

MARTOR



Title: "Public and the Private in Communist Romania: The Retrospective of a Dynamic Dichotomy Twenty Years after the Demise of the Communist Regime"

Author: Maria Mateoni

How to cite this article: Mateoni, Maria. 2012. "Public and the Private in Communist Romania: The Retrospective of a Dynamic Dichotomy Twenty Years after the Demise of the Communist Regime". *Martor* 17: 51-68.

Published by: Editura MARTOR (MARTOR Publishing House), Muzeul Țăranului Român (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant)

URL: <http://martor.muzeultaranuluiroman.ro/archive/revista-martor-nr-17-din-2012/>

Martor (The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review) is a peer-reviewed academic journal established in 1996, with a focus on cultural and visual anthropology, ethnology, museum studies and the dialogue among these disciplines. *Martor* review is published by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant. Its aim is to provide, as widely as possible, a rich content at the highest academic and editorial standards for scientific, educational and (in)formational goals. Any use aside from these purposes and without mentioning the source of the article(s) is prohibited and will be considered an infringement of copyright.

Martor (Revue d'Anthropologie du Musée du Paysan Roumain) est un journal académique en système *peer-review* fondé en 1996, qui se concentre sur l'anthropologie visuelle et culturelle, l'ethnologie, la muséologie et sur le dialogue entre ces disciplines. La revue *Martor* est publiée par le Musée du Paysan Roumain. Son aspiration est de généraliser l'accès vers un riche contenu au plus haut niveau du point de vue académique et éditorial pour des objectifs scientifiques, éducatifs et informationnels. Toute utilisation au-delà de ces buts et sans mentionner la source des articles est interdite et sera considérée une violation des droits de l'auteur.

Martor is indexed by EBSCO and CEEOL.

Public and the Private in Communist Romania: The Retrospective of a Dynamic Dichotomy Twenty Years after the Demise of the Communist Regime

.....

Maria Mateoni

Maria Mateoni is a researcher at the Romanian National Peasant Museum. She holds a BA degree in History from University of Bucharest and a PhD degree in Ethnology from Laval University, Quebec.

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the dynamic relationship between the public and the private in the Romanian rural world during the communist period. The analysis is based on oral interviews with persons comprising various age groups and diverse socio-professional categories. The data was gathered during an anthropological research project on communism undertaken between 2011-2012 by the Romanian National Peasant Museum

KEYWORDS

Public - private, adaptation, resistance, compromise, approachment - reapproachment.

Considering that Marxist-Leninist ideology aspired to shape an egalitarian society, the attempt to apply the notions of public and private to the societies of the former Communist bloc may seem paradoxical (Christian, Knott, 2009: 1). The program of the Bolshevik Revolution took an explicit stance against the distinction between the public and the private, since the relationship between the two was regarded as intrinsic to bourgeois society. Indeed, the very notions of public and private were considered "bourgeois" ideological categories. As such, they had to be eliminated at all cost.

From a juridical standpoint, the regime replaced "public" with the notion of "common," while the expression "private" was substituted with the term "personal" (Christian, Knott, op. cit.: 6). The concept of "common" designated the domain of production carried out by means of etatized means of production. On the other hand, the notion of "personal" indicated consumption, which is an individual matter often engaged in by possessing private property over goods.

Despite the massive nationalization of the economy, the communist systems - including the Romanian regime - did not entirely sup-

press individual private property, least of all personal consumer goods. The regimes not only tolerated consumption, but also encouraged the development of a socialist consumer society as an alternative to capitalist consumerism (Betts, 2008: 1-54). Consequently, the communist regimes continued to act upon certain public and/or private realities, although the very existence of these categories was officially denied.

Contrary to what George Orwell implied in his anti-utopia, the communist regimes did not succeed in completely absorbing the private sphere. A personal, private life continued to exist alongside and in opposition to a transparent, surveilled, and controlled public sphere. Despite the ideological discourse that propounded the elimination of the cleavages between the two realms, the relationship between the two spheres was dynamic and constantly negotiated by social actors. Their practices contributed to the shaping of a new society conceived differently than the previous, allegedly bourgeois and retrograde social order.

This article focuses on the dynamic relationship between the public and the private in Romanian society during the period of com-



photo©Vlad Columbeanu

munist rule, as well as on the modalities whereby this relationship evolved in response to state policies. The reaction of social actors to these policies will likewise be analyzed, particularly their strategies of circumventing, accepting, transgressing, or adapting to the new circumstances. The public - private relationship is understood here primarily as the connection between common and personal property, between the peasant homestead and the collective farm, and between the place of residence and the place of work and public expression.

The empirical material utilized here comprises a significant number of interviews completed in the period from 2010-2011. The interviews were undertaken in the framework of a research project on the anthropology of daily life under communism, sponsored by the Romanian National Peasant Museum¹. The interviewees were of various ages and from diverse social environments. In order to better delineate the subject, we focused on the Romanian rural world, selecting from the gathered material the recollections regarding this specific frame of life. These memoirs provide

the necessary elements for understanding not only the mechanism whereby the communist system functioned as a whole, but also the typology of daily practices that contributed to its reproduction.

We do not posit a dichotomy between state and society; we highlight this opposition only to the extent that it clearly emerges in the stories told by the informants. As researchers, we interrogate the relationship between the public and the private starting from the premise that the state is an emanation of society. In this context, individuals contribute passively or actively to the reproduction of the system. The relationship between public and private in the Romanian rural world during the communist period reveals specific elements of the system, as well as a distinct subjectivity - marked by distrust and fear - pertaining to citizens' relationship with the state and with authority. To a great extent, the situation continues today.

Politics is a social practice, an ideological form of quotidian life (Deyanova 2003: 166). The employment of the secret police to monitor citizens, the imposition of restrictive and discriminatory laws over a portion of the pop-

1) We would like to express our gratitude to all specialists and collaborators who participated in this research project under the aegis of the Romanian National Peasant Museum: Mihai Gheorghiu, Ana Pascu, Mirela Florian, Vlad Columbeanu, George Turliu, Dan Turcu, Irina Ornea, Oana Mateescu.

ulation, the transformation of the citizenry into simple marionettes on the political scene, particularly in regards to the right to elect and be elected to office, as well as the persecution of the old elite and its replacement with a new one, are undeniable realities. Without ignoring these realities, on the contrary, by foregrounding them, our starting hypothesis is that, despite their harshness, the authorities' oppressive policies did not lead to the eradication of private life. Private life was an intimate and secret domain that survived all coercions, and which became more relevant in direct proportion to the regime's measures of surveillance and control.

