

THE RURAL DIMENSION OF ROMANIA'S INTEGRATION  
INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION: THE IMPACT OF THE EU ENLARGEMENT ON  
ROMANIAN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AREAS

by

GEORGETA STOIAN CONNOR

(Under the Direction of Andrew J. Herod)

ABSTRACT

Agriculture is central to Romania's economy and social life. Not only does it produce food but Romania's agro-food sector is both a major contributor to the economy and an important vehicle for rural development. In order to understand where rural Romania, particularly with regard to the so-called "agrarian question," stands today, it is necessary to appreciate that it has undergone a number of significant changes in its turbulent history, especially after the Second World War. Comparing historical agricultural patterns, it is worth emphasizing the shift from the excessively large estates characteristic of the period prior to the First World War to the small and medium-sized properties during the interwar period, followed by a new fragmentation of the land through the 1945 Land Reform, and, finally, the creation of large collective properties during the communist era. Since the 1990s, on the other hand, post-communist land reform – initiated with the controversial Law 18/1991 – has aimed to decollectivize agriculture and restore rural property to its pre-collectivization owners. Importantly, this has had a number of disruptive effects on rural areas, including fostering conflicts between villagers over land, land abandonment, the inability of private farmers to access formerly state-owned equipment, and the

proliferation of small subsistence farms, all of which have negatively impacted production and farmers' access to markets.

In this context, agricultural questions have proven to be some of the most difficult to resolve in EU admission negotiations, as EU officials have insisted that Romanian agriculture has had to be quickly “modernized” if Romania is to become a fully integrated member of the European Union. Through examination of archival records and interviews with key individuals, this dissertation investigates the evolution of Romanian agriculture and rural areas, focusing on the impact of Romania's accession into the EU on agricultural practice and rural development. The research addresses the consequences of adjusting Romanian agriculture to Common Agricultural Policy requirements and of seeking to harmonize traditional and modern agriculture in order to preserve the rural traditions of Romania and its agricultural biodiversity.

**INDEX WORDS:** Romania, Land reforms, Agricultural collectivization, Decollectivization, EU integration, Common Agricultural Policy, Rural development, Rural property

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## DEDICATION

In memory of my parents, Elena and Petru Stoian, and grandparents, Anica and Neculai Gr. Cojocaru, for their dedication to, and respect for, Romanian rural traditions.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AAs	Association Agreements
AAFS	Academy for Agricultural and Forestry Science
AGROSTAR	National Federation of the Trade Unions in Agriculture
APC	Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CAPs)
APIA	Agency of Payment and Intervention in Agriculture
ASE	Academia de Studii Economice (Academy of Economic Studies)
BINAG	Bank for the Industrialization and Valorization of Agricultural Products
CAF	Collective Agricultural Farms (GAC)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CAPs	Cooperative Agricole de Productie (APC)
CEC	Saving Bank
CEDO	Curtea Europeana a Drepturilor Omului (ECHR)
CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
CEECS	Central and Eastern European Countries
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CI	[LEADER] Community Initiative
CM	Common Market
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [COMECON]
COM	European Commission
DADR	Directia pentru Agricultura si Dezvoltare Rurala (Direction for Agriculture and Rural Development)
EAs	Europe Agreements
EAC	European Agricultural Community
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
EAGGF	European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (FEOGA)
EC	European Community
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights (CEDO)
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
ECU	European Currency Unit
EDC	European Defense Community
EEC	European Economic Community (CM)
EECs	Eastern European Countries
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EHC	European Health Community
EMA	Enterprises for Mechanization of Agriculture (IMA)
EMU	Economic and Monetary Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund

ESF	European Social Fund
ETC	European Transports Community
EU	European Union
EURATOM	European Atomic Energy Community
€	Euro
FEOGA	Fonds Europeen d’Orientation et de Garantie Agricole
FIS	Financial Investment Societies
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FSN	Frontul Salvării Nationale
GAC	Gospodării Agricole Colective (CAF)
GAI	Gospodării Agricole Individuale (Private Farms)
GAS	Gospodării Agricole de Stat (State Agricultural Farms)
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
HC	Health Check
HCA	Higher Council of Agriculture (Consiliul Superior al Agriculturii)
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IAS	Intreprinderi Agricole de Stat (SAE)
IMA	Intreprinderi pentru Mecanizarea Agriculturii (EMA)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPARD	Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development
IQS	Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies
ISPA	Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession
LEADER	Liaison Entre Actions de Developpement de l’Economie Rurale
LFAs	Less Favored Areas
MADR	Ministerul Agriculturii si Dezvoltării Rurale [Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development]
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Food
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Development [MAPDR]
MAPDR	Ministerul Agriculturii Padurilor and Dezvoltării Rurale
MDR	Ministry of Regional Development
MET	Mihai Eminescu Trust
MIE	Ministry of European Integration
MIP	Mediterranean Integrated Programs
MTR	Mid-term Review
MTS	Machine and Tractor Station (SMT)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NPAA	National Program of the Adoption of the <i>Acquis</i>
NRDP	National Rural Development Program
NSPRD	National Strategy Plan for Rural Development
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organization for European Economic Cooperation
OLAF	Office Europeen de Lutte Anti-Fraude (European Anti-Fraud Office)

OSA	Open Society Archives
PCR	Partidul Comunist Roman (Romanian Communist Party)
PHARE	Poland-Hungary: Actions for the Reconstruction of Their Economics
PSD	Party of Social Democracy
RARI	Romanian Agricultural Research Institute
RCP	Romanian Communist Party (PCR)
RD	Rural Development
RIS	Romanian Intelligence Service (Serviciul Roman de Informatii/SRI)
RSY	Romanian Statistical Yearbook
RPR	Romanian People's Republic (Republica Populara Romana)
SAE	State Agricultural Enterprises (IAS)
SAF	State Agricultural Farms (GAS)
SAPARD	Special Assistance Program for Agriculture and Rural Development
SAPS	Single Area Payment Scheme
SEA	Single European Act
SMT	Statiuni de Masini si Tractoare (MTS)
SOF	State Ownership Fund
SPS	Single Payment Scheme
SU	Soviet Union
TCA	Trade and Cooperation Agreement
TEU	Treaty on European Union (Treaty of Maastricht)
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VAT	Value Added Tax
WECs	Western European Countries
WB	World Bank
WDI	World Development Indicators
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWI	First World War
WWII	Second World War

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is central to Romania's economy and social life. Not only does it produce food but Romania's agro-food sector is both a major contributor to the economy and an important vehicle for rural development. Encouraging agriculture so as to encourage rural development, then, has been a central goal of the post-communist Romanian government. In this light, in April 2000 the Chamber of Deputies approved a *National Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development*, emphasizing four priorities: "development of agro-food processing"; "development of rural infrastructure"; "diversification of economic activity"; and "development of human resources" (OECD 2000, 143). Despite its centrality and these initiatives, though, modernizing agriculture and establishing viable rural development policy are activities which still remain in their "infancy" in Romania (Thomson 2003, 8).

It is in this context that, on September 26, 2006, the European Commission (COM) announced that Romania would be admitted into the European Union (EU) on January 1, 2007 (<http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/>, 2006). However, in order for accession to be completed by this date, the Commission indicated that, with regard to agriculture, a number a key steps would have to be initiated, including establishing agencies to handle direct payments to farmers under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), building up rendering collection and treatment facilities for animal by-products, creating tax administration systems that could be coordinated with those of the rest of the Union (so as to facilitate collection of the correct amounts of Value Added Tax [VAT]), and a number of other matters related to rural areas. In essence, such requirements were

designed to jump-start the “modernization” of Romanian agriculture by stimulating reform in an economic sector which seems to have been caught in an interminable transition from the inherited centrally planned economy of the communist era to the market economy of the post-communist era. For many, both inside and outside Romania, then, acceding to the demands of the EU was seen as a way to speed up the process of transition. However, it is also likely to unleash significant conflicts, as farmers were, and still are, increasingly encouraged/ forced to transform their agricultural practices to conform with EU standards.

Principally, this dissertation seeks to explore how ideas developed in one context may play out in quite perverse ways when implemented in radically different contexts from those in which they were developed. Specifically, I argue that the EU has had a preconceived vision of what a “modern agricultural landscape” should look like, a vision developed in the context of Western European agriculture. However, when this vision has been implemented within Romania’s agricultural landscape, it has produced deeply contradictory outcomes. For example, in seeking to encourage Romanian agriculture to become “modern,” the EU has insisted upon the privatization of the rural landscape, as the existence of a collectivized landscape has been seen to be a holdover from a failed economic system – central planning. Indeed, property restitution was significant for having a functioning market economy, one of the prerequisites for Romania’s acceptance into the EU. The process of decollectivization undertaken by the Romanian government, though, in which only the agricultural land was restituted to farmers but machinery and other non-land assets were not, has opened up all sorts of problems, such as massive migration abroad for work and land abandonment, rather than a more productive use of land. Furthermore, many of the requirements of the European Union’s Common Agricultural Policy adopted by Romania have proven to be inappropriate for the realities of Eastern European

agricultural patterns and practices: they have endangered, for example, Romanian biodiversity and have tended to encourage the replacing of small family farms with large commercial ones, a phenomenon which smacks of the reintroducing of a landscape that in many ways resembles that of the collectivized era, with its massive state farms.

It is in light of these issues that I have conducted the research outlined here. Specifically, the purpose of this study has been to understand how Romania's efforts to join the EU are shaping agricultural practices and land-use patterns, together with the response that this is engendering. Specifically, I have sought to answer the following question: *How has Romania's preparation for admittance into the EU impacted agricultural practices and land-use patterns, and what has been the response of rural people to this?* The study results aim to provide insights into the contentious dual processes of transition from a centrally planned to a market economy and of EU enlargement.

### **1.1 Why Study Romania?**

Romania, a country located in the Southeastern part of Central Europe, North of the Balkan Peninsula, on the lower course of the Danube River, and on the Western coast of the Black Sea, known as the *Carpatho-Danubiano-Pontic* territory (Figures 1.1 and 1.2), was chosen for this study because it represents, more than other Eastern European countries, nearly all the critical factors involved in the process of European integration. For myself, a native Romanian, this represents a unique opportunity to study in detail one of the most important key foreign policy goals of Romania, as well as of all Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) since 1989, namely their accession and integration into the European Union (Phinnemore 2001).



Figure 1.1 Romania on the Map of Europe  
 Source: <http://www.presidency.ro/>



Figure 1.2 Romania: Physical Map  
 Source: <http://www.presidency.ro/>

Focusing on Romania's agriculture, one of the most challenging chapters of the EU *acquis communautaire*<sup>1</sup>, the study attempts to emphasize that agriculture in Romania is a sector of considerable potential, but the current structural conditions must be significantly improved. Currently, some 62% of Romania's territory is used for agricultural production, 45% of the total population lives in rural areas, and agriculture generates some 30% of the nation's employment (MAPDR 2001; OECD 2000; Thomson 2003; Dalton et al. 2003; Romanian Statistical Yearbooks 2006, 2007; see also Chapter 9). The fact that Romania has large expanses of first-class arable soils means agriculture could make a significant contribution to the country's economic prosperity. Given that its location on the western Black Sea shoreline allows Romania to control the Danube transport corridor, Romania could conceivably emerge as an important player in EU agriculture and in broader global food trade networks.

In order to understand where Romanian agriculture stands today, though, it is necessary to appreciate that it has undergone a number of significant changes in the past centuries, especially as a result of major land reforms initiated in 1864, 1921, 1945, and 1949. The 1949 Law in particular stimulated a dramatic transformation of the countryside through the forced collectivization of agriculture, followed by a dramatic program of rural systematization, which resulted in a significant rural-urban exodus. If the 1949 Law resulted in collectivization, since the 1990s, on the other hand, post-communist land reform – initiated with the controversial Law 18/1991 (the Law on Land Resources) – has aimed to decollectivize agriculture and restore rural property to its pre-collectivization owners (MAPDR 2001; Verdery 2003; Geopolitica 1(5) 2005). Importantly, this has had a number of disruptive effects on rural areas, including fostering conflicts between villagers over land and encouraging the proliferation of small subsistence farms as collective farms have been broken up. In addition, rural areas have had to

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<sup>1</sup> *Acquis communautaire* is the whole body of the EU legislation (see Appendix F).

cope with trying to absorb workers made redundant by the privatization of urban-based industries, while the break-up of collective farms has meant that many farmers who are now farming their own private land have been unable to access agricultural equipment which collective farms had owned. All of this has negatively impacted production and farmers' access to markets.

Although rural areas served as “a buffer in labor markets” (OECD 2000, 9) and a preferred destination for a significant number of urban people after the 1991 Law was implemented, the subsequent problems with agriculture and the high pressure of unemployment, especially in villages located near small and medium-sized towns, where large numbers of former city commuters or return migrants now live, has encouraged a significant rural migration abroad for work in recent years (Sandu 1999). As a result, in 2006, the last year of preparation for Romania's integration into the EU, some 16% of arable land (over 1.5 million hectares) remained uncultivated, and much of that which was cultivated was done so as part of rural households practicing subsistence agriculture (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007; see also Chapter 9). It was within this context, then, that adoption of CAP requirements was seen as a way to kick-start the agricultural modernization process.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

If exploring the deeply contradictory nature of putting ideas and policies developed in one geographical realm (Western Europe) into place in an agricultural landscape that has developed in response to a quite different set of historical and geographical factors and processes (Romania) is the overarching theme of this dissertation, to do so requires understanding how, precisely, Romania's agricultural landscape has been affected by the country's efforts to join the EU. To do this, I seek to address three specific research questions.

### ***1.2.1 What was the state of Romania's agriculture prior to the 1989 revolution which ended Communist Party rule in Romania?***

In order to answer this question I relied upon two main sources of data: archival materials and interviews with officials and farmers. My goal in posing this first question was to understand the main characteristics of Romanian agriculture in the historical context, particularly the state of agriculture in 1989, on the cusp of the revolution which removed the government of communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu. More specifically, in this archival work and interviews I looked for information relating to such things as agrarian reforms, land-use and crop production, agrarian structure and land tenure, foreign politics and agriculture, and the relationship between central and/or local government and villagers concerning agricultural policies and rural development. This part of the research was largely descriptive and provided a benchmark by which to determine post-1989 changes.

### ***1.2.2 How has Romanian agriculture been transformed since 1989?***

The purpose of this question was to determine how agriculture has been transformed in the post-1989 period. Answering this question drew upon the same sources outlined above, archives and interviews. I was particularly interested in how land restitution took place and the extent to which decollectivization and outmigration are impacting agriculture. Thus, I used archival materials and interviews with national and local officials and farmers in which I asked them about how agricultural practices have been transformed since 1989, especially in response to decollectivization. In addition, I asked my in-country interviewees for contact information of individuals who had left the country, with the goal of conducting interviews with them by phone or mail concerning what role agricultural changes may have played in their decision to emigrate (emigration being a form of response to such changes).

***1.2.3 What role has preparation for admittance to the EU played in any post-1989 transformation identified and how have rural people reacted to this?***

This question was, in many ways, the central aspect of the research presented here, for it sought to determine which elements of post-1989 agricultural transformation were most directly associated with preparation for admittance into the EU. Although the European Commission indicated only in 2006 that Romania would be admitted, and the admittance officially took place on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, the Romanian agricultural sector had been undergoing dramatic changes for a number of years in anticipation of admittance. The research to answer this question required a number of different elements: a) examination of Romanian and EU documentation relating to agricultural and rural development policies; b) interviews with local farmers, government officials, and NGO representatives to determine to what extent local transformations had been in response to the EU accession process, together with reaction to these; c) examination of newspaper stories in the local newspapers in Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov counties and in the national press emphasizing farmer resistance to EU agricultural policies; and d) focus groups, which allowed a different set of dynamics to emerge concerning the “local pulse” of the rural communities. I also documented aspects of contemporary rural life via photography.

Elements a) and b) were addressed as part of the interviews and archival work outlined in Sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. For Element c), some national newspapers were on-line and I searched these prior to my arrival in Romania. However, it was necessary for me to examine some other print newspapers for a better understanding of the local realities. This was conducted alongside my archival work. Element d) required me to conduct two focus groups in Bacau and Iasi counties, with the intent of recording narratives of frustration, violence, corruption, injustice, and poverty, fear of de- and possibly re-collectivization, and identity issues, as well as new,

successful initiatives in farming based upon accessing EU or Romanian government funds. Such focus groups provided different insights from those of the one-on-one interviews.

### **1.3 Significance of the Research**

In its attempt to identify the characteristics of Romanian agriculture and to understand how Romania's efforts to join the EU are impacting agricultural practices and land-use patterns, the study broadens and deepens the literature on transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy, together with that on EU enlargement. Given that the EU's creation and enlargement, as well as Romania's integration, are predominantly elite affairs, such that, in many respects, there exists a significant "gap between citizens and elites," the research also sheds light on how processes of top-down administrative fiat are interpreted, resisted, and transformed by those whom they impact (Lahav 2004, 11). The research makes conceptual and empirical contributions in the areas of economic, historical, and political geography, European/ EU studies, rural studies, and international political economy. It also contributes to academic debates over the emergence of a civil society in Eastern Europe and to important theoretical debates within geography (such as: what remains of the power of the individual nation-state [e.g., Romania] in an age of supranationalism? and how do social groups mobilize to challenge top-down development schemes?).

This study has clear policy implications for understanding the process of transition from a centrally planned to a market economy, and the process of eastward expansion of the EU into more economically challenged regions of Europe. By examining how policies are implemented and, possibly, resisted by those who are impacted, this study contributes to policy debates surrounding the creation of a more inclusive and open civil society in Eastern Europe. Specifically, by understanding how decisions made by the EU and Romanian elites impact non-

elites but are also challenged by them, the study provides insights into the politics of transition and, through my interaction with my research participants, facilitates their own self-reflection upon the processes to which they are being subjected/ are subjecting others. These lessons and reflections may have pertinence for other countries with large agricultural sectors which are currently seeking EU admission, including candidate countries (Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey) and potential candidates (Serbia, other Balkan countries, and Iceland), as well as the countries contemplating later integration (Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia) ([http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-counties/potential-candidates/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-counties/potential-candidates/index_en.htm). Retrieved: December 2009).

Finally, taking photographs allowed me to preserve for posterity images of a rural landscape about to undergo significant transition. These images could be useful for future students of agricultural transformation associated with EU enlargement. They would also serve to capture a particular moment in time, thereby acting as a pictorial repository of a Romanian rural cultural identity which is probably about to be lost. I have established a website for these images at: <http://gsconnor.myweb.uga.edu><sup>2</sup>.

#### **1.4 The Plan of the Dissertation**

The dissertation is organized into eleven chapters, grouped into three broader sections. This first chapter has delineated the complexity of the problems raised by the three established research questions, revealing, at the same time, the rationale for studying Romania's case within the general picture of post-communist transition and European integration. Chapter 2 outlines the research design and methodology used to identify and understand Romania's agrarian question and the country's efforts to join the European Union, together with the impact of the

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<sup>2</sup> See Dissertation: Rural Romania - Photo Album.

integration on agriculture and rural development. This chapter also elaborates the epistemological underpinning of the research, followed by an outline of the methodology used, with emphasis on fieldwork in Romania and data analysis. The pertinent literature that defines and theorizes rural space is reviewed in Chapter 3. The chapter then moves on to discuss a brief history of rural studies in Europe, with an emphasis on those studies in or about Romania.

The section entitled “*Negotiating the New Geography of the Enlarged Europe*” encompasses two chapters, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Chapter 4 is concerned with the new geographies of Europe, from the Common Market to the European Union. Specifically, the study briefly sketches the origins of the European Union, followed by some explanation of the integration process with respect to Eastern enlargement. Since the focus of this research is agriculture and rural development, Chapter 5 includes one of the most complex policies of the European Union: the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Agriculture is viewed as a “highly Europeanized sector” (Greer 2005, 1). Consequently, the CAP is considered a crucial element of the European integration process, and is supposed to produce “harmonization and policy convergence across EU countries” (ibid). Finally, the chapter explores rural development policy, as a key component of the enlargement process.

The next two sections narrow the focus of the discussion by concentrating on rural Romania. Using extensive archival research, section two, “*From Traditions to Communism: Rural Romania Before 1989*,” offers details regarding agriculture and rural development for two contrasting political divisions within Romania’s history: pre-WWII capitalism (Chapter 6) and communism (Chapters 7 and 8). Chapter 6 emphasizes the characteristics of traditional Romanian agriculture, focusing, in Cartwright’s (2001, vi) words, on “the history of past land reforms as a way to understand the present.” By way of contrast, Chapters 7 and 8 provide a

detailed discussion of the rural dimension of Romania under communist rule. More specifically, the characteristic features of the communist era (the 1945 Land Reform, forced agricultural collectivization, the systematization of the Romanian villages, and the rural-urban exodus) are compared and contrasted, taking into account two historical divisions of the communist era, namely Romania under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1945-1965) and Nicolae Ceausescu (1965-1989). Some brief comparisons with other former communist countries are also made.

The third section, “*Back to Capitalism: Rural Romania After 1989*,” encompassing Chapters 9 and 10, develops original empirical data on the cognitive and normative components of agriculture and rural development policies as revealed by the EU, national, regional, and/or local elites. My approach to elite analysis follows other work on decision-makers involved in European integration. Therefore, it is not necessarily a new approach to rural and agriculture research, but it has rarely been applied (Lahav 2004). This research, though, also involves the experiences of non-elites, villagers and farmers. The primary data on which the elite and non-elite analyses are based come from interviews conducted in Romania with 60 individuals. This section also contains an extended attitudinal analysis, incorporating some information from Eurobarometer reports as well. These attitudinal data are used to analyze the domestic and international voices arguing for integration and the perspective on development held in the most extensive regions of the country, these being the rural areas. Equally important is the analysis of the extent to which Romania, which differs considerably from Western Europe in terms of economic development, especially agriculture, can organize its interests so that Romanian agriculture may adjust to the Common Agricultural Policy’s requirements.

The first part of Chapter 9 details the specific characteristics of the post-communist transition and the challenges posed by integration (the decollectivization of agriculture, land reform, new migratory flows [urban-rural and rural-abroad], accession negotiations, and the adjustment of agriculture and rural development to the Common Agricultural Policy). The second part of Chapter 9 is an empirical section that analyzes the structural transformation of Romania's agriculture (land use and agricultural production), followed by the third part which focuses on rural development policy. Chapter 10 then shifts the analysis of people's opinions about agriculture and rural transformations from the country level to particular counties, focusing especially on rural-post accession characteristics of three counties: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov. These chapters raise issues concerning the discourse related to the social constructions of European and national identity, and of the identity of villagers and farmers. Furthermore, the analysis concludes with an attempt to generate a formal hypothesis concerning the relationships between concepts, and testing the authenticity of the inductive content analysis (Patton 2002; Ezzy 2002).

Finally, Chapter 11, "*Concluding Remarks*," concludes the study by assessing the importance of the findings for current literatures in economic and political geography, European/EU studies, rural studies, international political economy, and debates on globalization and/or between intergovernmental and supranational views of cooperation and convergence. The data reveal a "converse relationship" between European integration and rural development policy, one that is contrary to the "unilinear conceptualization of globalization and regional integration" and which is marked by significant rural traditions and national brands (Lahav 2004, 21). The concluding chapter also emphasizes the limitations of the study, suggesting the direction future

research might take in an effort to continue critical research on agricultural integration and rural development.

## CHAPTER 2

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This research has been conducted using a qualitative research design, “a field of inquiry in its own right” (Denzin and Lincoln 2000, 1). Qualitative research is a loosely defined category of research design. Crosscutting disciplines, fields, and subject matters, it elicits a variety of data in the form of field notes, descriptive narratives, transcriptions from audio and/or videotapes, pictures, films, and other records. As Janesick (2000, 379) noted, citing Flick, “the essence of good qualitative research design turns on the use of a set of procedures that are simultaneously open-ended and rigorous and that do justice to the complexity of the social setting under study.” Yet, qualitative researchers look beyond ordinary, everyday ways of seeing social life, trying to understand social processes in context (Esterberg 2002).

The meaning and value of qualitative inquiry often reflect broader controversies in the social sciences. As a reformist movement that began in the early 1970s, qualitative inquiry is more comprehensible as “a site or arena for social scientific criticism,” a site that is “a home” for a diversity of scholars who share a general rejection of “mainstream social science” (Schwandt 2000, 190). Using a series of metaphors, Janesick (2000, 379) compares qualitative research with “choreography,” which “refuses to be limited to one approach.” In this light, Denzin and Lincoln (2000, 4) see the qualitative researcher as a “bricoleur,” or “a kind of professional do-it-yourself” and the qualitative research as “bricolage,” representing “a piece-together set of representations.”

## 2.1 Epistemology

I identify my research with the *constructionist or constructivist* stance because it allows for the existence of “multiple realities” and truths (Patton 2002, 96). But what is constructionism or constructivism? In the constructionist view, meanings are “not discovered but constructed” (Crotty 2003, 9 and 42). According to Crotty (2003, 43), constructionism claims that “meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting.” In the words of Dickens (1996, 71), cited by Burningham and Cooper (1999, 299), “all knowledge must in some sense be a social construction,” a position which rejects notions of an “absolute truth.” As Preissle and Grant (2004, 173) noted, citing Velody and Williams (1998), there are many varieties of constructionism, assuming that “knowledge is created by an interaction between the knower and the known” or, to quote Crotty (2003, 45) again, “interaction between subject and object.”

Although the objects of research are limited by the particular history or by the use for which they were originally intended, they are seriously taken into consideration by constructionism. Since all objects are constituted within various interpretative strategies, making meanings is an ongoing process. According to the constructionist view, there exists a variety of interpretations, such as “useful,” “liberating,” “fulfilling,” or “rewarding,” but “there is no true or valid interpretation” (Crotty 2003, 47-48). In their attempt to emphasize the utility of social constructionist approaches for the study of environmental issues, Burningham and Cooper (1999, 302 and 305) look especially at “how constructionism is used in studies,” remarking that “a mild form of analysis” is adopted by the social studies. Yet, research in the constructivist vein also requires approaching the object “in a radical spirit of openness to its potential for new or richer meaning.” Therefore, it is an invitation to “reinterpretation” (Crotty 2003, 51).

Patton (2002) has remarked on an important distinction between constructivism and constructionism in Crotty's (1998) work, illustrating the modality in which the process of social construction is developed. While constructivism, focusing on "the meaning-making activity of the individual mind" (Crotty 1998, 58), points out "the unique experience of each of us" (Patton 2002, 97), (social) constructionism, focusing on "the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning" (Crotty 1998, 58), shapes the way in which we see and feel things. By way of contrast, Risse (2004, 160), quoting Elster (1989, 13), suggests the following:

It is probably most useful to describe constructivism as based on a social ontology which insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings ('culture' in a broad sense). This is in contrast to the methodological individualism of rational choice according to which '[t]he elementary unit of social life is the individual human action'.

In their part, Burningham and Cooper (1999, 313) have pointed out that some authors use the term "social constructivism" and some simply "constructivism" or "constructionism," emphasizing that the debate about these terms has revealed "no clear rationale for preferring one term over another."

Accepting that "all objects are made and not found," we have to consider "the social origin of meaning" (Crotty 2003, 52). Patton (2002, 96) reminds us, quoting Shadish (1995, 67), that "social constructionism refers to constructing knowledge about reality, not constructing reality itself." Describing a variety of approaches to science, knowledge, and nature, social constructionism sometimes generates polemic debate across the social and natural sciences. Its basic tenet is that "knowledge of the everyday world and of nature is constructed through processes of social interaction and the mobilization of disparate rhetorical and representational resources" (Bickerstaff and Walker 2003, 46; Miller and Holstein 1993). Social constructionism

is thus a mixture of beliefs about the socially constructed nature of reality, specifically how “we as humans come to understand what we believe to be reality” (Tucker 2004, 77).

As has been emphasized by Risse (2004, 161), the “mutual constitutiveness” of (social) structures and agents is the crucial point of constructivists. Moreover, our identities as social beings, embedded in various social communities, are defined by the social environment. At the same time, through our daily practices, culture is created, reproduced, and changed by human agency. Thus, “social constructivism occupies a -- sometimes uneasy -- ontological middleground between individualism and structuralism by claiming that there are properties of structures and of agents that cannot be collapsed into each other” (ibid).

Taking into consideration the fact that many of the conclusions of this research are drawn from a comparative analysis of public opinion and elite preferences, this study is premised on a social constructionist or constructivist view of the construction of knowledge. Since this study attempts to analyze both individual and collective views and experiences within the geographical space of Europe, I draw on “constructionism/constructivism” or simply “social constructivism,” the latter being the most used term in European Union studies. Since we do not construct our interpretations in isolation, the creation of reality takes place in the context of social interaction (Tucker 2004; Schwandt 2000). Hence, the understanding developed through this research is influenced by the interaction between me, as a researcher (interviewer, [participant] observer), and the researched (subjects, participants, respondents, and/or informants). In this light, in examining the impact of the EU enlargement on Romanian agriculture and rural areas from the social constructivist view, I do not attempt to observe an ‘objective’ truth; rather, I attempt to understand and explain the interviewees’ constructed meanings about this process, as suggested by Esterberg (2002, 15), “through the process of interpretation.”

## 2.2 Theoretical Perspective

Schwandt (2000, 197), citing Fay, refers to the sociocultural dimension of constructivism in contemporary epistemology as “perspectivism” because the evaluation of knowledge takes place within a “conceptual framework through which the world is described and explained.” In the words of Crotty (2003, 3), any theoretical perspective adopted represents “the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria.” Taking into consideration the complexity of the study, I identify with Lather’s (2004, 207) “understanding,” “emancipation,” and “deconstruction” paradigms, aligning closely to the theoretical perspectives of “interpretivism,” “critical inquiry,” and “postmodernism” (Crotty 2003, 5). By focusing on these theoretical frameworks, I aim to move beyond a review of a series of contextually localized studies that describe Romania’s land reforms and the complex processes of the pre- and post-1989 revolution, and to raise questions relating to the impact of the EU enlargement on Romanian agriculture and rural development. Specifically, I attempt not only to understand the elites’ preferences and public opinion toward communism and/or integration, rural integration especially, but also to scrutinize some of the most challenging issues raised by the recent alignment of Romania’s agriculture to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

I align most closely with the Postmodernist theoretical framework, “the most prevalent mode of thinking in our time,” as it allows me to exercise control over language in analyzing the specific categories of reality (Patton 2002, 100). But what is Postmodernism? Encompassing a broad variety of developments, postmodernism is considered one of the most slippery of terms. Postmodernists do not constitute a unified group. There still are substantial debates about the signification of postmodernism and its implications for doing qualitative research. In the words

of Best and Kellner (1991, 2), quoted by Peet (1998, 214), “there is no unified postmodern theory, or even a coherent set of positions.” Consequently, the term is used, and defined, in a multitude of ways.

As has been emphasized by Crotty (2003, 192), quoting Milner (1991, 106), postmodernism is an approach to knowledge that involves “the progressive deconstruction and dissolution of distinctions.” More specifically, in a post-industrial world dominated by multinational corporations and characterized by transnationalism, universal consumerism, hypermilitarization, and ultra-technological images, in which Europe is also integrated, a certain degree of the massification of culture has occurred, followed by “the dissolution of differences and distinctions” (Crotty 2003, 194). Lather (2004, 205) generally uses the term postmodern to mean “the shift in material conditions of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century monopoly capitalism,” characterized by “the micro-electronic revolution in information technology, the fissures of global, multinational hypercapitalism, and the global uprising of the marginalized.” These movements have not taken place only in art and/or architecture but have also affected the practices of everyday life, creating a conjuncture that “shifts our sense of who we are and what is possible in the name of science” (Lather 2004, 205).

In postmodern philosophy, modern reason, “which produces truth,” is revised and reinterpreted critically, as “a mode of social control” (Peet 1998, 195). Although the new philosophy would not necessarily produce better forms of knowledge but merely different ones, it offers an “alternative discourse based on oppositional modes of understanding” (p. 208). In the words of Rue (1994), for example, quoted by Crotty (2003, 192), postmodernism is described as “a philosophical orientation that rejects the dominant foundational program of the Western tradition.” According to Crotty (2003, 190), postmodernism is “a response to a qualitatively new

society,” characterized through a “structural transformation of advanced industrial societies.” Refusing the essentialist orientations of modernist systems of thought and abandoning the epistemological basis for any claims to truth, postmodernism typically engages in “a radical decentring of the subject” and privileges “the dispersal of identity” (Crotty 2003, 185).

Postmodernists “tend to agree that there is not one reality, but instead a number of different realities and ways of knowing, all equally valid” (Esterberg 2002, 20). Consequently, if there is no single reality or truth, we can assume that there is no one ‘right’ way of doing research or interpreting data. In other words, there are multiple stories that might be told from multiple perspectives. Although a postmodern critical geography is “spatially deconstructive” (Peet 1998, 223), deconstruction alone does not have any finality. It must be accompanied by a flexible spatial reconstruction, emphasizing the struggles of marginalized oppressed peoples (Soja 1989; Peet 1998).

Deconstructing the language and exposing it to critical analysis should allow me to “give a voice to the voiceless” (Denzin [1991, 153] quoted in Patton 2002, 101), more specifically, to rural Romanians dramatically challenged by communism, transition from the communist system to democracy, and integration into the EU. For the purposes of this study, in deconstructing constructivism I align myself to a moderate view that captures “different perspectives about reality” (Patton 2002, 101) as they emerge from differences in temporal and spatial geographic locations and dislocations. Consequently, the multitude of different realities requires a multitude of ways of knowing.

The proposed framework for this study allowed me to answer a variety of questions. First, from an interpretive perspective, the questions are directed to the understanding of the historical evolution of rural Romania, as well as of two crucial political aspects in Europe: transition, from

the communist system to democracy, and integration. More specifically, the study attempts to understand and interpret the complexity of this unique political and economic community, the European Union (EU), and the rationale, on the one hand, for the EU enlargement to the east and, on the other hand, for the desire of the former communist countries, Romania especially, to integrate into Western institutions. Second, a critical perspective allowed me not only to answer questions regarding the communist-forced agricultural collectivization but also those regarding Romania's accession negotiations with the EU, decollectivization and the perspective of recollectivization, followed by the unprecedented current of rural migration abroad. Third, the postmodern perspective can guide me to answer questions about Romania's post-accession agricultural and rural development policies, as well as about public opinion and elite preferences, focusing on both domestic and international voices.

Approaching my study from a constructivist epistemology, social constructivist especially, can lead to a better understanding of the study of European transition and integration, including Romania's rural integration. Specifically, I argue that an identity-based explanation is better able to account for the EU's Eastern enlargement decision than are conventional theories of integration such as rationalist liberal intergovernmentalism (Schimmelfennig 2001; Risse 2004). Moreover, by examining the economic significance of national identities, the study can empirically illustrate patterns of political and economic disintegration and reintegration among Eastern European countries (EECs) and the former Soviet Union (USSR) (Abdelal 2001 and 2005; Risse 2004; Eichler 2005; Tsygankov 2005; Pickel 2005). Finally, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and its political influence means not only the transition of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) from the communist system to a market economy and integration into the Western structure but also the re-emancipation of the Eastern Europeans, including rural

people, as a result of the new open politics (Schultz and Weingast 2003; Piazzolo 2001). My research study is directed toward a large audience, but primarily the specialists and students in Geography, International Relations, Political Science, and Economics.

### **2.3 Methodology**

A major strength of case study research is the opportunity to use many different sources of data: archives, interviews, statistics, field observations, and personal experience. Not all of these sources of data were used to answer each research question but each research question did have multiple sources of information, as well as different methods to obtain the data (Hays 2004). Because different data collection strategies have different strengths and weaknesses, a research design that includes multiple research strategies is considered to be the strongest one. Such research design, using more than one research strategy and multiple research techniques (multimethods or mixed methods), is called *triangulation* (Bentz and Shapiro 1998; Wolcott 2001; Esterberg 2002; Patton 2002; Preissle and Grant 2004; Schutz et al. 2004).

The discussions of triangulation inquiry in the social sciences trace their origin to the Campbell and Fiske (1959) article on the “multitrait-multimethod matrix,” in which they argued that “every method has its limitation, and multiple methods are usually needed” in order to construct validity (Schutz et al. 2004, 276; Patton 2002, 247). Related to this argument, Schutz et al (2004, 276), quoting Knafl and Breitmayer (1989, 210), specified that the triangulation strategy was used as “a metaphor to characterize the use of multiple methods to measure a single construct.” In other words, explaining the logic of triangulation, Patton (2002, 247), quoting Denzin (1978, 28), wrote:

No single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This is termed triangulation.

Thus, triangulation strengthens a study by combining several kinds of methods or data, including using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A rich variety of methodological combinations can be employed to get a richer understanding of a phenomenon (Bentz and Shapiro 1998; Patton 2002). Yet, different kinds of data may yield different results. In this light, the researcher's ability to understand such inconsistencies in findings can be crucial, offering opportunities for deeper insights into the relationship between the inquiry approach and the phenomenon under study. Patton (2002, 556) has individualized four categories of triangulation: "methods triangulation" (comparing and integrating data collected through both qualitative and quantitative methods), "triangulation of sources" (comparing and cross-checking the consistency of different data sources within the same method), "analyst triangulation" (using multiple as opposed to singular observers to review findings), and "theory/perspective triangulation" (using different theoretical perspectives/theories to look at the same data).

The complexity of this study required cutting across inquiry approaches, achieving triangulation by combining qualitative methods (archives, interviewing, focus groups, observations, content or case analysis, and developing hypotheses) and quantitative methods (statistical analysis and making systematic comparisons on standardized criteria). However, this last type of analysis was relegated to a secondary role.

### ***2.3.1 Research Site and Data Collection***

#### ***2.3.1.1 Archival Research in the United States***

My research was conducted primarily in the United States, using the archival resources obtained from several public and private academic libraries, but my field study was conducted in Romania. In addition, the European Commission and Parliament in Brussels offered valuable

sources of information. Prior to, and after engaging in, fieldwork in Romania, I searched for documents relating to EU agricultural policy at the Library of Congress (a library offering an excellent collection of EU documents) and for those relating to Romanian agriculture at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in Washington, D.C. (which houses a vast collection of documents relating to Eastern Europe). I also searched various EU and Romanian websites for such information.

Since information about the EU is quite abundant, in the selection of this dissertation's bibliography my attention has focused on a large range of opinions. The majority of the cited authors are from the Western countries, but several Eastern European authors are included as well. Also, due to the fact that a series of events were in progress, I had to be informed daily, through Romanian and international media, as to the evolution of the integration process of Romania, agriculture and rural areas especially. I am aware of some gaps and/or inconsistencies in the bibliographical information written in Romanian or about Romania. Translation from the Romanian language sources was my own.

### ***2.3.1.2 Fieldwork in Romania***

Although my dissertation research was primarily archival, it was also based on extended fieldwork in Romania, delving into a variety of research methods. Fieldwork in geography, as in other social sciences or in professional sciences, is "research on some aspect of human behavior in its everyday context" (Preissle and Grant 2004, 163). Or, to quote Clifford (1990, 53): "Fieldwork is a complex historical, political, intersubjective set of experiences which escapes the metaphors of participation, observation, initiation, rapport, induction, learning, and so forth, often deployed to account for it." The researcher enters the field, first, to observe human interaction in a specific context. In addition to watching, the researcher, as a participant

observer, has to ask and to collect (documenting or recording) information. Some scholars point out that fieldwork can be considered “one of the oldest forms of human inquiry,” starting even in antiquity, forming the foundations of many disciplines, including geography, anthropology, geology, biology, and astronomy (Preissle and Grant 2004, 162). Many questions -- practical, political, ethical, strategic, personal -- are raised by conducting field research. Some of them seem separate from the research itself, but are integral to it. Studying events (as close to first hand as possible), reflecting on them, and interpreting them are the basic elements of all fieldwork (Katz 1994; Crang 2002; Preissle and Grant 2004).

As has been emphasized by Fry (2000, 10), participant observation has “advantages beyond being a method for collecting particular types of information.” This statement means that the ‘participant’ role provides an opportunity for the researcher to contribute to the group’s activities. In addition, there are several other reasons for which we may consider participant observation useful. First, fieldwork itself is the empirical method of studying, firsthand, the direct experience of life (Preissle and Grant 2004). Participant observation also provides the opportunity to observe people’s actions as well as their talk. It can be useful for gaining access to the less accessible frames of reference which may not be as easily accessible during an interview. Finally, occurring in settings which existed prior to the researcher’s entrance, fieldwork offers the opportunity for gathering naturally-occurring data. Yet, fieldwork could be an expensive part of the research program and, sometimes, a series of sites are less accessible, necessitating time and effort to obtain official approval.

Duneier (1999, 352) pointed out that during his fieldwork in New York he “relied upon the method of participant observation, rather than interviewing,” or his so-called “summer internship,” in order to obtain the bulk of his data. But what is participant observation?

According to Preissle and Grant (2004), participant observation is a label for research requiring some extent of social participation to document or record the course of ongoing events. The researcher observes through participating in events, but the nature and extent of participation vary. Using this reference, I have identified four types of participant observation: (1) the complete participant; (2) the participant observer; (3) the observer as participant; and (4) the complete observer (Preissle and Grant 2004, 163). Unlike the “complete participant” and the “complete observer” positions, in which the researchers do not reveal their research intention to those they study, in the other two types of participant observer, the “participant as observer” and the “observer as participant,” the participants know that the researcher will do a study about them.

My fieldwork was conducted with me partly as a participant observer and partly as simply an observer, based upon what I needed to achieve in the different contexts. My principal fieldwork tools included gathering archival information (governmental documents, media reports, national academic writings, official surveys), observing places and people, helping people to resolve some daily farm problems, taking field notes, photographs, interviewing individuals one-on-one, and organizing focus group interviews with a series of elite and non-elite individuals, or simply talking with different people to learn their opinions about collectivized agriculture and how rural Romanians are responding to EU enlargement.

#### ***2.3.1.2.1 Site***

Although I was interested in constructing a general picture of agriculture across the nation as a whole, I was particularly interested in the regions of Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov counties, in Eastern and Central Romania (Figure 2.1; Figure 2.2). I selected these regions because they provide a way to examine rural and agricultural transformation in three quite different areas in

Moldova and Transylvania: (1) a complex agrarian-industrial zone of the Trotus Basin, Bacau County, covering a variety of landforms with former collectivized villages in the river valleys and lowland zones, and former non-collectivized villages in the mountain zones (Figure 2.3); (2) a rural zone (one with many former collectivized villages) in the Moldavian Plain surrounding the city of Iasi, the largest university and cultural city in Moldova, Eastern Romania (Figure 2.4); and (3) a rural zone (Brasov) in the Transylvanian Plateau inhabited by ethnic Germans and Romanians (Figure 2.5). By examining these areas, I attempted to explore how preparation for EU admittance has impacted agriculture and rural development in a wide variety of contexts – formerly collectivized v. non-collectivized areas; isolated rural v. rural areas which serve as suppliers of market garden goods to significant local urban areas; and ethnically Romanian v. ethnically German areas.



Figure 2.1 **Romania – Physical Map with Counties**

Source: <http://romaniatraveltourism.com/romania/Romania-Counties-Map.jpg>



Figure 2.2 Romania – Traditional Historical Provinces  
 Source: <http://www.ici.ro/romania/en/geografie/judete.html>

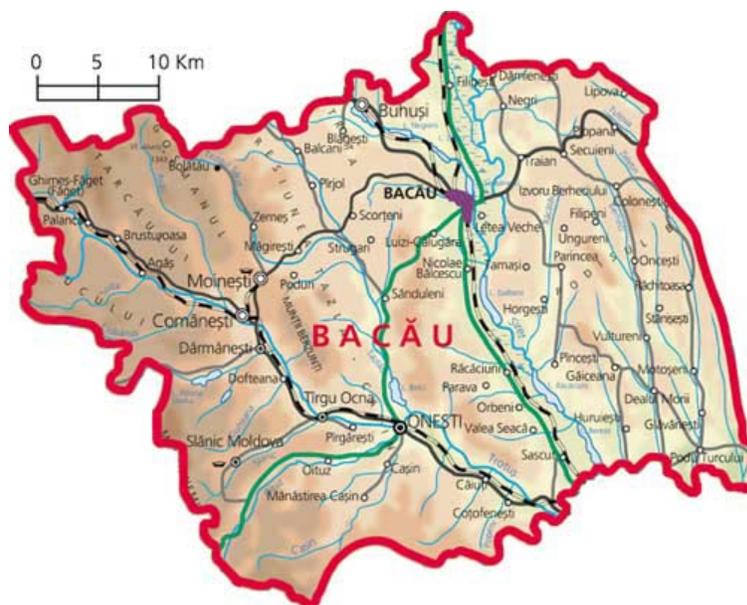


Figure 2.3 Bacău County – Physical Map  
 Source: <http://www.rotravel.com/Maps-of-Romania/Bacau-c1/>



### **2.3.1.2.2 Secondary Data**

Once in Romania, I (who am of Romanian origin) examined agriculture-related documents located in the Bucharest archives of the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR), the Ministry of European Integration (MIE) -- today renamed the Ministry of Regional Development (MDR) -- and several academic libraries, such as the Romanian Academy of Science, the University of Bucharest, the Academy of Economic Studies, and the University of Agronomical Sciences. I also inquired about archives held in local county offices in Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov counties and several academic libraries, such as the Directions for Agriculture and Rural Development in the cities of Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov, the University of Agronomical Sciences and Al. I. Cuza University in Iasi city, and Transylvania University in Brasov city. As some national newspapers and magazines were on-line, I searched these prior to my arrival in Romania (<http://www.ziare.com/>; <http://www.evz.ro/>; <http://www.adevarul.ro/>; <http://www.formula-as.ro/>; <http://www.geopolitica.ro/>; <http://www.romanialibera.ro/>; <http://www.romare.ro/>; <http://www.agrinews.ro/>; <http://www.lumeasatului.ro/>; and <http://www.agrinet.ro/>). However, it was necessary for me to examine some other newspapers by hand for finding local realities, the research conducted alongside my archival work (<http://www.ziaruldebacau.ro/> and <http://www.ziaruldeiasi.ro/>).

I collected data on crop production, land tenure, land reform and agriculture's decollectivization, agriculture's negotiations, government policy toward agriculture, and the relationship between central and local government concerning agricultural directives of the EU Commission and of MADR, as well as patterns of land-use in villages in these counties (given the high outmigration which is leaving much land unused). In this light, I reviewed documentation on the Law 18/1991 (the Law on Land Resources) and government policies to

determine what development initiatives have been taken in agriculture, together with the extent of, and the impact of, the unprecedented exodus of rural population abroad for work, which is significantly affecting agricultural practice and land-use through land abandonment.

#### **2.3.1.2.3 Primary Data**

Primary data from individuals were collected through the use of interviews and focus groups. In his book, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, Patton (2002, 340) pointed out that “we interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe,” arguing that we cannot observe feelings, thoughts, intentions, behaviors, and situations. An *interview* is therefore a process in which a researcher and his or her interviewees engage in a conversation, focusing on questions related to the research study (deMarrais 2004; Gubrium and Holstein 2003). At first glance, the interview seems simple and self-evident. On the one hand, the interviewer has to coordinate a conversation and, on the other hand, the respondent has to provide the answers. Although perceived as a conversation, an interview is much different from an everyday conversation, taking into consideration that the researcher selects the participants, designs the study, and determines the research purpose. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective, assuming that the perspective of others is meaningful and knowledgeable (Patton 2002; Gubrium and Holstein 2003).

Much has been written in recent years within the social science and the professional literature about interviews. Herod (1999, 325), for example, analyzes how interviews with foreign elites often confuse taken-for-granted notions of who is the “insider” and who is the “outsider,” and notions of “authentic” knowledge in cross-cultural qualitative studies. He also emphasizes the main differences between conducting interviews with foreign elites and non-elites, describing his experience in conducting research in the Czech and Slovak Republics. The

idea is also developed in McDowell's (1998, 2135) research, interviewing high-status workers in the City of London. Discussing access to the field and data, McDowell points out that "a great deal depends on luck and chance, connection and networks, and the particular circumstances at the time."

Since qualitative interviewing assumes that "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (Patton 2002, 341), I planned to interview a number of Romanian people to find out what they thought about agriculture and rural development, specifically to gather their stories. I prepared approximately 40 open-ended questions (Appendix A) for my semistructured interviews. My goal was to explore more openly the challenge of Romania's integration into the EU and how this is being experienced by rural areas, allowing interviewees "to express their opinion and ideas in their own words" (Esterberg 2002, 87).

Although my initial plan was to conduct semistructured interviews (in-depth interviews), using open-ended questions with national and local elite individuals, and unstructured interviews (informal or conversational interviews) with non-elite individuals, especially farmers, I sometimes had to change my initial plans, adjusting my interviews to different contexts. More specifically, I sometimes used the informal or conversational interview even with some national elites. Of course, each interview should be tailored to the research participant and in the case of in-depth interviews there is "a much freer exchange between interviewer and interviewee" (Esterberg 2002, 87). This type of interview is particularly useful for exploring a topic in detail or in constructing theory and "can sometimes take surprising turns" because "the interviews are not prescribed" (ibid).

In Romania, I conducted interviews with EU, national, county, and local officials, as well as farmers and other people connected with rural areas, in order to ask and receive information

about Romania's integration process and agricultural practices in the pre- and post-1989 era (Appendix B). I conducted in-depth interviews, using open-ended questions, and/or the informal conversational interviews with over fifty respondents in Romania. Most of the interviews (48) were conducted in communes and cities/towns located in Bacau, Iasi, Buzau, and Brasov counties. I consider this number of respondents to be sufficient to provide significant insights into transformation in these counties. In the rural church communities, for example, where I particularly expected to find farmers, I used the informal conversational interview, or "unstructured interviewing," as "the most open-ended approach to interviewing" (Patton 2002, 342). This informal conversational interview, also called an ethnographic interview, does not require a predetermined set of questions. The reason for using this method was that it offered "maximum flexibility" to obtain information (ibid). Furthermore, I interviewed seven (7) Romanian and EU officials and specialists in the field of agriculture in Bucharest. Upon returning from Romania I have continued to interview via email, regular mail, or telephone five (5) Romanian and/or EU officials from the Agriculture and Rural Development and Romanians from the diaspora.

In addition, being able to stay in the same field for a longer period of time (in Barnova, Iasi County, and Poduri, Bacau County) and having the possibility to interview individuals either in face-to-face interviews or during the focus group interviews, it allowed me to gather valuable data. In the case when the same person was interviewed a second time, participating in a *focus group*, for example, he or she had the opportunity not only to be more spontaneous but also to revise or deepen their previous responses. The questions arose more naturally with topics arising from the situation. An interview in a small group, typically 6-10 people with similar background, is an unstructured interview, with a comfortable and often enjoyable atmosphere, in

which participants “share their ideas and perceptions” (Patton 2002, 386). Hearing each other’s responses, participants were able to make additional comments beyond their own original responses. They did not need to agree with each other, but their synergistic comments brought a higher quality data, which was one of my research goals. I invited some of the farmers I had previously interviewed one-on-one to participate in the group interviews with previously un-interviewed farmers so as to provide a good mix of perspectives.

Although most methods treat interviewing as “a conversation between two people,” the interviewer and the interviewee, following Esterberg’s (2002, 84) opinion, I prefer to view interviewing as “a form of relationship” between two or more individuals. Of course, the individuals may be close or more distant, but in each case, two individuals, or in the case of the focus group, six to ten individuals, “try to create meaning about a particular topic” and bring different qualities to the interview (Herod 1999; Esterberg 2002, 85; Patton 2002). According to Esterberg (2002, 85), during the structured and semistructured interviews, interviewers and interviewees “draw on established social conventions,” an aspect which is less evident in the case of the conversational interviews. In all cases, the interviews focused upon “the production of talk” (ibid).

#### ***2.3.1.2.4 Interview Procedures and Consent Process***

As Hollway and Jefferson (2005) indicate, it is often the case that the researchers must reevaluate their protocols. This was certainly the case in my research, as I had to accept some compromises during my field research and to adjust my methods in light of the local context. Taking into consideration my perception of the Romanian communist system, especially toward its security system’s practice, and influenced by the well-known anthropologist Katherine Verdery (2003), who has conducted extensive research in Romania, I changed my initial

proposed procedure in my dissertation proposal, which had been to tape my interviews. My feeling about this unpleasant association of tape recording with the feared Romanian Security (Securitate) was confirmed several times during my conversational interviews with older villagers. More specifically, during one of my informal conversations with Rodica, a cream cheese vendor in the farm market of the Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County, I had the pleasure of listening to many details about her own farm, as well as the new development of the Gura Vaili commune and agriculture. Telling her that her information was precious for my research and asking for permission to write down her words, she stopped talking for some seconds; then, I immediately felt that she was censoring her own words, obliging me to put my note pad back into my briefcase. As a result, I did not tape my interviews in Romania.

I asked my interviewees, farmers especially, to allow me to take handwritten notes. Of course, I tried to write as many words as possible from my interviewees, but inevitably I lost many valuable ideas. In order to save as much as possible from their stories, I decided several times to find immediately after the interview a nearby quiet place where I could continue to write what I remembered but was unable to write down during the interview. This method helped me to add important details and, thus, improve my interview notes significantly.

The majority of my interview participants in direct contact with me, one-to-one interviewing, completed and signed a consent form prior to participating in an interview. However, some politely rejected the official document, considering it as inappropriate for a friendly conversation. The language used in the consent form was clear, concise, and simple to avoid misunderstanding. In any case, the interviewees were asked if they understood or had questions regarding the consent form before signing it. If it was apparent that an interviewee did not have sufficient understanding of the text in the consent form, I provided supplementary

explanations. Email interviews took place without the participants' signature, but they received the consent form for their information as an attachment to my email. Since the consent form attachment explained the purpose of the study, indicated that participation in this study was strictly voluntary, remained confidential, and provided the researcher's contact information, their answering my email implied that the participants had consented to participation in this study. Consent forms prepared in the U.S. were in English (Appendix C). Since I had to interview many people in Romania, some of whom who did not speak English, I had to translate into Romanian the content of the English documents (Appendix C). Given that I am a native Romanian, therefore, translation from English into Romanian was my own.

Interviewees were given the opportunity to indicate their preferred location for their interview, while other interviews were taken electronically, through email. The questions were created online for completion online. The farm market vendors, instead, instantaneously accepted to be interviewed at their workplace. I encountered some special cases in Bucharest and Iasi when several interviewees, very busy persons, asked me to give them a copy of my questions in order for them to prepare their written/oral answers and/or different bibliographic materials which they offered to me. In general, the open-ended semistructured interviews varied in length from thirty minutes to one hour, but some of the conversational interviews exceeded this time. All interviews were conducted in Romanian.

#### ***2.3.1.2.5 Research Participants and Selection Criteria***

The participants in my study were Romanian government and parliament officials; Romanian representatives at the EU-European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), including the Chief Negotiator for Romania's accession into the EU; public and private economic chief executive officers; NGO leaders; domestic investors; newspaper editors; local

government representatives; specialists in agriculture, environment, and forestry; engineers and technicians; public notaries and legal advisors; teachers and librarians; priests and clerks; and agricultural vendors and farmers. My participants were selected racially/ethnically and were socio-economically diverse, as I was interested in a variety of opinions related to the Romanian communist system, the post-1989 transition, and accession and integration into the European Union, particularly as it affected agriculture and rural areas.

Since I had planned to contact some individuals via the internet, there was theoretically no maximum number of participants. However, I expected to work with no more than 100 participants in my study, from which no more than 60 subjects were interviewed. The participants were both men and women, approximately 30 to 80 years old, all of whom were of Romanian origin [in Brasov I have also ensured a mix of ethnically Romanian and German farmers.] The lower age limit was set so as to capture individuals who were old enough to recollect pre-1989 practices, but I also had the opportunity to interview a 21-year-old man, who gave me valuable first-hand information about migration abroad (in Belgium), and his 28-year-old sister, a wife of another emigrant in Belgium.

These interview subjects were identified in two ways. First, whenever particular names of individuals (e.g., EU, Romanian government, county government, commune) who were instrumental in the negotiation process with the EU, shaping Romania's accession, and/or the difficult process of its integration into the EU, as well as agricultural practices either nationally or locally, came to light in the archives, I sought to locate and interview them. To contact the international, national and/or local officials in Romania and/or the European Union, I sent in advance a cover letter (Appendix D). Second, I approached friends and/or local figures of importance (e.g., local government, local church and/or other local institution leaders) for the

purpose of having them identify local farmers whom I could interview. Although the farmers' unions are still in their incipient activity or even non-existent in many rural zones, I believe that approaching respected local leaders is a valuable way to provide an entrée to the local communities. In addition, having worked in Bacau County as a geography teacher for over 25 years, I did not anticipate having difficulties in this regard, either in Bacau or elsewhere.

I employed a snowball sampling technique whereby I asked farmers and others with knowledge of agriculture to suggest additional sources who may have pertinent knowledge and who would be willing to be interviewed. This method worked very well, even at the national level. In this way, using one of my elite interviewees' help from Bucharest, I had the opportunity to contact a personality at the EU level, a member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), in Brussels. Finally, although members of the Romanian diaspora from Western Europe could be contacted using its internet sites, as specified above I asked my in-country interviewees for contact information of individuals who had left the country (to Italy and Belgium, for example), with the goal of conducting interviews with them upon my return to the U.S. by email, regular mail, or telephone concerning what role agricultural changes may have played in their decision to emigrate.

A central part of the research design involved using several Romanian research assistants for my fieldwork. Although my initial goal had been to hire two undergraduate students, either from the University of Bucharest or from Al. Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, the reality in the field suggested basing my fieldwork on collaboration with my former colleagues and students, some local teachers and friends, relatives, and neighbors. Their non-paid assistance was invaluable, helping me to contact urban and rural interviewees, as well as otherwise assisting with the research trips in rural areas, Barnova (Iasi County) and Poduri (Bacau County). They were

particularly helpful in setting up the focus groups. Upon its completion, these research assistants also briefly outlined the project's findings and gauged community reaction/response. It was my hope this would facilitate community dialog, furthering community understanding. The use of those former students and local teachers as my research assistants not only helped my research but also allowed them to gain valuable fieldwork experience. Such skill transference is an important part of the broader impact of my study. All these interviews allowed me to distinguish between general post-1989 changes and those which are the specific result of preparing for EU admittance, together with how these are impacting rural life.

#### **2.3.1.2.6 Subjectivities (Researcher's Role)**

Fieldworkers can play in their research a range of roles, and fieldwork roles are expected to shift over time. It is also important that accounts might be written from the perspective of the researcher's "positionality" – either as an "insider" or an "outsider" (Herod 1999, 320; Preissle and Grant 2004, 165). Herod (1999) has emphasized that the issue of positionality is more complex than this dualism (insider vs. outsider) would initially suggest. In addition, he cautioned that we should not presume that an "insider" will produce better knowledge than that produced by an "outsider."

I believe my sensitivity includes my status as a native citizen of Romania, currently a member of the European Union. I would like to add my strong belief in a moral rectification toward the former communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe for those 45 years of forced communist dictatorship. I also bring a new social position to the research table, as an American citizen, a woman married to an American, whose roots were European (Ireland-England-Germany). Furthermore, I have considerable experience in living and working in

Romania as a high school geography teacher, who knows and understands the Romanian realities both before and after the 1989 revolution.

Yet, the time for doing my fieldwork came at a very critical moment for me, when I was wondering whether I was an insider or an outsider researcher. The fact that I left Romania over a decade ago and that, in the meantime, my country experienced major transformations, culminating with Romania's integration into NATO in 2004 and into the EU in 2007, had created in my mind a state of confusion, leaving me feeling as though I were a stranger, a foreign researcher, or an outsider. Consequently, my friends' help and collaboration were invaluable in that confusing time during my fieldwork in Romania. More specifically, while I was doing the fieldwork (observation, interviewing, and collecting data) in Iasi County, in the Barnova commune and the city of Iasi, or in Bacau County, in the Poduri, Oituz, and Caiuti communes and the city of Bacau, as well as in the Onesti library and the Environmental Office/Department, the participants were likely to have much greater knowledge of my research interest and a more personal relationship was created. My positionality also influenced the level of self-disclosure and the relationship with my participants. I was relatively reserved in general, but quite outgoing in a series of situations. I was quite impressed by the attitude of the majority of my participants toward my research interest, but I also had to endure a string of profanities addressed at Americans, who are considered "criminals," due to their participation in the war in Iraq (Nicu, June 2007).

As researchers have different opinions about how much of themselves they should reveal in an interview, taking into consideration the specific context in which my interviews took place, I admit to having shared a "postmodernist or critical approach to social research" (Esterberg 2002, 88), presenting my own opinion and beliefs. It is true I could not reveal in my interviews the

same amount of information about myself or about my opinions. This depended by my relationship with the research participants and the time which I had to spend in the field.

Taking into consideration the complex phenomenon at the European scale that I was researching and the fact that I am a native Romanian living in the United States (with dual citizenship), I had to conduct my research both as an “outsider” and an “insider,” i.e., as a “non-participant” and/or a “participant” observer. Since the researcher’s positionality is “not necessarily fixed,” I had to shift my positionality on some occasions, depending on context (Herod 1999, 321). Certainly, I believe that my positionality -- my former status as a teacher in Romania and the complex connections created by this -- was the most helpful tool for expediting my field research, including interviews, in Romania.

#### ***2.3.1.2.7 Risk, Benefit, Ethics***

Although the role of “complete observer” requires no participation in social events, it (like the other three roles) “depends on some level of deception and raises special ethical concerns” (Preissle and Grant 2004, 164). Ethical issues may occur at all stages of a research project (van Manen 1990; Esterberg 2002; Ezzy 2002; Patton 2002; Tisdale 2004). In the early stages, the researchers have to plan to minimize any harmful consequences to their research participants. Researchers also need to consider what they can give back to the people they are studying. Esterberg (2002, 55), for example, suggests that it is very important for researchers to “talk with others about these ethical challenges” since “others may see ethical problems you hadn’t considered, or they may offer novel solutions.”

But what are these ethical issues? Ezzy (2002, 55) notes that we should primarily follow the Hippocratic Oath of “First, do not harm.” With regard to ethic critical philosophy focuses upon special obligations to oppressed populations, and actions of advocacy are considered

correct actions. Tisdale (2004, 17) has pointed out that researchers may have several roles to play regarding ethical aspects. The researchers may act as “advocates” for the oppressed population, but, at the same time, they can be “adversaries,” “facilitators” and/or “collaborators.” Patton (2002, 408) presents a detailed ethical issues checklist, emphasizing “confidentiality,” “explaining purpose,” “promises and reciprocity,” “risk assessment,” and “data collection boundaries.”

However, opinions on whether or not to disclose the interviewees’ name vary. Duneier (1999), for example, explains his decision to use the procedure used in journalism, disclosing the place and names of the people he has to write about. He justifies the use of this method in his writing because he believes that the method holds him up to “a higher standard of evidence” (Duneier 1999, 348). Thus, according to him, “his professional reputation depends on competent description,” and disclosing places and names “increases accountability” (ibid). Yet, he recognizes that “there are sometimes good reasons for keeping a site or a person’s name anonymous, especially when the account would be humiliating or embarrassing” (ibid).

In this light, although agriculture is not a sensitive topic of research for individuals, I assured my interviewees that this study would not create any discomfort, stress, or risk. Although through my questions I wished to receive as complete answers as possible, I informed my interviewees that they were free to refuse to answer any question which they considered made them feel uncomfortable. Likewise, participation was strictly voluntary so that those concerned about their privacy could choose not to participate, even though all names would be kept confidential for those who agreed to participate. If any identifiable information regarding them was used, they were assigned pseudonyms and their names would not appear in any data for the study or in any results reported. Although I asked my interviewees to suggest their own

pseudonyms, they allowed me to create them and even to use their first name. Just as Verdery (2003) had done, I chose simple Romanian names to assist foreign readers to read and pronounce them without difficulty. Even using this strict procedure, the name-pseudonym keys and all data were kept by me, as the researcher, in a secured, limited-access location. Only I had access to the data and the key and their information was kept until I finished my dissertation.

Furthermore, I assured them that any information they gave me in this study would not be released in any individual identifiable form without their prior consent.

I could identify several ethical issues that have emerged as I engaged in this study. First, some of the participants may have experienced memory discomfort, recalling some difficult or even harsh economic experiences through which they were forced to struggle during the communist and/or the transition period. Since I had no solution for improving the economic situation, my strategy was to encourage my interviewee to express their opinions and suggestions, which I sent to the local officials in the Trotus Valley, for example. A second strategy that I have built into my research design was to invite media representatives to join me in some portions of my field work, in Iasi for example [which could be followed by publication of some findings in the local newspapers.] This strategy, though, has the potential to create some political tensions with local government representatives.

My study will benefit humankind in several ways. First, I hope that the findings will help people to gain a deeper understanding of the benefits and/or losses of the detachment of this Black Sea shoreline country from Moscow's umbrella and the integration into the Western structures. Although focused on the Romanian case, the fact that expansion of the EU eastwards is likely to continue means that the research promises to generate crucial knowledge concerning the potentials and pitfalls of further EU enlargement into regions experiencing dramatic

economic and political transformation. People may learn, on the one hand, how to benefit from democracy, open borders, and land restitution and, on the other hand, how to adjust from the centrally planned economy to the harsh competition in a dynamic market economy, particularly to Common Agricultural Policy. Second, the benefits may include a sense of pride, emphasizing their contribution to these complex and difficult processes of transition and integration, either through their direct decision-making or through their active initiative and participation in the rural development of Romania, especially agriculture. In this light, Professor Vasile Puscas's<sup>3</sup> words are significant: "I have believed in integration and, impelled by so much negativism, I wished to succeed" (interview, June 2007, Bucharest).

### ***2.3.2 Data Analysis***

According to Patton (2002, 453), "qualitative analysis is typically inductive in the early stages, especially when developing a codebook for content analysis or figuring out possible categories, patterns, and themes." Yet, "at the heart of theorizing lies the interplay of making inductions (deriving concepts, their properties, and dimensions from data) and deductions (hypothesizing about the relationships between concepts" (Straus and Corbin [1998, 22], quoted in Patton 2002, 454). Patton (2002) and Ezzy (2002) have developed comprehensive explanations about inductive qualitative analysis, comparing, at the same time, deductive and inductive analytical methodologies, i.e., grounded theory/content analysis and inductive/thematic analysis. Unlike analytic induction qualitative analysis, which is first deductive, or "emic," and then inductive, or "etic," grounded theory analysis starts, first, by establishing patterns, themes, and/or categories through inductive analysis and, then, in the final stage of analysis may be

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<sup>3</sup> Vasile Puscas is a history professor at the Babes-Bolyai University, in Cluj-Napoca. Between 2002 and 2004 he was a member of the Romanian Government and Chief Negotiator for Romania's accession into the EU (Puscas 2006).

deductive, generating hypotheses (Patton 2002, 454; Ezzy 2002; Dey 1999; Strauss and Corbin 1998).

Taking into consideration Strauss and Corbin's postpositivist approach, especially "giving voice to their respondents, representing them as accurately as possible, discovering and acknowledging how respondents' views of reality conflict with their own," Charmaz (2000, 510) has added another position to the fray and another vision for future qualitative research, i.e., "constructivist grounded theory." According to Charmaz (2000), the power of grounded theory consists in its tools for understanding empirical worlds. Celebrating "firsthand knowledge of empirical worlds," constructivist grounded theory assumes the "relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meaning" (ibid).

How do we do grounded theory? How long do we have to collect the data and how do we conceive of analyzing data in constructivist grounded theory? According to the grounded theory literature, theory is derived from data acquired through archival research, documents especially, and fieldwork observations and interviews. As has been emphasized by Dey (1999, 1-2), data collection, or "sampling," based on emerging concepts, can stop when "new conceptualizations emerge." On the other hand, data analysis, which can begin "as soon as data becomes available," is "systematic" and proceeds through identifying and connecting categories (ibid). More specifically, data analysis proceeds from "open" coding through "axial" and "selective" coding (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 102; Dey 1999, 2). During "initial" (Charmaz 2000, 515) or "open coding," data are broken down into "discrete parts," patterns or themes, which must be closely examined and compared for similarities and differences (Strauss and Corbin (1998, 102). This allows the second analytic step, "axial coding," for "examining conditions, strategies, and

consequences” (Dey 1999, 2), followed by “focused coding” (Charmaz 2000, 516) or “selective coding” around an emerging story line, in which “data are reassembled” through “statements of relationship,” commonly referred to as “hypotheses” (Strauss and Corbin (1998, 103). Or, in Glaser’s (1978, 56) words, cited by Dey (1999, 10), selective coding involves the “core variable that forms the heart of the emerging theory.”

As Dey (1999, 1) noted, citing Strauss and Corbin (1997), “grounded methodology and methods (procedures) are now among the most influential and widely used modes of carrying out qualitative research when generating theory is the researcher’s principal aim.” Since coding starts the chain of theory development, in order to understand the “logic that lies behind analysis,” I had to break the coding process down (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 101). Coding helps us not only to “gain a new perspective on our material” but also to “focus further data collection” (Charmaz 2000, 515). Therefore, through coding, I attempted to define and categorize my data. More specifically, I started to code the text, individualizing and labeling or naming the themes, categories, subcategories, and/or issues. In addition, in my effort to construct a process and/or an outcomes matrix (Appendix E), I attempted to deepen my analysis in order to find “new ideas through the generation of new hypotheses” (Ezzy 2002, 14), or new categories, not labeled, doing an “etic analysis,” in Patton’s words (Patton 2002, 454). The general scope in doing this operation was to ask questions about them and to examine them comparatively “for similarities and differences between events and incidents” (Ezzy 2002, 88). As Strauss and Corbin (1998, 104) noted,

For our analytic purposes, it also is important to understand that classified objects, events, acts, and actions / interactions have attributes and that how one defines and interprets those attributes (or the meaning given to them) determines the various ways in which concepts are classified.

As I specified above, I was aware of some gaps and/or inconsistencies in the bibliographical information written in Romanian or about Romania. Yet, at the same time, refining my ideas and/or categories and developing them as “theoretical constructs,” I also found gaps in my field data (Charmaz 2000, 519). Consequently, I had to go back to both the library and the field and collect more data to fill those conceptual gaps. Theoretical sampling, “a pivotal part of the development of formal theory” (ibid), offered me the opportunity to sample not only scenes, events, and documents but also people’s thought, i.e., public opinion and decision-making toward Romania’s integration, especially regarding agriculture and rural development.

Since I had to interview a number of people in Romania, the first thing I did was to translate into English the interviews conducted in Romanian. I likewise translated any Romanian documents, for purposes of coding, an essential aspect of the analysis, which allowed patterns and themes to be identified. Clearly, creating a highly rigid set of coding categories ahead of time may impose an artificial and arbitrary structure on the data. On the other hand, analysis of data cannot be conducted from a “naïve” blank-slate entry point. Consequently, I established a number of themes and categories ahead of time, with the recognition that the categories may have to be revised as the analysis proceeds – in other words, I have always been tacking between coding categories and the data.

There are several ways of doing open coding such as “line-by-line” analysis, including “phrase by phrase” and even “word by word” for close examination of data or microanalysis, then the “whole sentence or paragraph” analysis, and, finally, perusing “the entire document” (Straus and Corbin 1998, 119-120). Because many references, including the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development’s and/or the European Commission’s documents, are quite long, I did not codify every word or phrase. Following Strauss and Corbin’s (1998, 120)

suggestion for doing open coding, I chose instead to analyze the “whole sentences or paragraphs,” aiming to find the major ideas. Furthermore, examining the Commission’s Reports for Romania, I coded by “perusing the entire document” in order to ask questions, and to compare the documents for similarities and differences (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 120).

I anticipated developing categories which would focus initially upon three themes: 1) *life under collectivization* (within this theme I focused on references to agriculture in foreign politics, shifts in rural property, farm structure, agricultural work patterns, crop production, rural employment, rural-urban migration, rural systematization, and the relationship of farmers to the state); 2) *decollectivization and the restoration of rural property* (within this theme I focused on references to land reform, comparative restitution, the reemergence of subsistence agriculture, land use, deforestation and environmental degradation, agricultural production, agricultural employment, urban-rural migration, migration abroad from rural areas, and rural development policy); and 3) *agricultural alignment to the CAP* (within this theme I focused on references to postcommunist transition, accession negotiations - negotiating agriculture, agricultural funding programs such as the EU’s PHARE and SAPARD and the Romanian government’s FERMIERUL<sup>4</sup>, changes in market accessibility, activities of rural farmer labor unions, agricultural policies designed to encourage rural development/ increase farmers’ income, changing crop patterns and efforts to increase productivity/ quality, changes in food processing and distribution methods, and local public opinion concerning elite decision-making).

Coding and categorization could be facilitated by use of the NVivo data analysis software, but my unfamiliarity with this program and the fact that, taking handwritten notes, I did not have to transcribe the audio-taped interviews, led me not to use such a program. Taking into account

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<sup>4</sup> PHARE and SAPARD are programs to support sustainable agricultural and rural development in the CEECs during the pre-accession period; FERMIERUL provides low interest credit to farmers, backed by the EU.

these reasons, I considered that manual coding was more efficient, allowing me a greater flexibility. Thus, a key aspect of this coding was not just to find out what has happened but to evaluate any competing claims which emerge. This was done through triangulation of the data generated, a long-established practice in qualitative research which allows rigor of interpretation to be established (Herod 1999; Patton 2002).

Establishing *a priori* a protocol for determining the extent to which it is preparation for EU admittance which has driven some of the agricultural changes (as opposed to other factors) is, arguably, the key element for answering research Question 3. In this regard, then, I took as evidence that preparation for admittance was impacting agricultural practices statements from archival or interview sources which declared that significant changes in rural areas have been made so as to align Romanian agriculture to the European standards. Equally, any programs which have been established using EU funds were taken to have been established in preparation for admittance. Hence, the program FERMIERUL (“The Farmer”) is one of the most important programs implemented by the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Rural Development to stimulate agricultural businesses through favorable financial credits (MAPDR 2006). This program was established in January 2006 in response to EU funding opportunities through its SAPARD program. Consequently, any activities funded under this program were taken to have been established in response to preparing for EU entrance. Establishing such a protocol ahead of time gave me much greater confidence with regard to interpretation of data, allowing me to make supportable claims concerning how transformations are coming about in response to EU admittance.

## 2.4 Research Schedule

In the light of Charmaz's (2000, 510) strategies of grounded theory, which included, among other things, "simultaneous collection and analysis of data," I extended for five years (2005-2010) the simultaneous process of data collection and data analysis for my archival study, supplemented by two fieldwork sessions in Romania, during summer 2005 and 2007. They were conducted "concurrently alongside theoretical sampling" and the development of codes, "sophisticated techniques unique to grounded theory" (Ezzy 2002, 87-88). The correlation of varied data sources constituted an ongoing process and, therefore, I had to be diligent in the selection, storage, and retrieval of the research information.

- *May - June 2005*: Research travel to Romania: collected secondary data in Bucharest; fieldwork-observation, conversational interviews, photographs in Bacau county -- the Trotus Valley and Poduri commune; observations and field notes in Brasov county -- in the village of Viscri, Bunesti commune, a remote rural Saxon zone, recently included in the UNESCO heritage, in the Transylvanian Plateau inhabited by ethnic Germans and Romanians; collection of archival data online; interviews with local farmers and business persons; other documented rural/agricultural practices (photos). Special interest: the "Mihai Eminescu Trust" (MET) and the "Whole Village" project, for understanding the efforts in combining heritage conservation with economic regeneration of the Saxon villages of Transylvania. (The MET's headquarters is located in London and is patronized by the Prince of Wales).
- *July - December 2005*: Outlined my research topic; archival research in the U.S.; searched online Romanian and European newspapers and European Commission

documents; presented results at the SEDAAG Conference in West Palm Beach, FL, November 20-22, 2005.

- *January - May 2006*: Collected more secondary data in the U.S.; presented results at the AAG Conference in Chicago, IL, March 7-11, 2006.
- *May - December 2006*: Attended the last three courses required for finishing my coursework program; collected more secondary data in the U.S.; defended my dissertation proposal.
- *January - May 2007*: Searched online Romanian and European newspapers and European Commission documents; obtained human subjects approval; searched online the Woodrow Wilson archive; presented results at the Seventh Annual Georgia Graduate Student Interdisciplinary Conference, March 24, 2007; mailed and/or emailed cover letters to Romanian and/or European officials for interviews.
- *June - July 2007*: Research travel to Romania, including:
  1. Scheduled and conducted in-person interviews and focus groups: elite interviews: Romanian and the EU officials in Bucharest; local elite and non-elite interviews in Bacau and Iasi counties;
  2. Collected archival data: Bucharest: archival research: the Government of Romania - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the former Ministry of European Integration (now renamed the Ministry of Regional Development), Romanian Academy of Science, the Academy of Economic Studies, the University of Agronomical Sciences; and the European Institute of Romania; Iasi city: the University of Agronomical Sciences; Bacau and Iasi cities: the Directions for Agriculture and Rural Development;

3. Documented agricultural practices and rural developments (photos) in Bacau and Iasi counties;

4. Observed and took field notes in two counties in Moldova: Iasi, Barnova commune, a suburban rural development of the city of Iasi; and Bacau: the Trotus Valley: the villages surrounding the municipality of Onesti, an important petrochemical industrial center, including both the former collectivized and non-collectivized rural areas and the urban farm markets; and the Poduri commune, a remote rural area, in the Tazlau Valley.

- *August - December 2007*: Completed comprehensive exams and advanced to candidacy; began content analysis of in-country June interviews; contacted/ interviewed members of Romanian diaspora identified while I was in Romania; started writing the dissertation.
- *January - August 2008*: Continued to search online Romanian/European newspapers and statistics, and EU documents, together with the documents of the Direction for Agriculture and Rural Development, Brasov county and those regarding the villages of Viscri, Poduri, and Barnova; content analysis of diaspora interviews and archive; presented results at the AAG Conference in Boston, MA, on April 15-19, 2008; archival research travel to Washington, D.C. (July 15 - August 13, 2008): Woodrow Wilson Library (research grant) and Library of Congress; conducted mail and telephone interviews with several rural people from Viscri, Brasov county, and C.A. Rosetti, Buzau county; added new chapters to my dissertation.
- *August-December 2008*: attended the last qualitative course for my Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate Program; prepared one article for publication; presented the findings at the 2008 Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Annual

Conference (IQS), College of Education, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, December 10, 2008.

- *January - July 2009*: conducted more mail and telephone interviews; wrote new chapters of my dissertation; submitted one article for publication to *Balkanistica*.
- *August - December 2009*: submitted the second article for publication to “Ovidius” University, Constanta, Romania; finished writing the first draft of my dissertation and started editing the second draft; presented the new findings at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Critical Geography Mini-Conference, Department of Geography, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, October 23-24, 2009; submitted a paper abstract, which was accepted by the AAG to be presented at the 2010 Association of American Geographers Conference in Washington, D.C., April 14-18, 2010.
- *January - May 2010*: finished and defended my dissertation; attended the 2010 Association of American Geographers Conference in Washington, D.C., April 14-18, 2010; Ph.D. graduation.

## CHAPTER 3

### **THE RURAL AND RURALITY: AN INSIGHT INTO EUROPEAN RURAL STUDIES WITH EMPHASIS ON RURAL ROMANIA**

Rural areas cover a multitude of natural and cultural landscapes, activities, and functions, including not only villages and agricultural areas, ranging from traditional to intensive monoculture systems, forests, various parks, and wilderness, but also services and commercial sites, including market towns, as well as educational and research centers. Specifically, rural areas provide living space for their inhabitants and for flora and fauna and, as buffer zones, fulfill significant balance functions between unpopulated wilderness zones and overloaded centers of dense development. As a result of this complex diversity, our understanding of rural areas must concern more than how land is used by nature and humans. Yet, as Bercowitz and Schulz-Greve (2001, 3) have noted, rural areas also must be related to “economic and social structures in which farming and forestry, handicraft, and small, middle, or large companies produce and trade, where services, from the most local to the most international (such as tourism), are provided.” In addition, some rural areas represent valuable ecological balance zones through preservation and/or conservation establishments. All these factors create and evolve into a tight interdependence, interconnection, and competition.

There is no doubt that among the literature written in the English language, an Anglo-American view of the rural, rurality, and rural development predominates (Hoggart et al. 1995). Yet, after the 1989 revolution, other views about rural areas, many from and regarding the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs), were taken into serious consideration. The

intention here is to provide some commentaries that will help elucidate distinctions in theorizing rural space, followed by a brief history of rural study in Europe with emphasis on those studies in or about Romania. More specifically, the first three sections review the literature that defines the rural and rurality, describes some theoretical approaches to the rural and rurality, and details rural diversity in Europe. The fourth section, which explores the literature on the history of rural studies, especially those pertaining to rural Romania, focuses on three distinct periods: rural studies prior to WWII, those between WWII and the 1989 revolution, and those post-1989.

### 3.1 Defining Rural

An early idea about rural areas and/or rurality was to describe them either as “regions of agricultural production” and “reservoirs of manpower” or as “not urban”/“non-urbanized” regions (Galeski and Mendras 1981, v; Arcaini et al. 1999, 6; Callanan et al. 2006, 61; Ratering et al. 2006; Barthelemy and Vidal 2008, 1). Yet, since rural areas have their own defining characteristics and the term *rural* embraces multiple meanings, the definition, although it has the merit of simplicity, in fact, oversimplifies the reality (Arcaini et al. 1999). The concept of *rural* is thus difficult to define, but despite critiques, the rural, as well the urban, continues to be used conceptually. While the city is perceived as “a reserve of creativity, ideas, enthusiasm, diversity and differentiation,” capable of offering a good quality of life, villages are perceived, if not as the urban’s opposite, then at least as “distinctly different entities” (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 3). Citing Bengs and Schmidt-Tome (2005), Shucksmith et al. (2006, 3) emphasize the rural idyll as “places dominated by supposedly stable and secure social relations and a moral superiority.” Furthermore, in the words of Ward and Ray (2004), quoted by Shucksmith et al. (2006, 3), rural society is “the good life,” representing the “antithesis of change, a category defined in opposition to modernity.”

Rural areas are closely associated, first, with their resident population, *i.e.*, the people engaged in rural activities, including farmers. Since there is a stronger renewal of interest in rural areas, account also has to be taken of other social groups already present or appearing in rural areas, such as workers, technicians, intellectuals, and businessmen. Second, the notions of rural and rurality are also linked to the landscape, connected not only to the residential areas but also to the great natural values which generate different functions complementary to agriculture.

The *rural* is a concept that has changed over time. Consequently, its evolution can be understood only by analyzing the changes in the broader historical, political, and macro-economic contexts of rural society. Moving from a pre-industrial to an industrial or a post-industrial society, as a result of the ‘invasion’ of industrial and service activities into rural areas, agriculture has gradually been marginalized. In this respect, the newly created landscapes have made it more difficult to distinguish between urban and rural, rural areas being no longer synonymous with agricultural and forestry economies (Arcaini et al. 1999; Davidova et al., 2006; Callanan et al. 2006; Storti et al. 2005; Shucksmith et al. 2006). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the context of industrialization, new perspectives on rurality emerged. In this light, *rurality* was associated with the concept of “community,” a term also adopted by the Romantic Movement, desiring, on the one hand, to re-establish local social relations and, on the other hand, to signal the demise of the rural idyll (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 3). Yet, emerging from the foundations of nostalgia, many enduring cultural associations were created, with the goal of protecting the authenticity of rural areas. Since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, other processes such as regional and transnational processes and structures, as well as globalization, have significantly influenced rural space, changing the definition given to rurality (Hoggart et al. 1995; Storti et al. 2005).

A particular aspect of rurality in the former communist countries of Europe is detailed by Juska (2007) in his case study of Lithuania. According to Juska (2007), as a result of the development of national consciousness, terms such as *rural*, *rurality*, and/or *peasants* have been important topics of public discourse in Russia and Eastern Europe since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In contrast with “Westernized” urban areas, which symbolize “alien culture,” the romanticized representations of rural areas associated rural societies with “native countries,” which were “ethnically and culturally distinct nations,” while, simultaneously, the peasants were considered “the other” (Juska 2007, 239). However, by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the failure to modernize agriculture as well as the brutal realities of rural life led to the decline, followed by the replacement, of the romanticized version of rurality. Moreover, the contradictory representation of “the nations” vis-à-vis “the others” continues to survive, being also used during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (ibid).

