

LAND REFORM AND COLLECTIVISATION OF AGRICULTURE - CASE STUDY ROMANIA AND OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

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Abstract

Trough the conducted researches and studies during the present paper we have tried to highlight the modalities how the communist regimes in central and eastern Europe have confiscated, after World War II, the properties of their rural population. After a conducted survey we reached the conclusion that in most of the communist countries the socialist transformation of the agriculture followed the soviet model and generated great sufference to rural population. From this study we can affirm that the results expected by communist authorythies were not achived neither by attracting sustainers to communist propaganda nor by obtaining much higher crops than before.

Keywords: Land reform, collectivisation, communist agriculture, agrarian reform, rural properties.

The abusive takeover of properties is an action made by the communist regime in Romania during the period it was located in the leading position, namely since March 6, 1945, to December 22, 1989. During this entire period, Romania was led by the unique party, Romanian Communist Party.

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The model applied, generally similar for all the countries located after the World War 2 on the eastern part of the "iron curtain"¹, was of soviet origin and had been tested successfully on many of the peoples that already made the soviet republics, The soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine being the most significant example in this respect.

Communism represented a form of totalitarian regime. For creating the concept of communism, it was wanted to achieve a political and economic equality. Marx-Engel's ideology aimed to transform the capitalist society in a socialist one, this representing the first stage of communism. It has to be mentioned also that the communist regime is considered a proletarian dictatorship due to the propaganda made, which wanted to capture the workers' attention.² ,as the social class that has been previously always disfavoured.

The main goals of Stalinizing were the transformation of the economy from private in one of the state, the industrial concentration in state's hands as well as the collectivization of agricultural fields.

After the model previously applied in the Soviet Union the collectivization consisted in confiscation of agricultural private properties followed by their joining in agricultural farms administered by the state. "The right of private property on land is canceled forever; the land may not be sold, nor bought or given in lease or mortgaged or given away in any other manner."³

Practically the collectivization meant the confiscation of the majority of private agricultural properties, these becoming good of people. In Romania, as in the other countries newly became communist, the process of collectivization took place in the second half of 40's until the first half of 60's and it aimed to the transform the agrarian economy by means of socialist turn in cooperatives of the agriculture. It was aimed to turn the capitalist agriculture in a socialist one, but this process was sinuous and many times doubled by a repressive politicss.

¹ Ioan Scurtu, *Totalitarismul de dreapta în România. Origini, manifestări evoluție 1919-1927*, Bucuresti: Institutul National pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 1996, p. 203.

² *Ibidem*.

³ Vladimir Ilici Lenin, *Decree over the Land* in *Pravda* no. 171 on November 10, 1917, p.41

During 1949-1953 was the first wave of the collectivization process in Romania, stage characterized by contradictory politic directives, following forced progresses and dramatic withdrawals. During this period five distinct stages may be individualized: the first is the period March 1949 – February 1950, the second stage of the collectivization is February 1950 – June 1950, the third is June 15, 1950 – September 1950, October 1950 – January 1952 being the fourth stage and finally the stage in the period January 1952 – April 1953.

Firstly, for the clarity of the changes made at the beginning of the collectivization process, we must analyze the situation of the agriculture and agricultural property in Romania during the period previous to the collectivization. Regarding the right of ownership, Romanian Civil Code in 1864 stipulated: *“The property is the right someone has to enjoy and dispose of a thing exclusively and absolutely, but within the limits imposed by the law”*⁴. There were so distinguished the following elements of the right of property: the right to use, the right to enjoy the life interest, the right to dispose; the most important of all of these being the right to dispose. Private property was characterized by the fact that it could belong to the civil circuit, so it could be administrative, obtained, kept or given away by means of legal acts. In exchange, the property of the public domain could be given away only in the circuit of public domain, meaning that it was practically inalienable.