By recording and analyzing certain conjunctures and life fragments preserved in the memory of those who lived and experienced them, we are inevitably reconstructing a subjective and undoubtedly partial history of quotidian life during the communist period - particularly the evolution of the public - private rapport. We will survey the changes in the property regime starting with the instauration of the regime in 1945. This moment was followed by the terror of the 1950s, the highpoint of the planned economy during the 1960s and 1970s, and the terminal phase of decline and penury during the 1980s. We will document the attitudes of the authorities and of ordinary people towards production, consumption, leisure time, personal and civic responsibilities, as well as towards the insinuation of the state into the private life of citizens. At the same time, we will analyze the appropriation of public institutions by private individuals and the emergence of parallel non-public networks that led to the collapse of the regime.

.....

The Metamorphosis of the Villages: The Quotas Regime, the Decline of Private Property, and the Collectivization of the Land

In Romania, the communist regime came to power by force. Its political adversaries were

swiftly annihilated, their families put under surveillance and excluded from the public sphere. The public sphere became the terrain for applying the norms and practices meant to effectively eradicate the old system. The fact that Romania possessed no significant communist tradition is well known. Before 1945, the membership of the Romanian Communist party did not exceed 800 people. Most of them were city dwellers, while 75% of Romania's population consisted of peasants, with 80% of the latter possessing up to 10 hectares of land (Roberts, 1951: 51). This reality determined the new leaders to devote special attention to the rural world. Accordingly, the regime established two main objectives. First, the collectivization of agriculture and its incorporation in the planned socialist economy. Second, the implantation of party organizations in the villages (Roger, 2002: 25). This dual preoccupation of the authorities resulted in the development of a new, complex, and evolutive agrarian structure.

Despite the absence of a strong Romanian communist tradition, it is nonetheless true that the regime would not have gained power, much less survived, without the acquiescence or complicity of those who opportunistically adhered to the movement out of the desire to acquire high official positions. Against the backdrop of pervasive delations and conformism, the system of surveillance and control was rapidly instituted. The public space was invaded by imposed measures, by the elimination of so-called class enemies, and by the eradication of any opposition to the policies of the sole Party. Disavowing the principle of political pluralism, schools became the privileged terrain for the implementation of the new, singular course, for the radical transformation of society, and the creation of the "new man." Teachers were replaced by unqualified personnel; schools were joined together, while specializations and educational programs were hastily transformed. Controversial passages from textbooks were eliminated by the censorship mechanism, and books and magazines with a bourgeois sensibility were

banned. The nationalization and collectivization laws radically modified the relationship between public and private. The two spheres were reconfigured in relation with these new property laws. All these changes marked the beginning of the transformation of the rural space, which underwent radical changes under the impulse of the top-down measures enacted by the authorities. The constitution of "collective" property rendered the land, its products, and the labor force more easily legible and manipulable by the centralized authority (Scott, 2007: 18). Faced with these ultramodernist abusive policies, ordinary people lived with the hope of an outside intervention (the coming of the Americans), the desire to return to an earlier period, or a change for the better. They also lived with the feeling that their success was ephemeral or with the fear that they will become future victims of the terror instituted by the regime. Most often, they were motivated by the yearning to survive on the stage of history, quickly adapting to the new socio-political context.

Peasants were first subject to the quota system, which forced them to cede the greatest share of their crops harvested on their property to the state. This measure was implemented precisely in order to convince them to renounce their right to property and to accept joining the collective homesteads established on the model of the Soviet kolkhoz farms. Peasants that owned larger properties were rapidly framed as exploiters (*chiaburi*) of the poor peasantry. They were put under surveillance and imprisoned, sometimes for the most far-fetched reasons.

The constitution of "collective" property occurred in a gradual and difficult manner, following a long chain of abuses and intrusions into the private sphere. Peasants were subjected to unprecedented pressures in order to give up their right to individual property. This was the case of the peasants living in Bărăști, Hațeg district.

They didn't have reasons to tell why they imprisoned [my father-in-law]. That's how it was around here. We didn't have a boiler to

*make plum brandy, we didn't have... because one had to have a thresher machine, something [for which they could put one in jail]. But they assessed our property at over 10 hectares and then we were all classified as *chiaburi*. There were seven of us in this village. There were also some old people who lived here, across the road, and who died [and], they didn't come anymore. They were not taken to Alba Iulia, to Bicaz, to the Canal, because they were all old. 'Cause they measured the placement [of the properties] according to the old people's properties. And then they took old people, not children. They only took one [young] man instead of his father, who was very old, and [the young man] took his place in jail. [For my father-in-law] the motive was that he did not turn the stubble [when they wanted him to]. But one could not stubble-turn. We had oxen like lions and we went with my poor mother-in-law to try to do it. Those from the Popular Assembly told us to try, that if we did not want to try we were against the Party. There was no way, the earth was like concrete. We had iron ploughs, with Hungarian wheels. But it wasn't possible. We took the pigs for the quota and we arrived... [they said] that one also had to provide meat and milk. In two years, we were left dirt poor. We could only bring home straws, because one also had to give them hay. [In order to sustain ourselves] my husband discharged himself [from the army] and took a job [in the factory] at Călan. And during the winter he used to go to Călan, staying for six months at the coking plant. He used to come [home] the way he left the coke plant, he was black, only the teeth in his mouth were white. When his mother saw him, she cried. And this is in order to support ourselves. We had only the first child then, the second we had nine years later. He went [to the plant] both in the summer and in the winter, because [otherwise] we couldn't have made it. And then they went easier on the quotas. I don't remember for how long the quotas lasted, maybe two or three years. This great evil. It was so awful. For one cow, you had to deliver 700 liters of milk. [It was a lot]. Poor me! Because there was a drought. There was no hay to contribute, there was no grass in the*

fields. If only these were better years to help us out! He went to Călan to buy butter for the quota, so that we would not end up in jail. If you didn't deliver the quota you ended up in prison, because you were considered [to be] against the regime. And then they went and bought 10 kilos of butter every trimester and delivered it to the quota. I don't know how many liters of milk was this butter worth. One could find bulk quantities of butter like this... [My folks] used to bring potatoes from Făgăraș; we brought them all to the reception area. We planted a hectare of potatoes, [but it was not enough]. When they brought us [potatoes] from Făgăraș, it was because they had a better harvest, for the seed was changed. Here we didn't really know about such matters. Neighbors used to exchange seeds, but not to go to Făgăraș, or to go to Brașov... The potato harvest was so large, that we needed three [people] to take them to the reception area. It was very, very hard, that I don't even want to remember. I was a 17 year-old child... (Ileana C., Bărăști, Hațeg district).

