just before the territorial commissions were scheduled to deliver their findings and she clinched audiences with the French and the British prime ministers and the American president.¹⁷⁷ Romania, Marie's 'small country' needed to be seen courting the Great Powers, and the British were keen to be associated with a popular English-born queen who was immediately shown off by the French prime minister and with whom even a reluctant American president met twice.¹⁷⁸

Marie's reception in Paris validates Barker's observation that leaders seek to 'engage in mutual legitimization'.¹⁷⁹ However, while Barker focuses on private legitimization between rulers, Marie's gift was to use her 'magic symbols of nationalism' to appeal to the elite minority, while simultaneously parading the legitimacy accrued through those meetings, in front of a wider audience.¹⁸⁰ Her first meeting with one of the 'Great Three' – France's Prime Minister Clemenceau – was lauded in the French

¹⁷² Derby to Balfour, 15 Nov 1918, Correspondence 41, MS 49744, Balfour Papers, BL.

¹⁷³ Cannadine cites the value of studies which focus on this relationship; Cannadine, 'The Divine Right of Kings', p. 4.

¹⁷⁴ *Daily Mail*, 8, 10, 14, 24, 27 Mar 1919; *The Graphic*, 15 Mar 1919.

¹⁷⁵ Marie Diary, 5 Mar 1919, p. 99, III/116, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁷⁶ Spector, *Rumania at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 136.

¹⁷⁷ Dunlop, 'Queen Marie and the Conduct of Romanian Foreign Policy, 1914–19', p. 39.

¹⁷⁸ She first met Clemenceau on 7 Mar and Balfour and Lloyd George on 10 Mar. President Wilson had breakfast with her on 10 Apr and lunch 11 Apr. Marie Diaries 7, 9 Mar 1919, pp. 111–12, 132, III/116, 10, 11 Apr 1919, pp. 68, 74–75, III/117, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁷⁹ Barker, *Legitimizing Identities*, p. 70.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

media and featured in several British papers. There was a picture of the meeting in the *Daily Mail*, and *The Times* referred to the unprecedented full military honours she received.¹⁸¹ In London her dinner with the acting Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, attended by numerous ambassadors and the Churchills, was also considered newsworthy.¹⁸² Given the attention these events attracted, it would be inaccurate to evaluate them primarily as private events. A useful comparison is the much less public reception which Alexander of Serbia was accorded when he arrived in Paris.¹⁸³ Although privately admired by the British Foreign Office, the Prince lacked the celebrity attention Marie commanded.¹⁸⁴

Macmillan concedes Marie made an impression at the Conference but suggests that as decision-making took place within the territorial commissions, the Queen's energies were misplaced.¹⁸⁵ This conclusion underestimates the value of informal diplomacy and access in a city where over twenty countries were vying for attention. Britain, while contemptuous of Brătianu, was mindful of its poor standing in Romania and albeit temporarily, was keen to cement a working relationship with this tricky Eastern ally.¹⁸⁶ Marie, who both felt comfortable among the British establishment and had daily meetings with the Romanian delegation in Paris, was a well-placed figurehead through which to mediate good intentions.¹⁸⁷ Aware of her Prime Minister's

¹⁸¹ Marie's French press clippings for 10 Mar 1919 in VI/4/1919, CRRM, RNA (*Le Journal*, *Le Matin*, *L'Homme Libre*, *Le Petit Journal*, *L'Œuvre*, *L'Echo de Paris*, *L'Avenir*, *Excelsior*, *Les Gaulois*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps*, *L'Intransigeant*); *Daily Mail*, 10 Mar 1919, *The Times*, 8 Mar 1919.

¹⁸² *The Times*, 29 Mar 1919; *Daily Telegraph*, 29 Mar 1919.

¹⁸³ *The Times* dedicated three perfunctory lines to Prince Alexander's arrival in Paris; *The Times*, 3 Feb 1919.

¹⁸⁴ On her return to Bucharest Marie met with Alexander in Serbia and reassured him that 'she felt no bitterness' regarding the contested area in the Banat. Rattigan cautioned that 'her opinions have very little weight in political circles'. Rattigan dispatch, 8 May 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

¹⁸⁵ MacMillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 143.

¹⁸⁶ The Bolshevik threat made this need acute, but a recommendation that Balfour should flatter Romania recognised Brătianu did not make the prospect easy; Crowe observation on FO Notes on Greenly Military Report, 26 Feb 1919, FO608/48, TNA.

¹⁸⁷ Of the British delegation she wrote, 'Having myself been born in a "Great Country" I could only too well comprehend their mentality.' Brătianu visited the Queen daily and 'went over all our national questions'; Queen Marie in Mandache, *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 32, 38–9; Marie Diaries, 7 Mar 1919, pp. 109–10, III/116, CRRM, RNA.

shortcomings, noting prior to her meeting with Clemenceau that Brătianu was ‘hard’ to listen to, she did things ‘in my own way’.¹⁸⁸

Marie enjoyed her lunch with the British leaders. Although Lloyd George professed to dislike the Queen, he was struck by her intelligence and naughtiness, and a more receptive hearing for Brătianu was forthcoming.¹⁸⁹ Lord Derby was impressed by Marie’s political style, referring to her as ‘amusing’ and detailing her supreme confidence:

She never talks of the King at all and always talks of ‘my’ ministers, ‘my’ army and ‘my’ country. She now says that they want her to become the Queen of Poland. I suggested she might undertake also Czecho-Slovakia and try and get Poland, Roumania and CZ as a federated state under her. She took it quite seriously and seemed to think it was an excellent idea and was quite confident she would make it work.¹⁹⁰

That she was in Paris without her King, served to underline Marie’s exceptional status,¹⁹¹ while her gender safeguarded against her overstatements or ‘conceit’ being interpreted as unconstitutional assertions of power. From Britain’s perspective, with a ‘very naughty’ queen as its cheerleader, Romania could be simultaneously accessed and enjoyed.¹⁹²

At the lunch Marie also talked to Arthur Balfour. Jokes about her prospective conversation with President Wilson and whether she should begin it by discussing her pink chemise or the League of Nations indicated a familiarity between the Queen and the British Foreign Secretary.¹⁹³ Their exchanges suggest a coded acknowledgement that they belonged to the old European world of politics and Wilson to a stark new democratic era. Underlining that sentiment was the presence of Herbert Hoover, Head of the American Food Administration, at the same event who struck Lord Derby ‘as a

¹⁸⁸ Marie Diaries, 7 Mar 1919, p. 110, *ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ It was a ‘most charming, quite small lunch’; Marie Diaries, 10 Mar 1919, p. 132, *ibid.*; *Lloyd George: A Diary*, by Frances Stevenson, ed. A. J. P. Taylor, London, Hutchinson & Co., 1971, p. 171; Queen Marie, in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 64.

¹⁹⁰ Lord Derby Diary, 8 Apr 1919, 9, 267, MS 49744, Balfour Papers, BL.