On national level, the progress of the process of collectivization is preceded by several stages, from which we mention two more important: the Agrarian Reform in 1945⁵ and the Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers’ Party on March 3-5, 1949.

Among the first projects of the communists after they gained the power, was the agrarian reform. Romania was the first non-soviet country in which an agrarian reform was ordered, this being implemented by the Act 187 on March 23, 1945. The Romanian Communist Party was being sustained from Moscow to promote a law that changed so radically the

⁴ Codul Civil decretat la 26 noiembrie 1864, promulgat la 4 decembrie 1864 si pus in aplicare la 1 decembrie 1865

⁵ Legea nr. 187 pentru înfăptuirea reformei agrare din 23 martie 1945, M.Of. nr. 68 bis.

system of the right of agricultural property. Then, it was created the organization Frontul Plugarilor [plowmen's front] through which it was achieved the extension of socialist structures in villages. But the Party still needed men in order to sustain the "reform", a work of persuading the rural population being needed to apply this measure. So the propaganda of the party mentioned the "destruction of the land owners class"⁶ as a manner to free the country from the "Nazi -fascist yoke", in order to increase the number of its sustainers. So it was promised to give the peasants in property, the land confiscated from the landlords firstly. But the goal of the communist party was to obtain the whole land without previously giving compensation. Besides that, it was wanted to confiscate the animals and agricultural tools from the houses and after that it was promised to give in property to the "working peasantry".⁷

All these measures were due to the situation of the peasantry after the World War 2. Owing to the fact that a significant number of peasants had been sacrificed on the front during the war, several land owners owned properties over 500 hectares and the family of ordinary peasants owned less than 5 hectares.⁸ This situation created the background favorable to the communist propaganda and it had to be solved taking into account the fact that peasants must work "boyars" lands, most times without being compensated. In this context, the only one who had the power to change the situation of the peasantry was the Romanian Communist Party.

Regarding the apparent goal of this reform, it has been declared as the increase of arable land of peasant houses that was formed by less than 5 hectares of land. Briefly, the proclaimed goal of the law was to radically transform the agriculture and to give property to the peasantry without land or with little land in Romania, action based on the expropriation of some categories of owners (generally landlords and not only). Although, the real goal of the reform was a veiled one, more specifically a political

⁶ Dumitru Șandru, *Reforma agrară din 1945 în România*, București: Institutul național pentru studiul totalitarismului, 2000, p. 63.

⁷ Joan Sokolovsky, *Peasants and Power. State Autonomy and the Collectivization of Agriculture in Eastern Europe*, San Francisco : Westview Press, 1990.p. 2.

⁸ *Legea nr. 187 din 23 martie 1945 pentru înfăptuirea reformei agrare*, publicată în Monitorul Oficial nr. 68/23 martie 1945

one. The real desire of communist authorities was to attract on government's side the rural population, which represented around 80-85% of the total of population. So practically the expropriation of landlords was done not in peasantry's interest but in the interest of the state. The apparent sustaining of the peasantry had as purpose to obtain a larger number of supporters of the Romanian Communist Party.

Agrarian law was issued in the Official Gazette on March 23, 1945 and became valid on the same date. Art 1 of the Act fixed clearly the principle of private property: *"Romania's agriculture will lean on strong, healthy and productive households, which are the private property of those who master them"*⁹. The lands targeted by this Act were stipulated in art 3 of the act, it including an exhaustive enumeration of the categories of land targeted, among which: lands and agrarian properties of any kind belonging to German citizens and to Romanian citizen, natural or legal persons of German nationality who collaborated with Hitler's Germany; the lands and other properties of war criminals and those guilty for the disaster of the country, and letter h of the same article 3 mentioned also *"The excess of agrarian lands constituting properties of natural persons that overpass the surface of 50 ha namely: arable land, orchards, grasslands, ponds and artificial ponds, either they serve or not for fishing, swamps and flooded lands."*¹⁰ Exceptions of the expropriations were included in article 8 of Act no 187. So there were excluded from the expropriation: *"existing rice fields, agrarian goods belonging to monasteries, parishes, church settlements, goods of Crown Domains, of hospitals, as well as those of Romanian Academy, House of Schools and other cultural settlements of communal and cooperatives as well as grasslands and pastures belonging to localities and generally all goods belonging to the state"*.¹¹