This story offers a specific image that is very telling of the way in which Romanian villages metamorphosized with the advent of communism. The measures imposed by the regime profoundly and dramatically affected the daily lives of ordinary people, who were compelled to rapidly adapt to the new context. The imprisonment of prosperous peasants, classified as *chiaburi*, the burdensome quotas required by the state, the shortages and wrongdoings caused by the regime, convinced especially young people to move to cities in order to find work in factories, mostly as unskilled workers in very tough environments. Effectively under assault, the family abdicated when confronted by the series of measures imposed from above. The family adapted to the demands of the regime in the hope that good will ultimately "overcome" evil, and that they will be able to "hold on" and survive.

Since opposition seemed destined to failure, the only solution remained the search for alternative forms of survival. Agricultural work became burdensome and meaningless,

since it did not even ensure the fulfillment of the necessary quotas. Consequently, wage work compensated for the lack of returns. The cash salary offered the family not only the material conditions necessary for survival, but also the means to fulfill their obligations towards the state.

Despite these increasingly onerous obligations, the peasants were most reluctant to give up their properties. "Collective" property was established with difficulty, following a long trial period. In order to compel them to relinquish their lands, peasants were hunted down and harassed by the agents of power. The private space was systematically invaded by the representatives assigned to carry out "edification work" with the peasants, in order to determine them to sign the applications for membership in the Agricultural Production Cooperative (CAP). Asked whether she willingly joined the CAP, Ileana C. responded:

Willingly - no way! Oh, we all ran, men, women... They collectivized four villages... for our village was a wealthy one, with land and people who worked it; they were good husbandmen. And we said: "We won't apply!" 'Cause one had to state that one willingly joined [the CAP]. I don't know if you know the situation. [This] lasted for a week or two and [then] the Moldovan woman came around. The entire district was afraid of her. And I ran, I went in the first room, [then] I entered the other one. I hid under the bed and they came after me and they



photo©Vlad Columbeanu

found me there. And [they said]: "Why are you hiding? Aren't you ashamed, you sow?" I got out and I stayed silent, with tears in my eyes. Afterwards, the entire village signed up... There was no other way, because they came around with all kinds of threats. There were seven or eight individuals that came by. But around here, that Moldovan woman, whom we talked about, did not take our cattle. While in Răchitova, in those mountain villages, they took them because they did not meet their quotas. They used to take the cow from the stable for meat. Troubles. And then we joined the Collective. They called the Assembly at the cultural house and they played music. Nobody showed up, everybody cried. A voluntary party, you know. But no one came to dance, to have a good time. And then we accommodated ourselves, what else could we do?" (Ileana C, Bărăști, Hațeg district).

The institutionalization of collective property was achieved through force, the household was besieged, and the family put under surveillance. The agreement to join the Agricultural Production Cooperative was insistently and systematically pursued, by means of full employment of force, as well as menacing and insulting words. Although they vehemently opposed joining the collective, the peasants gradually succumbed to pressures and later conformed, accommodating themselves to the new situation.

The intrusion into private space elicited responses of flight and retreat to secluded, hidden places:



photo©Vlad Columbeanu

What I remember - Silvia S. recounts -, being six or seven years old, is the fact that we used to hide. Thus they came after our parents, they came with those applications, to sign the papers for joining the CAP and... Here there was quite a great deal of resistance, that is, people resisted for a long time, because they were very attached to their lands. The land was their soul, so they could not conceive giving up their land and their animals. They did not realize what this cooperative meant; they could not imagine giving up their goods and assets, to be taken there... There were party activists from the Hațeg region... And they arrived in an organized fashion, and they came very late in the evening, so that I remember that one night I fell asleep in the attic; another time we were away [working] in the field and in the end the wave overtook everybody and... my folks also joined up. Daddy had a very hard time detaching himself from his tools, from his plough... they took the wagon, they took the plough, they took... the animals... No! I don't... Look, I don't remember about the animals... But I remember those tools, which I know were very important to my father, 'cause he built them all by himself and he was very attached to them. And after tens of years he recognized the wagon, and the harrow, and the plough; he knew where they were... He managed to recover his plough; he went after 1989 and brought it home (Silvia S, Bărăști, Hațeg district).

The rural space was metamorphosized by the emergence of Agricultural Production Cooperatives and by the adjustment of the former landowners to the new socio-economic context. The elements of autonomous public life were marginalized. The Party organization became the "cell" that oversaw both the CAPs' activity and the cultural activities undertaken within the schools with pupils and teachers. The old markets, fairs, mills, and the village pubs were eliminated. Although tolerated, religious life found itself in strong competition with the mandatory activities organized by the authorities. These activities included participation in celebrations and festivals, visits and trips to model factories, supposedly "patriotic"

(voluntary) work for the "commonweal" in maintaining roads and houses, as well as harvesting of agricultural products.

It must, however, be emphasized that the CAP, although included in the planned economy, benefited from a certain degree of organizational freedom. State control over the CAP was less stringent than over the State Agricultural Enterprises. Cooperative peasants were remunerated in cash and in kind, according to the work days performed. In exchange for working for the CAP, they were allotted individual plots no larger than 150 square meters, and which gave them the opportunity to raise farm animals in their own homesteads. These lots could no longer be bought or sold, but were gradually appropriated by peasants and thus assimilated into the symbolic order of private property.

The time allocated to individual work was much longer than the work set aside for work at the collective farm cooperative. This caused the systematic intervention of the state in favor of collective work and property (Roger, 2002: 26). The results mirrored the degree of implication. The official statistics show the state's priorities very clearly. In 1962, at the national scale, the individual plots made up only 10.2% of the surface occupied by the Agricultural Production Cooperatives, but they yielded 14.8% of the total cereal production, 40% of vegetables production, and 45.3% of animal production (Montias, 1967: 103).