¹⁹¹ Marie’s single status as Queen of Romania in Paris complemented her wartime representations, which Bucur notes were unique in Europe; Bucur, ‘Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu’, p. 43.

¹⁹² *Lloyd George: A Diary*, p. 171.

¹⁹³ Marie Diaries, 28 Mar, pp. 21–2, III/117, CRRM, RNA; *Lloyd George: A Diary*, p. 171.

most disagreeable character'.¹⁹⁴ Over dinner in London with Lord Curzon and his wife, Marie acknowledged that when discussing Romania she made them laugh and cry, 'telling little anecdotes in a funny way, I managed to lead the conversation to what I wanted to talk about'.¹⁹⁵

Challenging Macmillan's dismissal of the Queen's political relevance, when Marie crossed the Channel to visit George V on 12 March 1919, Leeper was keen to discover why she had summoned Brătianu to join her and wanted to know 'what he is up to'.¹⁹⁶ Marie had managed to clinch a meeting with George V for her unpopular Prime Minister which she also mediated.¹⁹⁷ Her trip to Paris and London affirmed her role as a political conduit with the capacity to shape and soften Romania's image. When Brătianu abandoned the Conference three months later and a game of brinkmanship ensued, that role took on new significance. Delivering an ultimatum from the Supreme Council to Romania in September 1919, Sir George Clerk visited the Queen.¹⁹⁸ Although Marie remained unrepentant regarding Romania's occupation of Hungary, Clerk conceded that the Minorities Treaty could feasibly be watered down, and concluded that Romania was hospitable, finding 'real feeling for more intimate relations with England'. His responses suggest that she helped mitigate the unease caused by Brătianu.¹⁹⁹ In December 1919 it was the Queen who beseeched the British Ambassador for additional time prior to the signing of the Minorities Treaty. She appealed to Rattigan 'as a former compatriot', playing on her shared British heritage to prevent 'the fatal consequences to Roumania of a refusal to sign'.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁴ Lord Derby Diary, 8 Apr 1919, 9, 267, MS 49744, Balfour Papers, BL.

¹⁹⁵ Reference to her lunch with Balfour and Lloyd George, Marie Diaries, 10 Mar 1919, p. 132, III/116, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁹⁶ A. Leeper to R. Leeper, 17 Mar 1919, 1/3 AWAL, CA.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.; Queen Marie in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 55.

¹⁹⁸ Leeper Diary, 19 Sep 1919, 1/2, AWAL, CA; Marie Diaries, 19 Sep 1919, p. 205, III/118, CRRM, RNA.

¹⁹⁹ Marie Diary, *ibid.*; Clerk concluded Romanian troops had to withdraw from Hungary but he stressed the need for improved military and political cooperation from the Allies. Sir George Clerk to President of the Council, Oct 1919, 19424; Clerk to Crowe, 8 Oct 1919, 109, FO608/50, TNA.

²⁰⁰ Summary of Rattigan Report in Romania and situation in Paris, sent from Astoria Paris to Lord Curzon, 3 Dec 1919, 20963, *ibid.*

Marie was both British (declaring herself ‘proud I am English’ in the press)²⁰¹ and the first cousin of George V. Those two assets were underlined in the extensive coverage of the cousins’ London reunion. The *Daily Mail* observed that ‘the Belgian suite of apartments at Buckingham palace – the rooms used by President and Mrs Wilson – will be placed at the disposal of the Queen of Rumania and her daughters’. The *Daily Telegraph* recalled her girlhood in Kent’s Eastwell Park and the English-made trousseau for her marriage. Both *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph* noted the presence of George V and his wife, as well as the ‘crimson carpet’, and ‘considerable’ crowds at Victoria station, which awaited this popular monarch.²⁰² That Romania considered the London leg of Marie’s spring 1919 tour as important as the Parisian sojourn was evidenced in the delay prior to the confirmation of her appearance at the Conference. Romania was waiting to hear from Britain regarding the Queen’s stay at Buckingham Palace.²⁰³ Brătianu believed that Marie’s best work in London ‘was to be on excellent terms with the royal family’.²⁰⁴

During her visit, the Queen was clear about where her interests lay – in a closer union between Romania and Britain. Written about and photographed on an almost daily basis,²⁰⁵ Marie elevated Romania’s exposure on the British stage and fulfilled her desire to ‘arouse the interest of your people in my people’. The *Daily Telegraph* decided Romania’s new populations in Bessarabia and Transylvania and other ‘even less known folks’ could be reassured that ‘the advocacy of their wants and rights could not be better represented than by our royal guest’.²⁰⁶ Pictured on the front of the *Graphic*, the journal emphasised that she was the eldest child of the ‘late Duke of Edinburgh’. Beneath a photograph of Marie nursing the wounded, it read ‘The Queen of Roumania is interesting not only for herself but as representing a country which has played a conspicuous part in the War ... [S]he is a woman of great ability, a fitting co-ruler of a

²⁰¹ *Daily Mirror*, 28 Mar 1919.

²⁰² *Daily Telegraph*, 13 Mar 1919.

²⁰³ Marie noted that she was ‘awaiting news from England’ before she could travel. On confirmation of her visit she finalised her travel plans. Marie Diaries, 13, 20, 22 Feb 1919, pp. 70–81, III/115, CRRM, RNA.

²⁰⁴ Marie Diaries, 21 Mar 1919, p. 170, III/116, *ibid*.

²⁰⁵ *Daily Mail*, 8, 10, 12, 14, 24 Mar 1919; *The Times*, 8, 10, 13, 19, 26, 27, 28, 29 Mar 1919; *Daily Telegraph*, 13, 18, 28, 29 Mar 1919; *The Graphic*, 15 Mar 1919; *Sunday Times*, 30 Mar 1919; *Illustrated London News*, 12, 22, 29 Mar 1919.

²⁰⁶ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 Mar 1919.

country that has long stood as an outpost of a civilisation and culture in the wilds of barbarism.’²⁰⁷

Her identity as Romania’s British queen, which Marie deliberately promoted and the British press focused on, encouraged the idea that Britain would enjoy an influential role in post-war Romania. Marie provided what Drummond identifies more generally in Balkan discourse, as the ‘linkage between old world capacity and new world inadequacy’.²⁰⁸ The Queen recognised Britain’s ‘indifference’ towards ‘those Balkan countries’, which is certainly the ‘name they gave us when we were not in the room’, and used her position to hold to account what Wolff and Todorova identify as self-serving Balkan or Eastern stereotyping.²⁰⁹ ‘You English – I can say so though I too am English in a sense – have a way of regarding distant Continental peoples with a sort of superior aloofness.’²¹⁰ Marie beseeched readers to ‘see how much your own interests are bound up with intelligent appreciation of the position of other peoples whom you can help to develop and who are eager for your assistance’.²¹¹

The challenge of quantifying the value of royal ceremony, acknowledged by Cannadine, was obvious to Marie in spring 1919. ‘The difficulty was to ascertain if any of my pleading and interventions had brought about results? Was I making headway? What had I obtained?’²¹² In a quest to overcome the latter conundrum, she resorted to what Drummond argues was the buttressing of colonial and postcolonial power, that demands the construction of geographical zones which invite economic, political and territorial domination.²¹³ Marie occupied that ‘colonial’ space so familiar in Britain, in order to attract aid and attention for her beleaguered nation. *Punch* ran a front cover with Romania personified as a peasant girl begging the Allies not to forget their ‘starving friends’. On the one hand the image is proof that, counter to standard Balkan tropes, Romania could be constructed as a feminine, sympathetic nation, presenting an

²⁰⁷ *Graphic*, 15 Mar 1919.