During the period of the Soviet and other communist regimes of Eastern Europe, *rurality* was generally defined as a “collective-farm,” or “*kolkhoz*-based society,” which was a system heavily controlled by the state (Juska 2007, 238; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Rizov and Swinnen 2003; Verdery 2003, 52; Cartwright 2001, 96; Carter 1998, 70). Since the late 1980s, under the tensions and conflicts produced by perestroika and post-communist neo-liberal reforms, the rural economy recorded profound changes with significant influences toward the definition of rurality. More specifically, in the early 1990s, as a result of privatization and land restitution, agriculture in Lithuania -- as well as in Russia and in the other CEECs -- recorded “excessive land fragmentation, decline in productivity, and growth in subsistence farming” (Juska 2007, 238; Geopolitica 2005; Dawidson 2004; Verdery 2003; Erjavec et al. 2001; Sandu 1999; Carter 1998; Hall 1998; Turnock 1998; Varga 1998). Thus, during the mid-1990s, the Eastern European

farmers became one of the most impoverished groups, and agriculture in the majority of the CEECs, including Romania, was pushed back some one hundred years, reaching the “pre-capitalist” level (Juska 2007, 239) or so-called “neofeudalism” (Geopolitica 2005, 21).

On the European scale, with its rural mosaic, it is difficult to reach a consensus on a definition of rural, and the discourse on rural space and rurality has recorded dramatic changes (Hoggart et al. 1995). According to Hadjimichalis (2003), in the discourse on European integration, during the mid-1960s and the beginning of the 1990s, for example, *rural space* and *rurality* were associated with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), while the spatial development of the countryside received little attention. As a “place of production,” *rural space* was incorporated into “sectoral policies,” dealing especially with agriculture (Hadjimichalis 2003, 103). By way of contrast, as a result of the erosion of the power and influence of rural space and agricultural activity, today the discourse has shifted from “production” to “consumption and leisure,” trends discussed either at the national or at the EU level (Richardson 2000; Hadjimichalis 2003, 103).

According to Shucksmith et al. (2006, 3), two main narratives shape people’s perceptions of *rurality*: “pastoralism” and “pre-modernity.” *Pastoralism* has had long traditions since the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, within Western and Eastern European literature, music, and painting. Pastoralists see rural areas as “repositories of cultural values or even national identities,” seeking to protect their romantic notion of rural life from outside influences (ibid). In this view, the rural space is a “refuge of natural order,” an unpolluted place, socially and environmentally, conceived to be “apart from the industrial society” (Hadjimichalis 2003, 104). By contrast, *modernists* see rural areas as “backward and needing transformation and development to enjoy the tangible benefits of the modern world” (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 3). In many contexts, the rural areas are

seen as offering a better quality of life, especially a better quality of family life. However, post-communist rurality, compared with the relative prosperity of urban areas, was associated with the “failure of the moral modernization,” and rural people were stigmatized as “deficient in values and character” (Juska 2007, 238). Yet, in the new political and economic context, especially after the year 2000, when the CEECs recorded significant economic progress, negotiating for their accession into the EU, rurality was gradually re-defined in EU terms as a “socio-spatial entity shaped by regional, national, and local policies promoting multifunctionality of rural areas, well-being of rural communities and active citizenship” (ibid).

### **3.2 Approaches to the Rural and Rurality**

Rurality is a vibrant field of study which has opened significant debates among European scholars. Given that Europe is characterized by a very diverse rural space, consensus on what is meant by rural does not exist (Hoggart et al. 1995). Consequently, there is a diverse array of theoretical approaches to the rural, rurality, and/or rural development (Juska 2007; Overbeek 2006; Shucksmith et al. 2006; Storti et al. 2005; Baldock et al. 2001; Richardson 2000; Hoggart et al. 1995). Although the classifications are slightly different, many of them include similar characteristics. Moreover, each approach, with its specific criteria and indicators of rurality, is based on given explanations of local and/or regional level growth and of change dynamics.

Overbeek (2006, 27), for example, has distinguished two main approaches within the discussion of the meaning of rural as follows: (1) “objective” approaches, including “morphological” and “functional” characteristics; and (2) “subjective” or “constructivist” approaches. While the objective approaches concern “spatial” and “territorial” issues, the constructivist approach takes into consideration the “perspective and meaning” of rural actors (ibid). A similar classification can be found in Storti et al. (2004), who emphasized, citing Blanc

(1977), that the existing approaches to rurality can be divided into three categories: (1) the spatial approach; (2) the territorial approach; and (3) the constructivist approach. Furthermore, citing Halfacree (1993), Shucksmith et al. (2006) identified four distinct phases in relation to attempts to clarify the concept of the rural: descriptive studies, spatial determinism, rural locality studies, and social constructivist approaches.

While the *descriptive studies* approach may contribute to developing and understanding the rural only at a descriptive level without contributing to defining it, the *spatial determinism* approach strives to assess the “degree of rurality” of certain places (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 4). More specifically, using different parameters, such as population density or distance, a degree of rurality can be assigned to each territorial unit. In this light, Shucksmith et al. (2006) and Overbeek (2006) illustrated some EU Commission (COM) and Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) policy documents, which, combining some theory with intuition and existing empirical evidence, offered different classifications of rural areas. One representative example is the Commission classification, which distinguishes three ‘standard’ types of rural areas: (1) rural areas under pressure (from the development of modern society); (2) rural areas in decline (or stagnation of rural regions due to structural backwardness); and (3) very marginal rural areas (or stagnation of remote rural regions with structural and natural handicaps).

According to Storti et al. (2005, 4) the *spatial approach* considers space as “a set of points” and the rural as the “result of forces of settlement and exodus interacting with the territory and leading to territorial patterns.” Consequently, rural space comes into existence in certain areas, typified by a series of factors such as land use (especially for agriculture), population density, agricultural employment, and the built areas. Generally, rural areas are considered to be synonymous with more extensive land use activities in agriculture and forestry, low population

density, small settlements, and an agrarian way of life (Baldock et al. 2001; Knox and Marston 2007). This approach, which has a “hierarchical vision of space,” is thus based on the idea of separation between rural and urban spaces on the basis of the “territorial division of labor,” tending to see the “rural world dependent on the town” (Storti et al. 2005, 4; Overbeek 2006).

By way of contrast, the *territorial* approach, the so-called “local economy approach” (Overbeek 2006, 28) or “*rural locality studies*” (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 4), abandons the strong tie between rural areas and agriculture, emphasizing the “economic diversification” of rural areas (Overbeek 2006, 28). *Rural locality studies* also recorded an increased interest through work on rural restructuring, attempting to demonstrate how forces of global restructuring had local manifestations and how these were different in rural areas. According to this view, space is divided into territorial entities, with variable scales, covering the local or regional economy, and each unit includes both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Similarly, Storti et al. (2005, 4) saw the territory embodied in the concept of the “local system,” a complex place, either rural or urban, where different elements (economic, social, and cultural) interact and are “linked by a continuum.”

The *constructivist approach*, on which this study is based, assumes that the experience of the rural is dependent on “personal perceptions and interpretations of every day reality” and, therefore, the meaning of the countryside may differ significantly among individuals (Overbeek 2006, 28). As an “operational category,” as well as a “symbolic construction,” the rural represents spaces of social and cultural values that can be identified in spatial transformations and, in the new vision, particularly in more consumption functions (Hoggart et al. 1995, 21). In the constructivist vision, space is “the result of the actions of the social groups interacting in a given area” (Storti et al. 2005, 5). Since a space cannot be seen separately from the people who

shape the rural areas and decide their evolution in terms of their concept of rurality, it is unanimously accepted that only the social structure gives form to rural space. Citing Hoggart and Halfacree, Shucksmith et al. (2006, 5) argue that “‘rural’ cannot be understood as a specific type of space -- but rather as a social representation.” The idea was further developed by *social constructivist* approaches which view rural space as a “social representation or social construct” (ibid) or as a “site of social struggle” (pp. 4-5; Shucksmith, quoted in Richardson 2000, 54). Furthermore, the social construction of rurality is seen as the result of “competing visions of rural space” which emerge after “negotiation between networks of actors linked by power relationship” (Storti et al. 2005, 5).

In their analysis, Storti et al. (2005, 5) differentiated the meaning of the concepts of “local,” as the “meeting point for the complex relations between internal and external actors,” from the “rural,” as the “meeting point of a subset of relations, linked to a rural social space.” Therefore, social context and the strategies applied by the people involved will differentiate spaces in terms of their development processes. According to Richardson (2000, 54), within the *social constructivist* approach the research focus shifts from “who is rural” to “how one might feel rural, how different people feel rural, and what that tells us about social divisions and power relations in society.” Equally important, the purpose of doing research based on social constructivist approaches is “not to shed light on rurality itself,” but “to shed light on social differences and exercises of power within (and on) rural society” (Shucksmith [1994], quoted in Richardson 2000, 54). In addition, wishing to offer new ways of exploring rural space and to show the complexities and ambivalences of rurality, Shucksmith et al. (2006, 5) emphasized the *deconstructivist approaches*, which stress the “detachment of symbols of rurality from the practices of everyday life.”

### 3.3 Rural Diversity in the European Union

The diversity and complexity of the EU territory are major reasons for recognition and acceptance of the national differences in defining ‘rural.’ Yet, at the same time, there are evident multiple cross-national similarities. In addition, the evolution and development of rural areas is increasingly determined by international and/or transnational processes and structures. Consequently, we need to understand how the regional (the EU, for example) or global causal forces are grounded in European nation-specific practices. As Hoggart et al. (1995, 2) have remarked, quoting Wenturis (1994, 235), most European policy is made in the national parliaments and not in the Community institutions, showing that EU “legislation reflects a compromise between national objectives.” Moreover, a deeper understanding of the behavior patterns, as well as the words and concepts used daily by individuals or small groups in their conversations, can also shed light on the meaning of rurality and rural diversity within the European Communities.

Thus, at the EU’s level there is not a common definition for rural areas and, in general, member states developed their own definitions. Within the EU-15, for example, national definitions tend to emphasize rural as “what is not urban” (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 9; Callanan et al. 2006, 61), “population thresholds” being a criterion accepted by many countries (Hoggart et al. 1995, 22; Shucksmith et al. 2006, 9). However, at the EU level, two criteria differentiate rural zones according to their position toward urban centers. EU-15 countries use “conceptual” criteria, from which a territorial pattern emerges, while the 2004 and 2007 new member states, together with Turkey, as a candidate country, use “government” criteria, characterizing all the regions on a scale from urban to rural (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 10). Arcaini et al. (1999, 7) emphasize a series of “socio-economic” criteria used in defining rural areas and the frontier

between rural and urban, from which “agricultural patterns” and “population density” are almost universally applicable. Since population density is considered an inappropriate criterion for guiding public policy decisions, rural areas can be differentiated using “population variation at local level” (ibid).

Taking into consideration the multiplicity of rural histories and ideologies, Hoggart et al. (1995, 92) distinguished four “pseudo-independent” rural traditions in the EU-15: agrarian, naturalist, Mediterranean, and marginalist. In the *agrarian* tradition rural areas are perceived as production spaces for agriculture, while in the *naturalist* tradition rural areas are seen as consumption spaces of landscape and nature. Both views consider that the traditional rural way of life is superior to its urban counterpart. Since, in the *Mediterranean* tradition, spatial organization is directed by cities, rural areas are associated with the agricultural sector, having little cultural or ideological value in terms of identity. Finally, in the *marginalist* tradition, although rural areas constrain human activities, the predominant mountain environment is valued for its wilderness. The view also integrates the environmental protection with agricultural, forestry, and fishing practices. This functional approach to defining rural space is also applicable in a number of countries from Eastern Europe as well. In this light, it is also noteworthy to mention Hadjimichalis’s (2003, 104 and 107) detailed analysis of agrarian and naturalist traditions of rurality, respectively the shift from the “productivist” to the “consumerist” phase in European rural discourse, concluding that this is a good indication of how different people in different places promote different political interests through the use of this particular discourse.

Usually, the rural and rurality are conceived as spatial or territorial concepts for policy purposes. In this light, Arcaini et al. (1999, 7-8) and Ratering et al. (2006, 1-2) offered the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) classification, conceived

especially for the purpose of making international comparisons, in which two hierarchical levels of territorial unit are distinguished: “local” and “regional.” Unlike at the local level, in which rural areas are identified in terms of the “population density” in the rural communities, specifically below 150 inhabitants per square kilometer, at the regional level the degree of rurality is derived from the “share of a region’s population living in rural communities” (Arcaini et al. (1999, 7-8). According to this criterion, the OECD distinguishes three types of regions: (1) “predominantly rural,” in which over 50 percent of the population lives in rural communities; (2) “significantly rural,” with rural population between 15 and 50 percent living in rural communities; and (3) “predominantly urban,” with less than 15 percent rural population (Arcaini et al. 1999, 7-8; Ratering et al. 2006, 1-2).

Population density is also the criterion used by Eurostat, the statistical center of the EU. The Eurostat approach is based on the “degree of urbanization” (Arcaini et al. 1999, 8), with there being three categories, or territorial classes -- “densely,” “intermediary,” and “sparsely” populated zones (Ratering et al. 2006, 2). *Densely populated* zones comprise groups of municipalities in which the total population is at least 50,000 inhabitants and population density of each municipality is over 500 inhabitants per square kilometer. Within the second category, *intermediate zones*, although the municipalities do not belong to a densely populated zone, they must record over 100 inhabitants per square kilometer. The number of 50,000 inhabitants is also considered the lowest limit for the total population, or the municipality must be located next to a densely populated zone. The OECD *predominantly rural* regions are synonymous with the Eurostat *sparsely populated* regions, which are conceived as rural areas with less than 100 inhabitants per square km or with communities with less than 50,000 inhabitants in total (Ratering et al. 2006; Callanan et al. 2006).

In addition to these regional classifications based on demographic indicators, for the purpose of policy analysis it is also useful to consider more qualitative systems, categorizing rural areas according to their “degree of integration” within the national economy (Arcaini et al. 1999, 9; Ratering et al. 2006, 4). In this light, three categories of rural areas can be individualized: “integrated;” “intermediate;” and “remote” (ibid). Although in *integrated rural areas*, which are located relatively close to big cities, farming still has significance as a key use of land, the basis of employment is in the secondary and tertiary sectors. They can develop either as working areas in their own right or become dwelling areas for the nearby cities. *Intermediate rural areas* can be found in many countries. Located relatively far from urban centers, these rural areas have large farms, together with some secondary sectors. In contrast, *remote rural areas* provide very few basic services. Often located in the mountains, these isolated and low density areas are characterized by aging populations that are often those with the lowest incomes. Overall, we can see that, for policy purposes, the rural is still conceived as a spatial or territorial concept (Callanan et al. 2006).

Yet, as has been emphasized by Hoggart et al. (1995), European countries cannot be placed on a simple scale, neither with regard to rural population nor agricultural production, rural employment, or other indicators. In conformity with the OECD approach, for example, approximately one-third of the total OECD population lives in rural communities, representing over 90% of the territory of its 30 countries (Shucksmith et al. 2006). Moreover, national proportions of rural populations differ considerably from under 5% in Belgium (2.8% in 2006), to 10-20% in the United Kingdom (10.2%) and the Netherlands (19.3%), and to about 30-40% in Turkey (32.2%) and Finland (38.8%) (World Development Indicators [WDI] 2008). Applying the OECD definition of rurality to some Eastern European countries implies that rural areas

represent 89% of the country's surface in Romania, 83% in Hungary, 91% in the Czech Republic, and 92% in Poland (OECD Romania 2000; Ratinger et al. 2006). As for rural population, 44.8% of the total population in 2006 was rural in Romania, 33.3% in Hungary, 26.5% in Czech Republic, and 37.8% in Poland (Romanian Statistical Yearbook [RSY] 2006 and 2007; World Development Indicators 2008). More recently, the European Commission, using a standard definition, estimated in *Rural Development Policy 2007-2013* that rural space accounts for more than 91% of the entire territory of the EU and is home to more than 56% of the EU's population (European Commission 2008).

Furthermore, there are many other significant differences between countries. Large British farms, with high productivity and high farm incomes, for example, contrast sharply with Greek agricultural units, with their smaller farms and low productivity. Yet, small farm units with very high income are a reality in the Netherlands and Belgium, while large farms with low productivity and income can be found in Portugal and Spain. Significant contrasts can also be found in the same country, either between northern and southern Italy, France, and Germany, or between upland and lowland farms in Austria and Romania. These are some examples of patterns of "cross-national farm income disparity," which, according to Hoggart et al. (1995, 43), are "far from simple, and not directly related to population density or remoteness." Therefore, terms such as 'remote,' 'marginal,' 'stagnated,' and 'sparsely populated' have significance only with supplementary data and thorough analyses.

For the collection, development, and harmonization of the Union's regional statistics, the socio-economic analyses of the region, and the framing of Community regional policies, the EU uses the *Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics* (NUTS) (Arcaini et al. 1999; Ratinger et al. 2006; Callanan et al. 2006; Eurostat 2008). The NUTS is a three-level hierarchical

classification, in which each member state is subdivided into a number of NUTS 1 regions, each of which has, in turn, a number of NUTS 2 regions, and, finally, each region of the level 2 has a number of smaller NUTS 3 regions. The present NUTS nomenclature, valid from January 1, 2008, subdivides the economic territory of the EU into 97 regions at the NUTS 1 level, 271 regions at level 2, and 1303 regions at level 3 (Eurostat 2008). The terminology of the two main regional levels, which are also administrative structures, differs from country to country: regions and departments in France; autonomous regions and provinces in Spain; and regions and provinces in Italy (Ratinger et al. 2006; Eurostat 2008). Romania, for example, is divided into four ‘macroregions’ (non-administrative NUTS 1), each of them comprising two non-administrative ‘regions’ at the NUTS 2 level. The total number of NUTS 3 at the country level is 42, representing, in fact, the administrative divisions of the country, counties (‘judete’ in Romanian) (Eurostat 2008). This study focused on rural areas from Bacau and Iasi Counties (NUTS level 3, RO211 and RO213), included in the North-Eastern region of the country (NUTS level 2), and macroregion 2 (NUTS level 1), as well as Brasov County (NUTS level 3, RO122), included in the Center region (NUTS level 2), and macroregion 1 (NUTS level 1).

### **3.4 A Brief History of Rural Studies**

Rural areas have been and still are important research subjects for diverse scholars. Taking into consideration the high diversity of rural areas in the EU, the radical historical and political changes on the European continent, as well as the varieties of themes and personal research interests of each author, there are significant differences and original orientations toward village studies in each country. Each author has attempted to define the national traditions and originality of the main schools, placing these studies in the social and intellectual context of his/her realization. According to Durand-Drouhin (1981, 2), three series of factors should be

taken into consideration in order to understand these differences: (1) “the place of the peasantry and of rurality in a society at different moments of its development;” (2) “the role of the State, of political and social forces which appear at times as ‘demanders’ of research to which they impart an ideological tinge;” and (3) “the presence and content of intellectual traditions: trend of philosophical thought, sociological or ethnological school.” Thus, all these factors served as a framework for the important and high quality literature in both Western and Eastern Europe.

A rich body of literature already exists on rural places, societies, identities, economies, and development, and a significant part of it focuses on the geography and political economy of contemporary Europe. Yet, according to Hoggart et al. (1995, x), there still can be considered a lack of academic work that “combines the themes of ‘rural’ and ‘Europe,’” as well as that “considers the role of rural transformation in underpinning the historic development of European capitalism, and a variety of forms this took over a diverse continent.” Furthermore, despite a considerable literature on identity and change in Europe, there still exists an “absence of comparative studies on rural areas,” especially a “comparison between national trajectories,” a neglected starting point from which to explore socioeconomic diversity and change in rural Europe (ibid).

Widely recognized throughout Europe is “the importance of integrating agriculture with the rest of the rural economy” (Csaki and Lerman 2001, xi). In this light, many European governments were and still are struggling to design or readjust rural development policies in order to alleviate multiple social problems in rural areas and their pressures on agricultural policies. In the case of the EU, agricultural policy represents the “arena” in which the most important processes of European integration have occurred, but national considerations continue to remain at the fore in the literature regarding rural areas (Hoggart et al. 1995, x). Despite the

recognized role of global and Europe-wide socioeconomic forces of change, the academic endeavor on national issues emphasizes that “national-specificities have special causal powers” (ibid). This reflects not only the importance of states in policy-making and debates but also the distinctive national traditions, experiences, socioeconomic diversity, and environmental transformations, as well as the problems that continue to persist in their rural areas.

Yet, since rural Europe is very diverse, the material that focuses on rural issues is also quite fragmented and largely centered on particular states, many of them from Western Europe. During the 1990s, as a result of the opening of Eastern Europe toward the West, scholars’ attention especially shifted to the analysis of rural issues in CEECs admitted into the EU in 2004, which “fully adopted EU legislation and most of the measures of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP),” which later extended to South-Eastern Europe, including Romania, and the former Soviet Union countries (Davidova et al. 2006, xiii). More recent work has brought into play a conceptual shift away from considering the rural as “purely a spatial concept towards theories that focus on the lived experience of rural actors and the rural nature of the relations and interactions of these people,” showing an increased tendency to include people’s experience in rural analyses (Callanan et al. 2006, 61).

Following from this discussion, then, in the next section I attempt to emphasize some of the most significant examples of village/ rural area studies with emphasis on rural Romania, placing them in different historical and social contexts of 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Europe.

### ***3.4.1 Rural Studies prior to the Second World War***

Considered as a “microcosm,” the village was studied prior to the Second World War as a “fundamental cell” of society and even seen as “the reduced model of the national community” (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 3). From the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and especially before the First

World War (WWI), interest in rural studies was focused on “the village social system,” leading to a better understanding of the peasantry, which still represented the dominant part of the European population (ibid). Except in Great Britain, a highly urbanized country, in which the differences between town and country were significantly eroded, agriculture represented a fundamental economic activity in all European countries and “self-sufficiency in foodstuffs remained an aim of the majority of the governments,” advantages of which were well demonstrated during WWI (ibid; Symes 1981). In this context, the rural studies represented by monographs, particularly by the “holistic-exhaustive” monographs (Cernea et al. 1981, 192), attempted to cover the “whole social reality,” describing in detail not only the social life but also the cultural and even economic aspects of rural areas (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 3). Significantly, from simple ethnographical and sociological studies characteristic of the beginning of the century, rural studies shifted to explanation and interpretation of the villages’ economic development and their interaction. It is thus worth emphasizing both real progress made by the methodological research and the researchers’ interest in more elaborated analyses.

For decades, using the survey techniques and inspired by the dominant philosophical ideas of the turn of the century (e.g., Le Play’s conception of the family and its role in the society and Durkheim’s work on social organization, as well as Chayanov’s coherent picture of the peasant economy), academic work on rural areas represented “the essential of empirical sociology” in the majority of European countries, decisively contributing to the knowledge of European societies (H. Stahl 1980; Durand-Drouhin 1981, 4; Levi-Strauss et. al 1981; Symes 1981). Providing general representations of the individual’s relations with the land, the monographs were not politically neutral. Through their representations, they reflected either the existent social order, in agreement or in opposition to the dominant ideology, or strong historical bias (e.g., studies on

the Basque minorities in Spain by Caro Baroja), or even the insertion of this type of research into social movements (e.g., monographical activity in Nazi Germany) (Durand-Drouhin 1981; Mira Castera, J. F. 1981).

Two elements were central for the monograph analysis, adopted as the classic model of the rural life of many European countries: “the family,” with its division of labor and distribution of social roles; and “the community,” with its social hierarchy and power relations, specifically the “small farm population” (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 4; Symes 1981). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, the village community played the same role in research as the working class in the interwar period. Yet, industrial development before WWI in several European countries started to weaken the rural community. In this light, it is worth mentioning the new subjects of study: on the one hand, those regarding the emergence of the “agricultural proletariat” and, on the other hand, those regarding the acceleration of “migration towards the towns” as a result of the “overpopulation” in the European countrysides (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 6), the process of “urbanization” (Mira Castera 1981, 301), or the “Famine,” which characterized 19<sup>th</sup> century Ireland (Symes 1981, 70). Equally important is the particular attention given by researchers, including students, from Romania, Germany, and Finland, to rural reforms on land, education, health, and food. Moreover, since the beginning of the industrial revolution in Romania and Hungary, economists have advanced the idea of rural industrialization.

The 1930s world economic crisis indirectly, but strongly, affected the non-industrialized CEECs, with negative repercussions on European agricultural markets. The rural poverty and the peasants’ debts, followed by a massive rural-urban exodus, were sufficient catalysts for the emergence of a new generation of researchers, Marxists such as C. Dobrogeanu-Gherea, L. Patrascanu, M. Constantinescu, and R. Moldovan in Romania; F. Erdei and the Szeged group in

Hungary; and Angelov and Kunin in Bulgaria (Cernea et al.1981; Durand-Drouhin 1981).

Although in the minority, the protagonists, claiming “revolutionary ideas,” strove to examine the most sensitive aspects of rural life: “the process of impoverishment, mechanisms of exploitation of peasant labour, and relationships of the servitude of small peasants to the big landowners” (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 6). Thus, the economic crisis had repercussions not only toward the urban working class and its emerging “socialist and revolutionary ideas,” but also toward small peasants, who started to organize (ibid). Although these organizations were still sporadic and limited in membership between the great crisis and WWII, the challenges influenced the future of rural studies.

Without going into the matter exhaustively, it may be of interest to note that countries such as Romania and Poland have seen a considerable number of monographs on their rural communities, but in other countries, including Ireland, which was essentially an agricultural country, there were surprisingly few monographs (Szwengrub and Wierzbicki 1981; Cernea et al., 1981; Symes 1981). While at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Romanian monographs were written at the county level, during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a program for rural research at the village level was launched. In the inter-war period, the monographic study of local village communities, “pursued more extensively in Romania than most other countries,” was considered the “pivotal focus of rural sociological research” (Cernea et al. 1981, 191). The significance of these monographs, at the county level especially, has resided in the fact that they appeared immediately after the 1864 Land Reform, which provided for the “allotment of land to ‘sokeman’ (clacasi)<sup>5</sup>,” signifying a profound transformation in Romanian agricultural relations (p. 194). At the village community level, the writing of monographs was stimulated by other

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<sup>5</sup> The *clacasi* (the old-style peasantry) were those peasants who were obliged to perform *claca* or compulsory labour service (Hitchins 1994, 25-26).

major events, amongst which I would like to emphasize the socio-economic conflicts in village life and the 1921 Land Reform. Moreover, after WWI, these types of research were accompanied by the holistic-exhaustive monographs, works carried out by the Romanian Sociological School under the direction of D. Gusti, who also sought to extend rural research from the village level to the country level, with the goal of developing a nation-wide synthesis, the so-called “*The Science of Nation*” (p. 193).

These social and scientific circumstances for such complex monographic studies, as well as other types of academic works like the geographical dictionaries at the county level, led a series of Romanian scientists have devoted their efforts to a systematic research of rural areas. Among these researchers are V. Mihailescu, I. Conea, N. A. Radulescu, I. Sandru, V. Tufescu (geographers), and I. Simionescu (ecologist), as well as D. Gusti, H. H. Stahl, and R. Vuia (sociologists and ethnographers), to mention only a few of the most notable scholars (Tufescu 1974; Cernea et al.1981; Turnock 1991b). Yet, some circumstances, particularly the 1864 Land Reform, often resulted in deep social conflicts. More specifically, up to the mid-twentieth century, Romania was a country with a predominantly agrarian economy. Its agriculture has been characterized as the “unique mixture of feudal and capitalist relations, including small-scale subsistence and merchandising, the ruthless exploitation of the peasantry and their exceedingly poor cultural and sanitary conditions” (Cernea et al. 1981, 191). Nevertheless, the Romanian peasantry was not simply a passive victim of its environment. The attitude of the peasants toward national politics and the legal system was shaped by their threats to the peasants’ livelihood. In this context, it is worth mentioning the great peasant revolts of 1907, in which 11,000 peasants were killed, revolts which were a result of the persistence of the semifeudal agricultural relations in Romanian villages, especially in Moldova, that dramatically aggravated

the poverty of the peasant masses (Cernea et al. 1981; Turnock 1998; Cartwright 2001). All these complex and dramatic social problems in Romania have enhanced researchers' interest in monographic studies.

Moreover, the lack of accurate knowledge of village realities at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, under the pressure of rapid acceleration of capitalist development, was replaced by the initiation of a scientific research program, supported by the Romanian government -- an initiative that, in the words of D. Gusti, entailed "the beginning of a monographic movement" (Cernea et al. 1981, 195). In this light, it is worth emphasizing a significant interdisciplinary research project, stimulated by royal patronage, involving a selection of 60 representative Romanian villages and approximately 125,000 people (Turnock 1991b; Cernea et al. 1981). They were investigated in the fieldwork of Royal Student Teams, in which some 1850 students were involved during the summer of 1938. The acquired data gave rise to valuable publications, including monographs and numerous shorter studies of synthesis and comparison concerning the economic conditions of peasants, the population movement, and other aspects of rural life. In this context, Golopentia and Georgescu's 1942 edition provided a significant study, conceived in five volumes, entitled *Sixty Romanian Villages Investigated by the Royal Student Teams in the Summer of 1938*, of which volumes four and five, *On the Typology of Romanian Villages*, are remarkable works for Romanian rural studies before the communist era.

According to Gusti, cited by Cernea et al. (1981, 249), the village monographs are "the most appropriate scientific means" by which to not only "drive us closer to our own country" but also "open up a vast field of experience." He has also considered the extension of rural research from the village level to the country level, aiming to develop a nation-wide synthesis, what Gusti would call "The Science of Nation" (p. 193). In this light, scholars such as Gidei

(1903), Constantinescu (1935), Gusti (1936), then, later, Murgescu (1957), and Cernea, Larionescu, Springer, and H. Stahl (1981) have significantly contributed to the development of monographic research. The research topics about rural Romania were very diverse, but predominantly emphasized agriculture and land reforms, and peasants' status, as well as rural economic, social, and cultural dynamics, including: Romanian agriculture in the Mehedinti county (south-western Romania) (Ionescu de la Brad 1868); neoserfdom (Dobrogeanu-Gherea 1910); the land, agrarian reform, and the peasant in Romania (Mitrany 1930); rural emigration to America (Negrea 1936); urbanization of the Romanian peasant and effects of industrialization on the Romanian peasant (Botis 1941; Grofsorean 1942); and costumes and household industry in the Carpathian (Apuseni) Mountains (Apolzan 1944).

Excepting for some notable studies (e.g., Emm. de Martonne with his geographical synthesis for Southern Romania, *La Valachie*, 1902), the majority of rural studies written prior to WWII focused on Transylvania's villages (Tufescu 1974). Surprisingly, relatively few books were dedicated to the study of rurality, rural development, and/or agriculture for Moldova's villages, even though the region, located in Eastern Romania, has significant rural characteristics. Three major works on rural agriculture appeared in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including a study of Romanian agriculture in the Dorohoi and Putna counties (North-Eastern and Central Moldova) (Ionescu de la Brad 1866, 1869) and an agricultural and economic study of Bacau county (Radianu 1889). However, any account of studies concerning Moldova's rurality has to emphasize Dimitrie Cantemir's (1715) famous *Descriptio Moldaviae* as the work of an enlightened precursor, although there is no doubt that Ion Ionescu de la Brad's monographs, for Putna district especially, are also significant academic works in the history of rural monographs in Romania. As an agronomist and agrarian economist, Ion Ionescu de la Brad, armed with

diverse scientific research methods, exhaustively investigated in the field, at the county level, “the condition of agriculture and of the rural population” (Cernea et al. 1981, 193). Moreover, he extended his area of research outside of Moldova’s territory, publishing in 1868 another impressive monograph of the County of Mehedinti (South-Western Romania). Most significant, however, was his proposal to analyze agriculture in the entire country, publishing the findings in 31 monographic volumes. De la Brad’s economic and social investigations were thus “beyond the narrow ethnographic approach” and, in the words of Cernea et al (1981, 194), “he may be looked upon as a true forerunner of Romanian sociology.”

During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a number of other valuable monographs regarding some Moldavian villages were written. Unusually vast and covering all aspects of village life, H. Stahl’s three-volume monograph of the village of Nerej is the most impressive of all the village monographs published in Romania. The originality of this rural study resides not only in a detailed analysis of “patriarchal socio-economic structures of the village and of their process of disintegration” but also for the emergence of a new research trend, labeled “social history” by H. Stahl (Cernea et al. 1981, 202). More specifically, Stahl’s research reconstructed the early forms of the Romanian communal village, the so-called “sat devalmas,” before capitalism penetrated agricultural life and caused the disintegration of this type of traditional community (Tufescu 1974; Cernea et al. 1981, 202).

Yet, in addition to the village or larger administrative zone monographs, also noteworthy is the elaboration of other studies, comprising “social theories” (e.g., “*Poporanism*” and “*Semanatorism*” or “*Samanatorism*”) concerning the Romanian peasantry and the “agrarian question” during the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> (Cernea et al. 1981, 196; Hitchins 1994, 71; Cartwright 2001, 13). The vision of these theories is explained by

Cernea et al. (1981, 249) as the “trend of ideas connected with populism, puts forward the superiority of the rural way of life and traditional value of the peasantry; defends the small agricultural cultivation, condemns the industrial and urban civilization.”

Hitchins (1994, 67) also paid attention to these “most dynamic of the burgeoning agrarian currents,” which characterized Romanian intellectual life at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as to their principal leaders’ views, with the most prominent of these being the historian Nicolae Iorga (associated with *Semanatorism*) and law professor Constantin Stere (*Poporanism*). Iorga showed sympathy for the peasantry, considering the village “the place where the laws of social change operated in their purest form” (p. 70). He also envisioned that “agriculture would remain the economic and cultural foundation of society” (p. 71). Yet, while Semanatorists accorded pride of place to culture, Stere’s and the Poporanists’ main objective was to improve the economic conditions of life for the peasantry. In addition, unlike Semanatorists, who made distinction between culture and civilization, Stere perceived there to be a distinction between rural and urban civilizations, praising rural civilization “as authentic and as an organic part of the Romanian past” (p. 73). Hitchins (1994, 73) suggested that the essential difference between the Poporanists and the Samanatorists was the firm Poporanist (and Stere’s) conviction that “Romania belonged to Europe.”

Despite this idyllic vision of rural life in Romania, however, there existed ample evidence of the severe economic exploitation of the peasant masses, the catastrophic disintegration of the small landholdings, and the peasants’ impoverishment and starvation (Moraru et al.1966; Xenopol 1967). Therefore, the organization of production and the forms of land ownership were feudal in character. Whereas the serfs in Western Europe were liberated from their feudal status in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the feudal domination over the peasantry in CEECs increased

during this time. As Cartwright (2001, 12) noted, citing Berend and Ranki, in an apparent reversal of the course of Western European development, in the late 18<sup>th</sup>/early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries many of the South-Eastern European countries entered into “a second era of serfdom.” Thus, the publication in 1910 of the study entitled *Neoserfdom: An Economic and Sociological Study of Our Agrarian Question* by Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea was a major scientific event. Specifically, taking into consideration its economic and social development, Dobrogeanu Gherea labeled the rural economy following the 1864 agrarian reform as “neoserfdom” (*neoiobagia*), seeing the reform as a signal of the terrible 1888/89 and 1907 peasant risings (Mitrany 1930; Cernea et al. 1981, 196). This original theoretical work was considered the “first Marxist sociological analysis on a macrosocial level” of the Romanian peasantry in the context of global society, and it considerably influenced the subsequent evolution of Romanian sociological research (p. 196).

Furthermore, David Mitrany (1930), in his comprehensive study entitled *The Land & the Peasant in Rumania: The War and Agrarian Reform (1917-21)*, attempted to deal with the agrarian problem of South-Eastern Europe which, according to Shotwell (1930, xiii), “shaped itself under varying pressures of war and politics” and led “the Romanian peasant to speak for himself to the whole world.” Comparing the major events in Europe, especially the French Revolution with the Russian Revolution, Mitrany (1930, xxx) characterized them as “milestones in the social progress of Europe, marking the successive breakdown of feudalism in the West and in the East.” Yet, although both revolutions are considered to be “two vastly dissimilar specimens of the same genus,” the major difference between the two events is best seen in their effect on the peasant (p. xxxi). More specifically, whereas during the French Revolution land was sold to the peasants for securing revenue, preparing the way for the rise of the capitalist

middle class, the Russian Revolution heralded the political predominance of the working class, including the peasants. Proclaiming the “extermination of individual property,” the Bolsheviks (Communists) had, in fact, “requisitioned, confiscated, and expropriated” almost everything, contributing to the enormous expansion and consolidation of the communist system, not only in Russia but also in the neighboring agrarian countries from Eastern Europe (Mitrany 1930, xxxi). Furthermore, if the French Revolution released the peasant from his servile status, the Russian Revolution “placed upon his shoulders the mantle of power” (ibid). The case of the Romanian peasants illustrates, according to Mitrany, the difference between the two categories of rural reforms. If the 1864 Land Reform opened the way for the “enrichment of the landlords,” the 1921 Land Reform, which belongs to the group initiated by the War and the Russian Revolution, was projected to “leave the peasants in control of agriculture” (p. xxxiii).

#### ***3.4.2 Rural Studies between the Second World War and the Collapse of Communism***

Like urban areas, many rural regions were devastated by the Second World War (WWII). After 1945, villages throughout Europe began their reconstruction efforts and, although in the inter-war period the rhythms and levels of development were very different, all European economies put industrial development on their agendas. Even traditional agricultural countries in Eastern Europe (e.g., Poland, Romania, the Balkan countries) deliberately chose the way of rapid and intensive industrialization. If prior to WWI rural studies treated the village as a social system, after WWII researchers’ interest was directed toward “the social and economic aspects of change,” specifically to the problems of “the transition to modern agriculture” (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 3). Yet, as a result of the decisions made at the 1945 Yalta Conference, the scale of change was quite different in Western and Eastern European countryside, with the result that the context in which rural research was carried out differed greatly in the two regions.

Nevertheless, the theme of “adaptation” (p. 8) or “adjustment” (Stephanou 2006, 109; Cosgrove-Sacks 2006, 151) seems to have been the driving force of village studies up to today, with many researchers considering that “the village had the capacity to change itself while remaining itself” (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 8).

In the Western European countries, peasants were encouraged to abandon their artisanal working methods and to use tractors and machines in order to produce more and better products. Yet, the changes in rural areas were slow and in several countries, such as Italy, France, and Finland, the resistance movement had left deep traces. The innumerable reprisals and war devastations have been described by a series of authors, emphasizing the emergence of the “big mixing of ideas” (Roberts 1951; Ionescu 1964; Durand-Drouhin 1981, 7; Seton-Watson 1985; Georgescu 1991; Deletant, 1999; Cartwright 2001). Specifically, taking an active part in the underground struggle together with workers, clerks, students, and intellectuals, young peasants had the opportunity to better understand the ideas of progress, as well as to realistically assess their peasant conditions. In addition, the acceleration of the rural-urban exodus, particularly the loss of younger and more economically active people, accompanied by a strong fall in the birth rate, weakened the potential of the economic and social development of rural areas (Baldock et al. 2001). Moreover, the American ideas regarding agricultural development did not fail to have an effect on intellectuals, preoccupied by the European agricultural questions and the peasants’ engagement in the course of modernization.

Most importantly, in 1957, the Treaty of Rome established the birth of Green Europe, followed by the progressive establishment of the mechanism of the Common Market, and the gradual definition of a Common Agricultural Policy (Andrews 1973; Fennel 1997; Grant 1997; Balanica 2005). In this context, the inequalities in regional development and the accentuation of

competition had major consequences for national agricultures. However, apart from some exceptions, by the mid-1960s the mechanization and modernization of rural areas and agriculture in Western Europe were clearly underway, affecting all categories of farmers. Consequently, the majority of researchers did not present a pessimistic view toward the future of the village.

In this light, the village has been considered the “best social framework” for research, especially for survey research, as researchers have to deal with the relation of farmers and the community with the exterior, as well as the blockages to modernization or the diffusion of innovation in agriculture (Durand-Drouhin 1981, 10). Since in the process of modernization of agriculture the peasant tends to become an entrepreneur, this research is considered as “the basis of research on professionalisation of agricultural activity which describes the passing over from the peasant to the agriculturalist” (ibid). Such studies have been developed in both Western and Eastern Europe, especially in Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Finland, and even in Poland. According to Durand-Drouhin (1981, 7), two themes were significant in the studies of rural communities: (1) “the social and psychological consequences of the wide scale introduction of technical progress in agriculture”; and (2) “the social, cultural and political implications of the strengthening of relationships between town and countryside,” with the second theme considerably extended in the Western countries in the 1960s.

In the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs), including Romania, often described as a “peasant belt” between the two World Wars, the rural areas and agriculture recorded quite different characteristics (Sanders et al. 1976, vi; Cartwright 2001). The new agricultural reforms after the Second World War, followed by the collectivization of agriculture, replaced the capitalist, or, in some cases, the co-existent feudal-capitalist relations, with the new socialist or communist social relationships. Yet, there were also considerable differences

between these countries. For example, while in Poland and Yugoslavia the campaign of collectivization was abandoned and the land was returned to the owners, in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania collectivization was vigorously pursued and the communist authorities dramatically changed rural life in the late 1940s and 1950s. Through forced collectivization, private land became collective or state property and, through modernization based upon heavy industry, an impressive number of peasants were converted into urban workers. Consequently, new terms were used to describe various types of rural people, such as “agricultural cooperators” or “peasant-workers,” while leaders of some countries were even sustaining the idea that they no longer had a peasantry (Sanders et al. 1976, v; Cernea et al. 1981, 252). As for villages, the tendency for “equalization” was also an important goal frequently specified in communist policy statements (Turnock 1998, 33). It was put into practice in the 1980s in Romania, for example, as a “draconian” program of rural modernization (p. 201), or the so-called “*sistematizare*” -- a program which was not finalized due to the 1989 revolution (Turnock 1998, 33; Cartwright 2001, 98).

Rural studies under communist rule in Eastern Europe have comprised books, village monographs, and periodical articles, reporting many statistical and economic studies, as well as a certain amount of fictional literature (Sanders et al. 1976; Durand-Drouhin 1981). During the early post-war years, very few new monograph investigations were undertaken, but the previously conducted research continued to be published. In countries such as Romania and Poland a variety of monographs were written, but most of them were published in the 1960s-1970s (Szwengrub and Wierzbicki 1981; Cernea et al. 1981). As a result of centralized planning, statistical research, in its beginnings during the 1950s, was concerned especially with agricultural production, but later, other indicators were taken into consideration as well. In the 1960s, the

beginning of economic reform favored the resumption of village studies, especially in Romania and Poland, where the empirical study of the countryside was considerable before 1945. Priority was given to studies that served as guides to rural development, especially as the place of agricultural production and the understanding of social change was posed in more qualitative terms. In addition, the monographs were supplemented by some peasant novels, such as those written by Mihail Sadoveanu and Zaharia Stancu in Romania, describing the peasants' struggle against the big landowners, their land, revolutionary ideas, and/or the positive heroes of peasants in the avant-garde of collectivization (Durand-Drouhin 1981).

In the new political context of Romania between 1945 and 1989, the predominant theoretical perspective was the Marxist perspective, which saw the village community as a component of rural society and subject to its influence (Cherestesi 1954; Malinschi 1959; Merfea 1966; and Vilcu 1972 cited in Sanders et al. 1976; Cernea et al. 1981). In this vision, community research was aimed primarily at obtaining knowledge of economic structures and the ways in which these economic structures have acted as determinants of various socio-cultural components. Since the collectivization of agrarian relations radically altered the social subject of rural communities, rural studies were thus focused on a different range of subjects. Yet, for a period of time after WWII, rural research was almost interdicted, with the result that the bibliography of this period contains very little research on rural communities. Thus, according to Cernea et al. (1981), a series of valuable investigations initiated either by the Central Board of Statistics or by the Economic Research Institute of the Romanian Academy remained largely unpublished, as a result of the political prohibition in the late 1950s. Moreover, many scholars involved in scientific and cultural activities were imprisoned. Some, including Anton Golopentia, an eminent sociologist, statistician, and demographer, died there. Others either were

released after many years of imprisonment, e.g., the distinguished historian Constantin C. Giurescu, or were marginalized, ending their life in isolation and poverty, e.g., professors Simion Mehedinti and Dimitrie Gusti, both venerable figures of Romanian scholarly and intellectual life (Georgescu 1991).

Likewise, some less extensive village studies were presented in anthropological, ethnographic, and economic geography monographs. However, an “avalanche of village journalistic monographs” began to appear, depicting the “changing socio-economic content of the Romanian village” in the context of a socialist society (Cernea et al. 1981, 213). In the late 1960s, though, the interest in research on village communities was renewed, producing a series of valuable works illustrative of the new stage of research, some of which were geographical contributions. In this light, Vintila Mihailescu, one of the most important Romanian geographers, alone or in collaboration with other scholars, made a significant contribution to rural studies, especially in “devising a classification of villages” (Tufescu 1974; Mihailescu and Bacanaru 1966, cited in Sanders et al. 1976, 118).

According to Tufescu (1974), Vintila Mihailescu’s interest in rural classification actually started in the interwar period, when he published a series of articles which emphasized the characteristics of the Romanian villages located in the plain, hill, and mountain areas. Using as classification criteria the “shape,” “internal structure,” and “streets texture,” Vintila Mihailescu identified four categories of villages: “isolated houses” and “hamlets” in the mountain areas; “compact villages” in the plain areas and Transylvania’s hills; and “dispersed villages,” the widespread village type in Romania, in the hill areas (Tufescu 1974, 306; Sanders et al. 1976, 118). Then, in 1966, in collaboration with Ion Bacanaru, he published a new work, *Quelques Considerations sur la Geographie des Villages*, discussing the potential of the contribution of

geography to the study of rural life. In addition, the authors pointed out the essential components of the geographical approach in designing rural classification.

Cernea et al. (1981, 215) emphasize three major groups of problems which drew the attention of researchers in the new context of rural studies in the 1960s and 1970s: (1) “agricultural cooperativisation”; (2) “urbanization of rural areas”; and (3) “underdevelopment of rural areas.” In the first group, the most interesting rural studies concerned the first collectivized region in the country – the Constanta region, located in the historical province of Dobruja (Dobrogea), South-Eastern Romania. For instance, in 1960 S. Hartia and M. Dulea (cited in Cernea et al. 1981) published a vast economic study at the level of the whole region and, in particular, at the village level, where the process of collectivization had been completed some four years before its 1962 completion countrywide. After an introductory analysis regarding the history of the socio-economic development of the region from antiquity to modern times, with emphasis on agrarian relations, the authors examined collectivization from both economic indicators of agricultural production cooperatives, and political and institutional factors. Other researchers were interested in the process of collectivization, either at the country level (Parpala 1969) or at the cooperative level, such as M. Fulea and M. Ciobanu (1972), with a study about organization of work in agricultural production cooperatives, or M. Cernea (1974), with his sociology of the Romanian cooperative farm (Cernea et al. 1981).

Some researchers, such as V. Valcu (1972) and M. Merfea (1966), strongly asserted that “socialism is responsible for the great successes obtained in agriculture,” emphasizing the “role of the Party in educating the peasantry about cooperative work” and predicting more progress in the future (Sanders et al. 1976, 122 and 118). In this light, H. Stahl, revisiting a Transylvanian village, Dragus, which he had studied forty years before, published in 1972 a paper in which he

noted the “changes which have occurred as a result of socialism, cooperative agriculture, and industrial development” (p. 121). In addition, the study analyzed “the effects of new organizational forms of customs and traditional practices,” as well as “the changing occupational structure of the village” (ibid). Yet, the mountain areas were not collectivized in Romania. As a result, it is of interest to point out the various research programs (e.g., M. Constantinescu, 1972, in the commune of Cornerava) that revealed the contradictions between the cooperative agricultural system and private family farming (Cernea et al. 1981).

The process of industrialization, followed by urbanization of rural areas, provided the researchers with an opportunity to develop a series of interdisciplinary investigations in different zones of the country, such as the urbanization process of the Slatina-Olt zone (M. Constantinescu and H. Stahl, 1970) or of the Brasov zone (Bogdan et al. 1970). These two studies emphasize the impact of industrialization of two medium-sized towns in the surrounding region, specifically on the development of agriculture, urbanization of villages, and labor mobility. Furthermore, the discovery of different resources in the countryside and the establishment of a specific industry have changed the whole life of the rural communities. In the case of Boldesti village, located in the Subcarpathian zone, T. Herseni et al. (1970) studied the attitudes and behavior of those rural people in the context of the development of the oil industry and the progressive urbanization of the village, concluding that both industrialization and urbanization are highly significant for the transformation of rural communities (Cernea et al. 1981).

According to Sanders et al. (1976, 123), the “pauperization of the peasantry” was a neglected topic during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it was an important research theme in Romania at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this light, G. Zane, quoted in Sanders et al. (1976, 123), published in 1966 a paper entitled *19<sup>th</sup> Century Economic Literature on the Peasant Question*, in

which he emphasized the emergence from the countryside of the idea of “co-operativization,” a process which represented the “re-emergence in the conscience of the masses of the ancestral peasant community.” Equally important, research on rural underdevelopment has been pursued for several rural communities in the Vrancea mountain zone previously investigated by N. S. Dumitriu, whose work was published in 1972 (Cernea et al. 1981). The goal was not only to explain the “backwardness” of this area in comparison with the developed industrial agricultural neighbors, but also to find some practical solutions for its future development. In several cases, the problem of rural underdevelopment has connected important comparative studies regarding the entire zone of South-East Europe, such as that by George Hoffman (1967, 1972), which described the problems of economic development in the post-WWII period in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia, countries characterized not only by large regional differences in the level of development but also by having different approaches to the study of the problem (Hoffman 1972; Sanders et al. 1976).

Citing Matei’s work (1971) regarding the development of rural areas, Sanders et al. (1976, 116) emphasize the “concept of the rural settlement with urban amenities,” raising the question of choosing which villages, out of approximately 13,000 small Romanian villages, were to be developed and which were to be abandoned. The topic of rural destiny was also developed by geographers, like A. Herbst-Radoi (1968), in her study on village types in Dobrogea. This topic touches a sensitive aspect of Romanian rural areas under communist rule, the so-called “systematization,” a plan adopted by the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965 and aimed at modernizing Romanian villages (Tufescu 1974; V. Ioanid 1967, quoted in Sanders et al. 1976, 113; Hunya 1989). Historically, one of the major Romanian social problems was the significant discrepancy between urban and rural areas. Seeking to reduce, or even to

eliminate, the gap between town and village, the plan called for the “creation of agro-towns with a complete array of social services” (Turnock 1976, 1991b; Ioanid, quoted in Sanders et al. 1976, 114; Ronnas 1989). Yet, some factors, such as low population density and the geographical remoteness of many Romanian villages, led to the abandonment of the proposed plan, as the process was more complex than anticipated and would need to include also “agrarian reform, cooperativization, the elimination of capitalist ownership, industrial development and the spread of educational opportunity” (Duca 1961, quoted in Sanders et al. 1967, 110).

Rural monographs of Romanian communities, as well as other specialized rural research topics, continued to develop during the 1970s-1980s, in a number of disciplines, including geography. Except for a series of geographical monographs published by scholars, such as P. Poghirc’s study (1972) of villages in the Tutova Hills, in the Moldavian Plateau, other alternatives for rural research were mostly used in Romania (Cernea et al. 1981). In this light, in the mid-1970s the Department of Geography of the University of Bucharest made a remarkable decision that required their students to write, with the topic imposed, a variety of geographical monographs for their bachelor degree theses (see, for instance, Stoian 1975, the Gura Vaili commune, Bacau county, Central-Western part of Moldova). In addition, in Romania geography teachers must write a thesis to obtain their first didactical grade for preuniversity teaching, representing yet another way of extending this type of rural studies.

Studies of the traditional social structures and the property systems of the populations of South-Eastern Europe, including Romania, increased following World War II. The 1980 publication entitled *Traditional Romanian Village Communities: The Transition from the Communal to the Capitalist Mode of Production in the Danube Region*, for example, summarizes, according to Chirot (1980), Henri H. Stahl’s four decades of field work and

documentary research. More specifically, the book is a summary of the three-volume work Stahl published between 1958 and 1965, *Contributions to the Study of Romanian Communal Villages (Contributii la Studiul Satelor Devalmase Romanesti)*. Focusing on the village communities of Moldova and Muntenia, this study monitors the evolution of Romanian peasant society, particularly the modes of production which characterized the village communities from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> (Chirot 1980; Siani-Davies 1998). By comparing the communal villages, whose population was subjected to serfdom, with the free villages, whose population benefited from having private property, the author gave a distinguished interpretation of Romanian agrarian history.

In this light, P. H. Stahl (1986), in his study entitled *Household, Village and Village Confederation in Southeastern Europe*, extended his comparative study on Romanians, southern Slavs, Albanians, and Greeks, covering the period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The social units described for each country (a human group, a habitat, a property, and a common life), accompanied by a detailed description of the spiritual element, have emphasized not only the specific rural identity but also the common elements throughout the South-East European region. The two forms of property, village and household, have coexisted everywhere for a long time, the second developing continuity at the expense of the first. If this aspect has been (and still is) common throughout the region, the status of the villagers and their rights presented important territorial differentiations. In addition, the development of the socio-economic organization of the village association has been of particular sociological and geographical interest. One example is Caramelea's doctoral dissertation (1946), in which he studied the dissolution of prior forms of communal ownership and the origin of new forms of freeholders' associations, the so-called "obstea de mosneni," from Berivoesti village, near the

town of Campulung Muscel, Southern Subcarpathians, Valachia, Southern Romania (Caramelea, quoted in Cernea et al. 1981, 223).

Many foreign scholars were also interested in studying rurality and agriculture after 1960. As a result, a rich body of literature can be individualized for each country from CEE, such as: Anderson (1962) -- Czechoslovak agricultural policy; Hoffman (1964) -- transformation of rural settlement in Bulgaria; Burszta (1966) -- rural cultural integration in Western Poland; Dohrs (1968) -- incentives in Hungarian communist agriculture; and Defilippis (1969) -- rural spatial planning in Yugoslavia. In addition, a significant number of scientific works were published in the 1970s-1980s. The topics were very diverse, ranging from economic-geographic aspects and problems of Romanian and Bulgarian agriculture (Turnock 1970; Yurdanov 1970) to the revolutionary changes in ownership of land and the social and class structure of the Czechoslovakian village (Hrabina 1971), the process of transforming the peasant into a professional farmer in Poland (Galeski 1976), the peasant markets in Yugoslavia (Lockwood 1976), and many others. Regional development strategy in Southeast Europe (Hoffman 1972), comparison of communist and non-communist agriculture (Wadekin 1985), and European projects for the countryside (Bernfeld 1988) are several noteworthy examples of rural studies at the regional or European level.

In the case of Romania, unanimously recognized is Katherine Verdery's research which applies not only to rural Transylvania, with an emphasis on Aurel Vlaicu village (Hunedoara county, South-Western Transylvania), but also to the wider array of political issues of the communist era and transition in Eastern Europe. As Verdery (1983, xi) emphasized, the research on *Transylvanian Villagers* is about "political, economic, and social changes over three centuries in the lives of Transylvanian peasants," but is "placed within a much broader set of

transformations in Eastern Europe.” More importantly, the study invites us, its readers, to “hear from people and groups to whom we have not much listened” (pp. xi-xii), in order to better understand “how states were built around them,” “how their economies were affected by changes in patterns of economic activities,” and, equally important, “how a principal component of their self-conception, their national or ethnic identification, was formed and transformed through time and acquired different meanings for different groups in society” (p. xii).

David Turnock and Per Ronnas also made a significant contribution to the study of Romania’s settlements and agriculture, pre- and post-1989. In Stockholm in 1984, Per Ronnas published his doctoral dissertation regarding urbanization in Romania, an ample analysis of the geography of social and economic change since Romania’s independence. Later, Ronnas (1989, 543) shifted his interest to researching rural areas, with emphasis on “rural development policy.” His interest was determined by the revitalization of the Romanian “systematization programme,” which aimed to concentrate the rural population by “phasing out a large number of villages” (ibid). The topic was developed earlier by Sampson (1982) and, then, in the post-1989 literature, by Turnock (1991, 1998), Kideckel (1993), and Cartwright (2001). Since Romanian agriculture has always been a very important component of the raw material base for industry, it received increasing attention both from domestic and foreign researchers. Turnock (1970, 184), for example, studying the geographical aspect of Romanian agriculture, concluded that “agriculture must remain a fundamental component in Romania’s rapid economic progress which is becoming recognized as one of the more remarkable cases of expansion in the post-war world.”

Moreover, topics regarding rural Romania and agriculture were developed as doctoral dissertations in the United States at the University of Connecticut in 1975 and at the University of California, Davis, in 1988 (Woolley 1975; Argyres 1988). While Argyres (1988) emphasized

the tensions and contradictions among state, collective, and peasant household production in the Banat region, South-Western Romania, Woolley (1975) analyzed the administrative development, input - output, and short- and long-run efficiency of Romanian socialist agriculture (Popa and Horn 1994). Special consideration was given to the differentiation of the types of farms on the basis of their ownership (state, collective, and private), as well as to the changes in the institutions and the economic reforms that were initiated in the late 1960s, in order to emphasize the contribution that the agricultural sector made to the development of the national economy (Woolley 1975). Thus, the bibliography of this period included various studies, covering a multitude of topics. However, the value of these works varies considerably.

### ***3.4.3 Rural Studies Post-1989***

Over the last two decades, the body of literature regarding rural Europe in general, and the impact of Eastern enlargement on EU agriculture and rural areas in particular, has expanded considerably. Attention has predominantly focused on discourses on rurality in the new Europe (Richardson 2000; Hadjimichalis 2003; Storti et al. 2005; Juska 2007), and rural identity and transformation (Kersten 1990; Hoggart et al. 1995; Sampson 1995; Van Depoele 2000), as well as on rural-urban relationships (Arcaini et al. 1999; Shucksmith et al. 2006; Overbeek and Terluin 2006). The literature has also focused on important topics regarding rural development (Csaki and Tuck 2000; Baldock et al. 2001; Csaki and Lerman 2001; Marsden 2003; Callanan et al. 2006), agricultural policies in transition economies -- land reform and farm restructuring, in particular -- as a way to investigate pre-communist and communist eras, and the post-communist transition and adjustment to EU enlargement (Boyd 1991; Swinnen 1994; Abrahams 1996; Mathijs 1997; Swinnen and Mathijs 1997; Davidova and Buckwell 2000; Hartell and Swinnen 2000; Lerman 2000; Valdes 2000; Goetz 2001; Lerman et al. 2004; Greer 2005; Baltas 2006). In

addition, the theme regarding the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), one of the cornerstones of the EU, incorporates an impressive body of literature, from which Gardner (1996), Grant (1997), Fennell (1997), and Shucksmith et al. (2005) are only a few significant references for this study.

Romania, like the other CEECs, has been, and still is, an interesting case study for researching agriculture and rural development, and many foreign scholars have conducted studies either at the local/regional level (Kideckel 1993, 1995; Cartwright 2001; Verdery 2003) or at the country level (Jackson 1997; Turnock 1998; Dalton et al. 2003). David Kideckel, for example, directed his anthropological research on rural areas located in Brasov County, South-Eastern Transylvania, with emphasis on the Olt Land (the Fagaras Depression). Focusing on the daily lives of villagers, Kideckel (1993, xiv) attempted to provide a sense of “how local life was influenced by and in turn influenced the nature of life in the socialist state” and, in particular, “how individual compromises reinforced political stagnation” before 1989. Later, Kideckel returned to the region to study some aspects of the highly controversial process of privatization in the commune of Hirseni, subsequent to decollectivization. Comparing Romania with other European countries, Kideckel (1995, 48) pointed out that for all Eastern Europeans, privatization is “not cost free,” entailing many “compromises and contradictory decision making.” Although this is not to say that the effort for extending privatization in that Romanian region, or elsewhere in Eastern Europe, needs to be limited, it is clear that “agricultural privatization is not yet the panacea for local rural economies” and the debates over the division of land will continue for years (p. 61).

Other noteworthy topics of research were initiated by these scholars, including: the political economy of agricultural reform (Jackson 1997); rural planning, agrarian reform, land use, and rural diversification in Romania (Turnock 1991, 1998); implementing land reform in post-

communist Romania, with emphasis on Plaiesti village, Cluj County, Central Transylvania, and Mirsid village, Salaj County, North-Western Transylvania (Cartwright 2001); rural development and pre-accession strategy for Romanian agriculture (Dalton et al. 2003); and property and value in postsocialist Transylvania, with emphasis on Aurel Vlaicu village, Hunedoara County, South-Western Transylvania (Verdery 2003). Recently, a new doctoral dissertation was issued at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, entitled *Adapting to land reform: Self-selection, production and the response of subsistence farmers to land restitution in post-socialist Romania*, with emphasis on the counties of Dambovita and Ialomita, Walachia, Southern Romania (Sabates-Wheeler 2001).

From the aforementioned research studies, it is worth considering geographer David Turnock's long-term interest in studying Romanian rural settlements and agriculture, an effort extended during the pre-1989 (1970, 1976, 1979, 1987) and post-1989 (1990, 1991 -- multiple publications, 1997, 1998) periods. Although Turnock's works cover the entire economic and political complexity of Romanian rural areas, he paid special consideration to two particular issues: communist systematization and post-communist decollectivization and land restitution. Rural planning was not a new research interest to Turnock after the 1989 revolution. Like other scholars, he (1976, 1991) had long been interested in the consequences for rural areas of the Romanian Communist Party's 1972 decision to restructure rural settlement. Although the declared goal of this restructuring process was to increase the number of agricultural areas and improve the standard of living in Romanian villages, in reality hundreds of villages were planned to disappear. Restoration of property ownership, legalized by the Land Law 18, 1991, represented, in many cases, only a partial restitution of former owners, but it was fundamental to the process of privatization in Romanian agriculture (Turnock 1998). Moreover, rural

development has been identified as a priority for Romania's integration into the EU, considering agriculture is at the base of its rural economy. In this light, Turnock's works also offered an ample analysis of the future of rural areas, emphasizing the major factors capable of increasing their economic efficiency. Thus, since the literature on rural and agricultural transition, especially for Romania, is quite limited, Turnock's works are welcomed, being an important addition to the empirical literature on rural studies.

Among other foreign scholars with interest in rural Romania, Cartwright and Verdery have built up a significant base of legal, anthropologic, and historical expertise. As the fall of communism in Eastern Europe opened up the possibility for people to acquire land, both scholars have conducted extensive research in Romania, particularly in rural Transylvania. Exploring the importance of land and land ownership to people from Aurel Vlaicu commune, Hunedoara County, South-Western Transylvania, before and after 1989, Verdery (2003, xiv) emphasized how collectivized land was transformed into private property, suggesting that decollectivization is better understood as a "process of transforming socialist property" instead of "(re)creating private property." For many peasants, post-communist decollectivization and restitution of land represented a distinct moral rectification as well, and this was the context in which Verdery (Editorial Reviews, 2003) attempted to conceptualize the "property as a political symbol" and as a "process of assigning value."

Conflicts over land, land-use, and ownership have been a pervasive feature in the history of not only Romania but also the entire Central and Eastern European region. It is known that the control over land represents both economic power and political influence. As a result, land reformers always had to solve a difficult and sensitive problem. In the words of Seaton-Watson, cited in Cartwright (2001, 3), "the failure to settle the land problem in eastern and central Europe

played a major role in the collapse of democratic regimes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and their descent first into Fascism and later into Communism.” As a lawyer, Cartwright’s (2001, 4) goal was to explore “how the legal process operated within a context of complex social change.” Focusing on the history of the past Romanian land reforms, as an excellent way to understand the present, he investigated the ways in which collective property was privatized. More specifically, he looked at the legal basis for post-communist reform and, using Plaiesti village, Cluj County, Central Transylvania, and Mirsid village, Salaj County, North-Western Transylvania as a case study, attempted to show the implementation process in designated rural areas.

There have also been significant studies issued by Romanian researchers, of which it is worth emphasizing the numerous Romanian and/or bilingual (Romanian and English) works of the Institute of Agricultural Economics (Rusali 2005), the European Institute of Romania (Manoleli et al. 2004; Dumitru et al. 2004; Ramniceanu 2004, 2005; Giurca et al. 2005, 2006; Rusu et al. 2007), and the Romanian Academy for Agricultural and Forestry Sciences (Lup 1997, 2003, and 2007). This body of work reveals a number of themes that appear in the present study, such as agriculture and rural development policies, the CAP and its impact on Romanian agriculture and rural areas, as well as public opinion and perceptions regarding the impact of the EU enlargement on Romanian agriculture and rural areas. Furthermore, the body of post-1989 literature increased with a series of doctoral dissertations and master’s theses written in Romanian academic institutions, such as *Theory and practice in Common Agricultural Policy: Effects of Romania’s agriculture alignment to the CAP* (Balanica 2005); *Privatization of Agriculture in Some East-European Countries: Hungary, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria* (Constantin 2005); and *Agro-Food Integration in Tulcea County* (Singhi 2005). Equally important are the documents issued by the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural

Development, from which the *National Strategy Plan for Rural Development, 2007-2013* is a significant document, one required by the EU (MAPDR 2007).

Specifically concerning the Common Agricultural Policy, Silviu Balanica (2005), in his doctoral dissertation, *Theory and Practice in Common Agricultural Policy: Effects of Romania's Agriculture Alignment to the CAP*, developed an ample analysis toward the creation and evolution of the Common Agricultural Policy, pointing out how the CAP has been reformed in the context of the EU enlargement and its influences on the EU agriculture. In addition, Rusu et al. (2007) offered a Romanian vision toward an analysis of CAP improvement measures, as well as a case study, focusing on opinions and perceptions regarding the CAP. Furthermore, Balanica (2005) dedicated a detailed analysis of Romanian agriculture, specifically the problem of aligning Romanian agriculture to the CAP.

Among publications in English regarding rural Romania and agriculture, a number of works have been written by Romanian scholars, alone or in collaboration with their foreign counterparts. The majority of publications reveal a variety of topics in agriculture, either at the country level or at the regional level, such as land reform and agricultural reform policies (Gavrilescu 1994; Aligica and Dabu 2003), privatization and restructuring of farms (Grindea 1997; Sarris and Gavrilescu 1997; Gaburici 2000; Davis and Gaburici 2000), farm incomes and prices in agriculture (Williams et al. 2003; Webster et al. 2003), the international competitiveness of Romanian agriculture (Gorton et al. 2003), and an analysis of WTO commitments and CAP adoption in Romania (Davidova et al. 2003). At the regional level, Swain and Vincze published in 2001 an article regarding agricultural restructuring in Transylvania in the post-communist period. This research has also included political or demographic aspects of rurality. In this light, it is important to mention Mungiu-Pippidi's (2002)

work regarding peasant voting behavior and political opinions and Sandu's steady interest in rural migration and poverty in the Romanian villages (1999, 2002, 2005).

Dumitru Sandu's study (1999, 188) *Development and Poverty in the Romanian Villages*, is "part of a larger project of building a social atlas of Romania." Sandu classified Romanian villages "from a level and from a structural point of view," and an explanation of village poverty was given in terms of "poverty cycles and regression models" (ibid). Sandu found that, in general, the poorest villages in Romania are peripheral villages within communes, especially those located in the plain areas, but the maximum poverty is in the hill-field villages. They are far from big cities and modernized roads, the most numerous being located in the low developed counties, such as those in Moldova (e.g., Vaslui and Bacau). On the opposite side, the hill-mountain villages have the highest level of development. Yet, usually, poverty is associated with small rural communities. Therefore, the fact that bigger field villages are poorer than the mountainous ones could be seen as a paradoxical situation. Sandu offered detailed explanations, connecting poverty to the structure of the population: a preponderance of the population being older and with a lower educational level, and being mainly farmers. Moreover, regarding rural migration, Sandu pointed out that it is young people, with a higher educational level, who mainly leave the village, strengthening "the vicious circle of the poverty" in the villages (p. 202). However, after the 1989 revolution, the urban-rural and rural-abroad migration currents recorded exceptionally high levels, complicating the demographic changes in the Romanian villages.

As stated in the majority of academic works, the collapse of communism after 1989 created the way for a radical reorganization of farming in all Central and Eastern European countries, including Romania. It was assumed that farmers would prefer the private individual farming instead of the communist collective model, especially in terms of economic efficiency, and the

rapidity in which the decollectivization process took place after 1990 confirmed the general expectation. However, Sabates-Wheeler (2001, i), doing her dissertation fieldwork in the Romanian Plain and the Southern Subcarpatian hills, in the counties of Dambovita and Ialomita, Walachia, Southern Romania, discovered that the “Romanian transition experience has not fulfilled these expectations.” Sampling 344 households in nine villages, she found that “cooperative farms have remained remarkably persistent throughout the southern region” (ibid). Specifically, many villagers from her designated area of research, particularly the aged and capital-constrained, decided to remain in large associations in the early 1990s. Her research suggested that “smaller, endogenously developed farming associations, such as family societies, provide benefits over private farming strategies under certain conditions” (p. ii).

In summary, definitions of the terms of *rural* and/or *rurality* and delineation of rural from urban areas have been long debated topics in many academic works. More recently, rural development, as well as sustainability issues, has become a hot topic of discussion both at the national and the EU levels. The conceptual rural area definitions can be divided thus into two major categories: (1) those that focus on *spatial* properties (population density, built area, land use/cover, and relative-location characteristics); and (2) those that focus *non-spatial* properties (social, economic, cultural, demographical, and ecological characteristics), including initiatives for alternative definitions (Hurbanek, 2007; Shucksmith et al. 2006). These types of approaches produce many of the urban-rural binaries typically used, such as secular versus sacred, rational versus traditional, and unstable versus stable. They indicate a search for rurality in particular spaces and functions. From these, the *social constructivist* arguments are the basis of contemporary academic approaches to the rural and view *rurality* as an “imaginary concept”

which not only has different meanings to different people but also whose meanings and symbols may be manipulated and contested as part of social struggles (Shucksmith et al. 2006, 5).

Exploring how society constructs and represents rurality can be useful for understanding political mobilization around the rural. Although the concept of rural has been broadened, some classifications tend to generalize the characteristics of rural areas, focusing on homogenized physical spaces and not on people. It is debatable as to whether this is wise, though, since within an area of decline there may also be some areas of growth and vice versa. In addition, some arguments in favor of rural areas consider the necessity of viewing the rural as more than a physical space, as “a multiplicity of social spaces which overlap in the same geographical area” (Callanan et al. 2006, 62). Some policy makers see “rural development as an adjunct to agricultural policy,” but others see “agricultural development as just one component of rural policy” (Baldock et al. 2001, 17). Farmers’ organizations across Europe, for example, present “the rural” as being identical to “the agricultural,” illustrating how the rural can be an issue around which people organize and which mobilizes the support of particular interest groups. Such mobilizations manipulate concepts of rural identity and space. From these details, it is clear that one very important axis for interpreting different approaches to rural development is an *agrarian* versus *rural* perspective. Thus, it is evident that any classification used reveals the complexity of rural space within the EU territory. This is a complexity recognized by the EU institutions. Hence, in a written response to a question from the European Parliament, the European Commission offered the following:

At the present time, there is neither a geographical delimitation of rural space nor a harmonized definition of rural population within the Community. Under these conditions, all estimations of the rural population, either by Member States or by regions, can have only an indicative value and cannot thereby serve as the basis for comparisons of any significance.

(CEC, quoted in Hoggart et al. 1995, 23)

Undoubtedly, the degree of rural study prior to World War II was impressive and, in the words of Cernea et al. (1981, 211), this work “put Romanian monographic research on the international map.” Romanian experiences were often recommended or adopted in a series of European countries, in which rural sociology was undergoing considerable expansion. Unfortunately, the outbreak of WWII in 1939 cancelled any prospective initiatives for extending intellectual exchange into the international circuit. Certainly, many studies between the Second World War and the Collapse of Communism have high scientific standards, but some of them, especially some of the Romanian works written during the communist era, were intended only for propaganda purposes to portray cooperativized agriculture in a positive light. Although the professional monographs, including geographical ones, revealed their potential as a “tool” for scientific knowledge, dominating rural studies, gradually the ratio between monographs and other research modalities changed, considerably diversifying with alternative research designs (Cernea et al. 1981, 217). The principal conclusion suggested by the post-1989 works is that decollectivization is very diverse, both from country to country and from village to village, a statement confirmed by my personal experience and research in rural Romania. A comparison of work on different villages from Transylvania (Kideckel 1993, 1995; Cartwright 2001; Verdery 1983, 2003) and from Walachia (Sabates-Wheeler 2001, 2004) with my own work among some Moldavian rural areas could give a sense of the current development in rural Romania.

**I. NEGOTIATING THE NEW GEOGRAPHY OF THE ENLARGED EUROPE**

## CHAPTER 4

### **FROM THE COMMON MARKET TO THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Devastated by the apocalypse of fascism and war and threatened by Soviet communism, by 1945 Europe was effectively no longer at the center of the international system in the way in which it had been for much of the nineteenth century. For almost half a century after the Yalta Conference in 1945, the continent was divided by the Allied powers into two separate blocks: the Western bloc, with a liberal democracy, controlled by the countries of Western Europe and the United States (U.S.); and the Eastern block, with a totalitarian communism, controlled by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (Schimmelfennig 2001; Cole and Cole 1997; Balanica 2005). Most significant was the occupation and division of Germany, whose former capital, Berlin, was also divided by an infamous wall into Western and Eastern sectors. This development thus called for a change from the traditional pattern of European international politics. Consequently, soon after the war, very different visions were conceived for the future of Europe in political, economic, and social terms.

Bringing together former rivals and enemies in a completely new situation, Western European countries have created a series of entities for economic cooperation, defense, and security, designed to protect their bloc from the real or imagined threat from the communist bloc. A union of the democratic states is seen as the only way not only to create “lasting peace” or to “resist totalitarianism” but also to “make Europe’s voice felt in international relations” (Schimmelfennig 2001, 66). European integration was thus based on a “pan-European, liberal, both antifascist and anticommunist ideology and identity” (ibid). In this light, the federalist

Congress of Montreux, in August 1947, rejected the division of the continent and accepted the integration of Western Europe “as a core to be joined by the rest of Europe in a free and peaceful community” (p. 67). In addition, the Hague Congress (May 7-10, 1948), the so-called “Congress of Europe,” organized by the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity, was an international forum in which over 700 delegates from Europe, as well as observers from Canada and the United States, comprising a broad political spectrum, had the opportunity to discuss ideas on the future development of Europe (Balonica 2005, 19; <http://www.europeanmovement.org/>).

If the occupation of Eastern Europe by the USSR in the 1940s helped divide Europe, the USSR’s dissolution, “the most significant event in international relations in the past fifty years,” has likewise created unprecedented changes throughout Europe (Schultz and Weingast 2003, 36). More specifically, the end of the Cold War transformed the nature of European politics as the freely created European Union (EU) was confronted with its most difficult challenge: the assimilation of the former communist countries into membership and the expansion of the Union to the East. One of the key elements in this has been the desire of many former Soviet satellite countries to join the EU, both for political reasons (fear of a resurgent Russia, a belief that membership will help secure political reforms) and for economic reasons (a belief that membership will bring economic growth and prosperity). For the countries newly liberated from Moscow’s umbrella, including Romania, transition from the communist system to a market economy and integration into the Western European structures, the EU especially, were two major challenges, the main goals of economic and political policies. From the EU point of view, the enlargement to the East is morally imperative and strategically necessary “to overcome the artificial division of Europe” and to achieve an area of peace, security, prosperity, and stability

(Piazolo 2001, 1; Schimmelfennig 2001; <http://www.europarl.eu.int/>, 2004). Although it was not a uniform wish, many EU decision-makers have been desirous of encouraging enlargement to the East as a way of bringing “modernization” and stability to Central and Eastern Europe.

Enlargement, however, is a long and complex process, bringing with it a significant number of issues for both current and future member states. Front and center is ensuring that new entrants’ domestic laws and regulations are aligned with those of the EU.

Given such a situation, the chapter explores the journey of Europe in its unique economic and political process of enlargement and integration.

#### **4.1 Background**

Europe is characterized by an impressive physical and cultural diversity and throughout its history it has never formed a single political and/or economic unit. Yet, although the Second World War left deep physical and psychological scars on Europe and the Yalta Conference in 1945 established an “Iron Curtain” between Eastern and Western Europe, some European leaders have offered several strategies for the future political, economic, and social development of Europe (Svendsen 2003, 43; Cole and Cole 1997).

Much of the impetus for creating what would become the EU initially came from France, and French elites have long debated three “ideational models” of their interests in Europe, the so-called “traditional,” “confederal,” and “community” models (Parsons 2001, 55). The *traditionalist* view retained a realist analysis, with “legitimacy and security located in the independent nation-state” (p. 57). The primary goal of this view was to protect French interests within a more balanced European power nexus. Another group favored a *confederal* view based on “liberal thinking” (ibid). In this model, although the nation-state continues to remain the source of legitimacy and security, the interdependent states should cooperate closely. In this

view, only combined Franco-British leadership would prevent the Germans from dominating Europe. A third group called for a *community* strategy. According to this “functionalist” view, in which the “legitimate policies were those that best provided welfare,” Europe needed more than the nation-state (p. 58). Since the major goal, after two devastating world wars, was to create a Europe of peace and prosperity, the only solution was a new sort of “supranational institution, partly independent of governments” (Cole and Cole 1997; Parsons 2001, 58). Although a supranational solution meant “forsaking the security of Franco-British balancing against Germany,” the expected result was a real integration, leading to a possible “United States of Europe” (Andrews 1973, 4; Parsons 2001, 58).

Since Europe was practically destroyed during the War and the threat of communism was strong, it is clear that Europe needed the assistance of the United States. Thus, in order to “secure world-wide capitalism, free-trade, and free movement of capital,” the U.S. took strong initiatives in establishing several international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) in 1944, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1947<sup>6</sup> (Svendsen 2003, 43). In addition, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshal Plan were initiated in 1947, either as economic and military aid (\$400million) to Turkey and Greece, the most exposed to communism, or as economic assistance (\$13 billion) to Europe to recover from the War’s destructions.

As part of the goal of fostering European economic and political integration, several entities were established during the late 1940s and through the 1950s, initially for economic and cultural cooperation and then for defense and security (Table 4.1). Quite remarkable among these was the Treaty of Brussels, signed by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom on March 17, 1948, and considered the framework for two other significant

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<sup>6</sup> Renamed the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, after the Uruguay Round in 1994.

Table 4.1

**A Summary History of the European Union**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Event</b>
1945	End of Second World War
1948	Treaty of Brussels: OEEC established
1949	Council of Europe
1950	The Schuman Declaration
1951	Treaty of Paris: ECSC established
1952	ECSC Treaty entered into force
1955	Messina Conference
1955	Western European Union
1957	Treaty of Rome: EEC and EAEC established
1958	EEC and Euratom Treaties entered into force
1959	The Stockholm Convention: EFTA
1973	UK, Denmark and Ireland joined EC
1979	First direct elections to European Parliament
1981	Greece joined EC
1984	Draft of the Treaty of Maastricht
1986	Spain and Portugal joined EC
1986	Single European Act established
1987	Single European Act entered into force
1990	Unification of Germany
1992	Treaty of Maastricht: EU was born
1993	Treaty on European Union (TEU) entered into force
1993	Completion of Single Market
1994	EEA agreement entered into force
1995	Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU
1996	Start of IGC on reform of TEU
2004	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined the EU
2007	Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU

Source: Adapted from Cole and Cole 1997, Parsons 2001, and Svendsen 2003

entities formed in 1949, the Council of Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Cole and Cole 1997). Also, in 1948, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) was created, under Franco-British direction, to “allocate Marshal Plan aid” (Parsons 2001, 59; Svendsen 2003). Strongly supported by the Western leaders, OEEC was an important forum for economic issues, particularly focusing on “liberalization” or a “free-trade area” (Parson 2001, 67 and 71). In addition, in 1952, the North European countries, such as

Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, were separately grouped into a regional organization called the Nordic Council. Since the attempt of the founder member states of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) failed to develop a European Defense Community (EDC), in 1955 the Brussels Treaty Organization became the Western European Union (WEU), a Franco-British-led intergovernmental organization, enlarged later through the incorporation of Italy and West Germany. Pushed by the British and accepted by the Germans, the WEU was an appropriate “forum for political and armaments cooperation” (Parsons 2001, 67; Cole and Cole 1997).

Yet, Europe had already been divided into two antagonistic blocs. Consequently, it is also important to highlight the Eastern economic, political, and/or military organizations, such as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Warsaw Pact, created as a counterbalance to the Western European organizations (Cole and Cole 1997). If the CMEA was created for economic purposes in 1949 by several Eastern European countries (EECs), including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact, created in 1955 by the same group of countries, including Albania and East Germany, was a military organization, aiming to strengthen Soviet control in Eastern Europe. Both were disbanded immediately after the event of 1989, which would also lead to the break up of the USSR.

#### **4.2 Designing the European Community**

In this context, the vision inspired by Jean Monnet, Commissioner-General of the French National Planning Board, led Robert Schuman, the Foreign French Minister, also known as the “Father” of the European Community (EC), to propose on May 9, 1950, a plan through which the “Franco-German coal and steel production should be placed under a joint Higher Authority in an organization to which other European nations could belong” (Cole and Cole 1997, 12; Table

4.1). Geopolitically, the Schuman Plan aimed for “Franco-German reconciliation,” responding, at the same time, to “U.S. pressure for European collaboration” (Parsons 2001, 59).

Economically, the creation of a supranational institution like the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was considered as the “rational French strategy,” not only for securing “long-term access to German coal” but also for supervising “German heavy industry” (ibid).

Thus, the European Union (EU) has its origins in the European Communities (the European Coal and Steel Community [ECSC], the European Economic Community [EEC], and the European Atomic Energy Community [EURATOM]) founded in the 1950s in a Europe that was emerging from the devastation of the Second World War (Table 4.1; Table 4.2). The first step in the process of the creation of the European Union was the Treaty of Paris, which, on April 18, 1951, sanctioned the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). Signed by six member states, Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, the ECSC entered into force in 1952, establishing first its institutions, such as “the High Authority (later the Commission), the Common Assembly (later the Parliament), the Council and the Court of Justice” (Cole and Cole 1997, 13; Table 4.1). Public opinion was little informed and remained neutral in this process of creating the ECSC. Although Schuman’s proposal was strongly criticized, he argued that “the choice was now between the ECSC and no supervision of Germany” (Parsons 2001, 62).

Between 1951 and 1954, the community advocates proposed several new entities, such as the European Agricultural Community (EAC), the European Health Community (EHC), the European Transports Community (ETC), and, most important, a supranational “European Army” called the European Defense Community (EDC) (ibid). Although Stalin’s death on March 5, 1953, lessened Cold War pressures, Monnet himself played a key role in convincing the U.S. to

Table 4.2

**European Union Enlargements**

ENLARGEMENT	JOINED COUNTRIES	TOTAL	
		COUNTRIES	LANGUAGES
1957 Founding Member States	Belgium, France, W Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands	6	Dutch, French, German, Italian
1973 First Enlargement	Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom	9	Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Irish, Italian,
1981 Second Enlargement	Greece	10	Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Irish, Italian
1986 Third Enlargement	Portugal, Spain	12	Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish
1995 Fourth Enlargement	Austria, Finland, Sweden	15	Danish, Dutch, English, Finish, French, German, Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish
2004 Fifth Enlargement (1 <sup>st</sup> wave)	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia	25	Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish
2007 Fifth Enlargement (2 <sup>nd</sup> wave)	Bulgaria, Romania	27	Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish
Candidate Countries	Croatia, Turkey, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia		
Potential Candidate Countries	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo (under Security Council Resolution 1224)		

Source: Adapted from Cole and Cole 1997; EU Enlargement and the United States: Europe Whole and Free, <http://www.eurunion.org/>, 2004; The Official EU Languages, [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/index\\_en.html/](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/index_en.html/), March 2008; [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement.countries/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement.countries/index_en.htm), March 2008

focus on the EDC rather than NATO. Yet, as a result of U.S. pressure to re-arm West Germany, on the one hand, and the refusal of Britain (fearful of German dominance) to join the EDC, on the other, the proposed EDC was, ultimately rejected. Thus, the selected solution was simply, German entry into NATO instead of the creation of the controversial EDC.