Relevant provisions are contained in the Rules of the Act for implementing the agrarian reform no. 187 in the year 1945. In this rule are fixed in details all problems of decree-law no 187. So, it is stipulated in the rules of the necessity to apply urgently the law regarding agrarian reform, this

⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰ *Ibidem.*

¹¹ *Ibidem.*

application being counseled and controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains.

As it can be seen in the text of the Rules, this reform pointed firstly against the members of the German community in Romania and only secondly against the landlords (those who had the private property of more than 50 ha). The law-maker considered that German citizens and Romanian citizens of German nationality were the main culpable for the “disaster” in which Romania was in that period (in the collaboration with the Reich) these all being assimilated to the collaborationists with Hitler’s system. But although there were targeted mainly German ethnic communities from Romania, the effect of the reform affected also the landlords, even of Romanian citizenship, those who owned more than 50 ha of land, they being also expropriated and their lands divided in small pieces and given in property to the peasants who had little or even not at all land.

In order to put in application of the agrarian reform, there were founded special organisms stipulated in the law regarding the reform. So, at the level of the communes were founded the first committees of plowmen and committees for giving in property, followed by regional committees. On the county level, the activity was coordinated by County commissions for guiding in the agrarian reform. These regional organisms had the task of guiding local committees for a better implementation of the law.

Also by the Ministry Decision number 850 on April 18, 1945 was founded another organ of the state who had the obligation to apply the law of agrarian reform, namely the Central Commission regarding the agrarian reform.

Regarding the procedure of applying the agrarian reform, two distinct processes were going to take place: one of expropriation and the other for giving property. In the case of expropriation we may actually discuss about a confiscation because, as we have said, those from which the lands were confiscated were not compensated, fact that led to the violation of the fundamental right of property and it was in contradiction to the stipulation of the Constitution valid on the date.

Regarding the giving in property, article 12 of the law stipulates that the soldiers concentrated or under arms and all who fought against Hitler's Germany have propriety. It is interesting that although it was not given compensation for the "expropriated" lands, those who received property were obliged to pay an amount for the lands received.

At the end of the law there are specified certain conditions to exercise the right of property by the new owners. So, according to article 20 from the previously mentioned Act, *"Households created on the basis of the present decree-law, cannot be divided, sold or given for lease, mortgaged neither in whole nor partially."*¹² So the new households could be alienated only under certain conditions with the visa of the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains.

The apparent reason for which the law of agrarian reform forbade the selling of the lands received by the new owners was to avoid its division in small parts, but we consider that this condition was in fact imposed by the state in order to have the control over the rural population in view of the collectivization that was about to come.

An important problem occurred was that a significant number of peasants received properties before the Act regarding the agrarian reform became valid, so we may say that the application of the law for agrarian reform produced negative effects even before it became valid. But the immediate effect was the case that people who had no right became owners, and some people who actually were entitled to receive property remained without this right.

The application of the agrarian reform was even from the beginning a process full of difficulties, which in some cases encountered obstacles. Opposition exercised by the class of landlords significantly contributed to slow and in some cases to stop the process. Although, during the period August 1953 – December 1955 the interests of the communist party on the case won by the foundation, on soviet model, of the kolkhoznik, some collective associations, fact that led to the enlargement of state segment in agriculture and indirectly and the most of times forced, offered and impulse for the working peasantry in sustaining the communist ideology.

