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CREATING COMMUNIST AUTHORITY:

Class Warfare and Collectivization in Ieud, Marmures

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Executive Summary

Collectivization was the first mass action through which Romania's young communist regime initiated its radical agenda of transformation, promoting class warfare to achieve its goals. Ieud, a village in Maramures in the far north of Romania, was the first there to be collectivized despite the poor quality of the land. Based on in-depth interviews and archival research, I examine collectivization as the means by which the transformation of property relations transformed social relations and personhood, and, simultaneously, established and institutionalized communist authority itself. I conclude that collectivization in Ieud correlated highly with the degree and forms of resistance against communist rule rather than with economically-driven policies of socialist transformation. Where communist authorities perceived the "bourgeois" past to be a significant impediment to the socialist future, collectivization disciplined the population. I also discuss collectivization, memory, and the rewriting of history.

“We are living in times of great transformation. One kind of world is dying and another is being born.” (D.G., D.S. letter to their brother in Ieud; CNSAS FP 248/2, f. 23)

“At this time, in Ieud, a community in Maramures known to us, persons most dangerous to our regime are harbored.” (CNSAS Fondul Penal nr. 84, vo.25, f. 147; Security Services, Maramures, April 26, 1949)

“... in the heart of the reactionaries, we are going to create the first collective” (activist during a party meeting about collectivizing Maramures, Sighetu Marmatiei, 1949; personal communication)

Introduction

Collectivization was the first mass action through which the young communist regime initiated its radical agenda of social, political, and economic transformation. It introduced and promoted class warfare as the driving force with which to achieve the physical and symbolic inversion of spatial and social (notably class) relations in everyday life. Ieud, a community then of some 3,500 inhabitants, was the first collectivized in "historic" Maramures, a region in the far north of Romania. On March 5, 1950, nine party members (then the village total) had the "honor" of officially announcing the formation of the State Agricultural Collective, *Scanteia* (*The Spark*; henceforth, GAC Scanteia).¹

Situated in a mountainous area in the Iza Valley, Ieud was better suited for pastoral/livestock farming, potato cultivation, fruit tree growing, and forestry than large-scale agricultural production. Despite the poor quality of its land (category V productivity) in a mountainous area, Ieud-- like other villages later collectivized in the same area-- has contiguous flat lands for cultivation that were represented officially as adequate grounds for collectivization.² This "official" motive notwithstanding, Ieud was, in fact, collectivized primarily for socio-political reasons. Methods over the years ranged from persuasion to more forceful techniques of coercion.

Hence, Ieud's collectivization can only be understood in terms of its history in Maramures, in consequence of which its subjugation was considered crucial for transforming and instantiating communist rule and practices. In this paper, I first review key features of that history to set the stage for examining collectivization in Ieud. I focus especially on the first phase as the means by which the transformation of property relations transformed social relations and personhood and simultaneously

established and institutionalized communist authority itself. In the final section, I cursorily reflect on collectivization from the perspective of memory and the rewriting of history. As a result of preliminary analysis of the interview and archival data, I conclude that collectivization in “historic” Maramures as a whole and of Ieud in particular correlated highly with the degree and forms of resistance against communist rule rather than with economically-driven policies of socialist transformation.³

“Reactionaries” in “revolutionary” times: classes and class warfare

Throughout the “extreme years, 1945-1949” and beyond, communist authorities—local, regional, and national—viewed Ieud as a hotbed for “reactionaries” of various kinds engaged in “subversive,” “counter-revolutionary,” and “terrorist” acts. Ieud’s reputation stemmed firstly from its leadership in the resistance to the unification in 1945 of Maramures with Subcarpathian Ukraine, proposed under the guise of land reform.⁴ The priest, Dunca Ioan Joldea, who had been instrumental in the 1945 resistance was again at the forefront of the Uniate or Greek-Catholic Church’s resistance to unification with the Orthodox Church in 1948, adding another negative to Ieud’s troubled reputation among local, regional, and national authorities. As was reported: “Upon the unification of the two churches and especially afterward, in Ieud, there has been strong resistance on the part of the population..”⁵

Father Joldea was also the Vice President of Iuliu Maniu’s Peasant Party in Maramures. He was further charged with being the “spiritual leader” of the Popsa gang, one of several counter-revolutionary groups active in Maramures. Ieudeni were alleged to have been the most numerous among its direct participants and/or supporters, nevertheless with quite a number of other fugitives hiding in the surrounding mountains associated with the Pop Achim gang (largely operating in Tg. Lapus across the mountains).

The list of Ieud’s “bandits” was long and diverse, including members of terrorist groups, religious resisters, army deserters, wealthy peasants who had not paid their taxes or provided the quotas on goods set them, legionaires, and the like. Some 115 Ieudeni were imprisoned, of whom three were known to have been shot by government forces and five to have perished in prison.⁶ To all of this must be added

Ieud's local and regional renown as a village boasting of numerous personalities among its ranks; priests, writers, artists, teachers, etc, and wealthy peasants rounded out Ieud's problematic socio-political profile.⁷

The Land Reform of 1945 marked one of several fundamental steps in creating a socialist economy.⁸ In Ieud, 124 inhabitants benefited from this redistribution, "52 household plots and 72 plots for cultivation... totaling 132 jug, 1234 stj.p [stinjeni patrati] or roughly 76 yokes of expropriated property."⁹ Yet, the land reform did little to alleviate the deepening crisis of poverty and hunger throughout the region.

Plagued by infrastructural problems, local and regional leaders lacked the means to respond effectively. As part of the process of centralizing production and redistribution, the land reform was also meant to provide the State with reserves for redistribution that nonetheless remained unavailable in Maramures. Leaders pleaded with the central authorities to release supplies of all sorts. Urgent messages were sent to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Public Domain pointing out:

In that now the final touches of the agrarian reform are being done, it is for us the last chance to acquire state reserves that are so badly needed in this region, backward from every point of view.¹⁰

The Director of the Economic Bureau of the Maramures administrative region wrote to the Grain Division, Department of State Provisioning, on January 7, 1947, requesting ten train wagons of maize:"

There is unrest in the villages due to starvation... The situation is becoming alarming, as those who are starving threaten to revolt if they don't get bread... So that starvation does not paralyze the life of the entire region and provoke massacres, mass revolts and population exodus, a distribution of grain is urgently needed for the starving population of the region... Otherwise, we cannot take responsibility for the starvation that is spreading around our region, nor for the consequences of the actions of those who are starving.¹¹

In 1946, it was estimated that 70% of 3,135 Ieudeni were starving; 25% were insufficiently fed, and only 5% had enough to eat throughout the entire year. In only 1 of 55 villages reported--Campulung la Tisa-- did 50% of the population have adequate food supplies for the course of a year.¹²

Clearly, creating a centralized economy was easier to manage on paper than in actuality. Implementing the means to achieve this goal required transforming daily micro-economic practices. The

following example illustrates well what such changes entailed, suggesting the enormous difficulties that planners and everyday citizens confronted in all domains of economic exchange. To the extent that private commerce was criminalized, the State had to meet supply and distribution needs. It did not and indeed could not. On February 17, 1947, an urgent request for 50,000 pairs of peasant sandals was sent to the Department of Provisioning (SSA), the Leather Division, noting:

Peasants from the villages are barefoot and, without sandals, are no longer able to go to work. Nor are those working in forestry, the workers refusing to work without sandals...¹³

This shortage was on-going, meaning that the supply of leather sandals was irregular (as it was for other goods). In need of sandals for her children, in 1948, a woman (V.A.) was apprehended in the Sighet market shortly after showing her husband the three pairs for her children that she had just bought from a tanner at 200 lei each. She was questioned whether she understood that private commerce was against the law, and ordered to lead the way to the tanner guilty of clandestine economic activity. Private purchase of plum brandy, meat, cornmeal, or any other item, or private use of mills, slaughtering of animals, etc. was against the laws of socialist production and distribution.¹⁴ Private sales were considered a form of "sabotage." Learning the rules of a command economy, as well as how to get around them, took time. Significantly, such micro-practices reveal the very process by which the socialist economy was instituted in daily life.