State control of production increasingly determined the emergence of a subterranean economy. The yield from individual plots was partially hidden, so that peasants could deliver only a portion of their crops to the state. A full-blown mechanism for eluding the prescribed rules appeared and developed. Ostensibly compliant peasants worked hand in hand with the elites of the production cooperatives. In their turn, these elites channeled part of the agricultural surplus towards illicit economic exchanges. The foodstuff surplus was destined primarily for the upkeep of family members who lived in cities. City workers exchanged part of their salaries for a portion of the food

produced in the peasant households, with agricultural work typically being performed by parents. Yet another form of resistance to the official policies was to commute between city and countryside, which enabled rural workers to combine factory employment with work on their personal lots.

.....

Houses and the Systematization Laws

The appropriation of land and the replacement of a large part of private (homestead) work with wage labor, decided village inhabitants to devote their entire energy to their house, which was the private domain of the family. Houses became the most valuable possessions, one of the few in which one could invest accumulated earnings. This private good was, in turn, threatened by laws pertaining to the systematization of territories. In parallel to the project of instituting collective agricultural property according to centralized planning criteria, the system of centralized national planning was also developed. In 1965, a commission was established with the purpose of "systematizing" villages. The commission was charged with accounting for and reducing the costs of distributing prime agricultural goods. Concurrently, a state institute for architecture, construction, and systematization was tasked with evaluating the outlook for agricultural development. As such, the institute was required to classify villages into those "suitable for systematization" and communes that lacked the "potential for development." The classification criteria consisted of the villages' "physical facilities," "demographic evolution," "their real and potential economic function and "positioning in relation to urban centers." Villages deemed lacking potential for development were not subject to any measures, because they were assumed to eventually disappear through modernization; the ones with prospective for development were included in a vast project of aligning them to the urban lifestyle (Roger, 2002: 39).

In order to prevent workers from combining industrial labor with subsistence agricultural work, the authorities proposed measures meant to standardize both village and city life. The area allotted for building was delimited by the area set aside for agriculture. Construction norms were very strict. Individual houses were required to have two levels. This was considered necessary for accommodating an extended family. No doubt, this provision was intended to persuade family members established in the city to return to their native villages.

The purpose of the systematization of villages and towns was to control the space of the private household and to standardize the different strategies of private life between villages and cities. The "Agro-Industrial Centers" planned in the beginning of the 1980s, equipped with specialized industrial enterprises, aimed to radically transform the rural world and render life uniform by erasing the difference between city and village.

In regions rich in natural resources, such as the Jiu Valley, people were repeatedly put at risk of losing their homes. The transformation of the region for the purpose of systematically exploiting resources on an industrial scale, profoundly affected the local way of life.

They drilled and discovered coal and they said the Valley must be sacrificed for coal, and then they destroyed people's houses... Yes, where they discovered coal, [they simply said] just take your things and go... but what [indemnification] did they give? 'Cause there is compensation here too, but what is 15 centimes, one of these small coins for who knows what [amount of property], and they weren't even interested if you could move your home or you couldn't. (They didn't give them land to relocate their home). Where could they give you from? They said that some had [something] somewhere else but they'd better find a way not to move them from there too. They did what they did, they sacrificed, they experimented [to show] that there was no coal there, but still some were moved from there too... You know what the Ceaușescu woman said when she once came to the Valley and she

said that if one meter of coal, [for] one square meter of coal, everything must be destroyed, it was irrelevant how they moved or what they did... That's why they're all on hills and mountains; you should see that area, where they have their houses on mountaintops, they ran and oftentimes that's where they found [a place]... They were evicted from there... They said that they would give them a deadline; if by the deadline you haven't gathered your house, 'cause that's why these villagers build their houses out of wood, 'cause they were conscious; well there was no other material anyway, but they were conscious that if they came and tore it apart you [had to] quickly take it and you move... They were chased on the mountaintop.

The image of the locals, forced to retreat into the mountains, who built perishable wooden houses that were easy to assemble and disassemble, evokes the barbaric medieval period. The association of communist ultramodernism with the Middle Ages, when peasants took refuge in the mountains away from the path of barbarian invasions, is not accidental. Belying its program and ideological discourse, the communist regime employed harsh, barbaric methods of controlling private life, of subordinating it to the centralizing plans of national territorial administration, and of subordinating it to the exploitation natural resources

.....

Practices of Negotiating the Public - Private Relationship

The agricultural management and territorial administration policies imposed from the central level did not manage to transform private property solely into consumer goods. In addition to wage work undertaken away from home, and/or tending the individual plot at the CAP, another means whereby the peasant household consolidated itself as a unit of production was the practice of skilled crafts such as carpentry, furriery, and cooperage.

Working at home proved salutary for the



Adventists from the village of Bărăști, Sântămăria Orlea commune - Hațeg district. Because they were religiously prohibited from working on Saturdays and consequently unable to accept employment in state enterprises, many members of this religious community specialized in trades that allowed them to perform individual work at home.

Ioan D. worked as a carpenter at home for a period of 40 years, paying a tax to the state in exchange for being allowed to practice his trade. In addition to this tax, there were other levies, which had nothing to do with the practiced craft. Like any other inhabitant of the rural world, Ion D. was obligated to perform nine days of community work (for the "commonweal"). He was likewise compelled to sign a contract with the state, by which he undertook to deliver one pig every year. Despite these restrictions, he managed to earn a profit from his work and acquire a car - the supreme luxury of the era and the mark of prosperity and social status. For this, he was called in by the Securitate and required to explain himself.

During communism, I, as a craftsman, as a carpenter, was renowned throughout the Hațeg Valley, because I work well and my work is good, but my prices were higher. This is what the clients said: "Go to that Adventist, he doesn't lie, but his work is expensive." And I earned money. And I made a deposit to buy a new Mosvic. I waited seven years to have the car delivered. I was called to the Securitate post to admit that I had a car. I did not want to admit the money that I had [on deposit] at the CEC (House of Economies and Consignations). "Say this, it's a state secret and the secret is kept." "You have money!" "No, I don't." And I was investigated on the basis of Law 18... I had to answer the questions as to how I made them. I stayed 18 months at the tribunal in Petroșani so that I tell [them] from where I had my wealth and how I made it... It was not a large sum, but I was dispatched there by the station chief. And they applied Law 18 to me. Those [Securitate agents] had quotas, just as the traffic militia had quotas for fines. And the station chief had a quota for our commune, [to gather] persons

on the basis of Law 18 in order to show what they owned. 'Cause I had a painted house that drew attention. For 18 months, they called me there. And in the end, they passed a sentence of non-penal supervision... And during this time, an expert came to the place. And I found out that the actions of the station chief were not legal. But he had a quota to fulfill and he applied it on the community... [Ion D, Bărăști, Hațeg]

Private property entered under the incidence of state control. It had to be maintained within certain safe limitations so that it too, in turn, could become part of the planned state economy. Even the practice of exercising control was subordinated to the principles of the planned economy. What mattered for the station chief and his subordinates was not so much the efficiency of their measures, but the numbers of controlled persons.