²⁰⁸ Andrew Hammond, *The Debated Lands: British and American representations of the Balkans*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, pp. 12–13.

²⁰⁹ Queen Marie, in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 39; Todorova describes the Balkans as the ‘culturally despised alter ego’, Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, p. 18; Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, pp. 35.

²¹⁰ *The Times*, 10 Mar 1919.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² Cannadine, ‘Divine Right of Kings’, p. 17; Queen Marie in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 66.

²¹³ Drummond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 12–13.

‘Irresistible Claim’.²¹⁴ On the other, it served to compound Romania’s image as a country dependent on Western help, underscoring a frozen idea of a region suffering from both ‘economic and cultural backwardness’.²¹⁵ (Arguably the image was a caricature of the Queen. Although Marie did not recognise herself in the picture, she considered it a vindication that ‘my coming to England had already created change in public opinion’.²¹⁶)

In a ‘special interview’ with British war correspondent Mary Macleod Moore, Marie positioned herself as the ‘tender, unselfish mother’ of a vulnerable country, ‘whose biggest problem was education’. She extended the metaphor by demanding of Britain both ‘English Governesses’ who can do ‘good national work’, and money to establish ‘district nurses with motor cars’. The former idea was already being considered by the Foreign Office.²¹⁷ Marie’s vision was of a country full of ‘happy, healthy people’, in a Romania that was both ‘small’ and appealing.²¹⁸ In line with Chazan’s identification of Irredentism being a by-product of international transition,²¹⁹ Marie’s national construct was also a work in progress, a growing country that was still learning and which required external assistance. This depiction found its opposite in Brătianu’s aggressive nationalising Romania, against which it acted as a convincing and sympathetic counterpoint, with Marie’s Romania proving a far bigger news story in spring 1919 than any Conference niggles over Romania’s post-war conduct.

However, it is inaccurate to identify Marie’s efforts to shape the image of Romania solely in terms of backward representations within a traditional binary construct that prioritised Western advancement and Eastern dependency. The breadth of her appeal lay in what Smith articulates as the importance of ethno-symbolism in the ‘emotional power and hold of nationalism’.²²⁰ Queen Marie, as a close relative of the British royal family, was a shared national symbol, at once British and Romanian. So too, her publicly acknowledged, sacrificial role in the war provided a conduit for both

²¹⁴ Marie put the *Punch* clipping in her diary; Diary, 15 Mar 1919, p. 152, III/116, CRRM, RNA.

²¹⁵ Drummond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 12–13.

²¹⁶ Queen Marie in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 55.

²¹⁷ Leeper thought the English educational ideas were ‘very good’; Leeper note on A. J. Toynbee memo to Sir William Tyrrell, 10 June 1918, p. 46, FO371/4364, TNA.

²¹⁸ *Sunday Times*, 30 Mar 1919.

²¹⁹ Chazan, ‘The Development of Irredentist Concepts’, p. 143.

²²⁰ Smith, *The Nation in History*, p. 76.

national pride and shared experience.²²¹ ‘The average man’ should no longer think of ‘Roumania as simply one of the troublesome Balkan states’.²²² With Bolshevism recognised as the enemy of monarchy (and Romania’s monarchy specifically)²²³ she was well placed to talk up Romania’s vital strategic role in the face of Bela Kun’s coup.²²⁴ ‘We are keeping a fortress for you down there; but we are very far away. Do not forget us.’²²⁵ As ‘Queen of a gallant and unfortunate Allied country’, she had broad appeal. ‘It may be that the war stirred all the old soldier’s blood in me and made me feel now is the time to play the woman.’²²⁶ The Queen managed a nod to the contemporary issue of female enfranchisement while simultaneously underlining her timeless role as a full-blooded warring monarch.²²⁷

As the repository for British royal standards as well as Romanian potential and vulnerability, Marie deflected attention away from Brătianu’s aggressive assertion of power in Hungary.²²⁸ In July 1919 with King Ferdinand, she accompanied the army into Romania’s contested territory of Transylvania. The *London Illustrated News* dedicated a full-page spread to the Queen’s trip: ‘Royal devoir and Queenly Charities. Roumania’s Queen.’ Marie was photographed in a peasant dress; there were welcoming village deputations and girls in local costumes playing giant mountain horns.²²⁹ With ‘her Grandmother’s gracious charity’ and the ‘modern manners of British Royals’ Marie was

²²¹ In London Marie was awarded both a British Red Cross gold medal by Dowager Queen Alexandra and the Insignia of the Lady of Justice from the Order of St John of Jerusalem; *The Times*, 28, 29 Mar 1919.

²²² *The Graphic*, 15 Mar 1919.

²²³ In early 1918 there were reports that Lenin ordered the arrest of the King of Romania; *Daily Mail*, 18, 19 Jan 1918. The Romanian monarchy was referred to as a vital bulwark against revolution; Rattigan to Curzon, 25 Aug 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

²²⁴ There was extensive coverage of the coup in the press: *Daily Telegraph*, 26, 27, 29, 31 Mar 1919; *Daily Mail* 26, 28 Mar 1919; *Manchester Guardian* 27 Mar 1919; and worries about communist contagion in Britain: *Daily Telegraph*, 12, 13, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31 Mar 1919.

²²⁵ *The Times*, 10 Mar 1919.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ Marie tied her narrative directly to British women. ‘I may be regarded, as indeed I do regard myself, as one of the outposts, one of the representatives of all that the best of the English woman stands for.’ *Daily Mirror*, 28 Mar 1919.

²²⁸ In September 1919 Sir George Clerk and Allen Leeper represented the Conference on a trip to Romania to address several outstanding issues, including Romania’s unauthorised occupation of Budapest and the conduct of its army in Hungary. For an account of the Romanian army in Hungary in 1919 see Torrey, *Romania and World War I*, pp. 366–86.