In the interest of assuring adequate provisioning (at least in theory), obligatory quotas or forced requisitions ("cote") to be collected from each region of the country were set and enforced. Collections of vital supplies for redistribution also served importantly in promoting class warfare and, in turn, transforming class relations. Quotas were differentiated by class categories (to be discussed below): poor peasants donated the least; middle peasants, more; wealthy peasants or "chiaburi," the most.

Quotas were applied to the latter as a means to "break their will [or backs]," that is, force their "consent" to the regime. The amounts of wool, milk, eggs, meat, etc. that they were expected to deliver to the state, especially in the early years of collections, were often beyond any reasonable ability to comply, thereby placing them in violation of the law. As an 82 year old former chiabur explained:

They imposed a very high quota. You received a small notebook in which every quantity—of meat, wheat, barley, corn—was listed. They knew that no one could possibly give that much, so then they could say you were engaged in sabotage, and they locked you up. There was no one to whom to ask why the amounts were so high. The children of wealthy peasants no longer had the right to go to school.¹⁵

The “agricultural tax” functioned similarly, with the wealthy being heavily taxed, again, beyond their means to pay. As one “strictly secret” document (1949) that circulated at the administrative regional level noted:

The new law on agricultural taxes is formulated according to political interests: to protect poor and middle peasants and to give a strong blow to the wealthy. This law is applied in the context of increasing class warfare in the villages. Chiaburi who are affected by this law nonetheless try to deceive the masses about the law's content..¹⁶

There were myriad ways in which chiaburi and others attempted to evade both cote and taxes. Some, under the cover of night, hid cornmeal and other goods in the cellars of trusted friends and relatives who were themselves willing to bear the risk of discovery. Others tried to hide their property, declaring that they had less land, fewer animals (often sent to a relative in another locale). Those unable to meet the ever-changing, gradated quotas often retreated to the mountains where they joined the mix of fugitives mentioned above (i.e. “politicals” who were explicitly anti-communist, Uniate priests unwilling to convert, deserters from the military, and the like. Although lumped together as anti-communist, those in hiding often differed in their motives and political views. It should be mentioned that with men hiding in the mountains for periods of days, weeks, months, and years, their women bore the burden of managing their families and the authorities.

“Good” communist citizens were admonished to be vigilant in their search for saboteurs. The regional newspaper, *Graiul Maramuresului* (*the Talk of Maramures*) warned:

Peasant workers must be ever vigilant in their efforts to discover and expose all of the chiaburs' attempts to impede their struggle for a better life.¹⁷

Those who attempted to undermine the regime's progress were publicly denounced. For example, again as reported in the regional newspaper, *Graiul*:

The chiabur, F.I.C. [from Ieud] tried to avoid providing the wool quota. Although he has 42 sheep, he declared only 15 and that he is a middle peasant. He sent 27 of his sheep to

his brother in the village Botiza to hide them. But, his ruse was discovered in time by the vigilance of those who work [for a living]...¹⁸

Or, as revealed in a short article, "The exposure of new wealthy scoundrels:"

A few days ago, the collector for the DAC who had gone to Ieud to collect wool discovered 2 kg. of dirt and rags in the wool handed in by one deceiving chiabura... Another chiabura tried weighting her wool with salt, but worker-peasants discovered this in time and exposed her.¹⁹

Similar discoveries were publicized about chiaburi who tried to evade taxes on their property.

One packed the family's valuables in a chest and hid it in the barn,

...believing that he could fool the collector. But he only fooled himself, his ugly deed exposed by a poor peasant while a fiscal agent found the chest in the barn.²⁰

Those responsible for collections of produce or taxes ranged in manner from the overly zealous who sought to empty the chiaburs' cupboards, to those "who were decent, who did not fleece you." The latter turned a blind eye, collecting most but leaving just enough to feed the children something. As in all walks of life, there were "good" or "bad" collectors and fiscal agents. As described by one former chiabura, now a 78 year old widow: "you weren't able to pay your taxes, they took the shirt off your back, the bedsheets, everything..." Another, a former collector now deceased, added: [they took] "...everything fine from the house--the rug, the thickest woven woolen blanket..."

The methods used to enforce compliance were perceived to be arbitrary in application. As a peasant woman now in her late sixties related: "Whom they wanted to destroy, they did; whom not, they didn't." At age ten, she and her three siblings remained motherless because of the grain quota. Their father, unable to deliver his quota of wheat, was in hiding; therefore, the authorities pressured his wife to deliver them, resulting in tragedy:

That was in '49..they took mama to the town hall to turn over our wheat. "I will not give it,' she said. 'Let my husband do so, he is the head of the household," and so they beat her, and she was six months pregnant. My mother died ...and we four children were left motherless. That's how it was.²¹

Because the collections required people to deliver the results of their hard labor to the state, many people associate the collections (cote) with collectivization itself. Yet, as the first head of the collective farm, now in his mid-eighties and no longer living in Maramures, pointed out:

The collective farm had nothing to do with the collections. The quotas were collected at the reception center in Rozavlea and were the town hall's responsibility. The collective gave the land to collective farmers, combining it in one place, and gave land from the Church, and then, from S.B., one who had some 80 hectares. And they also took land from chiaburi that did not pay their taxes in compliance with Law 115. But only the town hall and financial section had anything to do with the quotas.²²

Moreover, as a former collector clarified: "No one was arrested for the collective, only for something else, they didn't provide their quota of grain..."

The technical distinction between collections and collectivization notwithstanding, people's experiences fueled their misunderstanding. The products of their labor as well as the land on which production was carried out were intricately intertwined for most. Obligatory collections by the state undermined chiaburs' sense of self, subordinating self/family interests to those of the state. As a popular verse lamented:

The plough is heavy, the quotas are heavy, bitter are my days.
The sack between my leggings is empty. My wife asks, 'Hey,
my man, what will we eat, when we don't have the quota for
meat, for pork? God, don't give them good luck. The quota for
beef, and life is hard.²³ [See Appendix]

In addition to collections, the state needed land for large-scale agricultural production. To this end, they encouraged forms of cooperative agricultural production known as "intovarasire" or voluntary associations.²⁴ P.V., then 82 but now deceased, noted: "Intovarasirea? You know what that was for? To attract people more easily into the collective farm. That was the aim... We worked voluntarily, not according to a production norm." A former First Secretary of the region Maramures, now in his eighties, underscored that:

In a voluntary association, each person would join with his land and whatever material means he had [atelaje...] They divided the products of their labor proportionally. The state was more involved in the agricultural production cooperative. The products of labor were divided according to the number of days worked... So, there was a difference: in the one, you were paid according to your work; in the other, according to your landholdings and by your work, less so.²⁵

Although such voluntary associations were predominant in much of Maramures, easing the way for the finalization of collectivization in 1962, this had not been the case in Ieud. In contrast to work

“without standardized production norms” in the voluntary associations, in the collective, people worked with production norms for all phases of production. Thus:

For ploughing, it was 30 ari per production norm; digging, 14; haying, 50 ari...A strong man could meet the production norms, I'm speaking about here where working the land is tough. But for a weaker man, it was hard to meet the norm. And you were paid according to these norms, so you tried to work as much as possible. Of course, working so much, you also worked poorly. That's why production was so bad...From year to year, the harvest was worse and worse. And it is from this that lying was born, because in many cases, you couldn't finish on time, so not to be sanctioned, you declared that you finished your work on time. Lying also grew out of reporting false production amounts. In the end, lies have come to dominate...²⁶