On the other hand, there also existed a relationship whereby the representatives of state institutions and persons who aspired to develop autonomously in their own private domain sounded each other out, trying as much as possible to avoid institutional frameworks.

The representatives of these institutions did not seem the staunchest defenders of the law; even the headquarters of the Securitate, of the Militia were transformed from a place of inquest into one of negotiation.

Mihu C. from Nereju, Vrancea district, continued to practice cooperage from his domicile - a craft learned from his parents. In this land of wood, as Vrancea district is considered, the communal property traditionally used by peasants was abusively appropriated by the state and managed by the local Forrest Ranges. Thus, peasants were deprived of the forests and pastures necessary for their survival. Those who did not abandon the old crafts had to constantly negotiate with the authorities for access to raw materials. These negotiations were necessary even if they possessed an official authorization to practice their trade and they procured the wood on the basis of a sales order. Paying for the wood was not sufficient; the buyer had to perform a





photo©Vlad Columbeanu

number of days of unpaid labor planting trees.

From 1950 onwards it stopped, the forest was no longer ours; it belonged to the state. They took the forests, they were no longer... Back then, if you could do something you talked to the forest ranger. You came to an agreement with him... It was hard to do (to keep doing it), 'cause I carried it only on my back, although I also had oxen. So that I don't leave tracks in the forest... And there was a forest ranger, P. He was a real bastard. He took them from your back. Yes, he took pails; he took trugs from my back... You should see what bargain I struck with a forest ranger. That was a deal! I went and I brought him a wagon of shingles, there, at Năruja. You know, at Năruja. He was from Năruja. I took them on the hills, with the ox-drawn cart to his house, so that he gave me a fir tree. He gave me the fir tree; I made about two big barrels. Me, I say, I'm friends with him, I did business with him [so] I brought the wagon of wood tiles to his home. Let me tell him how I'll do. I made six big vats and I broke the staves, the staves I numbered, 'cause the whole barrel took a lot of space. I stuffed the staves into two large bags, 'cause there were large bags back then, worth 5 centimes, made of hemp canvas. And I stuffed them, pay attention! I tied a bundle of hay and I put them inside the hay in the wagon. And I left with them to Focșani, telling this forest ranger about it. He said, "be careful, look what they do, [be sure to] tie the heap of hay..." Somewhere there was a guard, another

forest ranger from Năruja. When I got there, I was stopped. "Stop! What do you have in the wagon?" "I'm going to Focșani to buy [something]." He had a stake and poked the hay with it. I had two heaps that were tied to each other, one in each bag. And he started poking and found the staves. He made me unpack the hay and took the staves. I was left with the circles; he didn't confiscate those. Lucky me, I still had about two centimes from home, don't know where I had those from, and I went and got one or two sacks of corn and came home. Working for the forest ranger, brining the shingles to his house, and still he was the one who informed on me... (Miha C., Nereju, Vrancea district).

The laws of public property were formal, made to be broken and interpreted according to personal interests. The agents of the state abused the law in order to consolidate their position in the framework of a non-public network of relationships. In this manner, there appeared dependency relationships towards the agents of power. The latter came from the rural communities, local people who held functions in the system. The informants did not live with the feeling of guilt, with the awareness of conforming to a system they did not like and did not agree with, but to which they tried to adapt. What motivated them was the desire to "win" by adapting to the new conditions. Perhaps this is precisely because they did not belong to those privileged by the system, they were the victims of fraud and at the whim of a dominant class in the process of consolidating itself. Given the pervasive clientelary relationships that dominated everyday life, collective property was an ideal nobody believed in.

State property was systematically undermined from within by the very people supposed to defend it. "Collective" property became, in reality, a site of personal negotiation, a source of enrichment for some, and for others a means of survival. It was effectively reappropriated by the hidden clientelary networks that started to form and develop from the very beginning of the regime.

•••••

Alternative Non-Public Networks

Surrendering the land and entering into the CAP did not eliminate the intrusion of the state into the private sphere. Starting with the 1970s, every homestead was obligated to deliver, on the basis of contracts, agricultural products and animals to the state. This became the defining feature of the relationship between public and private in the Romanian rural milieu. The contracts requiring peasants to supply the state with products from their own household at prices well below what the free market would bear artificially tied individual households to the tutelary authority of the state, including them in the socialist planned economy.

In 1981, Romania was declared incapable of paying its debts, which amounted to 12 billion USD. The solution adopted by the leadership was to clear the public debt within four years. Imports were reduced to the minimum, while exports were encouraged, especially in sectors that did not necessitate the purchase of raw materials. These economic policies led to severe shortages on the internal market, especially food products. Because of their obligations towards the state and of the low prices they received, householders generally felt cheated. The state came to personify an enemy who had to be fought in order for them to survive. The representatives of power were seen as malefactors by the village communities.

What can I tell you about these quotas, recounts Victoria B. from Bărsești, Vrancea. I was very young, the town hall guard went around with a bugle and said everybody [should go] to the committee for contributions, contributions meant delivering quotas from all products in your household. I had my sister who could not pronounce "committee" and said "mocittee", but I easily remembered this, so everybody to the "mocittee" for contributions. So I don't know a lot about these things, I was too young, but now, nearer to our times, closer to '89 there were obligatory quotas. So I got married in '75; after '75 my husband worked for the mayoralty, we