²²⁹ *Illustrated London News*, 12 July 1919.

at once British and Romanian, contemporary and old-fashioned, conforming to Drummond's analysis that 'the intricate flexible discourse of imperial texts spins webs of colonising power'.²³⁰ In this case a British female figurehead served to legitimise Romania's muscular response to Bolshevik Hungary. The publication approved of the royal tour, informing readers that the King and Queen 'visited the principal towns of Transylvania where they were welcomed with great enthusiasm'.²³¹ This image did not match the reality on the ground. Bucur observes that in the newly incorporated territories there was a 'great ambivalence' towards the royal couple, with Hungarians regarding Marie as the 'partner of the King who took away their status and made them second-class citizens'.²³² The Queen privately acknowledged that the situation in Transylvania was complicated and carefully stage-managed the foreign press who accompanied the tour,²³³ noting they were 'delightfully conscious of the honour of having travelled ten days in a royal train and eating at a king's table'.²³⁴

Marie's ability to embody and publicise an idea of Greater Romania was important. Lloyd George was remembered for his faux pas regarding Teschen, but ignorance about New Europe ran far deeper than the Prime Minister in the spring of 1919.²³⁵ For Lord Derby 'Czecho-Slovaks and Jugo-slavs' were 'weird people', the renowned Czechoslovakian leader Edvard Beneš had a 'weird crowd' and the Yugoslavian government were 'fellows with unpronounceable names'. An ignorance surpassed by Sir William Tyrrell's observation that a British official, Mr Sharp, had 'startled' Romanian politician Take Ionescu by asking him whether 'Transylvania was a man or a woman'.²³⁶ As the celebrity 'face' of Romania, Marie provided an antidote to

²³⁰ Drummond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 12–13.

²³¹ *Illustrated London News*, 12 July 1919.

²³² Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering War in Twentieth Century Romania*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2009, p. 111.

²³³ Marie noted how in the predominantly non-Romanian Transylvanian towns 'many tight shut windows in the principal street were like cold shoulders turned upon those who were looked upon by many as intruders and these hostile tight shut windows saddened me'. Queen Marie in Mandache (ed.), *Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 100.

²³⁴ Marie Diaries, 1 June 1919, p. 15, III/118, CRRM, RNA.

²³⁵ Nicolson recalled the incident gave the idea that those at the Conference were 'ignorant and ill informed'. Nicolson, *Peacemaking*, p. 18.

²³⁶ Ambassador Derby in Paris to Balfour, 15 Nov 1918, p. 123 correspondence 41; Derby's Diary, 14, 16 Nov 1918, p. 133, 140, correspondence 40; Sir W. Tyrrell's note on letter Derby to Balfour, 18 Nov 1918, p. 151, correspondence 46, MS 49744, Balfour Papers, BL.

these hazy interpretations, and her wartime legacy created an emotional link between the British and ideas about Romanians.

In Barker's analysis of national leaders he suggests the role of the masses in the twentieth century has inadvertently belittled the significance of private ceremony between individuals. To justify this argument he cites Hroch's three stages of nationalism where it is only during the third stage that the national elite turn to enlist the masses. Barker misleadingly holds this up as an illustration of the masses' 'relative unimportance'.²³⁷ In Marie's case, she was the iconic symbol of Greater Romania which reached its apogee in Alba Iulia with the carefully stage-managed coronation of 1922, but her power as a figurehead was dependent on the perceived approval and adoration of her subjects.²³⁸ That relationship between Marie's celebrated popularity and elevated position was symbiotic, thus negating Barker's efforts to minimise the focus on mass appeal in legitimate leadership while serving to emphasise the importance of the third stage in Hroch's nationalism model. In Paris 1919 the *Daily Telegraph* wrote of how Marie's 'reward has come. The soldiers call her "mother" and she had the confidence of all the classes.'²³⁹ This 'reward' directly tied her own unimpeachable reputation back to that of her people. She mused publicly 'I do not know why but I have always felt at one with our people' and referred to a 'spontaneous sense of unity with and love for them'.²⁴⁰

Barker highlights the importance of the elite fully representing the nation, while being distinct from them.²⁴¹ The Queen's English heritage and her gender gave Marie's commitment to her adopted country (and theirs to her 'of this I can never be deprived') a newsworthy significance. Having cultivated an international image for being exceptional, by association the Romanian people whose 'love and trust' Queen Marie

²³⁷ Barker, *Legitimizing Identities*, p. 62; M. Hroch, *Comparative Studies in Modern European History: Nation, nationalism, social change*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007, pp. 94–104.

²³⁸ Bucur points out that the coronation 'lacked any legal justification but the king and queen wanted to mark this historic occasion with a magnificent ceremony'. Alba Iulia was the site where Transylvania had voted for unification with Romania and could therefore be held up by nationalists as proof Transylvania belonged to Romania on the basis of democratic principle; Bucur, *Heroes and Victims*, p. 112.

²³⁹ *Daily Telegraph*, 13 Mar 1919.

²⁴⁰ *The Times*, 10 Mar 1919.

²⁴¹ Barker, *Legitimizing Identities*, pp. 36–37.

claimed to value more highly than all else, became exceptional too.²⁴² This idea of a sympathetic Romania personified by the simple peasant or soldier also featured in the ethno-focused assessments of official Foreign Office correspondence. The Romanian peasants were ‘a loyal, honest, industrious and patient race’ and ‘eminently capable of evolving a democratic civilisation’.²⁴³ The implication was that without their pilfering politicians, Romania had the racial capacity to be an upstanding country. Beyond military reports and Foreign Office files, Marie was the figurehead who articulated that hope.

While long-term wariness of Romania’s capacity for political shenanigans had been exacerbated by Brătianu’s wrangling in 1919, the Queen, as a high-profile broker between the supercilious West and her ‘people’, offered a valuable counterpoint. The popularity and respect accorded to Alexander of Serbia is evidence that a royal head of state as a national diplomat was not unusual,²⁴⁴ but Queen Marie’s wartime legacy, charisma and gender guaranteed her a special place in Paris. Admiral Sir Walter Long assured her ‘that propaganda was the most difficult thing to make, that they had all spent thousands of pounds upon it, and that I had been the most astonishing propagandist he had ever seen’. The British legation in Bucharest concurred; aware of the challenges of the Romanian brand, Rattigan conceded that ‘the Queen is an excellent ambassador and is much loved’.²⁴⁵ Marie’s ability to harness her new found status in 1919 ensured that the country’s unpopular politicking was countered through her celebrated royal stature. Justifying her trip to Paris and London, Marie claimed that she came ‘to give Romania a face – she needs a face so I have come to give her mine. And

²⁴² *Daily Telegraph*, 13 Mar 1919.

²⁴³ Also according to the military attaché, ‘the army is of an excellent material ... splendid self sacrifice and discipline’. Greenly to Foreign Office, 21 Mar 1919, FO608/51. That the Foreign Office Handbook identified Romanians as predominantly illiterate and politically passive did not inhibit their optimistic conclusion about Romania’s capacity for democracy. Rumania, Handbooks Prepared under the Direction of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office, Dec 1918, pp. 43, 73–76, FO373/2/6, TNA.