Regardless of the form (voluntary association or institutionalized agricultural production), contiguous plots of land were crucial for modernized, large scale agriculture. To this end, two means of acquiring land for such purposes were introduced. Not surprisingly, they also aimed at transforming class relations: 1) confiscations, and 2) the merging or "comasare" of land.²⁷ Land had been outright confiscated from chiaburi. It was also “given in exchange,” the semantic nuances between "land taken ("pamant luat") and land "given" ("dat") lost on those whose land was exchanged. According to a report in February 1950,

60 poor and middle peasants freely accepted the exchange of land. The others who are under the influence of wealthy peasants refuse to sign...For working peasants, they are guaranteed land in exchange that is of the same quality and quantity. For the chiaburi, they received the poorest land up in the hills, meaning that the best land fell to the working class...²⁸

Chiaburi retained roughly the amount (quantity) of property they had, but they lost significantly in its quality and location. Reports that updated progress and problems associated with the merging of land noted that “the reason that the exchange of land is so difficult lies in the history of Ieud from 1945 on. This community has 44 chiaburi who, since 1945, have permanently opposed measures taken by our regime.”²⁹

“Chiabur” was the label attached to propertied, wealthy peasants, signifying the equivalent of Soviet “kulaks.” (In Ieud, most "chiaburi" did not possess 50 ha. as per the Land Reform of 1945. Rather, they generally possessed 12-25 ha.) As one 86 year old peasant, himself formerly chiabur, explained: “The regime introduced this word. We didn't know what a chiabur was.” Before, "peasants who were

better off were called "gazde," or "bogatani"[rich people]," the former First Secretary explained. He continued on about the definition of chiabur:³⁰

There was a limit, from so many to so many days worked with the paid help of others...It was an absurdity, not normal. No one considered anyone a chiabur in the way the party intended. You can't define a man as being something out of the ordinary because he employed the help of who knows whom for 30 days or more. But they [party leaders] needed to find a reason to label them as exploiters. [Chiaburi were defined largely in terms of exploiting labor for more than 30 days in a year or more or owned means of production more so than by land possessed.]

Exploitation was key to the promotion of class warfare. Social relations had to be transformed through class consciousness of class exploitation. However, convincing people to change their understanding of what had long seemed a "natural order of daily life" was not easy, especially in Ieud. The official dividing line for many of those labeled chiaburi was thus their exploitation of labor for thirty or more days annually.³¹ But as a former collector [of cote] then in his eighties, commented: "Peasant chiaburi worked along with their servants. They didn't hang around with their hands in their pockets, no..." Another former chiaburi, in his mid-eighties, elaborated:

If a man had a lot of land that he couldn't work alone, then he hired poor peasants as servants. Here, there was a class warfare when those who had been servants rose against the wealthier peasants. "Look, you, that chiabur, he exploited you!" That, so one would hate the other. The poor who had worked for "gazde" were the first to join the collective. They told them: 'Hey, we'll take their land and it will be yours, you'll work here just by the village and we'll send them to work up in the hills, far off.'³²

Clearly, how "class warfare" resonated among Ieudeni depended on their socio-economic position at the time.³³ Poor peasants who had been servants spoke bitterly about gazde and class disparities. They and former "chiaburi" alike agreed that while most chiaburi worked hard along side their workers, there nevertheless had been some "bad" chiaburi who maltreated their workers. Poor peasants who were sent to party school reminisced about learning about class warfare, exploitation, and returning to their village motivated to seek justice.³⁴ One person in his eighties who had been a servant asked rhetorically, "what did gazde ever do since the world was created? Nothing...Everything they did, they did for themselves." (He noted that the communists created schools, promoted education for all, etc.) Class exploitation had been explained and embraced.

Gazde, by contrast, represented themselves, and were often so represented by others including poor peasants, as having been "good people [esteemed]." One former chiabura, a peasant woman in her late seventies, reflected:

"A good person was someone who was sensible, who reasoned about things, who respected everyone, no matter their status; he had goodness in him...if a poor person helped you, you didn't take advantage of him, you paid him what he was owed. People educated their kids then, not like now."

Yet gazde were the first to be denounced as chiaburi, a category that expanded over time. While that expansion was in response to directives from Bucuresti, the criteria applied at the local level were often determined more by personal grudges than official guidelines.³⁵ As a former member of the State Commission for Planning of the Ministry of Agriculture, himself from Maramures (and 92 years old) pointed out: "the laws were written in a civilized form, very nice, but how they were applied was another matter. It isn't all the same what is written on paper and what happened..."³⁶

Central authorities sought to control such abuses, demanding justification for what they felt were inadequately substantiated categorizations of alleged chiaburi. To illustrate, in an exchange between center and periphery, the former questioned leud authorities about two individuals, requiring more detailed information about their situations. They were admonished that:

If the persons named were designated chiaburi based only on their wealth, then you have committed a grave abuse of the party line...Those named, if they do not have means of exploitation, then they are poor or middle peasants, given that they have large families and live in a mountainous region where the land is poor...In our work, we have to use all our force and the laws of proletarian dictatorship against the chiaburi, but not against poor or middle peasants under any circumstances...³⁷

The response made clear that the two had been rightly categorized: "D.I. is part of the exploiting class [exploiting labor more than 30 days in the year]; D.V. has 6 hectares of land of the best quality, a cow, 2 horses, 12 sheep, a thresher, a mill, a small timber mill operated by water."³⁸ Here, it is important to emphasize the elasticity of the category of chiabur that, when necessary, was easily confounded with a broad definition of "enemies of socialism." In the same initial inquiry to leud's authorities, a qualification was added, ambiguously making room for a poor and middle peasant if s/he: "has a past hostile to the democratic regime, was the leader of one of the historic parties [liberals, peasant party], or of the

legionary-fascist party, was knowingly involved in anti-communist activities..." that person's status could then legitimately be re-classified as "enemy." In view of Ieud's history, this qualification was widely invoked.³⁹

Class warfare was the principal weapon that transformed neighbors, godparents, even family members into "enemies," "exploiters." This powerful discourse legitimated the ongoing inversion of social relations, demarcated in time and space with a visible symbolic impact. Chiaburi who were not hiding in the mountains were publicly ridiculed as they trudged long distances to poor terrain. They were subjected to local abuses, often brutal in nature. Yet, as noted above, covered by darkness, loyal poor peasants risked bringing food for the families of chiaburi whose stocks had been demolished by increasing requisitions, or risked hiding what they could of grain and flour for them. Appearances and everyday practices were not "transparent."⁴⁰ Nonetheless, class warfare, relentless in invocation and application, enticed a small number of poor (with and without land) and middle peasants into the collective farm in formation.

Collectivization and Class Warfare

...In constructing socialism, the goal followed by the members united in the collective farm is, through well-organized work done together and using shared means of production, to assure our victory over the chiaburi, exploiters and enemies of the working people, to do away forever with the darkness and backwardness of small individual farms and to obtain instead the most production possible.⁴¹

On March 5, 1950, the Gospodaria Agricola Colectiva, 'Scanteia' Ieud was inaugurated⁴² In preparation for the creation of the GAC, the following information was supplied to regional and central authorities about Ieud's human and material resources: Ieud had 112 poor peasants, 109 worker peasants, 489 middle peasants, and 42 wealthy peasants; of them, 727 were Romanians; 1, Hungarian, and 19, Romi (Gypsies).⁴³ There were 1704 hectares of arable land, 3128 ha. of hayfields, 150ha. orchards, 2510 ha., forest land, 159 ha. of fallow land (total: 7, 651 h). Prior to March 5, 1950, 88 poor peasants, 29 middle peasants and 1 landless peasant joined the GAC "of their own free will." Of these 118 members, 117 were Romanians, 1 Hungarian (other reports claim 1 Rom also among them), with 236 arms [118 workers].

The GAC had a total of 144 ha. arable land (out of 1704), 28 ha. hayfields, 2 ha. orchards.⁴⁴ Most who joined the GAC had less than 1 ha. arable land; 3 had more than this, 1 of whom had 4.5 hectares.