were required, especially those who worked for the mayoralty, to make a contract for a pig, for birds mostly, sheep we didn't have [...] There was a plan at the commune with whom should fulfill the plan first, with the people from the village, with the animal breeders [...] The quotas were established according to the number of animals. If you had sheep when the animal census was taken [the quotas were established]. After I got married, my husband being in the mayoralty, the piglets were brought to the town hall to be distributed to those who had contracts. The price for buying [the piglets] from them was larger than the one we got when they acquired [the grown pigs], so that we did not receive as much as we spent buying [it]... They took [the pig] through the town hall, they brought it from a farm somewhere, they fattened it by 15-20 kilos, we had to make it reach a certain weight and deliver it; and at the delivery I remember it was 10 Lei per kilo... along the lines of these contracts people regarded those from the mayoralty as crooks, you know, they had a plan and all those from the mayoralty formed teams and went to people's houses in order to edify them, this word "to edify them" to close a contract for a pig and of course, I don't know whether it's relevant, but I remembered it now. My husband died very young, [at] 43 years old; I was 41 years old and where his grave is, someone, a distant relative, owned a gravesite next to my husband's, and I built a wall there, surrounding the grave thinking I could plant a flower there, and the person in question took pieces from the plaster and placed them in jest on the wall of my husband's grave. I was silent for a year or two; then I met her, my anger had lessened somewhat, and I asked her "Why did you do that auntie Ileana?" "Cause I had found out." "Well, they came to me and forced me to make a contract, to deliver chickens, to make a contract for pork," so look how far things went, people see you as an evildoer, they don't understand that you in turn are required to go there. My husband was not at the top of the mayoralty pyramid, he had a boss; it was the mayor who required him to go, and the mayor was obligated in his turn (Victoria L., Bărsești, Vrancea).

As Victoria L. expressed it, the laws, plans, and the controls imposed by the "Center" or "the top of the pyramid" engendered opposition by means of diverse forms of solidarity and various methods of deceiving the system. Everyone managed how she or he could, most times by transgressing the rules and by adapting to immediate needs. Most frequently, it was persons who were part of the state and/or party structure who first broke the laws.

[...] we also had a cow, my parents raised animals and they stayed at the monument, until the snow melted, at Dumbravă, they stayed with the animals, mostly my mother, for my father had his job and moreover they used to keep part of the animals, calves, a pig. They were gone and I was the one who used to feed them, the pigs and the cows. I used to come back from school and the first thing I used to do was to feed the animals and only afterwards to take care of other tasks in the household. And they thought to reward me for this work and they gave us a two-year-old cow. And we raised her, she became a mature cow, she gave birth. My daughters and my niece came here during the summer and they liked the milk from our cow. We were not allowed to slaughter the calf, we had to deliver it according to the contract; and in order for it to be accepted, the calf had to weigh 300 kilos. But it was a young cow and at her first birth she didn't weigh herself 300 kilos, so how could the calf possibly reach 300 kilos? And so we decided to sell the cow. But what to do with the calf now - we were neither allowed to slaughter it, nor to sell it, 'cause it was in their register. We needed to have a contract to give it away and so we decided to surreptitiously slaughter it. And we hid it so well that they found out. How did they find out? I threw away the calf's nostrils... I put everything that needed to be thrown away in a bowl in the summer kitchen thinking that I would take them somewhere further away or bury them. A cat entered and it took exactly the piece with the nostrils, and it went to eat them at the neighbors', she crossed the street, the neighbor saw it with the calf nostrils and she went to the veterinary technician and said: "Look here, Mitică, my cat

came home with these nostrils, where could they be from?" My husband was working at the town hall, as I told you, and we decided together with the mayor, 'cause my husband was his man, to write down a statement in which we explained that he sent the calf to pasture and it didn't come back, for it is usual around here that during the fall the cows would go alone to pasture and in the evening everyone goes to get their cow. And the statement that my husband filed with the veterinary technician went hand in hand with what the neighbor with the cat told him... There were people in the village who did this on a regular basis (slaughter calves). I mean certain people dealt with this; we needed some meat, I used to go to someone whom I knew was in contact with these people, "Ion, look, I need a package of meat." [And the mayoralty knew about this and kept silent]. From our case, I deduced that if they [the mayoralty] received it from us, it meant we were not the first ones (Victoria L., Bârsești, Vrancea).

The husband of Mrs. Victoria L., who was responsible for "edifying" villagers to sign contracts with the state for the raising of animals, broke the rules that he himself publicly proclaimed to his fellow residents. The spirit of complicity against the regime, engendered by the excessive interdictions, caused everyone from the lowest to the highest-ranking citizen to break the rules. Public office was abused in order to acquire necessary or rare products for oneself or for one's clientelary network.

The shortage of absolutely necessary goods unobtainable through official socialist commerce gave rise to non-public networks dedicated to obtaining these products. Television sets, gas cylinders, or washing machines were perceived as high-status goods, which conferred social distinction due to their scarcity and difficulty in procuring them.

It was difficult to obtain a gas cylinder, with interventions at Petroșani. I had an acquaintance here, and had to wait one year in order to buy a gas oven and then finally to obtain a gas cylinder. And it was difficult to fill up the gas cylinder, they didn't give [gas]. And who owned two gas cylinders was privileged. And in order



to obtain the second gas cylinder one had to intervene. Someone brought me a second gas cylinder from Făget, left it two kilometers away in the corn, at night. He came by motorcycle, 'cause he would have been condemned if caught. And the gas cylinder was paid for, I paid for it. Back then, the price was half a cow... (Ion D., Bărăști, Hațeg).

The conditions of penury rendered items of strict necessity into luxury goods. They were acquired directly from the warehouse through private relationships.

And I bought furniture in installments for one person or another, and he gave me the money and I paid the furniture in installments. But it was insignificant, the last time, I got "Crișu" furniture, very beautiful furniture made out of fir tree, for a colleague who had to marry his daughter off... but it was quite scarce and the man kept looking to buy furniture and no... he had the money, but didn't have the furniture. I had connections, but no furniture either, but I needed his money. And then I discussed with him one night, at work. "Man, he says, c'mon I'll give you." "But you'll get it for me?" "Yes!" And I went with him to Hațeg, to the warehouse, and there was a guy. "Man, I say, this and that." "You know, he says, what the deal is? This doesn't get to the warehouse, this is distributed from the railcar." The furniture was wavy. And he said: "Look, man, be careful here, the railcar is supposed to arrive on Monday, and if you're here in Călan, call them up and tell those guys from the transport department to phone Simeria to check where the railcar is, and when the railcar gets here, you come and you take it, with no discussions, 'cause one never knows when I can get it again." Well, and indeed in about three days the railcar arrived and I got the furniture... (Peter L., Sântămăria Orlea, Hațeg district).

The excessive regulation of exchanges, the obvious obstruction of the transparent market frequently generated theft and fraud. State property was regularly subject to theft, becoming a common occurrence, tacitly accepted by everybody. The accommodation to the new situation, created through the institution of

"collective" property meant the accommodation to certain rules, their transgression or their domestication in order for the family to survive and even prosper. The abusive accumulation of private property gave former owners the right to appropriate products from communal property.