¹² *Ibidem.*

During the period Act no. 287 regarding agrarian reform was applied, a series of adjacent laws were elaborated, the most important being Act 203 on July 18, 1947 regarding the juridical system of agricultural buildings from the period of the reform. The law regulated the circuit of the goods received by the peasants on the basis of the law regarding the agrarian reform. The purpose of the law-makers by creating this law was to gain the control over the lands that were provided in property to the peasants.

In this line of thinking, the law established that these lands cannot be sold without a previous authorization or without observing the right of preemption of the state. Of course that the law stipulated also some exceptions from the authorization to alienate between direct relatives up to third degree included, as well as between collaterals up to third degree included, but on the condition that the owner does not have any direct descendants. Attribution to issue the authorizations needed for the possibility of alienating the buildings stipulated by the law in discussion belonged to the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains, the law letting to its appreciation the opportunity of authorization.

Regarding the second condition imposed by the law concerning the legal regime of the buildings given in property based on the law of agrarian reform, that of the right of preemption of the state regarding these goods, it must be said that this right of preemption of the state refers to the possibility of the state to be preferred before any other person in the acquisition of an agricultural building. Article 12 within Act no 203 stipulated the right of preemption of the state over the agrarian buildings, so the alienation of those buildings could be done only with the condition of observing the right of preemption of the state, which will be exercised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains. Documents of alienation made without observing the stipulations of the law were considered null.

In conclusion, as it can be remarked from the stipulations of Act 203/1946, the legal system of agrarian buildings was a distinctive one. The State, by apparently legal means, tried to control Romanian agriculture and peasantry. We consider that the stipulations of Act 203/1947 were unconstitutional because they limited the rights of natural persons who owned agricultural lands or who wanted to have agrarian buildings to freely dispose of their properties. Regarding the situation of consequences

produced by the application of the communist agrarian reform both on agriculture and on population, are relevant the following aspects: consequently to the application of the law regarding the agrarian reform 1,464,000 ha of lands were confiscated from the landlords, which from only 110,000 ha were given to the working peasants.¹³The rest of the land taken over was in state's property, fact that resulted in the Romanian Communist Party obtaining the control over the agriculture.

Concerning the class of landlords, the result of the reform was the expected one, more exactly the destruction of this social class. But in the case of the peasantry, despite of all those expressed by the Party, the reform was not favorable to this category. The Party sustained that by the agrarian reform the peasantry would be sustained for the re-organization and increase of the production; in exchange it was found out that the production diminished instead of increasing, especially for wheat and corn.

The reform was neither favorable for the class of workers in agriculture; these passed from the state of dependence to landlords to the situation in which they depended on the state in order to be able to labor.

We conclude that the consequences of the reform were disastrous, one of the main causes being that those who received properties, in their great majority, were sympathizers or even members of the Communist Party.

The agrarian reform became a politic weapon since 1949, fact that led to the distribution of small pieces of the agrarian property and finally to reduced productivity. The effects of giving property in the case of peasants were annihilated by the beginning of the collectivization process in 1949.

More, by applying some methods, other than those stipulated expressly in the laws of agrarian reform, the state continued to monopolize numerous agrarian properties. All these due to the fact that different pretexts were found to confiscate land properties from the peasants. Those who received the property based on the law regarding the agrarian reform were subject to confiscation by invoking for instance the fact that the conditions for

¹³ Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică, vol I, 1949-1953*, București: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2000, p.18

cultivation were not fulfilled. So there were adopted different measures that led to the expropriation in stages, but systematic, of the properties.

The collectivization was a complex and also costly process and also an important action in the process of development of communism in Romania.¹⁴

Having legal control after November 1946, the communist government started at the level of the whole country a campaign to transform the economy. This transformation was going to be done by putting under state control different economic and production sectors, the agriculture representing a priority.