As noted in the application, the original members joined the collective of their own free will ("liber consimtamant"). Diverse methods of "convincing" them, from "persuasion" to "coercion" were employed to convince them of the benefits that would ensue. Members of the Ploughman's Front promised that:

We will conduct an intense campaign to convince members of our organization to join the collective, demonstrating to them that this is the only certain path to a better life free of exploitation...⁴⁵

Propaganda in diverse forms assured poor peasants that they would no longer suffer if they joined the collective (see Negrici, this volume). Otherwise, chiaburi would unite with the Americans and they, poor peasants, would still "eat with a ladle out of a shared bowl."⁴⁶ *Graiul Maramuresului*, the regional newspaper quoted above, relentlessly extolled the virtues of communism and collectivization while "unmasking" and denouncing those who tried to undermine their inevitable victory. Pro-collectivization songs such as the "Horie din viata colectivistilor dela GAC Ieud" ("Song about the life of the GAC Ieud's collective farmers") were performed in public meetings, published in *Scanteia*, (the national party newspaper), etc.:⁴⁷

Spring is coming and the whole country is in bloom
So are the fields and our collective.
Come on, let's work, brother, if we want to have our share
Come on, comrades, faster, so Ieud will be in the lead
And let's fence in the chiaburi, and we will live well.

"Wall newspapers" displayed in the village center praised "good deeds and bad ones."⁴⁸ These wall posters served as a medium through which to construct and instill communist morality, rewarding "good" citizens and exposing "bad" ones. As one "Activity Report" of the Provisional Region of the Iza administrative area stated:

Wall newspapers...play an important role. Look at the example of the wall paper in Cuhea [a neighboring comuna], where the editorial committee takes care to change articles weekly, exposing abusers, writing about the organization of work for threshing, harvesting...⁴⁹

Educational opportunities and activities were created to raise socialist consciousness as well as the cultural and political knowledge of party administrators and collective members alike. The local school library was filled with manuals explaining scientific approaches to agricultural endeavors. In the school, each class had its own small plot of land where students learned to cultivate what they planted. They competed in early forms of what were later institutionalized as socialist competitions. Study groups of all kinds were formed. The regional “propaganda and agitation section” of the Romanian Workers’ Party (PMR) Baie Mare, for example, reported that 156 persons participated in eighteen groups studying Comrade Stalin’s biography.⁵⁰

Of urgent importance among the party’s educational initiatives to raise the level of knowledge was the eradication of illiteracy. A report dated January 2, 1951 claimed that in the villages of the Viseu region alone, there were 19,727 illiterate persons.⁵¹ Illiteracy posed special problems for local party leaders who were encouraged to attend courses if they did not know how to read and write.⁵² Of the Organizing Committee of the GAC Scanteia, only two of four members could do so.⁵³ Yet, persons holding positions in the Party and GAC were expected to read *Scanteia* (the national party newspaper) each morning before coming to work so that they were well informed about or indoctrinated in socialist transformation.⁵⁴

According to the member of the State Commission for Planning, in the early period, the party preferred “half-educated poor peasants. (He also pointed out that many of the country’s intellectuals, urban and rural, were then incarcerated in prisons or the Canal.) Whether preferred or not, after WWI, there were no technical cadre. The cadre with whom collectivization began had attended agricultural schools requiring four years of primary school, then four more of agricultural training. He insisted that it had also been instrumental to use poor peasants in those early years: they had received a few hectares after the land reform of 1945 and feared that they would lose them if they did not carry out party directives.

With Ieud’s reputation as a village from whence intellectuals came, the new “leadership” was all the more galling to chiaburi and many others as well. It was widely held that:

The top authorities, all were uneducated; those who were educated were pushed aside; everywhere they placed people without much schooling... But after he entered school, then he was proud and claimed that he had been unable to go to school because of poverty, not that he had flunked out...⁵⁵

A former poor peasant, 82, commented more colorfully: "Let me tell you, people who were poorly trained, those seven grades as a child that they didn't do. Well, and then, with the communists, he had to learn too much material all at once and he went crazy. His mind caught on fire!"⁵⁶ One former chiabur remarked that D. G. had tried, in vain, to convince him and others to join the party, allegedly so that the party would not have to resort to "uneducated people."⁵⁷ (D.G. was an intellectual from Ieud who was the director of the Ethnographic Museum in Cluj-Napoca and a party activist.)

In the GAC's first years, chiaburi were deliberately excluded. As "enemies of socialism" by definition, it was assumed they would try to subvert socialism's goals. Those poor and middle peasants who did join "of their own free will" were first required to submit a written petition asking the leadership to accept them; it was then reviewed to make certain that the applicant met the criteria for approval. These petitions constituted a less scrutinized legal- administrative practice that reflected hierarchies of power and categories of personhood. Their style revealed discursive forms of subservience to the new authorities.

To illustrate, the then president of the GAC claimed that he never accepted anyone who had not submitted a handwritten application.⁵⁸ This was both true and not. In those years, all petitions were copied according to several models. Keeping the illiteracy rate in mind, many of these hand-written pages were written by a member of the GAC's leadership team, a peasant woman who herself had learned to write but who was, she volunteered, unable to read.⁵⁹ These formulaic petitions all contained clear expressions of gratitude to the Party/state, expressing the sincere hope that the petition would be accepted. Each was signed with classic slogans such as "We fight for peace," "Long live the GAC," and, of course, "Long live the Soviet Union, the stronghold of Peace, Liberty, and People's Liberation, with its flagbearer in the fight for peace, I. V. Stalin!"⁶⁰

A former chiabur, now in his late seventies who never joined the collective (even in the final phase), insightfully questioned the very meaning of such petitions: "It's obligatory to write a petition to enter the collective? But if it's a petition, then it isn't obligatory, but if it's obligatory, then it isn't a petition." "Free will" was a matter of interpretation. With or without it, the GAC Scanteia was created. Several months later, another was inaugurated in Salistea, also in the Viseu region. Together, in 1950, the number of households in the region that belonged to collective farms represented 1.02% of the population.⁶¹

Over the months and years, regular and required reports sent up the party hierarchy praised, indeed glorified, the progress and successes of the GAC and collective members. These included declarations such as: "To date, we are unaware of cases where producers have not disclosed the total amount of land they possess," "The class enemy to date has not made any trouble of any kind, but should this happen, we will immediately notify the regional authorities, " and "Even though the collective has had a series of problems, honest people have worked with commitment to obtain good results that serve as an example to all working peasants in our village and in those nearby."⁶² However, the voluminous penal files, interviews, and other party reports addressing "Difficulties "Failings and Weaknesses" contradict institutional inflation and/or distortion of what was happening in everyday life. The "official" public picture looked much rosier than the evidently more complicated process of creating both communist authority and the GAC.

Infrastructural problems affected most domains of production and distribution from the start. Inadequate storage facilities were but one example, meaning that hay, potatoes, grain, and the like, once collected, too often rotted instead of being stored for redistribution; milk soured before it reached collection stations.⁶³ Not least, agricultural specialists were frequently unable to offer timely advice as they lacked sufficient transportation to travel about the region to improve "our agricultural naivete in using the means of production..."⁶⁴ Other infrastructural problems pertained to human capital: work remained unfinished because of insufficient "work hands." Not only did local leaders need to learn to read

and write, but they also were expected to set an example of what may be labeled “communist morality” in the making.