To be honest, we stole potatoes sometime [from the CAP], we stole occasionally... Everybody did it... Then the corn, when we started harvesting it, 'cause it was good, we kept it cold in our bosoms until the evening... we filled it up 'til here (showing her abdomen). Poor me, I kept it cold close to my bones. It wasn't only me, it was everybody who went harvesting. There were times when the team leader used to search us, and we had to push him away 'cause he upset us... (Ileana C., Bărăști, Hațeg district).

They used to steal, yeah. I remember, I tell you!... And they mostly stole raw corn, when it was good for boiling. And when we harvested, my God! They picked and made "hives." And they used to put it in the "hive", hiding it... We called it "making the hive." So they used to cut the stems, the corn stalks, they cut them with the sickle, they picked them up, on the ground, crouching on the ground, 'cause we didn't pick then standing up, then you cut them. And they bundled several, about as much as one can hold in one's arm. They used to bind them with withes or with birch roods. And they used to make several. They put one standing and, after it, the other ones. And they made a "hive." And they tied that "hive". And there, in the "hive," they stuck the corn. And in the evening, the moment in which... the team leader or the guard, who were around them, they chose a moment when he wasn't there or they made a deal with him, 'cause they probably gave him some. And they stuck them in there. And they used to go at night and take them. They used to take out the corn from the "hives" and take them. So it was customary to steal from the CAP... [If they stole from the CAP], they considered that they were taking something for which they had worked. Theft wasn't practiced... one did not steal from another. But then, when... from the CAP they said: "Well, I work there too, I take 'cause it's in



common!" But from one's garden, meaning to steal from your garden wasn't done. So there were peaceful people here in this regard, but they used to take from the CAP (Viluca S., Vălioara, Hațeg district)

Stealing from the CAP simply meant taking something that was rightfully yours, and that right had been violated. The theft from collective property lost its meaning, becoming a legitimate act in the circumstances in which "collective" property emerged following forced expropriation. Stealing from the state amounted to taking what was one's due for badly paid work, and especially for the loss of property rights. Only the theft from private property was seen as reprehensible, taking someone else's goods - someone made of flesh and blood, not an abstract and impersonal entity such as the State. Stealing from the CAP became such a frequent practice that it ended up being part of daily rural life under communism.

And in the beginning of the '90s, in order to have the right to teach religion at the local school, I had to... I wanted to take a course at the Theological Seminary in Sibiu. And our classes were taught only by priests. And the discussion led to the issue of theft. And I said: "Father, I did steal in my life, I kept going to harvest potatoes and every time I stole three or four potatoes, 'cause I liked them and I didn't have any at home..." And the priest K.H. said: "What you stole was justified in the eyes of God, 'cause you only stole from the collective [farm] (they all laughed)." The collective belonged to all of us, it did not belong to any one person, thus "Your theft is justified in the eyes of God too!" Well, I say, think about that! (Rosemarie M., Altâna, Sibiu district).

.....

Forms and Means of Institutional Reappropriation

Over time, state organizations and institutions were reappropriated by the locals, who adopted a complicit attitude, practically un-

dermining from within the imposed norms. The CAP leaders, initially nominated for political reasons and without necessarily possessing any agricultural training, were gradually replaced by specialists. The latter adhered to the line set out by the Romanian Communist Party either out of opportunism, or simply because of the need to keep their jobs and accede in the system.

The villagers appropriated not only the CAP, but also other local institutions and organizations. The local party organizations, the unions, women's organizations, and the village assemblies were appropriated by the community and included in the daily lives of the people.

Alongside these public organizations, the cultural house emerged as a niche space between public and private. The cultural house was the site for imposed celebrations, school festivities, cultural activities, and contests that engaged especially the youth, pupils, and schoolteachers. At the same time, the cultural house was the locus of traditional celebrations. It was, undoubtedly, a controlled and surveilled space, but it was far from being exclusively associated with party propaganda or with the idolatrous poems dedicated to the great leaders. In the village of Vălioara, Hațeg district, the harvest festival was celebrated at the cultural house with relatives, friends, and acquaintances in attendance.

We did evening sittings. So during the time of Ceaușescu there were evening sittings; dances took place in our village... traditional harvest festivals. For instance, nowadays we don't have harvest festivals anymore. And it is a rare occasion that a friend drops by [for an evening sitting]. But back then, under Ceaușescu, there were harvest festivals, you brought musicians. I remember that one year, after I got into the school, in the second or third year, I organized a harvest festival, 'cause I was also the director of the cultural house. We organized the harvest festival. Mihai used to sing for us at the Vălioara fest, he came and he sang. But now there are no more harvest festivals. So there's no longer any music. Back then, one loved it at the

cultural house, you went... you went there, relatives came too. And from there, one went away and took them to dinner. You came home with them and ate. And after dinner, the youth went back. And we would wait; we had rows of tables, people at the tables. I remember that, for a few years my husband worked in commerce, and he had many colleagues. And one year we had outside, about 25-30 people at one single table... At our house, in Vălioara, we took the tables in the yard and we... So people used to get together. Now, for instance, I went on Sunday for the Easter celebration. I swear, you couldn't find people, only here and there you could find a man playing cards or knocking eggs. But the women... I no longer saw women coming out of the house. There used to be women. They came out, they talked, they chatted. Now everybody is tired. Also because of work. There's too much work (Viluca S., Hațeg).

The public space was reappropriated by the community; it became a communal space despite the indications and obligations set forth by the party organizations. There was a certain fluidity between public and private, based on old community rules and local solidarity. Celebrations used to unite, to consolidate relationships already consecrated by ties of kinship, friendship, and collegiality. The cultural house reentered in the possession of the community. At the same time, the street was also a territory where one communicated and celebrated. During celebrations, the yard opened up; it became welcoming in ways that no longer exist today. Paradoxically, within a system that worshiped work as the supreme ideal, regular people managed to elude this propaganda in order to celebrate in a way that today they no longer can.