During 1954 almost everyone thought that the community strategy had already ended, but the ECSC's victory stimulated the development of new community projects. In this light, the ECSC foreign ministers met at the Messina Conference in Italy in June 1955, committing to "further integration in other sectors" (Cole and Cole 1997, 13). Following two years of negotiations, the Treaties of Rome, signed on March 25, 1957, set up two other entities -- the European Economic Community (EEC), or the so-called Common Market, and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), an act considered one of the most significant economic and political developments in Europe's history (Andrews 1973). The EEC Treaty and the Euratom Treaty, together with the ECSC Treaty, constituted "the corpus of primary law" that governed the European Community (EC) over the subsequent three decades, until the negotiations for the Treaty of Maastricht, known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), which was ratified in 1993 (Baldwin 1994; Cole and Cole 1997, 13; Schimmelfennig 2001; Parsons 2001; Table 4.1).

### **4.3 Toward European Integration**

Although the most popular French politicians during the EEC negotiations had quite opposing views -- Mollet (pro-community), Mendes France (confederal), and Charles de Gaulle (traditionalist) -- and shared "little besides a model of a desirable Europe," France chose the EEC over other alternatives not only as a result of "a deeply cross-cutting battle of ideas" but also as an attempt to establish the French foreign policy agenda on "leading Europe" (Parsons 2001, 72-

73). Attracting broad support from Germany, de Gaulle, who took over power in May 1958, saw this supranational economic community as “the last way...to exclude the Anglo-Saxon British from Europe” (pp. 73-74). German chancellor Konrad Adenauer, however, felt that “good Franco-German relations depended on implementing the EEC,” and Adenauer had made the EEC’s creation a prerequisite for supporting de Gaulle’s plans (p. 73). During this time period, the British had “already excluded themselves from the EEC,” and the “Common Market” had constituted a useful “platform for de Gaulle’s European plans” (pp. 73-74). After 1959, the EEC and OEEC member states recorded fast growing economies; therefore, their businesses became markedly more pro-liberalization. Consequently, in the geopolitical realm, the divergent views were a fundamental, community strategy reshaping Europe’s axis “from Franco-British *entente* to Franco-German partnership” (p. 78).

During the 1960s and 1970s, many of the steps taken toward European integration were of an economic nature, especially relating to free trade. In this light, it is worth emphasizing the instrumental role of the United Kingdom, frustrated by the failure of the negotiations for admittance into the EEC, in creating the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Cole and Cole 1997; Table 4.3). Brought into being at the Stockholm Convention in November 1959, the EFTA, made up of Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, and Switzerland, entered into force in 1960. It was later extended through the incorporation of Liechtenstein and Finland in 1961, and then of Iceland in 1971 (Baldwin 1994; Cole and Cole 1997; Svendsen 2003; Table 4.1). The primary goal of EFTA was “the removal of trade barriers between members,” becoming at the same time a “significant counterweight organization” for the EC (Cole and Cole 1997, 13). In spite of the fact that some countries left it to join the EC (the UK and Denmark in 1973 and Portugal in 1986), the EFTA played a “leading role” in economic and commercial

cooperation until 1995, when Austria, Finland, and Sweden were accepted into the EU (Baldwin 1994; Cole and Cole 1997, 13; Table 4.2; Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

### Timetable of Enlargement Rounds: Western European Countries and Turkey

Country	Application	Opinion of Commission	Opening of negotiations	End of negotiations	Accession
UK	Sept 9, 1961 May 10, 1967	Sept 29, 1967	Nov 8, 1961 Jun 30, 1970	Jan 29, 1963 Jan 22, 1972	Jan 1, 1973
Denmark	Aug 10, 1961 May 11, 1967	Sep 29, 1967	Jun 20, 1970	Jan 22, 1972	Jan 1, 1973
Ireland	Jul 31, 1961 May 11, 1967	Sept 29, 1967	Jun 20, 1970	Jan 22, 1972	Jan 1, 1973
Norway	Apr 30, 1962 Jul 21, 1967 Nov 25, 1992	Sept 29, 1967 Mar 24, 1993	Jun 30, 1970 Apr 5, 1993	Jan 22, 1972 Apr 12, 1994	
Greece	Jun 12, 1975	Jan 29, 1976	Jul 27, 1976	May 28, 1979	Jan 1, 1981
Portugal	Mar 28, 1977	May 19, 1978	Oct 17, 1978	Jun 12, 1985	Jan 1, 1986
Spain	Jul 28, 1977	Nov 29, 1978	Feb 5, 1979	Jun 12, 1985	Jan 1, 1986
Turkey	Apr 14, 1987	Dec 14, 1989 Oct 13, 1989			
Austria	Jul 17, 1989	Aug 1, 1991	Feb 1, 1993	Apr 12, 1994	Jan 1, 1995
Sweden	Jul 1, 1991	Jul 31, 1992	Feb 1, 1993	Apr 12, 1994	Jan 1, 1995
Finland	Mar 18, 1992	Nov 1, 1992	Feb 1, 1993	Apr 12, 1994	Jan 1, 1995
Switzerland	May 26, 1992				

Source: Piazzolo, D. 2001

The 1970s saw the EC's growth through new applications for membership and association agreements, establishing new economic connections with several European countries. While after a referendum the population of Norway decided not to integrate into the EC, three other countries (the UK, Denmark, and Ireland) joined the Community in 1973, raising the number of member states from six to nine and the official languages from four to seven (Baldwin 1994; Cole and Cole 1997; Svendsen 2003; <http://www.eurunion.org/>, 2004; Table 4.2; Table 4.3; [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lang/languages/index_en.html), 2008). The 1980s and the first half of the 1990s saw further development of economic cooperation, as well as significant

advances in political integration among members of the European Community. Agriculture, energy policy, custom procedures, international trade, and research and development are several economic areas in which substantial results were recorded over the first 30 years. Yet, during the 1980s, the EC recorded “insufficient progress” toward the major objectives of the Treaties, including the “reduction of social and regional inequalities” and the “harmonization of legislation to a Single Market” (Cole and Cole 1997, 15).

Greece joined the EC in 1981 and Spain, together with Portugal, in 1986 (Table 4.2; Table 4.3). Since these countries had recently emerged from a period of dictatorship, both the second and third enlargements were based on EU political considerations aimed at establishing and consolidating strong democracies in Europe (Svendsen 2003). Following negotiations with Portugal and Spain in 1986, the Single European Act (SEA), the “first significant reform of the substantive law of the EC since its foundation,” was signed, entering into force on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1987 (Cole and Cole 1997, 15). This period also marked the beginning of the European Union, drafting in 1984 the Treaty of Maastricht, known as the Treaty on European Union (TEU), ratified on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1993, through which the European Union was officially born (Cole and Cole 1997; Phinnemore 1999; Dombroski 2003; Poole 2003; Nugent 2006; Sajdik and Schwarzingger 2008).

The last enlargement of the Western European countries, respectively the fourth enlargement of the Union, the so-called “EFTA enlargement,” was recorded in 1995 when Austria, Finland, and Sweden joined the EU (Svendsen 2003, 86; Table 4.2; Table 4.3). Adding these three countries, the European Union comprised fifteen member states with twelve official and working languages (Table 4.2; Figure 4.1). This enlargement was especially facilitated by economic and political factors. More specifically, many important domestic companies, such as

Volvo in Sweden and Nokia in Finland, wanted their accession to the single market. In addition, the end of the Cold War in 1989 allowed these neutral states to join the EU, resulting in their soon having a common foreign and security policy.



Figure 4.1 EU 15 and the Fifth Enlargement

Source: EU Enlargement and the United States: Europe Whole and Free <http://www.eurunion.org/>, 2004

Legend: Yellow: Pre-May 1, 2004 EU Members  
 Blue: May 1, 2004 Acceding Members  
 Lavender: Post-May 1, 2004 Candidate Countries

#### 4.4 The Open Door to Eastern Enlargement

Remarkably, the 1988 European Community (EC) - Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) “Joint Declaration,” signed in Luxembourg on June 25, marked a significant breakthrough in East-West European relations in Europe and at the same time signaled “the first

concrete manifestation of the forthcoming Soviet decline” (Papadimitriou 2002, 1).

Furthermore, in December 1989, as a result of the conclusions of the Strasbourg European Council, the European Community (EC) was taking into consideration the strengthening of its relations with the Central and Eastern European countries, drafting a new form of “association agreements,” the so-called “Europe Agreements” (EAs), published in 1990 (Svendsen 2003, 87; Papadimitriou 2002, 2; Schimmelfennig 2001; Piazzolo 2001, 11; Table 4.4). Despite the increasing skepticism regarding the usefulness of further integration, given the economic crisis of the early 1990s and the failure to solve some stringent social problems (unemployment, poverty) and ethnic issues (Yugoslavia’s conflict), two major reforms named the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) were instituted through the Treaty of Maastricht.

In parallel to its own odyssey toward deeper economic and political integration, the European Union could not afford to ignore the revolutionary changes in Eastern Europe. Concerning enlargement in the near future, a “grand-scale enlargement,” the EU was considering twelve new prospective member states, ten former communist countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia), and two non-communist countries (Cyprus and Malta) (Svendsen 2003, 87). Yet, since not all the former communist countries have initiated the same profound development strategies during their transition process from a centrally-planned economy to the market economy, and since the interest in Eastern enlargement of the EU countries was quite preferential, two “waves” of the EU’s fifth enlargement were established (Nello and Smith 1998, 2; Schimmelfennig 2001; Table 4.5). Unlike countries such as the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia, which, together with Malta and Cyprus, were included in the

first wave of accession, on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, Romania and Bulgaria were proposed as part of the second wave, finalized on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 (Herlea 1998; Popova 1998; Papadimitriou 2002; Papadimitriou and Phinnemore 2008; Table 4.1; Table 4.2; Table 4.6; Figure 4.2).

Table 4.4

**The Europe Agreements and the Interim/Free Trade Agreements  
between the EU and the CEECs**

<b>Countries</b>	<b>Signed</b>	<b>In Force Since</b>	<b>In Force Since</b>
	<i>Europe Agreements</i>		<i>Interim Agreements</i>
<b>Poland</b>	Dec 16, 1991	Feb 1, 1994	Mar 1, 1992
<b>Hungary</b>	Dec 16, 1991	Feb 1, 1994	Mar 1, 1992
<b>Czech Rep.</b>	Oct 4, 1993	Feb 1, 1995	Mar 1, 1992
<b>Slovakia</b>	Oct 4, 1993	Feb 1, 1995	Mar 1, 1992
<b>Romania</b>	Feb 1, 1993	Feb 1, 1995	May 1, 1993
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Mar 8, 1993	Feb 1, 1995	Dec 31, 1993
			<i>Free Trade Agreements</i>
<b>Estonia</b>	Jun 12, 1995	Feb 1, 1998	Jan 1, 1995
<b>Latvia</b>	Jun 12, 1995	Feb 1, 1998	Jan 1, 1995
<b>Lithuania</b>	Jun 12, 1995	Feb 1, 1998	Jan 1, 1995
<b>Slovenia</b>	Jun 1, 1996	Feb 1, 1999	Jan 1, 1997
Note: The interim and free trade agreements expired upon entry into force of the Europe Agreements.			

Source: European Commission, cited in Piazzolo 2001

Table 4.5

**Member State Enlargement Preferences**

	<b>Limited Enlargement</b>	<b>Inclusive Enlargement</b>
<b>Drivers</b>	Austria, Finland, Germany	Britain, Denmark, Sweden
<b>Brakemen</b>	Belgium, Luxemburg, Netherlands	France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain

Source: Schimmelfennig 2004

Table 4.6

**Timetable of EU Eastward Enlargement**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Application</b>	<b>Opinion of Commission</b>	<b>Opening of negotiations</b>	<b>End of negotiations</b>	<b>Accession</b>
Cyprus	Jul 4, 1990	Jun 30, 1993	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Hungary	Mar 31, 1994	Jul 16, 1997	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Poland	Apr 5, 1994	Jul 16, 1997	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Estonia	Nov 24, 1995	Jul 16, 1997	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Czech Rep.	Jan 17, 1996	Jul 16, 1997	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Slovenia	Jun 10, 1996	Jul 16, 1997	Mar 30, 1998	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Malta	Jul 16, 1990	Jun 30, 1993	Feb 15, 2000	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Romania	Jun 22, 1995	Oct 13, 1999	Feb 15, 2000	Dec 2004	Jan. 1, 2007
Slovakia	Jun 22, 1995	Oct 13, 1999	Feb 15, 2000	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Latvia	Oct 13, 1995	Oct 13, 1999	Feb 15, 2000	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Lithuania	Dec 8, 1995	Oct 13, 1999	Feb 15, 2000	Dec 2002	May 1, 2004
Bulgaria	Dec 14, 1995	Oct 13, 1999	Feb 15, 2000	Jun 2004	Jan. 1, 2007

Source: Adapted from Piazzolo, D. 2001; <http://europa.eu.int/>, 2004, 2007; <http://www.europarl.eu.int/>, 2004; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/>, 2004; <http://www.evenimentulzilei.ro/>, 2004, 2007; <http://www.expres.ro/>, 2004

In summary, then, the basic objectives of the EU originated in the founding Treaties of Paris (1951) and Rome (1957), which sanctioned the foundation of the European Community, setting up three entities, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC), and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). In their statement of principles and tasks, all member states share the same basic aims:

The Community shall have as its task, by establishing a common market and progressively approximating the economic policies of Member States, to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities, a continuous and balanced expansion, an increase in stability, an accelerated raising of the standard of living and closer relations between the States belonging to it.

(Art. 2 EEC, quoted in Cole and Cole 1997, 36)



The European Economic Community, now the European Union (EU), has seen significant evolution since the Treaties of Rome in 1957 and the first enlargement of 1973 (the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland) (Cole and Cole 1997; Burrell and Oskam 2000; Parsons 2001; Table 4.1). The shift from a *common market*, characterized by free movement of goods, services, people, and capital, to a *union*, characterized by a complexity of policies and standards, is quite a difficult process. Furthermore, deepening and widening the European Union means not only must there be common institutions, which can operate within a large and open common market, but also that they are capable of adjusting to local conditions. With growing size, from 6 to 27 states, and increasing heterogeneity of the member states, from 4 to 23 official languages, the need for diversification has increased and this is being reflected in the development of the European Union (Table 4.2). For both the EU and the CEECs, however, the transition to a market economy and integration into Western European structures have provided major challenges, particularly with regard to agriculture and rural life.

## CHAPTER 5

### **REFORMING EUROPEAN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

For the EU, developing an integrated agricultural policy has long been a central concern (Gardner 1996; Fennell 1997; Grant 1997; Koester 2000; Blandford 2000; Shucksmith et al. 2005; Greer 2005). However, integrating the agricultural sector is more than a matter simply of harmonizing policies relating to agricultural production, food processing, and the marketing of primary products. More specifically, unlike some other economic sectors where integration requires little more than, say, removing tariffs, the alignment of the agricultural sectors of new EU entrants requires a significant adjustment of national policies and institutions in a number of areas and, consequently, reduces national autonomy in the area of agriculture and food policy. This has been complicated by the fact that the heterogeneity of agricultural practices conducted within the EU has grown with each new group of member states. In addition, related issues such as environmental protection, landscape conservation, biodiversity, the economic development of rural areas, food security, and animal welfare have also been developing rapidly in order to meet the public's growing expectations in these areas (Marsh 2000; Burrell and Oskam 2000).

Although agriculture's long history as a human activity means it is sometimes regarded by some as peripheral to modern life, in fact agriculture remains at the center of EU policy-making activities (as any talk of modifying the CAP quickly reveals) (Andrews 1973; Gardner 1996; Grant 1997). This is especially so as the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations on agricultural trade and consumer calls for a more quality-oriented and environmentally friendly agriculture increase (Van Depoele 2000). However, the fact that there are important regional

differences in agriculture, which may affect both national agricultural politics and the strategies pursued by a member state at the European level, means that agriculture has been and still is a highly sensitive aspect of EU integration. Indeed, the complexities of the EU's CAP mean that, in the process of enlargement eastwards, agriculture is generally perceived to be "the most difficult chapter of EU membership negotiations" (Blandford 2000; Burrell and Oskam 2000, xi).

Given that more than 80% of the EU's territory is rural and more than one-third of its population lives and works in the countryside, such issues of rural development are a key component of the enlargement process (Van Depoele 2000; WDI 2006, 2008). This is especially so because Europe's rural areas are culturally very diverse and are often characterized by low population density, unemployment, outmigration, fragile environment, poor infrastructure, lack of training facilities, low income, gaps in service provision, and, in general, a fairly low standard of living. However, to add one more level of complexity, it is important to recognize that rurality is not always synonymous with decline; some rural areas are actually experiencing inward migration and farm and/or non-farm economic prosperity, developments which are themselves leading to pressure on the natural environment and on services. Ensuring the viability of rural areas, though, is "a fundamental part of the European model of society" (Van Depoele 2000, 79). In this regard, EU policies call not only for promoting structural adjustment in agriculture but also for a diversification of activities, both at the farm level and in the broader context of the rural economy, with the aim of helping rural areas to meet all these challenges.

This chapter examines, first, the Common Agricultural Policy, identifying three distinct periods: the creation and development of the CAP in the 1950s-1960s; the consolidation period of the 1970s and 1990s, including the GATT negotiations; and the 1992 reform. It also explores the main pressures for further reforms in the context of Eastern enlargement. The second

objective of this chapter is to look for an explanation for rural development in the context of Eastern enlargement of the EU, focusing on the evolution of Community policy for rural areas.

### **5.1 The Common Agricultural Policy: Challenges, Trends, and Adjustments**

As providers of food, a basic human need, farmers control significant parts of the physical environment and are often considered to be “the backbone of the communities which live in rural areas” (Gardner 1996, 6). Attempts to devise a common policy for European agriculture – one which can cope with a diversity of economies, a variety of historical agricultural traditions, and increasing external global pressures – have been difficult, to say the least. Since its initiation at the 1958 Stresa (Italy) conference, the CAP, as “one of the founding policies of the Community,” has received more attention than any other policy involved in the process of European integration (Grant 1997, 66; Fennell 1997, v). As one of the EU’s “cornerstones,” the CAP presents one of the most difficult obstacles to be negotiated in Eastern enlargement (Grant 1997, 1).

The main objective of the original CAP was “to defend and support a rural space and society” (Grant 1997, 4; Burrell 2000). More specifically, the CAP’s architects aimed “to support farmers through the market rather than by direct subsidization” (Gardner 1996, 18). Nevertheless, the vagaries of climatic and biologic factors, together with domestic political considerations (especially the political power of farmers) and the instabilities of the world market, have often caused governments to intervene in the market “to protect farmers from the price-depressing effects of cheap imports” and, in general, to maintain food supplies (Gardner 1996, 5; Blandford 2000). These considerations have combined with other political objectives, such as the preservation of the countryside, the maintenance of rural communities, and, more recently, preservation of the “rural patrimony,” to mean that EU member states have often defended activities not in strict accordance with the CAP (Gardner 1996, 5; Marsh 2000).

### ***5.1.1 Agricultural Debates and Initiatives of the Six, 1950s-1960s***

After the Treaty of Paris, which sanctioned the foundation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the road toward Europe reached, in Shuman's words, "a parting of the ways in the 1950s" (Parsons 2001, 62). Between 1951 and 1954, the Community advocates tried to imitate the ECSC, proposing, among other entities, a European Agricultural Community. Yet, during their fight over a European Agricultural Community, farmers opposed supranationality, considering the ECSC model to be "too heavy, too rigid, too authoritarian and *dirigiste*, and weighted towards consumer interests" (p. 68). Even French farmers, who were the most competitive in Europe and whose agricultural surpluses were mounting, opposed supranationality, or community strategy, in favor of bilateral cooperation. Thus, during the first half of the 1950s, "bilateral contracts" were accepted as the most appropriate form of international agreement concerning agriculture by the Western governments<sup>7</sup> (p. 67).

Agricultural lobbies were unconvinced of the Common Market's promise and the idea of a common agricultural policy was postponed, to be considered in the future. Although agriculture was not discussed in much detail at a meeting of foreign ministers of the ECSC in Messina, Italy, in June 1955 the report issued by Belgian foreign minister Paul-Henry Spaak was unanimously accepted as the basis for negotiation of a formal treaty (Fennell 1997; Grant 1997). Containing a chapter devoted to agriculture, the *Spaak Report* left no doubt concerning the fundamental importance of including agriculture in the framework of European economic integration. However, after strong debates and negotiations at the Messina conference, France was convinced to open for competition, followed then by its offer to accept the general common market if West Germany would agree, among other things, "to subsidise French farmers through a price-support scheme when introducing the single market" (Fennell 1997, 11; Grant 1997; Svendsen 2003, 45;

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<sup>7</sup> Except the Dutch, who, together with Italians, were more competitors than potential markets.

Balanica 2005). Furthermore, in 1956 the pro-community Mollet French government began lobbying farmers, who retained a strong attachment to the idea of the small family farm as the backbone of France's vast rural area, to support the EEC, promising "stable export contracts, not menacing liberalization" (Gardner 1996; Parsons 2001, 70). Although suspiciously antagonistic of anything that would provide a market for French surpluses, the agricultural organizations endorsed the EEC talks in summer 1956. The farmers' endorsement was an important step to a common market, but hostility to the EEC was still strong. French positions continued to remain in favor of preferential "long-term intergovernmental contracts with the EEC," with undefined future discussions and, therefore, without any demand for a "common agricultural policy" considered by farmers to be, in fact, liberalization (pp. 70-71).

Eight articles, 38-45, in the Treaty of Rome, signed in March 1957 and entered into force on January 1, 1958, constituted a signal of the importance of the agricultural sector for the six EEC founder states (Andrews 1973; Baldwin 1994; Grant 1997; Parsons 2001; Balanica 2005). The crucial article 39 set out the major objectives of a common market for agriculture, referring to agricultural productivity, standard of living of the individuals engaged in agriculture, market stabilization, guarantee of the agricultural supplies, and reasonable prices for agricultural products (Andrews 1973; Fennell 1997; Shucksmith et al. 2005). The content of these objectives showed profound understanding of rural life, seriously affected by WWII's destruction. In addition, the lack of balance between production and markets, intensively affected by the competition of low-priced imports of certain agricultural products, especially from the United States, was another important concern. Consequently, the tendency for protectionism of the European governments for their agricultural producers was still quite high at this time.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This fact was later criticized by reformers in the mid-1990s, who saw them as emphasizing "productionist policy" and completely neglecting environmental considerations (Grant 1997, 64).

Article 43 of the Treaty of Rome required establishment of an EEC conference for agriculture, with this scheduled to be held at Stresa, on Lake Maggiore in Italy, in July 1958 (Grant 1997, 66; Balanica 2005, 37). With regard to organizing this conference, it is important to emphasize the effort of the Commission officials, in particular that of Sicco Mansholt, the former Dutch Agriculture Minister and the Commissioner for Agriculture until 1972. The main activity of the Stresa conference centered around three major issues: (1) the current situation in agriculture; (2) the possible repercussions of the application of the Treaty of Rome on agriculture in the Six; and (3) the long-term goals of the common policy (Fennell 1997). Mansholt delivered a memorable speech, the key address of the Stresa conference, containing a range of problems, such as structural aspects of agricultural production, labor productivity, and prices, as well as the methods of marketing and processing. The conference offered a central space to those discussions regarding the creation of “modern profitable family farms” and the improvement of the standard of living of “all those who were mainly involved in farming” (Fennell 1997, 20). More importantly, Mansholt, together with his small Commission team, had to write “within two years of the entry into force of [the] Treaty”<sup>9</sup> a “proposal for a common agricultural policy,” which was envisioned to be divided in two parts: one part regarding the “improvement of the structure of agriculture,” and the other regarding the “establishment of the common market” (pp. 18-19). In sum, Stresa helped to establish the final resolution setting out the CAP’s objectives, but did not specify the mechanism to be used for their achievements.

Two years after the Treaty of Rome a series of requirements was established, which a projected CAP would have to meet. As “an integrated part of the economy as a whole,” agriculture has benefited from the beginning of the Common Market through the development and application of the technical revolution in agriculture in Europe, introducing farm machinery

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<sup>9</sup> That is to say, before January 1, 1960.

and petroleum power (Andrews 1973, 15). Yet, the gap between urban and rural areas was significant, the countryside being in the hands of peasants, a class with poorer educational facilities than those offered to the urban people. To reduce these differences, all countries, particularly Germany, were interested in developing some sort of bridges between rural and urban areas, encouraging the existence of an impressive number of commuting workers from the rural to the industrialized urban areas. More difficulties were expected in the effort to reach the second requirement for a common agricultural policy, the “structural change” in agriculture (p. 16). Although a change in the farming structure has been recognized as a necessity, taking into consideration the traditional European countries’ agriculture, based primarily on small farms and hand labor, the process of structural change will take a long time. Furthermore, the creation of a balance in the third requirement between “production and forthcoming demand” and “due consideration to imports and exports,” has implied, according to Andrews (1973, 16), “a market policy or a common trade policy” that has sought especially tariff reductions.

Agriculture, however, was not included in a round of tariff reductions almost ten years after the Treaty of Rome. The agricultural sector was given a short period of time to develop a common agricultural policy to eliminate barriers on agricultural products and to establish a common tariff and trade policy with countries outside the Six. Except for some basic agreements that emerged in January 1962, pointing the direction that the CAP would ultimately take, a final agreement regarding the difficult task of making uniform the pricing, as well as the protection and management of agriculture, was issued only at the end of the Kennedy Round of GATT negotiations in Geneva in June 1967 (Andrews 1973; Fennell 1997). Many other crucial decisions, such as the matter of external tariffs to replace the six separate national tariffs and the establishment of common pricing policies and regulations, had to be made in the following years.

The events recorded in the subsequent years since the signing of the EEC Treaty have illustrated not only the vital role of agriculture of the Six but the difficulties in the reconciliation of the divergent interests within the highly protective European agricultural systems. Stating these broad objectives, requirements, and the guidelines to achieve them seems a simple task for the Commission, but putting them into practice is definitely a more complicated matter.

After March 1957, when the treaties on EEC and Euratom were signed, a widespread campaign of mobilization of farmers began. Specifically, despite persistent divides in agricultural opinion on the EEC, many skeptical rural politicians, including the Radicals, Independents, and Gaullists, as well as some prominent members of farmers' organizations still hostile, were persuaded that the EEC was crucial in offering support for farmers, especially attractive long-term contracts. Agriculture was also mentioned in the de Gaulle-Adenauer meeting in 1958, but, at this point, French farmers' organizations and the government were more interested in "extending the transition-period provisions for bilateral contracts" than in the CAP (Neville-Rolfe 1984, 116, cited in Parsons 2001, 75). During the 1960s French agricultural surpluses significantly increased, with the result that farmers and even the de Gaulle government began to perceive interests in "agricultural arrangements beyond bilateral contracts" (Parsons 2001, 75). Yet, French demands alone were not sufficient to create the CAP. Moreover, in 1963, Ludwig Erhard replaced Adenauer in Germany, a development that brought to power a strong opponent of the CAP, given that Erhard considered an "economically absurd and politically costly accord" (ibid).

In the 1960s, the common market, in its consolidation process, included, among other things, creation of the CAP, as a core element of the EEC (Schimmelfennig 2004). Yet the interests of the EEC's partners for agriculture were very contradictory and, between 1961 and

1967, the CAP talks almost failed several times. In addition, highly organized farmers' associations, French farmers especially, had intense preferences, exercising a strong influence on their governments for a subsidized and protected market (Parsons 2001; Svendsen 2003). Unlike tariff reduction, agricultural policy had to be decided by unanimous vote, a requirement included as a result of hard intergovernmental bargaining and one that demonstrated that agricultural interests were very strong. As a result, little progress was made and, finally, the CAP's historical window soon closed. Agriculture still would have to remain for a period of time within the purview of bilateral intergovernmental contracts, as it had been envisioned by confederal and traditional strategies.

In spite of its ideological aversion to supranational institutions, France under de Gaulle continued to struggle for the adoption of the CAP, aiming to lock in a permanent financing arrangement at a high price level before Britain's admission into the EC. In order to force Germany to give up its preferential bilateral agricultural trade agreements and to obtain concessions on the CAP, France held up the EC's mandate for the Kennedy round (1963-1964) of GATT negotiations (Schimmelfennig 2004; Balanica 2005). Germany accepted this as a result of its desire to become integrated again into Europe. Yet, in return for its consent to the CAP, Germany was able to secure direct subsidies for its farmers. More specifically, invoking the need to protect against 'cheaper' imports from France, German Agriculture Minister Josef Ertl gained EEC acceptance for the establishment of "monetary compensatory amounts" (Gardner 1996, 24; Svendsen 2003; Schimmelfennig 2004). In addition, since livestock was the major branch of German agriculture, Germany was successful in maintaining high prices for animal products. Yet, despite its federalist preferences, the German government was still concerned with the establishment of a centralized Common Agricultural Policy because of the

possible placement of the country into a lower level of protection for its agricultural producers. This bargaining outcome demonstrates, first of all, “the lack of Commission influence” (Schimmelfennig 2004, 85). Although the Commission had sought “a liberal but centralized policy” in order to be able to adjust to small and inefficient farms, the “decentralized agricultural policy” conceived by the Western European countries was quite an opposite outcome (ibid).

Moreover, since the biggest expense in the EC, approximately half of the total Community budget, was that of the Common Agricultural Policy, in 1968 the Commission proposed the Mansholt Plan (Fennell 1997; Grant 1997; Svendsen 2003; Balanica 2005). The idea was to restructure agriculture, eliminating the inefficient farmers. Specifically, this had to be done by buying those small and inefficient farms, offering pensions to farmers over 55 years old, and helping young farmers in finding new jobs. However, met by massive and even aggressive demonstrations of French farmers, aiming to, for example, “Save the Family Farm,” the Mansholt Plan proved to be a complete failure (Svendsen 2003, 65).

Preferences concerning a common agricultural policy were quite different among the major European governments,<sup>10</sup> mirroring not only the importance and competitiveness of the agricultural sector in each country, but the power asymmetries between the highly organized farming sectors and the larger and unorganized groups of taxpayers and consumers. While Britain, for example, was skeptical of any agricultural policy, favoring a liberalization of global agricultural trade, Germany, although opposed to internal liberalization, was ready for GATT concessions (Schimmelfennig 2004). Instead, France, with 25% of the population working in agriculture and being a major exporter of agricultural goods, strongly opposed agricultural trade liberalization in the GATT. The prices also constituted a major factor of these differentiations. France, and even Germany (15% percent of whose population were farmers), were strong

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<sup>10</sup> Especially France, Germany, and Britain.

supporters of high prices (relative to the world market) of the agricultural products behind the EC protective barriers. Yet, Britain, with only 5% of its population working as farmers, was a major importer and, therefore, was interested in maintaining preferential agreement with the Commonwealth in order to pay lower prices for imported agricultural products (ibid; Table 5.1).

According to Moravcsik (1998), cited in Schimmelfennig (2004), both British interests in the EC membership and de Gaulle's opposition to it were primarily motivated by economic interests, including the CAP. Britain's commercial interests were harmed by exclusion from the customs union, but its opposition to the CAP constituted a serious source of fear for France. Since German economic interests were closer to those of the British than of the French, France had to give up its opposition, but only after the CAP was established, after which France continued to demand "a permanent financing arrangement for the CAP as a condition of UK entry" (Schimmelfennig 2004, 86; Andrews 1973). Being "more commercially dependent on the Six than vice versa" and preferring membership to exclusion, Britain made major concessions to France, mainly on the CAP (Schimmelfennig 2004, 86).

### ***5.1.2 The Evolution of the CAP, 1970s-1990s***

The first enlargement took place in 1973, when Great Britain, Denmark, and Ireland became members of the European Community. Having close trade relations with Britain and being attracted by the subsidies, Denmark and Ireland also wanted to gain access to a larger EC market for agricultural products (Svendsen 2003). Unlike the original Six, the so-called "deepeners," i.e., nations seeking a deep integration, one perhaps even leading to political union, the new comers formed the core of the "wideners," preferring shallow integration limited to economics (Baldwin 1994, 144). Consequently, Britain and Denmark opted out of monetary union, seeking instead major reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy (Poole 2003). The

Table 5.1

**Characteristics and Preferences for Agricultural Trade, 1960s**

<b>ISSUES</b>	<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>GERMANY</b>	<b>BRITAIN</b>
Agricultural Employment, %	25	15	5
Importance and Competitiveness of the Agricultural Sector	- Large surplus producer and exporter - Large benefits from intra-EC liberalization	- Large net importer - Marginal exporter of agricultural goods - Uncompetitive in agriculture	- Large net importer - Marginal exporter of agricultural goods - Uncompetitive in agriculture
Price Acceptance	- High prices relative to the world market	- High support prices behind protective barriers	- Low prices for importing agricultural products
Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)	- Favored liberalization of commodities trade within a preferential European zone with modest support prices	- Opposed internal liberalization unless very high common support prices were paid	- Skeptical of any agricultural policy - Maintaining its preferential agreement with the Commonwealth
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)	- Strongly opposed agricultural trade liberalization in the GATT	- Prepared to make GATT concession that preserved domestic arrangements	- Favored a liberalization of global agriculture trade

Source: Adapted from Schimmelfennig 2004

Irish, on the other hand, were much easier for the EU to accommodate. Welcoming the EU financial support, Ireland rapidly advanced from one of the poorest countries in Europe to one of the wealthiest. With their large agricultural industries, these two small countries were very important net agricultural exporting countries with high levels of self-sufficiency, which was the reason why they were expected to gain easy EC accession.

The appreciable increase in arable crops and in livestock products indicated a high degree of dynamism in the EC-9's farming sector, emphasizing the farmers' response to the new opportunities offered in the countries with the most critical attitude toward the CAP (Fennell 1997). In a short period of time after accession, Britain, with its small and efficient agricultural sector, became a net contributor to the CAP (Gardner 1996; Grant 1997; Svendsen 2003). More

specifically, having larger farms, Britain was seen to be a more efficient agricultural producer than its continental counterparts. By way of contrast, France, with its large and inefficient agricultural sector, became a net receiver. Thus, through the redistribution of money from British taxpayers to French farmers, France saw a significant economic advantage in having Britain as an EC member. However, British farmers also realized that, with the high prices of the agricultural products in the CAP, most of them would benefit from EC integration. Yet, the 1973 oil crisis, followed by an economic recession, made the agricultural countries less willing to liberalize market prices (Grant 1997; Svendsen 2003).

One of the issues of British agriculture was the problem of modernization and securing additional funds, a problem solved with the *Less Favored Areas Directive*, which was adopted in 1975 (Fennell 1997; Grant 1975; Shucksmith et al. 2005). Emphasizing its latitude and altitude, Britain was able to neutralize France's opposition and to incorporate this policy into the CAP. The Directive, originally conceived for the less-favored mountain areas in France, was subsequently expanded to other member states with mountains and other less favored areas. As a result, by 1995 over half of the utilized agricultural areas of the EU had been designated as a less-favored area. One of the fundamental principles of the CAP within the Common Market has been common pricing despite the existence of different national currencies. Yet, even though the British government used the "green pound," an additional element of protection for farmers conceived to restrain the rate of price increases, the producer prices did not rise according to the farmers' expectation (Green 1996; Gardner 1996; Grant 1997, 73; Balanica 2005). In addition, the maintaining of green money, or the so-called *agrimonetary* system, one of the most complex aspects of the history of the CAP, undermined the operation of the CAP as a common market. It

remained an important issue that would only be resolved by the Community with the development of the European Monetary System (EMS).

During the 1970s German agricultural policy was characterized by two main features -- the development of the rural structural policy and the heavy dependence upon the EC intervention system. While the former was the main feature of the Ertl Plan, the latter was the means of maintaining market prices for farmers. Aiming to ensure the survival of the small family farms, the so-called "Ertl Plan" appeared at odds with the EC's objective of "increasing agricultural efficiency through the encouragement of larger holdings and the movement of labour out of agriculture" (Gardner 1996, 25). The Ertl Plan was thus a means to maintain the high market prices for farmers, specifically a high-cost farm structure consolidated by the German government by the mid-1970s.

The Yaounde and Lome Conventions have been two other consequences of French and British membership, providing the framework for the EC's relations with developing countries, especially with their former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific (Gardner 1996; Grant 1997). Negotiated for the first time in 1975 by the British and covering forty-six countries, the Lome I Convention provided to the developing countries a "preferential access for their exports" and "access to financial resources from the Community" (Grant 1997, 73). These privileges are similar to those granted to the former French colonies under the earlier Yaounde Convention, through which these countries could continue to sell to Europe their traditional products, especially agricultural products like cacao, coffee, palm nuts, groundnuts oil, and many others. Later, the 1986 enlargement broadened the geographic field of North-South relations by attaching former Spanish and Portuguese colonies from Central and South America. The last negotiations were finalized only in 1990 with Lome IV, covering sixty-nine countries. Given

their great variety of conditions, it is difficult to generalize opinion over the efficacy of these arrangements for the former European colonies. However, as a result of the uneven economic development between the wealthy EU countries and the developing countries, a basic asymmetry of power within their commercial exchanges was expected.

In the 1980s and 1990s, reforms became necessary as a result of many significant changes. First, the second and the third enlargements of the EEC admitted the Mediterranean countries, Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1986, countries with large agricultural sectors (Poole 2003; Svendsen 2003). Since these countries were poorer than the other member states, they have received significant financial assistance from the “cohesion fund” created in 1980 especially to help the poorest countries of the Community (Poole 2003, 113). In addition, the fourth enlargement, in 1995, added three more countries to the EU-12: Austria, Finland, and Sweden. Unlike the Mediterranean countries, especially Spain and Portugal, the new EU members “suffer from comparative disadvantages” with respect to agriculture (Gardner 1976; Kola et al. 2000, 144). Specifically, this disadvantage results from the mountain regions in Austria and the Northern regions in Finland and Sweden, as the high altitude and latitude result in a short growing season and related difficulties. Only in Southern Sweden and the Austrian plains are grain yields competitive relative to average EU yields. Consequently, more than 60% of the total agricultural production in these countries was, and still is, based on livestock. In this context, the rationale for EU accession for Austria, Finland and Sweden has been a complex one. With their small and open economies, these countries were heavily dependent on international trade and, in general, they favored free trade (Kola et al. 2000). Yet, unlike the Swedish farmers, who, following a reform of agricultural policy in 1990, supported EU accession, as they expected

to benefit from it, the Austrian and Finnish farmers, due to the sheltered position of agriculture in their countries, were heavily opposed to joining the EU.

Furthermore, the economic crises, unemployment, subsidies, prices, and surpluses of the agricultural products were significant Community issues. Most importantly, as a result of surpluses and more money spent on dumping subsidized exports, between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, CAP spending doubled, threatening to break the Community's budget (Baldwin 1994; Grant 1997; Balanica 2005). Although differing from sector to sector, the introduction of dairy quotas in 1984 and budgetary stabilizers in 1988 brought expenses in the dairy sector under control, lowered prices for excessive production, and reduced intervention guarantees. The purpose of such controls, according to the 1989 European Commission's Report, was to make sure that agriculture expenditure did not "grow by more than just under three-quarters of the increase in Community GDP, restricting market support expenditure to no more than 2 per cent a year in real terms" (European Commission, cited in Grant 1997, 75). Yet, more fundamental reform of the CAP was required and the Commission's 1988 *Rural World* green paper stimulated further debates about the role of the CAP.

Whereas in the 1980s budgetary pressures were the most significant issues, in the 1990s the international trade negotiations conducted in the Uruguay Round of GATT moved into the forefront. The Uruguay Round, which began in October 1986 at the seaside resort of Punta del Este in Uruguay, was clearly seen as a continuous struggle between the two major trading forces – the European Community and the United States – for control of world agricultural markets (Fennell 1997; Gardner 1996; Grant 1997). Hitherto, agricultural trading was largely excluded from the other GATT agreements, specifically the Kennedy (1963-1967) and Tokyo Rounds (1972-1973), which had immediately preceded this new struggle to liberalize "the world's last

uncodified sector of international trade” (Gardner 1996, 115). More specifically, the U.S. Republicans reflected an “extreme and often chauvinistic view” toward those agricultural exporting countries which ‘unfairly’ subsidize their export to world markets, and demanded the complete dismantling of agricultural protection by the year 2000, the so-called “zero option” (pp. 115-116). Yet, the Europeans rejected this extreme American position, labeling it “impractical,” “undesirable,” and “totally unacceptable” (p. 116).

After other difficult negotiations during the so-called Mid-Term Review of progress during the Uruguay Round, held in Montreal in the autumn of 1989, as well as the Heysel Round, held at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels in December 1990, the approximate one-third scaling down of protection proposed by Arthur Dunkel, the GATT Secretary General, was still seen by the Europeans as “too generous to the Americans” (Gardner 1996, 116; Greer 2005). Even his *Draft Final Act*, which was conceived in December 1991 for the last negotiation session of the GATT Uruguay Round and which contained a broad outline for the eventual agricultural trade liberalization agreement, became the object of hostility in Europe. France and other EC member states, condemning the American domination of global agricultural trade, saw the document as likely “to bankrupt farmers” and “to ruin the agricultural industries” (Gardner 1996, 117). Although the Dunkel Final Act did not completely reconcile the opposing views of Brussels and Washington, the draft did provide the basis for continuing negotiation. In this light, a new version of the *Draft Final Act* was proposed for the Blair House negotiations, scheduled to be held in November 1992 in Washington, D. C. In the words of Tangermann (1996), cited in Grant (1997), the GATT negotiations and the CAP reforms were, in fact, two parallel processes.

In July 1991, Ray MacSharry, the EC Agriculture Commissioner from 1989 to 1992, issued a package of reform proposals based on the principle outlined in the Reflection paper, published

by the Commission earlier in the same year (Fennell 1997; Gardner 1996; Grant 1997; Rusu et al. 2007). The proposals were mainly directed at the cereals sector, with the aim of substantially reducing the level at which market prices would be supported, and diminishing the EC's commitment to subsidize exports. Seeking to stabilize production, the 1992 reform proposed to set aside a certain percentage of the EC's arable land, suggesting that in the first year of the new system the amount which had to be taken out of production was 15% of the farmers' average arable area. In return for the compulsory setting aside of land, farmers were promised arable aid compensation payments.

However, the most controversial aspect of the proposals, known as "modulation," related to a shift of assistance from larger farmers to smaller farmers (Grant 1997, 77). This proposal came to the negotiation table because, according to the Commission, 80% of the assistance was received by only 20 percent of farmers. Therefore, there were big disparities between farmers' incomes in the EC countries, disparities connected with the size of the farms, and too little money from the EAGGF (European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund) / the FEOGA (Fonds Europeen d'Orientation et de Garantie Agricole) was directed to those small and medium-sized farms (Gardner 1996, 54; Grant 1997, 77; Fennell 1997; Balanica 2005). Furthermore, as part of the CAP reform agreement, the EU Council of Ministers accepted proposals which marked the beginning of the comprehensive agricultural environmental policy (Gardner 1996). Nevertheless, the proposal package, containing many other important issues, remained under debate until agreement was reached in May 1992, which allowed further progress to be made in the 1993 Blair House negotiations<sup>11</sup> (Grant 1997; Balanica 2005).

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<sup>11</sup> The 1993 Blair House agreement allowed "a choice of starting point for cuts in export subsidies," exempting EU grain stocks from the calculations (Grant 1997, 80).

Although in economic terms the 1992 MacSharry's reforms were considered to be not large enough, left many issues unfinished, and widened the circle of decision-making in the EC regarding agriculture, they did regulate some significant issues, such as the price support system,<sup>12</sup> and brought markets into better balance (Gardner 1996; Grant 1997). However, until the end of the 1990s, support for farmers in the EU remained heavily dependent upon export subsidies. The modifications of the CAP introduced during the 1980s put some limitations on EC intervention, but there were no limits on the subsidizing of exports and also was little reduction in the growth of surpluses. According to Gardner (1996), in the early 1970s, for example, when the EU produced less than its own needs, export subsidies cost Brussels less than \$700 million a year. By contrast, by 1990, the payment had increased to \$19.6 billion, the result of having to cover the expenses for dumping not only surplus cereals but also beef, butter, milk, sugar, wine, and other agricultural products onto international markets.

Yet, despite the progress, there still remained many unresolved problems with the CAP that intensified EC-U.S. tensions. Unlike the U.S., which was interested in a free market and a reduction of the impact of the export subsidies of Europe on the world market, the EC was following a defensive strategy based on effective protection and isolation from world market forces (Grant 1997). In particular, France, the major agricultural exporter, was strongly resistant to losing its status and sought to extract the maximum concession from the negotiating process. Furthermore, the exclusion of the EC compensation payments from the negotiations, a key goal for the EC, as well as the implementation of the Blair House agreement, led to renewed tensions between the EC and the U.S. However, the Uruguay Round agreement, through its final accord reached at Geneva in the second half of December 1993 and signed at Marrakesh in April 1994, placed agriculture on the agenda of international trade negotiations, ensuring there would be

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<sup>12</sup> Supporting farmers by paying them direct subsidies rather than supporting wholesale.

discussions about further reform of agricultural trade at the end of the 1990s (Gardner 1996; Grant 1997). In addition, the pressures on the CAP from the liberalization of international trade would continue.

### ***5.1.3 Eastern Enlargement and the CAP***

Eastern enlargement has been a major issue for the EU, threatening to create “high costs for the poorer, less developed, and more agricultural members” (Schimmelfennig 2001, 52). Specifically, it was expected that the Eastern European countries’ low levels of wealth and income could attract great structural funds, with profound consequences for countries like Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Ireland, which had been the main beneficiaries of the budget prior to the 2004 integration. In other words, as “structural net recipients,” the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) could receive more money from the Community budget than their contributions, affecting both the CAP and the structural policies that together have comprised over 80% of the Community budget (ibid; Baldwin 1994). Consequently, these extant member states, “less developed” relative to the rest of the Union and specialized in agriculture, were the most vehement “brakemen” for an “inclusive” enlargement for all ten former communist countries (Baldwin 1994; Grant 1997, 187; Schimmelfennig 2004, 87; Table 4.5).

Nevertheless, the adoption of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1987 paved the way for a more integrated EU and use of Structural Funds to achieve economic and structural cohesion (Baldwin 1994; Poole 2003; Storti et al. 2005; Shucksmith et al. 2005). Conceived as large transfers to the poorer member states and regions to encourage greater economic and social cohesion, these Funds were to be used to reduce “disparities between different regions and social groups” and to promote “sustainable development and general economic efficiency” (Shucksmith et al. 2005, 45). Yet, the identification and funding of special groups and regions

from the central EU budget have produced strongly political debates, often expressed in nationalistic terms. Spain and Ireland, for example, felt that the 2004 enlargement had endangered their net receipts of structural funds, especially given Poland's stronger claim on them. Moreover, Spanish Prime Minister Aznar even threatened to block a common EU position on the free movement of labor from Eastern Europe unless Spanish claims to regional aid were protected (Poole 2003). However, Spain and other, older EU member states generously treated from the CAP budget, were finally forced by Germany, Britain, and other net contributors to the EU budget to agree to the EU's common position on the free movement of labor, specifying that "now it was the eastern Europeans' turn" (Poole 2003, 117).

Yet, the early 1990s relationships between the European Community and the CEECs were unfavorable for the latter as a result of a very asymmetrical bargaining power which characterized the negotiations about trade liberalization for industrial and agricultural products. Because nearly all industrialized governments have subsidized agriculture, they were privileged in EU-level negotiations (for example, France vetoed any concession on beef) (Schimmelfennig 2004). In addition, Association Agreements (AAs) denied the CEECs not only the right to participate in EU decision making but also in the CAP and formulating structural policies (Schimmelfennig 2001; Poole 2003). Consequently, the CEECs ran into a permanent agricultural trade deficit. An exception for the CEECs was East Germany, since it joined the EC by becoming part of the German Federal Republic in 1990. Yet, through subsidizing East German agriculture, the Community budget was seriously affected, leading to the first major reform of CAP, in 1992. However, the urgency of other issues, such as the 1993 Maastricht Treaty and the 1995 enlargement round, provided a welcome opportunity to put Eastern enlargement on the EC's agenda.

A succinct analysis of the agriculture structures of the CEECs in the early 1990s reveals considerable differences between these countries (Table 5.2; Grant 1997). In some countries, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and the Baltic countries, agriculture was, and still is, of central importance in the economy, its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) varying between approximately 10% and 20%. In other countries, specifically the so-called “Visegrad Four” (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovak Republic) and Slovenia, agriculture was of marginal importance, its production as a percentage of GDP being below 7% (Gardner 1996, 189; Grant 1997). In fact, historically, these countries have more in common with Western Europe than with their Eastern neighbors and, despite the forty-four years of communist dictatorship, they still see themselves in this light. As for the agricultural employment, Romania, with over 35% of the total population working in agriculture, is by far the most rural country.

The two key entrants in the first wave of the Eastern enlargement were Hungary and Poland (Grant 1997; Poole 2003). Unlike Hungary, whose agriculture was strong, Poland had a weaker agricultural sector, requiring the spending of an amount estimated at around half of the accession cost imposed on the CAP for the admission of the Visegrad countries. Polish land is predominantly arable, but its lower quality, light soils and frequent weather vagaries imposed a normal market adjustment. In addition, removing its collectivization program in the 1950s, the structure of Poland’s agriculture developed in a different way from other socialist countries. Specifically, with over three quarters of land in private ownership, Poland’s agriculture continued to develop in small fragmented farms, “circumscribed by centrally planned targets for compulsory deliveries” (Grant 1997, 189). As in all former communist countries, in Poland many landholding peasants were at the same time commuter workers for urban industry. Indeed, given that the end of the communist regime in 1989 was followed by the disappearance of non-

competitive industries, the worker peasants, who lost their jobs, were in fact saved by their small subsistence farms. By contrast, Hungary, “a key player in Central Europe,” is located in a more favorable region for agriculture, a fertile plain with a continental climate, favorable for a wide range of agricultural crops (Poole 2003, 71). However, Hungary shares the structural problems found in all CEECs, including decollectivization, privatization, compensation, agricultural/rural reforms, and adjustment to the CAP requirements. The important point as far as future policy is concerned is that the CEECs have a considerable agriculture potential.

Table 5.2

### Agriculture in the Economy of the CEEC 10, 1993

	Agricultural Production as a Percentage of GDP	Agricultural Employment as a Percentage of Total Employment
<b>Visegrad Four</b>		
Czech Republic	3.3	5.6
Hungary	6.4	10.1
Poland	6.3	25.6
Slovak Republic	5.8	8.4
<b>Other Possible Early Entrants</b>		
Estonia	10.4	8.2
Slovenia	4.9	10.7
<b>Other Countries</b>		
Bulgaria	10.0	21.2
Latvia	10.6	18.4
Lithuania	11.0	22.4
Romania	20.2	35.2

Source: Grant 1997

According to Tangermann (1995), cited in Schimmelfennig (2001), the CEEC candidates' contribution to the EU gross national product (GNP) was very small in the early 1990s, i.e., 3%. In addition, with 44% of the EU productive land, these countries attained only 30% of the EU agricultural production. Yet, as a result of the economic recovery after the 1989 revolutions, the CEECs were expected to increase their agricultural production significantly (Baldwin 1994; Gardner 1996). The CEECs also wished to access structural funds because of their lower health

and income levels. Consequently, a reform of the CAP and the structural policies was an indispensable precondition of Eastern enlargement (Schimmelfennig 2001).

The Commission's *Agricultural Strategy Paper*, adopted in November 1995, accepted that "further reform of the CAP beyond that anticipated in the MacSharry proposals will be necessary" (Grant 1997, 195; Balanica 2005). The cost of admitting ten former communist countries was anticipated to be an "additional budgetary cost of at least 12 billion ECU" (European Currency Unit) (Grant 1997, 195). The paper rejected radical reforms, especially those which would remove market support, introducing the so-called "decoupled and degressive compensatory payments" (Grant 1997; Fennell 1997). Although the paper as a whole was rather general in character, with many new CAP options continuing the style of the 1992 reforms, it did represent a further stimulus to the reform process. Among other objectives, it is worth noting the shift of interest from agriculture to rural development, underscoring the idea that agriculture is only a part of the complex process of rural development. This provocative objective has important implications for the future diversification of the rural economy and clearly requires more responsibility for implementation of the policies from the Member States (Balanica 2005; Shucksmith et al. 2005).

For its part, the EU partially embraced the liberalization of its agricultural sector established during the Uruguay Round, which gave birth to the WTO on January 1, 1995 (Peterson 2004; Balanica 2005). Europeans were particularly interested in obtaining an agreement on agricultural trade which could offer enough concessions to the U.S. position but which still could protect the EU's essential objectives (Grant 1997). Specifically, the EU wished to continue to use compensatory payments not fully decoupled from production. It was officially recognized that the objective of a substantial reduction in support and protection would be a

long-term and an ongoing process. In addition, it was agreed that negotiations for continuing the reform process would begin in 1999.

In the summer of 1997, the points of view toward the future policy reforms of the EU were expressed by the EU President, Jacques Santer, in a document entitled *Agenda 2000* (Poole 2003; Schimmelfennig 2001; Balanica 2005; Rusu et al. 2007; Sajdik and Schwarzingler 2008). The document emphasized the need for the institutional reforms, which had to be issued before the enlargement, as well as the EU-CAP budget. Among objectives which referred to food safety, alternative jobs, bureaucracy, rural development, and the standard of living for farmers, the document focused on one of the most important reforms for agriculture: environmental policy (Grant 1997; Balanica 2005; Shucksmith et al. 2005; Sajdik and Schwarzingler 2008). Although there was some tension between the productionist emphasis of the CAP and the protectionist emphasis of the environmental policy, the environmental goals became a priority for both agriculture and rural areas, taking into consideration a number of important impacts, such as soil degradation, water pollution, landscape modification, rare species' extinction, and biodiversity issues. The introduction of the compulsory setting aside of farmland and other elements specified in the 1992 MacSharry reforms offered some environmental gains, but a more profound adjustment of agricultural policies to environmental issues was, and still is, required. The relationship between the CAP and environmental policy, seeking to create a more sustainable balance between agricultural activity and the natural resources of the environment, would remain a long-term agenda issue in the reform debate (Grant 1997; Fennell 1997; Shucksmith et al. 2005).

Later, at their 1999 summit in Berlin, EU leaders reduced the seven-year EU budget from €84 billion (established in 1997 in the *Agenda 2000*) to €64 billion, but, most importantly,

they approved the Commission's proposal to use €1.84 billion, representing 3.4 percent of the total, to help the CEECs prepare their accession into the EU (Poole 2003). Because of French opposition, the Berlin summit did not achieve major reforms of the CAP, but its members did agree to review the subject in 2002, after the French elections. President Chirac, who had once served as French agricultural minister, strongly opposed any reform which could affect the heavy support given French farmers in the EU budget. However, EU leaders approved a new program called SAPARD (Special Assistance Program for Agriculture and Rural Development), "the first major EU aid program specifically for the farm sector of the candidate countries" (Poole 2003, 113; Shucksmith et al. 2005).

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Eastern enlargement of the EU provided the main imperative for current and further reform. One of the very sensitive agricultural issues was the right of EU citizens to buy farmland in Eastern Europe (Poole 2003). Since the farmland in the former communist countries was five to twenty times cheaper than in Western Europe, these countries, applicants for EU accession, were afraid of land speculators and thus requested long transition periods before non-nationals could buy farmland in their countries. Farmers in Poland, for example, were particularly afraid that Germans would buy their farmland in the Western part of the country, a former German territory. Despite France's proposal to introduce this issue later in the accession negotiation agreements, in May 2001 the EU and the CEECs agreed to a common position on land purchases (Poole 2003). The Czech Republic accepted a transition period of seven years, but Poland insisted upon, and finally obtained, a twelve-year transition for its land.

After the EU's Eastern enlargement had been approved and the date of accession of the first wave was approaching, the Commission decided upon a more radical CAP reform, one that

would have major effects on both the agricultural sector and rural areas of the new member states. Given that the agricultural sector is closely linked with rural development, policies for both areas are interconnected (Davidova et al. 2006; Ratinger et al. 2006). Two are of particular importance. These are the so-called Pillar I and Pillar II policies, with Pillar I consisting of market price support and income policies, and Pillar II relating to rural development measures. Discussions on further reform intensified following the success of the 2001 Doha Round, which focused on the reduction of trade barriers to agricultural products, as well as the publication in 2002 of the European Commission Mid-term Review (MTR) of *Agenda 2000* proposals (Davidova et al. 2006; Rusu et al. 2007).

In June 2003, Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler presented a revolutionary plan for reforming the Common Agricultural Policy, proposing “to move the CAP away from production subsidies and to avoid a huge increase in support payments to eastern European farmers after their countries joined the EU” (Poole 2003, 107). These reforms were actually Commissioner Fischler’s second set of CAP reforms after *Agenda 2000* in 1999. Although in the eyes of farm lobbies Fischler’s proposal to eliminate production subsidies was cast as a radical measure, the decision to give farmers direct payments aroused significant interest. Farmer support was secured for meeting community standards, including the environmental ones, and improving animal welfare and the quality of agricultural products, with an emphasis on food safety (Poole 2003; Storti et al. 2005; Rusu et al. 2007). Yet, at the same time, the system allowed EU farmers to rely on their farm potential and their preferences when adapting to changes in their economic environment and to make their choices in response to market signals (COM (2007) 722). In addition, at the 2003 “Planting seeds for rural futures” Salzburg conference one of the last evolutions in EU agricultural and rural policy, multifunctional agriculture and improvement in

the competitiveness of the farming sector were encouraged, with a focus on diversification, innovation, and high added value products (Storti et al. 2005, 8; European Commission 2003).

The introduction of certain standards had two objectives. On the one hand, the goal was to prevent land abandonment, which was a possible threat thanks to decoupling payments. On the other, reformers hoped to maintain those pasture areas which were under the threat of conversion to arable crop production. As a result of the decoupling of the direct payments from production in most sectors of Pillar I, in 2003 a new method of payment was designed under the name the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) (COM (2007) 722; Rusu et al. 2007). In addition, a simplified system, known as the Single Area Payment Scheme (SAPS), was proposed for the new CEE member states. This process was planned to lead to reforms in sugar (2006), fruit and vegetables (2007), with the ultimate goal being to reform in the wine sector (COM (2007) 722).

The 2003/2004 reform marked a new phase in the CAP process, being the first step to make the CAP fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It also constituted the basis for debates in 2005 regarding the further adjustments and implementation improvements, actions grouped under the term “Health Check” (HC) (COM (2007) 722, 11; Rusu et al. 2007, 10). Subsequently, in November 2007, the EU submitted for public debate its position relating to the improvement of the CAP. Based on this public dialogue and on-going impact analysis, the Commission had in mind to submit its new proposals in the spring 2008 (COM (2007) 722). These adjustments were not planned to constitute a fundamental reform, but could prepare EU agriculture to adapt better to a rapidly changing environment. According to the European Commission (2008), the Health Check will modernize, simplify, and streamline the CAP and remove restrictions on farmers, helping them to respond better to signals from the market and to face new challenges. More specifically,

Among a range of measures, the agreement abolishes arable set-aside, increases milk quotas gradually leading up to their abolition in 2015, and converts market intervention into a genuine safety net. Ministers also agreed to increase modulation, whereby direct payments to farmers are reduced and the money transferred to the Rural Development Fund. This will allow a better response to the new challenges and opportunities faced by European agriculture, including climate change, the need for better water management, the protection of biodiversity, and the production of green energy. Member States will also be able to assist dairy farmers in sensitive regions adjust to the new market situation.

([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/healthcheck/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/healthcheck/index_en.htm), 2008)

## **5.2 Rural Development: The Reform Imperative**

With over 56 % of the population in the 27 Member States of the European Union (EU) living in rural areas, which cover 91 % of the territory, rural development is a vitally important policy area. Farming and forestry remain crucial for land use and the management of natural resources in the EU's rural areas, and as a platform for economic diversification in rural communities. The strengthening of EU rural development policy is, therefore, an overall EU priority.

(European Commission, 2007a, 1)

With such significant territorial and demographic dimensions, the EU's rural areas are a vital part of its physical make-up and its identity. From mountains to steppe, from great forests to rolling fields, the EU's landscapes give, among other things, its character. Moreover, the European countryside has a great deal to offer, from essential raw materials to beautiful rest and recreation places. In the Commission's vision, rural areas act "as our lungs," and, therefore, it is a great "battleground for the fight against climate change" (ibid). Although many EU rural areas still face significant challenges, such as their insufficiently modernized infrastructure, low competitiveness of some farming and forestry businesses, lower average income per head, narrower skills base, and a less developed service sector, they can offer unequalled opportunities as living and working spaces and, consequently, many people are attracted by the idea of living and/or working there.

Theoretically, the EU Member States could, and still can, decide and operate completely independent rural development policies. However, taking into consideration that not all countries are able to afford the policy which they need, this approach has worked poorly in practice. Furthermore, many of the issues addressed through rural development policy are not limited only to the national boundaries, but affect people outside of these limits. These aspects require rural development policy to have links to a number of other policies set at the EU level, especially the CAP and policies related to environmental sustainability, with the latter being both a European and an international concern. As a result, the EU has a common rural development policy, one which places considerable control in the hands of individual member states, but which is funded partly from the central EU budget (the remainder being funded by the individual Member States' national or regional budgets).

As is described in the first part of this chapter, agricultural policy initially had limited scope for achieving broader objectives, including employment or environmental goals in rural areas. In addition, the forces driving change in rural areas are quite diverse, a fact that not only has made reforming policies at the Community level but also tailoring rural development measures to local conditions ever more important (Csaki and Lerman 2001). Starting with the last decades of the twentieth century, rural areas experienced a profound evolution, leading to both a change in the role of the agricultural sector and a shift in territorial development trends, replacing the productivist landscape with the emergent landscape of consumption (Goverde et al. 2004; Storti et al. 2005). Consequently, the analysis and conceptualization of rural changes has been extended, supported not only by the “multifunctional role of agriculture” but also by the “generalized awareness of the multisectoral nature of rural development processes,” including the “territorial dimension” (Storti et al. 2005, 1; Shucksmith et al 2005, 170; Durand and

Huylenbroeck 2003; Belletti et al. 2003; van der Ploeg and Roep 2003; Delgado et al. 2003). In this respect, the resulting debates on the concepts of rural development have influenced EU policy for rural areas over the years.

### ***5.2.1 Defining the Concept of Rural Development***

As a concept, rural development comprises a wide set of notions with different priorities, ranging from rural economy to quality of life, via land management and environmental protection. Taking into consideration the vulnerability of rural areas, on the one hand, and their often less than successful economic performance, on the other, the question of their economic and environmental viability represent core issues for future development (Shucksmith et al 2005). As Ramniceanu (2004, 4) has emphasized, rural development measures can fulfill either a “sectorial” function (where they are exclusively targeted to “correct the structural problems of the agricultural sector derived from the application of the CAP”) or a “territorial” function (where measures in rural areas are addressed in an “integrated, multifunctional approach”).

Yet, the agricultural sector alone cannot enhance and stabilize the regions’ performance. It has been made clear that rural people depend on income generated by a multitude of economic activities, which is the reason why a territorial approach is needed to ensure a more balanced rural development model and social, economic, and territorial cohesion (Shucksmith et al. 2005; Van Huylenbroeck 2003). According to Bryden (1999), quoted in Shucksmith et al. (2005, 165), “rural development is increasingly viewed as a territorial concept involving increases in the welfare of rural citizens, including incomes, and quality of life.” In other words, the concept of rural development, also known as “sustainable rural development,” marks a shift from a unilateral view, especially concerning economic growth, to a more “holistic” view, one that includes economic, social, environmental, and spatial dimensions (Shucksmith et al. 2005, 165).

Thus, “the EU's rural development policy is all about meeting the challenges faced by our rural areas, and unlocking their potential” (European Commission 2007a, 1).

### ***5.2.2 The Way to a Rural Development Policy***

During the 1960s, there was little evidence of preoccupation with the rural development sector. Progress toward establishing a comprehensive rural development policy with a stronger territorial dimension was also very slow during the 1970s. As a result, a policy for European rural areas was reached later and only after a series of crucial phases (Van Depoele 2000; Shucksmith et al. 2005; Storti et al. 2005).

A significant aspect for the period of the 1970s was the “increasing similarity of the rural development approach to the future regional policy stance,” materialized by EEC Directive No. 268/1975 (Ramniceanu 2004, 5). In this light, the first recognition of the need for special assistance, in addition to agriculture, in designated rural areas was the introduction of the *Less Favored Areas* (LFAs) scheme in 1975, considered “the first step in the process of introducing a territorial dimension into a mainly sectoral policy” (Shucksmith et al. 2005, 154). During the late 1970s and the early 1980s a limited number of less-favored areas, such as Scotland, France, and Belgium, benefited from these integrated regional programs, going beyond agriculture. Featuring a multi-sectoral approach, they coordinated interventions covered by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) - Guidance section. Following the accession of Spain and Portugal in 1986, the approach was extended to the Mediterranean region, with the intent being to help some LFAs from Greece, Italy, France, and the Iberian countries adapt their economies (Van Depoele 2000).

For the first time, rural development measures contained a *cohesion* feature. Specifically, the LFA program was the CAP instrument which addressed “the territorial dimension of agricultural production,” but its impact cannot be assessed only by this single measure (Ramniceanu 2004; Shucksmith et al. 2005, 101). Since the decoupling process opened the agricultural process to rural development, it facilitated turning some of the natural handicaps of the mountains and other LFA into advantages, materialized through some substantial subsidies. Between 1988 and 1993, for example, approximately €15 billion were allocated to rural development, LFA expenditures being in fact the major EAGGF Guidance Section commitments (Shucksmith et al. 2005).

A change in rural development philosophy became visible in the late 1980s, marking the “beginning of a multi-sectoral approach” to rural issues (Ramniceanu 2004, 5). The 1986 *Single European Act*, among other things, identified *rural policies* as one of the instruments capable of achieving “economic and social cohesion” (Van Depoele 2000, 71; Storti et al. 2005, 6). As one of the fundamental objectives of the European structure, economic and social cohesion required the support from those Community funds that shared a structural feature. With the recognition of the need for a rural development dimension to regional policy after the adoption of the *Single European Act*, the highlight of this period was the creation of the common regional policy. In this light, in 1988 the first serious reform of the broader Structural Funds policy occurred, one which integrated rural development into programs designed to reduce regional disparities (Csaki and Lerman 2001; Ramniceanu 2004; Storti et al. 2005). In addition, the funds were intended: (1) “to promote economic and social cohesion in the European Union”; (2) “to improve the effectiveness of the Community’s structural assistance”; and (3) “to identify more precisely the

responsibilities of the Member States and the Community at each stage” (Shucksmith et al. 2005, 46).

The *Single European Act*'s commitment to cohesion provided the background to the package of proposals for the EU's future financing. In this light, in 1987 Jacques Delors, ex-Commission President, presented his proposals for a reform of the Structural Funds, the so-called “Delors I” (Van Depoele 2000, 71). Adopted in February 1988, the proposals included a commitment to double the budget for structural operations for the period of 1988-1993, establishing at the same time several key Objectives, including actions for rural areas. The Objectives were:

- Objective 1 - structural adjustment and development of less developed regions
- Objective 2 - conversion of regions severely affected by industrial decline
- Objective 3 - combating long-term unemployment and facilitating the occupational integration of young people and persons excluded from the labor market
- Objective 4 - assistance for workers in employment to adapt to industrial change and new production systems through retraining
- Objective 5a - speeding up the adjustment of agricultural and fisheries structures
- Objective 5b - facilitating development of rural areas, and
- Objective 6 - promotion of development in regions with exceptionally low population density

(Shucksmith et al. 2005, 46)

In the 1988-1993 and 1994-1999 programming periods, structural funds were allocated in rural areas, especially through Objectives 5b and 6, while some other objectives indirectly contributed to rural development. Moreover, the Objective 5b areas were expanded considerably after 1995, taking into account the fourth enlargement of the EU, when Austria, Finland and Sweden became new Member States. Specifically, on the accession of Sweden and Finland, new features were added to Objective 6 for the Nordic areas, which are characterized by extremely low population density.

This context established a definitive shift from a sector-based approach to the integrated programming of measures obtained from different Funds, including the European Agricultural Guidance of Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), preceded by the 1985 Mediterranean Integrated Programs (MIP) (Ramniceanu 2004; Storti et al. 2005). Thus, starting from 1988, the EAGGF - Guidance turned into one of the Community's structural funds and some of the rural development measures became assets common to both the CAP and the newly designed regional policy. However, it is worth mentioning that the new policy measures fell mainly under the responsibility of the Member States, the Community being involved especially in those areas where it could add value to agricultural products (Ramniceanu 2004). Overall, the territorial function of the rural development measures started to gain importance.

In 1988 the European Commission published a broad policy outline entitled *The Future of Rural Society*, in which a new rural development policy, territorial in nature, was defined. The document not only left behind the urban-rural dichotomy but also introduced the distinction between the processes of agriculture and rural development (Van Depoele 2000). Although modernization of the agricultural sector and the development of industrial processes were still seen as significant for structural evolution, the new policy focused on “the development of alternatives to agriculture” in which “local actors” represent “a suitable instrument to stimulate local projectual capacity” (Storti et al. 2005, 6). Equally important, by the end of the 1980s, the public had become increasingly aware of several environmental issues, specifically the role of agriculture and farmers in environmental protection and in preservation of rural landscapes.

The beginning of the 1990s brought two major initiatives in the evolution of rural development in the EU: the Community LEADER<sup>13</sup> Initiative and the MacSharry reform (Van

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<sup>13</sup> LEADER is the acronym for “*Liaison Entres Actions de Developpement de l'Economie Rurale*” (Van Depoele 2000, 74; Callanan et al. 2006, 66).

Depoele 2000; Csaki and Lerman 2001; Ramniceanu 2004; Callanan et al. 2006). The LEADER *Community Initiative* (CI) came into force in 1991, under the name of LEADER I, with the intention being to provide *bottom-up* support, especially in the Objective 5b regions of the Structural Funds, integrating development programs in rural areas in line with the indications provided by *The Future of Rural Society* (Van Depoele 2000; Storti et al. 2005). Although its budget was quite limited, relative to the overall Structural Funds and CAP budgets (some €400 million), the CI program was most closely related to the concept of integrated rural development, being based on the support of local initiatives (Van Depoele 2000; Ramniceanu 2004; Shucksmith et al. 2005). The budget allocation for LEADER II, 1994-1999, rose to €1.75 billion while the new rural development Community initiative, called LEADER+, reached €2.2 billion (Van Depoele 2000). These budgets were used to finance a wide range of valuable projects, comprising a variety of domains from rural tourism to the use of new technology, as well as the revitalization of cultural traditions and rural heritage. Providing a flexible program structure, the CI was able to adapt to different regional contexts, achieving particularly good results for small-scale regional development.

The 1992 MacSharry Reform brought in further structural measures, the so-called “accompanying measures,” with emphasis on agri-environment and afforestation of agricultural land, among other issues (Van Depoele 2000, 76; Ramniceanu 2004, 6; Storti et al. 2005, 6). They were implemented via national/regional programs and were co-financed by the EU and the respective Member State. The reform, whose measures were funded through the Guarantee Fund rather than the Structural Funds, acknowledged the growing significance of the rural development measures, as well as the complementarity between them and the market support measures. In addition, in December 1992 the European Council meeting in Edinburgh adopted

the “Delors II” financial package for the period of 1994-1999, giving further financial credit to the political commitment to cohesion (Van Depoele 2000, 72). More specifically, the Council once again agreed to double the Community financial resources allocated to the Structural Funds.

The 1993 Treaty of Maastricht strengthened both the EU’s commitment to achieving cohesion and the legal basis for EU rural development policies. It turned cohesion into “one of the three pillars of European construction, alongside economic and monetary union and the Single Market” (Van Depoele 2000, 71). Adding the words “including rural areas” to Article 130 A of the Maastricht Treaty (Article 158 of the Amsterdam Treaty), rural development policies were firmly anchored in the context of EU efforts to achieve economic and social cohesion (ibid). More specifically, the Treaty stated:

In order to promote its overall harmonious development, the Community shall develop and pursue its actions leading to the strengthening of its economic and social cohesion. In particular, the Community shall aim at reducing disparities between the level of development of the various regions and the backwardness of the least-favoured regions, including rural areas.

(Article 130 A of the Maastricht Treaty, quoted in Van Depoele 2000, 71)

The particular challenges facing Europe’s rural areas in the mid-1990s led Agriculture Commissioner Franz Fischler to submit a report entitled the *Commission’s Agricultural Strategy Paper* to the Madrid Summit in December 1995, calling for “the development of a strengthened and integrated rural development policy” (p. 77). The summit that brought together many experts and practitioners in rural development offered an excellent opportunity for valuable discussions and reflections upon the EU’s future rural development policies. Although the Commission’s 1996 first report on *Economic and Social Cohesion* emphasized several significant achievements it also confirmed the continued existence of substantial disparities. Consequently, the principles of a new European Rural Development policy were issued at the

Cork (Ireland) Conference on Rural Development, organized by the Commission on November 7-9, 1996 (European Commission 1996; Van Depoele 2000; Storti et al. 2005). The draft declaration, accompanied by a new normative framework, focused on a vast sustainable rural development program with emphasis on the diversification of local activities, decentralization of policy management, simplification of the legislation, and unification of the measures for regional planning, as well as a *bottom-up* approach. In their conclusions, the Cork Conference's participants urged Europe's policy-makers "to raise public awareness about the importance of making a new start in rural development policy" and, more importantly, "to make rural areas more attractive to people to live and work in, and become centers of a more meaningful life for a growing diversity of people of all ages" ([http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/cork\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/cork_en.htm), 1996).

Agricultural restructuring, regional development, and environmental integration were the major EU instruments which reflected the differing objectives of rural development in the mid-1990s. These instruments were in need of being put together into a more coherent framework, a goal achieved in *Agenda 2000* (Van Depoele 2000; Csaki and Lerman 2001; Ramniceanu 2004; Storti et al. 2005). Issued on July 16, 1997, *Agenda 2000* was conceived as a program whose main objectives were to strengthen Community policies and to give the European Union a new financial framework for the period 2000-2006 with a view to enlargement (European Commission 1999a). On March 26, 1999, at the Berlin European Council, the 15 Heads of Government or States concluded a political agreement on *Agenda 2000* in the form of twenty legislative texts relating to the effectiveness of the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Funds, the cornerstone of the *Agenda 2000* reforms, as well as to agricultural competitiveness and environmental protection (European Commission 1999a, 2000; Csaki and Lerman 2001).

More importantly, the Agenda 2000 package for agriculture was supplemented by a *Regulation* on rural development, considered “a genuinely second pillar of the CAP,” aiming to secure the future of rural areas through the development of a competitive, multifunctional, and sustainable agricultural sector (European Commission 1999b, 2000; Csaki and Lerman 2001; Shucksmith et al. 2005). In addition, new challenges, such as the preservation of rural ways of life and landscape, as well as the concentration of the Structural Funds more firmly on those areas and regions whose local economies were in need of revival, were central to the *Agenda 2000* reform. Moreover, the guiding principles of the new policy were both “decentralization” of responsibilities from Brussels to the local levels and “flexibility” of the programs, adjusting them to the countries’ specific needs (European Commission 1999b; Van Depoele 2000; Ramniceanu 2004). Turning rural development into the second pillar of the CAP, this set of reforms was considered a milestone in the development of European rural policy, a step toward supporting the broader rural economy rather than just agricultural production.

However, *Agenda 2000*, through its suggestions that “the role of rural policy instruments was merely to accompany and complement market policy,” trimmed the innovative scope of the Cork Declaration (European Commission 1999b; Csaki and Lerman 2001; Storti et al. 2005, 7). Specifically, the farmer organizations, which feared the reduction of the traditional market protection policies, successfully resisted the more radical changes outlined in the Cork Declaration. In addition, although the 1999 Berlin summit substantially simplified the policy programming instruments for rural development measures, such as the creation of a *single legal framework*, it also failed to introduce innovative elements for rural areas policy. More specifically, at this stage, with very strong agricultural lobbies, the development of EU policy for rural areas did not lead to a discontinuation of traditional agricultural policy. Yet, taking into

account all its characteristics and bearing in mind that, in some respects, the 1999 policy was not as far-reaching as had originally been proposed, the Commission nevertheless considered it “the most radical and wide-ranging reform of the CAP in its history” (European Commission 1999b).

*Agenda 2000* made some significant steps in improving the CAP/RD policies, but the second pillar still accounted for a low percentage of the CAP budget, i.e., approximately 10% of the CAP expenditure during the period of 2000-2006. Therefore, the elaboration and implementation of a coherent rural development policy continued to remain a stringent need in the early 2000s. Significantly, the 2002-2003 Fischler reform moved this a step forward by introducing the compulsoriness of the “*mandatory modulation*,” an action initiated by the *Agenda 2000* in 1999, as a system to shift resources from the first pillar of the CAP, market price, to the second pillar, rural development (Henke and Storti 2004; Storti et al. 2005, 8; Shucksmith et al. 2005; Davidova et al. 2006; Rusu et al. 2007; COM (2007) 722). Furthermore, the Fischler reform introduced a new measure for co-financing the management of integrated rural development strategies by local partnership. Intending to correct the uneven distribution of direct payments, the proposal was well accepted and approved by all Member States, except Ireland. Only Joe Walsh, the Irish Minister of Agriculture, at a meeting of farm ministers in Brussels, formally rejected the Fischler proposals, arguing that “he was not prepared to contemplate the damage to farm families and rural Ireland” (Garcia-Alvarez-Coque 2003, 1). In addition, other critics emphasized the fact that the larger farmers would keep benefiting from significant income support for many years ahead, to the disadvantage of the small farmers.

More recently, the Second European Conference on Rural Development held in Salzburg in November 2003, a follow-up of the 1996 Cork Conference, launched a wide debate on rural development policy (Storti et al. 2005; European Commission 2003). The conference was held

at a crucial time in the preparation of Community policy for rural areas for post-2006, emphasizing the need for rural policy to evolve in order to meet new challenges within an enlarged European Union. The Salzburg conference focused on the need to invest in the broader rural economy and rural communities, to increase the attractiveness of rural areas, and to promote sustainable growth, through generating new employment opportunities, especially in the new Member States. Preserving the diversity of the European countryside remained of ever growing importance. The conference provided an opportunity for a wide reflection on the experience of the current rural development programs for the period of 2000-2006, drawing lessons and conclusions for the 2007-2013 generation programs (European Commission 2003).

To bring rural development policy into line with the EU's priorities, Community-level strategic guidelines for rural development for the period of 2007-2013 were adopted, in particular in relation to the Goteborg sustainability goals (2001) and the renewed Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs, whose conclusion was signed in Thessaloniki, Greece, in June 2003 [COM (2005) 304 final]. Consequently, the Member States had to finalize their detailed national strategy plans in the first half of 2006 (the second half of the same year being scheduled for the approval process). These constituted the reference framework for the preparation of rural development programs, which have to specify what funding will be spent on which measures in the period 2007 to 2013 (European Commission 1999a; COM (2005) 304 final). In this light, it is important to specify the reorganization of the financial support directed to the two pillars of the CAP, individualizing the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) for the common market and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) for rural development (Ramniceanu 2004).

Having in mind that a “strong economic performance must go hand in hand with the sustainable use of natural resources,” the 2007-2013 Rural Development Policy focuses on three key areas: (1) “the agrifood economy;” (2) “the environment;” and (3) “the broader rural economy and population” [COM (2005) 304 final, 5-6]. In this light, these three themes, also known as *thematic axes*, have to serve rural development programs. Specifically, in addition to the competitiveness axis for agriculture, food, and forestry, it is worth emphasizing the axes regarding land management and environment, as well as the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of rural economy (Ramniceanu 2004; COM (2005) 304 final). A further requirement is that some of the funding must support projects based on experience with the *Leader Community Initiatives*, with the LEADER approach to rural development involving highly individual innovative pilot projects designed and executed by local partnerships to address specific local issues (European Community 1999a; Csaki and Lerman 2001; COM (2005) 304 final).

In sum, during the half century since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, the Common Agricultural Policy has experienced continuous transformation and adjustment, the result of important reforms, dictated by the pressures of globalization and the enlargement process, as well as by broader socio-economic dynamics (Rusu et al. 2007; European Commission 2007, 2008). The objectives of the CAP have changed and been extended from ensuring food security and creating stability in agro-food markets to ensuring a decent standard of living for rural communities in all member states. However, whereas in the late 1970s and early 1980s reforms promoted the development of modern agriculture, by the end of the 1980s the policy strongly distorted the market, stimulating intensive production beyond the market’s absorption power. Consequently, large stocks of unsold products and mounting environmental degradation, together

with incredible gaps in farm incomes between large and more efficient farms and small farms without access to technology, have required new visions toward the development of the CAP. These have been materialized through several radical reforms during the 1990s and the early 2000s.

In recent years, developments in world agricultural markets and the new political framework that has emerged following the EU's enlargement to include CEECs have influenced the evolution of the CAP (Poole 2003; Shucksmith et al. 2005; Rusu et al. 2007). The so-called CAP Health Check was built on the approach which began with the 2003 reforms, but has sought to improve the way the policy operates based on the experience gathered since 2003, with the goal of making it fit for the new challenges and opportunities in an EU of 27 Member States. As has been emphasized by the Commission, "the reforms have modernized the CAP, but the Health Check represents a perfect opportunity to take the policy review further" (European Commission 2007b).

At the 2008 Limassol, Cyprus, conference regarding rural Europe, Mariann Fischer Boel, member of the European Commission and Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, advanced a conservative approach to the rural development-agriculture relationship. More specifically, she suggested that

If we see agriculture and rural development as a 'husband and wife' team, it's true that the 'man' of the household (in other words, agriculture) is still the dominant figure in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)..... But in any case, the wife now influences his decisions more and more and for the last few years she's been making her own distinct voice heard, while carrying out projects of her own.

(Fischer Boel, 16 October 2008)

In other words, rural development and agriculture are seen as a strong couple, with the result that they should stay together under the same policy roof to be managed together. In terms of policy, this is seen as a very successful partnership that should be allowed to continue.

**II. FROM TRADITIONS TO COMMUNISM: RURAL ROMANIA BEFORE 1989**

## CHAPTER 6

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN ROMANIA PRIOR TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

Throughout history, rural life and agriculture have played a significant role in the Romanian economy. The variety of land forms, the temperate climate, and especially the quality of soils in the Danube basin made Romania, geographically the second largest of the ten Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs), the “breadbasket” for the surrounding powers for many centuries (Sabates-Wheeler 2004, 8; Dawson 2000; Turnock 1997). In Murgescu’s words, quoted in Balanica (2005, 91), “the evolution of economic life of Romanians should be observed through the evolution of the agrarian relations and on the basis of their division into periods” (“evolutia vietii economice a poporului roman ar trebui urmarita prin evolutia relatiilor agrare si pe temeiul periodizarii lor”). Or, to quote Cartwright (2001, 1), “every revolution has to deal with the past.” Thus, in order to understand where rural Romania, especially its agrarian problem, stands today, it is necessary to appreciate that it has undergone a number of significant changes in its turbulent history, especially during the past two centuries.

This chapter examines the development of the rural and agrarian question in Romania prior to the Second World War, emphasizing the existence of the traditional communal villages, the birth of serfdom, and the complicated political and economic conditions which favored the promulgation of the 1864 and 1921 laws for the agrarian reforms.