Yet, party reports and self-criticisms are replete with statements about irresponsible behavior on the part of members of the Organizing Committee who drank heavily (including on the job), womanized, were regularly late to meetings or to open the cooperative store, failed to raise the level of women in political activity, failed to pay their dues, etc. Such behavior compromised both “proletarian morality” and “our party.”⁶⁵

In addition, and contrary to the above-cited claim, “enemies” continued to engage actively in sabotage against the regime and the GAC, both before and after the latter’s inception. The regional PMR emphasized that Ieud's chiaburi:

"since 1945 have been permanently opposed to measures taken by our regime...We must find ways to smash completely the chiaburs' resistance, using political persuasion, exposing them before working peasants, and applying administrative measures..."⁶⁶

Progress in “the work of persuasion” was seriously impeded by chiaburi who continued to resist delivering their quotas, both before the GAC’s inauguration and until that of the CAP in 1962. (Of course, as discussed above, after land was confiscated and impossibly high quotas assigned them, most were also unable to deliver them.⁶⁷)

While propaganda preached the virtues of the GAC, “the chiaburi implore susceptible middle peasants not to agree to the exchange of land, thereby impeding the inauguration of the collective.”⁶⁸ Or, “there is a rumor circulating that the sky will darken and it will rain fire. The result of this ...they've bought candles...”⁶⁹ Another chiabur allegedly threatened that “using an axe, he will cut into pieces whoever goes near his property.” He was similarly accused of frightening poor peasants that if they joined the collective, they would die of hunger, unable even to buy cornmeal. Or, as yet another chiabur claimed “... all who join the collective will be taken to Siberia.”⁷⁰ Fugitives, chiaburi, and Uniate priests spread false rumors that the Americans were allegedly coming to save them from the Russians just as they had, in the end, saved Europe from Hitler, that those who joined the GAC would then see what would happen with their collective.”⁷¹ They instructed poor and middle peasants to resist the production plans

for all phases (e.g. planting on time, harvesting on time).⁷² Even the village midwife “who received a salary from the state” told a poor peasant woman suffering from an eye problem “and who had joined the collective that if she did not withdraw from it, she would go blind!”⁷³

To be sure, the priest, Dunca Ioan Joldea, was blamed for agitating against the GAC. But he was not alone in his quest, particularly with respect to the Greek-Catholic church. Throughout the region, “Among poor and middle peasants, as a result of the propaganda promoted by the religious sects and their actions, they do not trust the present regime.”⁷⁴ To counteract these strong influences in villages “where mysticism is still evident, they should read the brochure: ‘Superstition, the fruit of ignorance that blocks progress.’”⁷⁵

As suggested, such “enemy activities” continued until collectivization was declared completed in 1962. After the first phase that ended more or less in 1952 and which coincided with the incarceration or death of those “most wanted” fugitives (including priests, chiaburi, reactionaries), things quieted down, relatively. Local infrastructural problems, including the delivery of quotas, continued. Moreover, after 1952, chiaburi petitioned to have themselves removed from the list that had been much expanded from its original number, 44.⁷⁶ While some chiaburi were indeed removed, Ieud’s problematic history nevertheless remained a source of worry to local, regional and central authorities. Not surprisingly, in 1956, the Executive Committee of Ieud’s party, requested advice from the Secret Police for the Viseu region: “We don’t know what measures to take against them [enemies] locally.” To prevent the eruption of problems, those who had been given shorter prison sentences and/or had been released from prison were re-arrested.⁷⁷

Throughout the years, daily life went on. Some, whether sooner or later, accommodated the exigencies of hard times, making compromises that enabled them to survive. Accordingly, they made “a bit of friends.” That is, they paid the collector or other local officials “with cheese, plum brandy, whatever I had, and they lowered my quotas. What else could I do?”⁷⁸ Such compromises usually involved “bribes,” recognizing the favor done at the risk of being found out. Herein was another micro-practice that institutionalized falsifying statistics, lying and cheating the regime, practiced by its representatives and

enemies alike. Chiaburi who continued to resist the relentless pressure to join the GAC often distinguished between degrees of compromises.

Paying favors was one thing, necessitated by the system, "what else could I do?" but to compromise one's personal sense of self was another matter. Each person interviewed, all men, as well as others talking about them, referred to the petitions to join the GAC to illustrate this nuanced difference. They claimed that those who joined had to sign a statement: "I pray that you will accept me...because I am unable to manage myself," when, in fact, he was.⁷⁹ To agree to such a statement meant to compromise their (manly) sense of self.

Yet, as heads of household, men often felt compelled to make compromises of one kind or another. They were officially and culturally responsible for the well-being of their families; in consequence, they usually bore the direct brunt of resisting collectivization. It was mostly (not exclusively) men who were fugitives, had lengthy prison sentences, worked in labor camps, the Canal, the mines.

Women, by contrast, were mostly at home in their villages or towns; they constantly invoked different gendered reactions to the pressures of the times. In almost all interviews, women were claimed to have been the most vocal and adamant against joining the GAC. Men often commented that women did not reason soundly but reacted emotionally. One man quoted his mother as having cursed him for considering the "invitation" to join the GAC: "Go to hell! I'm not going to give my house and whatever I have to the state. They're mine!"⁸⁰ Another told his wife he had signed the petition to join, and "it was a nonstop fight...you jerk, why did you join the collective, we'll die of hunger..."⁸¹ To the extent that women resisted collectivization, it is ironic that at the end of communist rule, even though women suffered most directly the brunt of Ceausescu's reproductive policies, women were also readily accused of having been complicitous with a regime that allegedly "liberated" them.

By the second, final phase of collectivization, roughly 1960-1962, the majority of those labeled chiaburi were worn down by years of hardship. And theirs were among the 300 petitions submitted upon the formation of the CAP, Ieud.⁸² The application forms were markedly different than those submitted to

join the GAC; rather than hand-written, they were typed, prepared statements into which numbers (i.e. how much arable land and other forms of property were being contributed) were filled in by hand. This time, no slogans praising Stalin (then deceased), the communist party, or peace were included. Ieud's capitulation—at last—was the regime's hard-won triumph in creating what was popularly known as the Valley of Socialist Labor (the Iza Valley).

In the process, as seen in this paper, class warfare turned class relations upside down, simultaneously transforming authority relations, creating communist authority in the micro-practices of daily life. As a former chiabur, highly respected, reflected:⁸³

They lied to us about what we'd get and we, the population, lied in turn. That's how theft was born because they promised that we'd receive whatever, which we didn't, and realizing that we didn't get what they promised to be able to live, people began to steal from the CAP. Here in our village, the standard norm for a day's work was 14 lei, yet a meal at the cantina cost 12 lei. Given that, if you didn't steal, you couldn't survive because you can't live on one meal a day. And because of this, people were forced to steal and in the end, without any reservation. So the saying "to know how to get by." But he who knows how to get by is a liar, a thief, and two-faced. With honest work, you can't do anything except to survive minimally and even then, not really.

Lying and stealing became the trademarks of everyday living. But "to know how to get by" meant that citizens compromised themselves. If communist morality was constituted through the increasing disjunction between its discourses and practices, so individual ethics, personhood itself, were compromised by participating in such disjunctive patterns of thought and behavior. In the end, the construction of communist authority and class warfare contained the very seeds of their eventual demise.⁸⁴

Remembering Collectivization

Collectivization as an active campaign to create socialist rule and socialist practices was "completed" in 1962. Reflecting on that period was, for some, a bitter experience-- as much about what had happened to themselves, their families and community, as about their own actions at that time. In retrospect, more than a few former "chiaburi" commented that it had been a mistake to have resisted collectivization. What did they get out of it? With regret, quite a number of former resisters

acknowledged that D.G., previously mentioned, had been prescient in his attempts to convince them to support the party and its programs: "and that's exactly how things unfolded, step by step, as he said they would."⁸⁵

Those who joined in 1950 had had an easier time throughout the years of communist rule: "[they] divided cheese, sheep, everything, among themselves; they didn't have to give so much to the state." Those who did not join added that had they, they would today have pensions, however minimal. Most who did not join the GAC nonetheless contracted annually with the state. They sold cheese, meat, wool, sheep, etc. to the state at state prices. This did not, however, entail a "work permit" that formalized the relationship between the individual selling to the state and the state's obligation to him regarding "benefits." Such persons had been lead to understand that since they contributed regularly to the state, they would receive pensions. They felt deceived by everyone--then and now.⁸⁶

Another chiabur who survived by contracting with the State and doing seasonal migrant labor for long periods of time lodged a plea with the National Peasant Party in the early nineties. To his astonishment, he was told at their party headquarters in Bucharest that he had made a serious mistake by not having joined the CAP. Had he, he would today have a pension! (He resigned from the Peasant Party after this encounter.) Disillusioned, he remarked that having stood on principle in retrospect held few rewards for him or his family.⁸⁷

Another domain of practices that, upon reflection, were not perceived as having been as unproblematic as they had seemed at the time pertains to "hiding" property. Several volunteered that having hidden the number of sheep they owned may have been beneficial at the time, but when the regime came to an end, they could only claim what had been recorded. This also applied to hiding land so as not to pay taxes and has also proven difficult today in making property claims. The past haunts the present in unanticipated ways.