²⁴⁴ Leeper noted ‘this is a very impressive address’ on receipt of a speech by the Prince at the opening of Skuptchina; FO notes 25 Mar 1919, on report of Speech (16 Mar 1919) from General Plunkett, FO608/51. Vice-Admiral Troubridge was also impressed by the Prince Regent; Letter from Ambassador C. De Gras in Belgrade to Hardinge, 14 Jan 1919, 360, FO608/48, TNA.

²⁴⁵ Marie Diaries, 3 Apr 1919, p. 45, III/117, CRRM, RNA; Rattigan to FO, 30 Apr 1919, FO608/51, TNA.

this I succeeded in doing.’²⁴⁶ This ‘face’ softened and legitimised a Greater Romanian identity that included Transylvania and Bessarabia. Marie, fully invested in her adopted country and prepared to capitalise on her British heritage accordingly, provided a credible bridge across a considerable cultural and political divide. It is the exceptional and enduring impact of this queen and her work on Romanian identity in British discourse that has yet to be taken seriously by those same historians who claim the Balkans emerged as a distinct, masculine and untrustworthy construct during this period.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶ Queen Marie, in Mandache (ed.), *The Later Chapters of My Life*, p. 32.

²⁴⁷ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 5, 14; Hammond, *The Debated Lands*, pp. 2–3.

Conclusion

Focused on a period of unprecedented engagement between Britain and Romania, this thesis has sought to highlight the importance of common national interests for the assertion of positive Romanian imagery in British political and public discourse. During and immediately after World War I, geopolitical demands briefly prioritised a flattering version of the country over the ambiguous, pejorative representations that had previously dominated. In order to illuminate Romania's evolving identity in British thinking, this study has brought into productive exchange explorations from a wide range of fields. These include Romania's perceived place within several spatial groupings, particularly Balkanism, an examination of 'experts' and their agency in political and public constructions of Romania, the roles of monarchy and gender in diplomacy and national imaging, and the polarised responses to national identification in relation to Romania's Jewish question and the peasant motif. Several prominent theories of nationalism have been assessed in relation to this multi-dimensional material; these theoretical frameworks have helped explain the contradictions and compromises that impacted on competing ideas about Romania, a country which saw its identity shift from savage Eastern unknown to membership of a New European category within a decade.

This thesis concludes in 1919, a year that witnessed a clash between British expectations and the political realities behind three prominent Romanian nationalisms, all of which are informed by the above fields of research and are best articulated through an assessment of Rogers Brubaker's triadic nexus of nationalisms. At the Paris Peace Conference the ambitions of Prime Minister Brătianu's nationalising nation, the claims of Romania's Jewish national minority, and the fulfillment of Romania's homeland nationalism, focused predominantly on the Transylvanian Romanians, were competing realities on the international stage. Brubaker identifies three equivalent nationalisms in a post-war context, by which time the homeland nationalism belongs to defeated Hungary and Bulgaria and is pitted against Greater Romania's nationalising nation in possession of an expanded minority population.¹ However it is through an earlier pre-war identification of all three distinct and evolving nationalisms that this

¹ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the national question in the New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 107.

study elucidates Romania's complex emerging national identity in British discourse and helps make sense of the political decision-making in 1919.

Liberal politician and historian George Trevelyan identified a Romania predominantly defined through its Jewish Question, which had become an international issue as early as the 1860s.² Rising tensions in Europe and Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe intensified nationalistic tendencies in Britain by the turn of the twentieth century and saw the prominence of and sympathy for Romania's Jewish minority give way in favour of a focus on the Romanian population in Transylvania and the Old Kingdom's developing external homeland nationalism framed against a chauvinistic Hungary. The subsequent wartime identification of an ethnic Romania mobilised in the name of 'freedom and justice' that would fight for its oppressed ethnic brothers in adjacent Transylvania, conveniently disguised the nationalising tendencies of the Romanian state.³ The prominence this narrative was accorded suited Britain's strategic war needs and suppressed the uncomfortable realities behind Romania's conflicting identities.

Chapter 1 analysed a Romania which, on the peripheries of British interest and without a distinct Balkan identity, confounded regional generalisations and lacked a British champion. Chapter 2 acknowledged that changed in 1913, when two influential commentators, Dr. Emile Dillon and R. W. Seton-Watson, focused on Romania as an emerging power in South East Europe. With Seton-Watson's version of the country predominantly identified through the oppressed Romanian population in Hungary, it established Dillon as the Romanian Kingdom's leading champion in 1913. Previously excluded from Britain's recognised pool of Balkan 'experts', the identification of Dillon's influence is a significant addition to a historiography which has consistently overlooked the impact of journalism and conservative commentary on Balkan and wartime expertise.⁴ The role both Dillon and Seton-Watson played in highlighting Romania's exceptional status, singling it out as a peace broker in the region, does not negate Maria Todorova's general assertion of Balkanism as a pejorative trope that

² G. M. Trevelyan, 'Serbia Revisited', *Contemporary Review*, Jan 1915, vol. 107, p. 273.

³ *Punch*, 6 Sep 1916, front cover.

⁴ Eugene Michail, *The British and the Balkans: Forming images of foreign lands, 1900–1950*, London; New York, Continuum, 2011, p. 41; Volker Prott, 'Tying Up the Loose Ends of National Self-determination: British, French and American experts in peace planning 1917–1919', *Historical Journal*, 2014, vol. 57, no. 3, pp. 727–50.

hardened between 1912 and 1918. However, this thesis acknowledges Romania's conflicted place within that rubric.⁵

The early efforts to shift Romania's status from an obscure Eastern nation to an emerging power in South East Europe were facilitated during World War I. Chapters 3 and 4 discovered that Romania's Balkan and Eastern identities, fixated on by Dillon in neutrality, and highlighted in a Jewish context by the Conjoint Committee, were diminished and overlaid with representations of a Latin Romania fighting for its Roman heartland in Transylvania. Romania's European identity was well served in a conflict that saw the term Balkan become less applicable as a political shorthand, when countries in the Peninsula fought on opposing sides. Associations with a larger Eastern rubric were also lessened by the muted commentary on the Jewish Question during the war, while the Russian Revolution strengthened ideas about Romania as an exceptional European monarchy.

Extreme wartime dislocation that saw the country cut off by December 1916, exacerbated the influence of a few British 'experts' in a conflict which required a sympathetic European ally. Although ultimately Britain retained a Saidian 'upper hand' in political representations, Chapters 2 and 4 highlighted the influence Romanian diplomats and politicians had over constructions of their own country. Their role was facilitated by common British and Romanian interests in an information-sharing process that began with Seton-Watson's pre-war contact with Transylvanian Romanians and was reinforced through the work of Romanian émigrés in wartime London. A lack of knowledge about Romania and a British willingness to accept a narrative that suited their geopolitical ambitions served to over-emphasise Transylvania's potential influence and exaggerate the prospects for change in post-war Greater Romania.