On June 26, 1947 it was adopted the Act for the legal regime of agricultural products, this being approved by the Council of Ministries. The present law came to complete the law regarding the circulation of agrarian goods, the result being that it limited even more the development of the private property. In 1948 the communist government established a manner to oblige the peasants to give to the state a part of the agricultural production. So, by the Decree of the Great National Assembly in July 1948, it was established a quantum that had to be given to the state. This decree regulated the system of mandatory quotas from the production of cereals.

It was also pointed out a repressive plan, by getting legal the fight against the actions of resistance. It was targeted so to eliminate the obstacles in the process of collectivization.¹⁵

The process of collectivization was formed by three greater stages.

A first stage is that between the years of 1949 – 1953, stage in which violence was used to implement collectivization. A second stage, between the years 1953 – 1956 is characterized by the reduction of taxes for peasant households. And finally the third stage -1957 – 1962 in which were used again violent means in the process of collectivization.

¹⁴ Daniel Lățeș, *Revolution in Bits and Pieces: Collectivization in Southern Romania*, Budapest: CEU Press, 2009, p. 55.

¹⁵ David Mitrany, *The Land and the Peasant in Romania*, Michigan: University of Michigan Library, 2005, p. 486.

If we get to make a comparative analysis of the collectivization process, we remark that this was longer in Romania compared to other communist countries in Europe. In Romania the collectivization took 13 years, the process of collectivization of agricultural lands was slow and gradual; this started in 1945, was temporarily abandoned in the year 1952, continued in the year 1958 and it was considered fully completed in the year 1962.¹⁶

The model of collectivization was deployed after the soviet one. Marx's and Lenin's theory followed the dissolution of the property and the transformation of the society to the existence of a sole social class, the proletariat. The tactics regarding the collectivization in the countries where the communist parties climbed to the power, had as a model the strategy followed in the process of collectivization in USSR. So, the agrarian reforms that took place in the year 1945 in the majority of these states were inspired by the Decree on the land, issued on November 8, 1917 in Moscow. All these reforms, as it was that in our country, had in view to attract the peasantry on the communists' side and to eliminate the great landlords in agriculture "kiabours", seen as politic enemies.

Regarding the institutional system used, here also we can see the resemblance with the soviet one: foundation of collective farms (Agricultural Collective Households or *kolkhoz* soviet alternative), state farms (Agricultural State Households), Stations for Machineries and Tractors).

On the background of the division in small pieces of the small properties and agricultural crisis that took place during the war, communist leaders considered that very small lots of agricultural land could not be subjected to a modernization process, the solution being the exploit of as large as possible surfaces of land. So the only way in which it was possible to reach to a modernization of agriculture, consisted of their gathering together and the administration by the state of the lands. As consequence, in February 1948 it was already recommended cooperation as mean of ameliorating the economic situation.

¹⁶ Constantin Degeratu, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii. Modelul sovietic: Drumul belșugului*, in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, nr. 3/1994, pp. 54-57.

During March 3 – 5, 1949, the Plenary of the Central Committee of Romanian Working Party gives the signal of the socialist transformation of the agriculture and there are two directions of progress of the entire process; organization of collectivist structures: State and Collective Households, Stations of Machineries and Tractors, and *the intensification of the class fight in villages*.¹⁷ The Plenary on March 3 -5, 1949 of the Central Committee of the Romanian Workers' Party will mark a radical turn in the agrarian politics, deciding the pass to the "*socialist transformation of the agriculture*"¹⁸, in other words to the creation of collective agricultural households.¹⁹ But we have to mention that creating the collective households in fact cancelled the agrarian reform from 1945.

The process of collectivization had an extremely violent start. The procedure was launched by adopting the Decree no 83 on March 2, 1949, based on which properties larger than 50 ha were expropriated. This decree became valid and was implemented in the spot. The owners of lands were taken during the night from their houses and transported in other localities, where they were illegally forced to stay, their properties going to be confiscated entirely and transformed in headquarters of collective households.

So, as it may be seen, the first great stage of the collectivization was that in which it was adopted by the Act regarding the agrarian reform. So, by the use of propaganda to offer equality of rights to the peasantry, the communist party managed to apply this law with a certain facility.