Others who had benefited from collectivization—receiving land, power, and even prestige—did not, with hindsight, necessarily reflect positively upon it. For example, D. V., a former president of the GAC, asserted that Ieud should not have been collectivized:

"Because the land was too poor for a collective. No matter how much you struggled with a tractor--the village has approximately 5,000 hectares of land, of which only some 400 hectares are arable, the rest being hayfields, forests. From what do you get a yield, from where?...It was a big mistake that they made that collective. There was no way that it could produce results.⁸⁸

He added that Ieud was collectivized because:

There was a power struggle. They were against communism and communism wanted to eradicate misery and the exploitation of man by man.

In making sense of the past, and their actions during that period, many people are prone to relativizing their own deeds, or of suggesting, upon reflection, that perhaps things were not as they then believed. One high ranking regional official responded to my direct question about abuses of the period that he would be dishonest if he said he had had doubts about his actions then. He believed in and did not question what he and his comrades did then. However, today, he admits that "we made some mistakes." Or, someone else who had talked about compromises that made it possible for him and his family to survive, also commented after a lengthy discussion: "come on, let's be honest. If you knew how to get by, they you screwed someone else." Still others who spent years in prisons, who survived the Canal, torture and the like, located their fortitude in their religious faith and strong upbringing as "good people."

In one way or another, almost everyone recognized that there is a complex relationship between their experiences as individuals and the transformation of property and power relations that shaped their lives and senses of self and that, conversely, shaped the parameters of party rule locally, regionally and nationally. Moreover, many interviewed--whether a party official, a chiabur, or poor peasant--suggested that their local history had as much to do with the particularities of national history as they "lived" it as not. In short, within the limits of communist authority, not everything resulted from center-to-periphery directives, but rather from their translation, implementation, and negotiation in lived experiences.

Postscript

This paper sheds light on the process by which communist authority was created and institutionalized through collectivization in Ieud, Maramures. As demonstrated, political interests

dominated economic ones. In the end, Ieud, like the rest of Maramures, was not fully collectivized. That had never seemingly been the intention. To reiterate, the land across the region was generally of quite poor quality. In the Cosau and Mara valleys, there was less land to combine to yield larger areas for production. Many of their residents lived off of the local economy, with family members working in the nearby town of Sighet. In the Iza and Viseu valleys, by contrast, where there was technically more contiguous flat land to develop, their inhabitants could not live off of it as a primary resource. Then, and now, families survived on mixed economic strategies that involved seasonal migrant labor of greater or lesser duration.⁸⁹

Yet, those valleys became the "Valley of Socialist Agriculture." My research into the process of collectivization in Ieud, in particular, and in "historic" Maramures in general, concludes that collectivization--where and when--correlated highly with the degree and forms of resistance against communist rule. That is, in communities where communist authorities perceived the bourgeois past to be a significant impediment to the socialist future, collectivization was used as a disciplinary measure. Not surprisingly, as revealed in this paper, Ieud with its diverse political and religious "reactionaries" was first and foremost among them. As to the others that soon followed, on-going analysis will determine the extent to which their pasts weighed heavily on their futures, as preliminary analysis suggests. For example, where Uniate priests actively resisted unification with the Orthodox Church, collectivization was more insistently pursued to impose the will of the party.⁹⁰ Class warfare in its different forms was the most effective weapon--in discourse and in deed.

ENDNOTES

¹ See Hotararea Consiliului de Miniștri nr. 299, of 20 martie 1950 and Buletinul Oficial al RPR nr. 30 din 28 martie 1950. The formulaic closing of the inaugural announcement discursively constructs the members' loyalties: 'Long live the Soviet Union, supporter of the working class of the entire world! Long live the Romanian Workers' Party, the guide and support of the working peasants!', "All statistics cited in this paper are approximate, varying from one official document to another. Historic Maramures, referred to as Maramures in this paper, consists of the several villages west of and including Sighetul Marmatiei, and those of valleys Cosau, Mara, Iza and Viseu.

² See Directia Judeteana Baie Mare a Arhivelor Nationale (DJM) Fond 274, nr. 17/1951, f. 138 (sectia secretariat), "Tablou de comunele din raza Raionului Viseu pe categorii de fertilitate." (15 of 17 locales are category V; 2, category IV). The area under discussion consists of two regions: one hilly (21 villages), one mountainous (38 villages). See DJM Fond 58 dosar 65/1946, f. 56. On agriculture in Maramures, see I. Chioreanu, "Dezvoltarea Agriculturii Maramuresene," In *Lupta maselor populare maramuresene impotriva exploatarii, pentru edificarea, sub conducerea, P.C.R., a societatii socialiste*. (Baie Mare: Muzeul Judetean Maramures, 1972).

³ In the summers of 2000, 2002, and 2003, I conducted 31 in-depth interviews in Ieud, Sighetul Marmatiei, Baie Mare, and Viseu de Sus. These were supplemented by interview data previously collected in Ieud, peasant memoirs, and poems. (One memoir is Gavrilă Ples-Chindris', "Colectivizarea la Ieud: Marturisiri din cele petrecute," hand-written notebook.) In addition, I consulted archival documents at the Consiliul National pentru Studiarea Arhivelor Securitatii (CNSAS), the Directia Judeteana Maramures a Arhivelor Nationale, the Directia Judeteana Bistrita (DJBN) a Arhivelor Nationale, and the Directia Judeteana Cluj a Arhivelor Nationale, and the Arhiva Primarie Ieud, and Viseu de Sus. Between 1949 and 1952, Ieud was part of the administrative region, Rodna, that no longer exists. Records from this crucial period are thus difficult to locate. I am especially grateful to Virgiliu Tarau and Mihai Dancus, as well as Marius Oprea and Viorel Rusu for their assistance. Also, most texts are reproduced from the originals, maintaining grammatical errors.

⁴ Prefect Ion Odoviciuc, newly installed in Sighet, failed in his effort to integrate Maramures into the Soviet Union's Subcarpathian Ukraine. Interviews and two memoirs by Ieudeni, as well as a Proces Verbal of then primar Pop Dumitru Roibu (a CNSAS FP84), about the resistance to Odoviciuc's leadership in Sighet, are largely consistent with the "official" history of this period. See, for example, Tov. Vasile Luca's report on this episode in F. Constantiniu, *PCR, Patrascanu si Transilvania, 1945-1946*. (Bucuresti: Ed. Enciclopedica, 2001), 108-109; and Ilie Gherhes, *Maramuresul intre dictatul de la Viena si Conferinta de Pace de la Paris (30 august 1940-10 februarie 1947)*. Doctoral thesis, Iasi, 2001, ch. II.3. Dunca Ioan Joldea, a priest from Ieud, passionately and persuasively reminded Moroseni that the Armistice signed by Stalin guaranteed Romania's borders. Not surprisingly, this branded him as a Romanian nationalist.

⁵ See CNSAS Fondul Penal (FP) 84, v. 12, f.273. Father Joldea was one of several highly influential priests from Ieud. To the regime, he was a "mortal enemy of socialism" and "very dangerous to society" for which he was sentenced to 16 years in prison. See CNSAS FP84, v. 9, f.293.