## 6.1 Traditional Communal Villages

Very broadly, the structure of early Romanian society was exclusively “rural and egalitarian” (Mitrany 1930, 7). The Romanians’ ancestors, known as Getae (*Geti*) and Dacians (*Daci*), were people of the same “Indo-European Thracian” origin who inhabited from pre-historic times the “Carpatho-Danubian” or *Carpatho-Danubiano-Pontic* territory, a geomorphological unit that covers the drainage basin of the Danube, together with the Dobrogea region on the Black Sea seashore (Iorga 1925; Moraru et al. 1966; Otetea 1985; Giurescu 1998b, 279; Vulpe 1998, 3; www.presidency.ro, 2008). Historically, the people of the region lived in a society based on a rudimentary division of functions and in small “communal villages” characterized by an “absence of private control over the means of production” (Chirot 1980, ix). In this light, the tenure of land was regulated by unwritten ancient customs through which each village controlled a certain amount of land, in common for its inhabitants. However, unlike the grazing land which was used in common, the arable land was divided into a number of equal and indivisible strips and distributed to households. Land was available for all members of the community, in sufficient quantities to endow new households. Consequently, there was not any reason to compete for possessions and the land satisfied the villagers’ and their superiors’ personal needs (Chirot 1980; Mitrany 1930).

Although urban life flourished in this part of Europe from ancient times, the current Romanian territory largely supplied agricultural products to the broader Roman Empire for most of the second and third centuries after the birth of Christ (Mitrany 1930; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). It is worth specifying, however, that the Romans did not subjugate all of the Dacians’ territory and the Roman Province of Dacia was only one part of the broader Dacia in which “free” Dacians continued to live their old tribal life in Northern Transylvania, Crisana, Maramures, and

in Northern and Central Moldova (Figures 6.1 and 6.2; Stahl H. 1980, 24; Vulpe 1998, 38). Even in Roman Dacia, which covered the present territories of the Banat, the Transylvanian plateau, Oltenia, and, temporarily, those of Muntenia and Southern Moldova, the peasants were free -- “the slave or colonial latifundia existed only as an exception” (Stahl H. 1980, 24). Yet, from 271 A.D., when the Romans withdrew their legions from the region, its inhabitants had to fight for almost a thousand years (the so-called “dark millennium”) “innumerable” and “insatiable” waves of “wild nomad warriors” – Goths, Huns, Gepids, Avars, Slavs, Bulgars, Hungarians, Petchenegs, Cumans, and Tartars – who crossed through the area on their journey to Central and Western Europe (Andreescu 1998, 92; Mitrany 1930, 4-5, and 8; Stahl H. 1980, 24; Vulpe 1998; Brezeanu 1998; <http://www.presidency.ro>, 2008). The land thus fell prey to alien invaders and their rulers were hard pressed to preserve their estates.

In this historical context, town life fell into decrepitude and the Daco-Romans “lost the art of living in cities” (Mitrany 1930, 5). The society turned rural, resuming the “agro-pastoral” activities, that had existed before the Roman conquest (Brezeanu 1998, 68) as public and private life was reduced to very simple forms of small communities, known as “village communities” (*sate*, in Romanian, from the Latin *fossatum*) (Mitrany 1930; Stahl H. 1980, 24; Chirot 1980). Furthermore, the peasant communities increasingly gathered together into “*tari*” (Lat. *terra*, Engl. *lands*), these being the original institutions of Romanian medieval rural society comprised of a number of villages (*sate*) with a horizontal social structure and some common characteristics (Brezeanu 1998, 68).

Although isolated in the mass of Slavs and Greeks, as well as politically and economically marginalized, the Romanian rural communities struggled to defend their existence by returning to the pre-Roman agro-pastoral life. The peasants experienced very difficult material conditions

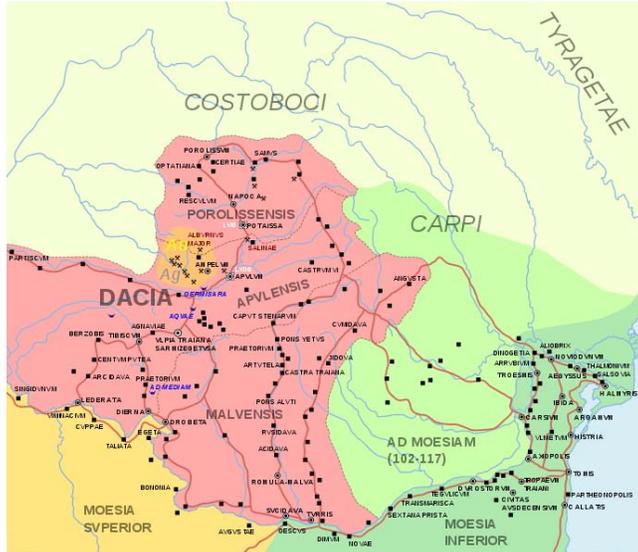


Figure 6.1 **Roman Dacia**

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Roman\\_Dacia\\_1.1.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Dacia_1.1.svg)

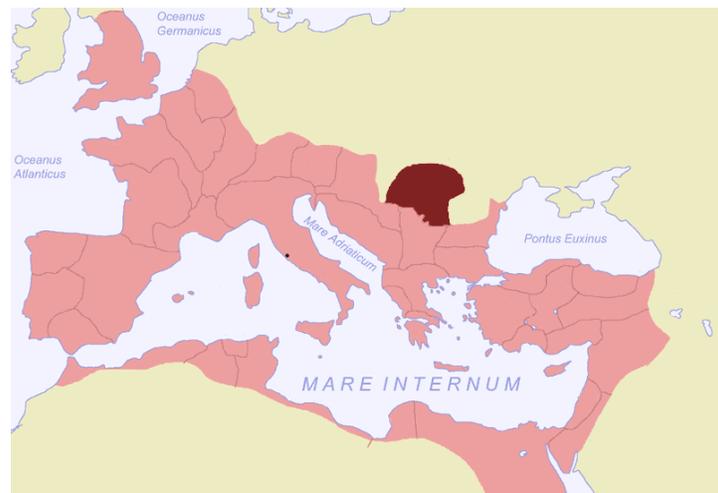


Figure 6.2 **The Roman Empire with Dacia (highlighted)**

Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dacia\\_SPQR.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dacia_SPQR.png)

and uncertainties during the uninterrupted barbarian invasions, but, excepting a small number of the war prisoners who were bound to the land, they still were able to keep their freedom and the rights to use their land in times when their Western fellow peasants experienced serfdom (Vulpe 1998; Andreescu 1998). Moreover, in spite of these historical circumstances, the Romanians' ancestors were able to preserve their identity in the region to an amazing degree, including the Romance language that survived as "a mystery island in the Slav ocean which surrounds it" (Mitrany 1930, 4; Tufescu 1974; <http://www.presidency.ro>, 2008).

## **6.2 The Birth of Serfdom in Romania**

When the tide of migratory invasions started to recede in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, new conditions appeared for the creation of the first Romanian States, these being the Principalities of Moldavia (Moldova) and Wallachia (sometimes called Muntenia, or "Land of the Mountains" or "the Romanian Country" (Mitrany 1930; Stahl H. 1980, 13). Although communal villages continued to exist in both principalities, many of them began to be abandoned in the late fifteenth century because of low population density. Gradually, however, as the population began to grow again and spread the traditional village communities began to be replaced by a combination of private property and serfdom (Chirot 1980). The first written documents, dated from the end of the fourteenth century in Moldova and the beginning of the fifteenth in Muntenia, offer valuable information regarding the specificity of Romanian rural feudalism, i.e., the co-existence of the "free" and "serf" villages in the same geographic and cultural conditions (Mitrany 1930, 9; Stahl H. 1980, 15). More specifically, the mass of the free villages was concentrated in the Carpathian and Subcarpathian regions, as well as in the South of Moldova, since they also had the role of frontier guards, while the serf villages were characteristic in the Danube Plain, in Muntenia, and in the Northern part of Moldova.

However, the Romanian feudal lords or landowners, called boyars (*boieri*), many of whom had a foreign origin and even lived outside of the country, were able to exploit not only serf villages but also free village communities, without owning them. The exploitation of the agrarian free population was possible simply by the “imposition of a tribute” in accordance with an established repressive state fiscal system, even as the land continued to be controlled by the communal villages (Stahl H. 1980, 14). Analyzing the genesis of these categories of village communities, H. H. Stahl (1980) emphasized the difference and similarities between Moldova and Muntenia. While the Moldavian state was formed by an act of reconquest from the Tartars, executed by a group of Romanian warriors from Maramures, on the other side of the Carpathians, Muntenia creation resulted from the Carpathian boyars’ action against the nomad Tartars to reconquer the Danube Plain. Both of them, although, exhibited similar fiscal systems and were “tributary states” (Stahl, quoted in Chirot 1980, ix).

In some cases, the lords took full ownership of those depopulated villages, colonizing them with peasants who were then enserfed for the simple motif of settling on conquered lands. Many similar situations occurred when peasants from less fertile lands moved to the emptied villages. In addition, the Romanian princes made efforts to attract foreign settlers, who had the status of “vecini” (neighbors), either to repopulate the old villages or to build up new ones. These new settlements were called “slobozii” (freedoms), since they were exempted from all taxes for several years (Mitrany 1930, 13). Therefore, the nature of serfdom in Moldova’s and Muntenia’s villages can be explained by the effect of the reconquest and repopulation of the rural zones which had been profoundly devastated by the invading armies from Asia (Stahl H.1980).

In Transylvania, on the other hand, Hungarian warriors conquered all the Romanian communal villages. With the exceptions of some free villages in the region of Fagaras, which

for a short period of time was under the Muntenia Principality's domination, and the military border zones, where Maria Theresa and Joseph II later created the special Frontier Regiments, all the Romanian peasants from Transylvania were reduced to serfdom (Stahl H. 1980; Platon 1998).

The process of reducing the Romanian peasantry to serfdom was not a short and sudden one. On the contrary, it spread over several centuries, rising especially during the Turkish domination over the Romanian territories. It started principally during the period 1538-1541, when government passed into the hands of aliens who "dropped like locusts upon the land" (Mitrany 1930, 14; Platon 1998). Although the Romanian Principalities were not incorporated into the Ottoman Empire, the Turks sought to secure domination over Romanian lands in order to use them as the empire's granary, without which both its army and capital city would have starved. The huge Ottoman market, especially the so-called "insatiable octopus" on the Bosphorus (Istanbul), was a permanent outlet for Romanian traditional products, many from agriculture and forestry, such as cereals, sheep, cattle, horses, wax, honey, wood, and many others (Maxim 1998, 124). In addition, the creation of a Romanian upper-class, ambitious and eager for power, with privileges and increasing needs to satisfy, constituted new circumstances which shaped the country's social evolution.

Given this internal context and with permanent external danger, in the second half of the fifteenth century the Romanian governments established that the armies were to be based on the "general duty of all those who owned land, or had a right to use it" (Mitrany 1930, 14). In other words, all free Romanian peasants were obliged to satisfy their military obligations, as "willing soldiers," bringing "their own arms and food with them whenever the alarm was raised" (Mitrany 1930, 14-15; Maxim 1998). Yet, in order for peasants to keep themselves and their

horses provisioned, they had to be allowed, at least in part, to preserve their traditional economic and social independence. The military system was radically changed at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, especially as a result of the increasing Turkish pressure. For the first time, Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul), Prince of Muntenia (1593-1601), equipped a standing professional army, for which the peasants were more needed as “compliant labourers” to satisfy not only the considerable supplies for the army but also for the payment of the heavy annual tribute to the Turkish Sultan (Mitrany 1930, 15). Mihai Viteazul’s claim to fame is his unifying for the first time in history the Romanian Principalities, Moldova, Muntenia, and Transylvania, in 1599-1600, although the peasants remained bound to the land (Mitrany 1930; Platon 1998; <http://www.presidency.ro>). The conditions of the peasantry were not always identical in the Romanian Principalities, though. In Muntenia, for example, more so than in Moldova, serfdom became a widespread custom, and the normal status of most of the peasants.

The many taxes imposed during the Phanariot political regime,<sup>14</sup> as well as the abuses of the tax collectors, encouraged many Romanian peasants to abandon en masse their land and villages, drastically affecting the sources of public revenue (Mitrany 1930; Platon 1998; Cartwright 2001; <http://www.presidency.ro>). As a result, the Romanian rulers were obliged to revise their laws and to release some peasants from their obligations. Constantin Mavrocordat, a Moldavian ruler, for example, decreed in 1749 “the emancipation of the vecini,” the peasants who had inherited their own land, in the Northern part of the province, abolishing serfdom there earlier than in Western Europe (Mitrany 1930, 16; Platon 1998, 153). Moreover, since the new law gave the peasant the right to pay an amount of money to “purchase his full freedom,” it was

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<sup>14</sup> During the Phanariot political regime (1711-1821 in Moldova and 1716-1821 in Muntenia), the rulers of these countries were appointed directly by the Porte, from among its high officials recruited from the Greek merchants in the Phanar district of Istanbul (Platon 1998).

the “first step towards transforming the title to land into private ownership,” as well as the “first attempt of the State to intervene between the two rural classes” (Mitrany 1930, 17).

Thus, during the second half of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the abolition of the relationships of serfdom, the codices of laws proclaimed by several Romanian rulers, the new agrarian settlement, and fiscal regulations, all under the influence of the Enlightenment and of the innovative ideas of the French Revolution, introduced new modern principles and norms to the Romanian Principalities. Yet, although the landlords’ feudal rights were limited, in reality the serfs’ obligations were only reduced, without according complete freedom. This system, called the “urbarial” system, proposed by Mavrocordat, was only a “mild improvement on the full serfdom,” but it was the first “enactment towards emancipation of both land and peasants,” an example of the tendency of some Romanian princes to protect the peasants against the abuses of the boyars (Mitrany 1930, 16-17).

During the second half of the eighteenth century, the needs of the domestic boyars, who obtained further privileges locally, Turkish sultans (*pashas*), and monasteries vastly increased. As the result, the obligations of the majority of the peasants, especially in Moldova, became very heavy. Even in this context, however, the traditional right to use all available land, a right based on ancient custom, remained untouched, a fact confirmed by a series of princely decrees.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, at this time, in both Romanian Principalities, all the land was already occupied and even cultivated.

However, soon after the peace of Kuchuk Kainarji (1774), and of Jassy (Iasi) (1792), which established the Russian protectorate of the Romanian Principalities and started to mark the end of Turkish domination, limitations on the right to land began to emerge (Mitrany 1930; Platon

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<sup>15</sup> The land law, known as “urbariu,” for example, issued by Grigore Calimach in 1768 stated that “a peasant who paid his dues in kind and labour had a right to all the land he needed” (Mitrany 1930, 21).

1998). The first decree for limiting the peasants' right to the use of the land was issued by the Moldavian ruler Alexander Moruzzi, in 1803. Since the landlords were allowed "to reserve for their own use one-fourth of the meadow land," the document restricted the peasants' right to graze no more than "sixteen large animals in Bessarabia, twelve in the Moldavia plains, and six in the mountain region" for each household (Mitrany 1930, 22). The Convention of Ackermann (1826), which gave the Romanian Principalities internal autonomy under the joint protectorate of Russia and Turkey and the right to be ruled by native princes, brought new restrictions on the Romanian peasants' rights (ibid). For example, under the rule of Ionita Sturdza, a Moldavian prince, the peasants' ancient rights to the unlimited use of the land were severely restricted. His decree from March 10, 1828, establishing the right for the "perpetual landlord" to use "the third part" of arable land and meadows, was the first document which recognized "the landlords as proprietors" (ibid). In addition, the increasing heavy taxes and many other burdens imposed on the peasants in both Romanian Principalities created free ways for boyars to acquire the possession of land of the yeomenry (free peasantry, or the so-called *razesi* in Romanian), bending the back the Romanian peasantry even more (Mitrany 1930; Berindei 1998). The situation was even stranger since the national princes granted privileges to the boyar landlords that the Phanariote princes had refused to allow.

In Transylvania, where Romanians were marginalized and considered only "a tolerated population," political activity was oriented toward acquiring civic and political rights, in harmony with the spirit of the epoch (Platon 1998, 154). The union with the Church of Rome opened an extensive field of action for the Romanians in their efforts for national struggle. For instance, because of its magnitude, as well as the problems and principles it raised -- some in advance of the ideas of the French Revolution -- the 1784 peasants' uprising, known as "Horea's

revolt,” had European echoes and significance (Iorga 1925; Platon 1998, 154). It also emphasized the immense social dimensions of the Romanian national movement, specifically a “Romanian issue” in Transylvania (Platon 1998, 154).

The wakening of Turkish authority, as well as the growth of the Austrian and Russian influence, created a unique situation in the Romanian provinces, namely “a political no man’s land” in which the boyars’ power became almost unlimited (Mitrany 1930, 23). Unlike in England, where “the aristocracy had power and no privileges,” or in France, where “the aristocracy had privileges and no power,” in the Romanian Principalities “the boiars had both power and privileges” (ibid). Furthermore, in the words of N. Soutzo, cited by Mitrany (1930, 23), “the average size of the Romanian estate was eighty-five times greater than the average English large estate.”

As a result, the first national rising in the Balkans, the Greek Hetaeria<sup>16</sup> movement under the leadership of Alexander Ypsilanti, had echos on Romanian soil during the early nineteenth century (Iorga 1925; Berindey 1998). In this light, in 1821, Tudor Vladimirescu, a Romanian patriot from Muntenia, used the opportunity to instigate a popular revolt against “these dragons - our ecclesiastical and political chiefs -- who have devoured our rights” (Mitrany 1930, 24). Heading his army of “pandours” (peasant soldiers in Oltenia – Western or Lesser Walachia), Tudor Vladimirescu rapidly dominated Oltenia, entering Bucharest on March 21, 1821 (Berindei 1998, 203). Unfortunately, Russia failed to help the liberation fighters and even condemned both the Romanian and Greek movements. Consequently, the two insurrections were doomed to failure. Therefore, the first revolt of the Romanian people was not against outside political oppression, but against domestic upper-class social and economic exploitation.

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<sup>16</sup> “Hetaeria:” “a Greek secret society which was preparing a general insurrection against the Ottoman Empire” (Berindey 1998, 203).

The removal of the Phanariot system in Moldova and Muntenia in 1822 had particularly important consequences for the evolution of the two Romanian Principalities. In addition, the Treaty of Adrianople, signed in 1829 after the Russian-Turkish wars, obliged the Ottoman Porte to give up its monopoly of the main Romanian products (Berindei 1998; Cartwright 2001). Consequently, the Romanian Principalities no longer had the obligation, imposed for centuries, of supplying food and other resources to Constantinople. Moreover, Moldova and Muntenia obtained the right to maintain free commercial relations, leading to the status of important grain suppliers for some Western European countries. Unfortunately, Russia's role as a protector continued to persist and even to enjoy an expansion.

However, in keeping with the Adrianople Treaty, under the direction of General Count Paul Kisselev, the new governor appointed by Russia for both Romanian Principalities, and in cooperation with the Romanian elite, the Russians soon started a program of political modernization. In this context, assemblies, called "divans" (*divanuri*), were created in both capitals, Bucharest and Iasi, in which the greatest landowner boyars and the highest clergy and ecclesiastical authorities had to make the fundamental laws of their countries (Mitrany 1930, 26; Cartwright 2001, 14). As has been remarked by Cartwright (2001, 14), unsurprisingly, the peasantry in both principalities was "neither included nor represented" in the divans. These laws (constitutions), known as the "Reglements Organiques" or the "Organic Statutes" and issued in 1830-1832, established a codified body of laws to govern property and economic relations between peasants and landlords (Otetea 1985; Berindei 1998, 206; Cartwright 2001, 14).

In both countries, the Organic Statutes made "the landlord the owner of all the lands of the village" (Cartwright 2001, 15). Yet, as has been emphasized by Mitrany (1930), the two laws differed considerably in their provisions relating to land rights and labor dues. Hence, in

Muntenia the Statute was much fairer in the assessment of labor services, but it was much greedier in regard to the peasants' right to land. After Russia's 1834 withdrawal of its army from the Principalities, the Romanian princes from both countries continued to serve the cause of modernization, including encouraging rural education (Otetea 1985; Berindei 1998). According to Mitrany (1930, 207),

Ghica had the merit of setting up about a thousand schools in the countryside, thus contributing to the 'modern' awakening of the Walachian peasantry. They both encountered the increase of cereal crops, the development and modernization of the capital and the Danube cities, especially the development of highest education at St. Sava College in Bucharest and the 'Mihaileana' Academy in Iasi (Iassy).

Although in some respects the Organic Statutes represented the beginning of modern life in the Romanian territories, favoring entirely the landlords and the boyars in agriculture, the laws "marked the high tide of rural feudalism" in both Romanian Principalities (Mitrany 1930, 42; Otetea 1985; Berindei 1998; Cartwright 2001).

### **6.3 Rural Property Relations between the Organic Statutes and WWI**

The liberation of the peasants from their feudal obligations, ensuring their desire for the land ownership, was one of the basic conditions for modernization of the Romanian provinces. Yet, it could not be achieved only by allotting land to the peasants under the existing political conditions. More complex and profound reforms were necessary, aiming to reach both the unification of the Romanian territories and the independence of the country from the Ottoman Empire.

On the international side, if the Congress of Vienna ignored the Romanians, the Paris Congresses of 1856 and 1858 restored the national autonomy of the Romanian provinces, not only reducing Turkish rule to a nominal suzerainty but also stopping Russia from making use of these provinces as a military highway to Constantinople. Placed under the Great Powers'

protection, which replaced Russia's exclusive and oppressive protectorate, the Principalities had to be governed by popularly elected native princes in the light of the new Constitutions (Otetea 1985; Berindei 1998). According to Article 27 of the 1856 Paris Treaty, the Ottoman Porte was obliged to convene a special assembly in each country, an *Ad hoc Divan*, "representing the interests of all the social classes," to formulate and submit the wishes of the countries to the Great Powers (Mitrany 1930, 46).

The Western Powers also sought the modernization of the Romanian Principalities by giving the people a chance to improve their existence through agrarian reform. Yet, the very powerful Romanian boyars with special feudal privileges as landlords still opposed any plan of agricultural reform. When 15 Moldavian peasants, members of the ad hoc divan in Iasi, expressed their wishes regarding the agrarian problem in an 1857 meeting, the landlords angrily denounced their "communistic tendencies" (Mitrany 1930, 46). In this context, it was expected that no reference about agriculture would be found in the agenda for the work of this divan. Finally, the European Commission of the guarantor powers waiting in Bucharest to receive the conclusions of the Iasi and Bucharest divans had to report that "nothing had been done to further the solution of the agrarian problem," adding that "if this reform were to be left in the care of the two interested parties, it will never be dealt with equitably" (p. 47).

The emancipation of the peasants and even the abolition of serfdom in some European countries (Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Serbia), however, provided significant examples for Romania. In 1848, for example, the Transylvanian Diet abolished serfdom, resettling the peasants but without any compensation (Mitrany 1930). Later, in 1854, an imperial patent established, for those communes inhabited by Romanians, that 75% of the ground was to be taken up by holdings of up to 50 hectares (ha), while at the same time the villages were to be

provided with commons and woodland. Since Bucovina was annexed by Austria in 1774, the reform of 1848 put in possession of its inhabitants the whole rural (*rustical*) land which they had owned before the annexation. Even the Romanian peasants from Bessarabia (Basarabia) (the Eastern part of Moldova, occupied by Russia in 1812) were better treated than their fellows in the free Principalities, receiving, after their 1861 emancipation, larger holdings (about 11 to 18 hectares) than the largest distributed across the Pruth (Prut) River (7 3/4 ha in Moldova and 5 1/2 ha in Muntenia), in addition to common grazing lands.

Consequently, the representatives of the Great Powers concluded that in the Principalities little progress would be made before resolving the rural problem, and it seemed that this “must be imposed from outside” (Mitrany 1930, 45; Cartwright 2001). In this light, wishing to improve the peasants’ conditions and to regulate the relationship between landlords and peasants, Article 46 of the 1858 Convention of Paris stipulated that “all Moldavians and Walachians will be equal before law, fiscal and other obligations, and equally eligible for public functions” and, in addition, “all privileges, exemptions or monopolies that certain classes may enjoy shall be abolished” (Berindei 1998, 219). Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the Western view toward the Romanian Principalities was not neutral. Romania’s rich soils were already being considered as possibilities for developing “the corn-growing needed for the expanding towns of the West” (Mitrany 1930, 44). In other words, the Romanian territories had to become “a new market for the manufacture of western industries,” as well as “a new source of food supplies for their workers” (ibid). In spite of all these international conjunctures, the solution of the agrarian problem in the Romanian Principalities was postponed for another six-year period.

When, in 1859, Colonel Alexandru Ioan Cuza was elected as Prince of the two Principalities, the Romanian people achieved not only a “Union prince” but also a “prince of

reforms” (Berindei 1998, 221). The Central Commission at Focsani -- a joint body consisting of eight members from each province and charged with the drafting of bills -- which had begun functioning on May 22, 1859, drew up a series of laws, including the 1860 draft land reform law. After long and passionate debates, on April 6, 1862, the Conservatives submitted to the Assembly the draft under which “the peasants were released from feudal obligations but lost the holdings they used” (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970, 386; Otetea 1985, 351; Berindei 1998). Cuza, however, fearing a peasant rising, opposed the bill and refused to sanction it. Although a land reform was still far from being accepted, the year of 1863 marked a significant event for Romania’s agriculture and rural areas, namely the secularization of the monasteries’ estates, through which more than a quarter of the country’s territory became the state’s property (Iorga 1925; Otetea 1970).

On Cuza’s request, on March 28, 1864, Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania’s Prime Minister, put forward his reform draft, which “gave the peasants all the land they then occupied,” upon some payment made to the landlords as compensation for the services and the tithe which had been abolished (Mitrany 1930, 48 and 50; Otetea 1970; Otetea 1985). Yet, the radical liberals and the conservative group, forming the so-called “monstrous coalition,” amended the bill, forcing Cuza and Kogalniceanu to dissolve the conservative-controlled Assembly and to launch their reform (Mitrany 1930, 49). Finally, based on *Kogalniceanu’s Bill* of March 28, the Law for the Regulation of Rural Property Relations was promulgated by Cuza on August 26, 1864 and amounted to the “legal abolition of feudalism” (Cartwright 2001, 17).

According to the 1864 Land Reform, 467,840 peasant families were put in possession of 1,766,258.25 hectares (ha) of land (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970; Berindei 1998; Cartwright 2001; Balanica 2005). In this context, the former serfs (*clacasi*) were settled as owners of the land they

had previously rented. More specifically, in both provinces the amount of land for peasants was calculated in accordance with the number of cattle they possessed, receiving between 4 and 8 ha in Moldova and between 2 and 6 ha in Muntenia (Mitrany 1930; Cartwright 2001). The peasants without cattle had to receive smaller holdings, generally insufficient for their living, with the result that they were forced to sell their labor power. The landlords also had to grant holdings to newly-married peasants from the reserve lots. As Otetea (1970) has noted, approximately 66% of the country's land was in the landlords' and the state's hands, the rest being the peasants' properties. Therefore, vast estates continued to exist.

Under these circumstances, it was not unusual when, with the complicity of the local state representatives, the landlord manipulated the implementation of the law to his advantage (Otetea 1970; Cartwright 2001). Having the right to select the third part of his estate, for example, in many villages, the peasants were allotted the poorest portions of land (sandy soils, marshlands, and/or eroded steep slopes), or, worse, there was insufficient land to establish viable family farms for all. In the case of the latter situation, the peasants were allotted land from the state's reserve, but the system was extremely slow, obliging the entitled peasants to wait many years for their holding or ignoring them entirely. In the case of surplus after distribution, the land had to remain in the landlords' estates. Often, the parcels were inaccurately measured or landlocked, with the peasants being obliged to pay a toll to the boyar for the privilege of crossing his land. Moreover, the peasants who received land had to pay a considerable amount of money to their landlords for the loss of their land, payment which was to be spread over 15 years (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970; Cartwright 2001).

According with this scheme, however, the land did not address those peasants who had previously been free from servitude. Since they neither rented land from the landlord nor

performed labor services for him, according to the Act these peasants did not receive any land, remaining only with their old holdings for houses and gardens. The Land Law of 1864 was intended to free the serfs, but it did not completely do away with feudalism in agriculture (Otetea 1970; Cartwright 2001). As a result of the fact that many peasants received insufficient plots and, in addition, had to pay for their new properties, the system of great estates serviced by peasant labor continued and even intensified. In other words, although juridically the peasants became free, economically only the big landlords' estates were emancipated. Preserving the land of the former serfs and ensuring significant compensation from both the State (in State bonds) and the peasants (in money), the 1864 Land Reform enriched the landlords, leaving many peasants worse off than they were before or improving conditions very little for many of them (Iorga 1925; Mitrany 1930).

In the period which followed Cuza's abdication in 1866, the feudal relations in agriculture, in which the landowners, on account of their vast land estates, still represented a considerable economic and political force, had to coexist with the simultaneous development of the capitalist system. The compromise between the landowners and the bourgeoisie was, finally, consolidated by the installation of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty in Romania, with the new fundamental Act of 1866 instituting a constitutional monarchy (Otetea 1970). Yet, despite these changes, Romania still went through periods of political instability. Moreover, it would not become an independent state until 1877, after the war of independence with Turkey (Berindei 1998).

Despite the efforts to eliminate elements of feudalism and promote modernization, the Romanian peasants remained impoverished in a backward agrarian country. As Sabates-Wheeler (2004) has argued, in 1866, when King Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen came to power, 85%

of the population of Romania inhabited rural areas, with only 20% of arable land under cultivation. Moreover, indebted to the state and the landlords, the peasants continued to provide labor to the landlords through a system of “agricultural contracts” (Mitrany 1930, 66) which, in Roberts’s words, quoted in Cartwright (2001, 18-19), were simply “the confirmation of the old servitudes in contractual form.” To these, it is worth adding another feature of the post-1864 rural economy - “absenteism” amongst the boyars, whereby estate management was transferred from the landlord, who moved to the town or out of the country, to professional managers (*arendas*) (Mitrany 1930, 70). Some of these land managers were aliens, especially from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and established exaggerated high prices for rent.

While industry started to expand and, in agriculture, peasants began increasingly to use farming machinery and new farming tools, with crop production and cereal exports increasing considerably, the peasants’ situation was far from satisfactory. Over three-quarters of the peasant families continued to have either too little land or no land at all. Tenancy contracts were very rigid, putting extreme pressure on the peasants (Berindei 1998). The enforcement of this feudal system was confirmed by a series of documents, including the Agricultural Labor Act of 1898, which outlawed agricultural strikes and “made labourers criminally liable for breaches of their seasonal contracts” (Cartwright 2001, 19). Taking into consideration this new development, the Romanian Marxist writer Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea characterized the rural economy following the 1864 agrarian reform as exhibiting “neoserfdom” (*neoiobagie*) and saw the reform as a cause of the terrible 1888/89 and 1907 peasant risings (Mitrany 1930; Cernea et al. 1981, 196; Cartwright 2001).

The promise made by the Romanian Government during the 1877 Independence War campaign not only was not kept but also aroused the expectations of the landless peasants. As a

result of the perpetual, inequitable land distribution and the oppressive methods practiced by the landlords, as well as the 1887 drought which resulted in the villagers' starvation, several bloody confrontations of the peasants occurred from the spring of 1888 to that of 1889 in various parts of the country, including the Romanian Plain around the capital (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970; Cartwright 2001). For instance, one revolt that started in Urziceni, a small town located in the Ialomita Plain, North-East of Bucharest, had, within a matter of days, spread to the surrounding villages. Before long, the peasants entered the town of Calarasi, on the left bank of the Danube River, an event followed a short time later by other revolts in a number of Southern counties, including Dambovita, Ilfov, and Vlasca, and even in Moldova (Otetea 1970). Although the uprising was put down and approximately 1,000 peasants were killed, many agricultural issues remained, proving once again the superficiality of the state's intervention in the agrarian problem.

In 1907, rural tensions exploded throughout the country as a genuine peasant war erupted in response to land scarcity, intensified exploitation, exorbitant rent prices, and poverty. The most violent uprising broke out in February 1907, in Botosani County in the village named Flamanzi, against Mochi Fischer, a lessee who had created a great land trust in Northern Moldova (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970; Otetea 1985; Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). In March, the apparently unorganized peasants, armed with pitch forks, axes, and scythes, devastated the houses of certain lessees, attacked the boyars' estates, town halls, Jewish inhabitants, and even engaged in confrontation with the police and army. Although a considerable number of peasants were killed and injured, the uprising spread over the counties of Dorohoi and Iasi, in the North-Eastern part of Moldova, with peasants demanding the reduction of rent.

In March, the revolt continued to extend to the Southern counties of Moldova, followed by those in Muntenia, with the greatest height in Teleorman County. They then continued through Oltenia to Mehedinti County, in the Western extremity of the Romanian Plain. In other words, the uprising covered the entire country, reaching unimaginable proportions and reactions. As Otetea (1970) pointed out, the peasants not only set fire to the landlords' houses but also, in some places, divided the grain, cattle, and land among themselves. In some towns, they sought out the landowners, the big lessees, and even the prefects. Desperate and unable to stop the revolt, the Conservative cabinet resigned, being replaced by the Liberals. The response of a government coalition, Conservatives and Liberals, was once again brutal, ordering the Second Army Corps to put down "the last great European *jacquerie*," which led to the deaths of 11,000 villagers in a single week and the destruction of many houses (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1985; Eidelberg [1974] cited in Siani-Davies 1998, 66; Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). By March 20, the uprising had been quelled, leaving behind a disaster in the villages but obliging the government at least to revise the existing agrarian laws.

The most significant consequence of the revolts was the introduction of new legislation in 1907 and 1908. Issued on December 23, 1907, the new law on agricultural contracts, for example, was significantly different from its predecessors. Having the aim to improve the peasants' situation, the law was devoted to a much greater extent than the previous farming agreements to protecting the laborers instead of the employers (Mitrany 1930; Berindei 1998; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). In addition, to assist in a better distribution of seasonal labor, the law also set up an agricultural employment bureau, and established the minimum wages of agricultural laborers and the maximum rent that could be asked from the peasants who rented land (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970). Another set of laws was designed to satisfy in some respects

the land needs of the peasantry. In this view, in 1908 the Rural Fund House or the Rural Office (*Casa Rurala*), a rural credit bank, was created to facilitate purchases and leases, with half the capital being provided by the State (Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Balanica 2005). Its main purpose was to facilitate land transfer, passing land from the powerful landlords into the peasants' hands. As such, it was seen to signal the weakening of the economic domination of the latifundia. The next year, another law was passed under which state-owned estates, together with the land properties belonging to churches, villages, and cultural and charitable institutions, had to be leased to the peasant associations (Otetea 1970). All these measures reduced the exploitation of the peasants, but did not resolve the land problem.

As for domestic and foreign reactions, some important points deserve mention here. First, on March 24, 1907, a large meeting of workers in Bucharest protested against the exploitation of the peasantry (Otetea 1985). The workers from many counties supported the rebel peasants and, in addition, many intellectuals spoke and wrote in defense of the peasants' agricultural problem. The uprising of 1907 also had a significant resonance with Romanians from Transylvania and even in some European countries. Lenin, for example, compared the consequences of the 1907 Romanian uprising with those of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia.

Both the internal and external reactions regarding the implementation of the government's measures were skeptical. In this light, Sabates-Wheeler (2004, 9), quoting Bolovan et al. (1997, 360), wrote:

...like the previous agrarian reforms, these laws were poorly enforced, a completely inadequate amount of land was made available for purchase, and the vast majority of the peasantry did not even qualify for most of the assistance made available.

In addition, Mitrany (1930, 89), quoting a French writer, specified:

One can predict with certainty that these texts will bring nothing but disappointment; for they tend to replace by artificial and hasty combinations a natural evolution which could result only from a profound change in the habits of the ruling class.

Moreover, the most surprising reaction was that of King Carol, with “his narrow outlook towards the peasant masses” (Seton-Watson, quoted in Otetea 1985, 406). While the Conservatives and Liberal groups were in a continuous struggle for power, protecting their huge holdings and benefits of feudal labor, without any corresponding obligations, the King (1866-1914) never used his great power and influence to develop a solution to the rural problems (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1985). Thus, it is clear that none of the political representatives showed signs of having an interest in, or willingness to, implement a truly widespread and deep reaching rural reform. Nevertheless, the great solution for the Romanian land question would appear soon, as a result of both the War between the Great Powers and of the Russian Revolution.

#### **6.4 The Agrarian Reforms between the Two World Wars**

Excepting the First and Second Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, the period between 1878 and 1914 was a relatively quiet time in European foreign affairs. But both Balkan Wars alerted Romanian parties about the danger of poverty and inequality in the countryside. Specifically, Romania’s participation in the Second Balkan War brought not only an additional territory, annexing Southern Dobrogea, but also a new international experience, exposing the Romanian peasant soldiers to less divisive forms of society (Otetea 1985; Berindei 1998; Cartwright 2001). In 1913, the Liberal Party brought up for public discussion the issue of a new land reform. Moreover, in 1913-1914, the Social-Democrat Party launched the idea of entirely expropriating the large estates. Even some Liberal politicians started to recognize the necessity of the expropriation of the largest estates, especially those above 5,000 ha, in order to endow the

peasants with land. Yet, the drafts of the new reforms prepared by M. Constantin Stere, “the foremost ‘peasantist’ theoretician, and at the time the ‘eminence grise’ of the Liberal Party,” were considered by “the fine but very conservative monarch” King Carol and the Conservative Party as “too radical” and were shelved until 1917 (Mitrany 1930, 97).

The peasant land issue was far from being solved. The Commission for land reform, appointed in June 1914, performed no work in either 1914 or in 1915. Soon afterwards, the First World War broke out. In this context, King Carol I, who accepted armed neutrality, died on October 10, 1914, and was succeeded by his nephew, Ferdinand (1914-1927), who was committed to acting “exclusively in Romanian interest” (Otetea 1985; Fischer-Galati 1998a; Torrey 1998, 281; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Although well-educated, King Ferdinand lacked his uncle’s prestige. His wife, Marie, a granddaughter of Queen Victoria and closely related to the Russian dynasty, did not hide her inclination toward the Entente. Carrying on “a policy of national instinct,” Romania entered the war against Austro-Hungary, on August 27, 1916, in order to liberate Transylvania (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1985, 409; Giurescu 1998a, 258; Torrey 1998).

Although conscription reduced agricultural labor power, farming production was maintained approximately at the previous years’ level. Almost the entire 1914 harvest was preempted to be exported to Germany. Yet, when Turkey entered the war in October 1914 and closed the straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, Romania could no longer export grain, oil products, and timber using this route to the Western countries (Otetea 1985; Torrey 1998). Over the succeeding months, Romanian exports were directed to the rail roads, on which innumerable long trains carried huge amounts of the 1914-1915 harvests to the belligerent Central Powers. On the other hand, in order to ensure domestic supply and to please the Entente, the Bratianu

government took measures against excessive exports, introducing high prices and forbidding exports for a period of time. In addition, looking to restrict the benefit to the Central Powers, the Bratianu government allowed the British Bureau, opened in 1916 in Bucharest, to purchase a certain quantity of grain for storage (Torrey 1998; Otetea 1985). All in all, though, high prices enriched the great landlords and grain brokers, but negatively affected the poor people.

While the front was being maintained, in order to raise the morale of the soldiers, in the 1916 Parliamentary session in Iasi, the King's statements emphasized the necessity for a new land reform (Otetea 1985). In addition, a new party, the Labor Party, founded in April 1917 from the left wing of the National Liberal Party, pledged to seek sufficient land for the peasants. In the same month, King Ferdinand visited the front to encourage the soldiers and delivered the following speech:

Sons of peasants, who, with your own hands, have defended the soil on which you were born, on which your lives have been passed, I, your King, tell you that besides the great recompense of victory which will assure for every one of you the nation's gratitude, you have earned the right of being masters, in a larger measure, of that soil upon which you fought. ...Land will be given you. I, your King, am the first to set the example; and you will also take large part in public affairs.

(King Ferdinand, quoted in Mitrany 1930, 101)

Nevertheless, despite Ferdinand's public proclamation, the Austro-German-Bulgarian-Turkish military who occupied two-thirds of the country (Muntenia, Oltenia, and most of Dobrogea) for almost two years continued to impose a harsh military occupation, collecting impressive quantities of agricultural products from the population (grain, cattle, wine, oil) to sustain the war efforts of the Central Powers (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1985). Everything in the country was organized with authentic "Teutonic efficiency," which, according to Torrey (1998, 285), "drew admiration even from some Romanians." However, the massive requisitioning of agricultural products for war and the mobilization of the peasants were followed by severe

farming difficulties and a dramatic shortage of food. At the beginning, food rationing allowed each individual 400 grams of bread per day, though within a short period of time the quantity was reduced to half and only 150 grams of meat per week was allowed per person. Furthermore, the export of food to the Central Power countries was drastically increased. From December 1916 to November 1918, over two million tons of food was exported, excluding that taken from Bulgarians from Dobrogea and that consumed by the occupation forces (Torrey 1998). In this context, in May 1917, the Government issued a decree regarding the “compulsory cultivation of land,” with precise obligations for both landlords and tenants (Mitrany 1930, 99; Otetea 1970). Despite an acute shortage of agricultural workers, especially male peasants, over 80% of the arable land cultivated in 1915-1916 was utilized in 1917. All of this made life quite difficult for the population and often caused agitations against occupiers.

King Ferdinand’s fear of war and even a possible revolution, inspired by the 1917 Russian Revolution of February and especially by the October Socialist Revolution, were two plausible reasons for his promises of land reform and resulted in enactment of the 1917-1921 agrarian reform laws (Otetea 1985; Giurescu 1998a; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). The first land expropriation bill was presented to the Constituent Assembly in June 1917, coming into force in July (Iorga 1925; Cartwright 2001). However, the prolonged debates between the major Parties regarding the area to be expropriated were quite strong. While the Conservatives considered that they could accept for expropriation an area of 1,800,000 ha, the Liberals, who in 1914 wanted to expropriate only 1,200,000 ha, in 1917 proposed 2,500,000 ha (Mitrany 1930). Moreover, the Labor Party, whose members were Radicals rather than Socialists, demanded the expropriation of all estates exceeding 100 ha. Finally, the Conservatives forced a compromise for a fixed area of 2,000,000 ha of arable land to be expropriated from the largest landowners, in addition to the

Crown land already promised by the King (Mitrany 1930; Cartwright 2001). Nevertheless, the Labor Party's deputies considered the Government's proposals inadequate and voted against the bill. Garoflid, the Minister of Agriculture in 1920, who believed in the necessity of reducing the latifundia, labeled the work of the Constituent Assembly as being "not a piece of scientific reform, but merely an electoral manifesto" (Mitrany 1930, 107; Cartwright 2001). The law was strongly criticized even by some Conservative and Liberal leaders, who denounced it as "being based on a sentiment of class-struggle" (Mitrany 1930, 104).

The disintegration of Russian armies in Moldova and the complete chaos in Russia during the autumn of 1917 led Lenin, who had come to power, to call for peace. Without Russian help, and unable to fight on two fronts, the Romanian army signed an armistice with the Central Powers on December 9, 1917. Then, in the spring of 1918, the Eastern front entirely collapsed, forcing Romania to accept the conditions of the preliminary Treaty of Buftea (near Bucharest) (Mitrany 1930; Torrey 1998). Finally, the humiliating Treaty of Bucharest was signed on May 7, 1918, whose provisions intended to turn Romania into an Austro-German colony (Iorga 1925; Otetea 1985; Torrey 1998). Analyzing these Peace Treaties, Nicolae Iorga, a Romanian History Professor, pointed out:

They in effect reduced Romania to a mere land of exploitation by the Austro-Germans: a land in which the white negroes – as the natives were to be – must do their agricultural work under the whip of new masters, who were worse than the old Ottoman suzerains.

(Iorga 1925, 260)

In this historical context, although always opposed to the idea of expropriation, the Conservatives tried to temper their radicalism, including with request and for agrarian reform. The new proposal, the so-called *Garoflid Bill*, introduced in September 1918, aimed "for a general redistribution of the allotment of land" (Mitrany 1930, 109). More specifically, the

reform proposed a limited redistribution of land in the form of expropriation and the compulsory leasing of land to the peasant co-operatives (Cartwright 2001). Yet, the proposal failed.

However, taking into account the destruction caused by the war, as well as the burdens imposed by the Treaty of Bucharest, agriculture was seen as the basis for any future recovery. In this light, the new government discussions reexamined the measures for the compulsory cultivation of the soil (which had been in force in Moldova in 1917) and for compulsory agricultural labor.

On the eve of the end of WWI, then, the political classes, including the King, feared that the peasants without land were vulnerable to the propaganda of the radical left. This danger tended to contaminate the whole region, forcing the elites to admit that some form of land distribution was necessary. In this context, in November 1918 King Ferdinand reaffirmed the promise he had given in the previous year to transfer the Crown's land (over 113,000 ha, established by the Law on the Estate of the Crown in 1884) to the peasants of the Old Kingdom (Muntenia, Moldova, and Dobrogea). He also added Basarabia, which in the meantime had proclaimed its union with Romania (Iorga 1925; Mitrany 1930; Berindei 1998; Cartwright 2001).

In a matter of days, in November 1918, Germany and the Allies concluded an armistice and WWI came to an end, followed by the disintegration of the surrounding empires -- Austro-Hungary, Tsarist Russia, and Ottoman Turkey (Otetea 1985; Cartwright 2001). Equally important for Romania, on October 18, 1918, the U.S. President Woodrow Wilson had recognized the right to national self-determination of the people of the Austro-Hungary Empire. As a result, on December 1, 1918, the revolutionary assembly organized in Alba Iulia, in the heart of Transylvania, where approximately 100,000 peasants from all the Romanian provinces participated and proclaimed the independence of the province and the Union of Transylvania and Bucovina with the Old Regat, to form what became known as Greater Romania (*Romania Mare*)

(Iorga 1925; Mitrany 1930; Fischer-Galati 1998; Giurescu 1998a; Cartwright 2001). The post-war agreements signed by Romania – the Treaty of Saint-Germain (December 9, 1919) with Austria and the Treaty of Trianon (June 4, 1920) with Hungary – more than doubled Romania's territory, with significant consequences for agriculture and rural areas (Otetea 1985; Sabated-Wheeler 2004). As Cartwright (2001) has noted, the country's territory increased from almost 14 million hectares to just under 29.5 million hectares, out of which approximately 12.5 million hectares was arable land. Specifically, the Old Kingdom gained four new provinces, inhabited by a majority Romanian population: Transylvania (included Maramures, Crisana, and Banat) from Hungary, Northern Bucovina from Austria, Basarabia from Russia, and Southern Dobrogea from Bulgaria.

After the war, the government considered the peasantry's problem was one of the most important to be resolved. The "Resolution of Union" presented on December 1, 1918, in Alba Iulia, among many other significant things for the unified country, emphasized "radical land reform" as a major agricultural problem (Giurescu 1998a, 259). Under the pressure of the villagers, land reform was partially enacted on December 16, 1918, and finally promulgated on July 17, 1921 (Mitrany 1930; Otetea 1970; Otetea 1985; Cartwright 2001). The government hoped the reform would have a radical effect on the land profile of the country, taking into account the fact that the expropriations were directed to the big estates belonging to the Crown, aristocracy, religious institutions, and domestic and/or foreign absentee landlords. As a result, the issue of how much land would be expropriated from the latifundia, and, in general, how such expropriation would be carried out, were the focus of much debate in Parliament.

According to the December 1918 decree, the land was to be expropriated and transferred to peasant cooperatives, a vast operation proposed to be extended during the winter of 1918-1919

and the following spring. Later, *Mihalache's Bill*,<sup>17</sup> an improved piece of legislation for land introduced in 1920, proposed that each large owner be expropriated a maximum of 100 ha (Mitrany 1930; Cartwright 2001). Although the provisions of the law still favored the existence of the huge estates (maximum of 500 ha), it was immediately attacked by the landlords because it “would despoil the proprietors and destroy agriculture” (Mitrany 1930, 115). Moreover, since the creation of Greater Romania had resulted in the country being full of “foreigners,” each new province introduced its own land reforms, with variations adapted to local conditions, although these later had to be ratified by Parliament (Mitrany 1930; Hitchins 1994; Fischer-Galati 1998a, 293; Cartwright 2001, 32). The primary beneficiaries of the expropriations were the peasants with smallest properties and those who held no land, as well as those who served the country in the military. For them, each provincial assembly proposed that the optimum land holding be between 5 and 8 ha.

The task of completing the second act of reform was moved from the “Peasantists” to the “acknowledged spokesman of great landowners,” M. Garoflid, who again took office in the Ministry of Agriculture (Mitrany 1930, 115). Although he considered the small peasant holdings “uneconomic,” his bill to create many small holdings was characterized as “a compromise between differing social requirements” (p. 116). *Garoflid's Law* was promulgated on July 17, 1921, followed by a long and difficult process of expropriation and resettlement of the peasants (Hitchins 1994). After enactment, the law was considerably changed, especially during the Liberals' terms, in 1922, 1925, and 1926. Nonetheless, by the time the reform was complete over 6 million ha of land had been expropriated, with about 1.4 million peasants received almost 3.7 million ha arable land and the rest being distributed largely for communal grazing/pasture and forest use, as well as for the creation of a land reserve for various public needs (roads, town

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<sup>17</sup> M. I. Mihalache - the Minister of Agriculture in the short-lived Peasant Party government (Cartwright 2001).

extensions) (Hitchins 1994; Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 6.1). The most numerous were those farms under 5 ha, which represented almost half of the total agricultural area. Farms between 5 and 50 ha covered 35%, while those above 100 ha constituted 12.09%. Finally, those above 250 ha made up only 7.22% of land area (Table 6.2). Peasants had to pay 65% of the expropriation cost over 20 years, while the State reimbursed 35% of the expropriated lands to the former owners, offering long-term bonds.

Although the 1921 Land Reform signaled a fundamental reorientation of state policy toward the agrarian question, it was strongly criticized for a series of weaknesses, including discriminating against the country's national minorities. As a result of the fact that the Romanian custom of splitting family farms among children has been, and still is, an important factor in excessive land fragmentation, the land laws tried to prevent the proliferation of very small holdings by establishing the minimum size of land that could be created for inheritance (Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). However, the weakness of this approach lay exactly in its enforcement. Not only was it impossible in many cases to enforce but, moreover, a formal system of land registration did not even exist in a number of provinces. Equally, although the agrarian reform laws for the new provinces were not drawn up primarily with a view to undermining the status of the minorities, the situation was quite sensitive, given the mix of nationalities such as the Magyars and, to a lesser extent, the Saxons in Transylvania (Cartwright 2001; Hitchins 1994). Even if there were no intent by the administration to encourage discrimination, however, "the appearance of discrimination was primarily the consequence of the discriminatory system of ownership which it had inherited" – for instance, in Transylvania the Romanians had primarily been peasants, small holders or landless, while the Magyar landlords had owned around 90% of the properties over 500 ha (Cartwright 2001, 32).

Table 6.1

**The Effects of the 1921 Land Reform on the Distribution of Land Property in  
Greater Romania**

<b>Land Category</b>	<b>Total Land Expropriated (ha)</b>	<b>No. of Peasants Entitled to Land</b>	<b>No. of Peasants Resettled</b>	<b>Area Distributed to Peasants (ha)</b>
Arable	3,998,753.67			
Grazing	117,875.17			
Pasture	849,542.87			
Forests	889,948.48			
Orchards, Vineyards	14,580.25			
Building Land & Farm-Yards	14,723.62			
Barren	122,673.99			
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,008,098.05</b>	<b>1,979,083</b>	<b>1,368,978</b>	<b>3,629,824.75</b>

Source: Adapted from Mitrany 1930

Table 6.2

**The Distributions of Arable Land Property in 1927**

<b>Category</b>	<b>&lt; 5 ha</b>	<b>5-10 ha</b>	<b>10-50 ha</b>	<b>50-250 ha</b>	<b>&gt; 250 ha</b>	<b>Total</b>
No. of Owners	3,231,463	435,715	148,860	18,122	2,597	3,836,757
Percent	84.22	11.36	3.88	0.47	0.07	100
Total Hectares	6,280,994	2,919,853	2,392,691	1,505,259	1,305,672	14,404,469
Percent	47.29	18.77	16.26	10.46	7.22	100

Source: Adapted from the Fiscal Census of the Ministry of Finance cited in Mitrany 1930

Despite the high hopes of some, the Reform did not bring prosperity to all Romanian peasants. The existence of the very large estates, together with the extremely small peasant holdings, labeled by Mitrany (1930, 222) as the “two opposite evils,” was Romania’s major land problem. While the Reform abolished the large property, the small property was maintained and

even extended (small property constituted 87.58% of all land area in 1924 and 87.91% in 1927) (Ministry of Agriculture, cited in Mitrany 1930). It is true that many landless laborers ended up becoming poor owners, but it is also true that they never reached the status of the independent farmers. Thus, according to Bolovan et al. (1997), cited in Sabates-Wheeler (2004), the average plot of peasant land was around 3.8 ha, smaller than the 5 ha minimum considered necessary to be economically independent. Unfortunately, neither further expropriation nor available large properties for an eventual transfer to the peasants were possible. Therefore, in terms of the size of the new land properties, Romanian agriculture was redesigned on “the model of the small family farm,” which persisted throughout the interwar period (Hitchins 1994; Cartwright 2001, 35; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Balanica 2005). In the words of Turnock (1986, 77), quoted in Cartwright (2001, 35), “latifundia was replaced by minifundia.”

The Agrarian Reforms, promised to the peasants by the King in 1917, then, were eventually introduced between 1918 and 1921. There existed some significant differences from province to province, reflecting the specific economic and social conditions under which each province had developed (Hitchins 1994). From this event until WWII, Romanian agriculture passed through three distinct stages: the post-war recovery (1918-1928), the economic depression (1929-1933), and the post-depression recovery (1934-1939). The period 1918-1928 was one of slow and uneven recovery from the devastation of war and occupation, particularly between 1919 and 1921, followed by the implementation of the reforms and a relative stabilization of capitalism (Hitchins 1994; Fischer-Galati 1998a). The government’s policies, based on high protectionist tariffs, generous subsidies for industry, limited foreign capital, and a favorable tax structure, had ensured a certain level of prosperity.

Despite such changes, the major unsolved economic problem remained agriculture. The primary goal of the Land Reforms was the distribution of land to the peasants, motivated by both social and economic concerns. Nevertheless, the repeated political changes affected the process of implementation, which, finally, left many peasants dissatisfied. The figures from the official documents, for example, emphasized that approximately 32% of the peasants entitled to land in 1921 did not receive land at all because there was not enough (Mitrany 1930; Hitchins 1994; Table 6.1). In addition, the continued fragmentation of holdings through inheritance, rural overpopulation, unemployment, and the difficulties of obtaining credit caused many peasants to abandon agriculture and engage in non-farming activities. Moreover, the state investment in agriculture was considerably lower relative to that in industry. Consequently, agricultural productivity seriously decreased, and, according to Cartwright (2001), it did not ever reach the pre-war (1913) average yield per hectare at any time during the next 25 years.

In this context, the Peasant Party, which was in power from November 1928 to October 1930, saw that one of the solutions for solving the agrarian problem could be the development of a system of farming cooperatives (Mitrany 1930; Cartwright 2001). As a result, in 1931 the *Law on Co-operatives* was introduced, although the peasants were suspicious of State interference in their activities. As a result, the cooperatives were relatively unsuccessful (Cartwright 2001). However, many advocates of the new system laid out strong arguments in favor of the cooperatives. One, articulated in the 1924 *Argus Magazine*, emphasized the role of cooperation as “the determinant factor of progress” for agriculture, one that would tend to eliminate the further exploitation of the peasants (Balanica (2005, 96). Moreover, the cooperatives were seen as an excellent way to increase agricultural productivity and its distribution on the market, rural education, and technical support, together with the new loan

advantages. Despite this, though, analyzing this alternative approach to restructuring agriculture, as well as the limited impact of the cooperative movement, Turnock, quoted in Cartwright (2001, 38), characterized the cooperatives as “some kind of precursor to collectivization.”

The 1929-1933 world economic crisis affected Romania's agriculture and rural life on a wide scale, especially the small holdings, where some vestiges of semi-feudal production were still maintained (Otetea 1970). The distribution of the expropriated land to the peasants continued during the 1930s, resulting in significant changes in the structure of landholding (Hitchins 1994). While the rural land-purchasing associations, dominated by prosperous peasants, were able to buy a considerable amount of land from the remaining landowners, the poor peasants and smallholders were forced to sell their land. In addition, the larger landholdings, using new machinery and tools, introduced modern technology in agriculture and hired peasant labor. It is also noteworthy that the reform laws were concerned only with the distribution of land and did not provide peasants with animals, tools, and credit. Many holdings were too small to be economically viable, with the result that an increasing number of peasants returned to the pre-reform, or the so-called “neoibagist,” conditions of dependency, renting land to satisfy their needs (Hitchins 1994, 353). The agrarian reform thus did not improve the standard of living of most peasants and, in fact, many remained landless. In other words, not only did land reform not interrupt rural areas' social stratification but it actually favored its continuance in Romanian villages.

The prices of the agricultural products designed for export, especially grains, recorded a sharp reduction, while those for import goods dramatically increased (Otetea 1970; Otetea 1985; Hitchins 1994). The response of the Romanian landowners to the depression's effects was to extend the cultivation of arable land, especially for corn. For their part, though, peasant

smallholders were desperately trying to compensate the depreciation of the prices on the domestic market by increasing their agricultural production. In parallel, successive governments concentrated on exports, introducing tariffs on imports and attempting to provide subsidies for the agricultural exporters (Cartwright 2001). Although still lagging behind in many respects, Romania's economy, including agriculture, saw significant development, reaching in 1938 the highest level of production ever known in capitalist Romania. An extended cooperation with Germany during the second half of the 1930s, including a trade treaty signed in March 1939, not only guaranteed a market for Romania's agricultural products but also superior technical assistance (Otetea 1985; Fischer-Galati 1998; Cartwright 2001). Yet, for Berend (1986), quoted in Cartwright (2001, 42), "the trade relations with Nazi Germany were a direct consequence of the region's failure to tackle its economic backwardness." Overall, though, the agrarian reforms did benefit certain segments of the peasantry and thus had some favorable consequences for the economic and social life of the village and of the country as a whole.

## CHAPTER 7

### **SHIFTING RURAL PROPERTY: FROM PRIVATE TO COLLECTIVIZED LAND**

The Second World War and the immediate post-war decades were key focal points for the struggles over power in Europe and would have tremendous consequences for Romania's future, especially its rural economy. The war, with its increased needs for food and other agricultural products, forced Romania's government to make all possible efforts to increase the variety of agricultural production while maintaining the large estate properties. The 1945 law was accepted as the legitimate land reform after the war, through which peasant ownership was maintained. However, the period also saw the beginning of state domination over the peasantry's land. Soon, collectivization transformed the way land was owned in the countryside. Specifically, the large-scale collective farms replaced the peasant smallholdings as the village's primary means of production, sweeping away methods of farming that had lasted for centuries and generating a significant rural-urban exodus.

This chapter discusses the transformation of Romania's agriculture between 1939 and 1962, attempting to provide useful insights regarding land distribution during the war and the beginning of communist central planning. The focus is especially on agricultural collectivization, preceded by a succinct analysis of the fascist period and the 1945 agrarian reform.

#### **7.1 Romania's Agriculture in the War's Turmoil, 1939-1945**

As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, after 1937 German-Romanian economic relations moved to a new stage and were solidified by the March 1939 agreement. At first glance, the

treaty emphasized “the complementary nature of the two economies” in a system of regional trade, aiming to expand and diversify Romanian agricultural production under the technical assistance of Germany (Roberts 1951, 215). Yet, in evaluating the significance of this agreement, as well as Germany’s increasing economic monopoly in the Balkans, it is clear that Germany’s intention was to prepare a war economy in this region. Certain short-term advantages were recorded from these economic relations, but many disadvantages were also a reality. As Roberts (1951, 216) emphasized, Germany offered “a market for Rumanian agricultural products at prices which Rumania could not obtain elsewhere” and, in the absence of assistance from other great powers, Germany’s cooperation was a benefit for Romania.

Yet, the benefits were not unconditional. Opposed to the expansion of secondary industry in Romania, except for armaments, agricultural industries, and railways, Germany was largely only going to allow Romania the opportunity to produce vegetables and prepare to export only foodstuffs and raw materials, oil especially. According to Hitler, quoted in Otetea (1985, 479),

Romania had better give up the idea of having an industry of her own. She should direct the wealth of her soil, primarily wheat, towards the German market...Romania’s proletariat, which is infected with Bolshevism, would thus disappear and our country would never lack for anything.

According to the Nazi Reich’s plans, Romania’s economic subordination was gradually to result in the seizing of its national identity. Therefore, the most obvious danger was a political one, resulting from the possibility that Germany might “reduce Rumania to a colonial status” (Roberts 1951, 216).

In the field of agrarian policy, especially during the royal dictatorship (1938-1940), the middle-sized peasants were favored over the small peasants, who formed the majority (Hitchins 1994). This orientation was materialized by a government law issued in December 1938 and amended in January 1939, which established a Bank for the Industrialization and Valorization of

Agricultural Products (BINAG) to provide agricultural credit. However, as Roberts (1951, 211) noted, Article 6 of this law stipulated that “the main credit functions of this bank applied only to farms of over 5 hectares, thus overlooking the majority of the peasants.” Nevertheless, the desire to concentrate the peasant holdings, by dispossessing the peasants of their land, was no more successful in Carol’s regime than in previous ones.

In order to guarantee a sufficient agricultural production for domestic needs and export, Romania’s government initiated new activities in planning. In this light, in the fall of 1939 the Minister of Agriculture had to prepare “an annual crop plan” to be able to provide necessary seed and labor force for farms (p. 213). A master five-year plan conceived in March 1940 was even more ambitious. It offered solutions to the major problems of Romanian agriculture, such as offering affordable credits to worthy peasants, freeing the peasants from their dependence upon grain production, granting incentives for the diversification of crops, improving technical solutions, and diminishing the price gap between agricultural and industrial products (Hitchins 1994; Roberts 1951). However, the political crisis and the loss of territory in the summer and fall of 1940 produced a general dislocation of the economy and drastically changed or even cancelled these initiatives for agriculture.

Stimulated by royal patronage, though, in the 1930s there had been significant research activity, especially concerning village life. Most of this activity involved sociological studies carried out by the Romanian Sociological School, under the direction of Professor Dimitrie Gusti and his students. Focusing attention upon Romania’s realities, the studies were extremely beneficial in “getting away from the application of quite unsuitable Western political and economic concepts to the local situation” (Roberts 1951, 212). The studies of village life continued and, in several instances, such as Golopentia and Georgescu’s study (1942), produced

extremely useful collections of information for a better understanding of the agrarian question (for details, see also Chapter 3).

Although subject to the onerous 1939 Nazi-Romanian economic agreement, the royal dictatorship of King Carol II was able to retain Romania's neutrality until the beginning of 1940. However, given the interests of the Great Powers in South-Eastern Europe, as well as Romania's isolation and the lack of any foreign support, in 1940 Romania lost a tremendous part of its territory, a loss that had significant consequences for agriculture (Figure 7.1). More specifically, under the terms of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Treaty, signed on August 23, 1939, the Reich had recognized the Soviet Union's interest in Basarabia. Thus, on June 28, 1940, after a second twenty-four-hour ultimatum, Basarabia and Northern Bucovina were incorporated within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) (Roberts 1951; Otetea 1985; Fischer-Galati 1998a; Giurescu 1998c; Cartwright 2001). The message from Berlin, Rome, Belgrade, Athens, and Ankara for Bucharest was "not to jeopardize peace in the Danube Basin and the Balkans by putting up a military resistance" (Giurescu 1998c, 325). As a result, between June 28 and July 3, 1940, Romania was forced to cede to the Soviet Union 50,762 sq. km -- Basarabia 44,500 sq. km and Northern Bucovina 6,262 sq. km -- with almost 3.8 million inhabitants, of whom some 2.7 million were from Basarabia alone. In this way, Romania's neutrality came to an end.

The loss of these territories set loose other revisionist claims under German and Italian auspices. Shortly thereafter, on August 30, the Vienna Fascist Diktat -- the Second Vienna Award -- required Romania to yield to Horthy's Hungary one of its most fertile provinces, the Northern and Eastern parts of Transylvania, a territory of 43,492 sq. km with over 2.6 million people, the majority Romanian (Otetea 1985; Fischer-Galati 1998a; Giurescu 1998c; Cartwright 2001). As if this was not enough, on September 7, 1940, under the Treaty of Craiova, Bulgaria

secured Cadrilater (Quadrilateral), or the Southern part of Dobrogea. As a result of ceding Durostor and Caliacra counties to Bulgaria, the frontiers established by the Berlin Congress in 1878 were re-established. Therefore, under these circumstances, the British-French “guarantees” had no practical value and Romania renounced them (Giurescu 1998c, 321; Roberts 1951, 209).



Figure 7.1 **Romania and Its Lost Territories, 1940s**

Source: <http://www.presidency.ro/>

In this context, when a third of the nation’s territory had been ceded without any sign of resistance, in September 1940 Carol II was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, Michael, and fled the country (Roberts 1951; Otetea 1985; Fischer-Galati 1998a; Giurescu 1998c; Cartwright 2001). For Romania, however, the absurd result of the popular indignation over the loss of Northern Transylvania continued. It was materialized by the fact that the new government, headed by General Ion Antonescu, was a pro-Axis government, a fascist military dictatorship, which not only recognized the Vienna Diktat but also committed Romania to war against the Soviet Union.<sup>18</sup> Antonescu’s reformist tendencies were close to Carol’s reforms, concentrating on modernization of agriculture, in addition to military and industrial purposes. Yet, according

<sup>18</sup> Launched by Hitler in June 1941 (Roberts 1951; Fischer-Galati 1998a).

to Roberts (1951), as a result of the loss of Basarabia, Northern Bucovina, Northern Transylvania, and Southern Dobrogea, Romania lost 37% of its arable land, 44% of its forest land, 27% of its orchards, and 37% of its vineyards. In addition, from December 1941 Romania became thoroughly engaged in the war, with significant consequences toward agriculture.

The increased need for diverse agricultural resources for war placed agriculture at the center of the regime's economic planning. As an attempt to compensate for the loss of territories and the shortage of manpower and livestock, the majority of acts issued during this time contained specific war measures. Militarization brought both management and employees under the general direction and discipline of military officers. In this context, in 1941 several decrees were promulgated, subjecting all the adult rural population to compulsory labor service by granting the communal agricultural committees and the Ministry of Agriculture almost unlimited power to requisition labor and to coordinate production (Roberts 1951; Hitchins 1994).

Antonescu, now a Marshal, also approved other measures, including price and export controls, crop planning, state requisitioning of cereals, and control of livestock, as well as laws against agricultural sabotage and speculation.

Antonescu was especially concerned about the fragmentation of peasant holdings, considering this a fundamental cause of low productivity and rural poverty. His goal was to create viable holdings of 10-15 hectares, promoting the development of the agricultural middle class as "the backbone of the nation" (Hitchins 1994, 480). In this way, it was clear that many peasants who lacked the middle-class requirements would create a heavy social stratum, called "the agricultural proletariat" (ibid). Consequently, several instruments were proposed for solving the problems of agriculture, such as the agricultural associations (the so-called *obstisatesti*) and cooperatives.

According to the Law of June 1942 covering the organization of agricultural associations, a group of at least fifteen landholders residing in the same commune could constitute an agricultural association. The peasants were encouraged to combine their holdings in the interest of efficiency and profitability. The associations thus formed were empowered to buy agricultural equipment, seeds, fertilizers, and buy or lease land, as well as to obtain favorable credits. However, the associations were not independent bodies. Having to be managed by several trustees, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the result of the program was not as expected. As Roberts (1951) and Hitchins (1994) noted, by 1944 there were only about 200 associations, comprising 6,400 members and covering an area of 38,000 hectares. However, these associations were considered an attempt to improve the situation of the small peasants, utilizing in the most efficient way an uneconomic system of land holdings.

The cooperatives, as governmental agencies, became the principal recipients of agricultural credits and machinery imported by the state, largely from Germany. Given that the state was subsidizing import of large quantities of agricultural machinery and tools, the number of tractors almost tripled during two and a half years of wartime, from 3,296 in December 1940 to 8,250 in the autumn of 1943 (Hitchins 1994). In addition to Romania's traditional crops, such as cereals, potato, sugar beet, and sunflower, a significant amount of agricultural land was used for soybean, flax, hemp, cotton, tobacco, and vegetables. The crop diversification and agricultural processing plants not only stimulated the production of industrial and garden crops but also offered peasants a source of supplementary income, other than from wheat and corn. In this way, the cooperatives served as the major providers of specified quantities of foodstuffs to the state.

However, all these measures did not alter the fundamental structure of agriculture. The main crops continued to be wheat and corn, covering over three-quarters of the total land

occupied with cereals (Table 7.1). Yet, taking into account the demand of war for men and horses, the area cultivated with cereals (wheat, rye, barley, and corn) fell by about half, from 11,226,000 hectares in 1938 to only 5,879,000 hectares in 1945 (Table 7.1). Both the vegetal and animal production declined drastically in comparison with that reached in 1938/1939, after the recovery from the early 1930s economic depression (Table 7.2; Table 7.3). The total production of major cereals dropped from a 1938-1939 average of 2,398,900 tonnes to 1,702,000 tonnes in 1944, and even lower in 1945, reaching only 546,800 tonnes (Table 7.2). In livestock, as was to be expected, the greatest reduction was in horses, from over 2,158,000 to only 748,000 in 1945 (Table 7.3). Moreover, the number of draft animals declined almost half during the same period (48.15% horses and cattle), the most notable fall being between 1943 and 1945 when German and Soviet troops were on Romania's territory (Table 7.3). Although the number of tractors and machines significantly increased, given the conditions of Romania's agricultural land, with its small strip farms, they could not replace the draft animals.

As was the case with the whole economy, so was agriculture put on a war footing, for Germany's benefit (Roberts 1951; Seton-Watson 1985). Commenting on Romania's support for the Axis Powers, Cartwright (2001) emphasized that, between 1939 and 1944, Germany absorbed over two-thirds of Romania's cereal exports. Moreover, in the first part of 1944, about 99% of the country's agricultural exports were bought only by Germany. Impressive quantities of agricultural products left Romania's territory during the war. More precisely, between 1941 and 1944, Romania exported to Germany 85,000 wagons with grains, each containing 10 tonnes of grain, and in the first nine months after August 23, 1944, 63,000 wagons of grain were delivered to the USSR (Giurescu 1998c).

Table 7.1

**Area of Main Crops, 1938-1945**  
(thousands of hectares)

Year	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Maize (Corn)	Potatoes	Sugar Beet
1938	3,818	482	1,278	651	4,997	193	48
1939	4,079	488	1,096	589	4,932	207	53
1940	2,078	92	588	433	3,567	110	37
1941	2,283	88	522	438	3,251	112	55
1942	1,485	58	588	502	3,099	154	37
1943	2,148	84	587	527	3,012	172	60
1944	2,819	174	610	640	3,225	221	53
1945	1,890	107	596	627	2,659	191	37

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000

Table 7.2

**Output of Main Crops, 1938-1945**  
(thousands of tonnes)

Year	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Maize (Corn)	Potatoes	Sugar Beet
1938	4,821	517	832	463	5,117	1,804	731
1939	4,453	432	816	487	6,051	1,988	855
1940	1,376	53	496	371	3,743	744	518
1941	1,986	55	391	333	3,347	854	567
1942	855	25	332	337	2,182	1,199	335
1943	2,319	68	587	500	2,884	1,629	739
1944	3,289	166	451	476	4,128	1,905	714
1945	1,066	44	267	258	1,099	893	201

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000

Table 7.3

**Numbers of Livestock, 1938-1945**  
(thousands)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Horses</b>	<b>Cattle</b>	<b>Pigs</b>	<b>Sheep</b>	<b>Poultry</b>
1938	2,158	4,161	3,165	12,768	34,666
1939	2,043	4,254	2,926	12,851	35,406
1940	1,095	2,643	1,770	8,288	22,036
1941	1,103	2,765	1,655	8,003	23,055
1942	1,113	3,087	2,001	8,093	22,151
1943	978	3,315	1,906	7,478	20,383
1944	...	...	...	...	...
1945	748	2,484	1,020	5,628	11,872

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000

In sum, the new approach, envisioned by the 1942 Law to overcome the agrarian impasse, differed from that emphasized by either Carol's dictatorship or the National Peasant Party. While Carol's regime aimed at the creation of medium-sized properties, the Peasant Party stressed cooperatives, credits, and diversification of production, creating the small peasant-holding on the Western model. Yet, according to Otto von Franges, cited in Roberts (1951, 238), the traditional peasants' associations "showed an admirable balance between individualism and collectivism, between control and liberty," sharply contrasting with agricultural cooperatives, which were obliged to neglect the poorer peasants. In his view, the associations were "the only possible compensation for the fragmentation of peasant properties and the only means of obtaining a decent improvement of productivity." The 1942 Law was thus "a bridge to the agricultural policy of the post-1945 government" (ibid).

## **7.2 The 1945 Land Reform**

The massive Soviet offensive on the Romanian front, which began on August 1944, was especially critical for the country, making the need for agrarian reform imperative. In this

context, the act of August 23, 1944, when King Michael organized a coup and Antonescu was arrested, brought Romania to the side of the Allies until the end of WWII (Roberts 1951; Seton-Watson 1985; Giurescu 1998c; Fischer-Galati 1998b; Cartwright 2001). Two days later, Michael formally declared war on Germany and Romanian troops fought alongside the Red Army. The main objective was the reconquest of Northern Transylvania from Hungary (officially restored to Romania on March 9, 1945), but the Romanian army also played an important role on the front in the Tatra Mountains for the liberation of Slovakia (Seton-Watson 1985; Ionescu 1998). These significant military actions, together with the interruption of the oil and grain exports to Germany, “shortened the war in Europe by six months” (Turnock [1986], cited in Cartwright 2001, 51). Unfortunately, the decisions taken at the Yalta Conference of February 1945 did not reflect Romania’s efforts, placing the country into the sphere of influence of the USSR, followed by the installation of the communist regime and collectivization of agriculture.

The fact that the war had depleted stocks of grains, draft animals, and equipment meant that Romania’s agriculture was highly disorganized. In addition, there had been a considerable dislocation of population, in which the old officials, including the greater part of the large landowning class, had fled before the Red Army’s advance in Moldova and Southern Bucovina (Roberts 1951; Seton-Watson 1985). Only in Muntenia and Southern Transylvania was the old bureaucracy, many having fascist sympathies, still in charge. Moreover, both of the old political parties, the Liberals and National Peasants, were devastated. Despite these unsettling aspects, there were very few recorded cases wherein the peasants took land either from the absentee owners or from those who fled the country. In this context, the Russian authorities had to ensure order, selecting their representatives from communists or persons ready to obey communist

orders. Many communists were Romanians, but Russians also included a considerable number of Hungarians and Jews, some from Basarabia, whose leaders were perceived as “foreigners without God or nation” and “horrible hyenas” (Seton-Watson 1985, 206; Deletant 1999, 41). The communist activists were supported not only by the Soviet authorities but also by the poor and oppressed Romanians.

Land reform was a pressing problem at this time and a commission for the study of land reform was set up by the new Premier, General Nicolae Radescu, after his appointment in December 1944. However, the commission was composed mostly of landowners and little progress was made. According to Otetea (1985, 502), the fundamental point of the draft program of the National Democratic Front, issued in January 1945, was the “immediate implementation of the land reform.” As usual, the reform was postponed by the government. In response, in early February, the Ploughmen’s Front, a radical peasant group labeled by Seton-Watson (1985, 204) “the rural branch of the Communist Party,” launched a campaign for “the forceful occupation of the landowners’ estates by the peasants” (Otetea 1985, 502). Even Dr. Petru Groza, as a Deputy Prime Minister, encouraged peasants to anticipate the land reform by seizing the land of the large estate owners. Equally, the Romanian newspaper *Scanteia*, in its February 13, 1945 edition, informed its readers about the expropriation by peasants of some estates in Prahova and Dambovita counties (Deletant 1999). Often, under the gendarmes’ fire, but with the support of teams of workers, the peasants divided the estates without waiting for the law, a phenomenon extended throughout the country in a matter of weeks.

However, as has been emphasized by Roberts (1951), the sporadic actions of the peasants did not result in a revolutionary situation. In reality, the Romanian peasants were tired by the marches and requisitions of the German, Russian, and Romanian troops, as well as the loss of

their sons, fathers, animals, equipment, and health. Political tension reached an apogee on February 24, when the communists organized mass demonstrations on the Palace Square, in Bucharest, and in many other places throughout the country. The first official step to the changes in agriculture occurred on March 6, 1945, when the Groza government, “the Soviet choice,” came into power (Roberts 1951; Otetea 1985; Seton-Watson 1985; Hitchins 1994; Ionescu 1998; Deletant 1999, 42; Cartwright 2001). The new political orientation, together with the presence of the Soviet army in Romania, constituted the decisive factor which, according to Ionescu (1964, 108), “doomed the plots of the bourgeoisie and landowners of Romania, backed by the western imperialists.”

One of the first acts of the Groza government was to promulgate a decree-law for an agrarian reform, the bill being issued on March 22, 1945 (Otetea 1985; Seton-Watson 1985; Hitchins 1994; Ionescu 1998; Balanica 2005). Article One of this law declared that:

Agrarian reform is a national, economic, and social necessity for our country. Romanian agriculture should be based upon sound and productive farms, which are the private property of those who cultivate them.

(Roberts 1951, 293-294; Cartwright 2001, 58)

All landed estates exceeding 50 hectares were expropriated, as well as estates belonging to those who had collaborated with the Germans, war criminals, those guilty of the country’s disaster, and those who held property of more than 10 hectares but had not themselves tilled their land during the previous seven years. In other words, the reform restricted all privately-owned properties to 50 hectares, including both arable and flooded land, orchards, meadows, ponds, and marshes. The proprietor had the right to select the 50 hectares of land, which had to be located together in one place. The estates of less than 10 hectares were excluded from expropriation. The law also exempted from expropriation the crown’s land, lands belonging to certain specified cultural and philanthropic institutions, urban communes, and cooperatives, as well as the church and

monastic properties, and rice fields. In some exceptional situations, such as very well-organized “model farms” under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture, the exemption from expropriation was extended to 150 hectares (Roberts 1951, 295; Cartwright 2001, 55).

For implementation of the law’s provisions, a special village committee of 7-15 members had to draw up a list of those people who were entitled to receive land, as follows: cultivators mobilized and those who had fought against Nazi Germany; widows, orphans, and any war invalids; landless peasants; agricultural laborers and crop sharers who had worked on the estates being expropriated, irrespective of the village in which they lived; and peasants owning less than 5 hectares (Roberts 1951; Otetea 1985). These local committees had to be coordinated by a district committee operating with the Ministry of Agriculture. Expropriation was without compensation. Comparing this reform with the 1921 Land Reform, Cartwright (2001) has emphasized an important difference. While the expropriation provisions were considered by the Romanian government “ethnically blind” in 1921, the provisions of the 1945 reform clearly had an “anti-German orientation” (Cartwright 2001, 55). However, the 1945 Law avoided expropriation based on collective guilt.

Significantly, in order to convince peasants of the law’s commitment to private property, the government required payment for the land to the state. The peasants had to pay for their new lots, in money or in kind, the price having to be equal to the annual average harvest of one hectare. This meant that, the sum was small and did not constitute a financial burden for the individual peasant. The proprietors had to pay immediately 10% of the purchase price, the remainder having to be paid in ten years for peasants with little land and in twenty years for the landless peasants. The law also stipulated that the new land, which was received without

obligations, “could not be divided, sold, leased or mortgaged, either in whole or in part” unless they had the authorization of the Ministry of Agriculture (Roberts 1951, 295; Cartwright 2001).

The 1945 law expropriated or confiscated 1.4 million hectares from over 140,000 individual holdings, of which about 1.1 million hectares were distributed to the peasants and the rest retained as the state’s reserve (Roberts 1951; Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975; Otetea 1985; Hitchins 1994; Ionescu 1998; Cartwright 2001; Balanica 2005). Allotments were made to around 800,000 peasants, out of over 1.1 million peasants’ claims, each beneficiary receiving an average of approximately 1.3 hectares. According to the law, over 400,000 families of landless peasants now had their own homesteads and another 500,000 improved their economic position. In addition, the land which became the state’s property (over 300,000 hectares) was designated to be used as the State Agricultural Farms (SAF) (*Gospodarii Agricole de Stat*, GAS). The law also stipulated the confiscation of all equipment and draft animals, which were then used in the newly created centers for renting agricultural machinery to peasants, called the Machine and Tractor Station (MTS) (*Statiuni de Masini si Tractoare*, SMT). This represented a crucial step toward the later development of agricultural cooperatives and the collectivization of agriculture. The reform was completed by the spring of 1948.

Compared with the 1921 reform, which distributed an average of around 3 hectares per family, the 1945 agrarian reform resulted in even greater numbers of economically unproductive plots of less than 3 hectares. According to Romania’s 1941 agricultural census, cited in Ionescu (1998), as a result of the regrouping of land ownership after the 1921 Land Reform, the number of plots under 5 hectares of arable land decreased from 47.29% to 33.30% (Table 7.4). Consequently, the plots between 5-10 hectares and 10-50 hectares increased, from 18.77% of all plots to 26% and from 16.22% to 21.4% respectively (Table 7.4; see also Table 6.2). However,

the 1945 reform disturbed that relative extant balance. Specifically, the 1948 agricultural census recorded an increase of the plots under 5 hectares from 33.3% to 57.7% but a decrease from 26% to 23% for the plots between 5-10 hectares, and from 21.4% to 16.3% for those between 10-50 hectares (Ionescu 1998; Table 7.4). The creation of such an enormous number of small farms clearly indicated that the peasants' economic and social status hardly changed. Dramatic changes in the organization of agriculture did not occur, but would take place soon, after the Communist Party had secured its political power (Hitchins 1994).

Table 7.4

**The Distributions of Arable Land Property in 1927, 1941, and 1948**  
(percentages)

<b>Properties</b>	<b>1927</b>	<b>1941</b>	<b>1948</b>
Under 5 ha	47.29	33.3	57.7
5-10 ha	18.77	26.0	23.0
10-50 ha	16.26	21.4	16.3
Over 50 ha	17.68	19.3	3.0

Source: Adapted from the 1927 Fiscal Census of the Ministry of Finance cited in Mitrany 1930; and the 1941 and 1948 Romania's Agricultural Censuses cited in Ionescu 1964, and Ionescu 1998

However, the Land Reform of 1945 did dramatically reduce the number of very poor or landless peasants while increasing the number of middle-income peasants. In this way, an old dream of the Romanian peasantry, for which they had continuously fought, had come true. This solved the fundamental problem in the process of bourgeois-democratic changes in Romania – a process which had been left incomplete in the stage of the revolution of 1948 and during the subsequent period. As Otetea (1985) has pointed out, the landowners as a class disappeared, undermining the foundations of the old socio-political regime in Romania. Yet, taking into account that the minimum lot necessary to sustain a household of four persons is 3 hectares, the

1945 Land Reform did not create a nation of prosperous small-holders. Indeed, of all of the plots of arable land under 5 hectares in size, those under 3 hectares represented “more than half of the agricultural exploitations of Romania” (Roberts 1951, 297; Ionescu 1998, 413). Therefore, the law did not resolve the problems of strip farming, progressive fragmentation of properties, and low productivity. Providing only temporary relief for many peasants, it had only marginal value.

Some scholars connected this aspect of the agrarian reform with the larger communist project for rapid industrialization. For an under-developed country like post-war Romania, modernization based upon heavy industry was seen as the best solution by the communist government. Kideckel (1993) and Verdery (1983), for example, argued that a push strategy worked throughout the country soon after the 1945 reform, dislocating the unprosperous poor peasants and encouraging them to engage industrial labor. Converting the peasants into workers aimed to resolve another acute Romanian rural issue: overpopulation. Yet, judging the 1945 land reform in light of the political context, Roberts (1951) argued that the 1945 Land Reform cannot be considered a pure Romanian reform. Specifically, with the Soviet occupation troops in the country and the Soviet Union’s control of the entire Romanian economy, the immediate aims of the reform seemed to be political rather than economic. According to Roberts (1951, 298), “in its general lines and intentions the agrarian reform clearly derives from Lenin’s interpretation of class relations in a predominantly agrarian society: the need of eradicating the feudal remnants and of gaining of support of the peasantry by fulfilling its desire for land.”