In the second stage, by enforcing the law of agrarian reform, Romanian landlords were liquidated. So, as we previously mentioned, the landlords who owned a land larger than 50 ha were expropriated.

¹⁷ Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Represiunea., Vol. I, 1949 – 1953*, București: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2004, p. 11.

¹⁸ Dobrin Dobrinu, Constantin Iordachi, *Țărănimea și puterea. Procesul de colecttivizare a agriculturii în România*, Iași: Polirom, 2005, p. 78.

¹⁹ George Armstrong, *The Soviet Law Property. The Right to Control Property and the Construction of Communism*, Boston: Kluwer Boston, 1983, p. 59

The third stage represents the final of collectivization, when in 1962 the right of individual property was cancelled almost completely and the right to succession was abolished. It is a need to specify that the process of collectivization produced its effect over all peasants and not only over a category of persons, as it happened in the case of nationalization.

Further on, on a chronological line, another normative act with essential effect within the collectivization process in Romania is the decision regarding agrarian joints, adopted within a meeting of the Council of Ministries on January 18, 1952.²⁰

Consequently to the Plenary of the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party on March 3-5, 1949 it was passed to the accelerated collectivization of agriculture on the soviet model. So there were constituted beside the households the agrarian joints. At first they were joints then there were created Agricultural Collective Households and then Agricultural Cooperatives of Production.

Regarding rural population's attitude concerning the politics done by the process of collectivization this was not some positive one. In several localities, peasants had an hostile behavior toward what was happening, *"taking actions to dismantle the Collective households, to prevent the creation of new ones, reaching even to attacks against the activists and state organs, tearing up the documents for the constitution of collective households and going back to work on the individual agricultural lots."*²¹

Collective Agricultural Households (CAH) represented the core of the process of socialist transformation of Romanian agriculture, being launched in the year 1949, month of March. It was targeted to attract the peasantry on the collective households, the entrance to CAH by peasant's free consent, the gradual organization of collective households. It was also wanted to receive in CAH exclusively poor peasants and middle ones, they

²⁰ Hotărârea nr. 99 a Consiliului de Miniștri al R.P.R. privind aprobarea Statutului model al Întovărășirilor agricole de țărani muncitori pentru cultivarea laolaltă a pământului. Act emis de Consiliul de Miniștri în ședința de la 18 ianuarie 1952 și publicat în B.Of. nr. 6/25 ianuarie 1952.

²¹ Ion Bălan, *Colectivizarea în regiunea București 1950-1962*, București: Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, 2012, p. 52-53.

having the obligation to entry in CAH with all the land and afferent agricultural inventory, as well as the obligation to distribute the products resulted after the work done.

By the end of the collectivization process, all efforts were targeted to disperse in the rural population the “economic miracles”²² obtained by the collective agricultural households. Agrarian joints were accepted only in the measure it was aimed at their transformation in CAH-s, and the communist power faced a long resistance on the part of the rural community. The main causes of peasant’s mutinies was created in great measure by two of the most important principles that governed the whole period of socialist transformation of agriculture, namely to impose the mandatory quotas for peasantry and foundation and operation of Collective Agricultural Households.

But going back to the economic situation, the most important objective targeted by the communists was the total capture of this sector of activity so that the state would own the control over it. All actions related to this domain were centralized around the principle of the common, collective property by abolishing individual, private property. Subsequently, the state had to become the unique financier, producer and distributor, all any other forms of concurrence being limited.

In the urban environment of the Romanian economy this thing was done in a relatively short time by the nationalizations done, but concerning the rural sector the problem of abolishing private property faces more obstacles that it was estimated.²³ Peasant community constituted a different social segment that had as fundamental values of the tradition and the property of the land.²⁴ These elements gave birth to a gap between town and village in what meant the passage from the private, individual property to the common, collective or state property.

²² Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare. Property and Value in Postsocialist Transilvania*, New York: Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 41.

²³ Marian Cojoc, *Dobrogea de la reforma agrară la colectivizarea forțată*, Constanța: Muntenia & Leda, 2001, p. 17.

²⁴ Samuel Sharp, *The Peasantry of Eastern Europe under Communism, In the Peasantry Of Eastern Europe*, vol II, New York: Pergamon Press, 1979, p.73.

Collectivization in States from Eastern Europe

The first analysis is about Hungary.

Until the end of the 1940's, the Popular Republic of Hungary went through several trials to transform the agriculture. The process of collectivization was implemented only in the year 1960. So it was administered to bring the land detained by the peasants in individual cooperatives into agricultural cooperatives owed by the state.

As we have said before, there were numerous trials to collectivize agriculture. But the great boom in the process of collectivization in Hungarian agriculture took place during 1959 -1961. At the end of this period, *more than 95% of the agrarian lands in Hungary became the property of collective farms.*²⁵

So, in February 1961, the communist party announced the finalization of the actions of socializing agriculture. But this rapid success was not the result of the fact that the peasant accepted the ideal of agrarian collectivization.²⁶ For them, private property meant independence and self-determination in the own existence, while the collectivization managed to bring incertitude among them.²⁷ Although the pensions for the members of the cooperatives constituted a legal requirement after 1958, some ones, potential older members, were not persuaded about the financial security on long term of the cooperatives and had left the farms and entered in industry, which seemed more secure at that moment. Although Hungarian peasants were not very interested in resisting against the actions of collectivization, taking into account the fact that the last two stages of collectivization were intense and tough, as the events of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956.

²⁵ Constantin Iordachi, Arnd Bauerkamper, *The Collectivization of Agriculture in Communist Eastern Europe. Comparison and Entanglements*, Budapest-New York : Central European University Press, 2014. p. 451.

²⁶ Sarkany Mihaly, *Transformation of Peasant Economy : A Hungarian Example*, The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979, p.247

²⁷ Nagy Imre, *In defence of the New Course in Communism*, New York: F.A. Praeger, 1957, p. 193.

Concerning Bulgaria, here the collectivization "*knew the greatest resistance from the peasants*"²⁸. The cause was due to the fact that a great part of the peasants were already associated in small cooperatives, so they had not sufficient reasons to accept the process of collectivization.

Agriculture Ministry in Bulgaria at the time expressed concern about the fact that he had so many obstacles to face, the most due to the fact that the peasants refused to submit the mandatory quotas. So there were collected measures to remediate the existing situation. As consequence, there were placed in the rural environment 18 commissions to control the activity of agricultural households. The result was that until November 5, 1949 "*these commissions controlled 1264 kolkhoz representing 2.3 of the whole collectivist system and researched 61854 cases of forced gather of private lands, in 35311 of these it was passed to their restitution and the punishment of the activists who disposed their requisition*"²⁹.

In the year 1950 in Bulgaria there was adopted a new payment system. Although, taking this measure did not mean the fact that they renounced the plan of collectivizing the agriculture of the country, so that in November 43.4% of the rural population was entered in the collectivist system.

Due to the fact that it belonged to the communist bloc that was under the tutorship of the USSR, Poland neither made an exception from the implementation of *the process of socialization of agriculture*³⁰. The system of implementing the process of collectivization was taken by the Central Committee of the Poland Communist Party in September 1948.

Even if the Popular Republic of Poland followed a policy of collectivization of agriculture during Stalin's period, it was the only country from the eastern bloc where the collectivization process on large scale did not manage to get roots.³¹

²⁸ Robert R. King, *Bulgaria, Communism in Eastern Europe*, Bloomington: University of Press, 1979, p.86

²⁹ Enno E. Kraehe, Philip E. Mosely, Edmund O. Stillman, *Collectivization of Agriculture in Eastern Europe*, University Of Kentucky Press, 1957, p.123

³⁰ Ivan Volgyes, *The Peasantry of Eastern Europe, vol II*, Washington: Pergamon Policy Studies, 1979, p.94

³¹ Janusz Kalinski, *Collectivization of agriculture in Poland, 1948-1956*, in Acta Poloniae Historica no. 57, 1988, p. 168.