⁶ It is well beyond the scope of this paper to analyze the complexly intertwined sagas of these various dusmani ai socialismului who populated the mountains of Maramures and later, Romania's harshest prisons, labor camps, and the Canal. I have reviewed hundreds of pages of unedited penal files. On the Popsa gang, the Pop Achim gang, religious resistance, see, for example, CNSAS FP 84, volumes 1-6, 9,11, 12, 22 among the 124 files that comprise this voluminous dosar. The "Organizational Chart of the Terrorist Gang Popsa," FP 84, v. 11, f. 86, is especially illuminating. Those associated with terrorist gangs were generally charged with engaging in "plots against the social order." On Dunca Ion Joldea, see FP 84, v. 9, 25, among others. (Accomplices less directly involved included those who provided food, haircuts to those in hiding, etc.) Ieud's association with the Popsa gang today is memorialized with a cross at the house of Dunca Dumitru Patu. There, one of the Popsa brothers, Vasile, was shot and killed in an action that led to the arrest of all but the youngest member of the Dunca family (5 people, including doua fete) and others. Popsa Ion escaped but was later captured and sentenced to long years in prison. On Dunca Ion Joldea, see FP 84, v. 9, 25, among others. The Comitetul Central al Partidului Muncitoresc Roman was informed, for instance, that he and other priests from Ieud were accused of "being engaged in politics masked as religion. The estimates of those imprisoned are drawn from the personal memoir of one of Ieud's peasant chroniclers, B.S.

⁷ An informal list of Ieud's notables identified some 69 individuals. Included are two brothers, D.G. and D. S., who were prominent Communist Party members (i.e. a military general, and director of an ethnographic museum) who intervened on numerous occasions to convince their relatives and others to see the future and forego resisting. I thank Mihai and Ioana Dancus and Grigore Balea for their assistance in reconstructing this list of personalities. See also DJM Fond 58, nr.65/1946, f.55. "Wealthy peasants" is not the most felicitous translation of the term "gazde" re Maramures. There, gazde were peasants that were wealthier in relative terms (but not large landowners or landlords) and of higher social status, often serving as godparents, etc.

⁸ See Legea Nr. 187 publicata in Monitorul Oficial Nr. 68 din 23 martie 1945 (DJM Fond 58, nr. 7/1945, of the Camera Agricola a jud. Maramures). It is beyond the possibilities of this paper to discuss this and other such measures in detail.

⁹ DJM Fond 58, nr. 71/1946, f. 2,3: Comitetul local de reforma agrara al comunei Ieud

¹⁰ See DJM Fond 58/1946, f. 71, of the Camera Agricola Maramures.

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- ¹¹ See DJM, Fond 53 nr. 123/1946-1947, f.5, of the S.S.A.
- ¹² See DJM Fond 53, nr. 123/1946-1947, f. 1, of the SSA..Most reported well over half of their populations were starving. The measures are unknown.
- ¹³ See DJM Fond 53, nr. 150/1947, f. 10, of the SSA.
- ¹⁴ See, for example, DJM Fond 53, nr. 221/1948, f. 25, 41; Fond 53, nr. 234/1948, f.23; DJM Fond 53, nr. 179/1947, f.6, 7, and others.
- ¹⁵ See DJM Fond 10, nr. 8/1951 (Comitetul de Partid Raional Viseu, Sectia economica-agrara). D. I., 78 years old, former chiabur, Ieud. Interestingly, regional officials did complain to central authorities that the obligatory requisitions were applied mechanically in Maramures, not taking into consideration the poor quality of the land, category V, recognized by the Central Committee, 3 si 5 martie 1948: "Middle peasants and chiaburi cannot meet these requisitions." See DJM Fond 10, nr. 8/1951 (Comitetul de Partid Raional Viseu, Sectia economica-agrara.)
- ¹⁶ Vezi Circulara nr. 72, 7 iunie 1949.
- ¹⁷ See Gh. Chindris, "Chiaburii din plasa Iza sunt demascati si dati in judecata," *Graiul Maramuresului*, 16 aprilie 1950, 3. I am grateful to Liana Grancea for finding the 1949 editions of this paper.
- ¹⁸ See N. Timis, "Demascarea unui marsav chiabur din Ieud," *Graiul Maramuresului* 31 iulie 1949, 3.
- ¹⁹ See "Demascarea unor noi ticalosii chiaburesti," *Graiul Maramuresului*, 14 august 1949, 3.
- ²⁰ See Goth Mihai, "Taranii muncitori din comuna Ieud demasca uneltirile chiaburesti," *Graiul Maramuresulu*, 26 februarie 1950, 5.
- ²¹ I thank C.P. for sharing this deeply disturbing personal story with me. Her mother's response to the authorities was in keeping with local social structure. While beating a woman was accepted behavior, beating a pregnant one was not. Women were not expected to deliver quotas: "The woman is a housewife, not the head of the family. The man, therefore, was recorded in the agricultural register, not the woman" (P.V., 82).
- ²² Interview D.V., summer 2000, c. Giulvaz, j. Timis.
- ²³ A former chiabur, now 79, recalled this verse.
- ²⁴ See, for example, David Kideckel, *The Solitude of Collectivism: Romanian Villagers to the Revolution and Beyond*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993; Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectar: Property and Value in Postsocialist Transylvania*. Ithaca: Cornell Univeristy Press, 2003, and other papers in this volume.
- ²⁵ Interview P.G., summer 2002, Baie Mare.
- ²⁶ Memoir, B.S., handwritten notebook, n.d., Ieud.
- ²⁷ Space limitations do not permit fuller discussion of these. On confiscated property in Ieud, see Arhiva Primaria Ieud, Registrul Agricol Comunal Partea IIB pe anii 1951-55, anexa 6; DJM 58, nr. 49, nr. 144/1945-1948 on difficulties in enforcing the decision to expropriate, also nr. 190 (Camera Agricola a j. Maramures).On comasarea, see Ministerul Agriculturii Decret Nr. 151 "pentru comasarea si circulatia bunurilor agricole" published in Buletinul Oficial Nr. 52, 10 iunie 1950.
- ²⁸ See Arhiva Primaria Ieud, "Raport despre mersul schimbului de teren in comuna Ieud, in vederea formarii Gospodariei Agricole Colective," 25 februarie 1950. See also, for example, "Strict Secret" (Comitetul Judetean, circulara nr. 72, 7 iunie 1949).
- ²⁹ See interview B.S., summer 2000 and Arhiva Primaria Ieud, "Raport despre mersul schimbului de teren..." cited in footnote 29.
- ³⁰ He also noted: "Collectivization wasn't, in fact, really loved then. Somehow people heard about the Soviet colhoz. But little by little they became convinced."
- ³¹ See, for example, Arhiva Primaria Viseu, "Tabel Nominal: Chiaburi, Raional Viseu, Regiunii Baie Mare, 1956-1958." Those who applied to be removed from the category of chiaburi did not succeed if they were alleged to continue to exploit labor. See, for an example, DJM 274, f. 48-51 (Comisia Raionala, Sfatul Popular al Raionului Viseu). "Situatia, modulul de rezolvare a cererilor de radiere depe lista de chiaburi," 12 iunie 1953.
- ³² See interviews P.V., summer 2002, and I.S., summer 2002, Ieud. In rural areas, servants worked in the fields.

³³ Religion was also a significant factor, with resistance to church unification and to communism often overlapping. Class differentiation not only applied to quotas and taxes, but affected purchasing costs. For example, wood was cheapest for poor peasants (20 lei for a load); for middle peasants, 30; for chiaburi, 50, as one eighty-four year old peasant recollected.

³⁴ This former president of the GAC and secretary of the party in Ieud also noted that in 1949, villagers beat the few of them who were communists. (He showed a head scar to make his point.)

³⁵ Similarly, personal vendettas accounted for local abuses with regard to collections. See DJM 10 nr 33/1952, f. 61.

³⁶ Interview, H.D., July 2002, Sighetul Marmatiei.

³⁷ See CNSAS FP 248/II, f. 17.