### **7.3 On the Road to Agricultural Collectivization, 1945-1962**

The period between 1945 and 1962 was marked by profound political and economic changes in Romania, including the collectivization of agriculture. The first phase, which lasted from August 23, 1945 until December 30, 1947, is described in terms of Marxist political

philosophy as a “duality of power,” characterized by the cooperation of the old state’s institutions, above all the monarchy, with the new revolutionary elements, especially communists (Ionescu 1964, 107; Ionescu 1998, 409). This provisional stage ended on December 30, 1947, with the forced abdication of King Michael, “an anomalous monarch in a universe of burgeoning people’s democracies,” and the creation of the Romanian People’s Republic (*Republica Populara Romana, RPR*) (Roberts 1951, 310). It prepared the “qualitative change” for the second stage of “the dictatorship of the proletariat” and “the construction of socialism” (Roberts 1951, 312; Ionescu 1964, 107; Ionescu 1998, 409).

Both the internal and international situations facilitated this political evolution. Analyzing the internal situation of this time, Ionescu (1998, 410) emphasized the existence of still “rooted illusions” regarding “the democratic spirit of the bourgeois-landowning parties,” together with the peasant rejection of the idea that the National Peasants were the enemies of the peasantry. On the other hand, the presence of the Soviet army in Romania not only represented the guarantees that the Romanian people would be quiet but also played an important role in the establishment and consolidation of the communist dictatorship. Unfortunately, the Groza government, formed under the personal supervision of the Kremlin’s emissary Andrey Vyshinsky, and the Romanian communists were far more subservient to Moscow than Antonescu had ever been to Berlin (Ionescu 1964; Georgescu 1991; Ionescu 1998; Fischer-Galati 1998b; Deletant 1990).

In addition, Stalin demanded \$300 million in war compensation from Romania, payable in six years in cash and in kind, an immense amount for a country destroyed by the war and affected by droughts in 1946 and 1947. Cartwright (2001, 60) calculated that this debt represented “one million tonnes of cereals, 300,000 head of livestock and 60,000 tonnes of other

produce.” As Ionescu (1964, 113; 1998, 414) remarked, the Russian “exploitation was so blatant that it soon became common knowledge, no matter how much the Romanian communist press and radio tried to gloss over the fact.” Even during his 1945-1946 trial, Antonescu still continued to describe Soviet Russia as “his country’s main enemy,” a statement with which many peasants agreed, given the USSR’s later impact on Romania’s economy, particularly agriculture (Ionescu 1964, 114; Ionescu 1998, 415).

After the installation of the “popular democratic” regime, the communists took new steps to build up a well-organized and disciplined party, already composed of around 100,000 peasants who received party membership at the same time that they received land in 1945. As explained in the previous section, in 1945 the landlords had been liquidated as a class, but this act created small-scale economic activity in agriculture. Yet, according to Lenin, quoted in Roberts (1951, 323), “small-scale exploitation generates capitalism and the bourgeoisie constantly, daily, hourly, in an elemental way, and on a mass scale.” Therefore, the immediate task of the Romanian communist regime was “the liquidation of hostile forces,” including the wealthy farmers (Rom. *chiaburi*; Russ. *kulaks*), for which a reign of terror was instituted (Ionescu 1964, 110; Roberts 1951; Georgescu 1991). Long in advance, the regime had planned to severely restrict the rich peasants, following that with their removal from positions of influence and, finally, especially after 1949, their complete liquidation. The historical parties, such as the National Peasant and National Liberal Parties, were dissolved in August 1947.

On the other hand, after the continued criticism against “the predatory activity of the rich peasants and the sabotage committed by estate owners,” in the spring of 1948 Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the Party’s Secretary General, continued to deny rumors that the land would be taken back from the peasants (Roberts 1951, 322). In this light, in March 1948 a new decree

permitted peasants to possess even more land than they could till, thereby encouraging them to employ day laborers. Looking at the April 1948 RPR Constitution, Roberts (1951, 311) and Georgescu (1991) found that the People's Republic was thus defined at this time "as arising from the struggle against fascism, reaction, and imperialism rather than from the overthrow of landlords and capitalists." Furthermore, the Constitution of 1948 recognized that land and industrial and commercial establishment could be held as private property. However, Article 11 pointed out the possibility of expropriation and nationalization of industrial, mining, banking, insurance, and transport enterprises, "if demanded by the general interest" (Ionescu 1964, 157). In this context, a strong propaganda campaign was undertaken, convincing the poor and middle-income peasants, who were not identified with the kulaks (*chiaburi*), of the need to unite in collective farms or Agricultural Production Cooperatives (*Cooperative Agricole de Productie*, CAPs) (Roberts 1951; Deletant 1999; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Marking out the party line for 1949, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, quoted in Roberts (1951, 323), argued that: "It follows that the complete victory of socialism is impossible so long as private property in the means of production, in the towns and in the countryside, including private property in land, continues to exist."

The introduction of the communist terror was soon accompanied by an economic disaster, worsened by two consecutive droughts in 1946 and 1947, among the worst ever experienced in Romania. Specifically, the absence of grain, especially corn, the peasants' major source of food, brought about a tragic famine, above all in Moldova, in the winter and spring of 1946-1947. Agricultural production in 1944-1947, for example, was less than half of that in 1938-1939 (Roberts 1951; Ionescu 1998; International Historical Statistics: Europe 2003; see also Table 7.2). Moreover, the joint Soviet-Romanian enterprises, the so-called SOVROM, established in

May 1945, were perhaps the most harmful economic innovation, giving the USSR a controlling position at key points in the Romanian economy (Roberts 1951; Bossy 1957; Ionescu 1964; Verdery 1983; Georgescu 1991). The USSR, for example, had to assist Romanian agriculture with tractors, chemical products, seeds, and even agricultural specialists. Although they were created on a 50-50 basis, the Romanian state had to grant the Russian “partners” special privileges and monopolies, being thus a reminiscent form of the 1939 Romanian-German trade agreement.

Since 1944, the Romanian government had aimed to secure complete control over the supply and distribution of agricultural products. According to Cartwright (2001), Decree Number 565, issued in July 1945, stipulated that the state would be the official buyer of agricultural products, establishing as a criminal offence any action of economic sabotage and speculation. In this light, each cereal farmer was obliged to deliver a part of his harvest to the National Cooperative Institute for a price established by the state (below the market rate). In 1946, the compulsory quotas were canceled, but the peasants still had to give the state a certain proportion of their harvest as an agricultural income tax. Agricultural production became then the subject of great campaigns (seeding, harvesting), for which long lists of “volunteers” and party activists from the villages and towns were opened (Woolley 1975, 13).

As part of its currency reform program, in August 1947 the state confiscated all the merchandise in shops and factories, as well as bought the year’s entire cereal crop. The farmers and workers obtained a privileged exchange-rate, but inflation had seriously weakened the Romanian leu, accentuating the population’s poverty (Ionescu 1964; Ionescu 1998). All these, together with the disorganization of production brought about by communist mismanagement, led to multiple popular revolts between 1944 and 1947, which, among other things, involved the

removal of technical installations in the factories and, in the country, of agricultural machinery. There were widespread arrests in the villages and cities, as well as various armed interventions.

Nevertheless, the radical transformation of the country was accelerated by the abolition of the monarchy on December 30, 1947. Professor I.C. Parhon, a distinguished endocrinologist but one of the communist party's sympathizers, was appointed as a head of the new proclaimed Republic (Ionescu 1964; Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c). The 1948 Nationalization Law was followed by efforts to engage in the central planning of the economy, which started with two one-year plans, in 1949 and 1950, and continued with a number of five-year plans, the first being established for the 1951-1955 period (Fischer-Galati 1998c; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Since most state investments were in heavy industry, the other economic departments, including agriculture, received less attention. In addition, with industrialization, the urban population grew significantly at the expense of the rural population, putting tremendous pressure on food supplies and housing. The Romanian peasants showed strong opposition not only to the low price structure imposed by the communists for their products but, after 1949, to the beginning of agricultural collectivization.

Collectivization was the most radical attempt to solve Romania's agrarian problem. According to Fischer-Galati (1998c, 442), it was "designed to create the basis for effective agricultural production commensurate with the industrial development of the country and to carry the social revolution to the bourgeois-oriented village." In Cartwright's (2001, 69) words, the purpose for introducing new legislation for land reform was, on the one hand, "increasing the size of the state land reserve" and, on the other hand, "preventing the further expansion of the medium sized commercial sector." In this light, based on Decree No. 83 (March 2, 1949), the regime expropriated, without compensation, all agricultural lands up to 50 hectares (Roberts

1951; Ionescu 1964; Kideckel 1993; Deletant 1999; Cartwright 2001). More specifically, accusing peasants of sabotage, exploitation, and failure to comply with regulations, the Decree ordered the confiscation and transference to the state of all farmers' land and buildings, including the family home, together with their livestock and inventory. Based on its magnitude, especially in its legal and administrative terms, Cartwright considered collectivization "a revolution of great complexity" (Cartwright 2001, 83).

The confiscated private properties were mostly genuine farms, highly mechanized and modernized, owned by kulaks (*chiaburi*), who had been deemed "wholly parasitic" (Cartwright 1964, 68) and "enemies of the people" (Verdery 2003, 41). The land, almost one million hectares, became the state's property (Ionescu 1964; Deletant 1999; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Specifically, the expropriated land was transformed into the socialist sector of agriculture, included either into the state farms or collective farms. Yet, unlike the 1945 and previous agrarian reforms, when expropriation was not accompanied by persecution of the owner, the 1949 Law was brutal and followed by the mass deportation and organization of many labor camps (Roberts 1951). Without prior notification, for example, approximately 17,000 families, many from Banat, the South-West region of Romania with large and prosperous farms, were forced by the militia to leave their homes at night for destinations unknown. In some cases, they were simply abandoned under the free sky, without shelter, food, and sources of water, in the driest region of the Romanian Plain (Baragan), many of them losing their lives. Many prisoners were "employed as slave labourers on the Danube-Black Sea Canal" and other labor camps were specially organized for those who were opposed to the communist regime, and particularly to collectivization (Georgescu 1991; Deletant 1999; Cartwright 2001, 79).

Nevertheless, by the end of the year, only 56 such farms (CAPs [Russ. *kolkhozi* or *sovkhozy*]), comprising 4,000 peasant families, had been created (Roberts 1951; Ionescu 1964; Turnock 1970; Georgescu 1991). The process of socialization of the land was very slow because of the tremendous resistance of the peasantry. The betrayal of the principles of the 1945 reform, on the one hand, and the oft-repeated assurances that collectivization of agriculture was not contemplated, on the other, were important factors increasing the hostility of the peasants toward the Romanian communist leadership and the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1950, for example, there were numerous peasant revolts, with attacks on local party headquarters and the destruction of documents belonging to local authorities. There was even the taking hostage of prominent party members and the militia and even the army had to be brought in against the villagers (Ionescu 1964; Fischer-Galati 1998c; Cartwright 2001).

Moreover, it is worth specifying the existence of many separated resistance groups in the Carpathian Mountains who fought against systematic communist oppression. In 1946-1947 there was some evidence they had united under the name “The Black Greatcoats Division” (Deletant 1999, 47), or simply “black coats” (Georgescu 1991, 236) and/or “the black jackets” ([*divizia sumanele negre*]) (Ionescu 1998, 430). Although their activity was more defensive than offensive, it helped the peasants barricaded in some villages against the communist authorities and even troops who were sent to enforce collectivization in the villages. Over 80,000 peasants were arrested and imprisoned for their opposition to the policy of collectivization (Ionescu 1964; Ionescu 1998; Georgescu 1991; Deletant 1999; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Since the resistance against collectivization had extended throughout the country, the government initiated special resistance trials in public for about 30,000 peasants who had chosen to fight in this way.

As has been emphasized by Ionescu (1964), the Central Committee resolution of March 3-5, 1949, the basic and “quite definitive” text with respect to collectivization (Woolley 1975, 12), focused on five non-socialist categories of agriculture: (1) agricultural proletariat (landless people); (2) poor peasants (1-5 ha); (3) middle peasants (5-20 ha before 1947; 5-10 ha after 1947); (4) kulaks (*chiaburi*) (20/10-50 ha); and (5) landlords (over 50 ha). Analyzing these distinct social classes, Cartwright (2001, 68) highlighted that the “peasant’s relation to the means of production” and “their family background” were the main criteria employed to determine class status. The situation of the size of the individual holdings in 1948 is shown in Table 7.5.

Specifically, the mass of the agricultural proletariat in Romania before collectivization was estimated to be over 250,000 families, who earned their living working on the *chiaburi*’s farms. Many of these peasants subsequently moved to the towns. The second category, the poor peasants, constituted the great majority of the agricultural holdings, i.e. over 3.3 million families, owning 57.7% of the total area in 1948 of which those with less than 3 hectares owned over half (Ionescu 1964; Table 7.5). The typical farm of these smallholders was split into five or six strips, separated from each other by several kilometers. Since the peasants were unable to use modern techniques, the aim was to liquidate these farms and to persuade their owners to join the collectives. Many smallholders were also a serious source of urban workers (Cartwright 2001).

The middle peasants (*tarani mijlocasi*), the so-called “pivot of the village” or the “pivot of agricultural production,” were those peasants who owned between 5 and 20 hectares (Ionescu 1964, 239 and 279). Yet, in 1947 the communists and some socialists stated that this category, over 450,000 heads of families, could not own more than 10 hectares. These prosperous social groups were considered by the communists not only to be “the natural allies of the urban working class” but also as “providing the most suitable basis for the construction of the new

farms” (Cartwright 2001, 69). The kulaks (*chiaburi*) were considered either those peasants who owned over 20 hectares (20-50 ha) or those who hired labor. Before the 1949 Law, these rich peasants were recognized as having an important role to play in agricultural production. However, the status of wealth of these peasants, holding 5.7% of the arable land, was clearly irreconcilable with collectivization (Table 7.5). Consequently, the government planned to liquidate them through the 1949 Decree, together with the remnants of the old landowning class, which held only 3% of the arable land.

Table 7.5

**The Distribution of Arable Land Property in 1948**

Size of Individual Holdings	Percent of Total Area	
Less than 1 hectare	7.1	
1-3 hectares	26.2	
3-5 hectares	24.4	
		57.7
5-10 hectares	23.0	
10-20 hectares	10.6	
		33.6
20-50 hectares	5.7	
Over 50 hectares	3.0	

Source: Probleme Economice, Sept.-Oct. 1948, cited in Ionescu 1964

Given this pattern of landholding, an important task of the communist government, then, was to intensify its propaganda toward the first three categories of peasants in order for them to accept living and working on collective farms. As has been emphasized by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, cited in Roberts (1951, 324), this transition from private to socialist property had to be made “gradually, by means of persuasion, and with the voluntary support of the peasant.”

The resolution also highlighted the establishment of the Machine and Tractor Stations (MTSs), as well as the future process of reorganization of the villages.

In 1949-1950, due to the peasants' strong resistance, as well as the lack of agricultural equipment and specialists, collectivization resulted in food shortages and low agricultural products, which affected the country's exports. As a result, by late 1951 the communist regime had instituted a new agricultural development policy, slowing down the process of collectivization (Bossy 1957; Ionescu 1964; Fischer-Galati 1998c; Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

Under this new policy, the focus was oriented toward the consolidation of the already-existing cooperatives, as well as the mechanization of the MTSs and preparation of qualified personnel. In addition, an unexpected step was the Central Committee resolution of September 18, 1951, which allowed the peasants to retain their land and animals even in the face of collectivization, but required them to work in certain voluntary associations for mutual profit and to deliver a part of their output to the state.

This was followed in August 1953 by the adoption of the "New Course," a more rational economic policy aimed at relaxing the extreme pressure placed on Romania's national resources by Stalinist requests (Bossy 1957, 207; Woolley 1975, 15; Fischer-Galati 1998c, 447). As Fischer-Galati (1998c, 447) noted, the policy of the "New Course" was a reflection of the "reappraisal of Romania's economic potential to attain the national goal." Applying specifically to collectives, the New Course policy allowed them to receive large donations of land from the state, as well as more technical capital and concessionary fiscal capital.

The shift from collectivization to cooperativization of agriculture in 1951 was welcomed by the peasants. Consequently, the number of agricultural associations (*intovarasiri agricole*) increased significantly between 1952 and 1958 (Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975). According to

Cartwright (2001), the associations were more popular and respected by the peasants than the collectives because the peasants had the latitude to decide how much of their own land they would contribute. Although the boundaries of their land were destroyed, the peasant still remained the owner of the plot. In addition, they were able to withdraw their land after only one season if they were not satisfied. Furthermore, the associations secured access to agricultural machinery, while maintaining their ownership of land. More importantly, unlike the collective, where the peasants were paid by their norms, in the associations the production was distributed according to the amount of land of each member.

The communist government considered cooperatives and association to be “a first and easier step in the process of collectivization,” as well as “only transitional forms to the final stage of kolkhozes” (Ionescu 1964, 237; Woolley 1975). Since the government considered these cooperatives socialist ownership forms, their high number could express the “progress made in the socialist sector of agriculture” (Ionescu 1964, 237). In addition, the years 1952 and 1953 brought three important political events. On the domestic side were the new Constitution, issued on September 24, 1952, and Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej’s appointment as President of the Council of Ministers (Premier), in June 1952, combining this position with that of Secretary-General of the Communist Party (*Partidul Comunist Roman*, PCR), which he had held since October 1945. On the international side was Stalin’s death in March 1953, which reduced some of the tensions in the country (Georgescu 1991).

As a result, in addition to the “de-Stalinization” process at the country level, several changes in the countryside took place (Georgescu 1991, 238). In 1952, for example, a new system of compulsory agricultural quotas was introduced, which remained in force until 1955 (Ionescu 1964; Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c). According to this system, the peasants

were obliged to deliver a certain quantity of their agricultural products to the state at the established (low) prices. However, the government not only established very high quotas for the rich peasants (between 590 and 825 kg/ha in comparison with 300-350 kg/ha for the middle-income peasants) but also reserved the right to even increase it by 25% while reducing the quotas for collective farms by 25% in their first year (Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975).

In 1955, the compulsory quotas were canceled, being replaced with a system of “contracting and purchasing” (Bossy 1957, 205; Ionescu 1964, 203). Through this system, the state planned for certain quantities of agricultural products to be obtained from the peasants by use of two to three-year advance contracts. Those peasants who agreed to sign a contract with the state were entitled to several benefits, including receiving short-term credits and seed at a reduced price, although the established price for their products was so low that, in many cases, it was insufficient to cover the production cost. In addition, in 1953 a tax relief to agricultural producers was issued, through which some taxes and delivery quotas for milk, meat, and wool were reduced and other debts and undelivered quotas from previous years were cancelled. These and a number of other concessions were welcomed, especially because most of the peasants in the mid-1950s were still uncollectivized.

Despite opposition by the peasantry, in certain places collectivization recorded a “modicum” of success (Fischer-Galati 1998c, 442). Some collective farms and agricultural associations were more productive than the private sector, which was still predominant. Most important, as a result of the gradual mechanization and development of the model state farms, as well as favorable weather, by 1953 agricultural production had increased, approaching the level of prewar Romania (Ionescu 1964; Table 7.6). While wheat production recorded important fluctuations and in no year between 1949 and 1955 did it reach 1938-1939 production levels,

corn production in 1955 was higher than in the pre-war period, being 5.8 million tonnes compared to the 1938-1939 level of 5.5 million tonnes (Table 7.6). Although several other records deserve attention, it is worth specifying that sugar beet production tripled, from about 600,000-700,000 tonnes to 2 million tonnes for the same period. This constituted an important source of raw material for the country's food industry (Table 7.6). However, given the loss of territory by Romania after WWII, this comparison should perhaps be done with some caveats concerning comparability.

Table 7.6

**Output of Main Crops, 1938-1939 and 1949-1955**  
(thousands of tonnes)

	<b>Wheat</b>	<b>Rye</b>	<b>Barley</b>	<b>Oats</b>	<b>Maize (Corn)</b>	<b>Potatoes</b>	<b>Sugar Beet</b>
<b>1938</b>	4,821	517	832	463	5,117	1,804	731
<b>1939</b>	4,453	432	816	487	6,051	1,988	855
<b>1949</b>	...	...	...	...	...	1,090	...
<b>1950</b>	2,219	182	325	283	2,101	1,601	633
<b>1951</b>	3,521	229	526	389	3,100	2,141	1,430
<b>1952</b>	2,975	211	518	429	2,520	2,257	890
<b>1953</b>	3,964	262	612	494	3,225	2,355	1,300
<b>1954</b>	2,140	170	386	357	4,953	2,397	1,408
<b>1955</b>	3,006	214	445	374	5,877	2,608	2,000

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000

It is important to recognize, though, that these objectives were attained only by force. Moreover, the physical annihilation of the rich peasants, the confiscation of agricultural products in the name of compulsory deliveries, the use of arbitrary price structures, and the general attack on traditional values, especially religion, brought the villages to the verge of revolution by 1953. Equally, by 1953 Romania's national and political identity has been almost entirely lost, as the

country was transformed into a Soviet satellite (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c). Significantly, however, despite such changes in the countryside during the first half of the 1950s the peasants has not been totally subdued, and agricultural issues continued to plague the regime.

One important role for Romania's agriculture at this time was providing the Machine and Tractor Stations (MTSs), which not only made available the machinery and drivers (employed directly by the state) for all kinds of agricultural works but also technical advice on the development of crop rotation, seed selection, and use of fertilizer. In addition, through the development of the MTSs, the state extended its power into the rural areas at the expense of the peasants' traditional independence. More specifically, the peasants had to create associations (*intovarasiri*) to increase their agricultural areas, which enabled the tractors and other machines to work properly. For their services, the MTSs required yearly group contracts with the associations, through which the land owners freely renounced their traditional land borders (Cartwright 2001; Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005). After 1948-1949, when the Romanian government expropriated the Crown domains and the other properties which had been exempted from expropriation in 1945, the MTSs became even stronger because all the private machines were transferred to them.

As a result of the state's inability to subdue entirely the peasants, the process of collectivization was again accelerated in the mid-1950s, with the government trying to convince the peasants of the advisability of joining the collectives (Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975; Fischer-Galati 1998c; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Persuasion and financial and technical aid now replaced the previous brutal methods of forced collectivization. Yet, some methods of persuasion (*munca de lamurire*) were seen as not fair, a fact recognized by the government, which admitted that "some methods had violated the principle of free consent" (Ionescu 1964, 297; Cartwright 2001).

In addition to the peasants' land, the collective farms received increasing amounts of land from the state, to the point that by 1956 almost a quarter of the entire land area of the collective farm sector had come initially from the state (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7

**Collective Farms: The Provenance of the Land, 1952 and 1956**

	1952	1956
Total	100.0	100.0
Given by the state	16.9	24.0
Contributed by owners	83.1	76.0
of which		
a) Poor peasants	24.1	25.0
b) Middle peasants	59.0	51.0

Source: N. Belli, Socialist Ownership in the RPR Agriculture, *Probleme Economice*, December 12, 1957, cited in Ionescu 1964

The state itself received impressive quantities of agricultural land through donation after 1948. Particularly in the early stages of collectivization, certain institutions and private owners were forced to “donate” their land (Woolley 1975; Georgescu 1991; Cartwright 2001). The largest institutional landowner in the Romanian villages was the Church. In 1948, there was a massive transfer of land from the abolished Greco-Catholic Church, whose land was entirely confiscated. The Orthodox Church also “donated” most of its land to the state in both the 1945 Land Reform and the 1949 expropriation Decree No. 83. Unfortunately, the great amounts of genuine donation, without compensation or fee, came throughout collectivization in the form of land given by all classes of peasants, who were exasperated by their perpetual debts and overwhelming obligations, especially the intentionally exaggerated high quotas for their

agricultural products. The heavy burden in meeting the quotas led many peasants to freely renounce their land and to migrate to the towns. In addition, illness and old age, as well as the departure of the younger members of the family to work in the towns, were frequently invoked motifs for land donation. Hence, while in the early 1950s about 75% of the total population lived in rural areas, by the mid-1960 the rural population had decreased to 61% of the overall population (Georgescu 1991; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2006; Table 7.8). In the words of Sandru, quoted in Cartwright (2001, 76), “the Communists had managed, through their politics and economics, to produce in the heart of the peasant a repulsion towards the land.”

Table 7.8

**Population by Area: Rural Population, 1930-1989**

<b>Year Census Date (C)</b>	<b>Total Population (millions of inhabitants)</b>	<b>Rural Population (as percentage of total pop)</b>
Dec. 29, 1930 (C)	14.2	78.6
Jan. 25, 1948 (C)	15.8	76.6
1950	16.3	n. a.
Feb. 21, 1956 (C)	17.4	68.7
1960	18.4	67.9
1965	19.0	66.3
July 1, 1966 (C)	19.1	61.8
1970	20.2	63.1
1975	21.2	60.7
July 1, 1977 (C)	21.5	56.4
1980	22.2	54.2
1985	22.7	50.0
1989	23.1	46.8

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2006, 2007; Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966

The “voluntary” removal of the Soviet armies from Romania in the summer of 1958, as well as the reinforcement of links with some Western nations, consolidated the Romanian Communist Party’s position vis-à-vis Moscow. In addition, the threat of “Khrushchevism” and the experience of the 1956 Hungarian revolution facilitated Romania’s transformation into a nationalist “independent” communist state (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c, 452). These opened new opportunities to Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej to proclaim the reduction of obligatory dependence on the USSR and the building of the Romanian socialist state. In this light, the PCR’s Plenum in November 1958 established as the main goal the acceleration of both the industrialization and the socialization of agriculture.

The main objective of the agricultural policy announced in 1958 was to obtain approximately 60-70% of the country’s entire agricultural output from the socialist sector by the end of the second Five-Year Plan, 1956-1960 (Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975). Taking into account the economic policy of the Romanian government (the development of heavy industry), it is clear that the major concern of the communist administration was regarding the food supply to the towns. Consequently, beginning in 1958 the government started to promote a gradual transfer of less unpopular associations into the collective farms, issuing some financial regulations which favored the cooperativized at the expense of the private peasants. In this context, many peasants freely joined the associations to protect themselves and in the hope of postponing the accession into the collective farms. Furthermore, in March 1959, the government issued a decree to expropriate the entire agricultural land of the rich and middle-income peasants (farms between 20 and 50 ha) if that land were not being directly cultivated by the owners. The decree also forbid sharecropping, land leasing, and labor hiring (Cartwright 2001). As a result,

for the first time after 1952, the rate of increase of the collective area was greater than that of the associations.

As Ionescu (1964) has detailed, in 1957 there were 2,564 collective farms covering 1,301,000 hectares, of which 1,179,800 hectares was arable land, representing 51% of total arable land in the country. Although at the end of the second five-year plan (1956-1960) socialist agriculture comprised 81.9%, of which 29.4% was state farms and 52.5% was collective farms, there still remained 1.8 million hectares of arable land outside the socialist sector. Consequently, at the Third Congress of the Romanian Communist Party (1960) Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej suggested that 1965 would be the year of collectivization's completion, even though this might leave some land outside the collectivized sector (Ionescu 1964; Deletant 1999).

The failure to collectivize all land can be explain through several factors. First, Romania had, and still has, large areas of upland, whose inaccessibility made it impractical to collectivize. Second, there still existed an important number of private farms and associations, which continued to refuse to be transformed into cooperatives. Finally, and most important, is the nature of collectivized agriculture itself, which is often considered "communism's greatest failure" because of its general low productivity and economic inefficiency (Ionescu 1964, 300). For example, the target for 1960 of 15 million tonnes of cereal grains, set by the Second Party Congress in 1955, was never reached and was only approached in 1957 a very good harvest year, when the records show some 11 million tonnes (Table 7.9). Moreover, it was even more difficult to achieve a production of 14-16 million tonnes in 1965, which the Third Party Congress had proposed in 1960 as its goal (Ionescu 1964). Various factors account for this inability to meet

Party expectations, amongst them being the shortage of machinery and trained personnel, as well as the still existent sabotage from the opponents of collectivization.

Table 7.9

**Output of Main Cereal Grains, 1955 - 1962**  
(thousands of tonnes)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Wheat</b>	<b>Rye</b>	<b>Barley</b>	<b>Oats</b>	<b>Maize (Corn)</b>	<b>Rice</b>	<b>Total Production</b>
1955	3,006	214	445	374	5,877	35	9,951
1956	2,436	136	291	305	3,932	37	7,137
1957	3,701	152	417	392	6,338	36	11,036
1958	2,914	124	305	250	3,657	37	7,287
1959	4,001	128	449	315	5,680	55	10,628
1960	3,450	103	405	284	5,531	49	9,822
1961	3,990	104	468	275	5,740	31	10,608
1962	4,054	75	419	96	4,932	20	9,596

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000; Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980

The pressure for collectivization nevertheless continued to grow. As a result, the number of collective farms (CAPs) increased considerably compared with that of state farms (GAS/IAS), especially after 1959 (e.g., from 1,027 in 1950 to 6,715 in 1962) (Ionescu 1964; Woolley 1975; Table 7.10). Both categories of farms recorded their highest growth rate in 1962, the year of the completion of collectivization. In 1962 the number of state farms was almost 600 and that of the collective farms ten times higher (6,715), a ratio maintained throughout the communist era (Table 7.10). The state farms were not only bigger but their size remained relatively constant - an average size of 2,500 ha before 1962 and around 5,000 ha after 1962. The collective farms, on the other hand, were much smaller, their average size increasing from 281 ha in 1950 to 1,683 ha in 1962, and to 2,374 ha in 1989 (Table 7.10).

Table 7.10

**Communist Agriculture: Farm Structure, 1950 - 1989**  
(Selected Years)

Indicator	State Farms					Collective Farms				
	1950	1962	1970	1980	1989	1950	1962	1970	1980	1989
Number of Farms	363	597	370	407	411	1,027	6,715	4,626	4,011	3,776
Average Size (hectares/ha)	2,075	2,964	5,646	5,003	5,000	281	1,683	1,953	2,259	2,374

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; Romanian Statistical Yearbook 1991, cited in Sabates-Wheeler, 2004

Although collectivization was seen as a goal for the nation, the rhythm of collectivization was very different in different parts of the country. The first three places in the country to complete the collectivization process were Constanta, Galati, and Timis Counties (Ionescu 1964). The first to do so was Constanta County, located on the Black Sea shoreline, in the historical province of Dobrogea, which announced completion of the collectivization process on October 19, 1957, five years earlier than the official date at the country level (Lup 2003). All these regions had vast estates and state farms, some of which were abandoned during and after the War by Bulgarians and Turks in Constanta (Dobrogea), and by Swabs (Germans) in Timis (Banat). In many counties, however, the peasants' resistance to collectivization remained strong. Even years after the Second World War, Romanians in general, and the peasants in particular, had hoped that the Americans would come back to save the country from communism and collectivization. Citing a communist document (Dossier 1447/68, Fond 7, 1948 of the Party's Regional Committee in Cluj), Cartwright (2001, 68) noted that "there were many in the countryside who were waiting for the imminent invasion of an Anglo-American force that would evict the Russians, restore the King and imprison the godless Communist leaders." Yet, the

Americans never returned. Daily assaulted by the activists and propagandists (many of whom were rural teachers, obliged by the local communist officials to persuade the villagers), the peasants finally ceded to their pressure, accepting membership of the collectives.

At the end of 1960 there were about 5,000 collective farms in the country, but many still had to make great effort to be considered models of agriculture. By the spring of 1962, over 3.2 million families were included in the socialist sector (Cartwright 2001, Paun 2002). In terms of surface area, 93.4 % of total agricultural land, representing 96% of all arable area, had been brought into the socialist sector, including state farms, collective farms, and a decreasing number of agricultural associations (Ionescu 1964; Cartwright 2001; Balanica 2005; Table 7.11). The remaining private lands, representing 6.6% of all agricultural land and 4% of the country's arable land, were located mainly in the mountain areas, places in which agricultural machinery could only be used with difficulty.

Table 7.11

**Agricultural Land Fund, by Property Form, 1962**

Property Type	Agricultural Land		Arable Land	
	thou ha	%	thou ha	%
Total	14,594	100.0	9,854	100.0
State farms	4,363	29.9	1,781	18.1
Cooperatives	9,277	63.5	7,673	77.9
Private farms	954	6.6	400	4.0

Source: Balanica 2005

At the country level, collectivization was considered to have been completed in April 1962 (Ionescu 1964; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Balanica 2005). Although collectivization in Romania was finalized four years earlier than had been expected, Romania was nonetheless the

penultimate country in Eastern Europe to achieve collectivization (Poland was the last). As a result, according to Parpala (1969, 7-8),

The agrarian problem, one of the oldest and most serious problems in the development of society, has been solved. By the accomplishment of cooperativization and the development of the technical-material basis, Romanian agriculture proceeded on the road of continuous progress ensuring even higher outputs while meeting the consumption demands of the population and the needs of the economy and having an increasing weight in the life of the country.

Yet, in his report on the conclusion of collectivization, presented at a special session of the National Assembly on April 27, 1962, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej not only emphasized the importance and the future direction of collectivization but also suggested need for collective farmers to make the full use of their private plots so as to increase agricultural production and to reach the country's domestic and external needs (Ionescu 1964). Despite the obvious shortfalls that still existed in production, then, the end of collectivization was strongly popularized in the country as a significant victory of socialism, even being introduced in 1962 as a compulsory topic of examination for students' high school graduation.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> I myself experienced this in my own high school graduation.

## CHAPTER 8

**ADJUSTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE PERSPECTIVE OF  
BUILDING THE “MULTILATERALLY DEVELOPED SOCIALIST SOCIETY”**

During the first half of the 1960s, the Romanian government established its crucial political goal -- the building of the Romanian socialist state and disengaging from the USSR, all while maintaining Stalinist authoritarianism. The death of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej in March 1965 and the appointment of Nicolae Ceausescu as a leader of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) (*Partidul Communist Roman*, PCR) marked the beginning of a distinctive communist stage, the so-called “golden age” (Fischer-Galati 1998c, 462; Cartwright 2001, 89). For almost a quarter of a century, Romania was ruled by an individual who evolved “from a leader apparently committed to modernization and liberalization in 1965 to a regressive neo-Stalinist despot by 1989” (Fischer-Galati 1989c, 462). Insatiable for power and adulation, as well as for a cult of personality, Ceausescu became the absolute leader of Romania from November 1974, when the Eleventh Congress of the Romanian Communist Party provided him the dual role of President of the country and General Secretary of the Party. From 1979, Ceausescu’s power became absolute. From this position, Ceausescu was the moral author, among other draconian schemes, of the new radical campaign of rural planning, called systematization (*sistematizare*), which was, in fact, the beginning of the destruction of the identity of Romania’s traditional villages (Turnock 1991a; Cartwright 2001; Ronnas 1989).

This chapter examines some characteristics of agriculture and of rural settlements during Ceausescu's dictatorship, particularly the trends of development of agriculture and organization of rural property, as well as the campaign to systematize the countryside.

## **8.1 Agriculture within the Political Economy of the Golden Age, 1965-1989:**

### **Development, Decline, and Collapse**

#### ***8.1.1 Foreign Politics and Agriculture***

By 1965 Gheorghiu-Dej's foreign and domestic policies were heading toward "de-Russification" and "autonomy," a very different path compared with the other countries of Eastern Europe (Georgescu 1991, 246-247). In this context, Romania vehemently opposed the economic integration and specialization proposed by the supranational Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), regarding "a division between the industrialized north and the agrarian south" (p. 245). More specifically, after 1955, when COMECON was reactivated, the Soviet Union proposed to create "a division of labor and economic specialization" in Eastern Europe (Georgescu 1991, 243; Tismaneanu 2002; Deletant 2004). The Northern socialist countries, especially East Germany and Czechoslovakia, became responsible for industrial development, while the Southern ones, including Romania, had to provide raw materials and agricultural products. This new vision created conflicts between the developed North and the developing South, especially taking into account Bulgaria's position, which quickly accepted Moscow's view.

In this light, in 1964 the Romanian government rejected the Russian Professor E.B. Valev's proposal for the creation of an "interstate economic complex in the lower Danube region" (Georgescu 1991, 245) to which, Romania would have had to contribute the entire Southern and

South-Eastern part of its territory (100,000 sq. km, 42% of its territory), together with Northern Bulgaria (38,000 sq. km), and the Southern Soviet Union, around the Northern part of the Danube Delta (12,000 sq. km). The major objective of this proposal was clearly to foster agricultural development, wherein Romania was to become the “agricultural hinterland” of communist Europe (Tismaneanu 2002, 48). However, Romania considered the plan “an attempt to dismember national economies and national territory” and rejected it in the name of national interest (Georgescu 1991, 245; Deletant 2004; OSA, 2009).

Although at home efforts towards economic liberalism were drastically constricted, between 1965 and 1974 Romania’s diplomatic initiatives were quite remarkable, taking into account the political context of Eastern Europe. In this light, of considerable importance was the preferential treatment in trade, granted by the Common Market in 1973, followed by the first trade agreement concluded in 1976 (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c). Also worthy of mention, in addition to the admission of Romania into GATT in 1971, are the negotiations for Romania’s membership in both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), completed in 1972. Furthermore, as the only member of the socialist camp that maintained diplomatic relations with Israel after the Six-Day War (1967), Romania became the first communist country to secure most-favored nation status from the Congress of the United States, in July 1975<sup>20</sup> (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c; Deletant 2004).

Moreover, the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany (1967), as well as Romania’s neutrality in the Sino-Soviet conflict, its closer ties with Yugoslavia, its refusal not only to support Moscow’s wish for hegemony over the international communist movement but also to allow Warsaw Pact maneuvers on Romanian territory, and its non-participation in the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, seriously tested the limits of

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<sup>20</sup> Romania lost most-favored nation status in 1988 (Georgescu 1991, 275).

Soviet tolerance and brought greater Western recognition. Equally important, several prestigious visitors to Bucharest, such as French President Charles de Gaulle in 1968 and United States President Richard Nixon in 1969, brought goodwill and Western economic aid to Romania. Consequently, foreign trade was gradually reoriented toward the West and, after 1971, a series of Romanian-Western companies were established for industrial and commercial development (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c).

The new orientation toward the West, as a means of expressing Romania's independence from COMECON, is evident from a quick analysis of the export-import operations of the country. According to Georgescu (1991), the total value of imports from the West rose from 21.5% of all imports in 1958 to 40% in 1965, while exports increased from 24% to 33%. During the same period of time, imports from the Soviet Union decreased from 53% to 38%, while exports declined from 50% to 40%. Overall, in 1965 trade with COMECON accounted for 60% of the value of all Romania's foreign commerce, of which 39% was with the Soviet Union and 29% with the developed capitalist countries. The situation reversed after a decade, however, and the figures recorded in 1974 show an increase of trade with the developed countries from 29% to 45%, while trade with COMECON countries decreased from 60% of all trade to 34%, of which 16% was with the Soviet Union. Yet, the mismanagement of the economy again reoriented Romania to the East during the 1980s. In this context, Romania's foreign trade on the less competitive socialist market grew from 34% in 1974 to 57% between 1980 and 1985, in which the most spectacular trade increase, from 16% to 34% between 1982 and 1986, was recorded with the Soviet Union. Consequently, Western developed countries' share of all trade decreased from 45% in 1974 to an annual average of 27% between 1981 and 1985 (Woolley 1975; Georgescu 1991).

After 1965, Romania continued to remain an important producer of grain, especially corn and wheat, but the exports of food products were still low during the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Exports of corn, for example, dropped from around 2.3 million tonnes in 1967 to only 373,000 tonnes in 1970, followed by a relatively slow increase in 1972 to 900,000 tonnes (International Historical Statistics, Europe 2003). Analyzing Romania's external trade, Georgescu (1991) correlated the low and/or moderate export of food production with the existence of abundant food in Romania during the seventies.

Yet, by 1979 both Romania's economy and international relations with the Western countries, particularly with the United States and France, had evidently deteriorated as a result of the flagrant violation of human rights in Romania. In addition, the termination of the established relationships with the Shah resulted in higher prices for Iranian oil and, therefore, a higher dependency on Soviet oil (Fischer-Galati 1998c). The increasingly critical economic and cultural situation in Romania was followed by strong individual dissatisfaction. As a result, after 1975 two significant phenomena started to emerge: growing dissidence and emigration (Georgescu 1991; Turnock 1997; Deletant 1999). The most active dissident movement was the religious one, most notably that of the Orthodox Church, especially between 1975 and 1983. As for emigration, it is worth pointing out that much of this had an ethnic dimension, with Germans and Jews being some of the first emigrants, followed by Hungarians, Armenians, Greeks, and other Romanian ethnic minorities, as well as many Romanians, who were eager to leave the country. According to Georgescu (1991), between 1975 and 1986 some 170,000 Romanian urban and rural citizens left the country, with the result that some ethnic rural communities were drastically diminished.

Part of the reason for the emigration is that Ceausescu, in order to secure hard currency from the West, especially from Germany and Israel, encouraged the emigration of Germans and Jews, requiring them in 1982 to pay for their freedom with the equivalent of the cost of their education received in Romania, the so-called “emigration tax”<sup>21</sup> or “head tax” (Georgescu 1991; Fischer-Galati 1998c, 472; Deletant 1999, 110). Under the agreement between Romania and the Federal Republic of Germany, approximately 12,000 ethnic Germans annually received permission to leave the country, with Germany paying approximately DM 8,000 for each. As usual, the communist state did not pay any compensation to the emigrants for their houses and agricultural and/or forest land, which remained in the country. In this context, Romania, especially Transylvania’s and Banat’s villages, lost thousands of disciplined and skilled German workers, together with their unique cultural identities. At the same time, Romanians and other ethnic groups were increasingly isolated from the outside world.

Although Romanian-Soviet political relations showed some improvements after 1974, the economic relations between Romania and COMECON returned to their 1964 positions when COMECON once again repeated the call for economic specialization and integration among member nations, the proposal previously rejected by Romania. However, having become more discredited in the West after 1980, Ceausescu increasingly focused his economic interest on the Soviet Union, signing in May 1986 a document with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev regarding a “long-term program for the development of Romanian-Soviet economic, technological and scientific cooperation” (Georgescu 1991, 271). Furthermore, Romania decided to develop “direct links” between Romanian and Soviet enterprises, a decision which had been totally unacceptable in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s (ibid). This shift was explained by Georgescu (1991, 271) as a result of the “colossal mismanagement of the economy and by the

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<sup>21</sup> The “emigration tax” was suspended in 1983 (Fischer-Galati 1998, 472).

incapacity of the ruling class to respond to the need of reforms.” Moreover, after March 1985, when Gorbachev came to power, Ceausescu not only rejected any suggestion for liberalization in Romania but also was the most vocal opponent of reform in the Soviet bloc, raising the level of repression against his critics (Fischer-Galati 1998c; Deletant 1999, 2004).

Consequently, from being considered “one of eastern Europe’s good Communists,” in the words of George Bush<sup>22</sup>, or his being treated as “a courageous and innovative leader” in his visits to Buckingham Palace and the White House, Ceausescu’s image dramatically changed in the eye of the Western media (Georgescu 1991, 267-268). Given his failure to develop a more liberal domestic model of society and as a result of his economic mismanagement impoverishing one of the richest East European countries, Ceausescu was increasingly characterized as a “tyrant” (The Wall Street Journal) or “the sick man of communism” (The Economist) who had turned Romania into “das Aethiopien Europas” [the European Ethiopia] (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung) (p. 268).

### ***8.1.2 Domestic Policies: Peculiarities of the Romanian Socialized Agriculture***

With the new orientation of foreign policy, some significant changes were recorded in domestic policy after 1960 as well. The new constitution adopted in 1965 clearly stipulated this political shift, giving less weight to the Eastern “brother liberator” (p. 251). Yet, as was emphasized in the previous chapter, since 1949 the entire Romanian economy, including agricultural production, had increasingly been organized following the Stalinist model, in accordance with the state centralized planning. Specifically, after the completion of the collectivization process in 1962, the communist party established a number of five-year plans for economic and social development as follows: 1966-1970; 1971-1975; 1976-1980; 1981-1985,

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<sup>22</sup> In a speech delivered in 1984 after a trip to Eastern Europe (Georgescu 1991, 267).

and the last one, 1986-1990, which was interrupted by the 1989 revolution. Ceausescu had recognized many times the necessity of modernization of the entire economy of the country, but he strongly believed in a strict centralization, with detailed planning by the communist party (Parpala 1969; Turnock 1976; 1991a, b, c; Georgescu 1991; Kideckel 1993; Cartwright 2001).

In order to better understand the most important critical issues in rural Romania, it is important to understand the major characteristic of domestic politics during the Golden Age, the period of so-called *neo-Stalinism* (Deletant 1999; Deletant 2004). Specifically, Stalinist economics, requiring detailed planning and absolute centralization of every aspect of existence, created an inevitable *neo-Stalinist* domestic politics. This was initiated by the 11<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Romanian Communist Party (PCR) in March 1974, when, through the nomination of Ceausescu as President of Romania, the post-1960 era of “enlightened despotism” ended and the country’s politics returned “to the methods, goals, and value systems of the fifties” (Georgescu 1991, 256). Less brutal than the original model, but with selective repression methods, it was during the period of *neo-Stalinism* (1974 to 1989) that the highest level of the cult of personality of a family dynasty was reached. This political regime, composed of a small group of elites, many of them Ceausescu’s family members or close relatives, controlled not only the party but also the key positions in the government, including agriculture. This “dynastic socialism,” without precedent in Romania’s history, ended with the seizure of the entire political establishment of the country (p. 257). The triumph of this extreme personalization of power, sustained by a delirious “hagiography,” ended the timid decentralization process initiated by Ion Gheorghe Maurer, the former Prime Minister<sup>23</sup>, with catastrophic consequences for the entire economy, especially for agriculture and rural areas (p. 258).

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<sup>23</sup> Ion Gheorghe Maurer served as Prime Minister under both Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Ceausescu, 1961-1974 (Deletant 1999, 104, 124).

The 1966-1970 Five-Year Plan called for rapid economic development focusing on heavy industry, especially the petrochemical, steel, and machine-building industries. As a result, the allocation of funds for agriculture was far below that for industry, respectively between 12.8% and 16% of all investment, while industry accounted for between 49% in 1965 and 47.5% in 1970 (Cartwright 2001; <http://www.communismulinromania.ro/>, retrieved in April 2009). This budget was less than the proportion allocated during the 1960-1965 Plan (19.5%), but it was nevertheless better than what had been allocated during the first communist plans: 9% in 1949, 7% in 1950, and 7.5% in 1953. These funds were primarily used to strengthen the new farms that had been created by the final phase of collectivization.

Moreover, while exports of grain and meat products were projected to double between 1970 and 1974, the allocation for agriculture decreased even more, from 16% to 13%. According to the 1986 Romanian Statistical Yearbook, cited in Georgescu (1991), the structure of investments in the Romanian economy during the first half of the 1980s continued to show a significant discrepancy between industry and agriculture. While industrial development still continued to receive “the lion’s share of investment,” around half of the total investment during the 1980s, agriculture received an annual average of only 16% for the same time period (Cartwright 2001, 91; Table 8.1). Overall, agriculture never received more than a fifth of the state investment budget and, in addition, the levels of investment fluctuated widely from plan to plan, or even from year to year, making longer-term planning difficult. Doubtlessly, these figures show the general attitude toward agriculture, expecting to receive great profits without investing much in modernizing it.

Ceausescu’s ambitious goals for the acceleration of heavy industry’s development during the 1971-1975 Five-Year Plan affected agriculture even further. Specifically, the rapid

industrialization, which created a diversity of outlets for the Romanian work force, as well as low agricultural wages, encouraged a massive rural-urban migration (Woolley 1975; Georgescu 1991; Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). The long-term negative consequence was village depopulation, followed by an acute shortage of agricultural labor. The problem was resolved from year to year by obliging millions of non-agriculturalist people from a diversity of governmental domains, including students and soldiers, to work in agriculture. This was most pronounced each September-October, during the fall harvesting, when over two million students from all levels, together with their professors, had to leave their classes to work in the fields for several weeks. Not only were they not paid for their work but, furthermore, their school work had to be made up on the weekends, when normal school programs were rescheduled (my personal experience; multiple interviews with teachers, June 2007, Onesti and Iasi).

Table 8.1

**The Structure of Investments in Romania, 1981-1985**  
(percentage)

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Industry	50.7	46.9	48.0	51.7	48.3
Agriculture	15.8	15.6	17.2	14.9	17.7

Source: Anuarul Statistic (Statistical Yearbook), 1986, cited in Georgescu 1991

This situation seems hard to understand, taking into account the high percentage of the population that was rural and employed in agriculture. For example, according to the Romanian Statistical Yearbook (2006, 2007), the percentage of Romania's population that lived in rural areas decreased continuously during the communist period, from 78.6% in 1930 to 61.8% in 1966 and 56.4% in 1977. Nevertheless, at the sunset of the Golden Age, almost half of

Romania's population still lived in the countryside (Table 8.2). Although agricultural employment recorded similar dramatic changes, from 74.1% in 1950 to 27.5% in 1989, relative to other European countries (e.g., Belgium and the United Kingdom with 3%, the Netherlands with 5%) the percentage of agricultural labor in Romania was still high (Cole 1981; Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005; Tables 8.2; Table 8.3). Many other countries, several from Western Europe, recorded a high percent of their population as being rural in the eighties (see Table 8.3). Therefore, Romania was not unique in this respect in Europe. However, in no country did people have such experiences with agriculture as in Romania.

Table 8.2

**Romanian Population by Area:  
Rural Population and Agricultural Employment, 1930-1989**

<b>Year Census Date (C)</b>	<b>Total Population (millions of inhabitants)</b>	<b>Rural Population (as percentage of total pop)</b>	<b>Employment in Agriculture (as percentage of total labor force)</b>
Dec. 29, 1930 (C)	14.2	78.6	90.4
Jan. 25, 1948 (C)	15.8	76.6	
1950	16.3	n. a.	74.1
Feb. 21, 1956 (C)	17.4	68.7	
1960	18.4	67.9	65.4
1965	19.0	66.3	
July 1, 1966 (C)	19.1	61.8	
1970	20.2	63.1	49.1
1975	21.2	60.7	
July 1, 1977 (C)	21.5	56.4	
1980	22.2	54.2	29.4
1985	22.7	50.0	
1989	23.1	46.8	27.5

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2006; Romanian Statistical Yearbook 1990, cited in Balanica 2005 and Cartwright 2001; Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966; Hitchins 1994

Table 8.3

**Europe: Rural Population and Agricultural Employment, 1980**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Rural Population</b> (as percentage of total population)	<b>Employment in Agriculture</b> (as percentage of total employment)
Austria	35	11
Belgium	5	3
Bulgaria	39	24
Czech Republic	25	13
Denmark	16	8
Estonia	30	15
Finland	40	13
France	27	8
Germany	17	n. a.
Greece	42	30
Hungary	43	22
Ireland	45	18
Italy	33	14
Latvia	32	16
Lithuania	39	28
Netherlands	12	5
Norway	30	8
Poland	42	30
Portugal	71	27
Romania	51	30
Slovakia	48	14
Slovenia	52	16
Spain	27	19
Sweden	17	6
Switzerland	43	7
United Kingdom	11	3

Source: World Development Indicators CD-ROM, World Bank, 2001<sup>24</sup>

Until 1977 the majority of Romanians found Ceausescu's rule relatively tolerable. Yet, the negative consequences of the country's external affairs were accentuated by Ceausescu's unrealistic high goals for the 1976-1980 and 1981-1985 Five-Year Plans regarding agricultural

<sup>24</sup> Some statistical data from the several international sources are slightly different from Romania's statistics.

production and expanded trade with the West and the Third World (Fischer-Galati 1998c; Cartwright 2001). In this light, both plans were revised several times, each time increasing the budget for industrial development and grain production, despite an already strong economic imbalance and the clear signs of an economic crisis at the end of the 1970s. Even worse, Ceausescu tried to secure much of the needed hard currencies through the massive exportation of agricultural products, especially to Western Europe. This, in turn, entailed the adoption of a series of measures designed to increase agricultural production without, however, providing the peasantry with any incentives. Those short steps to create incentives for the private-plots and non-collectivized peasant producers proposed during the late 1960s were abandoned by the early 1970s. Georgescu (1991, 259), describing the situation of Romania's domestic politics during the early 1980s, has suggested that the five decrees on agriculture issued in 1983 treated it as "a moral and political issue" rather than "a function of the market."

One example of viewing agriculture as a moral issue is that of raising cattle, which was seen by the communists as "an honor and a duty" for the Romanian peasants (Georgescu 1991, 259). Peasants were given clear obligations to register all their domestic animals at the local government offices, as well as high fines and even imprisonment for slaughtering animals privately. In addition, a requirement restricting deliveries of agricultural produce to the state abolished in 1956 was reintroduced in 1983. In this light, the peasants were required to sell their produce only with the state, at very low prices established by the state. Moreover, the sizes of the private plots were decreased by decree and the price ceilings, including severe limits, further discouraged the private producers who supplied the farm markets with food, deepening the food shortage (Georgescu 1991; Jackson 1997). As a result, it was not uncommon for peasants to prefer to feed their pigs with the milk from their cows instead of selling it for a humiliatingly low

price imposed by the state. For solving their food needs, many urban people had established long-term arrangements with the peasants, letting them deliver their produce directly to their houses, avoiding the market places (multiple interviews, June 2007, farm market Onesti). The peasants required, in general, decent prices and, most importantly, their produce was organically grown. These and many other examples show that agriculture and the peasants continued to be treated with a total lack of understanding, imposing “Phanariot” regulations and increasing central control even more.

Agricultural exports, together with the inefficiency of production methods and an excessively rigid centralization of planning, brought desperate food shortages, forcing the party in 1981 to reintroduce rationing of basic food products<sup>25</sup>, such as bread, meat, milk, oil, and sugar (Fischer-Galati 1998c; Georgescu 1991; Cartwright 2001). This paradoxical decision was made in the context of recording the biggest grain crop in Romania’s history (over 20 million tonnes in 1980)<sup>26</sup>. During those years, it was common to see people in line at 2:00 AM, or even earlier, in front of the grocery store, in the dark streets, waiting on their small stools for the store to open at 6:00 AM, to be sure that they would be lucky enough to buy some food. As if the situation were not bad enough, a *Rational Eating Program* was promulgated on Ceausescu’s initiative, claiming that Romanians ate too much and setting limits of food consumption per capita for the period 1982-1985 (Georgescu 1991; Jackson 1997). Consequently, Romanians’ standard of living was worse off in the eighties than in the sixties, with Romania experiencing the most dramatic economic situation since the Second World War<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>25</sup> It had discontinued in 1954 (Georgescu 1991, 260).

<sup>26</sup> See more details in section 8.1.5.

<sup>27</sup> This is the reason for which a series of data was interdicted to be released to the public, especially after 1985, and much of that released was intentionally distorted.

The key problems thus facing Ceausescu in the early 1980s were economic: high prices for imports, especially oil and iron ore for the overexpanded petrochemical and steel industries and, overall, enormous external debts, which, according to Fischer-Galati (1998c), were over \$10 billion. Consequently, in the 1980s, Ceausescu imposed a draconian conservation regime (cutting the showing of evening TV programs to only two-three hours per night, cutting night hours for the centralized heating system, restrictions on using home appliances, an imposed schedule for driving cars, on even or uneven days, and the systematic interruption of power, without an established schedule).

Finally, Ceausescu ordered the development of a plan to “modernize” villages, called rural systematization, through which the traditional villages would be replaced with so-called agro-food or “*agro-alimentary centers*” (Fischer-Galati 1998c, 474; Jackson 1997). In this plan, the peasants had to leave their houses and were forced to move into high-rise concrete apartments, often without amenities. The aim of this program was to introduce more land into the agricultural circuit and to eliminate the peasants’ independence and spirit, as well as to replace the traditional elements of the Romanian rural society with the socialist ones of *the new man*.<sup>28</sup>

### ***8.1.3 Agrarian Structure and Land Tenure***

Following the agricultural policies adopted during the 1948-1989 period, several new economic units and research stations were organized. Specifically, most agricultural work during the communist era was done by four economic units: (1) state farms, (2) collective farms, (3) private farms, and (4) machine and tractor stations (Woolley 1975; Verdery 2003). In addition, communist agriculture had benefited from the long traditions of agricultural research and teaching in some specialized research stations and university departments. The entire

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<sup>28</sup> A detailed description of rural systematization will follow in this chapter: section 8.2.

activity was coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, known after 1962 as the Higher Council of Agriculture, HCA (*Consiliul Superior al Agriculturii*), through the regional and local specialized institutions (Parpala 1969; Turnock 1970; Woolley 1975). Above all of them, though, were the Party's Central Committee and Politbureau of the Communist Party, the most powerful decision-makers.

### ***8.1.3.1 Agricultural Research***

Scientific activity made an important contribution to the modernization of Romanian agriculture. Turnock (1970) has highlighted several important research facilities, starting with the work of nineteenth century scholars such as Ion Ionescu de la Brad, whose special research interest was in the field of soils and animal breeding. Between the World Wars, research on animal husbandry and agronomy increased significantly, setting up the Romanian Agricultural Research Institute (RARI), the first official agricultural research institute in the country. After World War II, this institute was split into several sections, all but one of which were relocated and renamed (OECD 2000). The one remaining section was reorganized into the Institute for Horticultural and Wine Growing Research. In 1957, the Research Institute for Cereals and Industrial Plants was founded at Fundulea, near Bucharest, accompanied by other research institutes, mainly located in the university centers, such as Iasi, Cluj, Timisoara, and Craiova, as well as the state experimental stations (Parpala 1969; Turnock 1970).

Furthermore, at the end of the 1960s, another reorganization of the agricultural research system took place, resulting in the founding of the Academy for Agricultural and Forestry Science (AAFS). While the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (MAF) defined research issues and funded research programs, the AAFS was responsible for the scientific coordination of the agricultural research institutes in the country. In the 1970s, the conditions for agricultural

research were very favorable. As the result, at the end of the 1980s the research institutions and stations represented “more that 25% of the total research network in Romania” (OECD 2000, 136). However, after 1945, both the old or new research institutions were under the Party’s control.

According to Parpala (1969), the expenses allocated for agricultural research between 1960 and 1965 reached the impressive figure of 830 million lei, with the prospect that it might increase in future budgets. The researchers’ central preoccupation was:

the creation of the new plant species and hybrids of greater productivity, the upgrading of animal breeds, the solving of the problems of mechanization and chemicalization of agriculture, the development of irrigation, the elaboration of more efficient methods of controlling pests and the more rational use of land resources.

(Parpala 1969, 50)

In this light, Turnock (1970) personified the Fundulea Institute’s research goals, focusing especially on high-yielding winter wheat, a cereal which covered around 95% of the area sown with wheat in 1964-1965. Taking into account the variation across Romanian territory, the researchers tested not only varieties of plants resistant to drought or diseases but also those suitable for irrigation and high productivity. The state and collective farms were particularly useful vehicles for introducing new crops and methods perfected by the research institutes and/or research stations (for an outline of the administrative organization that resulted in the end of the collectivization process, see Ionescu 1964; Turnock 1970, 1997; Woolley 1975; Kideckel 1993; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2001, 2004; and Balanica 2005).

### ***8.1.3.2 State Farms***

Describing the state sector, Balanica (2005) has recounted how state farms originated from a combination of the former farms of the Ministry of Agriculture and the estates expropriated under the 1945 Agrarian Reform. Since 1948 the new state farms were developed as

independent State Agricultural Farms (SAF) (*Gospodarii Agricole de Stat*, GAS). The state farms developed very rapidly until 1950, but much slower in later years. In 1967, all State Agricultural Farms (SAF) were turned into State Agricultural Enterprises (SAE) (*Intreprinderi Agricole de Stat*, IAS) and these constituted the strongest, most productive agricultural units, the main source of agro-food products on the Romanian market. The State Agricultural Enterprises had a certain number of specialized agricultural farms, specifically vegetable and animal production, as well as research stations and agro-industrial farms, supplying the selected seeds and improved livestock breeds, as well as processing their agricultural products (Bossy 1957; Ionescu 1964; Parpala 1969; Balanica 2005).

Much of the best agricultural land in the country was incorporated into the state farms, whose share of the total agricultural area expanded from 21.6% in 1950 to 29.9% in 1962, a trend which followed the Soviet practice of central control and planning (Table 7.11; Table 8.4). Given that in 1950 the collectivization process was still very slow, the state farms accounted for 91.5% of the socialized sector of agriculture. However, collectivization was followed by a major decrease in the share of land held within state farm in favor of collective farms, so that between 1962 and 1989 about 32% of socialized land was held in state farms (Table 8.4). Unlike the other two components of the socialized sector, the collective farms and agricultural associations, the state farms had nothing collective or cooperative. In other words, their employees did not share in the profit, but they were paid. The number of employees in a state farm with well defined salaries was around 650, of which some 50 were specialists, half of them having university degrees (Bossy 1957; Woolley 1975).

As a result of a high degree of land fragmentation, the government passed Decree No. 151/1950, later supplemented by Law No. 59/1974, to bring about the merger of certain lands,

Table 8.4

**Property Forms**  
**Share in Agricultural and Socialized Land: 1950, 1962, and 1989**  
 (percentage)

Property Forms	Agricultural Land			Socialized Land		
	1950	1962	1989	1950	1962	1989
State farms	21.6	29.9	28.0	91.5	32.0	32.6
Collectives	2.0	63.5	58.0	8.5	68.0	67.4
Private farms	76.4	6.6	14.0	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Adjusted from Turnock 1970, Balanica 2005, and OECD 2000

modifying the number of the state farms several times (Balanica 2005). In this context, by the end of the collectivization process in 1962, the number of state farms had doubled, increasing from 281 in 1945 and 363 in 1950 to 597 (see Table 7.10). Subsequently, as a result of amalgamation the number of state farms declined, recording some 400 units during the 1980s (Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; OECD 2000; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 7.10). In 1989, the average size of a state farm was some 5,000 hectares of agricultural land, of which approximately 4,000 hectares was arable.

Overall, as the backbone of the socialized sector, the state farms represented the major mechanism for implementing government agricultural policy. However, as Balanica (2005) noted, immediately after the 1989 revolution, the State Agricultural Enterprises would be transformed into joint-stock commercial companies under Laws 15/1990 and 31/1990<sup>29</sup>.

### **8.1.3.3 Collective Farms**

As previously specified, the cooperative/collectivist sector, initiated in 1949, included a high number of collective farms and agricultural associations (Ionescu 1964; Deletant 1999;

<sup>29</sup> See more details in Chapter 9, section 9.2.1.

Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Since 1958, the collective farms, first called Collective Agricultural Farms (CAF) (*Gospodarii Agricole Colective*, GAC), started to incorporate the agricultural associations (*intovarasiri agricole*), resulting in much larger collective farms which, after 1965, were called Agricultural Production Cooperatives (APC) (*Cooperative Agricole de Productie*, CAPs) (Turnock 1970). Although in theory collective farms were supposed to be created in response to the peasants' personal wish, practically the collectivization process was a top-down one. There was little room for negotiation in the decision to join the cooperatives and, in the majority of cases, the peasants had no alternative (Bossy 1957; Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005; see also Chapter 7). Consequently, whereas in 1950 collectives accounted for 8.5% of the socialized land, they represented about 68% between 1962 and 1989 (Table 8.4).

During the collectivization period, the number of collective farms decreased from 6,715 in 1962 to 4,626 in 1970 and 3,776 in 1989, of which 3,172 were Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CAPs) and 604 were agricultural associations (Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; Parpala 1969; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 7.10). The average size of a cooperative, between 1962 and 1989, was something over 2,000 hectares and the number of peasants per cooperative was around 600 (Balanica 2005; Table 7.10). Although collective farms were legally the property of those who formed them, with their land belonging to agricultural cooperators, in reality the state managed these units in a centralized manner.

Specifically, the CAPs did not own their own agricultural machinery, with the result that they had to rent all types of machines and tractors from the state, i.e., from the Machine and Tractor Stations, often for exorbitant fees (Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005). Further influence of the state on the system of collective management came in the form of contracts, planned

investments, and industrial inputs, such as chemical fertilizers and irrigations, all for very high prices. Organized into teams or brigades, the peasant cooperators had to do all the necessary work to meet the contracts, which had established the quantity of the output to be delivered to the state. Distribution to the members was not made according to the amount of land or capital contribution. Rather, members' rewards were determined on the basis of *work-day* norms, the main form of material incentive, including the distribution of private plots (Bossy 1957; Woolley 1975). It is also important to specify that distribution of the agricultural produce took place only after the payment of taxes, the delivery of compulsory quotas, the payment for services performed by the Machine and Tractor Stations (MTSs), and the setting aside of sums for the CAPs' investment fund. As a result, the remaining quantities of produce were often too small to satisfy the peasants' needs.

Moreover, the payment for peasants gradually changed after 1962, from an exclusive payment in agricultural produce, depending on the number of their worked days, to a mixed type of payment, in produce and money (Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005). During this time, the state established a system of pensions for the peasants over 65 years of age, though these were usually fairly minimal. In 96% of the CAPs, according to Balanica (2005), since 1973 payment has been exclusively in the form of a small monthly salary for each member of the cooperative. In other words, from the status of owner of his land, the Romanian peasant became simply an agricultural-worker or a peasant-worker, very poorly paid by a quite weak agricultural organization (Sanders et al. 1976; Cernea et al. 1981; see also Chapter 3). The National Union of Agricultural Production Cooperatives and the county unions, created as public economic bodies, theoretically, belonging to the peasantry, had the mission to improve the methods of management in agriculture. However, in fact their decisions were totally subordinated to the

party's directives. Consequently, in a multitude of cases, the Romanian peasants had very little interest in working in their CAPs, with many of them simply refusing to work or migrating to the town. This neo-slavery treatment could explain in part the peasants' attitude towards the destruction of most collectives after 1989.

Unlike state farm workers, the peasant cooperators had a couple of ways of earning a small income. Except for the money and/or produce explained above, whose provenance was from sales collectively of the output to the state, the collective members were encouraged to sell any surplus or private produce directly to the state. With regard to selling their CAPs' surplus, it is important to note that the state set the prices, which were usually lower than the contract prices (Woolley 1975). Consequently, the better alternative was the commercialization of private agricultural produce on the free farm market, a method regularly used by many peasants and welcomed by Romanian consumers.

Comparing Romania with some other former communist countries, we can see a degree of similarity in the majority of these countries in the evolution of their collectivization process. More specifically, except for Poland and Yugoslavia, whose land was not collectivized, the other countries had 90% or higher of their agricultural land socialized, containing both state and collective farms (Verdery 2003; Table 8.5). Nonetheless, while Bulgaria and the Soviet Union socialized over 99% of their land, even in the 1960s Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia recorded a lower level of land socialization in agriculture, respectively around 80% (Table 8.5). On the other hand, in Poland and Yugoslavia the communist regimes' efforts to collectivize land were completely unsuccessful, with the result that the private sector continued dominating agricultural production until 1989 (Klein, G. and Klein, P. 1979; Borzutzky and Kranidis 2006). Although these two countries established a number of state farms and cooperatives, they

averaged only about 30% of the agricultural land in either country (Lindemans and Swinnen 1997; Table 8.5). Thus, with few exceptions, these two kinds of farms were central to socialist agriculture in Eastern Europe.

Table 8.5

**Eastern Europe and the USSR: Percentage of Socialized Agricultural Land, 1960 - 1980**

Year	E A S T E R N E U R O P E							U.S.S.R.
	Bulgaria	Czechoslovakia	G.D.R.	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Yugoslavia	
1960	99.0	87.2	92.4	79.2	22.5	81.9	24.1	99.9
1965	99.5	89.3	93.9	93.5	23.8	91.4	29.2	99.9
1970	n. a.	89.0	93.5	93.2	24.9	90.8	30.1	99.9
1075	n. a.	93.0	94.0	93.3	29.5	90.6	30.4	n. a.
1980	n. a.	95.0	94.5	93.6	31.6	91.0	31.3	n. a.
Average	99.3	90.7	93.7	90.6	26.5	89.1	29.0	99.9

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980

#### **8.1.3.4 Machine and Tractor Stations**

As previously mentioned, the mechanization of the collective land was accomplished through the state-owned Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), renamed the Enterprises for Mechanization of Agriculture, EMA (*Intreprinderi pentru Mecanizarea Agriculturii*, IMA) (Parpala 1969; Woolley 1975). By concentrating the mechanized means of production and introducing the advanced methods within all levels of production, the EMAs constituted a powerful economic lever, bringing at the same time an important contribution to the modernization of collectivized agriculture, as well as the increase of production and labor productivity. The EMA employees had their salaries paid by the state in accordance with the accomplishment of certain work norms, established from above (e.g., the number of hectares plowed, sowed, or harvested). Unlike the private farmers, who had to pay cash for renting the

EMA machineries, the cooperatives had to pay their rent in kind when the harvest occurred, the amount being based on the value of the work done (Woolley 1975; Verdery 2003).

According to Parpala (1969), in 1968 there were some 290 EMAs in the country, owning over 66,000 tractors, 45,000 seed drills, 33,000 small grain combine-harvesters, and other equipment for the mechanization of various agricultural operations. Taking into account the entire communist period after 1950, we can see the state's preoccupation for improving the technical endowment of these enterprises (Table 8.6). Thus, in 1950, whereas the number of tractors was close to 17,000 and that of combines a little over 100, in 1989 the official records show an increase to almost 260,000 tractors and over 90,000 combines (Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 8.6).

Table 8.6

**Romania: Tractors and Grain Combines, 1950-1989**

Indicators	Selected Years				
	1950	1962	1970	1980	1989
Tractors	16,700	57,500	107,300	146,600	259,035
Grain Combines	118	28,400	45,241	39,341	90,832

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; Sabates-Wheeler 2004

Again, compared with the other CEECs, Romania, with around 44,000 tractors and 18,000 combines, was deemed in 1960 to have a medium degree of mechanized agriculture, i.e., behind Czechoslovakia, GDR, and Poland, but ahead of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (Table 8.7). Yet, by 1980, the non-collectivized countries (Poland and Yugoslavia), with their relative small family farming plots, recorded a far greater level of mechanization than did most other CEECs. While

each collectivized country, except Hungary, recorded an average of 160,000 tractors and combines, Poland had almost 900,000 and Yugoslavia over some 400,000 agricultural machines (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7

**Eastern Europe: Tractors and Grain Combines, 1960 and 1980**

Country	1960		1980	
	Tractors	Combines	Tractors	Combines
Bulgaria	40,300	7,042	153,300	9,682
Czechoslovakia	94,300	6,326	136,700	17,771
East Germany	70,600	6,409	144,500	13,582
Hungary	47,900	4,167	55,400	14,071
Poland	77,200	3,100	858,300	39,300
Romania	44,200	17,577	146,600	39,341
Yugoslavia	35,800	4,921	415,700	8,868

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980

### 8.1.3.5 Private Farms

Although the communist system in agriculture was widespread by 1962, in Romania (as in almost all CEECs), the private sector (*Gospodarii Agricole Individuale*) continued to be maintained. It was represented by all farms located in the high hills and mountain areas, where the collectivization process was not possible because the terrain was difficult to mechanize and the CAP's members kept their personal farmstead (their houses and small vegetable gardens) around them (Turnock 1970, 1986; Deletant 1999; Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005). Analyzing property relations under socialism, Verdery (2003, 41) emphasized an important old document, the Civil Code of 1864, which remained in force until 1990 and according to which property rights were established "within the limits set by law." However, although the 1864 Code remained in place, the laws and decrees which followed established different limits, and private

property shrank from 76.4% of all agricultural land in 1950 to 6.6% in 1962 and 14% in 1989 (Turnock 1970; OECD 2000; Verdery 2003; Balanica 2005; Table 7.11; Table 8.4; Table 8.8).

Table 8.8

**Agricultural Land Fund, by Property Form, 1989**

Property Forms	Agricultural Land		Arable Land	
	(thousand hectares)	(%)	(thousand hectares)	(%)
Total	14,800	100.0	9,500	100.0
State farms	4,144	28.0	1,995	21.0
Collective farms	8,584	58.0	6,650	70.0
Private farms	2,072	14.0	855	9.0

Source: OECD 2000

In the new political and economic context, members of the collective farms, especially those located in the plains areas, were allowed to keep small private plots, up to 0.2 - 0.3 hectares. In contrast, the mountain farms were larger, having an average size of around 2.5 hectares (Bossy 1957; Turnock 1970; Woolley 1975; Deletant 1999; Balanica 2005). Unlike the less efficient collective farms, the private farms were in the majority of cases very productive, serving as the primary providers of food for many peasants' families. The high productivity of these farms resulted not only from their location around houses but, more importantly, from the peasants' hard work and their interest in obtaining the maximum of productivity from their small plots. The state did not control production of these properties, but it did affect peasants' financial situation through shaping their income and land taxes.

In sum, in 1989 86% of the total agricultural land and 91% of the total arable land was socialized (Table 8.8). The state sector, the IASs, used 28% of all agricultural land, over 4 million hectares, and 21% (some 2 million hectares) of all arable land. On the other hand, the cooperative sector, the CAPs, occupied the biggest area, covering 58% (8.5 million hectares) of all agricultural land and 70% (6.6 million hectares) of all arable land. The rest was in the private sector (OECD 2000; Table 8.8). Examining the evolution of land ownership during the communist era, then, we can see that both the state and collective farms increased their agricultural areas at the expense of private property. More specifically, the amount of land incorporated within state farms increased from about 20% of all agricultural land in 1950 to almost 30% in 1989, representing some 1.0 million hectares, while the cooperative sector increased spectacularly from 2% to almost 60%, incorporating over 8.2 million hectares of agricultural land (Table 8.4; Table 8.8; Table 8.9). However, between 1950 and 1989, the amount of private property decreased dramatically, losing over 8.8 million hectares of agricultural land. Being somewhat provocative, then, it is significant to note that the landscapes of the communist era in some ways recreated the large estates characteristic of the period prior to the First World War, as the small and medium properties of the interwar period, which had been fragmented through the 1945 Land Reform, were amalgamated into large collective properties.

#### ***8.1.4 Land Use***

Romania may be categorized as a country with an abundance of fertile soils and very favorable climatic conditions suitable for a high level of agricultural development – or, to use the communist expression, “for an intensive and multilateral agriculture” (Parpala 1969, 14; Woolley 1975). With around 14.5 million hectares of agricultural land and 10.3 million hectares of arable land, Romania has a significant agricultural area (Table 8.10). Throughout its history,

Table 8.9

**Agricultural Land Ownership Pattern in Romania: 1950, 1962, and 1989**  
(thousand hectares)

Property Forms	Agricultural Land			Land Ownership Evolution		
	1950	1962	1989	1950 - 1962	1962 - 1989	1950 - 1989
State farms	3,094	4,363	4,144	+ 1,269	- 219	+ 1,050
Collectives	286	9,277	8,584	+ 8,991	- 693	+ 8,298
Private farms	10,944	954	2,072	- 9,990	+ 1,118	- 8,872
Total	14,324	14,594	14,800			
	+ 476					

Source: Adjusted from Turnock 1970, Balanica 2005, and OECD 2000

Table 8.10

**Land Use, 1950 - 1980**

Year	Total Area	Agricultural Land							Forest Area	Other
		Total Agri-cultural	Arable Land				Permanent Meadow	Permanent Pasture		
			Total Arable	Cultivated Land	Orchards and Gardens	Vineyards				
1,000 hectare										
1950	23,750	14,324	9,789	9,378	184	227	1,683	2,852	6,446	2,980
1955	23,750	14,112	10,058	9,662	167	229	1,361	2,693	6,483	3,155
1960	23,750	14,547	10,346	9,821	213	311	1,387	2,814	6,403	2,800
1962	23,750	14,688	10,490	9,921	268	301	1,395	2,802	6,397	2,665
1965	23,750	14,791	10,475	9,814	346	312	1,371	2,945	6,378	2,580
1970	23,750	14,930	10,512	9,737	428	347	1,416	3,003	6,315	2,505
1975	23,750	14,946	10,500	9,741	430	329	1,413	3,003	6,316	2,488
1980	23,750	14,963	10,497	9,834	357	306	1,423	3,044	6,337	2,450
<b>Avg.</b>	<b>23,750</b>	<b>14,663</b>	<b>10,333</b>	<b>9,739</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>2,897</b>	<b>6,384</b>	<b>2,703</b>

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966 and 1960-1980

Romania has been an important producer of agricultural surplus, which led it to be known as *Europe's granary*, especially during the interwar period. In 1960, Romania had 0.79 hectares of agricultural land and 0.56 hectares of arable per inhabitant, though by 1970 this had declined to 0.74 hectares of agricultural land and 0.52 hectares of arable. With increasing population, by

1980 there were 0.67 hectares of agricultural land and 0.47 hectares of arable per inhabitant, a situation quite favorable in comparison with other countries (e.g., Czechoslovakia, with 0.44 ha agricultural land and 0.33 ha arable, or Yugoslavia, with 0.35 ha arable per capita) (Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980; Woolley 1975; Table 7.8; Table 8.10).

The instability of the temperate-continental climate, together with the location of the landforms, the Carpathian Mountains especially, and the Danube River have played a significant role in the agricultural production of the country (Figure 1.2). More than half of the arable land has been affected by one or more problematic environmental conditions, such as erosion (Subcarpatians), drought (Danube Plain, Moldavian and Dobrujan Plateaus), floods (Western Plain, Transylvanian Plateau), and excessive humidity (Danube Valley). Under these natural conditions and the ideology that saw the land as one of the primary focal points of socialist transformation, the Romanian communist officials typically stressed the need for extensive projects for land improvement, such as the tractor and agricultural machine-building industry, the chemical industry (especially for fertilizers), rural electrification, and irrigation, as well as different land amelioration projects (Parpala 1969; Woolley 1975).

Citing the surveys carried out by the specialized scientific institutions, Parpala (1969) noted that the irrigatable area in the country could be extended over 5 million hectares, representing in 1965 some 21% of the total area of the country, 34% of the agricultural area, and 48% of the arable area (see also Table 8.10). Officials planned for almost three-quarters of the irrigated areas to be those located in the driest part of the country, i.e., the South and South-East regions, respectively the Romanian Plain (Campia Romana) and Dobruja (Dobrogea) Plateau. More than half of these projects had to be funded by the state and the rest by the agricultural units. Also

worth nothing is the significance of “patriotic labor” in shaping the agricultural landscape, with such (unpaid) labor being frequently used by the communist government (Woolley 1975, 71). Citing Sirbu (1972), Woolley (1975, 71) pointed out that “in 1959 more than 60% of the total earthwork (25 million cubic meters) was performed with patriotic labor.” The 1971-1975 Five-Year Plan gave special emphasis to the land program, particularly irrigation, a program also extended into the 1980s. Hence, while in 1950 only 43,000 hectares were irrigated, in 1983 the irrigated area had increased to over 2.5 million hectares (Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 1982, cited in Cartwright 2001).

However, Romanian agriculture had limited possibilities to extend its area of cultivation. From 1950 to 1970, the agricultural area increased by over 600,000 hectares, from 14.3 million hectares to 14.9 million hectares (Table 8.10). This extension was achieved partially at the expense of formerly unproductive areas (Parpala 1969). In addition, many forest belts that had stabilized the sandy soils in the Romanian Plain were cut down and some grazing land in the hill regions was transferred into arable land, accentuating the erosion process (Bossy 1957). Moreover, through the extensive draining work in the Danube’s Floodplain, especially Balta of Ialomita and Balta of Braila, and the Danube’s Delta, important agricultural areas were added, but to a certain extent the natural equilibrium of these zones was destroyed, resulting in a series of catastrophic floods.

By 1980 Romania’s agricultural area represented 61.8% of the total area of the country, to which was added the forest areas (26.9%) and other categories of land (11.3%) (Table 8.10; Table 8.11). The most extended area of agricultural land was, and still is, the arable land (cultivated, orchards, and vineyards), representing 70% of the total agricultural land and 43.5% of the total area of the country (Turnock 1970; Tables 8.10; Table 8.11). This category of land is

located especially in South and South-Eastern Romania, specifically in the Romanian (Wallachian) Plain along the Danube, Dobrogea Plateau, and Southern section of the Moldavian Plateau (between the Siret, Prut, and Danube [Dunare] rivers), as well as in the Western (Panonian) Plain. Important arable areas are also in the North-Eastern sector of the Moldavian Plateau drained by the Jijia River (between Siret and Prut), along all important river valleys at the lower elevation, and the lower Subcarpathian and plateau hills (Figure 1.2).

Table 8.11

**Land Fund, by Use, 1950 - 1980**  
(as percentage of total area)

Year	Total Area	Agricultural Land							Forest Area	Other
		Total Agri-cultural	Arable Land				Permanent Meadow	Permanent Pasture		
			Total Arable	Cultivated Land	Orchards and Gardens	Vineyards				
%										
1950	100	60.3	41.2	39.5	0.8	0.9	7.1	12.0	27.2	12.5
1960	100	61.2	43.6	41.4	0.9	1.3	5.8	11.8	27.0	11.8
1970	100	62.9	44.3	41.0	1.8	1.5	6.0	12.6	26.6	10.5
1980	100	63.0	44.2	41.4	1.5	1.3	6.0	12.8	26.7	10.3
<b>Avg.</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>11.3</b>

(Percentages calculated from absolute data, Table 8.10)

Source: Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966 and 1960-1980

Equally important for agriculture were areas occupied by meadows, representing 10% of the agricultural land and 6.0% of the country, and the permanent pastures (hayfields), with 20% of the agricultural land and 12.2% of the country. Both of these are important areas for the development of the zootechnical sector, which particularly covers the hill and mountainous zones (Table 8.10; Table 8.11). As a specific characteristic, approximately two-thirds of Romania's surface is made up of mountains and hills. Consequently, sloping lands occupy half

of the arable land and almost three-quarters of the natural pastures. These conditions encourage soil erosion, requiring important state funds for soil erosion control (e.g., terracing, planting orchards and vineyards).

In terms of land use, state farms had significant areas of arable land, but their emphasis was placed especially on animal breeding, a sector which required more investment, including in research, and direct state control (Turnock 1970; Woolley 1975). On the other hand, collective farms, together with the private plots of their members, took a greater share of the arable land and, in the hill zones, represented important areas of orchards and vineyards. In addition, taking into consideration their location at higher elevation, the individual (autonomous) farms have more extensive areas of meadows and hayfields, raising animals, especially cattle, sheep, and pigs. The pattern of farming, however, was radically modified, especially in the state and collective farms, as a result of mechanization and the introduction of further measures of technological advance.

#### ***8.1.5 Agricultural Production***

The way in which the arable land was being used has played an important role in the development of Romanian agriculture. Although the diversification of agriculture was encouraged, Romania continued to remain an important grain producer (Table 8.12; Table 8.14). The preponderance of cereals not only met the population, industrial, and export needs but also constituted a powerful forage basis for the development of animal husbandry. With an average of 6.5 million hectares, cereals represented over 65% of the cultivated area (Table 8.10; Table 8.12; Table 8.14). Corn and wheat continued to dominate the entire vegetable sector of agriculture, both as the cultivated area and in terms of total production (Table 8.12; Table 8.13). However, although with almost 6 million hectares during 1950-1989 they still recorded

approximately 90% of the total grain area, after 1966 there was a substantial transfer from wheat and corn to the other cereals, especially barley, as well as to other crops, mainly industrial crops (sugar beet and sunflower), potatoes, and vegetables (Table 8.12).

Table 8.12

**Area of Main Crops, 1950 - 1989**  
(thousands of hectares)

Year	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Maize (Corn)	Rice	Potatoes	Sugar Beet
1950	2,785	204	534	520	2,853	17	229	72
1955	2,948	202	390	385	3,265	19	258	145
1960	2,837	98	266	270	3,572	21	292	200
1962	3,043	77	251	174	3,107	6	299	155
1965	2,983	102	233	116	3,306	19	298	190
1966	3,035	91	246	138	3,288	20	306	194
1970	2,321	45	288	131	3,084	28	286	170
1972	2,523	42	327	121	3,197	27	296	197
1976	2,389	40	410	45	3,378	21	301	235
1980	2,244	35	809	51	3,288	20	286	238
1985	2,366	30	680	72	3,090	n. a.	321	276
1989	2,319	40	768	106	2,738	n. a.	325	291

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000; Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1950-1966 and 1960-1980; OECD 2000

Except for 1962 and 1966, when the area cultivated with wheat was over 3 million hectares, the entire period maintained an average of wheat coverage of around 2.6 million hectares (Table 8.12). Corn production, on the other hand, was regularly over 3 million hectares, with an extension of almost 3.6 million hectares in 1960 (Table 8.12). Areas with rye and oats were continuously reduced, especially after 1970, and the rice production was always quite low in Romania, much below 30,000 hectares. The area covered with barley production increased more than three times after 1965, with a similar situation being recorded for some industrial

crops, especially sugar beet (Table 8.12). These area changes, together with mechanization and other technical innovations introduced in agriculture, had immediate consequences in crop production.

