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## The Evolution of the Rural in Romania after the Second World War

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After 1945 the evolution of the rural in Romania was influenced by five distinct stages:

- the stage of quotas for the payment the war compensations to the former Soviet Union (1945-1956);
- the stage of massive collectivization (1957-1962);
- the stage of forced industrialization (1963-1984);
- the stage of fortuitous payments of external debts (1985-1989);
- the stage of socialist structural and economic disorganization of the rural (December 1989 – till now).

**The stage of the quotas for payment the war compensations constituted a heavy burden for the rural population.** The masculine, vigorous working-force, kept alive from the dreadful girths of the Second World War, mostly represented by peasants, continued to work hard in agriculture in the condition of a rudimentary endowment of this field. The greatest part of the crops took the former Soviet Union road. It is the period of setting up areas in the villages. They consisted in the grouped haystack deposit of cereals in obedience to the slogan: “don’t lose anything from the harvest.” The peasant remained a simple onlooker at his own crop threshing and his gain was often an empty sack. Soviet counsellors, doubled by a powerful army that remained in Romania till 1956, controlled the whole economy.

**The stage of massive collectivization (1957-1962).** The agriculture collectivization began in 1948, 1949, after a Soviet pattern. It was theoretically

and propaganda intended to convince the masses of peasants to adhere at the Agricultural Production Co-operatives with land, animals and outfits. In a first phase, the so-called associations were intended to convince the peasants of the working together “advantages”. They consisted practically in the partial merging of the neighboring land plots that had to be worked together. In fact, the collectivization process was a forced action, imposed from the outside. “The peasants enlightenment” consisted in repeated calls, at the most unsuitable hours, in special points arranged for this purpose (the mayoralty’s offices, police or hidden school classrooms). Often the opponents have been “enlightened” through threats, beatings, at which could be added the massive deportations at canal, prison and forced transfers. The so-called kulak (wealthy peasants) of the villages, in fact the pick and flower of the Romanian peasantry in that time, was in a short time decimated. At these atrocities, the deportations of the German population from Romania in Bărăgan, the west of Siberia and the industrial region of Ural Mountains could be added, for the reason they colluded with the German army during the war.

The collectivization process was more rapidly “adopted” in the former kingdom (Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia and Dobrogea), where the property sense and the households were not so economically strengthened and organized as in Transylvania.

The sense of land property has been (and is) more strengthened in Transylvania, compared with the rest of the country, both due to the frequent attempts to occupy this Romanian geographical space, as to the positive influences transmitted by the

co-inhabiting minorities, on the background of Habsburg Empire domination.

After 1956, a refreshing of the economical life in the rural was noticed, as a result of escaping the heavy burden of quota payments. This flourishing period stopped in the spring of 1962, as a result of co-operativization generalization.

The A.P.C. (Agricultural Production Co-operatives) (in the first stage named G.A.C.) consisted in peasants' dispossession of land, animals, carts and agricultural tools. They were founded at the level of a rural settlement. In places with the predominance of small villages it was organized an A.P.C. for 2-3 villages. The villages partially played the role of a farm. The work was done in working teams that consisted in the peasant families with households situated in the neighborhood. A team was generally formed by 15-30 families, lead by a team chief. The teams were organized at the next level in brigades, a brigade being able to include 5-6 teams. The brigade had a team leader, chosen from the mass of peasants. Every A.P.C. had a president, in many cases an agronomist engineer, zootechnician expert or veterinary doctor. The Counties Agricultural Directions that received, at their turn, the tasks for quantitative and assortment plan of the crops from the Ministry of Agriculture dictated the structure of the crop. A bureaucratic and ignorant party controlled the whole organizational and working process.

Concomitant with the co-operative agriculture, the State Agriculture Enterprises (S.A.E.) functioned and they continued to function till now. The State Agricultural Enterprises are organized on the farm principle, they registering a higher degree of agriculture modernization, the working-force being remunerated on salaries. The S.A.E. boast a pronounced degree of specialization in production and have, in many cases, their own research stations.

The mountainous areas, hard accessible, with poor lands, as well as some isolated rural settlements from the hilly sectors were not comprised in the collectivization action. They didn't prosper, being economically annihilated and comprised in the general wave of the rural-urbane migration.

**The stage of forced industrialization (1963-1984).** This stage had the most negative effects upon the rural, consisting in its demographically "emptying". To work in the town industry was the dream of every young man from the village background. The parents advised and supported their children to move in towns, where the monthly incomes were sure and more increased. The block-of-

flats and the rents from the urbane offered a plus of comfort compared with the village houses and the country lifestyle. Furthermore, the worker statute offered an important political capital, as compared with the peasant or intellectual statute. Little by little the rural life began to disintegrate, wanting the contribution of the young and vigorous population. This fact had later repercussions: the drastic reduction of the rural demographically contingents of the school age.

**The stage of the fortuitous payments of external debts (1985-1989).** The industrialization process was sustained by massive currency loans, besides the massive export of agricultural products (food), and lead to the increase of the external debt, inclusively due to the increase of the interest's rate. It was assessed that at the end of 1984 the external debt of the Romania registered 13-14 thousand millions U.S.A. \$. An industry that was a great consumer of energy, with a high rate of dependency on raw materials and technology from import, generally less competitive, was not able to ensure the payments of the loans contracted for its own setting up. As a result, the only alternative was the intense exploitation of the agricultural potential and the massive export of agricultural products. In the same time, the level of supplying the population with food diminished at an alarming share, this fact being one of the essential reasons, which eroded the communist system credibility. In the spring of 1989 the integral payment of the Romania external debt was announced, a positive balance of 3,5-4 billion U.S.A \$ being estimated.

**The tragic events from December 1989 through their blood tribute and massive destruction of goods and buildings marked the beginning of the structural disorganization stage of the Romanian rural.**

This first stage is characterized by rapid processes of input-output in the rural medium and by generalized disorganization of the former A.P.C. It's a stage marked by intense convulsions in rural environment, generated by the reinstatement of land properties. The alarming growth of the peasants and other categories of people implied in trials in order to recover the land and to ensure the succession amplify the reduced time of the rural.

Territorially, the sowed surfaces diminish rapidly, alike the number of animals and agricultural production, in general. Romania must resort to massive imports of agricultural products that bring about the assuming of new external debts.