The second ball, I mean the next one was just before Christmas, for the Christmas fasting, around November 25 is Katarina. The name, in the calendar. And we used to organize Katari-nen ball. So, and for these balls, which had a tradition, each time we used to stage a theater play. And I wanna tell you, that is during Ceaușescu's time, and I lived those times, when every evening there were electricity cuts and we



photo©Vlad Columbeanu

didn't have electricity. And we used to go with the oil lamp for rehearsals, to the teachers' room, and my friend Edith had five kids. So this is the only way I remember Edith - with a big belly, pregnant, and with the oil lamp in front of her, at the rehearsals! I swear, I don't recall any other image of her. And then we organized a ball, so we called them up there, that is... everybody was invited, there was an entrance fee, and we also had a vocal ensemble. I was their instructor too, and many times, we combined the theater play, the dance, and the vocal group, so a program like this... And afterwards, the ball. A band came, 'cause there were many - [from] Sibiu, Mediaș, Turnișor, and we had a ball. At midnight everybody went home, there used to be a break for about an hour, although, if outsiders came, we used to invite them for a sandwich, a bit of food, and we came back. And there was dancing at the cultural house until morning, without music... This Saturday I went to a wedding and I had to come home 'cause my head and my brains almost exploded. And everything back then was totally different (Rosemarie M., Alțâna, Sibiu).

With the imposition of the public sector on the agricultural economy, the peasants determinedly tried to adapt to the new conditions. They survived and even prospered by elaborating various strategies and succeeding at the same time to reappropriate the imposed framework, to domesticate it for their own needs.

Ordinary people from the country side demonstrated resistance towards the system, not only when adopting an oppositional stance towards the economic measures imposed by the Center, but also when they bent the purpose of the institutions set up by the established power. They did this using combinations and adaptations suitable to their own way of communal life. In order to resist the imposed norms, the peasantry did not rigidify into an immutable mode of organization, but continuously adapted to exterior pressures, maintaining a dynamic relationship with power.

•••••

Instead of Conclusions

The collectivization of agriculture and the constitution of "collective" agricultural property led to the achievement of the twin objectives that the traditional modern state aspired to from its very inception: political appropriation and control (Scott, *op. cit.*: 248). The Agricultural Production Cooperative proved to be an instrument for the appropriation of a social and economic fund extremely resistant to any form of appropriation and control. Collectivization radically changed the traditional ways of life, forcing the peasantry to adapt to a new ethos of wage labor. This represented a radically transformative vision of the peasantry into proletarians. Through the cultural revolution that followed the strictly economic measures, the "dark" civilization of the peasants needed to be replaced by the organizational culture of cooperative workers. The cooperatives were designed to function in a manner similar to the factories within the centralized economy. The laws governing territorial organization were likewise intended to homogenize the population by reducing the differences between the rural and urban milieus.

At the same time, the collectivization of agriculture, the excessive control of property and private life proved to be "a tribute less to

the plan of the state than to the improvisations, gray markets, bartering, and ingenuity that partly compensated for failures (Scott, 1998: 203)

Treating the workers only as industrial labor, not as peasants, the collectivist system destroyed many of the skills that the peasantry possessed before the collectivization process (Ibid: 420). The collectivization and the excessive control measures that followed destroyed a certain institutional autonomy specific to the rural world. The forms of solidarity associated with public projects were replaced by subversive forms of solidarity and complicity against the official structures, the centralizing state, undermining individuals' ability to govern themselves (Idem).

Despite the means and the effects, the people found the power to survive and, in their turn, even to control the system. The emergence of parallel economic networks based on gift exchanges created the premises of a circular movement through which family clans appropriated the impoverished formal institutions of the state. Concurrently, these networks developed and prospered (See Deyanova, *op. cit.*: 166).

In the conception of the Hungarian sociologist János Kornai, family networks, based on mutual aid and gift exchange and opposed to the official contractual economy, constituted a fundamental structural feature of socialism (Kornai, 1980). We are in the position to reflect upon a society that systematically produced shortages, simply because any capitalist motivation was blocked from the start. The societies are typified by the existence of a duality of structures - on the one hand, a public sphere characterized by formal allegiance to the regime and idolatry towards its supreme leaders and, on the other hand, a private sphere of unofficial relationships, of transactions, and exchanges vital to survival. Far from being a characteristic specific only to the economic field, the private networks, even through opposition, sustained the official public sphere.

On the other hand, following James Scott, the systems of formal order created through

social engineering were but subsystems of a broader framework they depended on and even had a parasitic relationship to. The response to this parasitic relationship was the development of a non-public sphere of relations. The more rigid the framework of official life, the more significant and powerful these non-public networks became, leading to the demise and replacement of the regime.



Bibliography

- Cernea, M. (1974) *Sociologia Cooperativei Agricole* [The Sociology of the Agricultural Cooperative], București: Editura Academiei;
- Christian, M., S. Kott. (2009) 'Introduction. Sphère Publique et sphère privée dans les sociétés socialistes. La mise à l'épreuve d'une dichotomie', *Histoire@Politique*, no.7: 1-12;
- Betts, P. (eds.) (2008) *Socialist Modern. East German Everyday Culture and Politics*, Michigan: University Press;
- Blajovic, P. (1967) 'Ceriințele noi în organizarea teritorială și sistematizarea rurală' ['New Requirements in Territorial Organization and Rural Systematization'], *Probleme economice*, nr. 11: 7-18 [Economic Issues];
- Deyanova, L. (2003) 'La dictature des limites, les limites de la dictature', *La revue internationale et stratégique*, no. 50: 165-168;
- Falvien, J. (1976) 'La Roumanie', *L'agriculture dans les pays socialistes d'Europe*, Paris : Éditions sociales, p. 172-190 ;
- Habermas, J. (1992) *L'espace public*, Paris: Payot;
- Kornai, J. (1880) *Economics of Shortage*, Amsterdam, New York, North Holland;
- Kott, S. (2001) *Le communisme au quotidien. Les entreprises d'État dans la société est-allemande*, Paris, Berlin,
- Idem (2005) 'Les services dans une société industrielle et socialiste: le cas de la RDA, 1949-1989', *Le mouvement social*, no. 211: 83-98;
- Montias, J. M. (1967) *Economic Development in Communist Romania*, Cambridge: Mass the M. I. T. Press;
- Perrot, M. (1987) *Histoire de la vie privée, Tome IV, De la Révolution à la Grande Guerre*, Paris : Seuil ; ine
- Roger, A. (2002) 'Relations agraires et relations de pouvoir dans la Roumanie communiste: les coopératives agricoles de production comme terrain d'affrontement politique', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, nr. 49-2: 24-53;
- James C. Scott. (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition New Have Failed*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press;
- Scott, J. (2007) *În numele statului. Modele eșuate de îmbunătățire a condiției umane*, Iași: Polirom;
- Stahl, H. (1998) *Satele devălmașe*, [The Communal Villages] Cluj-Napoca: Cartea Românească;