Table 8.13

**Output of Main Crops, 1965 - 1989**  
(thousands of tonnes)

Year	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Maize (Corn)	Rice	Potatoes	Sugar Beet
1965	5,937	125	485	124	5,877	46	2,195	3,275
1966	5,065	100	483	170	8,022	56	3,352	4,368
1970	3,356	43	513	117	6,536	65	2,064	3,175
1972	6,041	58	839	111	9,817	45	3,672	5,581
1976	6,724	49	1,231	55	11,583	97	4,788	6,911
1980	6,427	40	2,466	47	11,153	39	4,135	5,562
1985	5,666	45	1,850	102	11,903	138	6,631	6,446
1989	7,880	55	3,436	168	6,810	70	4,420	6,771

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000; Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980; OECD 2000

Table 8.14

**Total Grain Yield, 1965 - 1989**

Year	Total Grain Area (thousands of ha)	Total Production (thousands of tonnes)	Total Grain Yield (tonnes/ha)
1965	6,759	12,594	1.9
1966	6,818	13,896	2.0
1970	5,897	10,630	1.8
1972	6,237	16,911	2.7
1976	6,283	19,739	3.1
1980	6,447	20,172	3.1
1985	6,238	19,704	3.2
1989	5,971	18,419	3.1

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000  
(Calculated from individual absolute data)

After several years of fluctuations, with the lowest being 10 million tonnes in 1970, agricultural production recorded the highest grain harvest after collectivization of over 20 million tonnes in 1980, representing an increase in yield from 1.8 tonnes per hectare in 1970 to over 3 tonnes per hectare after 1976 (Table 8.14). Cereal production grew from 3.3 million tonnes in 1970 to 7.8 million tonnes in 1989 for wheat, and from 5.8 million tonnes in 1965 to 11.9 million tonnes in 1985 for corn (Table 8.13). In addition, as a result of the increasing number of animals, the production of other grains, especially barley, recorded a significant increase, from only 485,000 tonnes in 1965 to almost 3.5 million tonnes in 1989 (Table 8.13). Simultaneous with the development of cereal production, a strong improvement in production was recorded for potatoes and sugar beet, whose output doubled between 1965 and 1989, as well as other increases for industrial and forage crops, vegetables, fruits, and grapes (Table 8.13).

As for animal production, the situation was similar for cattle, pigs, sheep, and poultry, but quite different for horses. Agricultural mechanization drastically diminished the number of horses, from an annual average of around 1 million before 1962 to around 600,000 between 1965 and 1980 (Table 8.15). Mechanization itself seems not be the only reason for the disappearance of hundreds of thousands of horses. A recent interview conducted by a Romanian magazine, *Formula AS*, with Professor Ryzsard Kolstrung, the Secretary of the *Polish Association of Users and Friends of Working Horses*, emphasized some similar characteristics in both Romania and Poland regarding horses. In both countries, horses were considered to be “a sign of backwardness” and “bourgeois animals, useless in the conditions of mechanization of agriculture” (<http://www.formula.as.ro>, 861, 2009). Yet, unlike in Poland, where horses were only disdained, in Romania in the 1950s, in an official “horses’ holocaust,” over 100,000 horses were sent directly to slaughter-houses and killed (ibid).

Table 8.15

**Numbers of Livestock, 1950 - 1989**  
(thousands)

Year	Horses	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep	Poultry
1950	971	4,309	2,211	9,834	17,507
1955	1,120	4,630	4,370	10,882	29,500
1960	1,110	4,450	4,300	11,200	37,000
1962	1,013	4,707	4,665	12,285	44,692
1965	689	4,756	6,034	12,734	39,910
1966	689	4,935	5,365	13,125	40,085
1970	668	5,216	6,359	13,818	54,333
1972	631	5,767	8,785	14,455	64,496
1976	576	6,357	10,193	14,331	91,503
1980	555	6,485	11,542	15,865	97,800
1985	672	7,077	14,319	18,609	124,770
1989	702	6,416	14,351	16,210	127,564

Source: International Historical Statistics: Europe, 1750-2000

Paradoxically, though, as Cartwright (2001, 95) points out, during Ceausescu's regime, with its severe rationing of energy, there was "a return to horse-drawn ploughs" by the end of the communist era. In other words, as a result of the introduction of the most severe program of austerity in the 1980s, for energy saving especially, communist officials suggested the need to return to draft animals in agriculture, as a result of which the number of horses increased after 1985 to around 700,000 (Table 8.15). In addition, the traditional horse farms were encouraged to select and raise as many pure bred horses as possible for export.

The basic preoccupation of Ceausescu's regime, though, was the increase in the cattle stock, considered the main branch of the Romanian zootechnical sector (Parpala 1969). According to the official statistics, except for during war time, Romania had around 4.5 million head of cattle per year before collectivization, followed by an increase to an annual average of 6 million head by 1989 (Table 8.15). The stock of pigs and poultry also recorded a dramatic

increase, being seven times the 1950 figure by 1989 (Table 8.15). More specifically, the number of pigs increased from 2 million to 14 million while the number of chickens increased from 17 million to 127 million for the period of 1950 -1989. Furthermore, sheep-raising, a longstanding tradition in Romania, doubled the number of sheep during the same period of time, from 9 million head in 1950 to 18 million in 1985 (Table 8.15).

Compared with the other CEECs, Romania's overall grain cultivated area (6.5 million hectares) and cereal production (an average of 13.5 million tonnes between 1960 and 1980), placed it second only to Poland, which recorded an average of 17.4 million tonnes from an area of 8.4 million hectares (Table 8.16). Except for Yugoslavia, with its 5 million hectares, the other countries, such as Bulgaria, GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, had relatively small grain areas. A correlation between total grain production and grain yield, however, shows us the other side of the coin. More specifically, the largest countries obtained some of the lowest grain yields, respectively only an average of 2.1 tonnes per hectare, while the rest of the countries recorded between 2.6 tonnes per hectare (Yugoslavia) and 3.1 tonnes per hectare (GDR). The results for Poland and Romania seem even more confusing when taking into consideration the fact that Poland has very little socialized agricultural land (26.5%) and, in addition, mechanization was much better in Romania (e.g., 210 hectares per grain combine in comparison with 1,135 hectares in Poland) (Table 8.16).

The evolution of Romanian agriculture described above reflects some incontestable progress made by communist agriculture, but it was realized with an incredible effort and extreme austerity for the regular individual, especially for the Romanian peasants. The extension at a rapid rate of agricultural production, especially after 1970, was imposed, first, by the increasing needs of agricultural products for export (Parpala 1969; Cartwright 2001). These

needs were determined by Ceausescu's plan in the 1980s to repay all the country's foreign debts through increased exports. Because the industrial products were insufficient or of insufficient quality to generate the amount of foreign currency needed, agricultural products had to make their contribution. This objective was emphasized in many party documents. The 1981-1985 Five-Year Plan, for example, mandated an increase in agricultural production of 4.5-5.0% per year, while the export for cereals was set to increase by 10% per year.

Table 8.16

**Eastern Europe: Total Grain, 1960 - 1980**  
(average values)

Country	Total Grain Area (thousand ha)	Total Grain Production (thousand tonnes)	Total Grain Yield (tonnes/ha)	Hectares per Grain Combine	Socialized Agricultural Land (%)
Bulgaria	2,271	6,200	2.8	267	93.3
Czechoslovakia	2,596	7,523	2.9	209	90.7
G.D.R.	2,363	7,323	3.1	210	93.7
Hungary	3,176	9,127	2.9	372	90.6
Poland	8,438	17,442	2.1	1,135	26.5
Romania	6,580	13,527	2.1	210	89.1
Yugoslavia	5,079	12,841	2.6	582	29.0

Source: Calculated from Agricultural Statistics of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1960-1980

Yet, in Cartwright's words (2001, 91), "despite its successes, Romania was the great underachiever." This statement is proven not only when comparing Romania with the other CEECs or with Western European countries, but also analyzing the significant gap between agricultural achievement and central planning goals (Woolley 1975). More specifically, the central plans' goals were much higher than were its accomplishments. In 1980, for example, the planned grain harvest was over some 24 million tonnes, but the statistics show production of 20,172,000 tonnes, though this was actually the highest amount of grain production ever in

communist Romania (Cartwright 2001; Table 8.14). This failure of the agricultural sector to meet expectations might be a good indicator of the inefficiency of collectivized agriculture. The Romanian peasants were not incapable of solving their agricultural problems, but the strict and rigid system of planning totally discouraged and even eliminated any local initiative. Although the private sector, which covered in the majority of cases all the people's needs, supplied significant quantities of agricultural products to the state, the "new agrarian revolution" announced by Ceausescu in the early 1980s, meant an increase in the state's control over private production (Cartwright 2001, 95). Consequently, the standard of living in communist Romania dropped sharply in the 1980s, followed by the continuous growth of people's disaffection.

## **8.2 Rural Systematization**

In the second part of the communist era, between 1965 and 1989, the collectivization campaign was replaced with another radical campaign, systematization (*sistematizare*) of the Romanian villages. It was primarily a planning project thought to establish "an optimum combination of facilities" and "a rational use of natural resources" (Cartwright 2001, 98). In Ceausescu's words, quoted in Cartwright (2001, 89), this campaign had to take place in order to "liquidate the essential difference between the towns and the countryside." The motivation was appreciable, but in having to destroy thousands of villages, the project was a radical one. In his speech addressed to the National Conference of the Presidents of People's Councils on March 3, 1988, quoted in Deletant (1999, 148), Ceausescu clearly specified that "we must radically reduce the number of villages from about 13,000 at present to 5,000 to 6,000 at most" by the year 2000. This affirmation alarmed not only Romanians, especially the peasants who would lose their houses, but also the international media. They perceived Ceausescu's intention as a destructive plan coming at a time when conservation and concern for environmental protection had been

promoted to the top of the Western political agenda. Although the strategy of systematization was conceived in the context of modernization of the country, it was implemented through coercive measures planned “to enhance the power of the state and erode the traditional individualism of the peasantry” (Turnock 1991c, 251).

### **8.2.1 Background**

Although rural systematization had significant negative connotations during the *Golden Age* of Ceausescu, it was not a new phenomenon in Romania. The long-term modernization of Romanian settlements started in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but it was accelerated especially after WWII (Turnock 1976; 1987; 1991c). Unfortunately, the geographical location of the country and historical events in Europe meant that Romania would consistently be in the situation of being a “war-ravaged buffer state between the major powers of Southeastern Europe” (Turnock [1970, 541], quoted in Sampson 1982, 23). In this context, the efforts to modernize Romanian settlements were always considerable and, in some cases, really painful. In addition, while approximately three-quarters of Romania’s people lived in the rural areas even after WWII, policies were highly urban-oriented.

During the Habsburg occupation in the late eighteenth century, the villages from Banat and Oltenia, Southwestern Romania, were rebuilt “on accessible sites according to a regular plan,” following the same policy of “drawing out settlement to the main lines of communication” (Turnock 1976, 89). Although the need for some coordination in the program encouraging the growth of rural settlements was emphasized by Ion Ionescu de la Brad in the second half of the nineteenth century, in general the responsibility was left to individual landowners. Turnock (1976) has noted that the first planning legislation in the twentieth century was passed in 1904, followed by another in 1925, which was strongly linked to the 1921 Agrarian Reform. The most

important was the 1936 legislation, which “called for a thorough restructuring of rural settlement to reduce the isolation and backwardness of the villages” (p. 89). The required plans for each commune, which had to be prepared by each county prior to 1938, did not have the adequate cadastral maps, but they constituted a great beginning for rural modernization. However, the project was interrupted by the Second World War and postponed by the immediate need for the post-war recovery after 1945. Consequently, plans for rural areas, together with the agricultural sector, started to be reevaluated after 1950 (Moraru et al. 1966; Tufescu 1974; Turnock 1976; Ronnas 1984; Turnock 1991 a, b, c; Kideckel 1993; Fischer-Galati 1998; Cartwright 2001).

### ***8.2.2 Communist Rural Planning***

Before Ceausescu, Romania was divided several times into different administrative units, specifically in 1950, 1952, 1956, 1960, and 1964 (Moraru et al. 1966). These administrative divisions finally created 16 economic-administrative regions, with 150 districts (*raioane*), containing 183 towns, 4,259 communes, and 15,129 villages (Moraru et al. 1966; Turnock 1976 and 1991b; Ronnas 1984). The main problem in this territorial division was that the traditional settlement pattern with many small villages, some of them with rather scattered houses, was “an obstacle to modernization and to narrowing the social and economic gap between rural and urban life” Ronnas (1989, 543). According to Tufescu (1974), during the first half of the 1960s, there were approximately 5,000 small and very small villages, each with fewer than 500 inhabitants, representing around 35% of the total number of villages in the country. They were principally located in the Getic Plateau, the Barlad Hills, the Apuseni Mountains, and several other places, all having a very low level of economic development. Although some villages in the mountain areas were quite highly populated, they were very dispersed on the slopes, with large distances between houses and therefore did not exhibit appropriate conditions for “modernization.” As

Turnock (1991c, 251) has suggested, rural settlement patterns have been reflective of “ethnic factors as well as past administrative measures,” as Moldova and Muntenia have enjoyed relatively low population density whereas Transylvania, the former Habsburg territory, has had a greater concentration of population.

As has been described in the agricultural section, after the Second World War the communist policies primarily focused on urban-industrial development. Nevertheless, in addition to the emergent urban-rural gap, differentiation between villages grew as a result of the different interests held by the administration officials for some particular places. Consequently, some villages experienced growth in the 1950s, but the majority were neglected. Equally important, a rural planning strategy clearly intensified in the 1960s as a consequence of the collectivization program, but clear principles were only developed in the 1970s (Turnock 1991c). Specifically, during the collectivization process, the Romanian villages, especially the communal centers, had to develop certain specialized institutions capable of organizing farm activity, as well as assisting in consultation and future implementation. A significant number of rural industries still remained in the villages (e.g., timber, mining, textile, milling), but progress in rural industrialization was seriously eroded by urban industrialization and transportation development (Turnock 1976).

Several crucial elements had to be taken into consideration in rural modernization, such as land forms, local architecture, natural resources, selection of the villages, as well as people’s attitude. The Carpathians and Danube Delta constituted special issues for rural systematization. Not only are the mountainous villages located at a high altitude but some of them have considerable variation in relief between the villages of the same commune. On the other hand, the Danube Delta is an extremely low and flat area and, in addition, the sandy banks (*grinduri*)

are small and, with some exceptions, they are under serious flood risks. Therefore, while the viable villages from the plains and lower hills could, in general, be “modernized,” many small and isolated villages from elsewhere simply had to disappear.

Equally, private houses typically exhibited traditional architecture, while the two-story apartment buildings, planned to be located in the central area of the villages, as well as the new farm buildings, research stations, schools, shopping centers, and other central agencies, used modern styles, in total disharmony with the local traditions. Romanian architects and geographers were strongly against depersonalization of both towns and villages, calling for “architectural styles sympathetic to local tradition” and “a more careful balance” between the traditional and the modern architecture in order to avoid “a purely functional approach” (Turnock 1976, 93). The most difficult problem, though, was the selection of the villages to be systematized. Theoretically, the problem was simply one of taking into account that it was known that almost three-quarters of the Romanian villages in 1966 had fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. Since many of them had limited economic potential, it was clear that those villages could not hope to have a wide range of services. Turnock (1976, 94) pointed out that it was suggested even in the 1960s that “as many as two-thirds of the country’s villages should disappear.” Nevertheless, opposition from villagers would play an important role in the process of village systematization.

The official call for rural systematization was expressed on November 11-12, 1965, at the Plenary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party, followed then by that on October 5-6, 1967 (Tufescu 1974). Ceausescu asked for efficiency in using the village land and water, avoiding excessive spreading out of the buildings [what Turnock (1976, 94) has called “ribbon development”]. Because the project at the national scale was more complicated than the

government officials thought it would be, a multidisciplinary approach (geographical, ethnographic, and sociological) was needed to study alternative solutions for each locality. In this light, strong units of local administration and party organizations at the commune level were established to coordinate local planning and economic development (Tufescu 1974; Turnock 1974, 1976).

After the 1968 territorial-administrative reform, regional plans were adjusted to the new system of administration constituted by 40 counties (later 41) (*judete*), containing 2,706 communes (2562 rural and 144 suburban communes) and 13,149 villages (Tufescu 1974; Turnock 1976, 1991b, 1991c; Ronnas 1984, 1989). This new jurisdictional division was the rejection of the Soviet-inspired division, introduced after WWII, and a return to the traditional Romanian administrative pattern. The new division not only decreased the number of communes from 4,259 to 2,706, but also increased the communes' administrative and economic power and enhanced local party control. Although it was not unusual to find a commune with only one big village, in general Romania's communes had an average population of around 4,500 inhabitants, who lived in 4-5 separate villages (Turnock 1991c; Cartwright 2001). By 1970, each village was endowed with its proper system of public services (e.g., general and/or specialized stores, medical facilities, schools, cultural centers) and some 80% of villages had electricity. The local government (the Peoples' Councils), the agricultural offices (MTSs and CAPs), the party's organizations, banks, and other facilities were located only in the centers of the communes.

The 1968 administrative reform revised the previous decisions regarding rural settlements. There were three principal elements of rural systematization: (1) land use efficiency; (2) infrastructure improvement; and (3) the architectural façade of the villages (Ronnas 1984). However, the special attention paid to the most developed communes in the hope they would

become new towns was also important. Some surveys of local potential consequently identified some 300-400 communes which might be selected for eventual promotion to urban status (Turnock 1991c). Overall, though, during the 1960s rural systematization made slow progress, but it was the first deliberative attempt to change the rural landscape, emphasizing an increased interest in rural development.

The 1970s brought new attempts at rural systematization. The 1972 National Conference of the Romanian Communist Party, for example, adopted a comprehensive program of systematization (Turnock 1976; Ronnas 1984; Cartwright 2001). The focus was put on the structure of rural localities, particularly on those small and very small villages without any opportunity for future development, as well as on problems of concentration of two-story buildings in the centers of the communes (*vatra*), industrialization, and the urbanization of a certain number of villages. Ideas outlined in 1972 were transposed into a more coherent program for the Eleventh Party Congress in November 1974, in addition to the 1974 Law on Systematization, approved on October 28<sup>30</sup> (Ronnas 1984; Turnock 1991b; 1991c). Discussing the 1974 rural modernization program, Turnock (1991c, 253) emphasized there were two important ideological factors at play: (1) “the priority for socialist agriculture” and (2) “the insistence on a built environment.” Giving priority to socialist agriculture meant automatically marginalizing the private sector, a goal to be achieved not only through efforts to restrict house lots to a maximum 250 m<sup>2</sup>, but also by moving all private plots of the collective farm members outside the built area. In addition, increasing population density in the multi-story block-buildings has been seen as “a system of surveillance to minimize individualism with its potential for passive resistance to the regime” (ibid).

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<sup>30</sup> Law No. 58 / 1974 (Ronnas 1984, 277).

Ronnas (1984, 1989) pointed out the complexity of the systematization process, which if enacted, would have taken 10-15 years to implement. The destruction of 5000-6000 small and less developed villages, including the relocation of the people to small apartments, presented more complex problems than the industrialization and urbanization of some 300-400 others that were more developed. Consequently, the systematization program's implementation continued to be slow and far behind the original schedule. Specifically, by 1981 only one rural locality<sup>31</sup>, out of some 300-350 villages had been declared a town (Turnock 1991c), while by mid-1989 only 28 new towns had been recorded (Ronnas 1989).

Additional important reasons for this slowdown in rural systematization included the high expenses for repairing the catastrophic 1977 earthquake damages, as well as Ceausescu's irrational decision to repay all the county's foreign debts in a very short period of time (Turnock 1991b, 1991c; Deletant 1999). Furthermore, the completion of the Danube-Black Sea Canal in 1984, which signaled the start of major redevelopment in the center of Bucharest, slowed the rural program even more. In the mid-1980s, a major shift in priorities resulted in increasing investments in state agriculture (e.g., through further mechanization and irrigation) in order to maximize food supplies for export. Moreover, restricting courtyards and constructing apartment buildings of two or three stories would secure additional agricultural land for collectivized agriculture. The President's repeated demands for more agricultural production had transformed agriculture into a key factor in the country's export sector, aiming to pay all foreign debts.

The slow pace of rural reform and the continued growth of the urban population, especially through rural-urban migration, led the authorities to resort to coercion. Ceausescu's speech on March 3, 1988, put the systematization program at the top of the political agenda and stated that it was to be completed by the year 2000 (Ronnas 1989). In addition to reducing villages from

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<sup>31</sup> The mining center of Rovinari (Turnock 1991c, 253).

over 13,000 to a maximum of 5,000-6,000, the new targets also included a reduction in the number of communes, from 2,706 to a maximum 2,000. Furthermore, the speech called for a strict control of migration in 1989, forcing people who worked in the rural area to move to the commune or village where they worked (Ronnas 1989; Turnock 1991b; Cartwright 2001).

In late November 1988, Ceausescu came back with another speech, emphasizing two aspects of the systematization program: the development of rural areas and rural depopulation. No reference was made to the many villages declared “non-viable” or to the precise date for finishing the megaproject (Ronnas 1989, 548; Cartwright 2001, 98). As it turned out, though, pressure for resettlement seemed to be moderated since the unviable villages would be allowed to die naturally instead of being immediately demolished. Overall, and with some exceptions, the plans failed, and only 24 communes had actually gained urban status by December 1989, when the communist regime collapsed (Turnock 1991b). Finally, the 1989 revolution canceled the entire program, including those sections then undergoing reformation.

### ***8.2.3 Implications of the Systematization Program***

There are several implications of these developments. First, systematization had resulted in a vast program of research. Many foreign and domestic scholars (geographers, historians, anthropologists, sociologists, ethnographers, and planners) have written about this program, including Parpala (1969), Turnock (1974, 1976, 1986, 1987, 1991a, b, c), Sampson (1982), Ronnas (1984, 1989), Kideckel (1993), Fischer-Galati (1998c), Deletant (1999), Cartwright (2001), and many others. Whereas many foreign researchers and a few Romanian ones opposed or criticized the intention of destroying Romanian villages, many domestic writers during the communist era praised, or were forced to praise, the project. Geographers (e.g., M. Posea, I. Bacanaru, A. Butureanu, V. Ioanid, C. Stan, D. Buga, C. Mihailescu, D. Defour and D. Dobra,

P. Poghirc, I. Bold, M. Apavaloaie, and others) included planning in their studies, emphasizing some implications of rural systematization on agricultural efficiency, industrialization, rural transportation, population density, services, flood risks, poor water supply, local employment, and so on. The topic was introduced even in the Romanian universities, as a geography course for graduate students, for example. I personally had to accept a compulsory course entitled *Settlements' Systematization* in my graduate program in Romania, in the Department of Geography at the University of Iasi in the first half of the 1980s.

Analyzing this aspect from the historical perspective, Fischer-Galati (1998c) argued that symbolic of Ceausescu's determination to shape the history of Romania was a concerted drive to destroy all edifices of the past which he considered incompatible with the victory of socialism, such as churches, monasteries, and/or historic buildings. Equally, in his view the villages had to be destroyed so that huge agricultural units capable of producing food supplies for an expanding industry, urban population, and export markets could be created. As for the motivation for such a project, Fischer-Galati (1998c) invoked both the economic and political aspects of rural reorganization, especially suggesting that the Hungarian peasants from Transylvania and Banat could readily contrast their economic standards of living with that of their relatively affluent conationals in neighboring Hungary and Yugoslavia. In this light, Galati (1998c, 474) has accurately described the dramatic future conceived by the communist regime for Romanian villagers, emphasizing that "the peasantry, disenchanted with collectivization, with confiscatory pricing of agricultural products delivered to the state and, above all, with communism per se, had to be removed from villages and relocated in prefabricated blockhouses surrounding the agro-alimentary centers."

On the other hand, Parpala (1969, 32), an advocate of the Romanian communist regime, saw rural systematization as a beneficial project, believing that it provided for “the establishment of a rational density of the inhabitants per village.” In addition, in his view, “the systematization of villages will contribute not only to a judicious and efficient distribution of investment over the territory, but will also lead to the gradual recovering of certain areas of agricultural land” (ibid).

Yet, in a complex geographical study regarding Romania, Tufescu (1974, 313) noted:

Rural systematization and modernization does not need to create an artificial village, of high comfort and disconnected from the people’s soul, but on the contrary it has to preserve the value content of our culture millenary infused in the being itself of our nation.

*(Sistematizarea si modernizarea rurala nu trebuie sa creeze un sat artificial, de confort superior dar rupt de sufletul poporului, ci dimpotriva sa pastreze continutul valoric al culturii noastre sadita milenar in fiinta insasi a poporului nostru.)*

Second, there was considerable domestic and international opposition to systematization.

A remarkable instance of criticism came from an open letter sent to the President in August 1988. It was written by Doina Cornea, lecturer at the University of Cluj-Napoca, and signed by a certain number of people, mainly intellectuals from Transylvania. As has been specified by Turnock (1991c, 258), they told Ceausescu that he had “no right, without committing a grave abuse of power, to demolish thousands of villages without the consent of the people concerned and even without the consent of the entire nation.” Both domestic and international opposition to systematization emphasized the risks of turning the Romanian peasant “from a producer to a consumer of food,” changing at the same time their status “from owner-occupier to tenant” (p. 254).

Systematization attracted a great deal of bad international publicity. According to Deletant (1999, 153), Romania’s President was put under the microscope by the Western media only “after Gorbachev’s policies highlighted Ceausescu’s old-fashioned Stalinism.” The international

criticism of the systematization program also had ethnic implications. In particular, Hungarians protested the government's "destroying their distinctive villages and traditions" (Cartwright 2001, 100). In other words, systematization was perceived as "an attempt to uproot and forcefully assimilate the ethnic minorities" and/or "to eradicate century-old minority cultures in Transylvania" (Ronnas 1989, 548). On the other hand, fewer complaints were recorded from Germans who emigrated from Banat to the FRG and whose houses were occupied by Romanians in the early 1980s. Turnock (1991b) correctly remarked that in late 1988 the Western media mistakenly emphasized that systematization was a particular threat to Romania's ethnic minorities. In reality, the program was a national one, generally affecting Romanians in the majority of cases.

However, international criticism grew, resulting in a comprehensive campaign for rural protection through an "adoption" program (Turnock 1991b, 103). The movement, entitled *Operation Villages Roumains*, attracted significant media attention (Deletant 1999). Through this action, 430 Romanian villages were "adopted" by European communities from Belgium, France, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom by September 1989 (p. 153). Absolutely remarkable was the Royal Family's intervention, respectively Prince Charles's speech delivered in April 1989, condemning the systematization program. As Deletant (1999, 154) emphasized, "the Prince instructed his Civic Trust to place rooms in its headquarters in Carlton Garden at the disposal of the campaign."

In sum, Romania's position in the world system was profoundly changed by communist rule and Soviet domination. The goal of the communist party was to ensure that by 1990 Romania reached the level of economic development of a "medium-developed country" and that by 2000 it would prosper as a "multilaterally developed socialist country" (Georgescu 1991, 268). The

long-term objective was thus an ideological one, expressed again in the President's speech in November 1988 as follows:

We must always bear in mind that resolving all these problems is an objective requirement for achieving a superior stage of the multilaterally developed socialist society and for creating the necessary preconditions for a gradual advance towards the golden dream, towards communism.

(Ceausescu, cited in Ronnas 1989, 550)

In its effort to reach this goal, agricultural policy functioned for 40 years as the heavy artillery of the Communist Party against the Romanian peasants. In addition, systematization under Ceausescu could be considered even more than a planning process. It threatened to destroy a traditional way of life linked with the land and the identity of the village and its inhabitants. As it turned out, the Romanian "communist paradise" was destined to come to a quick end, which happened on December 22, 1989, one accelerated by both the impact of domestic politics and the advent of Soviet *glasnost* and *perestroika* (Fischer-Galati 1998c, 473).

### **III. BACK TO CAPITALISM: RURAL ROMANIA AFTER 1989**

## CHAPTER 9

### **RURAL ROMANIA IN TRANSITION:**

#### **FROM DECOLLECTIVIZATION TO THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

On the eve of transition from the centrally planned economy to the market economy, the Romanian agricultural sector was characterized by large-scale state and collective farms, a disproportionate production on very small private plots relative to on collectives, an aged and feminized labor population, and a generalized abandonment of agriculture by the younger generation. However, with the execution of Ceausescu on December 25, 1989, all of the projects regarding agriculture and rural areas collapsed, including the plans to demolish half of the country's villages. More specifically, rural Romania was about to undergo radical post-communist reforms, aimed at the decollectivization of agriculture and the restoration of private rural property rights (Jackson 1997; Cartwright 2001; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

Regardless of what it might have liked to do, immediately after taking power in 1990, the new provisional government, known as the National Salvation Front (*Frontul Salvării Naționale*, FSN), had limited abilities to direct local economic and political reforms. Consequently, many decisions concerning the collectives and land ownership were made locally. Before the first decrees/laws were promulgated in 1990 and 1991, Romanian peasants' views toward the socialized agricultural sector ranged from the desire for a peaceful transfer of power that might either maintain or dissolve collective farming, to a threatening attitude, one which forced some state officials to flee and led to the vandalizing of the CAPs buildings, the taking home of many

animals and equipment of previous cooperatives, and requiring exclusive private farming (OECD 2000; Cartwright 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

Overall, Romania's transition from totalitarian rule was quite different from that of its neighbors. This difference has been highlighted particularly by the subsequent European integration process, wherein Romania, together with Bulgaria, was not accepted into the EU in 2004 because its reforms were seen to be proceeding too slowly. In this context, desire for EU membership has been an important catalyst for faster reform in the agricultural sector of post-communist Romania.

Given this, this chapter seeks to explore the agricultural and rural development issues raised by the transition to the market economy and the thorny road of the integration process with the Western structures, particularly with the European Union. Specifically, it examines the consequences of adjusting Romanian agriculture to the Common Agricultural Policy requirements. The aim, then, is to examine the post-communist land reforms, specifically Law 18, 1991, which opened the door for decollectivization and privatization of agriculture, as well as to analyze the post-1989 transformation of Romania's agriculture and rural areas.

## **9.1 Post-Communist Transition and Challenge of Integration:**

### **The Alignment of Romania's Agriculture to the Common Agricultural Policy**

In Turnock's (1997, 155) words, "the transition involves a new style of regulation of the factors of production through a mix of institutions, habits and practices." In the case of the former communist countries, after the 1989 revolution regulation had to shift from a "command economy," an inflexible, autarchic, and excessively centralized regulatory system, to a "market economy," a profit-oriented system with reduced government intervention in which the "invisible hand" referred to by Adam Smith could actually function (Turnock 1997, 155-156;

Grindea 1997, 4). The ways by which different countries extricated themselves from the Soviet system were complex and reflected the specificities of each country's experience under central planning. Yet, there were also a number of similarities between countries. Transition, though, implied a fundamental restructuring of the political, social, and economic systems that affected all sectors of the society, including agriculture and rural development (Schrieder et al, 2000). Changing the communist political structure, then, was a very difficult task in each Central and Eastern European country. Changing the fundamental economic structure, like those associated with collectivization, though, was even more difficult. In addition, the issue of selecting between "shock therapy" and "gradual therapy" as a specific method for a smooth transition from communism to capitalism was a significant issue in the 1990s, with quite different consequences for each former communist country (Grindea 1997, 17).

Although in 1989 Romania's macroeconomy was "more balanced" than that of most other CEECs and thus, in some EU eyes, was ripe for a rapid transition to a market-led system, the governments which ruled Romania between 1990 and 2004 remained committed to a long transitional period, one marked by "slow and uncertain political and economic reform" in which the state continued to be substantially involved in the economy (Thompson 2003a, 1). Lack of economic development during the 1990s, though, led to a paucity of employment, rural outmigration, low birth rates, currency depreciation, inflation, poverty, and, in general, social, ethnic, and political instability. Certainly, since 2000 some signs of stabilization have emerged. Nevertheless, despite some progress, Romania has remained "at or near the bottom" of the ten CEECs in terms of economic performance (p. 3), which has led to growing calls for a more rapid "modernization" of the whole economy, particularly of agriculture.

Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2004 also emerged as one of Romania's key foreign policy goals, and provided a new impulse for striving to enter the EU in 2007. However, the fact that the formal application for NATO membership was submitted in 1996 suggests that Romania's integration into the organization was also a longer and more difficult process compared with that of other CEECs (Phinnemore 2001). The failure of Romania to be invited to Madrid for the first round of NATO's integration in 1997 was a clear sign that the country was still treated as a laggard, despite the victory of a new reform-oriented government and the strenuous efforts made to draw attention to Romania's eligibility as a stable and mature democracy. Yet, U.S. President Clinton's words during his visit to Bucharest in July 1997 that "the door to NATO is open" appeared to assure Romania's 2004 NATO integration (Phinnemore 2001, 248).

### ***9.1.1 A Comparative Investigation of the European Commission's Monitoring Reports on Romania's Preparedness for EU Membership: Agriculture***

Romania's status as a "laggard" in the European integration process owes much to the failure of the Romanian governments during the 1990s to introduce economic reforms (p. 264). A look at Romania's particularities with regards to its integration process expressed by the European Commission (COM 1998), through its *Monitoring Reports on the State of Preparedness for EU Membership of Bulgaria and Romania*, reveals that Romania's progress toward integration into the EU has been continuously monitored by the Commission since 1998. The analysis of the 2002 Regular Report on Romania's progress toward meeting the criteria for membership, for example, emphasizes that although "Romania has made good further progress towards meeting the Copenhagen criteria," it did not yet fully meet either the Copenhagen economic criteria or the *acquis communautaire* criteria (COM 2002, 624 final, 24; Appendix F).

In other words, more than a decade after its revolution Romania did not yet have a functioning market economy. In addition, the capacity of the public administration apparatus to implement the *acquis* still represented a major constraint on Romania's accession preparations, identifying several key areas that had to be considered a priority for reform (COM 2002, 624 final).

As Puscas (2006) emphasized, in the first semester of 2003, during the Greek presidency (see Appendix G) of the EU Council, as well as at the European Council in Brussels in December 2003, Member States declared their support for Romania and Bulgaria to complete their negotiations in 2004 and, therefore, for their accession into the EU in 2007. The Strategy Paper accompanying the 2003 Country Report underlined the Commission's support for signing the Accession Treaty with Romania and Bulgaria in 2005. The Treaty of Accession represented the reference framework for these years' monitoring, containing rights and obligations of the future Member States, as well as concrete commitments on their adoption and implementation of the entire *acquis*. With accession negotiations with both countries were finally concluded in December 2004, in April 2005, the Treaty of Accession was signed, welcoming Romania and Bulgaria as new EU members from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 (COM 2005, 534). Despite significant development issues across the various areas, structural reforms continued in the country, especially after 2004, to strengthen the competitiveness of Romania's economy. Yet, at this point, Romania still had to work hard in order to entirely satisfy the EU accession criteria.

The *Comprehensive Monitoring Report on the State of Preparedness for EU Membership of Bulgaria and Romania*, issued on October 25, 2005, analyzed these countries' progress toward accession after the 2004 Commission's Strategy Paper, identifying the remaining gaps and recommendations for the 2006 development and implementation of the *acquis*. The Report evaluated the countries' preparedness for the 2007 accession on the basis of the political and

economic criteria for membership. In its summary of findings, the Commission concluded that in 2004 “both countries fulfilled the political criteria” and “both countries complied with the criterion of being a functioning market economy” (COM 2005, 534, 3-4). In the conclusion of each chapter, three categories were emphasized: (1) the areas where the countries were ready or preparations were ongoing; (2) the areas requiring increased efforts and faster progress; and (3) the areas of serious concern, where immediate actions needed to be taken (COM 2005, 534). The analysis of the 2005 Reports for Romania showed several areas of progress, including “property restitution,” “the improvement of financial discipline,” and “the restructuring of key sectors” (pp. 3-4). However, further improvements were still needed.

Adopting and implementing “the EU legal order,” or *acquis communautaire*, reforms continued to be the major theme of Romania’s integration process (COM 2005, 534, 3; Appendix F). During 2005, Romania attained a considerable degree of alignment with the *acquis*. Yet, in the area of agriculture, the country needed not only to speed up preparations for its integration into the Common Market Organizations but also to put in place the mechanisms for external trade. Increased efforts were required in the areas of environmental and veterinary legislation, labor law, and implementation of the EU-funded Structural Funds programs and Cohesion Fund measures, as well as the process of decentralization (COM 2005, 534). Areas of serious concern in the field of agriculture were also identified by the Commission, in particular regarding Romania’s preparation to set up the fully functional paying agencies and implement the integrated administration and control system (IACS) for handling direct payments to farmers and disbursing rural development funds under the CAP. Consequently, the EU has continued to monitor Romania’s preparations, establishing the so-called “safeguard clauses,” to address

serious problems that may arise in the above-mentioned areas, either before accession or in the three years after accession (COM 2005, 534, 2).

In the light of the overall progress made by Romania on the eve of its accession into the EU and assessed in the 2006 Monitoring Reports, the Commission considered that Romania had maintained macroeconomic stability and advanced structural reforms. Therefore, the Commission determined, it should be prepared for membership by the end of the year, so as to be admitted into the EU on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 (COM 2006, 214 final; COM 2006, 549 final).

However, a number of outstanding issues still needed to be addressed. The major issues for Romania remained agriculture, justice, corruption, and the incapacity to absorb EU funds. With regard to agriculture, except for the paying agencies and IACS, which remained areas of serious concern, the Commission also indicated building up the necessary rendering collection and treatment facilities for animal by-products, and creating tax administration systems to be ready for inter-operability with those of the rest of the Union (so as to enable a correct collection of VAT throughout the internal market) (ibid). Corrective actions were expected in all areas, but the most important was whether or not Romania could solve them in time for accession on January 1, 2007 (COM 2005, 534; COM 2006, 214 final).

### ***9.1.2 Accession Negotiations: Negotiating Agriculture***

Negotiation with the European Union, which required a “new form of professionalism,” was an objective necessity for all the former communist countries in their process of European integration (Puscas 2006, 5). In the words of Frank Pfetsch (1998), noted in Puscas (2006, 18), “negotiations are central elements in the development and dynamic functioning of the EU, being regarded as the predominant policy method and the main source of the EU’s successful functioning.” Compared with the previous rounds of accession negotiations (1973, 1981, 1986,

and 1995), Puscas (2006, 17) considered that the twelve EU candidate countries, including Romania, “had to fulfill much more complex criteria without being long-standing democracies or having experience of a market economy” (see also Table 4.2; Table 4.6). Furthermore, the candidates had to transpose most of the *acquis* (consolidated during several decades) into their national legislation (in a decade or so), which, in fact, is considered a great achievement. However, in the accession negotiation process of these new candidates, ten of which were former communist countries, a series of “compromises in implementing the *acquis*” were accepted by the both sides (Puscas 2006, 17; Table 4.6).

The accession process began in 2000 on the recommendation of the 1999 Helsinki meeting (Turnock 2007; Table 4.6). Yet, Romania lagged in its process of negotiation for accession into the EU. According to Vasile Puscas (2006), the Chief Negotiator for Romania’s accession, Romania opened the first nine chapters of negotiations in the year of 2000 in the following order: No. 16, 17, 18, 26, 27, 6, 12, 19, and 20<sup>32</sup> (Appendix G). The process of negotiation continued in 2001 with eight other chapters (No. 4, 5, 8, 9, 25, 10, 13, and 23<sup>33</sup>), and in 2002 with the last thirteen chapters (No. 1, 2, 11, 14, 21, 22, 24, 28, 30, 15, 7, 3, and 29<sup>34</sup>). While in 2000 the first six chapters were provisionally closed, the process of negotiation significantly slowed down in 2001, when only three chapters were provisionally closed. Chapter 7 of the *acquis*, Agriculture, which is this study’s major focus, was opened only in 2002 and provisionally closed in 2004, together with the rest of the chapters (Appendix F; Appendix G; Table 4.6).

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<sup>32</sup> Ch.16/Small and Medium Enterprises, Ch.17/Science and Research, Ch.18/Education and Training, Ch.26/External Relations, Ch.27/Foreign and Security Policy, Ch.6/Competition, Ch.12/Statistics, Ch.19/Telecommunication and Information Technology, and Ch.20/Culture and Audio-Visual;

<sup>33</sup> Ch.4/Free Movement of Capital, Ch.5/Company Law, Ch.8/Fisheries, Ch.9/Transports, Ch.25/Custom Union, Ch.10/Taxation, Ch.13/Social Policy and Employment, and Ch.23/Consumers and Health Protection;

<sup>34</sup> Ch.1/Free Movement of Goods, Ch.2/Free Movement of Persons, Ch.11/Economic and Monetary Union, Ch.14/Energy, Ch.21/Regional Policy, Ch.22/Environment, Ch.24/Justice and Home Affairs, Ch.28/Financial Control, Ch.30/Institutions, Ch.15/Industrial Policy, Ch.7/Agriculture, Ch.3/Free Movement of Services, and Ch.29/Financial and Budgetary Provisions (Puscas 2006; see also Appendices F and G).

According to Puscas (2003), Romania had entirely accepted the *acquis communautaire* regarding Chapter 7, assuring that it would be able to apply the *acquis* at the date of accession, excepting for a certain number of items for which Romania asked for different transitional periods. More specifically, Romania requested the following transitional periods:

- five years (until December 31, 2011) for adopting safeguard measures for its imports of agricultural products from one or more member states, if these imports created or threatened to create perturbations of the Romanian agricultural market;
- four years (until December 31, 2010) for the inventory of vineyard plantations and the organization of a unitary registration (Regulation 2392/86 and Regulation 649/87);
- eight years (until December 31, 2014) for elimination from production of hybrid vineyards (Regulation 1493/99);
- three years (until December 31, 2009) for the implementation at the national level of the non-vaccination policy for the classical porcine plague (Direction 80/217CEE);
- three years (until December 31, 2009) for the modernization and re-technologization of slaughter-houses and meat-processing units, in accordance with the CAP's requirements (Direction 64/433/CEE, Direction 77/99/CEE; Direction 94/65/CE; Direction 92/118/CE; Direction 71/118/CEE; Direction 91/495/CE, Direction 92/45/CE);
- three years (until December 31, 2009) for the modernization and re-technologization of milk-processing units, as well as the organization of collecting and standardizing of milk centers, in accordance with the CAP's requirements (Direction 92/46/CE; Decision 95/342/CEE); and
- three years (until December 31, 2009) for adjusting dairy farms and the quality of the raw milk to the CAP's requirements (Direction 92/46/CE and Decision 89/362/CEE).

By January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, Romania had fulfilled the majority of obligations and requirements of the accession negotiations for Agriculture, but had experienced significant delays in the implementation of the EU legislation, especially for the setting up of paying agencies and accreditation of the SAPARD funds (Balanica 2005).

### ***9.1.3 Funding Romania's Agriculture and Rural Development***

As for the ten countries accepted into the Union on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, the Commission had to prepare a “financial package” for Romania and Bulgaria as “the ground for the completion of the negotiations,” submitting it to the European Council at the beginning of 2004 (COM, SEC, 2004, 160 final, 2). The Commission also had to present a draft common position to the Council, in spring 2004, for the negotiations of these countries in a series of fields, including agriculture. Because the financial package for Romania and Bulgaria would need to reflect future policy reforms or fundamental changes in comparison with the pre-accession perspective, the Commission decided to limit the financial package for Romania and Bulgaria to “a period of three years from their accession” (ibid). In this context, the Commission estimated a financial envelope for Romania amounting to €732 million for agricultural market measures and €2,424 million for rural development. In addition, the Commission decided to gradually introduce “direct payments” for farmers in the new Member States, providing a clear perspective for full application of the *acquis* to Romania in agriculture (p. 3). The financial package for direct payments for Romania was estimated at €881 million in the first three years after accession. The Commission expected possible future adaptations to the financial package in light of future policy reform. However, the Commission specified that the possible changes resulting from the future policy reform would not have any significant effect on the overall financial package.

As have the other CEECs, Romania has benefited from some EU assistance funds, starting with its pre-accession program, especially from PHARE (*Poland-Hungary: Actions for the Reconstruction of their Economics*), SAPARD (a *Special Accession Program for Agriculture and Rural Development*), and ISPA (*the Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession*) (Dalton et al. 2003; Turnock 2007; Papadimitriu and Phinnemore 2008; see also Chapter 5). In addition, since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, the Romanian Government has initiated a program known as FERMIERUL (*the Farmer*), a system of co-financing alongside EU funds to provide low interest credit to farmers who wish to access the SAPARD program for investments in modernization and/or development of the agricultural farms and food processing units (MAPDR, 2006; DADR Iasi, 2006).

Financed by the EC budget, the Program for Economic Reconstruction for Poland and Hungary, PHARE, was launched in September 1989 to support the process of reform, and economic and political transition in Poland and Hungary (Papadimitriu and Phinnemore 2008; <http://europa.eu/legislation>, 2004, 2007). In 1990, the program was extended to cover all CEECs, becoming the main financial instrument of the pre-accession strategy of those countries that have applied for membership of the EU. In line with the *Agenda 2000* recommendations, PHARE has gradually changed into a structural fund designed to encourage economic development. Each country's partnership had to be supplemented by its own National Program of the Adoption of the *Acquis* (NPAA). Among other things, the PHARE program involved measures for supporting domestic agricultural production, improved accession to EC markets, and environmental protection.

The initial admission of Romania to the list of recipient countries was in February 1990, but due to the poor record of democratic reform, Romania was excluded from the PHARE

program in July 1990, excepting for humanitarian aid. Formal admission into the PHARE program was realized in January 1991. In addition, the ratification of the country's Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with the EC, in February 1991, was the first major step in Romania's long and difficult road toward integration into the European structures. According to Papadimitriu and Phinnemore (2008), the total PHARE commitments for Romania, between 1990 and 2006, were established as €3.5 billion, from which some €2.5 billion was allocated after 1997. The EU remained committed to Romania's accession after the launching in March 1998 of the accession process and provided increased PHARE funding. Both the TCAs and the PHARE program were significant, creating a foundation for the development of bilateral relations.

PHARE was complemented by two other financial instruments: the *Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-Accession* (ISPA), supporting in particular the environment and transport policies projects, and the *Special Accession Program for Agriculture and Rural Development* (SAPARD) (COM 2006, 780 final; <http://europa.eu/legislation/enlargement/>, 2004, 2007). These instruments, which were set up for the period 2000-2006 for the CEECs, have been replaced by the *Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance* (IPA) for the period 2007-2013. Covered by Council Regulation No. 1085/2006, IPA offers assistance to the Western Balkan countries and Turkey, countries aspiring to join the EU during the period 2007-2013 (<http://europa.eu/legislation/enlargement/>, 2004, 2007). Moreover, rules for IPA, the Rural Development component of the instrument, known as IPARD, were established (COM 2006, 780 final).

Beginning in 2000, the EU reinforced its pre-accession assistance for agriculture and rural development of the ten CEE candidate countries by creating SAPARD, the *Special Accession*

*Program for Agriculture and Rural Development* (ibid). It was launched when the EU showed its commitment to Eastern enlargement by providing financial assistance to the agricultural and rural communities of the CEECs (Dalton et al. 2003). Implementing SAPARD was seen as a way to familiarize Eastern countries with the administrative systems required for the expenditure of EU funds for development purposes. According to the 2005 SAPARD Annual Report, the major objectives were, on the one hand, “to implement numerous small scale rural development projects” and, on the other hand, “to create structures capable of applying the *acquis communautaire* upon accession” (COM 2006, 780 final, 1).

The annual SAPARD allocation for Romania amounted to between €153.2 million in 2000 and €317 million in 2004 (Dalton et al. 2003; Papadimitriu and Phinnemore 2008). In 2005 the European Commission allocated €250.3 million to the 2007 candidates, Romania and Bulgaria, of which €175.2 million went to Romania (COM 2006, 780 final). This brought the total of EU funds committed for Romania in the period 2000-2005 to around one billion Euros. Yet, in 2005 the EU actually paid a total of €254.4 million to both 2007 candidate countries, of which €187.2 million went to Romania. The cumulative EU payments for the period 2000-2005 to Romania amounted to €385.4 million, representing only 39.8% of EU allocated funds. According to the Report for 2005, the SAPARD Agency had approved 1,928 projects by the end of 2005, amounting to €34.8 million, i.e., 55% of the SAPARD allocation for the period 2000-2005. Receiving only €385.4 million by the end of the year 2005, Romania risked losing substantial EU funds (ibid).

The implementation of SAPARD started in Romania only during mid-2002 and faced serious difficulties. The lack of administrative capacity and credits for farms or rural businesses was worsened by floods which terribly affected Romania in 2005 and seriously damaged many

completed projects. In this context, the EU agreed to re-allocate substantial funds to rural infrastructure rehabilitation in the affected areas (COM 2006, 780 final; Table 9.1).

Table 9.1

**Eligible SAPARD Measures**

- 
- Investment in agricultural holdings
  - Improving the processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products
  - Improving the structures for animal and plant health controls, for the quality of foodstuff, and for consumer protection
  - Agricultural production methods designed to protect the environment and maintain the countryside
  - Development and diversification of economic activities, providing for multiple activities and alternative income
  - Setting up farm relief and farm management services
  - Setting up producer groups
  - Renovation and development of villages and the protection and conservation of rural heritage
  - Land improvement and re-parceling
  - Establishment and updating of land registers
  - Improvement of vocational training
  - Development and improvement of rural infrastructure
  - Agricultural water resources management
  - Forestry, including forestation, investments in forest holdings owned by private forest owners, and processing and marketing of forestry products
  - Technical assistance for the measures covered by Regulation 1268/1999, including studies to assist with the preparation and monitoring of the program, information and publicity campaigns
  - Designing and implementing local and regional rural development strategies for rural communities in Bulgaria and Romania
- 

Source: European Commission 2002, cited in Dalton et al. 2003;  
[http://europa.eu/legislation-summaries/enlargement/2004\\_and\\_2007\\_enlargement/](http://europa.eu/legislation-summaries/enlargement/2004_and_2007_enlargement/)

Because Romania had, and still has, serious problems with its rural infrastructure, the largest share of EU funds has been allocated to this measure, in particular for roads, drinking water facilities, and sewerage systems.

The second largest share of EU funds was allocated to the *acquis*-related measure known as “Processing and Marketing” (meat and dairy products), which received only 54% of the funds available for the period 2000-2005 (COM 2006, 780 final, 6; Table 9.1). This was followed by the “Investments in Agricultural Holdings,” reaching 28% of the available funds, 59% of which was for investments for the development of field crops (ibid). Approaching Romania’s accession, attention was given particularly to enhancing implementation in livestock sectors. Although the “Diversification of Economic Activities” received only 23% of the funds allocated for 2000-2005, it is worth mentioning that much of this was for the development of rural tourism, with 86% of the total funds received going to this purpose (ibid).

Since EU funding is accession driven, SAPARD funding had thus to be consistent with both accession partnerships and the National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) (Dalton et al. 2003). Great emphasis was given to a regional approach with decentralized decisions, an intention which was not initially met positively in Romania. The implementation procedures of the SAPARD program are quite difficult, having to conform with EU practice. In addition, stringent audit procedures have resulted in much delay in releasing the money, to the detriment of intended beneficiaries. A candidate country may choose among these sixteen measures (see Table 9.1) for EU funds, according to the priority areas of its agriculture and rural development programs (Dalton et al. 2003; <http://europa.eu/legislation/enlargement/>, 2004, 2007). In this context, Romania made efforts to reinforce controls of the implementation of these projects in order to avoid financial irregularities. However, some projects faced serious absorption problems. According to the Commission’s Report, in 2005 151 new cases of irregularities were brought to the attention of OLAF<sup>35</sup>, of which 127 were recorded in only three countries: 87 in Romania, 21 in Hungary, and 19 in Poland (COM 2006, 780 final). In addition,

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<sup>35</sup> OLAF: Office Europeen de Lutte Anti-Fraude (European Anti-Fraud Office).

many projects involve considerable expense, needing national co-financing (e.g., Fermierul, in Romania). Therefore, the choices for using the EU funds are not easy to make.

## **9.2 Restructuring Post-1989 Agriculture**

Although it was clear that Romania's agriculture must be reformed, in the beginning of 1990 Romanian officials expressed reluctance to abandon collective farming, warning that "the total privatization of agriculture would destabilise production and would lead to the recreation of a system of large landed estates and landless labourers" (Cartwright 2001, 108). For President Ion Iliescu, whose university education had been accomplished in Moscow, "cooperation assures strength, competitiveness and modernization" (ibid). Much to the disappointment of many villagers, the perpetuation of the collectives was also supported by the government officials, primarily the new Romanian Prime Minister, Petre Roman, and Minister of Agriculture, Victor Surdu. Only in the lower hill and mountain areas were collectives permitted to dismantle their farms.

Given this official position, it was not surprising that Governmental Decrees 42/1990 and 43/1990 announced that members of the CAPs would receive property rights only for small plots, limited to a maximum of 0.5 hectares, without undermining the collective system (Jackson 1997; OECD 2000; Swain and Vincze 2001; Cartwright 2001). The decision was extended to the benefit of the agricultural engineers associated with the CAPs, as well as to the workers of the Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS). Also established was the right to allocate small plots (0.25 hectares in size) for "long-term use" to non-collective members from rural and urban areas who wished to return to, or begin, agricultural work (Jackson 1997, 302; Cartwright 2001, 109).

### ***9.2.1 Legislating Decollectivization and Privatization in Romania***

The decision to privatize agriculture continued to remain on the Romanian Government agenda. Except for the cases of spontaneous privatization, labeled by Jackson (1997, 302) as “spontaneous asset-grabbing,” agricultural restructuring in the Romanian countryside was structured by a series of legal measures issued in the 1990s as follows: Laws No. 9 and 15/1990; Law Decree 75/1990; Laws No. 1, 18, 36/1991; Law No. 16/1994; Law No. 169/1997; Law 54/1998; Law 1/2000; and several others (Kideckel 1993; Turnock 1998; OECD 2000; Cartwright 2001; Swain and Vincze 2001; Puscas 2003; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 9.2). These land laws, especially in the beginning of the decollectivization process, did not aim at agricultural efficiency. Instead, they were “designed on the historical justice presumption,” restoring ownership and property rights to the pre-communist owners, particularly to the former collective (CAPs) members, who were obliged to give up their land due to the collectivization process (OECD 2000, 78).

As a result, different types of farming emerged and the private agricultural sector became dominant, which by 1999 included 85% of land, in comparison to only 14% in 1989 (OECD 2000; Table 9.3). Yet, with approximately 40 million small plots and over 4 million small landowners created by Law 18/1991, Romania’s agriculture became extremely fragmented, which remained one of the major obstacles for the development of a strong agricultural sector (Swain and Vincze 2001; Puscas 2003). Consequently, new amendments have been issued for these laws, allowing the creation of larger farms (Laws 169/1997 and 54/1998), as well as the possibilities for leasing and/or selling properties (Laws 16/1994 and 169/1997) (Table 9.2).

Issued in February 1991, the Law on Land Resources (*Legea Fondului Funciar*), known as Law 18/1991, is considered the cornerstone of Romanian agricultural reform (Swain and Vincze

Table 9.2

### Post-Communist Land Reforms

Law No. / Decree Law	Year	Provisions
9	1990	Interdicted selling land for a period of 10 years
15	1990	Law on the <i>Privatization of State Agricultural Enterprises (IASs)</i> : - Created commercial joint stock and autonomous companies
Decrees No. 42 and 43	1990	Increased the permitted size of plots from 0.15 ha to 0.5 ha Extended the right to a plot of 0.25 ha to villagers and town people not former cooperative members
75	1990	Abolished compulsory deliveries for auxiliary family plots Permitted the free market sale of agricultural goods
1	1991	Regulated support for the unemployed Increasing the number of small-scale farmers
18	1991	<i>Law on Land Resources</i> : - Established the legal framework for liquidating the collectives - Abrogated Decree No. 42/1990 - Re-established the rights of Romanians to own land - Distributed the CAPs' assets to the entitled/successor persons - Permitted a partial restitution of a maximum of 10 ha/family - Stipulated a maximum land ownership at 100 ha/family - Partly modified the interdiction of selling land (Law 9/1990)
36	1991	Law for <i>Agricultural Societies and Other Forms of Associations in Agriculture</i> : - Regulated the operation of agricultural companies or other entities active in agriculture
16	1994	<i>Land Lease Law</i> : - Regulated the rental of land
137	1995	Law on <i>Environmental Protection</i>
7	1996	Law on <i>General Cadastre and Real Estate Publicity</i> , amended by Emergency Ordinance No. 70/2001
169	1997	Amended and supplemented Law 18/1991: - Returned the land owned in 1945 (50 ha/arable and 30 ha/forest) - Gave unclaimed land to local councils (communal pasture) - Permitted legally recognized churches to reclaim land - Removed restrictions on the sale of land within ten years - Returned the 0.5 ha plots allocated in 1990 to their original owners - Required agricultural companies to clarify the ownership of land
54	1998	Law on the <i>Circulation of Lands</i> : - Increased the limit of land ownership per family to 200 ha
65	1998	<i>Land Lease Law</i> : Amended and extended Law 16/1994
213	1998	<i>Law on Public Ownership</i> : - Defined and delimited public property rights
1	2000	Stipulated the reconstitution of land ownership rights for agricultural and forest land (requested according to Law 18/1991 and Law 169/1997)
268	2001	Stipulated the privatization of commercial companies which administer the private and public state owned agricultural land and setting up the State Domain Agency

Source: Adjusted from Jackson 1997; OECD 2000; Verdery 2003; Swain and Vincze 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004

Table 9.3

**Farm Structures in Romania:  
Shares in Total Agricultural Land, 1989 and 1999**

Domain	1989 %	1999 %
<b>State/Public sector</b>	28.0	<b>15</b>
- Commercial companies		11
- Other public		4
<b>Collective sector</b>	58.0	-
<b>Private sector</b>	14.0	<b>85</b>
- Family farms		68
- Formal associations		10
- Family associations		6
- Commercial private companies		1

Source: Adjusted from OECD 2000

2001; Verdery 2003; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). It not only provided the juridical regulation for the decollectivization of the collective farms but also re-established the rights of Romanian citizens to own land (privatization). Although the initial restitution was limited to a maximum of 10 hectares of arable land, including up to one hectare of forest per family, article 46 of the Land Law stipulated 100 hectares per household as the maximum land ownership (OECD 2000). Land was restored in kind, attempting to respect the original boundaries. When this was not feasible, an “equivalent size and quality”<sup>36</sup> had to be offered in an “alternative location” (Sabates-Wheeler 2004, 17). On the other hand, the law had a clear predisposition toward large-scale farms, preserving several of the main features of socialist agriculture, including collective farming. Specifically, Law 18/1991 accorded rights for setting up the “private-type associations with legal personality,” taking over all assets of former CAPs (ibid). Consequently, as has been specified by Cartwright (2001, 110), during the implementation of this law, there were examples

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<sup>36</sup> As much as 2.5 hectares of pastures and as little as 0.4 hectares of vineyard might be equivalent to 1 ha of arable land (Jackson 1997, 304).

where “peasants were, once again, being pressured into joining ‘voluntarily’ farming organization.” For all new owners, articles 53-68 established the regime of the compulsory cultivation of land and soil protection, accompanied by the threat of fines, and ultimately confiscation, if the land were left uncultivated for two years.

Law 18/1991 was amended by Laws 169/1997, 54/1998, and 1/2000, aiming to increase the average size of private farms and to create a legal framework for the land market in Romania (OECD 2000; Swain and Vincze 2001; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 9.2). Among other provisions, Law 169/1997 extended the limits of land for restitution to 50 hectares of arable land, including 30 hectares of forest. Where the land was not available for restitution, compensation had to be paid for the non-restituted land difference. In addition, the law removed restrictions on the sale of land within ten years, which had been introduced by Law 9/1990. Furthermore, Law 54/1998, the Land Circulation Law, increased the limit of land ownership from 100 hectares to 200 hectares per family, at the same time legalizing free land transactions. It is also worth mentioning that land ownership by non-resident foreigners as physical persons was forbidden, and only the foreign legal persons registered in Romania could own land (Cartwright 2001). However, many potential beneficiaries did not receive the claimed land and, in addition, there were many other conflicts over land. As a result, a new law was finally issued, Law 1/2000, stipulating the implementation rules of both Laws 18/1991 and 169/1997 (OECD 2000; Sabates-Wheeler 2004).

According to the OECD (2000, 79), State Agricultural Enterprises (IASs) have been differently privatized, their being “included in the general framework of privatization of state owned assets.” It is useful to point out that the state farms were excluded from restitution. In this light, Law 15/1990 provided the basis for the former IASs to be converted into either

commercial limited joint stock companies, eligible for privatization in accordance with Law 31/1990, or “Regie Autonome”<sup>37</sup> (*Regii Autonome*), considered to be of national strategic importance (OECD 2000, 79; Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Commercial companies are owned by the State Ownership Fund (SOF), Financial Investment Societies (FISs), and private shareholders.

Meanwhile, the state still continued to own some land, about 2.2 million hectares, but it was not the subject of Law 18/1991. Commercial companies, with an area of 1.7 million hectares in 1999, represented the so-called “private domain state owned land” (OECD 2000, 80). They operated in 1999 on about 11% of the total agricultural land in the country, with an average size of about 3,000 hectares (Table 9.3). Since the process of privatization was very slow during the first decade of the transition period<sup>38</sup>, in 1999 the State Ownership Fund still owned between 55 and 70% of the shares, the rest being owned by private shareholders. The rest of the state land, about 0.5 million hectares in 1999, constituted the “public domain state owned land,” and included communal pastures, teaching and research institutions, experimental stations, and other uses (*ibid*). The management of the state’s agricultural land was done by a new State Domain Agency created by Law 268/2001 (OECD 2000; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Table 9.2).

### ***9.2.2 Comparative Restitutions***

Comparing agricultural restructuring in all CEECs we may find some general patterns, but many differences as well. Most CEECs, for example, have chosen to restore collective farm land to former owners who kept legal rights to their land (Swinnen and Mathijs 1997). Also, in the majority of CEECs, state farm land was first leased, pending sale of the land for a period of time. Non-land assets have typically been privatized using procedures other than those used for land.

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<sup>37</sup> State farms temporarily excluded from the process of privatization (OECD 2000).

<sup>38</sup> The State Ownership Fund reported that out of the 547 commercial companies (CCs) that are on the list to be privatized, only 20 were actually privatized by November 1999 (OECD 2000, 80).

The most spectacular case of the dissolution of socialist agriculture was recorded in Eastern Germany. As a result of German reunification, the collective farms were rapidly dismantled after 1990, but the state farms were not broken up and remained state property and available for leasing (Verdery 2003). Therefore, the owners who lost legal ownership title were able to rent land from the nationalized land of state farms. The government subsidies, together with Germany's EU membership and its free access to European markets, made the GDR's land reform the most distinctive within the CEECs. Meanwhile, in Slovenia, the land of the state farms was restituted to its former owners, while in Albania, the majority of land was distributed to farm workers, the residents of villages, even if they did not necessarily previously own it. In addition, unlike the lengthy process in Romania, the dissolution of socialist forms proceeded very quickly in Albania, as all the collective and state farms were disbanded within only eighteen months (Swinnen and Mathijs 1997; Verdery 2003).

In many cases, though, large-scale farms still dominated agricultural production in several CEECs several years after the collapse of communism. According to Swinnen and Mathijs (1997), in the mid-1990s these large-scale organizations from Bulgaria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia cultivated more than two-thirds of the total agricultural area. In several other CEECs, individual farming became the dominant system of farm organization. In the case of Poland, Slovenia, and the other former Yugoslavian Republics, small-scale farming was simply a continuation of communist farming, but in Romania, Albania, and the Baltic Countries, especially in Latvia, spontaneous privatization led to a rapid break-up of the collective farms. In addition, Latvia was the only country that, by the mid-1990s, had restituted land to former owners who were no longer Latvian citizens, a decision motivated, according to Verdery (2003, 89), "to keep it out of Russian hands." The difference between these countries' attitudes toward

large-scale farming, especially collectives, has been explained by Serbanescu (2007, 202) as a result of people's cultivated "motivation for working in agricultural cooperatives," which, unlike in Romania, in Hungary or in the Czech Republic, had not been destroyed.

Yet, privatization did not necessarily lead to full transfer of all property rights to new private owners. In this light, the agricultural restructuring in Romania was obviously far from ideal. Not only did the neo-communist Romanian government hesitate to privatize the socialized land, but once it agreed to progress in privatization was very slow. Due to the absence of complete cadastral information, the property deeds (*Titluri de Proprietate*) were significantly delayed (OECD 2000). Figures from mid-1997 indicated that about 69% of the total land titles were issued, rising to 75% by the end of 1999 (Verdery 2003; OECD). Moreover, Law 1/2000 extended again the deadline for the new applications, generating even more submissions of claims. Verdery (2003) pointed out that around 6.2 million claims had been filed by summer 1994, from which only some 4.8 million were accepted. Yet, many peasants did not receive the claimed land at all, generating conflicts and resulting in over 600,000 litigations<sup>39</sup> (Swinnen and Mathijs 1997; Serbanescu 2007; Turnock 2007).

### ***9.2.3 Structural Transformation of Romania's Agriculture***

Since 1989, three key agricultural issues have been at the forefront: changing the structure of agricultural land; using a moderate degree of state intervention; and developing rural villages to serve as a social buffer by absorbing workers released from agriculture and other domains (Sarris and Gavrilesu 1997; Drager and Jaksch 2001; Turnock 1998, 2007; Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Serbanescu 2007). Farm restructuring is part of the general agricultural transformation

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<sup>39</sup> According to other authorized sources, the number of litigations for land had reached the impressive figure of over three million of which there still existed over one million unsolved cases in 2007 (interview, June 12, 2007, MAPDR Bucharest).

process involving the conversion of the collective and state farms into private ones. As Swinnen and Mathijs (1997) have emphasized, however, the reader should be careful in interpreting the concept of “private.” Although “private” refers to “ownership rights or all property rights,” the term may often be uncertain since the owners’ status could be either “individual” agricultural holders or other “legal” holders, including “agricultural companies/associations,” “commercial companies with private/state majority social capital,” “units of public administration,” “cooperative units,” and other types (Swinnen and Mathijs 1997, 335; Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2006, 2007; Table 9.4). This break-up of the socialized farms into different types of private farms, especially individual farms, implied tremendous challenges, including technological changes, as well as major restructurings in human capital.

### ***9.2.3.1 Emerging Private Farming***

Following Land Law 18/1991, the socialized land, previously used by the CAPs and the state farms, started to be privatized. Having the ability to decide the type of farming they wanted to develop, the majority of the Romanian farmers opted to stay out of the cooperative system of agriculture. Consequently, the family farm or individual agricultural holding became the predominant type of farming in Romania and the percentage of private ownership of agricultural land grew continuously as a result of the implementation of Law 18/1991, from around 70% in the early 1990s to nearly 80% at the end of the same decade (OECD 2000; Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007; Table 9.4; Table 9.5). In addition, the 1997-2001 legislation, which brought new amendments to the 1991 Law on Land Resources, contributed to a significant increase in private ownership, which had grown to over 95% by 2000 (RSY 2007; Table 9.5).<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> It should be specified that these percentages include all categories of private ownership: state, administrative-territorial units, legal persons, and natural persons.

Table 9.4

**Agricultural Holdings, by Legal Status, 2005**

Legal Status of Agricultural Holdings	Agricultural Holdings				
	Total Agricultural Holdings (number)	As Percentage of Total	As Percentage of Units with Legal Status	Agricultural Area in Use (ha)	Average Agricultural Area in Use per Holding (ha)
Total	4,256,152	100.0	-	13,906,701.3	3.3
Individual Agricultural Holdings	4,237,889	99.6	-	9,102,018.2	2.2
Units with Legal Status:	18,263	0.4	100.0	4,804,683.1	263.1
* Agricultural Companies/ Associations	1,630	-	8.9	742,065.4	455.3
* Commercial Companies with Private Majority Social Capital	4,574	-	25.0	1,720,792.0	376.2
* Commercial Companies with State Majority Social Capital	250	-	1.4	59,995.8	240.0
* Units of Public Administration	4,818	-	26.4	2,124,736.7	441.0
* Cooperative Units	108	-	0.6	3,246.4	30.1
* Other Types	6,883	-	37.7	153,846.8	22.4

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007

According to the Romanian Statistical Yearbook (2007) estimates for 2005, there were 4,237,889 million individual agricultural holdings recorded, representing 99.6% of the total units in the country (Table 9.4). Taking into account that the agricultural area in use for these family farms was estimated at 9,102,018.2 million hectares, the average agricultural area in use per holding was only 2.2 hectares. In Turnock's (2007, 173) words, "minifundia became the dominant feature of life in most rural areas outside the main lowland zones; accentuated by

fragmentation since many small farms were divided into several small plots dispersed over a wide area.” Specifically, in many cases, a family farm consisted of three or more plots, separated by distances of several kilometers.<sup>41</sup> Given their small scale, the newly created Romanian family farms were subsistence farms, used, in general, for self-consumption. They generated little or no cash income, having no market orientation and even depending financially on non-agricultural sectors.

Table 9.5

**Evolution of Private Ownership, 1990 - 2006**

Year	Agricultural Land		Of Which Private Ownership	
	Total Country (thou ha)	(%)	Total (thou ha)	(%)
1990	14,769.0	100	-	-
1991	14,798.3	100	10,324.8	69.8
1992	14,790.1	100	10,396.3	70.3
1993	14,793.1	100	10,336.4	69.9
1994	14,797.5	100	10,371.3	70.1
1995	14,797.2	100	10,693.9	72.3
1996	14,788.7	100	10,693.6	72.3
1997	14,794.0	100	10,430.7	70.5
1998	14,801.7	100	10,475.2	70.8
1999	14,730.7	100	11,432.6	77.6
2000	14,856.8	100	14,218.2	95.7
2001	14,852.3	100	14,310.0	96.3
2002	14,836.6	100	14,288.9	96.3
2003	14,717.4	100	14,156.0	96.2
2004	14,711.6	100	14,057.6	95.6
2005	14,741.2	100	14,087.1	95.6
2006	14,731.0	100	14,034.0	95.3

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007

<sup>41</sup> My parents, for example, have inherited six plots, approximately three hectares from my grandparents on my mother’s side, located in two villages of the same commune, Racova, Bacau County, separated by distances between one and six kilometers.

It should not be supposed that Romanian agriculture involved only small peasant farms, however. New associations, whose size significantly differed by individual holdings, were encouraged or forced to be created (Sabates-Wheeler 2004; Turnock 2007). There are several reasons why certain people decided to keep their land within large-scale farms. First, land titles in Romania were issued very slowly, leaving farmers uncertain about the result of their claims for land (OECD 2000). Then, restitution was limited to land, leaving farmers without agricultural machinery. Equally important was the fact that many former collective members were very narrowly specialized and did not have enough skill to start farming alone. Furthermore, some of the new owners were town residents, with permanent jobs outside the village, with little or no experience in agriculture. Moreover, other new owners were already too old to be able to work their land individually, and so were happy to join an association. Finally, there were a number of peasants who, despite their wanting to work individually, had no alternative. This was the case especially in the large plains, where local officials and some of the peasants decided to continue agricultural work on the already existing association farms.

Under these conditions, some thousands of formal (legal entities with a minimum membership of ten) and informal (family) associations were created. Family associations were based only on written or verbal agreements between at least two family farms. Thus, they had no legal status. OECD (2000) data suggest there were over 15,000 family associations at the end of 1996, farming about 1.4 million hectares. By 1999, though, their number had dramatically decreased, with only some 6,000 family associations owning less than 0.9 million hectares recorded in December of the same year. These informal associations, then, appeared to be a “transitory alternative” either to individual private farms or to formal associations (OECD 2000, 83).

By 2005 there were 18, 263 units with legal status, representing 0.4% of all agricultural holdings (Table 9.4). Given the fact that these units covered over 4.8 million hectares of land, a holding from this category is significantly larger, having an average of over 260 hectares. The largest farms with legal status are included in the categories of agricultural companies/associations, with an average agricultural area per holding of some 450 hectares. These are followed by commercial companies with private majority social capital, with an average size of over 375 hectares, and then by commercial companies with state majority social capital, which are a little smaller, at around 240 hectares each. From these, the most numerous are the commercial companies with private social capital, accounting for some 4,574 companies, which represent 25% of the total units with legal status. They are also important because their land holdings, over 1.7 million hectares, represent about 36% of the total agricultural area in use in holdings with legal status. In addition, the large-scale agricultural holdings incorporate over 4,800 units of public administration, which represent about 26% of the total units with legal status. The owned land area is over 2.1 million hectares, with an average of some 440 hectares per unit, representing 44% of the total agricultural area in use of the holdings with legal status. However, there also exist some smaller cooperatives and a variety of other types of agricultural holdings with legal status, covering an area of some 160,000 hectares, with an average area of around 20-30 hectares per unit (Table 9.4).

Thus, combining “historical justice” with “equity considerations,” land reform created a relatively fair distribution of land ownership in Romania (OECD 2000, 84). Yet, restitution, as a reform strategy, resulted in a highly fragmented land ownership pattern. This raised great concern regarding economic consequences at the time when the country’s agricultural sector was opening to increasingly competitive worldwide trade. This concern was justified by the fact that

Romania, as well as the other CEECs, heavily relied on rural areas and agriculture to resolve the housing and income issues caused by restructuring of the industrial sector. As Sabates-Wheeler (2004) has remarked, Romanian privatization has led to a variety of problems, ranging from technical to sociopolitical to economic. Although Romania's agriculture had, and still has, to resolve serious domestic and integration problems, including a sharp decline in production, in many respects the land use pattern did not change substantially after 1989. Nevertheless, there were some important changes in post-1989 land use.

### ***9.2.3.2 Land Use***

During the 1990s, the amount of agricultural land in Romania increased 87,800 hectares, primarily as a result of a massive deforestation of private forests (Turnock 1998; RSY 2007). Unfortunately, as a result of a lack of legislation during the first years of transition, the Romanian forests, especially in the Carpathian Mountains, were savagely destroyed, losing 228,100 hectares in ten years, with terrible consequences for the agricultural environment (especially floods). After 2000, specifically during the period 2000-2004, the agricultural area steadily decreased, from 14,856,800 hectares in 2000 to 14,711,600 hectares in 2004, followed then by a slight increase during the next two years (Table 9.6). Overall, the fluctuations in the size of agricultural land were not dramatic ones, but, as a result especially of increasing rural migration abroad for work, several alarming signs of land abandonment began to emerge.<sup>42</sup> The good news for agriculture, though, and, in general, for the environment was the extension of the forest areas by about 300,000 hectares (Table 9.6).

In 2005, agricultural land accounted for approximately 62% of the Romania's total territory (Table 9.7). This is slightly less than it had been in 1990. Within this, arable land (some 9.4

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<sup>42</sup> This topic is developed in the section below regarding rural population; see also Chapter 1.

million hectares) continued to be the most important category of agricultural land, representing an average of 63.7% of the total agricultural area and 39.5% of Romanian territory. The most dramatic changes were recorded in the vineyard and orchard areas. Both categories of agricultural land lost significant amount of coverage, while land devoted to pastures and hayfields increased. Hence, while vineyards lost 53,300 hectares between 1990 and 2005 (a decline from 1.9% to 1.5% of the total agricultural land), orchards lost almost twice that area during the same period, i.e., 95,200 hectares (a decline from 2.1% to 1.5% of the total agricultural land) (Table 9.7). By comparison, pastures and hayfields increased significantly in this period of time, over 150,000 hectares, especially in the hill and mountain areas. Pasture areas were extended by about 100,000 hectares (an increase from 22.1% in 1990 to 22.8% in 2005) and hayfield areas by almost 50,000 hectares (an increase from 9.9% to 10.3% for the same period) (ibid). Taking into consideration the average cultivated area in the reference period (1989-1991), the Romanian Minister of Agriculture calculated a base area of 6,891,100 hectares that could benefit from the EU's direct payment scheme (Puscas 2003).

Table 9.6

**Total Land Fund, by Use, 1989 - 2006**  
(thousands hectares)

Indicator	1989	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total land area	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1	23,839.1
Agricultural area	14,759.0	14,769.0	14,856.8	14,852.3	14,836.6	14,717.4	14,711.6	14,741.2	14,731.0
Arable	9,458.4	9,450.4	9,381.1	9,401.5	9,398.5	9,414.3	9,421.9	9,420.2	9,434.6
Pastures	3,256.9	3,262.5	3,441.7	3,421.4	3,424.0	3,355.0	3,346.9	3,364.0	3,334.4
Hayfields	1,448.3	1,465.3	1,507.1	1,510.0	1,513.6	1,490.4	1,498.4	1,514.7	1,524.9
Vineyards	277.5	277.4	272.3	267.4	259.6	230.5	223.3	224.1	223.7
Orchards	318.0	313.4	254.6	252.0	240.9	227.2	221.1	218.2	213.4
Forest	6,678.5	6,685.4	6,457.3	6,605.7	6,663.1	6,751.7	6,779.3	6,742.8	6,754.7
Other	2,401.6	2,384.7	2,525.0	2,381.1	2,339.4	2,370.0	2,348.2	2,355.1	2,353.4

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2006, 2007; Turnock 1998

Table 9.7

**Land Fund, by Use: 1990, 2000, and 2005<sup>43</sup>**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>		<b>2005</b>	
	(thou ha)	(%)	(thou ha)	(%)	(thou ha)	(%)
Total land area	23,839.1	100.0	23,839.1	100.0	23,839.1	100.0
Agricultural area	14,769.0	62.0	14,856.8	62.3	14,741.2	61.8
		100.0		100.0		100.0
Arable	9,450.4	64.0	9,381.1	63.1	9,420.2	63.9
Pastures	3,262.5	22.1	3,441.7	23.2	3,364.0	22.8
Hayfields	1,465.3	9.9	1,507.1	10.2	1,514.7	10.3
Vineyards	277.4	1.9	272.3	1.8	224.1	1.5
Orchards	313.4	2.1	254.6	1.7	218.2	1.5
Forests	6,685.4	28.0	6,457.3	27.1	6,742.8	28.3
Other	2,384.7	10.0	2,525.0	10.6	2,355.1	9.9

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbooks 2006 and 2007

It is also worth considering the transformations in private ownership. Table 9.8 gives us significant details for two selected years: 1991 (the year of the beginning of decollectivization and privatization) and 2006 (the last year of preparation for Romania's integration into the EU). While in 1991 only 69.8% of the total agricultural land was in private ownership, by 2006 as much as 95.3% was in private hands. However, there were important variations in the different agricultural branches. For instance, the private share of arable land increased from 79% in 1991 to 96% in 2006 (ibid). In the hayfield areas, on the other hand, the increase was almost negligible, from 92.8% in 1991 to 98% in 2006. In contrast, pasture areas held privately increased tremendously, from 33.6% to 92% for the same time interval. Equally important were the transformations in ownership in the vineyard and orchard zones, restituted especially in the plateau and hill zones. In 1991, private vineyards covered 69% of the total country's vineyards

<sup>43</sup> Percentages for agricultural land are calculated based on Romania's total area while percentages for arable land, pastures, hayfields, vineyards, and orchards are calculated from the total agricultural area.

and orchards 66% of the total country's orchard lands. By the end of 2006, though, 96.2% of vineyards and 94% of orchards had become private properties (ibid).

Table 9.8

**Agricultural Area, by Use: Private Ownership, 1991 and 2006**

Indicator	1991				2006			
	Agricultural Area (thou ha / %)		Structure (%)		Agricultural Area (thou ha / %)		Structure (%)	
	Total	Of Which Private Majority Ownership (thou ha / %)	Total	Of Which Private Majority Ownership	Total	Of Which Private Majority Ownership (thou ha / %)	Total	Of Which Private Majority Ownership
Total	14,798.3	10,324.8 / 69.8	100.0	100.0	14,731.0	14,034.0 / 95.3	100.0	100.0
Arable	9,423.5	7,448.2 / 79.0	63.7	72.1	9,434.6	9,056.3 / 96.0	64.0	64.5
Pastures	3,309.8	1,112.4 / 33.6	22.4	10.8	3,334.4	3,067.9 / 92.0	22.6	21.9
Hayfields	1,467.9	1,361.6 / 92.8	9.9	13.2	1,524.9	1,494.2 / 98.0	10.4	10.6
Vineyards	285.8	197.2 / 69.0	1.9	1.9	223.7	215.3 / 96.2	1.5	1.5
Orchards	311.3	205.4 / 66.0	2.1	2.0	213.4	200.3 / 94.0	1.5	1.5

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007 (Agricultural Area/percentages: Own calculation)

As a result of several factors, especially economic, patterns of arable land use have fluctuated notably over the transitional time period (Table 9.9). Although Romania is well-endowed with arable land, about 9.4 million hectares (64%) out of the total agricultural area of 14.7 millions, the transitional issues and harsh adjustment to the market economy left many agricultural areas abandoned. After 1990, the proportion of all arable land not cultivated increased by about 1.5 million hectares to 16% of all such land and some important changes also occurred in cropping patterns (ibid). Significantly, while before 1999 the highest level of abandoned land was 4.9% (recorded in 1996), during the period of more intense preparation for EU membership (1999-2006), five out of eight years recorded over 9% non-cultivated land (ibid).

Table 9.9

**Arable Land:  
Distribution of Cultivated and Non-Cultivated Areas, 1990-2006<sup>44</sup>**

Year	Arable Land		Cultivated		Non-Cultivated	
	(thou ha)	%	(thou ha)	%	(thou ha)	%
1990	9,450.4	100.0	9,402.1	99.5	48,300	0.5
1991	9,423.5	100.0	9,197.3	97.6	226,200	2.4
1992	9,356.9	100.0	8,909.1	95.2	447,800	4.8
1993	9,341.5	100.0	9,166.1	98.1	175,400	1.9
1994	9,338.0	100.0	9,220.0	98.7	118,000	1.3
1995	9,337.1	100.0	9,224.6	98.8	112,500	1.2
1996	9,338.9	100.0	8,878.8	95.1	460,100	4.9
1997	9,341.4	100.0	9,059.8	97.0	281,600	3.0
1998	9,350.8	100.0	8,972.6	96.0	372,200	4.0
1999	9,358.1	100.0	8,493.9	90.8	864,200	9.2
2000	9,381.1	100.0	8,499.8	90.6	881,300	9.4
2001	9,401.5	100.0	8,905.0	94.7	496,500	5.3
2002	9,398.5	100.0	9,001.6	95.8	396,900	4.2
2003	9,414.3	100.0	8,880.6	94.3	533,700	5.7
2004	9,421.9	100.0	8,527.8	90.5	894,100	9.5
2005	9,420.2	100.0	8,467.9	90.0	952,300	10.0
2006	9,434.6	100.0	7,884.0	83.6	1,550,600	16.4

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007  
(Non-cultivated areas [ha] and all percentages: Own calculation)

Abandoning agricultural land, with first-class arable soil, in the context of massive imports of food seems hard to understand at first glance. Yet, the long transition was quite difficult for many Romanians. Industrial disintegration, inflation, and unemployment in the 1990s generated waves of urban-rural migrants. However, people soon discovered a rural area with plenty of private agricultural land, but with a non-mechanized agriculture. In other words, in the 1990s Romanians experienced first-hand the shift from commercial mechanized agriculture to

<sup>44</sup> Some references have emphasized even larger non-cultivated (abandoned) areas.

traditional non-commercial and non-mechanized agriculture. It was a shift toward excessively fragmented holdings and the growth of labor-intensive subsistence crops, with little hope for taking advantage of the EU-supported programs (Turnock 2007). In addition, the ongoing deforestation facilitated a generalized ecological disaster, materialized by landslides and annual catastrophic floods, with an unusual devastating flood being recorded in 2005. Romania's less competitive agriculture was also strongly affected by the importation of food at dumping prices, which resulted in domestic food being more expensive than imported food, thereby depressing the areas sown especially with cereals and sugar beet (ibid). Consequently, many farmers were discouraged from working their land and many left the countryside for the big cities or even went abroad for work. In turn, this increased the areas of abandoned agricultural land.