Romania's nationalising tendencies were exonerated through a wartime focus on an external homeland narrative directed towards a vaunted Romanian minority in British discourse. This ability to dissemble Romanian chauvinism was particularly important in 1919 when Britain played a leading role in the reconstruction of Central and South East Europe at the Peace Conference. Romania, winning territory from both Austria-Hungary (Transylvania, the Banat, Bucovina) and Russia (Bessarabia) and

⁵ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, New York; Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 7.

retaining Dobrogea in Bulgaria, was set to gain disproportionately. Chapter 5 outlined how Greater Romania became part of a Central European constellation posited as a solution to concerns over Russian Bolshevism and a potentially revanchist Germany. However, despite deliberate wartime efforts to reframe Romania, Chapter 5 also acknowledged a persistent uneasiness among British politicians; significantly the ‘heart’ of delegate Harold Nicolson did not ‘sing’ for Greater Romania as it did for the other countries in the region. Decades later, historian Kenneth Calder also avoided Romania in his seminal analysis of post-1918 New Europe.⁶ Ultimately the strategically motivated efforts to identify a European Romania in the 1910s through a sympathetic homeland narrative, could not eradicate a stubborn wariness of the country and what it stood for. It was in this context that the controversy over the Minorities Treaty and Romania’s Jewish Question acquired a fresh relevance.

Romania’s more pronounced Eastern geography and identity put it at a relative disadvantage among the countries in a feted post-war New Europe. During the latter half of the war, expert thinking regarding the creation of new states from lands which lay predominantly within the Habsburg Empire had gradually been adopted as policy by the British government. Boasting ancient ethnic and historic nations, Czechoslovakia and much of Poland were carved from the west-facing territory of the former Dual Monarchy, with Prague enjoying the distinction of having served as the capital of the Holy Roman Empire twice since the fourteenth century. Significantly, New Europe’s primary champion, Seton-Watson, left the Conference in May for a month-long visit to Czechoslovakia, where he provided British delegates with first-hand information.⁷ Meanwhile Serbia’s future was promoted as part of Yugoslavia, a new country, half of which was made up of former Habsburg territories, including Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia, while Serbia’s valour on the battlefield conveniently disguised the distinct Balkan footprint of Yugoslavia’s largest component nation. It is in the context of this Central European rubric that Allen Leeper’s efforts to package the reality of a Greater Romania around a possible Transylvanian future, need to be understood.

⁶ Kenneth, J. Calder, *Britain and the Origins of New Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976.

⁷ Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: R. W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary*, London, Methuen, 1981, pp. 365–72.

In this New Europe, self-determination and democracy were posited as fundamental principles to be guaranteed by a League of Nations. However, Romania's reluctance to sign the Minorities Treaty in 1919, the country's unauthorised military incursions into Hungary, and disagreements with Serbia over the Banat were indicative of what came next. Irina Livezeanu summed up interwar Greater Romania as 'the idea of unifying all ethnic Romanians and all the contiguous territories where they lived, into one state'.⁸ This mission was chiefly propagated and sustained in the 1920s by Brătianu's National Liberal Party. The resultant post-war nationalising Romanian nation, home to sizeable national minorities and driven by fear and desire, that fought to establish ethnic Romanians in public office and for which anti-Semitism became a national rallying cry,⁹ provides the denouement for Brubaker's post-1918 model of reframed nationalisms. Exclusive Greater Romania was a nation that British war aims helped create, but the reality of which British delegates in Paris never fully acknowledged.

Britain's apparent complicity in constructions of this nationalising nation in 1919 was facilitated by the pre-war problems associated with Romania's identity in British thinking. Chapters 1 and 2 addressed historiography's inconsistent treatment of Romania within a Balkan rubric. Through an extensive interrogation of a wide evidential base, it has been demonstrated that before the second Balkan war Romania's perceived inclusion in this spatial grouping invariably did not stand up to scrutiny. Even the violent 1907 Peasants' Revolt, which ostensibly conformed to negative ideas of Balkanism, served to pin Romania to a broader East European identity with its anti-Semitic overtones and compromising depictions of the peasantry. That within five years Romania could be hailed as the first among Balkan equals in the wake of the second Balkan war is indicative of the superficial basis upon which judgements about this region were made.

While ill-formed paradoxical ideas about Romania compromised its early imaging in British discourse, this thesis has suggested that the fluid inchoate nature of these constructs served both Romanian and British political ambitions well in World

⁸ Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater-Romania: Regionalism, nation building and ethnic struggle, 1918–1930*, Ithaca, NY; London, Cornell University Press, 1995, p. 4.

⁹ Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*.

War I. In line with ‘expert’ opinion, British diplomatic representations sought to highlight Romania’s redeeming European and peasant qualities in an atmosphere that increasingly demanded a moral case for war. To better explain this image-overhaul which saw British ideas of Romania shift from uncivilised East European player to feted member of a New European rubric, it is instructive to return to Miroslav Hroch’s three-stage model.

Chapter 2 argued that Hroch’s efforts to develop methods for the ‘assessment of experiences of nation-building’ in the East, which involved the identification of an ‘exogenous’ ruling class that dominated ethnic groups, helps to explain the appeal in British discourse of the well organised Transylvanian Romanians living under the yoke of the Magyars.¹⁰ However, this thesis observed that, although appropriate for other Balkan states, Hroch’s model was not applicable to British interpretations of the pre-war Romanian Kingdom. The widely reported violent 1907 Peasants’ Revolt delegitimised ideas about Romania and highlighted the absence of a ‘mass movement’ stage in the country’s formation. The peasants were framed as disenfranchised and predominantly illiterate and their oppressors were identified not as ‘exogenous’ rulers but rather Romanian landowners or Jews. This perceived Romanian exceptionalism explicates the early difficulties inherent in efforts to articulate Romanian identity in British discourse, and British experts’ preponderant emphasis on sympathetic Transylvania as the country’s potential saviour.

Chapter 4 argued that it was the iconic appeal of Queen Marie, who established herself as an outstanding national champion during Romania’s war, that served as a bridge between the final two stages in Hroch’s model which involve a ‘new range of activist’ and mass mobilisation. The popularity of Romania’s royal nurse and mother, framed as the saviour of her peasant soldiers, was enabled through Germany’s occupation of two thirds of Romania in December 1916. Her opposition and strength in the face of German ‘frightfulness’ saw Marie celebrated as an effective and sympathetic champion of a country that by 1919 was exhibiting rampant chauvinism. Fulfilling Hroch’s three-stage criteria, at the end of the war Romania both presented as a more easily recognisable national construct in British discourse and was simultaneously better placed to push forward its nationalising nationalism agenda.

¹⁰ Miroslav Hroch, ‘From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The nation-building process in Europe’, *New Left Review*, 1993, 193, pp. 3–20.