The process of collectivization in Poland targeted the liquidation of the social class of landlords or very wealthy peasants "kiabours" similar to Romania. In this country also this social class was not clearly identified; on the contrary it was hard to establish which persons should be considered "kiabours".

Agriculture workers in Poland strongly opposed to the collectivization actions, reaching even to the cut of forests marked for collectivization. Polish peasants fiercely defended their lands, fact that led to several repressive measures in 1952, against those who resisted the collectivization.

Similar to the situation in Hungary and Poland, the process of collectivization has no success in Czechoslovakia also. In Czechoslovakia, the process of collectivization has been launched in 1949.³² The causes of failure were firstly the food crisis caused by the last two years drought, which confronted the Czech government in that period. To this food crisis was added secondly the diminishing of the population as a consequence of expulsion German ethnics.

We also have to mention that peasants in Czechoslovakia had no good impression on this collectivization, in the majority of localities the popular meeting organized by the activists being boycotted by the locals, some of them even ending with peasants' mutinies.

In former Yugoslavia, also the collectivization process was not that one expected by the communist leaders, even more. One can talk about a failure of this forced collectivization. In this country also, as in ours, it was elaborated an agrarian reform in the year 1945, which was ordered by political reasons more than economic. As a consequence of this reform there were reduced the great agrarian properties to *a maximum of 35 hectares*³³, to poor peasants being allotted little individual lots. In the perspective of those presented, the peasants couldn't assure their living from the little households they had the property and without having the alternative to work for the great landlords, so the initiation of the

³² Enno E. Kraehe, Philip E. Mosely, Edmund O. Stillman, *Collectivization of Agriculture in Eastern Europe*, University Of Kentucky Press, 1957, p.103.

³³ Joseph T. Bombelles, *Economic Development of Communist Yugoslavia* Stanford: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace Stanford University, 1968, p. 21-22.

collectivization process seemed the most proper solution. So it was decided by the urgent constitution of agrarian households on the soviet model, "kolkhoz" type.

Similarly to those happened in the Soviet Union in ideological plan, the communist party, by the General Direction of the Cooperation in Yugoslavia, looked for allies among the poor peasantry and colonists with properties given, not because they had great success in their households, but because they had to become the political basis of controlling the whole peasantry.³⁴

Similarly to the other states, the process of collectivization had only negative effects, in the year 1952 being recorded in the collectivist system *only 17% of the owners of agricultural lands and 18% of the owners of arable lands.*³⁵ So, in March 1953 collectivist peasants started to leave agrarian farms, at the end of the year being recorder an exaggeratedly reduced number of members remained.

In great lines, several aspects remain emblems regarding this process of collectivization, which may be found in a form or another, both on local internal plan or central and on international plan in the countries that belonged to the communist bloc under soviet influence. So the assembly image and the consequences of the socialist transformation of the agriculture may be synthesized in tens of thousands of imprisonments, deportations, executions, excessive party propaganda, diminishment of authentic peasant traditions, cutting off the roots of the peasant converted in commuting worker with the communist industrialization and lastly but of crucial importance, the collectivization meant expropriation, forced pass of peasants' private property into collective property of the communist State.

³⁴ Augustin Țărău, *Noaptea moșierilor: aplicarea decretului 83/1949 în nord-vestul României*, Oradea: Arca, 2009, p. 48.

³⁵ Augustin Țărău, *Noaptea moșierilor: aplicarea decretului 83/1949 în nord-vestul României*, Oradea: Arca, 2009, p. 48.

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