Although the cultivated land dramatically decreased, from 9,402,100 hectares in 1990 to 7,884,000 hectares in 2006, the share of private ownership increased, from 28.4% to 97.9% during the same period (Table 9.10). Cereal for grains continued to cover the majority of cultivated land, accounting for an average of around 5.6 million hectares for the selected years. Yet, while in the beginning of the transition period the land devoted to grains increased, from 5.7 million hectares in 1990 to over 6 million hectares in 1991, after 1991 the grain areas decreased, registering a total of only 5.1 million hectares in 2006. Corn, though, is an exception, having increased its area of cultivation from 2.5 million hectares in 1990-1991 to over 3 million hectares in 2000 (though it declined slightly to 2.5 million hectares in 2006) (Table 9.10).

Many crops (potatoes, vegetables, and grafted bearing vineyards) have retained similar levels of cultivation throughout the post-1990 period, but others significantly increased their area of cultivation. The industrial crops, for example, almost doubled in area, from some 700,000 hectares in the early 1990s to over 1.3 million hectares in 2006. Within this category, the most

important are sunflower production, whose area more than doubled between 1990 and 2006 (from 394,700 hectares to 991,000 hectares). By way of contrast, dried pulses and sugar beet dramatically decreased their areas. Sugar beet accounted for over 200,000 hectares in 1991, but its area decreased to 48,000 hectares in 2000 and to less than 40,000 hectares in 2006 (Puscas 2003; Table 9.10). The major shift, though, was related to property ownership, with all categories of crop areas achieving rates of private ownership of greater than 96% (Table 9.10).

Table 9.10

**Cultivated Area, by Main Crops, 1990 - 2006**

Main Crops	1990		1991		2000		2006	
	Total (thou ha)	Of Which Private Majority Ownership (%)						
<b>Cultivated Area</b>								
Total of Which:	9,402.1	28.4	9,197.3	78.9	8,499.8	87.6	7,884.0	97.9
<b>Cereals for Grains</b>								
of which:	5,704.0	36.5	6,049.0	83.9	5,655.2	89.8	5,114.4	99.1
Wheat	2,253.2	14.2	2,154.3	84.5	1,940.2	84.8	2,012.6	98.8
Corn	2,466.7	67.0	2,575.0	91.9	3,049.4	94.4	2,520.1	99.4
<b>Dried Pulses</b>	129.5	12.2	81.2	66.9	41.3	80.1	40.4	96.3
<b>Root Crops</b>								
of which:	537.2	39.1	496.2	88.6	366.7	97.4	344.1	99.4
Potatoes	289.6	60.0	234.9	92.6	282.7	97.9	278.0	99.6
Sugar Beet	162.7	10.7	201.6	87.6	48.4	94.0	39.8	98.2
<b>Industrial Crops</b>								
of which:	747.6	1.5	712.3	71.1	1,089.1	72.9	1,330.8	98.4
Sunflower	394.7	2.2	476.8	77.4	876.8	79.3	991.0	98.9
<b>Vegetables</b>	250.6	40.1	243.7	76.7	281.9	97.1	280.1	98.3
<b>Bearing Vineyards</b>	223.6	33.1	225.3	74.0	247.5	81.5	190.5	97.6

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007 and OECD 2000  
(Percentages: Own calculation)<sup>45</sup>

In order to encourage agriculture, the Romanian government allocated a certain amount of money for various activities. For example, in 2000, the government paid one million lei (some

<sup>45</sup> The percentages of private ownership were calculated using absolute data of areas for each category of crops (RSY 2007, Table 14.7).

\$50) to the farmers for each cultivated hectare, and subsidized up to 50% their purchase of certified seeds and 55% their purchase of tractors and agricultural machinery manufactured by Romanian companies (Puscas 2003). The government did this because, in accordance with Government Ordinance No. 108/2001 regarding agriculture, Romanian farms have had the right to receive all of the financial resources available in the EU, even if it has been the Romanian government which has had to provide the funding.

### ***9.2.3.3 Agricultural Production***

Romania has a balanced variety of production conditions due to its land forms, soil types, and climate, giving it an unusually broad spectrum of farming possibilities.

#### ***9.2.3.3.1 Cereal for Grains***

Crop production figures reflect, in general, the size of the cultivated areas, although the weather's vagaries can certainly lead to poor harvests. Consequently, since cereals cover over 65% of the entire cultivated area, their production has tended to dominate overall production. However, grain production fluctuated significantly after 1990. The 1990s started with 19.3 million tonnes of grain in 1991, the same level of production recorded for collectivized agriculture in the 1980s (RSY 2007; Table 9.11). However, several years recorded lower production, below 15 million tonnes. For example, in 2003, as a result of a severe drought, production was only 12.9 million tonnes and only 12.2 million tonnes in 1992, production levels matched only in the 1960s (Table 8.11; RSY 2007; Turnock 2007). To encourage production and enhance competitiveness, in 1999 the Romanian government bought wheat from farmers, but only at low prices, and granted export licenses. However, this discouraged farmers from sowing wheat for 2000. In addition, in 2000 Romania experienced its worst drought in 50 years. Combined with the vandalization of a significant part of the irrigation system built before

1989<sup>46</sup>, the year 2000 recorded the lowest production of grains during the transition period so far, a mere 10.4 million tonnes (ibid).

Table 9.11

### Crop Production, for Main Crops: 1990 - 2006

Main Crops	1990		1991		2000		2006	
	Total (thou t)	Of Which Private Majority Ownership (%)						
<b>Cereals for Grains</b>	17,173.5	36.3	19,306.6	83.0	10,477.5	86.7	15,759.3	99.1
of which:								
Wheat	7,289.3	12.6	5,473.1	78.7	4,434.4	80.8	5,526.2	98.6
Corn	6,809.6	74.9	10,497.3	92.9	4,897.6	94.9	8,984.7	99.5
<b>Dried Pulses</b>	112.1	26.8	79.5	67.3	36.9	78.6	71.6	96.2
<b>Potatoes</b>	3,185.6	63.1	1,872.8	91.2	3,469.8	98.0	4,015.9	99.6
<b>Sugar Beet</b>	3,277.7	11.7	4,702.7	88.2	666.9	94.4	1,152.2	98.2
<b>Sunflower</b>	556.2	1.8	612.0	75.4	720.9	77.6	1,526.2	98.9
<b>Vegetables</b>	3,051.2	57.4	3,246.4	82.4	3,381.1	97.0	4,138.9	98.5
<b>Grapes</b>	954.0	32.6	848.5	65.5	1,295.3	77.1	912.4	98.4
<b>Fruits (total)</b>	1,453.0	52.9	1,164.7	63.1	1,301.0	89.8	1,486.4	96.0

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007 and OECD 2000  
(Percentages: Own calculation)

The highest production rates for cereals were recorded in 1997 (22.1 million tonnes), the second best year in grain production in the entire pre-accession period, and in 2004 (24.4 million tonnes), the highest production of grains recorded in Romania's history (RSY 2007). An average of 50% of the grains area and about 35% of all the cultivated area in 2000, or 32% in 2006, was planted with corn, an indicator of its dominant role in the country's overall crop production (Table 9.10). Whereas not quite 7 million tonnes had been produced in 1990, over 10 million tonnes were produced in 1991, 1999, and 2005, and high points of 12.6 million tonnes and 14.5 million tonnes were reached in 1997 and 2004 (Drager and Jaksch 2001; RSY 2007; Table 9.11).

<sup>46</sup> In 2000 the agricultural area effectively irrigated was 216,100 hectares [compared with over 2.5 million ha in 1983; 793,600 ha in 1994; and only 96,200 ha in 2006], of which 204,200 hectares covered arable land. In private ownership, the year 2000 recorded 94,500 hectares of irrigated agricultural land, of which 89,200 hectares was arable land (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007, Table 14.2).

The level of private ownership for cereals changed from 12.6% for wheat and 74.9% for corn in 1990 to 98.6% for wheat and 99.5% for corn in 2006 (Table 9.11).

Analyzing the cereal sector, Turnock (2007) outlined the exorbitant production cost for cereals, wheat especially, in Romania in the 1990s compared with that in the EU, which made them uncompetitive on the international market. In 1997, for example, Romania had a 2.5 million tonnes wheat surplus, largely because its domestic production was undercut by Hungarian and Turkish cereal and flour imports. Consequently, many called for tariffs, together with a ceiling on duty-free imports, in order to protect Romanian millers. In this context, there were several cases of border picketing by the Agrostar union in protest of the non-implementation of the tariff increases against Hungarian wheat (ibid). It thus became imperative that new investment to be made in technology used on the large farms of the private sector to address the problem of prices. As a result of the grain sector's significant improvement after 2004, Romania expected to export some 2.65 million tonnes of wheat and up to 2.7 million tonnes of corn by 2005. While in the period 1999-2000 the government had paid substantial subsidies, including those for wheat, in 2005 these subsidies were cancelled, except for less-favored areas, some of which actually received even greater assistance (Puscas 2003; Turnock 2007).

#### ***9.2.3.3.2 Industrial Crops***

Largely as a result of the high cost of imported edible oil, sunflower production substantially increased, from 556,200 tonnes in 1990 to over 1.5 million tonnes in 2006 (Table 9.11). Most of this was grown by private producers, as the proportion they produced increased from 1.8% of the total to 98.9%. Additionally, interest in this culture was boosted by the need for biodiesel production, and several projects were initiated for its production in the Baragan

Plain, with Belgian and Portuguese investors, and in Dobrogea and Moldova, with Romanian investors (Turnock 2007). The sharp reduction in areas of sugar beet production resulted in a fall in production from 4.7 million tonnes in 1991 to only 666,000 tonnes in 2000, although there was a slight increase to 1.1 million tonnes in 2006 (Puscas 2003; Table 9.11). This drop was largely the result of the low market price for sugar, which removed the incentive for many peasant farmers to produce sugar beet. In addition, many domestic sugar factories lacked high-end technology, with the result that some of them preferred to process (at lower cost) imported crude sugar.

There was, in general, strong criticism of the Nastase government<sup>47</sup> for negotiating unrealistic quotas with the EU. According to Puscas (2003), Romania requested a sugar quota of 500,000 tonnes, a quantity designed to represent the annual domestic need for Romania. Yet, the production of sugar from sugar beet dramatically decreased, from some 400,000 tonnes in the early 1990s to a little over 100,000 tonnes in 1999, and fell to about half that amount after 2000 (Puscas 2003; Turnock 2007). However, there seems to be little desire to increase production, so that Romania now needs to import annually over 85% of the sugar its population consumes. Consequently, after its 2007 accession, Romania has had to re-negotiate a series of quotas, including that for sugar, in order to better benefit from the EU assistance.

#### ***9.2.3.3.3 Fruit and Grape Production***

Once land was privatized in the hill regions with relatively shallow slopes, many owners cut down orchards to obtain more land for corn. As a result, fruit production declined significantly, with production levels ranging between 0.9 million tonnes (in 1994, 1995, 1999, and 2002) and 2.0 million tonnes (in 1993 and 2003) (RSY 2007). Two kinds of fruits had, and

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<sup>47</sup> Adrian Nastase was Prime Minister of Romania between 2000 and 2004.

still have, supremacy in Romania: plums and apples. While before WWII plums accounted for two-thirds of all fruits, during the communist period apples and pears were the preference. After 1989, many plum orchards were reestablished in order to extend the traditional plum brandy industry, both formally and also as an informal rural business. Plum production still accounted for between one-third and one-half the fruit produced, and in 2003 over 900,000 tonnes of plums were grown (RSY 2007). This made Romania the world's third-largest plum producer in 2002, after China and the U.S. (Turnock 2007). Although Romania does not have a climate favorable for producing exotic fruits and had traditionally imported them from different countries, as a consequence of privatization, in the mid-1990s a privatized state farm located in Southern Dobrogea, at Ostrov, Constanta County, started an experimental kiwi orchard business, though it has faced issues of cold winters and frequent droughts in the region (Turnock 2007; Table 9.11; <http://www.ziare.com/>, July 9, 2009).

Romania has been known from antiquity for its vineyards and wine. The wine industry has experienced difficulties through restitution and underdevelopment, as well as the adjustment to the CAP's requirements. In this light, because hybrid vines are banned in the EU, Romanian farmers had to replace their old hybrid plantations (approximately 111,000 hectares) with the noble varieties of vine (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, No. 680, 2005). Yet, the new plantations are quite expensive, as much as €10,000/ha (Turnock 2007). Consequently, the replacement of vineyards has proceeded very slowly. In addition, wine producers have claimed to suffer from excessive fiscal problems and have asked that wine be designated as part of the EU's "food" category so as to save money for new vine plantations. Taking into account that approximately half of Romania's vineyards were grafted and the other half were hybrid, compared to other EU countries (Italy, France, and Spain, for example) they have been relatively unproductive (Table

9.12). The average yield for grapes in the period 1990-2006 was around 4,518 kg/ha, ranging between 2,603 kg/ha in 2005 and 5,991 kg/ha (6,037 kg/ha in private ownership) in 2004 (RSY 2006, 2007; Table 9.12). Total production ranged between 505,800 tonnes in 2005 and 1,431,400 tonnes in 1996, with an average of some 1.1 million tonnes (RSY 2007). The share of private ownership was also very high, 98% for both areas of vineyards and grape production (Tables 9.10 and 9.11).

Table 9.12

**Europe: Grapes Production, 2004**  
(selected countries)

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total</b> (thou tonnes)	<b>Average Yield</b> <b>per Hectare</b> (kg/ha)	<b>Per Inhabitant</b> (kg)
France	7,563	8,880	125
Germany	1,120	11,430	14
Greece	1,300	10,080	117
Italy	8,692	10,350	150
Portugal	1,000	4,760	95
Romania	1,230	5,991	57
Spain	7,286	6,200	169

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook: International Statistics, 2006

Although the adjustment to the CAP requirements was very hard, some valuable steps in investment and research in the wine industry were taken by both Romanians and foreigners. Turnock (2007) has detailed certain instances of foreign assistance, such as the French Institute for Cooperation with East European Countries, which has provided assistance to some vineyards in Constanta County, and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, which has worked with the Odobesti Vine Growers Association, in Vrancea County. State and/or EU support to individual wine growers is still needed, though. However, there have been some proposals to create stronger associations to negotiate contracts with the viticulture companies. Given that its

production of around 6.0 million hectoliters (hl) made Romania the world's sixth largest wine producer, the key point has been to increase efforts to modernize and expand the industry, so as to make Romanian quality wine better known abroad (Turnock 2007).

#### ***9.2.3.3.4 Livestock Farming***

As in other branches of agriculture, livestock farming also saw tremendous changes. More specifically, excepting for horses, all zootechnical sectors recorded a sharp decline during the entire transition period (Drager & Jaksch 2001; Turnock 2007; Table 8.15; Table 9.13). Cattle, pigs, and sheep inventories, for example, fell by over half between 1989 and 2006, and poultry by one-third for the same period. By way of contrast, the number of horses decreased more slowly, from about 700,000 head in 1989 to a little over 660,000 in 1990 and 1991, followed by an increase to some 800,000 head after 2000 (Table 9.13). This increase was directly connected with the lack of tractors and agricultural machines for small farms, as illustrated by the fact that the proportion of horses in private ownership increased from 65% in 1990 to 99% in 2006 (ibid). Finally, since 2000, there has also been growing interest in ostrich breeding (Turnock 2007; <http://www.ziare.com/>, September 10, 2008).

During the 1990s, decline was most evident in the state sector because a large number of pig and poultry farms were liquidated and only a few were privatized. In addition, Romania experienced severe drought in 1993, pricing anomalies (feed prices higher than those for animal products), state control of prices until 1997, inflation, lack of assistance to farmers affected by natural disasters, high cost of insurance, and even unfair competition from EU countries (Turnock 2007). However, there were some signs of reconstruction, assisted by SAPARD, and after 2000 the livestock sector started to improve. It is worth nothing that private ownership

increased from an average of about 35% (excepting horses) in 1990 to over 99% in 2006 (Table 9.13).

Table 9.13

**Livestock, 1990 - 2006**

Livestock	1990		1991		2000		2006	
	Total (thou heads)	Of Which Private Majority Ownership (%)						
Cattle	6,291	33.1	5,381	44.4	2,870	97.4	2,934	99.6
Pigs	11,671	28.6	12,003	28.9	4,797	94.7	6,815	99.5
Sheep	15,435	46.6	14,062	62.0	7,657	98.3	7,678	99.8
Horses	663	64.4	670	74.5	865	98.8	805	99.0
Poultry	113,968	36.3	121,379	35.5	70,076	97.4	84,990	99.2

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007  
(Percentages: Own calculation)

The mountain regions represent a special case for the livestock sector, given that they were part of the country's non-cooperativized agriculture during the communist regime. Although the mountain farmers had fewer problems feeding their animals because they had access to extensive meadows and hayfields in this region, many other issues emerged during the transition, such as overgrazing, soil erosion, lack of efficient veterinary services, and, more importantly, "the inadaptability of marketing systems for small-scale farming" (Turnock 2007, 200). Moreover, emigration of people abroad (especially young people) negatively impacted the mountain villages, with the result that the problems of the mountain farms were left in the hands of the older generation. Opening the country to the world market after 1989 had a negative impact not only on dairy and meat products but also on mutton and wool, which had previously enjoyed the strong support of a protected home market. Hence, after 1989, many Carpathian villages, which during the communist system were specialized in the management of large flocks of sheep based on transhumance, encountered dramatic transformations. Free trade and EU regulations, as well

as the government's incorrect implementation of some regulations, drastically diminished the shepherds' profit, obliging them to create lobbying associations, to protest on the street, to diminish/quit their business, or even to ask for rights at Strasbourg.

Nevertheless, substantial improvements were seen in certain places in the livestock farming and food processing industry, especially following the removal of price controls. Numerous family or large-farm associations and companies were organized, with domestic (local and/or national) or external assistance, in order to sell their products. Examples of the adjustment of Romania's zootechnical sector to the CAP include: Dutch assistance during 1995-1996 to develop milk production associations in the Bucharest area, as well as in Iasi County; Italian capital invested in 2005 in a dairy farm and milk factory in Arad County; Danish cows used in the development of a modern complex for dairy cow breeding in Tulcea County; and SAPARD assistance during 2005-2006 for dairy farms across the country (Turnock 1998; Turnock 2007). The farm market for fresh animal products, including fresh cheeses, as well as finding export opportunities, was the main attraction in Romania. Yet, many farms still had to increase efforts to improve the quality of their animal products to fully adjust to EU regulations.

### **9.3 Rural Transformations: On the Road to the National Rural Development Program**

As in other Central and Eastern European countries, rural areas in Romania are characterized by a very heavy dependence on farming. In the absence of non-farming opportunities for work and the difficulties of post-communist transition, many villages have taken on a largely subsistence character, with low income, high unemployment, and massive outmigration flows.

### ***9.3.1 Rural Population and Agricultural Employment***

Between 1990 and 2006, Romania's population dramatically decreased, from 23.2 million to 21.5 million people. In this context, the rural population accounted for a little less than half of the total population (Table 9.14). From an economic point of view, the major problem of the Romanian rural areas has been that their economy is based predominantly on agriculture. In addition, as a result of the general reorganization of the Romanian economy after 1989, when non-agricultural employment was limited, farming became once again a major employer, absorbing an average of about 35% of the total employment in post-communist Romania. The period of 1999-2001 recorded the highest level of agricultural employment, 41%, and this coincided with the second wave of land restitution after the 1997 and 2001 legislation (Tables 9.2; Table 9.14). Agriculture served thus as an occupational buffer for most rural inhabitants and a number of urban people. However, agricultural incomes were too low to assure appropriate levels of welfare, taking into account that at the end of the 1990s some 40% of rural people were under the poverty line (OECD (2000)). In this light, significant migration waves emerged as a survival strategy, with workers going both to the cities and abroad (Sandu 2002, 2005).

### ***9.3.2 Romanian Villages in Confrontation with the New Migratory Flows***

The transition dramatically affected the standard of living of Romanians after 1990. As a result, internal migratory flows were quite high, both those from rural to urban areas and from urban to rural areas. These flows were complemented by the external ones. Overall, these had significant consequences for agriculture and rural development.

In 1990 the total number of domestic migrants was as many as 786,471, from which 69.8% migrated from rural to urban areas, 3.5% from urban to rural areas, and the rest moved from urban to urban or from rural to rural places (Table 9.15). Although in the next year the number

of migrants dramatically decreased to about 260,000, the share of rural-urban flow remained very high, over 50%. This coincided with the issuing of the Law on Land Resources, which permitted a partial restitution of a maximum of 10 hectares of agricultural land per family (Table 9.2). The outmigration from the countryside, though, appeared to be a warning sign that many agricultural plots might remain non-cultivated as a result of lack of labor.

Table 9.14

**Romania's Population: Rural Population and Agricultural Employment, 1990-2006**

<b>Year</b> Census Date (C)	<b>Total Population</b> (million inhabitants)	<b>Rural Population</b> (as percentage of total pop)	<b>Employment in Agriculture</b> (as percentage of total labor force)
1990	23.2	45.7	28.2
1991	23.1	45.9	28.9
Jan. 7, 1992 (C)	22.8	45.7	32.1
1993	22.7	45.5	35.2
1994	22.7	45.3	35.6
1995	22.6	45.1	33.6
1996	22.6	45.1	34.6
1997	22.5	45.0	37.5
1998	22.5	45.1	38.0
1999	22.4	45.2	41.2
2000	22.4	45.4	41.4
2001	22.4	45.4	40.9
March 18, 2002 (C)	21.6	47.3	36.2
2003	21.7	46.6	34.7
2004	21.6	45.1	32.0
2005	21.6	45.1	31.9
2006	21.5	44.8	29.7
	<b>-1.7</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>34.8</b>

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2006 and 2007

On the other hand, there was also a notable increase in the share of urban-rural flows, with this increasing from some 10% of all migration in 1991 to an average of over 30% for the period after 1999 (Table 9.15). This continuous increase of the share of urban-rural flows, complemented by a continuous decrease of the share of rural-urban ones, finally began to create a degree of “balance” with regard to internal migration. Yet, this “balance” still favored rural-urban movement: on average, rural-urban flows accounted for 29.1% of all migration while the figure was 23.6% for urban-rural migration (ibid). Although after 2000 the share of urban-rural flows was quite high, as a result of the general deterioration of the standard of living in the country and of the EU simplified procedures for employment of Eastern Europeans, many Romanians chose to go abroad. Given that many of these people came from rural areas, it is clear that agriculture could be severely affected.

Analyzing transnational migration from Romanian villages, Sandu (2002) pointed out three factors which decisively contributed to the emergence of social pressure for the first wave of transnational circular (temporary) migration in the beginning of the 1990s: (1) the decline of jobs in urban micro-regions, particularly in small- and medium-sized towns; (2) the decline of rural-urban commuting; and (3) the expansion of village-town return migration. Subsequently, a number of other factors contributed to the intensification of rural emigration abroad, such as the networks created by the previous transnational migrants and by permanent migration of Germans (Saxons from Southern Transylvania and Svabi from Banat) and Hungarians. In addition, the opening of the Schengen borders for Romania on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, substantially contributed to the increase of overseas migration (Sandu 2002; Dumitru et al. 2004; Papadimitriou and Phinmore 2008). Compared with the urban population, people from villages seem to have been more interested in undertaking this mass form of migration, though many subsequently returned

to their villages due to their limited skills and educational status, which made them more vulnerable abroad.

Table 9.15

**Structure of Internal Migration, 1990 - 2006**  
(absolute data and percentage)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Migrants</b>	<b>From Rural to Urban (%)</b>	<b>From Urban to Rural (%)</b>
1990	786,471	69.8	3.5
1991	262,903	50.3	10.1
1992	293,182	39.2	13.7
1993	240,231	35.0	14.6
1994	266,745	30.5	18.3
1995	289,491	25.1	20.8
1996	292,897	24.7	23.4
1997	302,579	22.6	26.8
1998	276,154	21.9	28.4
1999	275,699	21.0	30.7
2000	244,507	19.5	33.8
2001	284,332	24.6	27.9
2002	320,819	22.4	30.1
2003	331,747	23.0	30.2
2004	369,892	21.1	31.8
2005	272,604	22.1	29.6
2006	334,025	22.5	28.1
<b>Average</b>		<b>29.1</b>	<b>23.6</b>

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2007

According to Sandu (2002), in December 2001 the number of rural people who temporarily left their villages to work abroad was around 200,000. Analyzing the border police report regarding the border traffic data for 2003, Dumitru et al (2004) noted that over 346,000 Romanians were absent from the country on December 31, 2003. From some field surveys, it appears that 80% of the Romanian migrant population who worked abroad was of rural provenance (ibid). The major destinations were Italy, Hungary, Germany, and Spain, followed

by the former Yugoslavia, Israel, France, Greece, Turkey, and other countries, especially those in Europe. There were, though, particular country preferences amongst such migrants. Hence, while migrants from Moldova tended to prefer Italy and Transylvanian and Western counties were oriented toward Hungary, Germany, and Yugoslavia, the Southeastern counties were dominated by flows to Turkey. Some isolated counties had as their destination Spain, France, and Israel. Although there were many rural people who illegally worked abroad, leaving the country as tourists, many others followed the requirements established by the official bilateral labor agreements between Romania and several European countries, such as with Germany (1992 and 1999), Switzerland (1999), Hungary (2000), Luxemburg (2001), Spain (2002), and others (ibid).

As Sandu (2002, 26) has noted, about 2,700 villages, out of over 12,900 in the country, could be considered as “probable transmigrant communities.” More specifically, about one-fifth of the villages accounted for about three-quarters of the rural transmigrants, a fact that had significant implications for those rural areas. Since rural emigration was more intense from villages with high rates of unemployed but relatively educated young persons, as well as returns from towns, those villages faced two issues. First, there was the danger that many agricultural areas might be abandoned. Second, it was the case that migrants might return but also with money and new ideas about replacing the traditional architectural identity of the region with modern designs, a fact that would fundamentally change their character (e.g., Barsana village in Maramures, Northern Transylvania; Barnova Commune, Iasi County) (Sandu 2002; <http://www.formula-as.ro/>, No. 775, 2007; my fieldwork observations).

### ***9.3.3 Rural Development Policy***

In Romania, as well as in the other CEECs, a cohesive approach to rural development was put forward but only with great delay. Although the first two post-1989 governments broadly formulated measures for “improving the life quality in rural areas,” in fact financial support for rural areas was directed particularly toward agriculture, rather than other aspects of rural life (OECD 2000, 143). The European integration process played a decisive role in the elaboration of a real strategy for rural development. In this regard, the policy goal of rural development was first mentioned in December 1996 in the program of the newly elected Democratic Convention government. Yet, a rural development policy strategy was prepared only in 1998, concretized in the *National Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development* and designed to serve as a basis for the implementation of the SAPARD program (OECD 2000; Ramniceanu 2004; see also section 9.1.3). The Plan was completed and approved by the Chamber of Deputies in April 2000 and it outlined four priorities of rural development in Romania for the period 2000-2006, as follows (OECD 2000, 143):

- development of agro-food processing and marketing infrastructure in rural areas in conjunction with improvement of quality, veterinary and phytosanitary control;
- development of rural infrastructure as a way of increasing living standards in rural areas;
- diversification of economic activity in rural areas in order to create alternative employment opportunities and income sources, coupled with improvement of economic performance of private agricultural structures based on principles of sustainable development;
- development of human resources by improvement of vocational training of persons occupied in agriculture and forestry.

From this point, rural development was identified as a priority for Romania’s integration into the European Union and agriculture lay at its base. The provisional closing of the agricultural negotiation chapter in June 2004 offered Romania rural development terms similar to those obtained by the 2004 accession countries. As has been emphasized by Ramniceanu (2004),

this was facilitated by the beginning of a new financial programming period within the EU and, more importantly, by a substantially reformed rural development policy. Yet, Romania also had difficulties stemming from the lack of institutional and human capacity for implementation of the programs, as well as from limited programming experience (OECD 2000). However, this program did provide great experience and served as a valuable guide for drawing up the Rural Development Program for 2007-2013.

The *National Strategy Plan for Rural Development* (NSPRD) and the *National Rural Development Program* (NRDP) for 2007-2013 were designed by the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development (MAFRD) in accordance with Articles 11 and 12 of Council Regulation 1698/2005, which concerns supporting rural development under the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (MAFRD 2007). Representing Pillar 2 of the CAP, the EAFRD has been designed to accompany Pillar 1's support policy, which provides basic income support for farmers. The support under the EAFRD, focusing especially upon the rural economy, environment, and quality of life, aims to implement the core EU policies, including the re-launched Lisbon<sup>48</sup> strategy and the Gothenburg<sup>49</sup> declaration on sustainable development (ibid). As a member state of the EU since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, Romania has been trying to integrate EU-CAP instruments with its national policies in order to take advantage of the sources available to benefit rural areas. While until the end of 2006 support for farmers was provided by the national program Fermierul, co-financed by SAPARD, since 2007 the rural development policy (NRDP) of Romania has thus been co-financed by the EAFRD and

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<sup>48</sup> The strategy of Lisbon (2000) has as its objective to contribute to the revival of European competitiveness, increasing the growth of the economy potential through increased productivity, and reinforcing social cohesion in focusing mainly on knowledge, innovation and the development of human and physical capital (MARD 2007, 37).

<sup>49</sup> The rural development strategy and the overall objectives are in line with the Gothenburg objectives (2001), especially by supporting activities in Less Favored Areas, by encouraging investments in environmental protection, EU standards and in sustainable systems for farm management and processing (MARD 2007, 37).

a number of complementary national programs for rural development, in conformity with Article 88 of the Regulation (CE) 1698/2005 (ibid).

The *National Strategy Plan* for Romania is the basis for the implementation of the *National Rural Development Program* for 2007-2013, focusing on the priorities and directions of rural development, in conjunction with the Community priorities. According to the official document, the objectives of the *National Rural Development Strategy* are to: (1) increase the economic dynamics of Romanian rural areas, including the development of sustainable agriculture and the forestry sector; (2) preserve, protect and consolidate nature, the environment and natural resources; and (3) enhance the social dynamics and quality of life in rural areas (MAPDR 2007). For efficiency, the objectives were broken down into a number of strategic objectives, reflecting regional and local economic aspects of rural areas, as well as the future challenges.

A brief analysis of the allocation of the EAFRD money illustrates the main priorities in the rural development program. In this light, the highest share, up to 45%, can be allotted to the “development of the competitiveness” both of the agricultural and forestry sector (NSPRD 2007, 34). The second largest share, up to 30%, is destined to “develop the quality of life in rural areas and [foster] rural economy diversification” (ibid). This is followed by the “improvement of the environment and the rural areas through the sustainable use of agricultural and forestry land,” for which the allocation can go up to 25%, and a small share, up to 2.5%, for starting and operating new “local initiatives,” via LEADER (pp. 34-35; see also Chapter 5).

Compared with the 2000-2006 Plan, the 2007-2013 Program reflects a stronger emphasis on the diversification of the rural economy and quality of life. More specifically, for the period 2007-2013, the main strategic targets of the Romanian agri-food sector aim at consolidating the family-type farms, increasing the incomes of the rural population, strengthening the processing

sector, ensuring food safety, readjusting the balances of trade for the agri-food products, and other goals. For reaching these and other targets, the implementation of both the CAP instruments and the national mechanisms is a must.

Although in 1989 Romania left the same political bloc as the other CEECs, it has had its own transitional characteristics in the shift from the centrally planned economy to the market economy. In Boia's (2001, 205) words, quoted in Thomson (2003, 216), "Communism had the paradoxical effect of separating Romania from the West without ultimately bringing it closer to Russia." Alongside the economic and political difficulties of adjusting to the EU integration requirements, particularly to the Common Agricultural Policy, Romania recorded significant progress toward land reform, not only in elaborating legislative measures but also in implementing them. The new rural economy, including specifically farm diversification, is probably not the best option, but it is a restoring one, reestablishing, at least in part, the owner identity of the Romanian peasants. However, the huge number of small farm households and the massive imports of food in a country with the agricultural area able to feed at least twice the population, as well as mass migration abroad for work, cannot be ignored. It is widely agreed that these small family farms provide a relatively secure way of life for the rural population, as well as for a number of urban people, but a better emphasis on rural non-farm economy would constitute a great way of stimulating economic growth and, ultimately, improving the standard of living in the Romanian villages. All these political and economic pre- and post-accession transformations have stimulated a multitude of domestic and international debates, engaged in from elites to farmers. Chapter 10 will analyze some of these, focusing especially on rural post-accession characteristics of three counties: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov.

## CHAPTER 10

### **ZONAL VARIATION IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

#### **AN ATTITUDINAL PORTRAIT OF RURAL ROMANIA**

Rural Romania, particularly its agricultural and rural transformations intensified through the strains of the communist rule, post-communist transition, and integration into the European Union, represents an interesting case study. Throughout the period between the beginning of the agrarian reform and property restitution process in February 1991 and the third year of EU membership, there were thousands of domestic and international voices questioning Romania's integration, accession negotiations, and alignment to the CAP. The implementation of the CAP requirements and its implications in everyday life of the Romanian farmers were particularly significant for this study, viewed through a social constructivist lens, (see Chapter 2). Specific themes and categories for specific targets have been identified in order to address positive or negative attitudes: (1) life under collectivization; (2) decollectivization and restoration of rural property; and (3) agricultural policies and alignment to the CAP. Here, the accession negotiation process, together with the adjustment to the CAP requirements, is understood as the consequence of elite preferences. Nevertheless, special attention was also directed to non-elites' opinions, giving voice to the respondents, finding identity-based explanations, and constructing knowledge about local realities within three counties, Bacau and Iasi in Central Moldova and Brasov in South-East Transylvania (Figure 2.2; Figure 10.1, A and B).

### 10.1 A Brief Overview of Romania's Rural Settlements

According to Article 3 of the Constitution, Romania's territory (238,391 sq km or 92,043 sq mi) is administratively organized in communes, towns/cities, and counties (*judete*). Currently, Romania has 41 counties (*judete*) and the municipality-capital Bucharest, which has a status similar to that of a county, classified as NUTS 3 at the EU level (Figure 10.1; see Chapter 3). Each county is further divided into towns/cities (*orase*) and communes (*commune*). On December 31, 2006, there were a total of 320 towns and cities and 2,854 communes, containing 12,951 villages (<http://www.insse.ro/>, 2008; Table 10.1). The selected counties are located in Central-Eastern Moldova, Bacau and Iasi, and South-Eastern Transylvania, Brasov, at the junction of the important trade roads, connecting the Balkans with the rest of Europe (Figures 1.1 and 1.2; Figure 2.2; Figure 10.1 A and B).

Table 10.1

#### Rural Romania - Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties: Administrative Organization, Population, and Agricultural Employment, 2000 and 2006

COUNTRY			MOLDOVA						TRANSYLVANIA		
Year/ Area (A) sq km	Communes (C) #	Villages (V) #	Bacau County			Iasi County			Brasov County		
			Area sq km	C #	V #	Area sq km	C #	V #	Area sq km	C #	V #
238,391			6,621			5,476			5,363		
2000	2,686	13,092		79	490		85	420		43	150
2006	2,854	12,951		85	491		93	418		48	149
<b>Rural Population</b>	%		%			%			%		
2000	45.4		50.2			50.1			24.4		
2006	44.8		54.0			52.1			25.4		
<b>Agricultural Employment</b>	%		%			%			%		
2000	41.4		37.6			43.0			20.4		
2006	29.7		30.6			33.3			14.0		

Source: Adjusted from Romanian Statistical Yearbooks 2006 and 2007; and County Statistics: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov



As for demographic size, the Romanian communes range between under 1000 inhabitants and over 10,000 inhabitants. Statistical data for 2006 show that from the total of 2,854 communes in the country, the most numerous (1769) are those communes with populations between 2,000 and 4,999 inhabitants, representing 62% of the total communes and 59.3% of the total rural population (<http://www.insse.ro/>, 2007). The less numerous (21) are the largest communes (with over 10,000 inhabitants), representing only 0.7% of total communes, followed by the smallest ones (under 1,000 inhabitants), representing 2.4% of the total communes and only 0.5% of the total rural population. Brasov County, for instance, with significant mountainous areas, had very few large communes. In 2008, only two communes recorded their populations as between 8,000 and 9,000 inhabitants (Prejmer and Tarlungeni) and three communes were recorded as between 5,000 and 7,000 inhabitants (Hoghiz, Bran, and Feldioara). On the opposite side, two communes, Fundata and Ticusu, recorded only some 900 inhabitants (<http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008).

## **10.2 Community Transformations: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties**

The size of the counties ranges between some 5,400 sq. km (Iasi and Brasov) and 6,600 sq. km (Bacau), and their total population between 600,000 inhabitants (Brasov) and over 800,000 (Iasi) (<http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>; <http://www.iasi.insse.ro/>; <http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008). The average density of 110 inhabitants per square kilometer (Bacau and Brasov) and over 150 inhabitants per square kilometer (Iasi) places these counties over the average of population density in the country (90.5 inhabitants/sq. km/2006). Yet, despite having a few similarities, some significant differences exist. Specifically, while Bacau and Iasi are strongly ruralized counties, with over half of their total population living in rural areas, Brasov is one of the most urbanized counties of Romania, with only 25% rural population (Table 10.1). Consequently, the

agricultural employment in the Transylvanian county is even lower than half of the value recorded for each of the Moldavian counties (14% in Brasov compared with over 30% in Bacau and 33% in Iasi, for example).

The rural population in Bacau County, 389,745 inhabitants in 2006, is spread within 491 villages, which are grouped into 85 communes. Although a smaller size, Iasi County has far more rural people (429,387 inhabitants in 2006) than Bacau County. In addition, they live in fewer villages (only 418) than the rural population in Bacau County, but these villages are organized into a greater number of communes (93). The smaller and less ruralized county, Brasov, has only 151,505 rural inhabitants, who live in 149 villages grouped into 48 communes (<http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>, 2008; <http://www.iasi.insse.ro/>, 2008; <http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008). While Bacau and Iasi Counties recorded in 2006 a higher share of male population (some 5,000 more men than women in Bacau and over 7,500 in Iasi), Brasov County has a more equilibrated rural population by sex, but with a slight preponderance of women (some 150 more women than men) in 2006<sup>50</sup>.

The number of rural administrative territorial divisions in the country, including the counties under consideration, varied over time, as a result of the national and local political decisions. During the communist era, for instance, a series of communes were abolished, their territories being included within bigger nearby communes. After the 1989 revolution, new tendencies emerged, either returning to the initial administrative divisions or creating new and better organized administrative units. In this light, between the years 2000 and 2006 the number of communes increased in all three counties, adding six more communes in Bacau County, eight communes in Iasi County, and five communes in Brasov County (Table 10.1). Unlike the

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<sup>50</sup> The share of men within the total rural population in Brasov County was reversed in 2007 and 2008, when they became preponderant in rural areas, but the difference between sexes is only around 200 persons (<http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008).

communes, during the same time period the number of villages did not fluctuate much, recording only a new village in Bacau County and the disappearance of two villages in Iasi County and of one village in Brasov County (Table 10.1).

According to Romania's statistical data, one village in Bacau County is a relatively recent creation. Its name is Hemieni, set up within Parjol commune (on the left/eastern side of the Siret Valley), beginning June 19, 2003, in accordance with Law No. 260/2003 (<http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>, 2008; Figure 2.3). On the other hand, several communes experienced a split. In this context, during the years 2004 and 2005, six new communes were established within Bacau County, five surrounding the municipality of Bacau (Sarata, Gioseni, Odobesti, Prajesti, and Itesti) and one near Onesti city (Buciumi). Itesti commune, for example, located some 15-20 km. north of Bacau city, was established through the separation of the villages of Itesti, Ciumasi, Dumbrava, and Fagetel from Beresti-Bistrita commune, in accordance with Law No. 215/2005. Interviews and field observation in Dumbrava indicated that people were happier returning to the traditional territorial organization, as the Beresti-Bistrita communal center, located too far away, was less efficient in solving their local needs (Maria, June 2007, Dumbrava). In the western part of the county, in the Trotus Valley, Buciumi, a suburban commune of the Municipality of Onesti, was re-created as a result of the separation of the villages of Buciumi and Racauti from Stefan cel Mare commune, in accordance with Law 67/2005. These two communes were coupled during the communist regime, with the goal of establishing a larger economic (collectivized) unit, an important source of food for the extensive petrochemical Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (Onesti)<sup>51</sup>-Borzesti industrial zone (Figure 2.3; <http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>, 2008).

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<sup>51</sup> During the communist regime, Onesti was renamed for Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej.

Comparing a village's transformation under communist rule with that after 15-17 years of post-communism, my 2005 and 2007 field observations revealed significant changes. While during the rural systematization program the villagers had no rights to extend their built area toward agricultural land, today a real rural “explosion” is recorded. We can see not only many new and modern houses but also big villas, some of them located far outside the built rural perimeter (Figure 10.2; see also my website).



Figure 10.2 **Moinesti, Bacau County** (The Tazlau Subcarpathians)  
A Rich Oil Area and New Private Buildings in the Periurban Zone:  
Isolated Houses alongside the Road to Poduri Commune

As a native Romanian, who had experienced both political systems and understood well the transition difficulties, especially for rural people, my first question was “How did this happen?”

In addition, since many of the Romanian houses are built all around from solid brick and concrete, or reinforced concrete, and, therefore, are quite expensive,<sup>52</sup> another question was “Where did rural people obtain so much money?” However, many villages continue to keep

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<sup>52</sup> It is not unusual to find rural houses in Barnova commune which are worth around €60,000 - 100,000 in the context when the price of land is something between €25/sq.m. and €50/sq.m. (interview, June 2007, Ilie Meiu, Barnova, Iasi County).

their older architectural identity and, in the case of the German villages in Transylvania, there are strong actions for preservation of the original architecture. For exemplification, I have selected three villages: Pietrarie village - Barnova commune, Iasi County, Negreni village - Poduri commune, Bacau County, and Viscri village - Bunesti commune, Brasov County.

In my 2007 fieldwork in Barnova commune,<sup>53</sup> located seven kilometers from Iasi city, the largest metropolitan area in Moldova, I did not find one single old house with traditional architecture on my way to Pietrarie village. It is worth mentioning that the rural infrastructure is not the best in the country. Interviewing Mr. Ilie Meiu, vice-mayor of Barnova commune, I understood that over 1,000 houses were built between 1992 and 2007, placing Barnova commune in first place in Iasi County for built area (Figures 10.3 and 10.4; see also my website).



Figure 10.3 **Barnova Commune, Iasi County:**  
The Entrance and a New House under Construction

<sup>53</sup> Barnova commune has an area of 4,122 hectares and a stable population of some 4,100 inhabitants (<http://barnova-iasi.tripod.com/primaria.html>).



Figure 10.4 **Barnova** - Older (non-traditional) Houses and New Villas

As for the money provenance, the opinions are very diverse, invoking stealing and corruption. Some money comes from new businesses (in Iasi or elsewhere), some from people who work in Iasi city,<sup>54</sup> and, of course, some comes from rural agriculture or non-agricultural activities (e.g., from tourism and agro-tourism).<sup>55</sup> Unlike other rural areas in the country, few people emigrated from Barnova; therefore, fewer sources of money for houses came from people who emigrated abroad for work. Many owners established their permanent residence in their new houses in Barnova, but some share their living space between a Barnova house and an apartment in Iasi city. Mr. Meiu seemed to be very proud of Barnova's post-revolution accomplishments, informing me of some near future important projects (infrastructure, running water, sewerage system for 13 surrounding communes, projected to be finished in 2010), partially (20%) funded by the local governments and partially by the EU and World Bank. Moreover, since 1992,

<sup>54</sup> Only 15% of Barnova's population works in Iasi city (interview, Ilie Meiu, June 2007, Barnova, Iasi County).

<sup>55</sup> There are 10 authorized pensions in Barnova, having around 50 accommodation places for tourists (interview, Ilie Meiu, June 2007, Barnova, Iasi County).

Barnova has been twined with the French commune Migne-Auxances and the Swiss commune Fey and so has benefited from some valuable cultural exchanges

(<http://barnova-iasi.tripod.com/primaria.html/>, retrieved June 2007; interview, June 2007, Barnova).

However, the Barnova “pattern” does not work around these three counties. Using trains and busses to cover larger sections of Bacau County, especially within the Trotus Basin, or walking on the rural streets in Poduri and Caiuti communes during my 2007 fieldwork, I found some similarities with the Barnova development, but the changes were not so radical as they were in Barnova. Poduri commune,<sup>56</sup> located near Moinesti, an “oil city,” in the Tazlau Subcarpathian zone, is a traditional rural area, with old Romanian villages<sup>57</sup> (Figures 2.3, 10.2, and 10.5).



Figure 10.5 Welcome to Poduri Commune, Bacau County

<sup>56</sup> Poduri commune has an area of 7,269 hectares and a population of over 8,000 inhabitants (<http://www.ppbc.ro/istorie.php=poduri/>, retrieved September 2009).

<sup>57</sup> Poduri commune is composed of eight villages: Poduri, Prohozesti, Negreni, Valea-Sosii, Bucsesti, Buleni, Cernu, and Cornet. Some villages are very old, their names being mentioned in documents from 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries: e.g., Prohozesti (1419), Bucsesti (1456), and Podurile (today Poduri) (1803) (Popa, G. 1974).

Although it is connected by road with Moinesti and only some 5 kilometers separate the first village from the city, the commune villages (Negreni especially) function as remote rural settlements, with traditional (but beautiful) houses, with electricity, but non-modernized infrastructure (Figures 10.2, 10.6, and 10.7; see also my website).



Figure 10.6 **Negreni Village, Poduri Commune:** Rural Infrastructure  
(The author doing fieldwork, June 2007)

There are some dispersed new modern houses, and a few of them were built even outside of the villages' precincts, isolated along the road to Moinesti (Figure 10.2). Significantly, some new houses are built by older people, after their retirement. When asked about his new beautiful house under construction in Poduri, Dan (45 year old) emphasized his earlier retirement from the army in Arges County and one year's work in Italy, followed by the decision to relocate to his home village, close by his elderly parents (interview, June 2007, Poduri). Unlike other rural areas, in Poduri village the collective buildings were not destroyed and so offered room after

1989 for the new private businesses (see my website). The current context of rural development facilitated new funding opportunities, used by local government for improving rural activities. In this light, the county newspaper *Desteptarea* issue of May 26, 2009, emphasized the inauguration of the new local government building and a community cultural center, built with both local funds and those received from Romania's government.



Figure 10.7 **Negreni** – A Traditional House

By contrast, German (Saxon) villages from Transylvania, including Viscri (Weisskirch) village located in Bunesti commune,<sup>58</sup> North-West of Brasov County, with their fortified

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<sup>58</sup> Bunesti commune, with 2,500 inhabitants, has five component villages: Bunesti, Crit, Mesendorf, Roades, and Viscri (<http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008; <http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>; <http://www.primaria-bunesti.ro/>, retrieved September 2009).

churches and specific architectonic style, provide not only a special picture of the cultural landscape of Southern Transylvania but also an opposite attitude regarding the decision-making (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/596>, retrieved September 2009; Figure 10.8).



Figure 10.8 **Viscri Village, Bunesti Commune, Brasov County - Saxon Architecture**

Specifically, Viscri, a remote village (some 500 inhabitants, Germans and Romanians) has recorded a unique evolution since 1989. Characterized, as are the other Saxon villages in Transylvania, by a specific land-use system, settlement pattern, and organization of the family farmstead that have been preserved since the Middle Ages, Viscri is best known for its highly fortified church, originally built around 1100 AD (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/596>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/viscri/>; Figure 10.9; see also my website). This village is the only fortress in Romania protecting the oldest and one of the best preserved functional churches in Transylvania, built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>59</sup> during the first stage of German colonization in this

<sup>59</sup> The original church was destroyed during the Tartars' invasion (1241-1242), being replaced by the current Gothic edifice in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (<http://www.rotravel.com/Places/Transylvania/Fortresses-and-fortified-Churches/Viscri>; <http://www.saxontransylvania.com/>, retrieved September 2009).

region (<http://www.saxontransylvania.com/>;

<http://www.rotravel.com/Places/Transylvania/Fortresses-and-fortified-Churches/Viscri/>). As a result, Viscri was designated in 1999 as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, becoming an important tourist attraction (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/596>; <http://www.propatrimonio.org/ro-en/projects/viscri.htm>; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/viscri/>).



Figure 10.9 **Viscri** – The Fortified Church  
Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viscri>

Included in the London-based Mihai Eminescu Trust,<sup>60</sup> under HRH The Prince of Wales's patronage, and/or the World Bank restoration projects, between 2000 and the present Viscri's church and many Saxon houses have been repaired or have had their damaged sections rebuilt (<http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>; <http://www.transylviancastle.com/Viscri.html>; <http://www.labforculture.org/>). The significant difference between Viscri and the other two villages under consideration resides in the compulsoriness of an integral conservation of the Saxon architecture in Viscri, using only original materials (<http://www.labforculture.org/>). Yet,

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<sup>60</sup> Mihai Eminescu Trust (MET) is dedicated to the conservation and regeneration of villages in Transylvania and the Maramures area, involving a high level of international cooperation (<http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>; <http://www.transylviancastle.com/Viscri.html>; <http://www.labforculture.org/>, retrieved September 2009).

forgotten skills had to be revived. In this light, British restoration specialists and builders – masons, plasterers, and carpenters – were invited to Viscri to teach the techniques and supervise the restoration in the traditional style (<http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>). Prince Charles, who is an ardent supporter of conservation of the cultural and natural heritage in Transylvania, as well as of the Romanian ecological agriculture, decided in 2006 to buy a restored 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse in Viscri, encouraging sustainable tourism in the economically deprived region<sup>61</sup> (<http://www.mihaieminescutrust.org/>; <http://www.transylvania-authentica.ro/>; <http://www.transylvaniancastle.com/Viscri.html/>; <http://ukinromania.fco.gov.uk/>).

Although, overall, the cases of the Barnova and Viscri villages are two post-communist stories of success, there still are individuals who did not find the best way to succeed after 1989. Lili and George, for example, received a big house in Viscri from George's parents during the communist era. I have visited their house and farm two times, admiring the beauty of the environment (excluding the rural infrastructure), the garden with organic agriculture, the Saxon architecture, and the parents' buffalos with their wonderful milk. They worked their farmland alone or with their two children, but George's unemployment, inflation, and general deterioration of the economic life in post-communist Romania resulted in them experiencing new challenges. Lili's emigration to Italy for almost the entire year of 2006 was not a solution for their financial improvement. The next step was to sell their big house in Viscri, relocating to a commune in Buzau County, where life is less expensive than in Brasov County. Yet, the new business opened in that village did not work well, so they planned to return to their land in Viscri, where Ralu, their daughter, is successful through her tourism firm (fieldwork, May 2005; multiple mail

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<sup>61</sup> Through the foundation called *Transylvania Authentica*, a joint project of the Romanian Environmental Partnership Foundation and The Prince's Charities Foundation, Prince Charles is a supporter of the Romanian ecological agriculture, encouraging small local producers to continue traditional agriculture and promoting a so-called "Transylvania brand" (<http://www.transylvania-authentica.ro/>, retrieved September 2009).

and telephone interviews, Lili, 2006-2009). Unfortunately, this is only one story from thousands of unhappy stories experienced by Romanian peasants today, for whom neither post-communist decollectivization nor the EU integration have influenced in a positive way their standard of living.

### **10.3 Agricultural Development: Using Experience as Data**

#### ***10.3.1 Remembering Cooperativized Agriculture in the Trotus Valley***

Except for the higher elevation zones, especially in Brasov and Bacau Counties, where agriculture was always practiced within private farms, the lower land was entirely collectivized before 1989. The suburban area surrounding the Municipality of Onesti<sup>62</sup> had, for instance, five Agricultural Production Cooperatives (CAPs),<sup>63</sup> with over 9,000 hectares agricultural land, from which some 6,000 hectares was arable land (Ciobanita et al., 1973). Taking into consideration the geographical location of these CAPs, within the Subcarpatian region, I have to note the existence of remarkable areas of pastures and hayfields (2,500 ha), followed by orchards (apple trees especially), and limited areas of vineyards (Figure 2.3). The main crops were thus cereals, corn, and wheat (over 75% of arable land), followed by potatoes and vegetables, for which were developed large greenhouse complexes. Sugar beet was intensively cultivated only after 1970. Since the Trotus River had been strongly polluted, the irrigation system was insignificant (some 2% of arable land). As for domestic animals, special attention was paid to the development of the cow and sheep farms, for milk and meat, taking into account the high needs of milk for thousands of people working in a polluted environment on the petrochemical industrial platform.

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<sup>62</sup> On March 1, 1968, two rural communes, Stefan cel Mare and Gura Vaii, received the status of suburban commune, being subordinated to the Municipality of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (Ciobanita et al. 1973).

<sup>63</sup> The former CAPs from Onesti area: “6 March,” located on the city’s administrative territory; “Stefan cel Mare” and “Buciumi,” on the territory of Stefan cel Mare commune; and “Gura Vaii” and “Dumbrava,” in Gura Vaii and Dumbrava communes.

The most interesting aspect of the Trotus Valley zone, the Onesti Depression especially, was, and still is, its highly industrial development, which, practically, emptied the surrounding villages of people, especially young and middle-age men. Consequently, both socialized and private agriculture had a strong feminized and aged labor force. As has been specified by Ciobanita et al. (1973), over 75% of the active cooperators working in CAP “6 March” and 70% in CAP Dumbrava were women. In Stefan cel Mare commune, for instance, 90% of the men worked in the town or in other non-agricultural places. According to the President of the People’s Council from Stefan cel Mare, cited by Ciobanita et al. (1973), each family had at least one male member who worked outside of the local CAPs. Yet, the number of the active cooperators per 100 hectares agricultural land recorded by the Moldavian counties in the 1970s was double (about 50-60 agriculturists/100 ha) that of Brasov County, which recorded some 25 agriculturists per 100 hectares.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party (1969) decided to encourage the development of the so-called Intercooperative Production Associations (*Asociatii Intercooperatiste de Productie*), aiming not only to increase agricultural production but also to improve the utilization of agricultural produce. In this light, the Intercooperative Production Association Gheorghe Gheorgiu-Dej was constituted from those five cooperatives surrounding the city, to which were added three more CAPs from the nearby communes of Casin, Bogdanesti, and Targu Trotus (Ciobanita et al. 1973). Two further communes, located in the mountain zone (15-30 km from Onesti), Manastirea Casin and Oituz, remained non-collectivized. Yet, although the collectives in the Onesti area were better mechanized (58 ha arable land per tractor) than the average of Bacau County (86 ha arable land per tractor), three out of five CAPs recorded lower results in the early-1970s than in the late-1960s in several fields (e.g., Dumbrava for corn and milk; Buciumi,

Dumbrava, and Gura Vaii for potatoes). Consequently, during the 1970s and 1980s a series of measures were taken for improving collectivized agriculture, focusing on land amelioration, reduction of corn areas, and extension of areas cultivated with vegetables, potatoes, sugar beet, and orchards, as well as the modernization of animal farms. However, since the dynamics of the labor force in agriculture changed very slowly, it was no surprise that everyone in all industrial plants, schools, hospitals, and other institutions were forced to work in agriculture several weeks or months per year.

Unlike those in schools, who were obliged by the communist government to work on the collective lots during harvesting time other state employees had to perform the entire range of agricultural work throughout the year. Florina, a pharmacist from Onesti, stated that her pharmacy team received a plot on the town's outskirts, around the Belci Lake, on the Tazlau Valley<sup>64</sup>, which was the land of one of the surrounding CAPs. Their job was a complex one. While ploughing and sawing had to be done by the tractor and sawing machine drivers, weeding twice, harvesting, and removing the corn sheaf from field was always the pharmacists' duty. These multiple operations forced them to close the pharmacy, sometimes three to four consecutive days, having to ignore any possible emergency need for medicines. Although this "patriotic" work has revolted many people, the majority of Romanians forced to work in agriculture, including my farmacist friend, have blindly obeyed the party's requirements in order to avoid any conflict with the feared security and, more importantly, to save their jobs. In this light, it is not surprising to me, a former teacher obliged to work with my students on the collective land, Florina's conciliatory attitude towards those forced-labor years. In the entire ten pages of her letter interview, I could not find one word through which to blame the communist

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<sup>64</sup> Tazlau River is a Trotus tributary river whose confluence is located within the Onesti Depression, near Slobozia, a residential district of the Municipality of Onesti.

system of exploitation. The only revolt was manifested against her colleagues who did not fairly work on the collective's land and against people who destroyed the forests on the hills surrounding Targu Ocna town,<sup>65</sup> remembering her contribution as a high school student to that zone's afforestation. She described the events as something that had to happen:

Mrs. Dinu, our pharmacy head, always placed herself in the first working lane, obliging us to follow her example. God, we were so hard-working people! After three-four days of corvee, we were really tired, dirty, and with our palms covered by blisters from weeding. Yet, when all the work was done, we established to stop at the Belci restaurant to eat and drink a cold beer. Good, it was so good! In one way, it was nice, but some of us seriously worked hard while other colleagues either stayed behind the heap of corn cobs, drinking and smoking, or simply left the land without conscientious scruples regarding those who remained to work under the terrible hot sun.

(Florina, February 12, 2009, Onesti)

Romania's schools represented a significant source of unpaid agricultural workers. Lidia, a Russian teacher from Iasi, spent valuable time for her mail interview, describing in detail several experiences working with her students from Onesti in farms such as Letea and Sascut, in the Siret Valley, and Oituz or some farms in the Adjud area, in the Trotus Valley. She argued that it was "not communism that was guilty for many unreasonable decision-making related to agricultural work, but human nature" (letter interview, February 2009, Iasi). More specifically, she believed that the individuals who were placed in different positions of authority, such as the local party representatives and militia had had to act in this way to keep the privileges, but had lost their humanity. She illustrated this by detailing how the militia's controls of the busses carrying students returning from their work in the vineyards, allowed them to confiscate from the students the grapes that they had received permission from the vineyard official to take. Such things happened at a time when students had to bring their food from home.<sup>66</sup> Unfortunately, no

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<sup>65</sup> Targu Ocna town is located some 14 km North-West of Onesti, on the Trotus Valley, from which, upstream, the river drains the Eastern Carpathians.

<sup>66</sup> For working programs extended several days or weeks, the state or collective farms offered shelter and free food for students and teachers.

one seemed to realize the level of the children's exploitation. The best example was the exceptional hard program of the rural commuting students, who had to leave their villages around 5:00 or 6:00AM in order to be in their city high school at 7:00AM, the time to leave for the designated farms. The time to return to their high school was 7:00PM, after which they had to go to take a train and return to their villages around 8:00 or 9:00PM. To all of these must be added the student expenses for commuting. If a student, too tired to start again a working day of around 15 hours, did not show up to school, the tendency was to penalize both the student and his/her teacher.

However, Florina's conciliatory attitude was not unique. For more than a quarter of the century, after the 1962 end of collectivization, with some exceptions, the entire nation was subdued as the genuine robots at any party's call. Consequently, leaving classes several weeks per year and working without compensation for the collectivized agriculture was seen as a "patriotic" activity. When I raised a critique in my former high school teacher's room, against the perpetuation of an inadmissible agricultural program for students and teachers in the conditions when many agriculturists refused to work their land and we had to recuperate the classes during the weekends, Tuca, a colleague teacher, invited me into the school hall and asked if I was unaware of the danger or was a communist security infiltrator, trying to rouse the spirits. I was not a security informer, but I realized once again that the psychological tension was omnipresent within the Romanian society.

### ***10.3.2 An Insight into Current Agriculture: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties***

Land decollectivization and restitution occurred in similar ways in these three counties as they did in the rest of the country, with the majority of state and collective farms being abolished and most of the people receiving their land back. Consequently, agricultural holdings are today

mostly in private hands in all three counties. In 2006, private holdings in Bacau County represented 98.9% of the total agricultural land of the county, some 317,121 hectares. By comparison, Iasi recorded 91.5%, with 360,906 hectares in private ownership, and Brasov 95.6%, with 270,325 hectares in private ownership (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007). In Bacau County, of a total of 162,842 agricultural holdings recorded by the General Agricultural Census (December 1, 2002), 162,139 were private holdings, representing 99.6% of the total holdings of the county. From such figures, then, it is clear that, except for some large holdings, the agricultural land is highly fragmented (<http://www.prefecturabacau.ro/>, 2006).

Some interviews with Romanian landowners in 2007 revealed that, with some exceptions, their new farms are small or very small. For instance, Valeria, a mathematics teacher from Iasi, together with her sister and brother, received all of her parents' land back, 6.5 hectares (4.5 ha/orchard, 1.5 ha/vineyard, and 0.5 ha forest), which were administered by the collectives of Barnova and Ciurea communes, South of Iasi city. Close by this Iasi case is Relu's father's farm. As a retired worker from Onesti refinery, he now has a good farm, about five hectares, in Caiuti commune, located some 10-15 km South of Onesti city. Less land, but an important area, was received by Iliana, a geography teacher from Onesti. She also received her parents' land, approximately two hectares of arable land, from Stefan cel Mare and Gura Vaii collectives, in the Trotus Valley. Other people received even less land. Constantin, a technician from Onesti, told me that his mother, who lives in Livezile commune, Bacau County, received the same piece of land, ceded to the collective in the 1960s, but its size is less than one hectare. Constantin himself has a house with garden of some 800 square meters in Livezile commune. It is true, some family farms are very small and cannot feed a family, but people are happy and proud for

any size of received land, which they see as constituting a victory against communist forced collectivization.

Relating to the county's area, in 2006 agricultural land accounted for between 48% of Bacau County and 72% of Iasi County (Table 10.2). Between 2000 and 2006, in all three counties the areas of arable land increased to the detriment of pastures and orchards, especially. The highest rates of change were recorded in Brasov County. While the arable land area increased 4% and hayfields 2.4%, the pasture areas decreased 6% and orchards 0.4% during the same period of time. Except for the arable land, Bacau County lost certain areas of each category of agricultural land, while Iasi County's hayfields increased, in addition to the arable land, maintaining unchanged vineyards, as in Brasov County (Table 10.2). It is also worth mentioning that these counties, Bacau and Brasov especially, are highly forested, with forest covering between 38.4% (Brasov County) and 42.7% (Bacau County with 282,549 hectares of forests in 2006) of the land area (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007).

Table 10.2

**Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties: Agricultural Land Fund, by Use, 2000 and 2006**

Indicator (ha)	Bacau		Iasi		Brasov	
	2000	2006	2000	2006	2000	2006
Total land area	662,052		547,558		536,309	
Agricultural area	323,595	320,552	380,697	394,404	297,397	282,897
(%)	48.9/100.0	48.4/100.0	69.5/100.0	72.0/100.0	55.5/100.0	52.7/100.0
Arable	57.1	58.1	66.1	67.4	39.7	43.7
Pastures	27.1	26.6	23.2	21.2	40.3	34.3
Hayfields	12.4	12.2	5.3	6.4	19.0	21.4
Vineyards	2.3	2.2	3.2	3.2	0.1	0.1
Orchards	1.1	0.9	2.2	1.8	0.9	0.5

Source: Adjusted from County Direction of Statistics: Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov, 2008

While the arable land increased in all three counties, the cultivated area dramatically decreased after 1990. Brasov County, for example, cultivated 99.8% of its arable land in 1990, but the 2006 figure shows only 71.6% (Table 10.3). The Moldavian counties, on the other hand, maintained a high rate of cultivated land in 2000, an average of over 97%, although by 2006 this had decreased to 84-85%. As with the general agricultural pattern of the country, the selected counties maintained the most extended cultivated area with cereals, wheat, and corn, respectively. Although Brasov County recorded some 18% of its cultivated area as growing wheat and rye, the largest wheat areas are in Iasi County (over 33,000 hectares), representing some 15% of its cultivated area in 2006. Corn is the principal crop cultivated in Bacau County, in over half of its cultivated area, followed immediately by Iasi County with over 45% of its cultivated area devoted to corn (*ibid*). Being a mountainous county, Brasov almost totally lacks sunflower, a crop well dispersed on the arable land of Iasi County (9.4% in 2006), but has a significant percentage of sugar beet (2.5%, of its cultivated areas, in comparison with only 0.4% in Bacau County) and potatoes (16.7%), more than double the percentages of Bacau and Iasi Counties together. Overall, except for potatoes, which were more prevalent in Brasov County (some 15,000 ha), Iasi County recorded in 2006 the highest cultivated areas of all the other categories of crops, with its main crops being corn (over 102,000 ha), wheat and rye (over 33,000 ha), sunflower (almost 21,000 ha) and vegetable (almost 13,000 ha) (<http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>; <http://www.iasi.insse.ro/>; <http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008).

As for total agricultural production, Iasi County placed recording the highest productions for all main crops except for potatoes, for which the highest production was obtained by Brasov County (Tables 10.4 and 10.5). Although Bacau County recorded less than half of Iasi's production of wheat in 2006, its records show the highest yields for this grain (2,742 kg/ha).

Table 10.3

**Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties: Cultivated Area, by Main Crops, 2000 and 2006**

County	Arable		Cultivated Area		Wheat & Rye		Corn		Sunflower		Sugar Beet		Potatoes		Vegetables <sup>67</sup>	
	ha		ha, %		%		%		%		%		%			
	2000	2006	2000	2006	00	06	00	06	00	06	00	06	00	06	00	06
Bacau	184,657	186,085	178,177 96.5%	158,244 85.0%	7.1	8.7	54.9	52.9	1.6	2.8	0.6	0.4	3.6	3.4	3.9	4.1
Iasi	251,602	265,835	248,021 98.6%	223,182 84.0%	14.2	14.9	48.3	46.0	6.2	9.4	1.7	1.9	3.9	4.2	5.1	5.8
Brasov	118,179	123,749	100,066 84.7%	88,596 71.6%	17.5	18.9	8.4	9.0	-	-	1.9	2.5	15.8	16.7	1.5	1.8

Source: Adjusted from County Direction of Statistics: Bacau, Iasi, & Brasov, 2008

Note: Percentages for cultivated areas are calculated based on each county's total area of arable land and percentages for main crops are calculated from the total cultivated areas.

In addition, Bacau recorded the highest yields for potatoes (over 20,700 kg/ha) and tomatoes (over 22,600 kg/ha). However, Bacau is far behind Iasi for sunflower, sugar beet, and grape production, while Brasov's sunflower and grape production is quite insignificant. Close production values were recorded by Bacau and Iasi for potatoes, tomatoes, and corn. Also, it should be specified that the hill regions in Moldavian counties are very favorable for extended areas with orchards and vineyards. In 2006, Bacau County was the largest producer of plums (14,670 tonnes), pears (3,279 tonnes), and nuts (1,861 tonnes), while Iasi County was first in the production of apples and cherries/sour cherries. Specifically, Iasi's production of apples (24,770 tonnes) was almost double that of Bacau's and five times Brasov's production. Moreover, the vineyards from Cotnari, around Iasi city, have already an international reputation for its famous vine.

<sup>67</sup> Total vegetables in Bacau and Iasi Counties include the family garden areas, but not in Brasov County (<http://www.bacau.insse.ro/>; <http://www.iasi.insse.ro/>; <http://www.brasov.insse.ro/>, 2008).

Table 10.4

**Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties:  
Crop Production and Average Yield, for Main Crops, 2006**

County	Wheat		Corn		Sunflower		Sugar Beet		Potatoes		Tomatoes	
	tonnes	kg/ha	tonnes	kg/ha	tonnes	kg/ha	tonnes	kg/ha	tonnes	kg/ha	tonnes	kg/ha
Bacau	37,840	2,742	272,408	3,256	6,807	1,532	18,432	28,710	115,625	20,778	25,602	22,617
Iasi	89,672	2,694	340,805	3,322	36,329	1,737	133,642	31,087	140,642	14,591	29,518	14,364
Brasov	34,638	2,218	22,473	2,865	-	-	73,539	33,610	253,786	17,144	3,482	19,672

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2007

Table 10.5

**Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties:  
Bearing Vineyards and Orchards - Area, Production, and Average Yield, 2006**

Counties	Bearing Vineyards			Orchards	
	Area ha	Production of Grapes tonnes	Average Yield of Grapes kg/ha	Area ha	Total Fruit Production tonnes
Bacau	5,052	25,919	4,934	2,842	39,393
Iasi	9,096	51,021	5,489	7,237	56,764
Brasov	-	-	-	1,420	8,597

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2007

The analysis of livestock and animal production also reveals significant differentiations (Table 10.6). While Bacau County recorded in 2006 the highest production for beef, milk, poultry, and eggs, Iasi County had the highest number of pigs and horses. On the other hand, Brasov County, with its extended mountainous pastures and hayfields (over 55% of its agricultural area), had the highest number of sheep and goats, as well as mutton/goat and honey (Tables 10.2 and 10.6). In terms of animal production, Iasi and Bacau had similar amounts of cattle (over 100,000 head each), while Brasov and Iasi were roughly equivalent in terms of

sheep/goats (over 265,000 each) and wool, and Iasi and Bacau were comparable in terms of bee families (over 25,000 each). According to one of the Bacau Prefecture's reports, the 2004 agricultural production of the county covered entirely the population's needs for corn flour, vegetables, potatoes, beef, chicken, and eggs, with even surpluses for export. The rest of the needs had to be covered by other counties or from import (<http://www.prefecturabacau.ro/>, 2006; Table 10.7).

Table 10.6

**Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov Counties: Livestock and Animal Production, 2006**

County	Cattle (cows & buffalos)			Pigs		Sheep and Goats			Poultry			Horses	Bees	
	Total (heads)	Beef (t live weight)	Milk (thou hl)	Total (heads)	Pork (t live weight)	Total (heads)	Mutton & Goat (t live weight)	Wool (t)	Total (heads)	Poultry (t live weight)	Eggs (mil)	Total (heads)	Total (fam)	Honey (t)
Bacau	104578	13741	2025	149601	13281	137359 34817	1959	344	4266025	33728	298	24461	25009	406
Iasi	105444	3758	1921	187627	15722	255298 11614	2884	659	3755555	26869	262	47512	28538	565
Brasov	63571	8187	1468	95588	11451	257727 17191	3562	559	1853846	14120	131	11572	16980	623

Source: Romanian Statistical Yearbook, 2007

Particularly, the agricultural land-use pattern in the selected communes is approximately the same as before 1989, taking into account the suitability of the soil. In Barnova, for example, agricultural land (2,090 hectares, which represents 50.7% of the land fund) is especially favorable for orchards, vineyards, and pastures (<http://barnova-iasi.tripod.com/date.html/>). Located within the orchard basin of Iasi-Raducaneni, Barnova is known for three dominant species of fruits, specifically apples, pears, and plums. In addition, the commune is included in one of the most important wine producing zones of Iasi County. By comparison, Poduri commune, with about 4,000 hectares of agricultural land (i.e., over 55% of the total area of the

commune), has over 1,600 hectares of arable land, used especially for grain crops, particularly corn, followed by pastures and hayfields (<http://www.ppbc.ro/istorie.php/poduri>). While general crop patterns characteristic of the hill regions of Brasov County are common on Bunesti - Viscri's agricultural land, the focus is toward the development of organic agriculture and agro-tourism.

Table 10.7

**The Needs for Alimentary Products and the Provided Level by the  
Agricultural Production of Bacau County, 2004**

<b>Alimentary Products</b>	<b>Provided Level (%)</b>
Flour and pasta	45.5
Corn flour	100.0
Rice	0.0
Dried beans	38.0
Vegetables	101.8
Potatoes	134.0
Fruits and grapes	70.0
Sugar <sup>68</sup>	3.0
Edible oil	32.0
Total meat	114.7
- Beef	108.0
- Pork	38.0
- Mutton and goat	69.4
- Chicken	373.8
Eggs	109.0
Milk	67.2

Source: <http://www.prefecturabacau.ro/>, 2006

<sup>68</sup> The costs of production of sugar obtained from sugar beet are estimated some \$80/tonne higher than that obtained from imported rough sugar. This is one reason why the sugar beet area is decreasing (Business Mesager IX (2), 36, 2004, Bacau, Romania).

## 10.4 Disaggregating Integration Attitudes

Romania's integration into the European Union, particularly its rural dimension, has preoccupied the interest of both the elite and non-elite Romanians, as well as different European officials and specialists. Yet, in mapping attitudes, it is important to take into consideration the differences between not only how people think about issues but also what they know about them.

### *10.4.1 Assessing Romania's Integration*

As Puscas (2006) has emphasized, in the accession negotiations/integration process with the EU, harmonizing interests (i.e., respecting and involving the interests of all the citizens in order to offer their support for fusion with the new European society) should be the major government goal. The attention of civil society for the debate concerning the future of Romania as an EU member, as well as implementation of the EU/CAP norms and directions by the Romanian Government, is also noteworthy. Although they are not representative of the entire nation, public opinion polls and other instruments for assessing the support of Romanian citizens for the integration process can be used as the basis for a brief analysis of a certain period, as well as for further improvements of communication strategies and increasing the level of participation.

Despite the perpetuation of frustrations and disappointments among the people, Romanians have been among the most supportive of any candidate country's population concerning membership in the EU (Eurobarometer, EB61-CC-EB 2004; OGREZeanu 2004). In 2004, for example, 70% of Romanians considered membership in the EU to be "a good thing," while only 3% considered it "a bad thing" (Table 10.8). A comparative analysis of the 2004 survey with the 2003 survey, in which "81%" of Romanians answered favorably concerning EU membership, reveals that the people's enthusiasm for integration started to decrease, but it was still very high compared with several countries from Western Europe (in the UK only 29% and in Austria 30%

Table 10.8

**Support for EU Accession**

<b>Countries/ Group of Countries</b>	<b>The membership in the EU is/will/would be</b>	
	<b>A good thing %</b>	<b>A bad thing %</b>
Luxembourg (LU)	75	7
Ireland (IE)	71	8
Greece (EL)	71	7
Turkey (TR)	71	9
<b>Romania (RO)</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Candidate Countries (CC-3)</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>7</b>
Bulgaria (BG)	65	6
Spain (ES)	64	10
The Netherlands (NL)	64	12
Belgium (BE)	57	10
Portugal (PT)	55	13
Italy (IT)	54	13
Denmark (DK)	53	20
Lithuania (LT)	52	12
Malta (MT)	50	16
<b>EU-15</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>EU-25</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>17</b>
Finland (FI)	46	20
Slovakia (SK)	46	9
Hungary (HU)	45	15
Germany (DE)	45	14
France (FR)	43	18
<b>NMS-10 (May 1, 2004)</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>
Poland (PL)	42	18
Cyprus (CY)	42	16
The Czech Republic (CZ)	41	17
Slovenia (SI)	40	13
Sweden (SE)	37	33
Latvia (LV)	33	22
Estonia (EE)	31	21
Austria (AT)	30	29
United Kingdom (UK)	29	29

Source: Eurobarometer, EB61-CC-EB 2004.1.

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/cceb/2004](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2004)

approve of membership) or even with a number of the former communist countries preparing for their 2004 integration into the EU (Estonia 31% and Latvia 33%) (Ogrezeanu 2004, 4; Table 10.8). Moreover, the fact that the 2004 candidates had an average of 43% support level for EU membership, lower than the 48% average of the Western European countries (EU-15), two months before their official integration, was recorded as a warning sign. Even despite Romania's and Bulgaria's disappointment in their failure to be included into the first wave of the fifth EU enlargement on May 1, 2004, or Turkey's long-standing status as an EU applicant, these three candidate countries (CC-3) still recorded high support for EU membership. Furthermore, contrasting with the deep decrease in trust in national political parties and Romania's government, Romanians had the highest confidence, 72%, in the European Union, in contrast to only 33% of Poles (who joined the EU in 2004) who tend to trust in the European Union (Eurobarometer, EB61-CC-EB 2004; Table 10.9).

Taking into consideration the fact that in most countries the level of support for EU accession has varied, with significant ups and downs in several cases, a question has been raised: "Why were Romanians constantly supportive of their country's membership in the EU?" Certainly, there are several important political and economic factors that contribute to this "overwhelming Euro-enthusiasm" (Ogrezeanu 2004, 6). Located on the seashore of the Black Sea, Romania is one of the most distant countries of the EU, having no common border with any EU member state until May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004. Between 1945 and 1989, Romania experienced one of the most callous communist regimes in Eastern Europe, which, at the same time, almost entirely isolated the country from Western Europe. Romania was also subject to a more devastating Soviet military occupation than Bulgaria or other Slavic countries. As Herlea (1998) pointed

Table 10.9

**Trust in the European Union**

<b>Countries/ Group of Countries</b>	<b>Tend to Trust %</b>	<b>Tend Not to Trust %</b>
<b>Romania (RO)</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>13</b>
Greece (EL)	68	27
Bulgaria (BG)	66	17
Portugal (PT)	60	27
Spain (ES)	58	32
Cyprus (CY)	57	29
Ireland (IE)	56	23
<b>Candidate Countries (CC-3)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>29</b>
Italy (IT)	54	27
Hungary (HU)	54	32
Luxembourg (LU)	53	35
Malta (MT)	50	30
Lithuania (LT)	50	21
Belgium (BE)	49	41
Turkey (TR)	48	36
Slovakia (SK)	47	31
Slovenia (SI)	47	39
The Czech Republic (CZ)	42	31
France (FR)	42	44
<b>EU-15</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>EU-25</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>
Denmark (DK)	41	49
<b>NMS-10 (May 1, 2004)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>
Finland (FI)	40	50
Estonia (EE)	39	36
Latvia (LV)	39	37
The Netherlands (NL)	38	13
Germany (DE)	36	45
Poland (PL)	33	41
Austria (AT)	31	57
Sweden (SE)	29	65
United Kingdom (UK)	19	55

Source: Eurobarometer, EB61-CC-EB 2004.1.

[http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/cceb/2004](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/cceb/2004)

out, the repression was harder, the exploitation of economic assets on behalf of the occupying power was more severe, and the crushing of national values was more brutal than elsewhere.

Although the EU has sometimes been called a “colonial power,” accused of “seeking to dominate Eastern Europe,” inclusion was seen either as “a way of reorienting the foreign policy of these states westwards,” or, more importantly, as “a way of cementing the integration of the economics of the states into pan-European markets” (Grabbe, 2003, 68). Moreover, as Balkan nationalism has facilitated ethnic conflicts on Romania’s borders and Russian influence is still strong in the region, joining NATO and the EU became a priority for most Central and South-Eastern European countries, especially for their direct or nearby neighbors, including Romania. Despite the desperate need for investment in the economy and infrastructure, the hope for money was not a key motivation for EU membership. Even common people expected high costs for their country’s EU integration.

#### ***10.4.2 Integrating Agriculture: Elites versus Non-Elites Attitudes***

Unlike the Eurobarometer’s surveys, the Romanian media and a series of interviews taken in my 2007 fieldtrip with certain Romanian politicians, government officials, agricultural, environmental, and forestry specialists, notaries, farmers, farm market vendors and buyers, and a diversity of new proprietors revealed some important differences between elite and non-elite opinions regarding the rural dimension of Romania’s integration. I had the privilege to interview the Chief Negotiator for Romania’s accession into the EU, Professor Vasile Puscas, who emphasized the complexity of the entire integration process of the country, as part of the so-called “Eastern dimension of the communitarian’s dimension” (interview, June 2007, Bucharest). More specifically, Puscas focused on a series of issues in negotiating agriculture. He recognized that Romania’s integration was an elite decision and, except for some consultations with big

agricultural producers, the peasants were not informed and they did not have a chance to express their opinions. The affirmation was confirmed by the Romanian media, as well as interviewed officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Administration and Interior, farmers, agricultural specialists, and different land proprietors (<http://www.express.ro/>, 2004; Armand, June 2007, MAPRD Bucharest; Elena and Cristina, June 2007, MAI Bucharest; Sorin, Viorel, and Eduard, June 2007, Iasi; Iliana, Gura Vaii/Onesti, and Ecaterina, Poduri, Bacau County, June 2007; Lili, Viscri, Brasov County, telephone interview, December 2008).

In addition, many rural people did not understand the new vocabulary regarding integration. In this light, Mr. Viorel, agricultural engineer and farmer from Iasi County, considered that “the Romanian elites are indifferent and the peasants do not solicit anything because they are bewildered” (letter interview, June 2007, Iasi). According to Mr. Eduard, a legal adviser for certain agricultural associations in Iasi County, in Romania’s low mechanized agriculture “the EU rules were imposed by the Romanian government, without a previous explanation and without a verification whether the peasant is prepared or not for these challenges” (letter interview, June 2007, Iasi). In his opinion, “the Romanian rural population was not asked and the peasants’ interests were not taken into consideration. It was only a mini-propaganda in the view of realization of the European purposes” (letter interview, June 2007, Iasi). These were the reasons for which many people reacted with reticence and indignation, realizing the impossibility to adjust to the new rules. Moreover, a teacher and new land proprietor from Bacau County expressed her opinion that there was no interest either from the national or local authorities in explaining new terminology to the farmers. Consequently, in her opinion, “Romanians were not prepared for the 2007 EU accession” (Iliana, June 2007, Onesti).

Romania's adjustment to EU requirements was quite slow. Therefore, in the first year of EU membership, according to Puscas (interview, June 2007, Bucharest), Romania's membership contribution to the EU was higher than the accessed EU funds, a statement also confirmed by some local and national elites, as well as by the President of Romania (<http://www.evz.ro/>, April 21, 2007; <http://www.romanialibera.ro/>, December 21, 2007). According to the central newspaper *Romania Libera*, citing Romania's President Traian Basescu, Romania's EU membership contribution for 2007 was €1.1 billion whereas its net financial fund received from the EU was only €400 million (<http://www.romanialibera.ro/>, December 21, 2007). The deficiency in obtaining the European funds was strongly criticized in all Romanian media even before accession. In 2006, the year preceding Romania's integration, Gheorghe Flutur, the Minister of Agriculture, for example, admitted that Romania was going to lose 25% from the EU funds destined to agriculture as a result of inadequate activity of the Agency of Payment and Intervention in Agriculture (APIA), which meant Romania was incapable of accessing all funds destined to the national program *Fermierul*, money which was planned to be redistributed to SAPARD projects (<http://www.ziare.com/>, retrieved September 2006). This situation was confirmed by Puscas (interview, June 2007, Bucharest), who also emphasized a positive aspect, the shift in priorities, from agriculture to rural development, with Romania expecting to receive half of the EU agricultural fund for rural development.

However, some authorized voices affirmed that agricultural negotiations with the EU were, in fact, resolved by the Party of Social Democracy (PSD) not only in a secret manner but also "in the knees,"<sup>69</sup> without having a short- or a long-term strategy and not in the national interest (Elena, June 2007, MAI Bucharest<sup>70</sup>; <http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 755, February 12-19, 2007).

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<sup>69</sup> Accepting many humiliating conditions for Romanian agriculture without heavy negotiations.

<sup>70</sup> She is a former Director for European integration.

Even though the Romanian negotiators accepted the elimination, partially or totally, of a series of the traditional crops from integrated agriculture, Romania's Chief Negotiator rejected this label during my interview (Puscas, June 2007, Bucharest). A Romanian official from the Ministry of Interior, for example, considered that "the negotiations had good intentions, but the negotiators were not familiarized with traditions" (Elena, June 2007, Bucharest). It is hard, though, to understand why the negotiators unfamiliar with rural traditions were selected for Brussels. In my interview with the Chief Negotiator, Mr. Puscas emphasized the work of an impressive Romanian negotiations team, some over 1,200 people, representing the parties, NGOs, local and regional administration, and other. The question posed was: "Why did these teams not include some farmers, at least one from each historical region of the country, who know well the local traditions?" Yet, I never received a satisfactory answer.