This version of Romania was embraced in the British press in large part due to Marie's outstanding wartime efforts at promoting herself, her adopted country and her peasant soldiers. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide a significant contribution to recent ideas concerning the gendered nature of nationalism in the context of war. Maria Bucur acknowledges Marie's dominant domestic image but fails to interrogate her international impact post-August 1916.¹¹ Building on the oeuvre and imagery established by her predecessor Queen Elizabeth, Marie was able to refocus wartime representations of Romania away from standard masculine tropes through the transposition of the soldier-peasant narrative onto a fresh, affectionate, and crucially, feminine canvass.

This thesis has returned to Anthony Smith's identification of the ethno-symbolic aspects of nationalism in order to explain the appeal of Romania's Latin heritage and national idea, essentialised through Marie.¹² Chapter 3 discussed how the national insecurities of wartime Britain played to sympathetic representations of the devout sacrificial peasant. Military constructions of Romania were grafted onto that affection for the peasant-soldier motif and in the wake of military collapse the same imagery was reframed under the sympathetic figure of Romania's leading nurse and queen. In this context, Marie's wartime popularity in Britain, which capitalised on pre-existing ruralist messaging, supports Todorova's contention that the characterisation of West Europe as the area that produced modern principles, and East Europe as the region characterised by 'its obsession in producing historical myths', does not stand up to closer scrutiny.¹³

However, the combined impact of both Queens, Marie and Elizabeth, challenges Romania's place in Todorova's characterisation of Balkan imaging as male and prosaic and her dismissive tone regarding Romania's Hohenzollern dynasty.¹⁴ Their ephemeral writings and feminine personas, which endured across decades, were more

¹¹ M. Bucur, 'Between the Mother of the Wounded and the Virgin of Jiu: Romanian women and the gender of heroism during the Great War', *Journal of Women's History*, Summer 2000, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 30–49.

¹² Anthony Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical debates about ethnicity and nationalism*, Hanover, NH, University Press of New England, 2000, pp. 76–77.

¹³ Maria Todorova, 'The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, temporality and the study of eastern European nationalism', *Slavic Review*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2005, pp. 152–53; Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 3, 7.

¹⁴ Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, pp. 5, 14.

representative of qualities that Todorova attributes to the Orient ‘as an exotic and imaginary realm’.¹⁵ In a process started by Queen Elizabeth, who helped establish the idea of Romania as an otherworldly ancient realm in British discourse, it was during the war under Marie that the country was convincingly included in a European narrative through representations of the Latin peasant and his English-born saviour.

Marie’s gendered appeal, which played to conventional conceptions of femininity, went beyond a reiteration of Romania’s immutable peasant stock and served to inspire a literary genre of its own. Chapter 4 analysed the published wartime endeavours of several British female writers whose tone avoided the suffrage-style militancy of their British Serbian equivalents and affirmed Romania’s identity as a sympathetic, albeit vulnerable nation, on a journey to greatness. Perfidious male connotations were airbrushed out of this re-versioning of Romania, in a country that had always been far harder to positively identify on the basis of its ‘political aspects’.¹⁶

In the political sphere, Marie’s presence helped compensate for Romania’s untrustworthy reputation. An analysis of British correspondence with and coverage of Romania’s Queen during the war and at the Paris Peace Conference leave no doubt as to her impact; she was a significant diplomatic force whose ability to garner headlines heightened her relevance. With her influence over weak King Ferdinand well known and as a sympathetic focal point for diplomats and politicians, Marie’s impact on the international stage culminated in 1919. Her prominence in both British public and political discourse insists that Roderick Mclean’s assertion of monarchical influence in the diplomatic field should be extended beyond 1914 in the case of Romania, a country where ideas regarding the diminution of royalty during and post-World War I are not applicable.¹⁷

With Romania’s image cast through the prism of their English-born queen, the imperative to challenge the country’s belligerent nationalism in 1919 was reduced in British representations. This ability to reframe her own country demands a slight reappraisal of the presumptions behind the binary power dynamic in Western representations of the East. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, it was Marie’s German

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁶ Smith, *The Nation in History*, pp. 76-77

¹⁷ Roderick, R. Mclean, *Royalty and Diplomacy in Europe, 1890–1914*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, who initiated the keen international association between Romania and sympathetic female royal figureheads. Both women were European imports but their capacity to facilitate an essentialised version of their adopted country helped legitimise their own identity as Romanian Queens beyond that superficial ‘invented’ facade recognised by Hobsbawm. Chapters 4 and 5 discovered a Marie who belonged to Romania, yet for the benefit of her British audience capitalised on her reputation as an outsider, encouraging the reader to see Romania as she saw it, coquettishly playing to the familiar expectations and presumptions of British diplomats and royalty, and exercising an imperial concern for her ‘small country’. In Britain she was familiar yet foreign, belonged to Eastern Europe but appeared exotic, and perhaps most importantly, she was an exceptional royal success story in which Britain could share.

The hybrid role Marie occupied challenges the Saidian premise of exteriority as a presumed aspect of Western representations, which most British ‘experts’ in this study otherwise conform to.¹⁸ Chapters 2, 4 and 5 have demonstrated that in the early twentieth century Romanian identity was predominantly shaped by politically influential men whose own appraisals of Romanian nationhood were both partial and conditional. Seton-Watson’s overriding concern was the establishment of a viable post-war Europe based on the principles of self-determination in the wake of the demise of the Habsburg Empire. Early contact with influential Romanian Transylvanians impacted on his perceptions of a possible future Greater Romania within this larger New European construct, a vision facilitated by his embedded anti-Semitism which served to negate concerns over Romania’s long standing Jewish Question. It was the growing influence of Seton-Watson and a coterie of like-minded thinkers in wartime Britain, and the promotion of their ‘small nations’ agenda through public and political channels, that saw Romania’s image distorted to fit a political vision in Britain which prioritised the creation of a New Europe as a means of achieving lasting peace on the continent.

If Seton-Watson was retrospectively feted as a great friend of Romania (and honoured accordingly), and had, by 1934, written the definitive history of Romania for an English-speaking audience,¹⁹ other ‘experts’ engaged with the country on a more

¹⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London, Penguin, 2003.

¹⁹ Romanian honours for Seton-Watson included: The Order of the Crown of Romania in the grade of Commander, 1921, Honorary Member of the Romanian Academy, 1923,

transitory basis. New Europe acolyte and Romanian ‘expert’, Leeper, did not visit the country until 1919, and with the majority of the legwork completed at the Conference he was looking to shed his commitment to the Anglo-Romanian Society the following year. However, it was journalist Dillon’s indignant outbursts during Romania’s neutrality that best exemplify the potential for inconsistency in external opinion-making. Dillon quickly adapted and contradicted his previous arguments in support of Romania, in an effort to align the country with his British-centric conservative world view which was subject to the demands of international alliances, and ultimately, war.

In contrast Marie, a leading champion of Romania in Britain from 1916, always put the interests of her adopted nation first. That she formulated representations of her country which would appeal to British ideas of Eastern backwardness, and was most effective when British and Romanian strategic needs coincided, affirms that she was operating within a conceptual structure ultimately dictated by a Western power. However, as both an external representative for her country and an internal one, Marie was a figurehead whose representations of Romania complicate interpretations of a paradigm where exteriority and power are presumed to travel from West to East.

Marie’s prominence in British discourse between 1916 and 1919 had ramifications for Romania’s interwar image. Her literary appeal endured, further complicating Vesna Goldsworthy’s thesis that the West appropriated and ‘exploited the resources of the Balkans to supply its literary and entertainment industries’ in what she terms as ‘imaginative colonisation’.²⁰ Marie controlled the images of herself and her country that she sold to the West, albeit within established Ruritanian and royal tropes. In 1925 she published a second book about Romania and by the early 1930s there were three volumes of the Queen’s memoirs.²¹ In 2018 104-year-old retired art publisher Ann Baer, the daughter of the publisher Frank Sidgwick of Sidgwick & Jackson, remembered a Christmas present she received in 1920 aged 6. ‘I was given a copy of

Honorary Citizen of the City of Cluj, 1923, Honorary Doctor of Cluj University, 1929 cited in Cornelia Bodea and Hugh Seton-Watson (eds), *R.W. Seton-Watson și românii, 1906–1920*, București, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1988, vol.2, pp. 936-37. Robert W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians, from Roman times to the Completion of Unity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1934.

²⁰ Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The imperialism of the imagination*, New Haven; London, Yale University Press, 1998, p. 2.

²¹ Marie, Queen of Romania, *The Country that I Love*, S.I., Duckworth, 1925; Marie, Queen of Romania, *The Story of My Life*, London, Cassell, 1934–35, 3 vols.

Queen Marie's *Peeping Pansy*. The book fascinated me. The illustrations were magical. There was a roof planted with irises and little door in a tree.' Ann knew the Queen was 'related to the English royal family and also that she was Romanian', and that *Peeping Pansy* had been reviewed in her father's trade magazine *The Bookman*.²² This vivid recall is evidence not only of Marie's literary reputation, but also the enduring association between the Queen, her fantasy oeuvre and Romania.

In the early 1920s a lavish coronation and the conversion of 10 May into a Heroes Day and national holiday emphasised the monarchy's central role in Greater Romania.²³ Internationally Marie's work and profile also dominated Romanian identity, offsetting less flattering ideas of a country that *The Times* like to remind readers included Bessarabia, a region both 'remote' and 'untutored'.²⁴ Confronted with an ill King Ferdinand, in late 1926 the *Sunday Times* wrote 'the throne means almost as much to Rumania as it does to the British Commonwealth'.²⁵ A royal visit to Britain by Romania's King and Queen in 1924 and Marie's well publicised tour of America in 1926 reaffirmed the international appeal of Romania's royalty after World War I. The belief that in Greater Romania the 'throne is the axis around which the unity of the country revolves', belied a British perception of Romania established by Marie in the war, where the monarchy had become shorthand for the country itself. Like much of Europe, interwar British politics were introspective; disengagement was the hallmark of relations in the Balkans. However a British survey of newspaper reading habits confirmed that the popularity of royal stories endured.²⁶ This contextualises the *Sunday Times*'s earlier commentary. Marie, and by association Ferdinand, identified as familiar constitutional monarchs, guaranteed Romania a sympathetic place in British discourse until the King's death in 1927.

Marie's success as her country's leading national indicator in Britain would exacerbate her 'wayward' son's failure. Although by 1938 constitutional monarchy had

²² Ann Baer, i/v recorded 25 July 2018 in Richmond, London; Marie, Queen of Romania, *Peeping Pansy, Illustrated by Mabel Lucie Attwell*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1919.

²³ Maria Bucur, *Heroes and Victims: Remembering war in twentieth century Romania*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 2009, pp. 102, 103, 110–12.

²⁴ Cited in Henry Baerlein, *Bessarabia and Beyond*, S.I., Methuen, 1935, p. 117.

²⁵ *Sunday Times*, 12 Dec 1926.

²⁶ Survey cited in Eugene Michail, *The British and the Balkans: Forming images of foreign lands, 1900–1950*, London; New York, Continuum, 2011, p. 19.

survived in Romania for nearly 60 years – a unique achievement in the Balkans – during the 1930s Carol II gained notoriety as ‘Europe’s most corrupt crowned head’²⁷ and exposed the flaws in a monarchical system which depended on a responsible custodian. Tom Gallagher cites ‘an inglorious tradition of the leaders of the Western powers deciding the fate of small Balkan states on the basis of stereotypical views about a country and its leaders’. He suggests Carol’s widely reported lifestyle may have encouraged British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to abandon Romania ‘to the tender mercies of the Soviet Union during the Second World War’.²⁸ With Carol’s efforts at totalitarian rule challenged by an internal fascist movement, it is unlikely Churchill would have found much to redeem Romania had he looked beyond the King but nonetheless the monarch’s prominence underlines a binary association between Romania and its royal image that was firmly established during World War I.

Twenty years earlier when affectionate ideas of Romania were centred around a ‘European Royal’ like Queen Marie, generalising about a nation on the ‘basis of stereotypical views’ did not appear as quite such an ‘inglorious tradition’. The subsequent diminution of Marie’s royal role and Carol’s assumption of the throne in the 1930s exposed the flimsiness of Romanian constructs in British discourse, dependent on both a political imperative and a sympathetic figurehead. Carol II, as the first monarch born in Romania and with an undisguised contempt for parliamentary rule, was easier to identify as an ‘oriental despot’ and Romania, increasingly drawn into Nazi Germany’s economic orbit, was denigrated accordingly.

This thesis has been written one hundred years after the events described here. Much has changed. It is thirty years since the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the country’s re-engagement with the West. Romania no longer has a ruling royal family to act as a bridge between the two countries sitting on opposite sides of Europe but former ties were commemorated when the Romanian government decided to fund and erect a statue of Queen Marie in Kent, the English county of her birth, to celebrate

²⁷ Tom Gallagher, *Outcast Europe: The Balkans, 1789–1989, from the Ottomans to Milošević*, London, Routledge, 2001, pp. 101–2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*; Hitchins argues that under Romania’s 1923 constitution Ferdinand respected the limitations on royal powers, but they were ‘ineffective in curbing the appetite for power of a Carol II’; Keith Hitchins, *Rumania, 1866–1947*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, p. 379.

the centenary of Greater Romania in December 2018.²⁹ Her inanimate appearance in Britain a hundred years after World War I is an apt reminder of a representational relationship that was ultimately facilitated and controlled by Britain, but in which the central player was a woman who belonged to Romania.

²⁹ www.icr-london.co.uk/article/queen-marie-of-romania-memorial-statue-erected-in-ashford-kent-on-the-occasion-of-the-great-union.html, accessed 2 Sep 2019.

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