It is known that the EU, for example, asked for the total replacement of over 110,000 hectares of hybrid vineyards, indicating that they are not very productive and, in addition, the wine contains methylic alcohol. The tragedy was not only the fact that the replacement of hybrid with grafted varieties is very expensive and the EU help could come only to the large commercial farms, but the "patriot" negotiators accepted the replacement of only 30,000 hectares vineyards. Yet, Romania had in 2003 over 233,000 hectares of vineyards, from which more than half (117,500 hectares) were hybrid (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007). Moreover, the Romanians have drunk wine from their hybrid vineyards for over 2,000 years and no one has died from that "incriminated methylic alcohol," which, in fact, we know to be an organic wine. Unfortunately, a part<sup>71</sup> of the vineyards were destroyed,<sup>72</sup> but, after renegotiations with the

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<sup>71</sup> By March 2004, around 1,000 ha vineyards at the country level were destroyed, of which 8 ha were in Bacau County (Business Mesager IX (2), 36, 2004, Bacau, Romania).

<sup>72</sup> The records for 2006 show the total area of bearing vineyards as 190,500 hectares, from which 93,800 hectares have hybrid varieties of grapes (Romanian Statistical Yearbook 2007, Table 14.10).

National Inter-Professional Wine-Growing Organization, the EU abandoned its unrealistic demand (Business Mesager IX (2), 36, 2004, Bacau, Romania). Other examples of the country's disadvantageous negotiations included those pertaining to cereals (wheat especially), hemp, orchards (peach tree especially), milk, and so on.

In this light, as has been emphasized by Fitiu,<sup>73</sup> “the Romanian peasantry was negotiated to disappear exactly by those who, for years, found the electoral resources within the rural area” (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 680, August 15-22, 2005). In other words, a left party, which is expected to protect the most disadvantaged people, accepted through the 2002-2004 negotiations the most painful measures for the Romanian farmers. Accepting the majority of the conditions imposed by the EU/CAP, which had to eliminate the traditional crops and animal species, endangered not only Romanian biodiversity but also rural traditions and national specificity. Through the tendency of replacing the small family farms with commercial farms, the CAP was considered a typical example of non-adaptation to the agricultural specificity of Eastern Europe, becoming both “the fright of the candidate countries” and “the terror of the new EU members” (<http://www/formula-as.ro/>, 680, August 2005).

Asked by the reporter if a “hope exists to avoid the catastrophe,” protecting some of the Romanian traditions in agriculture, Professor Fitiu was confident in a positive solution (ibid). He emphasized the initiative of Romania's President, who suggested to the Ministry of Agriculture the elaboration of an action plan regarding the development of ecological (organic) agriculture for the period 2007-2013 for over 20-25% of the Romanian agricultural land. Encouraging the development of organic agriculture within the mountain, hill, and pre-hill zones, where the

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<sup>73</sup> Avram Fitiu, Professor at the University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine in Cluj-Napoca and the General Secretary of National Federation of Ecologic Agriculture, was interviewed in 2005 by *Formula As* magazine as a Cabinet Director at the Ministry of Agriculture (<http://www/formula-as.ro/>, No. 680, August 15-22, 2005).

potential for an extensive production is relatively reduced anyhow, seemed the only solution to escape from the restrictions irresponsibly negotiated by the PSD government.

In this light, the initiative for protecting Romanian seed traditions engaged in by the Bank of Plant Genetic Resources in Suceava, Northern Romania, should also be mentioned. In fact, the Suceava Genebank project started in 1982 and, between 1985 and 1990, it belonged to the Suceava Agricultural Research Station. As an autonomous institution since 1990,<sup>74</sup> “the Suceava Genebank takes the responsibility to conserve the Romanian plant germplasm and, through international collaboration, contributes to the safeguard of the world genetic resources” (<http://www.svgenebank.ro/>, retrieved June 2008). The bank does not sell the seeds, but offers a small number of seeds, free of charge, to the peasants or other people interested in reintroducing traditional crops into the local agriculture. The offer is very small because the bank’s collections comprise about 10,000 seeds, destined especially to research and reintroduction into culture in the case of calamities or wars.

For rural areas, Romania’s accession could have been the best business, taking into account the significant amount of money allocated by the EU for funding both agriculture and rural development (Formula AS, 765, April 23-30, 2007). Unfortunately, as a result of political confusion, the lack of governmental reaction in construction of the required institutional system, and massive non-taxable EU imports, Romania lost an impressive amount of money during its first year of EU accession<sup>75</sup> (ibid; <http://www.ziare.com/>, 2007-2009, multiple retrievals). In addition, in many cases the new Romanian structures did not correctly understand the EU requirements, imposing some unacceptable implementation conditions on Romanian farmers.

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<sup>74</sup> Following the government’s Decision No. 371/1990, the Suceava Genebank became autonomous, being financed from the national budget (<http://www.svgenebank.ro/>).

<sup>75</sup> According to V. Steriu, former State Secretary for European integration within the Ministry of Agriculture (2001-2004), during the year 2007, “Romania loses approximately €20 million per day” (interview, <http://www.formula-as.ro/>, No. 765, April 23-30, 2007).

Taking into consideration these aspects (in addition to the replacement of the professionals with the party adherents within the Agriculture Ministry, interminable property restitution law suites, European high prices which did not correlate with Romanian low incomes, bankruptcies, and continuous deterioration of the people's standard of living), many protests were recorded after 2007, even voicing regrets about the fall of the communist regime with its collectivized agriculture.

One acute problem after accession was recorded with the *National Sanitary Veterinarian Agency*, sometimes called “the evil expression” in Romania, a typical case of “disgusting obedient enthusiasm” toward the EU (<http://www.formula-as.ro>, 765, 2007). More specifically, the “scandalous” decisions of this Authority consisted not only in imposing unrealistic hygienic conditions for animal farms but also in the limiting of transhumance of the shepherds' flocks, together with the chasing of the peasants from the farm markets by forbidding them to sell their cheese and other animal products in market places other than their local (county) ones (<http://www.adevarulonline.ro/>, retrieved February 2007). Since in the local areas many people have their own sheep and cheese, the limitations severely hampered the shepherds' business.

Given that it is known that the EU laws protect and even encourage the local and regional traditions, the decisions of the Veterinarian Authority (in fact, a necessary institution, established with good intentions) clearly demonstrated that the Romanian elites did not understand at all the European legislation, copying *ad-litteram* the EU instructions without an adjustment to the country's specifics (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 767, 2007). It was not any surprise to find continuous avalanches of protests (staking-out the Government's, Parliament's, and Veterinarian Authority's buildings and threatening them with lawsuits at the European Court of Human Rights (CEDO), in Strasbourg), arousing public indignation against the Romanian rulers.

Consequently, the Veterinarian Authority changed its decision, permitting the farmers to sell their primary products in the markets at the national level, but imposing higher quality standards (<http://www.ziare.com/>, December 19, 2008). In addition, the requirement for peasants was to register their selling activity at the *National Office of Romanian Traditional and Ecological Products* (<http://www.ziare.com/>, December 9, 2008).

The massive imports of food, milk especially, as well as an exaggerated low budget for agriculture and the cancellation of the state subsidies, were also important reasons for different dramatic forms of farmer protests, coordinated by local and/or national agricultural unions. In December 2008, for example, over 300 cattle farmers protested over the custom unions with Hungary (Nadlac, Bors, and Petea) against the illegal import of milk from different EU counties by throwing on the road hundreds of liters of milk (<http://www.ziare.com/>, December 19, 2008). Because the situation in agriculture did not change positively, in February 2009, AGROSTAR, the National Federation of the Trade Unions in Agriculture, called for the President of Romania's intervention to mediate some ongoing agricultural issues between the Romanian Government and agriculturists. Clearly expressed was the Federation's intention to initiate some strong protest actions, including marches and blocking the roads/city streets and milk product factories (which process imported milk) with diverse agricultural equipment and animals ([http://www.ziare.com](http://www.ziare.com/), February 1, 2009).

In this context, many people, situated at different social levels, have started to express their regret for the loss of the collectives (interviews: Armand, Bucharest; Iulian, Bacau city; Mihai, Racova; Constantin Livezile; Ileana, Onesti; Eleonora, Bogdanesti; Ecaterina and Dan, Poduri, Bacau County). In addition, even big farmers have considered that the CAPs must be reestablished, but with private capital (<http://www.evz.ro/>, March 21, 2009). In order to better

understand the local pulse, I opened the discussion regarding this sensitive topic within a diversity of places, from the Ministry of Agriculture level to the village individual farmer in Bacau County. Taking into consideration the general attitude of the Romanians toward Romania's integration, some responses from my interviewees, starting from the MAPDR level, were totally unexpected. According to one specialist from this Ministry,

“Decollectivization was the biggest mistake after 1989. The CAPs should have remained, possessing the equipments and irrigation systems, reconverting them today into some incorporated companies. Yet, since the communist mentality did not disappear, many peasants still refuse to create new associations.”

(Armand, June 2007, Bucharest)

The official opinion is also reiterated in the country. Iliana from Onesti (interview, June 2007) appreciated as positive the increase of the hygienic demands for producing, transporting, and selling animal products, but many of the Romanian peasants are too poor to be able to modernize their farm facilities in conformity with the EU requirements. She also emphasized the organization of some demonstrations of protest in her home village, Gura Vaii, in the Trotus Valley, and clearly expressed her belief that, overall, “it was better with the CAPs” because peasants had access to equipment. According to Eleonora and Dan, “In communism it was better. We had all we needed, but now we have to buy everything” (interviews, June 2007, Bogdanesti and Poduri, Bacau County). In addition, Eleonora specified that before 1989 her family “had a lot of money, but did not know what to do with it,” indirectly recognizing the dramatic shortage of goods in the stores before 1989. On the other hand, Dan was a military employee during the communist era, a social category always having superior privileges in comparison with others. However, Ecaterina's openness about the peasants' tendency to “supply” their families with different products from the CAPs' lots during the night revealed a painful scenario of the communism system, wherein people were left unable to secure their

elementary needs and so were forced to “steal” from their proper work, that is to say from their land forcibly included into the collectives. However, all recognized the integration’s facilities regarding the free movement of people within the EU territory.

Iulian, a technician from Bacau city, who worked during the 1970s and 1980s on different land amelioration sites in Bacau and Vaslui counties (Podu Turcului, Tutova, Perieni), also expressed his dissatisfaction with the current evolution of agriculture. Although many times before 1989 he criticized the communist system, I was surprised to hear his new thoughts, specifically that “communism was true for agriculture” (interview, June 21, 2007, Bacau). Taking into account his experience in land amelioration, Iulian illustrated with details his, and hundreds of other people’s, work on the standardized agricultural perimeters from Ungureni commune, in Barladului Plateau, Bacau County, and Perieni, near Barlad city, Vaslui County, on building terraces, grass strips, canals for rain water drainage, soil dams for ravines, slope canals, subterranean drainage, afforestations (acacia, poplar, and willow trees), irrigation canals, and access roads. According to him, between 1984 and 1988, on the hill slopes over 2000 hectares were planted with grafted vineyards, in addition to hundreds of hectares with older vineyards and diverse orchards. Unfortunately, after decollectivization, much of this expensive and meticulous work was abandoned, stolen, destroyed, or replaced with something else by the new small proprietors. Appalled by the Romanian neo-communist regime, he emphasized the miserable pensions (around \$100 per month, though, some of them were as little as \$10-20 per month) paid today to those peasants, who all their life worked hard during the communist era. It is not any surprise, then, that many peasants have decided to abandon their land and emigrate. Finally, in order for him to be sure that I correctly understood his message, Iulian closed his interview with

the observation, underlined through his tone, that “the peasants have borne the brunt of agriculture, with which Ceausescu paid the country’s external debts.”

The transition and integration costs were, and still are, high for all Romanians, but unanimously recognized is the fact that rural areas, including agriculture, are most affected. Yet, although rural Romania is still far from people’s expectations, with multiple imperfections, there are already many successful places in both agriculture and rural development, constituting encouraging examples for other areas in the near future. In addition, Romanians can benefit from the experiences of the other European countries, which spare no efforts to encourage Romania not only to protect its rural/agricultural identity but also to not repeat the Western European countries’ mistakes.

In addition to Barnova (Iasi), Viscri (Brasov), and other initiatives described above, there are many other prosperous rural areas, the result of using local, governmental, or EU funds, multiplied with impressive personal initiatives and/or foreign investments. In this respect, two significant projects in the Romanian Plain deserve mention: “*FermProd*” from Scarlatesti, Braila County, an agricultural oasis on around 1,600 hectares located in the most arid zone in Baragan (<http://www.evz.ro/>, May 4, 2009; <http://www.ecomagazin.ro/>, May 6, 2009); and “*Comana House*,” a tourist pension, together with “*Comana Natural Park*,” a compact protected forest area, around 6,000 hectares, located in the Neajlov Delta, Giurgiu County (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 811, March 2008). Significant here is the project called “*European Village Comana*,” an original idea for building a tourist complex with 27 rustic houses, representing the specific rural architecture of the 27 EU member states (<http://www.satul-european.ro/>, retrieved October 7, 2009). Equally important are the French and Danish investments in agriculture (vegetal and construction firms, grain elevators, and rural tourism) in Baragan, in Ialomita, Calarasi, and

Braila counties respectively (<http://www.evz.ro/>, April 2008), as well as the efforts for development of the less favored areas, the mountain and hill villages, with their predisposition to the development of agro-tourism (the Arges Valley and Fagaras Mountains; Apuseni's and Bucovina's mountains) and ecological agriculture (the Sibiu BioCoop, the first cooperative of ecological farmers in Romania, producing certified organic products – cereals, fruits, vegetables, milk, and dairy products) (The European Platform for Food Sovereignty, <http://www.epfs.eu/>, retreat October 5, 2009).

The tendency to develop ecological agriculture, certifying certain agricultural products as traditional, is also increasing in the counties under consideration. In this light, the county newspaper *Observator de Bacau* emphasized the establishment of the Asau Valley Association, “Eco Rozi,” in Asau commune, Bacau County, specialized in the dairy products (<http://www.observatordebacau.ro/>, July 2, 2007). The association has a network of proper stores in Asau, as well as in the Trotus Valley's towns such as Comanesti, Targu Ocna, and Onesti. In addition, the shepherds from Brusturoasa commune, Bacau County, encouraged by their participation at the 2006 “Terra Madre” conference in Turin, Italy, submitted documentation to the Direction for Agriculture and Rural Development (DADR), Bacau, for registering their “cheese in fir tree bark” as a Romanian traditional product. This was designated to allow them to commercialize their cheese on EU markets (<http://www.gandul.info/>, November 8, 2006; <http://www.gazetadeagricultura.info/>, September 14, 2008).

The pattern is also seen in Iasi County. Some fifteen traditional products were already recorded in 2007 (many of them cheeses), of which “Cuza hard cheese” and “princely sponge cake” received the appropriate certification to be sold on the EU markets (<http://www.ziarul lumina.ro/>, September 5, 2007). Furthermore, in 2008 a group of Japanese experts and the

DADR Iasi started a commune initiative for the re-establishment of some collectives/associations in Iasi County (<http://www.gardianul.ro/>, March 05, 2008). However, having experienced communist collectivized agriculture, many Romanian farmers are still reticent to work in an association, although the prospect of accessing EU funds is an encouraging factor for change. This has been proven by a group of 23 farmers from Rachitis commune, Bacau County, who initiated in 2006 development of the first agricultural association in Bacau County, using the Western system (<http://www.observatordebacau.ro/>, July 31, 2006). Moreover, Brasov County is the only site for manufacturing agricultural tractors and its natural landscape continues to attract domestic and foreign investors.

Romania has a significant agricultural space and rural areas constitute a reservoir of traditions and cultural values. Since many traditional villages in Western Europe have disappeared, several European personalities have pleaded for the conservation of the Romanian traditional agriculture and rural identity. Jose Bove, farmer and member of the union “*Confederation Paysanne*” from France, as well as a member of European Parliament, and Carlo Petrini, the President of the International Organization “*Slow Food*,” for example, are internationally recognized enemies of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and have been trying to convince the Romanian authorities, NGOs, and farmers of the necessity of preventing GMOs from entering Romania’s agriculture (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 689, October 24-31, 2005; and 726, July 17-24, 2006). Moreover, Sir Julian Rose, member of the Committee of Rural Development in South-East England, one of the British Government consultants, Dr. Otto von Habsburg, Honorary President of the “*PanEuropa*” Union, Evelyne Pivert, the President of the “*Operation Village Roumains*” Associations from France, Gerard Onesta, Vice-President of the European Parliament, Dr. Jurgen Henkel, Director of the Evangelical Academy

“*Transylvania*” from Sibiu, Romania, Professor Ryzsard Kolstrung, the Secretary of the Polish Association of Users and Friends of Working Horses, and a certain number of French farmers are some of the most important European voices who have called on Romanians to protect the oneness of the Romanian villages, their cultural values, and small peasant traditional farms, as well as the diversity of seeds and varieties of plants and animals, the only way to survive during an economic crises, national disaster, or war (<http://www.formula-as.ro/>, 662, April 11-17, 2005; 675, July 11-18, 2005; 678, August 1-8, 2005; 681, August 22-23, 2005; 691, November 7-14, 2005; and 767, May 7-14, 2007; 861, March 21-27, 2009).

In sum, this chapter examined several agricultural characteristics under communist rule and current rural challenges of transition and integration in the counties of Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov, based especially on people’s personal experiences in agriculture and their opinions about ongoing changes. While the available empirical evidence is imperfect, it supports the hypotheses a) that there are significant differences in the concept of rural development between Moldavian and Transylvanian Saxon villages and b) that there is much disagreement between domestic elites and non-elites, as well as between the EU and non-official international voices about Romania’s integration, accession negotiations, and alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy.

The analysis of agriculture and rural development in these three counties reveals not only similarities but also some significant differences. Unlike the lower elevation of the land forms in Iasi County, the extended mountainous and hilly areas in Brasov and Bacau counties have made a major contribution in the reduction of the collectivized land. In addition, as a result of its strong industrialized centers, Brasov County has been one of the major destinations of the Moldavian rural migrants. The patterns for collectivization and decollectivization of agriculture

were the same in all counties under consideration, but agricultural production has been, and still is, strongly influenced by their land forms and climate. Despite the major differences in land use and agricultural production, the selected counties maintain the largest cultivated areas with cereals, corn and wheat especially. However, at the commune/village level, the agricultural patterns are significantly different. Unlike Barnova, specialized in orchards and vineyards, Poduri's large arable areas are destined especially for grain crops. Although still a remote rural area, Viscri has a particular orientation to organic agriculture, buffalo farms, and agro-turism. Moreover, while Transylvanian Saxon villages struggle to preserve their identity, the Moldavian villages, the suburban ones in particular, tend to adjust to a modern style of life. The case of Barnova, Iasi County, is significant.

Although the post-1989 decollectivization and land restitution processes were welcomed in all these Moldavian and Transylvanian villages, the lack of restitution of non-land assets and high level of unemployment constituted major causes of the rural migration abroad for work. This is especially significant for people located in the remote villages such as Poduri and Viscri, whose destinations for emigration have been, and still are, Italy and Belgium. Furthermore, the adjustment to CAP requirements is difficult for all rural areas described and many people's voices have strongly emphasized their disappointment, even regretting collectivization. The emphasis on domestic and international attitudes in this chapter serves to contextualize and illuminate the underlying norms behind these institutional and policy developments.

## CHAPTER 11

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

After almost 150 years of agrarian reforms, Romania was obliged to declare the peasant farm the winner.

*Dupa aproape 150 de ani de reforme agrare, Romania a fost nevoita sa declare castigatoare gospodaria taraneasca.*

(Dr. Gabriel Popescu, ASE, Bucharest, cited in Formula AS, No. 867, 2009)

#### **11.1 Summary of Findings: Does Attitude Make a Difference?**

Romania, one of the largest and most ruralized Eastern European countries, has a very complex agrarian history, ranging from the traditional free communal villages and serfdom to the communist collective farms, followed by the agricultural alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy. Specifically, in the last almost 150 years, rural Romania went through significant restructuring as a result of the interaction of some important social, economic, and political phenomena, such as the Organic Statutes, the installation of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty in Romania, the war for independence from the Turks' suzerainty, the First World War, the interwar economic crisis, the Second World War, the communist regime, and the 1989 revolution, as well as the Eastern enlargement of the EU and Romania's accession. The reason for detailing these historical events in my study was to identify the principal forces that shaped the rural economy and the patterns of land tenure in the historical context in order to understand how Romania's efforts to join the EU are shaping agricultural practices and rural development, together with the response of rural people to this.

In this light, I posed the following questions:

1. What was the state of Romania's agriculture prior to the 1989 revolution which ended Communist Party rule in Romania?
2. How has Romanian agriculture been transformed since 1989? and
3. What role has preparation for admittance to the EU played in any identified post-1989 transformation, and how have rural people reacted to this?

In the previous chapter I used a case study of zonal variation in agriculture and rural transformations in the counties of Bacau, Iasi, and Brasov, in Eastern and Central Romania, focusing especially on an attitudinal portrait of rural Romania, in a wide variety of contexts – formerly collectivized v. non-collectivized areas, isolated rural v. rural areas which serve as suppliers of market garden goods to significant local urban areas, and ethnically Romanian v. ethnically German areas.

For the purpose of this study it was necessary to contact many individuals. Specifically, in Romania, I conducted in-depth and unstructured interviews with sixty national elites and non-elites, especially farmers, in order to ask and receive information about Romania's integration process and agricultural practices in the pre- and post-1989 era (see Appendix B). I also gathered valuable data organizing two focus groups in Barnova, Iasi County, and Poduri, Bacau County. They are suggestive of the impact of the EU enlargement on Romanian agriculture and rural areas as they condition electoral politics and interest group pressures in certain degrees. As Lahav (2004, 207) has remarked, these observations return us to Stanley Hoffmann's and other European scholars' works that suggest that "the triumph or failure of integration is contingent to a remarkable extent on developments in political culture and public opinion."

In conducting archival research, participant and/or non-participant observation, interviews, and focus groups with key individuals in the European integration debate, particularly Romania's agriculture and rural development, I identified several major themes. Initially, I established three themes (life under collectivization; decollectivization and the restoration of rural property; and agricultural alignment to the CAP) and categories, with the recognition that the categories may have to be revised as the analysis proceeds. Furthermore, in my attempt to generate new hypotheses, I deepened my analysis, establishing several additional themes (traditional [pre-communist] agriculture; transition and challenges of integration; and Eastern enlargement of the EU), and individualizing their categories, subcategories and/or issues (see Appendix E). I opted to analyze the agricultural data chronologically.

The findings of this dissertation show that, throughout the historical periods, particularly prior to 1945, agriculture remained the major occupation of the Romanian rural inhabitants and landholding continued to determine their social relations. Analyzing the Census of 1930, for example, Hitchins (1994) pointed out an impressive percent of the rural active population (90.4%) having agriculture as its primary source of income. Although the percent of rural employment decreased three times over three-quarters of a century, Romania is still a country with some of the highest rates of rural population and rural employment in Europe (see Tables 8.2, 8.3, and 9.14). Unfortunately, however, historically agrarian laws have tended to be made almost entirely by excluding the people whom the decisions will affect, although in some cases the peasants have made their presence known, as when they engaged in armed revolt (see the 1907-1908 legislation, as well as the 1921 and 1945 Land Reforms). All agrarian reform laws, excluding collectivization, brought about a massive transfer of land from large landowners, or from state and collective farms, to smallholders. A sharp decrease was recorded in the number

and extent of large properties in favor of medium and especially small holdings in both the 1921 and 1945 Land Reforms.

The findings also provide strong backing for state involvement at different scales and in different contexts. While the Bill for the 1921 Agrarian Reform, for example, was the result of the bargain between the two political parties, Conservative and Liberal (Mitrany 1930), the decisions for the 1945 Land Reform were entirely made by the Communist Party. However, the post-communist land reforms, decollectivization, and rural privatization were the result of both state and EU involvement, since these objectives were prerequisites for Romania's accession. In this light, it is worth mentioning that whereas land was finally restituted, this was not the general rule for other assets (Swinnen and Mathijs 1997). In many cases, non-land assets were subjects to illegal seizures and destruction of property. Sarris and Gavrilesco (1997) reported that serious disorders in the application of the 1991 Land Law led to the rapid decline of transferable assets. As a result, the privatization of non-land assets has proceeded much slower than that of land and livestock.

While production in the command economy was geared for the "military-industrial complex," "operating on an extensive basis with much use of land and labour," in the market economy it is becoming "more intensive with capital investment for mass production of consumer goods" (Turnock 1997, 156). Both aspects were analyzed in detail for Romania in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, including several comparison analyses at the CEECs level. There are many arguments pro and con for commercial and/or for small farming agriculture. Agricultural production depends on many factors, including the choice of agricultural practice. While in the majority of cases Romanian farmers' choice was for individual farming after the 1991 Land Reform, in some cases, in the Danube Plain for example, landowners selected (or were forced to

select) cooperative farming, based on “overcoming substantial resource-access barriers that have been largely created by the macro-political land reform choice made in 1991” (Sabates-Wheeler 2004, 278). In some cases, small farmer groups provide efficiency benefits to production relative to individual farming strategies while in many other cases the results are in favor of the individual engaging in private farming. Since the Romanian peasants are quite conservative, it seems that family farming will continue to remain a characteristic symbol of Romanian agriculture.

However, despite the magnitude of changes that have taken place, the findings reveal an interesting conundrum. Specifically, simple calculation of the average production for cereals for the period 1990-2006, for example, shows us a figure around 16.8 million tonnes (RSY 2007; Table 9.11). Comparing the post-communist result with the average of grain production during the communist agriculture, 1965-1989, which was 16.5 million tonnes (Table 8.14), this figure seems to present us with an interesting observation in light of efforts to deconstruct the rural landscape created under communism: either collectivized agriculture was not very bad or the “original” capitalist agriculture in Romania and its adjustment to the CAP are not in accordance with the Romanians’ expectations. It seems that Romanians uselessly destroyed the collectives, moving from an already established commercial, mechanized agriculture to a mixed agriculture, in the main a traditional one, in which the manual and animal work are crucial.

We have to accept that during these twenty years of capitalism, the country experienced many economic, social, and political conflicts with negative consequences toward agriculture. The legislation process for agricultural transformation was very slow and, in addition, the implementation process of the EU directives was even slower and/or incorrectly applied (see Chapter 10). Furthermore, contrary to the official declarations, I consider that agriculture and

rural development was never a real priority of the Romanian elites, unless they were pressed by some internal or external factors like the EU's requirements. Only before the local or national elections did the ruling people remember the peasants as they constituted a significant source of votes.

Going back to statistics, we have to recall that 99.6% of agricultural holdings are less mechanized individual holdings (over 4.2 million), with such holdings accounting for 65.5% of agricultural area in use (Table 9.4). Only some 18,000 are units with legal status, some thousand of these being large-scale farms (i.e., commercial agricultural companies). Yet, we also have to accept that during these past two decades, at least some of these individual holdings were relatively modernized holdings. In addition, certain Romanian projects for individual or commercial agriculture were funded by the EU and/or Romania's government. Moreover, many people worked in agriculture in different countries in the EU, gaining new experiences which could be applied to their own farms. Consequently, although significant areas of agricultural land are still abandoned, 24.4 million tonnes of cereals recorded in 2004 is a crucial sign of change (RSY 2007). Overall, the Romanian peasants love their land and many have worked hard to improve their agricultural practice.

Therefore, if a majority traditional agriculture was able to equalize and even exceed the commercial collectivized agriculture, there are hopes for future positive changes. It is clear, though, that Romania's agriculture in some respects is still far from perfection. But what agriculture is perfect? Having the unpleasant experiences for massive imports of food, Romanians have "the chance" to eat GMO food, full of chemicals and without any taste. Describing some imported tomatoes from Turkey, a former Prime Minister of Romania labeled them as having been made "from rubber." Many Romanians, including the government, have

understood that the traditional subsistence agriculture must not be completely eliminated. It can be an asset for the country if it is managed with care, improved, and adjusted to the twenty-first century, trying to reach the European standards of quality.

It is true that fragmented holdings made sowing and harvesting more difficult, with higher costs for transport and control. Yet, many other private associations could be created in the near future. Equally important is the restoration of the irrigation systems, especially in the driest Southern regions (see Lup 1997), and better orientation for projects supported by the EU funding programs, as well as the improvement of the quality of agricultural products so that higher quantities of Romanian products will be able to be exported to the other EU countries. Finally, a crucial importance for the rural economy will be a stronger emphasis on the non-agricultural economy and, rural tourism especially. I strongly advocate for the preservation of rural architecture and cultural traditions for tourism purposes, as one of the major economic alternatives for rural development.

There are many opinions, including official ones, regarding the maintaining of the small farms which mostly practice organic farming and, therefore, are considered to have a positive impact toward the environment. Given that in the extended EU there are many small farms (subsidence and semi-subsidence), according to Dacian Ciolos,<sup>76</sup> a former Romanian Minister of Agriculture and the current European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, “the CAP must adjust to the realities within the enlarged EU to permit the small farms to survive” (www.ziare.com, Nov. 7, 2008). Poland and Romania have the same vision toward

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<sup>76</sup> Dacian Ciolos served as Minister of Agriculture during the Tariceanu government, between August 2007 and December 2008. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010, he was validated as European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, succeeding Mariann Fischer Boel. Commissioner Ciolos took the Office in Brussels on February 9, 2010 (<http://www.ziare.com>, February 9, 2010; <http://en.wikipedia.org>).

small farms, taking into account that at the EU-level some 75% of the farms are less than five hectares and are thus relatively small.

The interviewees themselves know best about their life under communist rule, but some of their answers, expressing their nostalgia for communism, were hard for me to understand. This confusion was created because, with some exceptions, the shelves in the Romanian stores were permanently empty, especially during the second half of the 1980s. In addition, as if this was not enough, having the ability to stop any vehicle suspected of carrying food, the militia controlled almost every car at the entrance to a county/city, confiscating any agricultural product suspected to be from the CAPs. Therefore, many people (<http://www.ziare.com/>, 2008-2010, multiple retrievals), including myself, still do not understand how those nostalgic people have forgotten so quickly the communist dictatorship. Even today, the lack of or bad legislation, bureaucracy, and corruption are strong obstacles for a real democracy, including rural life. Knowing well the Romanian “original pattern” in resolving the rural (and other) issues, it was not a surprise for me to discover during my fieldwork that, after eighteen years from the elaboration of the Law of Land Resources, the restitution of land was not finished; there still exist people fighting in court to obtain their properties.

Although Puscas (2006, 37) specified that “EU enlargement is not an elite project but a process that involves an entire society,” my fieldwork findings and information from Romanian media do not confirm entirely the above affirmation. It is true that many Romanian people and all political parties, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), were advocates of integration and some Eurobarometer surveys confirmed this tendency (see Tables 10.8 and 10.9). However, it was unanimously recognized that, without a referendum, the majority of the Romanian people, especially farmers, were not well informed regarding the process of

integration, their rights, and their obligations. Consequently, it was not a surprise to read in the media answers (taken before accession) from older people located in some remote villages that the “Community is something as a county, a country bigger than Brasov,” which “could invade us” with “their milking machines and cow’s earrings” (Formula AS 672, June 20-27, 2005).

For many peasants, the EU, through the Romanian institutions (the Sanitary Veterinarian Agency especially) was, and perhaps still is, frightening. It continues to be a source of dissatisfaction for many farmers in that they were/are either prohibited from selling their agricultural produce in the farm markets of the big cities or are required to abandon the traditional sheep transhumance<sup>77</sup> and their traditions for preparing cheese.<sup>78</sup> In addition, some exaggerated and extremely expensive hygienic measures for animal farms were imposed,<sup>79</sup> which resulted in many cases in street marches and other forms of protest in front of the government and/or presidential buildings. Furthermore, some requirements are visibly biased. I am wondering why the Romanian peasant does not have permission to kill his pig for Christmas, using the traditional method, while in Spain there is no prohibition of the *corrida* (bullfight)? It is clear, both animals suffer extreme pain. Yet, while the Spanish bull is killed for entertainment, the Romanian pig is killed for food. However, for all this lack of concordance, it is not the EU that is entirely guilty but the Romanian Government for the non-adaptation of the EU requirements on the local realities and for its position of “yes-man” in the EU-Romania relations. There is not any doubt that integration into the EU, including Romania, is an elite preference and decision making process, but the process also involved important segments of the civil societies,

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<sup>77</sup> The MARD’s officials from Bucharest, who misinterpreted the EU regulations, initially established using trucks for moving sheep in their annual plain-mountain transhumance. Later, they recognized the error, having to establish only the transhumance routes (<http://www.formula-as.ro>, No. 755, 2007).

<sup>78</sup> The farmers were obliged to replace their wood utensils for cheese-making with others from steel.

<sup>79</sup> The modernization of the mountain sheepfolds included electricity (too expensive even for Romania’s Government), running water (impossible at the 1,500 - 2,000m altitude for isolated sheepfolds), and covering the walls/floors in the cheese-making rooms with tile (i.e., replacing a cheaper and warmer wood floor with an expensive and colder tile floor in the already colder mountain regions).

which played an active role in local community development, both in disseminating information and projects concerning European integration and in initiatives that promote public participation (Puscas 2006).

Thus, overall findings support the following hypotheses:

- Communist agricultural policy functioned for four decades as the heavy artillery of the Communist Party against the Romanian peasants.
- Rural systematization threatened to destroy a traditional way of life linked with the land and the identity of the village and its inhabitants.
- Although in 1989 Romania left the same political bloc as did the other CEECs, it has had its own transitional characteristics in the shift from the centrally planned economy to the market economy.
- Alongside the economic and political difficulties of adjusting to the EU integration requirements, particularly to the Common Agricultural Policy, Romania recorded significant progress toward land reform, not only in elaborating legislative measures but also in implementing them.
- The new rural economy, including specific farm diversification, is probably not the best option, but it is a restoring one, reestablishing, at least in part, the owner identity of the Romanian peasants.
- All these political and economic pre- and post-accession transformations have stimulated a multitude of domestic and international debates, from elites to farmers.
- Acceding to the demands of the EU is a way to speed up the process of transition. However, it is also likely to unleash significant conflicts, as farmers were, and still are, increasingly encouraged/ forced to transform their agricultural practices.

- There are significant differences in the concept of rural development between Moldavian and Transylvanian Saxon villages. While Transylvanian Saxon villages struggle to preserve their identity, the Moldavian villages, the suburban ones especially, are tending to adopt a modern style of life.
- There is much disagreement between domestic elites and non-elites, as well as between the EU and non-official international voices about Romania's integration, accession negotiations, and alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy.
- It is widely agreed that these small family farms provide a relatively secure way of life for rural, as well as a number of urban, people, but a better emphasis on rural non-farm economy would constitute a great way of stimulating economic growth and, ultimately, improving the standard of living in the Romanian villages.

## **11.2 Policy Implications**

The debate over agriculture and rural development in Romania and/or in the CEECs is fundamentally a debate over transition, from the inherited centrally planned economy of the communist era to the market economy of the post-communist era, as well as over the enlargement of the EU to the East and integration of the new member states. Many interviewees emphasized Romania's accession and the alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy as the most important dimension of current agricultural and rural transformations (<http://www.evz.ro>, January 28, 2010). This does not mean that all people are delighted by these changes. On the contrary, there are a multitude of opinions, emphasizing not only the new external pressure for changes but also the domestic government's inefficiency in dealing with these issues, particularly mediating better between Brussels's requirements and local realities. Moreover, after over three-quarters of a century of pre-communist agrarian reforms, over a quarter of a

century of collectivization, twenty years of decollectivized agriculture, and three years of EU membership and adjustment of Romanian agriculture to the Common Agricultural Policy, Romanian agriculture selected the family farm as the winner.

Eastern enlargement of the EU and integration of the former communist countries represent a remarkable transformation in the political and economic life of Central and Eastern Europe in the post-1989 era. In the case of Romania, the country has successfully managed to “shed many of the crippling legacies of the communist era” (Papadimitriou and Phinnemore 2008, 7).

However, as Sabates-Wheeler (2004, 3) has noted, citing Offe 1997, 105), “unlike the emergence of capitalism in the West, the creation of a new economic system in Eastern Europe is to a large extent an [overtly] ‘political project,’” one designed to make Eastern Europe more like Western Europe by modernizing its institutions and economic and political practices to establish the market mechanism and embed a liberal political system that will replace the economic central planning and political authoritarianism of the communist era. Thus, the efforts to adjust traditional and/or collectivized Eastern European agriculture to the CAP requirements have constituted a significant shift for all CEE nations and the models chosen to serve as the templates for agricultural land reform and the methods of agricultural privatization (e.g., through rapid decollectivization) are two of the most significant influences on how rural areas in Eastern Europe are being transformed today (Kideckel 1995).

However, to understand the nature and consequence of practices such as decollectivization and privatization, we need to understand the difference in meanings of the process as conceived by the EU and by the CEECs, together with how the world of ideas (EU conceptions of agricultural practices that are “appropriate” in a market economy) has intersected with the material realities of the Romanian landscape. Hence, CAP requirements often ignore local and

national differences which have resulted from the divergent historical and geographical trajectories in Central and Eastern European agriculture and rural life (see Chapter 10), as it is typically assumed that the EU model can be rolled out in a fairly unproblematic way in the various new member states so that, given sufficient time, Central and Eastern Europe will become just like Western Europe. Thus, although decollectivization does not entirely limit the possibilities of a successful implementation of EU policies and there have been several positive features in Romania's decollectivization process, as the details described at the country level (see Chapter 9) and at the level of the counties under consideration (see Chapter 10) show us, decollectivization and privatization are not cost-free but have entailed a great number of compromises and contradictory decision making (Kideckel 1995). Moreover, this has placed the central government (which is responsible for negotiating with the EU) in a tricky situation, for although post-communist officials have shown impressive understanding and flexibility in solving many rural issues in comparison with the communist officials, in many cases the Romanian government in Bucharest has been unable to efficiently mediate between the demands of Brussels and local realities in the countryside - the case of the National Sanitary Veterinarian Agency and its unrealistic decisions regarding animal farms is a case in point (see Chapter 10). Furthermore, the experience of implementing the SAPARD program and other EU or national funding programs, specifically the delay in the accreditation of the programs and their measures, have highlighted several aspects that should be avoided in the implementation of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (Giurca et al. 2006).

If the contradictions of implementing policies developed in the context of Western European patterns of agricultural development is one significant set of considerations within the context of Romania's effort to adopt the requirements of the CAP, another is the fact that the EU,

while on the one hand presenting itself as a liberator of Romania's rural landscape from the hold of its collectivist and centrally planned past, is also the most recent in a long line of outside entities seeking to impose its will on Romania's rural landscapes. Hence, although Romanians have expressed an "overwhelming Euro-enthusiasm," the EU's expectations for, and demands of, rural people constitute yet another external imposition on them (Ogrezeanu 2004, 6). Certainly, as detailed in some examples in Chapter 10, this imposition has had several beneficial aspects to it. But, at its heart it nevertheless remains an imposition from outside, one that, above all, does not take rural inhabitants' local situations into account. How Romania will negotiate its way, then, between the legacies of its past and the future offered it by the architects of the EU remain to be seen.

The study addressed both theoretical and empirical questions in order to unravel the main constraints to agriculture in contemporary Romania, as well as to compare it with the previous historical periods and with other EU countries, particularly the CEECs. The study fills a small part of the gaping hole that characterizes the state of current empirical literature on the Romanian agrarian sector. Providing a new primary data source, especially qualitative information, it also draws together different strands of the social constructivist theory that together provide form to the data.

### ***Romania's Admittance into the EU -- Integrant Part of Eastern Enlargement***

The enlargement of the EU, concluded by the Treaty of Rome for an "unlimited period" to "infinite membership expansion in Europe," has resulted in its growing from the original six founding members to the current EU of twenty-seven constituent units, though without a discernible pattern (Burgess 2004, 38-39; [http://europa.eu/pol/enlarg/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/pol/enlarg/index_en.htm), 2008). Each enlargement, from 1973 to 2007, has been the result of individual country negotiations, together

with a series of compromises from both sides (Papadimitriou 2002; Burgess 2004; Maurer 2005; Table 4.2). More specifically, the 1989 collapse of communism in Central and Eastern European countries, followed by the creation of the so-called “stable disorder,” created unprecedented challenges and problems for the EU project not only through the newcomers’ size and diversity but also through the enormous economic gap between the EU-15 and the CEECs (Piazolo 2001; Baldwin 2004; Burgess 2004, 39; Heijdra et al. 2004). Yet, enlargement must be understood not only as a challenge or threat to the Union but also as an opportunity to strengthen it.

As Schimmelfennig (2001, 49-50) has pointed out, state preferences, which are very divergent, represented, and still represent, a major factor which shapes the EU’s decision-making, with, in some respects, negative consequences toward the CEECs’ accession. In addition, geographical position, as a “proxy variable,” may influence the decision-making of the countries, divided into either the “drivers,” the advocates of Eastern enlargement and “equal treatment” for all, or the “breakmen,” the reticent ones and advocates of a limited round of enlargement in Central Europe. If we accept that international interdependence increases with geographical proximity, several Eastern European countries, including Romania, were disadvantaged from the starting point of the decision-making process.

Introducing the political geography of the “return to Europe” discourse, Moisio (2007, 82), for example, examines the 2004 EU expansion from the “constructionist” viewpoint. Since the EU expansion is interlinked with the “boundary regimes” in the eastern part of the EU, Moisio extends his research toward the concept of the “EU’s eastern dimension” (ibid). A significant amount of evidence also suggests that the debate on the social construction of “Europeanness” and “European self-understanding” is firmly connected with explanation regarding territoriality and the EU borders (p. 83).

In a sophisticated presentation of this strand of sociological institutionalism thinking, Schimmelfennig (2001, 58) has argued that sociological institutionalists view “rationality as constructed.” Also, the goals and procedures of international organizations are seen as determined by the “standards of legitimacy,” following the “logic of appropriateness” to which they belong (ibid). In this light, states that share the collective identity of an international community and, at the same time, adhere to its values and norms are entitled to join its organizations. As a result, the CEECs, including Romania, manipulated European collective identity and claimed they were engaged in “the return to Europe,” arguing that “they belong not only to geographical Europe but also to the (informal) European international community” (p. 68). Thus, the decision of the EU, as an organization of the European liberal community of states, to open accession negotiations with the CEECs is explained as encouraging “the inclusion of those countries that have come to share its liberal values and norms” (Piazolo 2001, 14; Schimmelfennig 2001, 48).

Yet, the prerequisites for the EU accession (democracies that respect the rule of law and human rights, open-market economy with free competition, and the acceptance of the entire *acquis communautaire*) have been differentially adopted and implemented by the CEECs (Piazolo 2001; Schimmelfennig 2001; Nicoll 1998; <http://www.eurunion.org/>, 2004).

Specifically, if the sociological expectation is correct, the five CEECs that were selected for accession talks on July 16, 1997 (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia) not only matched the EU members but also distinguished themselves from the other five associated countries (Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia) with regard to the liberal norms and other prerequisites for a successful application for EU membership (Table 4.6).

One of the major challenges facing the CEECs in obtaining EU membership has been “the need to implement effectively the *acquis communautaire*” (Papadimitriou and Phinnemore 2004, 619; Appendix F). Since the drive toward EU accession has accelerated after 1998, when the first group of countries opened their negotiations, all applicant countries have struggled to cope with the demands required by the enlargement process, primarily meeting the obligations contained in the 31 chapters of the *acquis*. Whereas the first eight former communist countries which were accepted during the first wave of accession, on May 1, 2004, had already incorporated EU law into their domestic legislation, the two “laggards” in the enlargement process, Bulgaria and Romania, still had to adjust themselves to the EU law, being scheduled and, finally, accepted to join the Union on January 1, 2007 (<http://europa.eu.int/>, 2004, 2007).

Despite the limitations of the country’s economic transition, Romania’s economic growth, including agriculture, in the mid-2000s was an outcome of the transformational effects associated with EU enlargement (Papadimitriou and Phinnemore 2008, 107). The opening of accession negotiations with the EU in 2000, particularly for Chapter 7 of the *acquis communautaire* - Agriculture in 2002, had a significant importance in this respect (Table 4.6; Appendix G). As Papadimitriou and Phinnemore (2008, 107) had emphasized, the Romanian political elites perceived the decision of the Helsinki European Council in December 1999 “as the country’s last chance to catch up with the CEE frontrunners.” Certainly, the Europeanising effects on Romanian agriculture and rural development started to intensify after January 2007, as the result of full implications of the country’s EU membership. Under EU pressure, particularly the safeguard clauses, however, Romanian political and economic elites faced major challenges, significantly adjusting communist agriculture and some traditional rural customs to the CAP requirements.

### **11.3 Limitations of the Study**

Taking into account the primary and secondary data collected, as well as the findings, I consider there to be several limitations in this research, including a shortage in current academic geographical references written in Romanian by the Romanian authors, the relatively limited information at the ethnic level in the Saxon villages from Transylvania, the disappearance of many people from the older generations able to describe first-hand life under collectivization, and the potential biases of news in the Romanian periodicals. In addition, the letters from the Romanian interviewees are open to question given that they are self-reported narratives detailing their working experience in the cooperativized agriculture. Moreover, in some cases, the comparison analyses were difficult to be conducted since the data released by the communist system either could not be assumed to be entirely reliable or, worse, does not exist and, in many cases, the current domestic and international statistics show considerable inconsistencies.

### **11.4 Future Research Considerations**

Due to the data limitation, this study was able to test only some of its impacting hypotheses, especially in three counties located in Eastern and Central Romania. In a similar vein, an exploration of the politics regarding agriculture and rural development at the development region levels would be very useful. An extended area of research, eventually comparing the mixed farming strategies, individual and cooperative, would improve in some degrees the geography literature on the rural economy at the country level. Research questions can pursue whether individual farming is superior to private associations or not. Although this study collected qualitative data from non-collectivized rural areas of the Trotus Basin, in the Carpathian Mountains (specifically, Bacau County), the study did not focus on these areas nor did it perform a separate empirical analysis. Consequently, in the new orientation for a stronger

emphasis on the development of organic agriculture, an interesting study would be one dedicated to the mountain and upper hill zones that not only looked at the regional differences but also tested the productivity and quality differences between similar farming forms across the regions.

Taking into consideration the characteristics of the Eastern enlargement of the EU, a useful extension to this study would be a comparison study at the Balkan level or between the CEECs accepted into the EU during the first wave of the fifth enlargement (May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004) and the second wave (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007), for comparison and contrast of their progress after a six- or three-year EU membership respectively. Issues of rural labor emigration could also become an interesting direction of research, together with the impact that CAP policy could have upon attracting foreign investment to Romanian agriculture in order to decrease emigration abroad for work. Finally, future research on European integration must grapple with the roles that individual states play in the decision-making process, particularly regarding agriculture and rural development, relative to that of the supranational EU.

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**APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS / INTREBARI PENTRU INTERVIU**  
**(Selected Questions in English and Romanian)**

June 2007

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All responses will be kept confidential. Data generated by this study will be used for content and/or statistical analysis only.

My primary research question is as follows:

**How is Romania's preparation for admittance into the EU impacting agricultural practices and land-use patterns, and what is the rural people's response to this?**

*Intrebarea centrala a cercetarii mele este urmatoarea:*

*In ce mod pregatirea Romaniei pentru integrarea in Uniunea Europeana influenteaza practicile agricole si modul de folosire a terenurilor, si care este atitudinea populatiei rurale fata de acesta schimbare?*

Subsidiary questions:

**I. What was the state of Romania's agriculture prior to the 1989 revolution which ended Communist Party rule in Romania?**

*Care a fost situatia agriculturii Romaniei inainte de revolutia din 1989 care a incheiat guvernarea Partidului Comunist in Romania?*

1. How difficult was the collectivization process in the country or in your county, if you remember? Which was the peasants' attitude in the perspective of losing their properties?

*Cum s-a facut cooperativizarea in tara sau in judetul dumneavoastra, daca va mai Amintiti? Cat de dificil a fost si care a fost atitudinea taranilor in perspective pierderii proprietatilor?*

2. Describe the state of agriculture and agricultural practices in the pre-1989 era. Did your area experience the collectivized agriculture?

*Descrieti situatia agriculturii si modul cum se lucra in agricultura inainte de 1989. A fost cooperativizata zona in care locuiti?*

3. How long did you work in the cooperative and what system of payment was used?

*Cati ani ati muncit in agricultura cooperatista si cum erati platiti?*

4. What was your material contribution to your agricultural production cooperative's endowment?  
*Care a fost contributiile dumneavoastra materiale la zestrea cooperativei agricole de productie?*
5. How do you assess the agricultural production obtained in the collectives? What was the difference between the cooperativized production and that obtained on the private plots?  
*Cum apreciati productia agricola in obtinuta in agricultura cooperativizata? Ce diferenta era intre productia cooperativizata si cea obtinuta din terenurile personale?*
6. Was your village affected by systematization? If yes, please explain.  
*A fost satul dumneavoastra afectat de sistematizare? Daca da, va rog sa explicati.*
7. What advantages did your village perceive from practicing non-collectivized agriculture?  
*Care sunt avantajele pe care satul dumneavoastra le-a avut practicand agricultura necooperativizata?*

## **II. How has Romanian agriculture been transformed since 1989?**

*Cum a fost transformata agricultura Romaniei incepand din 1989?*

1. How did preparation for EU admittance impact agriculture in your local contexts?  
*Ce influenta au avut asupra agriculturii locale pregatirile de integrare ale tarii in UE?*
2. What kind of impact do you think the EU integration process had on owners of small farms and their families?  
*Ce influenta are dupa parerea Dvs. procesul de integrare asupra micilor fermieri si familiilor lor?*
3. What potential problems do you foresee for small family farms trying to adjust to the EU standards?  
*Ce probleme anticipati pentru fermele mici de familie incercand sa se adapteze la standardele UE?*
4. Could the village farmers meet the EU standards for agricultural products without losing traditional values?  
*Ar putea fermierii atinge standardele UE pentru produsele agricole fara pierderea valorilor traditionale?*
5. How did land restitution take place and to what degree has decollectivization (a key element in preparing for EU admittance) affected agriculture?  
*Cum a avut loc restituirea terenurilor si in ce masura decolectivizarea (un element cheie in pregatirea pentru integrare) a afectat agricultura?*

6. How have agricultural practices been transformed since 1989 in response to decollectivization (land reform in 1991)?

*Cum au fost transformate metodele de lucru in agricultura dupa 1989 ca raspuns la decolectivizare (reforma agrara din 1991)*

7. Could you explain Romanian government policy toward agriculture? How did it work in this area?

*Puteti explica politica guvernului fata de agricultura? Cum se manifesta aceasta politica in zona in care locuiti?*

8. Describe the patterns of land-use in this zone. Were there significant changes after 1989 in comparison with the communist agriculture's patterns?

*Descrieti practicile folosite din totdeauna de gospodari in utilizarea terenurilor din aceasta zona. Exista schimbari majore dupa 1989 in comparative cu practicile agriculturii comuniste?*

9. Do you think that farmers will benefit better from European or Romanian government funds? If so, describe these benefits.

*Credeti ca fermierii vor beneficia mai mult de finantare de la UE sau de la Guvernul Romaniei? Daca da, descrieti aceste beneficii?*

10. What development initiatives have been taken in agriculture by local government and individual farmers to access the EU's and Romanian government's funds?

*Ce initiative de dezvoltare au fost luate in agricultura de catre guvernul local si de catre fermierii/gospodariile individuale pentru a accesa fondurile UE si ale Guvernului Roman.*

11. What role may have agricultural changes played in the people's decision to emigrate abroad?

*Ce rol au jucat schimbarile din agricultura in decizia oamenilor de a emigra peste hotare?*

12. What impact is registered by the local area from the unprecedented exodus of the rural population abroad for work?

*Ce impact este inregistrat de catre zona locala ca urmare a exodului fara precedent al populatiei rurale peste hotare?*

13. Is there an alternative for stimulating economic growth in your rural zone? If yes, explain.

*Exista o alternative pentru stimularea cresterii economice in zona dumneavoastra rurala? Daca da, va rog sa explicati.*

14. What are the economic costs and benefits of Romanian agriculture in the context of integration and alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy?

*Care sunt costurile economice si beneficiile agriculturii Romanesti in contextual integrarii si alinierii la Politica Comuna Agrara?*

15. Which were the first changes in agriculture perceived by villagers after January 1, 2007, and how did people react to these?

*Care au fost primele schimbari in agricultura simtite de catre tarani dupa 1 Ianuarie 2007 si cum au reactionat oamenii la aceste schimbari?*

**III. What role has the preparation for admittance to the EU played in any post-1989 transformation identified and how have rural people reacted to this?**

*Ce rol a jucat pregatirea pentru integrare in UE in transformarile identificate dupa 1989 si cum au reactionat oamenii la aceste transformari?*

1. Which elements of the post-1989 agricultural transformation are most directly associated with the preparation for admittance into the EU?  
*Care elemente ale transformarii agriculturii de dupa 1989 sunt cele mai asociate cu pregatirea pentru integrare?*
2. To what extent have local transformations been in response to the EU accession process?  
*In ce masura transformarile locale au fost un raspuns la procesul de integrare in UE?*
3. What reactions have been registered by Romanians to new rural transformations?  
*Ce reactii au fost inregistrate de catre Romanii din mediul rural la procesul de integrare in UE?*
4. Could you describe some examples of farmer resistance, if any, to EU agricultural policies?  
*Puteti descrie cateva exemple de rezistenta a fermierilor, daca a existat vreo una, la politicile agricole ale UE?*
5. Despite the difficulties of the transition, did you support Romania's integration into the EU? If so, why?  
*In ciuda dificultatilor percepute in perioada de tranzitie, Dvs, ati sustinut integrarea in UE? Daca da, de ce?*
6. What do you perceive as the differences or gaps between political or elite preferences/interests and local desires?  
*Cum percepeti/simtiti diferenta/prapastia dintre politica or preferintele/interesele elitei si dorintele locale?*
7. What are the practices of and difficulties associated with the harmonizing of traditional and modern agriculture?  
*Care sunt practicile si dificultatile asociate cu armonizarea traditiilor si agricultura moderna?*
8. If self-sustaining agriculture disappears, what future could rural regions have without the current village farms?  
*Daca agricultura de subsistenta/traditionala dispare, ce viitor ar putea avea zonele rurale fara actualele ferme satesti?*

9. Describe the activities of farmers' unions (their goals, how they are shaping adjustment to EU rules).  
*Descrieti activitatea uniunii/asociatiilor fermierilor (telurile, cum materializeaza ele adaptarea satelor la integrare in UE?)*
10. To what degree was Romanian government implicated in agricultural and rural development policy?  
*In ce masura s-a implicat Guvernul Roman in politica agricola si cea de dezvoltare rurala?*
11. The Social Democratic Party is accused of having negotiated Romania's accession into the EU, agriculture especially, "in the knees." Do you agree with this affirmation?  
*Guvernul PSD este acuzat ca a negociat "in genunchi" aderarea Romaniei la UE, in special agricultura. Sunteti de acord cu aceasta afirmatie?*
12. What is Romania's annual contribution for its EU membership? What European funds do you expect the Romanian agriculture to receive after 2007?  
*Care este contributia anuala a Romaniei ca membru UE? Ce fonduri Europene considerati ca vor intra in agricultura Romaniei dupa 2007?*
13. What changes can take place in the future for renegotiating agriculture and rural development?  
*Ce schimbari pot interveni in negocierile de aderare pentru agricultura si dezvoltare rurala in viitor?*
14. We know the EU's preoccupation for keeping and preserving the local traditions and values, and for diversity. How do you explain the recent interdictions against the shepherd's life? What about the possible disappearance of the traditional hybrid grapevine areas? Why do we need to blindly obey some directives which are not in our local identity's favor?  
*Cunoastem preocuparile UE pentru pastrarea si conservarea traditiilor si valorilor locale, a diversitatii. Cum explicati recentele interdictii impotriva ciobanitului? Dar posibila disparitie a traditionalelor vii hibride? De ce trebuie sa ne supunem orbeste unor directive care nu sunt in favoarea identitatii locale?*
15. Do you perceive a significant reevaluation of the environmental issues? What is the people's response in your area?  
*Dvs. simtiti o reevaluare semnificativa a problemelor de mediu? Care este raspunsul/reactia oamenilor din aceasta zona?*
16. What is your opinion about the future of rural Romania as a result of the European integration process?  
*Care este opinia dumneavoastra despre viitorul Romaniei rurale ca rezultat al procesului de integrare Europeana?*

## APPENDIX B

**FIELDWORK ROMANIA: PERSONAL INTERVIEWS, 2007**  
(Selective List)<sup>80</sup>

**I. ELITE: A. National/EU**

1. Chief Negotiator for Romania's accession into the European Union, Bucharest
2. Director-European Integration, General Direction for European Integration, Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, Bucharest
3. Minister's Counsellor, Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reform, Bucharest  
Former Adjunct Minister, Ministry of Justice, Bucharest
4. Counsellor, General Directorate for Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Bucharest
5. Member EESC/European Economic and Social Committee, Brussels, EU  
President, NGO Foundation "Terra Mileniul III," Bucharest
6. Parliamentary Counsellor, Chamber of Deputies, Parliament of Romania, Bucharest
7. Colonel, Head of the Department of Liaison with Public Authorities and NGO's, Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI), Bucharest

**B. Local: Iasi and Bacau Counties**

8. Executive Directors for Agriculture and Rural Development, Bacau and Iasi County
9. Legal Advisor for Agricultural Associations, Iasi County. Former Judicial Executor and Legal Advisor, UJCAP/ County Union of the Agricultural Cooperative, Iasi County
10. Public Notary, Municipality of Iasi
11. Agronomist and Farmer-Proprietor, Agricultural Association, Iasi County  
Former Agronomist, IAS/State Agricultural Enterprise, Iasi County
12. Vice-Mayor, Barnova Comune, Iasi County

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<sup>80</sup> In order to maintain confidentiality, I designated only the status of my interviewees.

13. Chief Environmental Office, Municipality of Onesti's Townhall, Bacau County
14. Silviculturists, Chief Offices, Oituz and Sascut Districts, Bacau County

## **II. NON-ELITE: Iasi, Bacau, Brasov, and Buzau Counties**

### **A. Urban Intellectuals/Office Staff/Workers and Rural Proprietors**

15. Retired mathematics teacher, Onesti and Iasi Municipalities, orchard farm/house proprietor, Barnova Commune, Iasi County
16. Retired Russian teacher, Municipalities of Onesti and Iasi
17. Mathematics teacher, Iasi Municipality, farmer-leaseholder, Barnova Commune, Iasi County
18. Mechanic engineer, Iasi Municipality, farmer-leaseholder, Barnova Commune, Iasi County
19. Geography teacher, Municipality of Onesti, land/house proprietor, Gura Vaii Commune, Bacau County
20. Librarian, "Radu Rosetti" Library, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County
21. Retired builder technician, Municipality of Bacau, former chief builder on the Tutova - Podu Turcului land amelioration site, Bacau County
22. Clerk office, Saving Bank (CEC), Onesti Municipality, Bacau County, land/house proprietor, Negreni Village, Poduri Commune, Bacau County
23. Retired military, land/house proprietor, Poduri Commune, Bacau County (former emigrant to Italy)
24. Cadastre office clerk, Municipality of Onesti's Townhall, Bacau County
25. Agricultural office clerk, Municipality of Onesti's Townhall, Bacau County
26. Builder technician, Municipality of Onesti, land/house proprietor, Livezile Commune, Bacau County
27. Mechanic technician, Municipality of Onesti, land proprietor, Podu Turcului Commune, Bacau County
28. Vendors of agricultural products, farm market, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County (imported vegetables from Matca Commune, Galati County)

**B. Villagers/Farmers**

29. Land/house proprietors, Dumbrava Village, Itesti Commune, Bacau County
30. Former collective tractor operator, Racova Commune, Bacau County
31. Land/house proprietors, Racova Commune, Bacau County
32. Land/house proprietors, Negreni Village, Poduri Commune, Bacau County
33. Land/house proprietors, Poduri Commune, Bacau County  
(some former emigrants to Belgium)
34. Land/house proprietors, Caraclau Village, Barsanesti Commune, Bacau County,  
cream cheese vendors, farm market, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County  
(product from their own farms)
35. Land/house proprietor, Marcesti Village, Caiuti Commune, Bacau County, green cheese  
vendor, farm market, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County (selling for her farm employer)
36. Land/house proprietor, Gura Vaii Commune, Bacau County, cream cheese vendor, farm  
market, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County (product from her own farm)
37. Land/house proprietor, Bogdanesti Commune, Bacau County, customer farm market,  
Municipality of Onesti
38. Vendors of agricultural products, farm market, Municipality of Onesti, Bacau County  
(vegetables from Matca Commune, Galati County and/or from imports)
39. Land/house proprietors and commercial business persons, Viscri Village, Bunesti Commune,  
Brasov County (former emigrants to Italy)
40. Land/house proprietors, Valea Catinii Village, Catina Commune and Balteni Village,  
C.A. Rosetti Commune, Buzau County

## APPENDIX C

**ENGLISH LETTER OF INVITATION AND CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANTS**

Georgeta Stoian Connor  
 Department of Geography  
 University of Georgia  
 Athens, GA 30602  
 U.S.A.

Telephone: 1 (706) 542 -2856 (Main Office)  
 Fax: 1 (706) 542-2388  
 Email: gsconnor@uga.edu

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in a research study titled " *The Rural Dimension of Romania's Integration into the European Union: The Impact of the EU Enlargement on Romanian Agriculture and Rural Areas,*" conducted by Georgeta Stoian Connor from the Department of Geography at the University of Georgia (542-2856) under the direction of Dr. Andrew J. Herod, Department of Geography, University of Georgia (542-2856). I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this study is to understand how Romania's efforts to join the EU are impacting agricultural practices and land-use patterns, together with the response this is engendering.

If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked questions about the state of Romania's agriculture under central planning prior to the 1989 revolution, as well as how local and/or national agriculture has been transformed since 1989. In addition, in accordance with my knowledge, I have to explain how rural people have reacted to the preparation for Romania's admittance into the EU after 1989. The interview will vary in length from thirty minutes to one hour. No discomfort or stress is expected as a result of this study. No risks are foreseen.

The results of my participation in this study will be confidential. If any identifiable information regarding me is used, I will be assigned a pseudonym and my name will not appear in any data for the study or in any results reported. Any information I give to Georgeta Stoian Connor in this study will not be released in any individual identifiable form without my prior consent. One name-pseudonym key and all data will be kept by Georgeta Stoian Connor in a secured, limited access location. Only Georgeta Stoian Connor will have access to the data and the key. My information will be kept until the researcher finishes her dissertation. The benefit for me is that the study may facilitate my own self-reflection upon the processes to which I am being subjected/ are subjecting others.

The researcher, Georgeta Stoian Connor, will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project and can be reached by phone at 1 (706) 542 - 2856 or by email at gsconnor@uga.edu. I understand that I am agreeing by my signature on this form to take part in this research project and understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form for my records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Researcher**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.**

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

**SCRISOARE DE INVITATIE SI CONSIMTAMANT PENTRU PARTICIPANTI**  
(Romanian)

Georgeta Stoian Connor  
Department of Geography  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
U.S.A.

Telephone: 1 (706) 542-2856 (Main Office)  
Fax: 1 (706) 542-2388  
Email: gsconnor@uga.edu

Eu, \_\_\_\_\_, sunt de acord sa particip intr-un program de cercetare intitulat "*Dimensiunea Rurala a Integrarii Romaniei in Uniunea Europeana: Impactul Extinderii Uniunii Europene asupra Agriculturii si Zonelor Rurale Romanesti,*" condusa de Georgeta Stoian Connor de la Facultatea de Geografie a Universitatii Georgia, S.U.A. (706-542-2856) sub indrumarea profesorului universitar Dr. Andrew J. Herod de la Facultatea de Geografie a Universitatii Georgia, S.U.A. (706-542-2856). Inteleg ca participarea mea este voluntara. Eu pot refuza sa particip or pot inceta participarea mea fara sa ofer nici un motiv, si fara repercursiuni. Pot cere sa mi se returneze toata informatia referitoare la mine, cit si aceasta sa fie eliminata din programul de cercetare, sau distrusa.

Scopul acestui studiu este sa intelegem cum eforturile de integrare a Romaniei in UE influenteaza practicile agricole si modul de utilizare a terenurilor, impreuna cu reactia pe care aceasta o genereaza.

Daca sunt de acord sa iau parte la acest studiu, mi se vor pune intrebari despre situatia agriculturii Romaniei din perioada de dinainte de revolutia din 1989, cat si despre cum agricultura locala si/ori nationala s-a transformat incepand din 1989. In plus, in conformitate cu informatia pe care o detin, voi explica cum oamenii de la tara au reactionat la pregatirea pentru integrarea Romaniei in Uniunea Europeana dupa 1989. Timpul pentru interviu va varia intre 30 si 60 de minute. Acest studiu nu va crea nici un fel de neplacere, stres, ori risc.

Rezultatul participarii mele in acest studiu este confidential/secret. Daca vreo informatie obtinuta de la mine va fi folosita, se va utiliza un pseudonym/alt nume iar numele meu nu va aparea in nici o sursa de informare si nici intr-o parte finalizata a acestui studiu. Orice informatie pe care o dau D-nei Georgeta Stoian Connor in acest studiu nu va fi facuta publica intr-o forma usor de identificat fara consimtamantul meu prealabil. Un nume fictiv si toata informatia va fi pastrata de D-na Georgeta Stoian Connor intr-un loc sigur, cu acces limitat. Numai D-na Georgeta Stoian Connor va avea access la informatii si la numele meu real. Informatia obtinuta de la mine va fi pastrata pana cand cercetatorul termina teza de doctorat. Avantajul meu este ca participarea la acest studiu poate incuraja reflectia mea personala asupra procesului la care am fost supus si care afecteaza si pe altii.

Cercetatorul, D-na Georgeta Stoian Connor, va raspunde la orice intrebare suplimentara despre acest studiu, acum sau in timpul pregatirii tezei, si poate fi contactata la telefonul 1 (706) 542-2856 sau prin email la adresa gsconnor@uga.edu. Inteleg ca sunt de acord prin intermediul semnaturii mele pe acest formular sa particip la acest proiect de cercetare si inteleg ca voi primi o copie semnata pentru dosarul meu personal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Numele Cercetatorului**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Semnatura**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Data**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Numele Participantului**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Semnatura**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Data**

**Va rog sa semnati amandoua copiile, una o pastrati si una o dati cercetatorului.**

Intrebari suplimentare sau probleme privind drepturile Dumneavoastra ca participant la acest studiu pot fi adresate Presedintelui Comitetului de Examinare, Centrul de Cercetare pentru Studii Postuniversitare al Universitatii Georgia, 612 Boyd, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411, S.U.A., Telefon (706) 542-3199; E-Mail: IRB@uga.edu

## APPENDIX D

**COVER (INFORMATIONAL) LETTER**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Professor Dr. Andrew J. Herod in the Department of Geography at the University of Georgia, U.S.A. My dissertation research, entitled "*The Rural Dimension of Romania's Integration into the European Union: The Impact of the EU Enlargement on Romanian Agriculture and Rural Areas*," is being conducted under the auspices of the Department of Geography and the Graduate School, the University of Georgia, U.S.A. The purpose of this study is to understand how Romania's efforts to join the EU are shaping agricultural practices and land-use patterns, together with the response this is engendering. The study results should provide insights into the contentious dual processes of transition from a centrally planned to a market economy and of EU enlargement. I write to seek your assistance in that endeavor.

In studying the rural dimension of Romania's integration into the European Union at this time, my goal is to build a base from which to trace the state of Romania's agriculture under central planning prior to the 1989 revolution which ended Communist Party rule in Romania, as well as the integration process post-1989. In this light, I am conducting a study of the Romanian and the EU perspectives and policy preferences regarding one of the most challenging issues facing Romania's integration, i.e., agriculture and rural development.

In pursuit of such understanding, I am asking for your cooperation. Specifically, I ask that you to take a few moments of your valuable time to share with me your views on Romanian integration, agriculture and rural development by answering several questions. Your thoughtful and candid answers are essential for my study. They will, of course, be kept completely confidential.

As the principal investigator, I will be in Romania during May 15 and June 30, 2007. Should your time permit, I would very much appreciate the opportunity of discussing these issues with you. If you would be willing to have such an interview, please so indicate your decision through an email [gsconnor@uga.edu], and I will be in touch with you or your office to arrange a specific time.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me 1 (706) 542-2856 (Geography Department / Main Office), or Dr. A. Herod at 1 (706) 542-2856 (Main Office) or direct at 1 (706) 542-2366, or send an e-mail to gsconnor@uga.edu or to aherod@uga.edu. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 612 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; telephone 1 (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Georgeta Stoian Connor  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Department of Geography  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA, U.S.A.  
Phone: 1 (706) 542-2856  
E-mail: gsconnor@uga.edu

Athens, May 1, 2007

**SCRISOARE DE INTENTIE**  
(Romanian)

Stimate \_\_\_\_\_:

Sunt doctorand sub îndrumarea profesorului universitar Dr. Andrew J. Herod de la Facultatea de Geografie a Universitatii Georgia, Statele Unite ale Americii. Teza mea de doctorat, intitulata "*Dimensiunea Rurala a Integrării Romaniei in Uniunea Europeana: Impactul Extinderii Uniunii Europene asupra Agriculturii si Zonelor Rurale Romanesti,*" este condusa sub auspiciile Facultatii de Geografie si a Centrului de Studii Postuniversitare de la Universitatea Georgia, S.U.A. Scopul acestui studiu este sa intelegem cum eforturile de integrare a Romaniei in UE influenteaza practicile agricole si modul de utilizare a terenurilor, impreuna cu reactia pe care aceasta o genereaza. Rezultatele studiului vor putea oferi o mai buna cunoastere a controversatului dublu proces de tranzitie de la economia socialista centralizata la economia de piata si de extindere a Uniunii Europene. Va scriu pentru a cere ajutorul dumneavoastra in aceasta stradanie.

Studiind dimensiunea rurala a integrării Romaniei in Uniunea Europeana in aceasta perioada, scopul meu este sa creez o baza de la care sa urmaresc situatia agriculturii Romaniei in timpul planificării centralizate de dinainte de revolutia din 1989 care a pus capat guvernării Partidului Comunist in Romania, cat si procesul de integrare de dupa 1989. In aceasta lumina, conduc un studiu privind perspectivele si prioritatile politice Romanesti si ale UE privind unul din cele mai provocatoare probleme cu care se confrunta integrarea Romaniei, adica agricultura si dezvoltarea rurala.

In cautarea unei astfel de intelegeri, asi avea nevoie de cooperarea dumneavoastra. In mod special, va rog sa-mi acordati cateva momente din timpul dumneavoastra valoros sa impartasiti punctul dumneavoastra de vedere referitor la integrarea Romaniei, agricultura si dezvoltare rurala, raspunzand la cateva intrebari. Raspunsurile dumneavoastra profunde si impartiale sunt esentiale pentru studiul meu. Ele, desigur, vor fi tinute confidential in totalitate.

Ca cercetator principal, voi fi in Romania in perioada 15 Mai -30 Iunie 2007. Daca timpul va permite, asi aprecia foarte mult posibilitatea de a discuta cu dumneavoastra aceste probleme. Daca veti binevoi sa-mi acordati un astfel de interviu, va rog sa indicati decizia dumneavoastra printr-un email [gsconnor@uga.edu], si eu voi fi in legatura cu dumneavoastra sau cu secretara pentru a stabili data si ora exacta.

Daca aveti intrebari referitoare la acest proiect de cercetare, ma puteti contacta la telefoanele 1 (706) 542-2856 (la Facultatea de Geografie/secretariat), ori il contactati pe Dr. Andrew Herod la numerele de telefon 1 (706) 542-2856 (secretariat) ori direct la 1 (706) 542-2366, ori trimiteti un email la adresa gsconnor@uga.edu ori la aherod@uga.edu.

Intrebari sau preocupari despre drepturile dumneavoastra ca participant la aceasta cercetare pot fi adresate Presedintelui Comitetului de Examinare, Centrul de Cercetare pentru Studii Postuniversitare al Universitatii Georgia, 612 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411, S.U.A., Telefon 1 (706) 542-3199; e-mail: irb@uga.edu.

Va multumesc anticipat pentru timpul dumneavoastra si consideratie.

Cu deosebita stima,

Drd. Georgeta Stoian Connor  
Facultatea de Geografie  
Universitatea Georgia  
Athens, GA, U.S.A.  
Tel: 1 (706) 542-2856  
E-mail: gsconnor@uga.edu

Athens, 1 Mai 2007

## APPENDIX E

## CODING: OUTCOME MATRIX

THEMES	CATEGORIES	SUBCATEGORIES / ISSUES
<b>Life Under Collectivization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communist dictatorship</li> <li>- the 1945 Land Reform</li> <li>- Stalinism</li> <li>- collectivization</li> <li>- de-Stalinization</li> <li>- farm structure</li> <li>- land use</li> <li>- agricultural production</li> <li>- industrial development</li> <li>- central planning</li> <li>- neo-Stalinism (Golden Age)</li> <li>- rural systematization</li> <li>- international movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the shift from a “duality of power” (monarchy and communists) to the “popular democratic” regime</li> <li>- deeper fragmentation of land</li> <li>- landowners as a class disappeared</li> <li>- Soviet military occupation and economic exploitation</li> <li>- the shift from private to collectives</li> <li>- expropriation, confiscation, and transference to the state of the farmers’ properties</li> <li>- liquidation of the prosperous farmers</li> <li>- tremendous resistance of the peasantry and other resistance groups</li> <li>- mass deportation, labor camps, and resistance trials</li> <li>- “voluntary” removal of the Soviet armies from Romania and “de-Russification”</li> <li>- state, collective, and private farms</li> <li>- imposed by the Communist Party</li> <li>- production differences: between socialist and private farms</li> <li>- rural-urban exodus, villages aging</li> <li>- dramatic lack of rural work force</li> <li>- absolute centralization: significant gap between central planning goals and agricultural achievements</li> <li>- massive export of food and desperate food shortages</li> <li>- aberrant rationing program (food, energy, media)</li> <li>- alarming ethnic emigration abroad</li> <li>- destruction of thousands of villages and traditional rural identity</li> <li>- <i>Operation Villages Roumains</i>: international campaign for rural protection</li> </ul>

<p><b>Decollectivization and Restoration of Rural Property</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- legislating decollectivization (post-communist land reforms)</li> <li>- property restitution</li> <li>- rural privatization and farm restructuring</li> <li>- environmental legislation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- accentuated land fragmentation</li> <li>- subsistence agriculture</li> <li>- lack of mechanization</li> <li>- slow; absence of complete cadastral information</li> <li>- destruction of the former CAPs and/or the irrigation system</li> <li>- conversion of the collective and state farms into private ones</li> <li>- collective farming (associations)</li> <li>- significant conflicts for land</li> <li>- innumerable litigations</li> <li>- CEECs: some general patterns, but many differences as well</li> <li>- massive deforestation</li> <li>- environment degradation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Agricultural Alignment to the Common Agricultural Policy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- agricultural negotiations</li> <li>- serious concerns</li> <li>- funding programs</li> <li>- structural transformation</li> <li>- agricultural patterns</li> <li>- CAP requirements</li> <li>- agricultural production</li> <li>- market accessibility</li> <li>- rural labor unions</li> <li>- agricultural and rural development policies</li> <li>- public opinion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- negotiating unrealistic quotas</li> <li>- compromises in implementing the <i>acquis</i></li> <li>- incapacity to absorb EU funds</li> <li>- functional paying agencies</li> <li>- integrated administration and control system/tax system</li> <li>- cases of project irregularities</li> <li>- moderate state intervention</li> <li>- villages serving as a social buffer</li> <li>- adjusted by the owners' needs and the market</li> <li>- heavy dependence on farming</li> <li>- ignoring the characteristics of the CEECs' agriculture</li> <li>- excessive changes in rural/farm traditions</li> <li>- fear of re-collectivization</li> <li>- exorbitant crop production cost</li> <li>- sharp decline of livestock</li> <li>- massive imports of food</li> <li>- border picketing, street protests</li> <li>- delay in elaboration of a cohesive approach to rural development</li> <li>- rural infrastructure problems</li> <li>- exclusive elite decision-making (no referendum)</li> <li>- uninformed rural population</li> </ul>

<b>OTHER THEMES</b> (not labeled)	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>SUBCATEGORIES / ISSUES</b>
<b>Pre-Communist Agricultural Question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- traditional communal villages</li> <li>- serfdom</li>   <li>- Phanariote regime</li>   <li>- “no man’s land” policy</li> <li>- Organic Statutes</li>   <li>-the 1864 Land Reform</li>   <li>- World War One</li>   <li>- the 1921 Land Reform</li>   <li>- economic crisis</li> <li>- World War Two</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- barbarian migrations: the land fell prey to alien invaders</li> <li>- the status of the most Romanian peasants in feudalism</li> <li>- feudal exploitation of the villagers increased under the Turks</li> <li>- unlimited boyars’ power</li> <li>- made the landlord the owner of all the lands of the village</li> <li>- marked the high tide of rural feudalism (exploitation)</li> <li>- legal abolition of feudalism</li> <li>- enriched the landlords</li> <li>- “neoserfdom”: extreme peasants’ impoverishment</li> <li>- frequent peasant risings</li> <li>- severe farming difficulties</li> <li>- dramatic shortage of food</li> <li>- dominant small family farms</li> <li>- persistence of landless peasants</li> <li>- land abandonment/rural poverty</li> <li>- agriculture drastically declined</li> </ul>
<b>Transition and Challenges of Integration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transition (from a centrally planned economy to a market economy)</li>   <li>- the Commissions’ Monitoring Reports</li> <li>- <i>acquis</i> implementation</li>   <li>- Romania’s accession and integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- long transition / gradual therapy</li> <li>- substantial involvement of the state</li> <li>- slow and uncertain political and economic reforms</li> <li>- inflation and corruption</li> <li>- industrial disintegration</li> <li>- urban-rural migration</li> <li>- lack of foreign investment</li> <li>- paucity of employment</li> <li>- land abandonment</li> <li>- rural migration abroad for work</li> <li>- lack of a functioning market economy (prior to 2005)</li> <li>- slow alignment with the <i>acquis</i></li> <li>- areas of progress (since 2005): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* property restitution</li> <li>* financial discipline</li> <li>* restructuring of key sectors</li> </ul> </li> <li>- failure of the 2004 EU accession</li> <li>- EU accession: January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 (safeguard clauses)</li> <li>- three years EU membership</li> </ul>

<p><b>Eastern Enlargement of the EU</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Europe Agreements</li> <li>- grand-scale enlargement</li> <li>- structural net recipients</li> <li>- the fifth enlargement</li> <li>- future enlargement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a new form of association agreements</li> <li>- a way for strengthening the EU relations with the CEECs</li> <li>- AAs denied the CEECs the right to participate in EU decision making</li> <li>- considering twelve new prospective member states</li> <li>- CEECs: 44% of the EU productive land</li> <li>- threatening to create high costs for the poorer, less developed, and more agricultural members</li> <li>- belief that the CEECs could receive more money from the EU budget than their contribution</li> <li>- significant differences in their agricultural development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Poland: non-collectivized agriculture and small subsistence farms</li> <li>* Poland: a weaker agriculture; required around half of the accession cost of the Visegrad countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- two waves of accession: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 (EU-25): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- eight former communist countries: Czech Rep., Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia</li> <li>- two non-communist countries: Cyprus and Malta</li> </ul> </li> <li>* January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 (EU-27): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- two former communist countries: Bulgaria and Romania</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- candidate countries: Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey</li> <li>- potential candidates: Serbia, other Balkan countries, and Iceland</li> <li>- countries contemplating later integration: Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia</li> </ul>
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## APPENDIX F

**CONTENTS OF ACQUIS COMMUNAUTAIRE**

- Chapters:
1. Free Movement of Goods
  2. Free Movement of Persons
  3. Freedom to Provide Services
  4. Free Movement of Capital
  5. Company Law
  6. Competition Policy
  7. Agriculture
  8. Fisheries
  9. Transport
  10. Taxation
  11. Economic and Monetary Union
  12. Statistics
  13. Social Policy / Employment
  14. Energy
  15. Industrial Policy
  16. Small and Medium-Sized Undertakings
  17. Science and Research
  18. Education, Vocational Training and Youth
  19. Telecommunications and Information Technologies
  20. Culture and Audio-Visual Policy
  21. Regional Policy / Structural Instruments
  22. Environment
  23. Consumers and Health Protection
  24. Cooperation in Justice and Home Affairs
  25. Custom Union
  26. External Relations
  27. Common Foreign and Security Policy
  28. Financial Control
  29. Financial and Budgetary Provisions
  30. Institutions
  31. Others

Source: Piazzolo, 2001; <http://europa.eu.int/>, 2004

## APPENDIX G

## STAGES OF ROMANIAN ACCESSION NEGOTIATION TO EU

Presidency of the EU Council	Romania	
	Opened Chapters	Provisionally Closed Chapters
The <b>Portuguese</b> Presidency (sem.I/2000)	Ch.16: Small and Medium Enterprises Ch.17: Science and Research Ch.18: Education and Training Ch.26: External Relations Ch.27: Foreign and Security Policy	Ch.16: Small and Medium Enterprises Ch.17: Science and Research Ch.18: Education and Training Ch.26: External Relations Ch.27: Foreign and Security Policy
Total Presidency	5	5
Total General	5	5
The <b>French</b> Presidency (sem.II/2000)	Ch.6: Competition Ch.12: Statistics Ch.19: Telecommunication and Information Technology Ch.20: Culture and Audio-Visual	Ch.12: Statistics
Total Presidency	4	1
Total General	9	6
The <b>Swedish</b> Presidency (sem.I/2001)	Ch.4: Free Movement of Capital Ch.5: Company Law Ch.8: Fisheries Ch.9: Transports Ch.25: Customs Union	Ch.8: Fisheries
Total Presidency	5	1
Total General	14	7
The <b>Belgian</b> Presidency (sem.II/2001)	Ch.10: Taxation Ch.13: Social Policy and Employment Ch.23: Consumers and Health Protection	Ch.5: Company Law Ch.23: Consumers and Health Protection
Total Presidency	3	2
Total General	17	9
The <b>Spanish</b> Presidency (sem.I/2002)	Ch.1: Free Movement of Goods Ch.2: : Free Movement of Persons Ch.11: Economic and Monetary Union Ch.14: Energy Ch.21: Regional Policy Ch.22: Environment Ch.24: Justice and Home Affairs Ch.28: Financial Control Ch.30: Institutions	Ch.13: Social Policy and Employment Ch.11: Economic and Monetary Union Ch.30: Institutions
Total Presidency	9	3
Total General	26	12

<b>Presidency of the EU Council</b>	<b>Romania</b>	
	<b>Opened Chapters</b>	<b>Provisionally Closed Chapters</b>
<b>The Danish</b> Presidency (sem.II/2002)	Ch.15: Industrial Policy Ch.7: Agriculture Ch.3: Free Movement of Services Ch.29: Financial and Budgetary Provisions	Ch.15: Industrial Policy Ch.19: Telecommunication and Information Technology Ch.20: Culture and Audio-Visual Policy Ch.25: Customs Union
Total Presidency	4	4
Total General	30	16
<b>The Greek</b> Presidency (sem.I/2003)		Ch.1: Free Movement of Goods Ch.4: Free Movement of Capital Ch.10: Taxation
Total Presidency	-	3
Total General	30	19
<b>The Italian</b> Presidency (sem.II/2003)		Ch.2: : Free Movement of Persons Ch.9: Transport Policy Ch.28: Financial Control
Total Presidency	-	3
Total General	30	22
<b>The Irish</b> Presidency (sem.I/2004)		Ch.7: Agriculture Ch.29: Financial and Budgetary Provisions Ch.14: Energy
Total Presidency	-	3
Total General	30	25
<b>The Dutch</b> Presidency (sem.II/2004)		Ch.3: Free Movement of Services Ch.6: Competition Ch.21: Regional Policy Ch.22: Environment Ch.24: Justice and Home Affairs Ch.32: Others
Total Presidency		6
Total General		31

Source: Puscas, V. 2006. European Negotiations. A Case Study: Romanian Accession to the European Union. International University Institute for European Studies (IUIES) and Institute of International Sociology, Gorizia (ISIG. Stampa: Grafica Goriziana. Gorizia, Italy.