³⁸ See CNSAS FP 248/II, f.22.

³⁹ There is slippage between "chiabur" and "enemy." While the former were by definition enemies, poor peasants could not be considered "chiaburi." They could, however, be "enemies." In one of the many penal cases against Ieudeni, a state prosecutor declared: "It is all the more surprising that members of this organization come from healthy social origins, most of them are illiterate, victims of the most reactionary and retrograde elements of the bourgeoisie and of the land owners who are not in agreement with the revolutionary conquests of the proletariat of our country." See CNSAS FP 160, v. 2, f. 611.

⁴⁰ Public and private acts of complicity and duplicity were structured from the beginning, numerous examples of which are presented in this paper. See also Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

⁴¹ See CNSAS Fondul Documentar (FD) 42/1952, f.50.

⁴² Their original petition was signed on January 13, 1950. See Arhiva Primarie Ieud, document not catalogued.

⁴³ These figures refer to adults. On chiaburi, see also DJM Fond 25/1951, f. 48-51, that concludes "we certify the exactness of this report," 2 iunie 1951. Yet, most reports claim 44 chiaburi originally. By 1953, the number of chiaburi was increased to 109.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Arhiva Primaria Ieud, Dosar 77, 1950. The number who joined soon dropped to 80.

⁴⁵ See DJBN Fond 62, nr. 1, f. 71, Comitetul regiunii Rodna al Frontului Plugarilor, Sectia Organizatorica. See also DJBN Fond 62, nr.6, 1951 re instructions regarding educational circles.

⁴⁶ In the early years of communism, chiaburi were allegedly allied with the Americans.

⁴⁷ This is the first of a multi-verse song. See DJM, Fond 10, nr. 8/1951, f. 57; also Z, Suliteanu, "Viata Cantecului Popular in c. Ieud," *Revista uniunii compozitorilor din RPR*. 1952, 44-56.

⁴⁸ Dare de Seama regularly reported on such matters. See DJM Fond 10 nr. 15/1951, f. 27, 29, of the Organizing Committee Ieud, among others. See also DJM Fond 10, nr. 6, f. 81-132 on propaganda, and interview with B.S, summer 2000, Ieud.

⁴⁹ See DJM Fond 274 nr. 14/1950, f. 40 (Sfatul Popular Raional Viseu). However, it was reported that the person responsible for the wall newspapers in Ieud was not as responsible about his duties. See DJM Fond 10, nr. 15/1951, f. 35.

⁵⁰ See DJM Dosar 44/195, f. 16 (Regionala PMR, Sectia Propaganda si Agitatie). Only six finished the full course of study. It is beyond the scope of this paper to cite the documentation available for this discussion of educational activities.

⁵¹ See DJM Fond 10, nr. 6. No figures were offered for the town.

⁵² See DJM Fond 10, nr. 15, f. 27

⁵³ See DJM Fond 10, nr. 33, f. 31

⁵⁴ They were not to read the paper during working hours, but between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. See Fond 10, nr. 15, f.8 (Organizatie de Baza, 26 iulie 1951).

⁵⁵ From the memoir of B.S., Ieud. Other than former local officials, most shared this view.

⁵⁶ Interview, P.V., July 2002, Ieud.

- ⁵⁷ Personal memoir, B.S. His recollections in this unpublished manuscript corroborate the position of D.G. in the letter cited in the epigram and in note 88 below.
- ⁵⁸ Interview, D.V., September 2000, c. Giulvaz, Timis.
- ⁵⁹ She was able to copy texts. Interview, P.N., summer 2002, Ieud.
- ⁶⁰ See Arhiva Primaria Ieud, Dosar Nr. 76: Cereri de înscriere în GAC din anii 1950-1961. As noted later, the petitions in 1962 noticeably differ.
- ⁶¹ See DJBN Fond 38, nr.4, f. 183-187 ("Situatia: datelor în legatura cu gospodariile agricole colective, din Regiunea")
- ⁶² See DJM Fond 10, nr 8/1951 (Comitetul Raional al PMR Viseu, Sectia economic-agrara); f.77, 78; DJM Fond 10 nr. 42/1952, f. 21. See also, for example, DJM Fond 10, nr.6, nr. 33, nr. 42.
- ⁶³ See DJM Fond 10,nr. 33/1952. Or, regarding milk requisitions: peasants had to travel long distances, often by foot. See DJM Fond 10, nr. 8/1951, f.66.
- ⁶⁴ See DJBN Fond 38, nr. 1/1905, f. 1; DJBN Fond 38, nr. 2/1950, f.12 (Sfatul Popular al Regiunii Rodna, Dare de Seama).
- ⁶⁵ See, for example, DJM Fond 10, nr. 33/1952, f.61, Fond 10, nr. 15, f. 7, Fond 10..nr. 42, f. 11, f. 386. These are representative examples, but certainly not exhaustive.
- ⁶⁶ See Arhiva Primaria Ieud, document not catalogued, 25 februarie 1950.
- ⁶⁷ See DJM Fond 274 nr. 17/1952, f. 79 (page unclear) and nr. 8/1957-58, f. 106; DJM Fond 10., nr. 33/1952, f. 10, nota 12.
- ⁶⁸ See CNSAS FP 248, v.22, f. 9,10.
- ⁶⁹ See Arhiva Primaria Ieud, "Raport despre mersul schimbului de teren în c. Ieud, în vederea formarii GACului PMR, j. Maramures," 25. II.1950.
- ⁷⁰ See CNSAS FD 7, nr. 10, f. 293. On Siberia, see nota 4; CNSAS FP 248/1, f. 17.
- ⁷¹ See DJM Fond 10, nr. 8/1951, f. 54..
- ⁷² See, for example, DJBN Fond 38, nr..1, nr. 2 (regular reports, Sfatul Popular al Regiunii Rodna).
- ⁷³ See CNSAS FP248, v.II, f. 9.
- ⁷⁴ See CNSAS FD 7 nr. 5, f. 153.
- ⁷⁵ On Joldea, see CNSAS FP 84. On religious sects' activities, see CNSAS FD 7, nr.5, f. 153. On mysticism, see DJBN Fond 62, nr. 7, f. 95.
- ⁷⁶ See DJM Fond 274, nr. 14/1954, f. 1-4, 121-25, etc. The arbitrariness of this category is exemplified in archival documents. In 1952, one document lists 109 by name, situation. In 1954, the pages cited herein, one official reviews the claim by Ieud's local party that there were only 30 chiaburi rather than 78. The regional authorities, checking each case, agreed to remove 24 from the list of 78 (that had, seemingly, been reduced from 109). Yet, in another 1954 report from the Secretariat of the same Sfatul Popular Raional, the total number of chiabur is listed as 66. See DJM 274, nr. 14, f. 226.
- ⁷⁷ See CNSAS Fond Informativ 3185, nr.1, p. 10. One former "political" was accused of threatening a collector with a scythe. Preventive re-arrests were mentioned in interviews as well. See also Aurel Visovan, *Dumnezeul Meu, Dumnezeul Meu, Pentru Ce M-ai Parazit?*I,II. Cluj: Napoca Star, 1999.
- ⁷⁸ I.S., summer 2002, Ieud. Chiaburi who did join consistently suspected them of having been informers, for which there is no evidence.
- ⁷⁹ See, for example, B.V., former middle peasant, interview summer 2002, Ieud.
- ⁸⁰ Interview, I.S., summer 2000, Ieud. Bob Levy called the gendered aspect of resistance to my attention many years ago. Regarding the resistance of Uniate priests, nuns served as critical messengers between those in hiding. In the penal files, they are "religious fanatics." See, for example, CNSAS FP84, v.4, 25.
- ⁸¹ Interview, P.V., summer 2002, Ieud.

⁸² See DJM Fond 335, nr. 18/1962, UJCAP (Uniunea Judeteana a Cooperativelor Agricole de Productie), "Actul de constituire si cereri de inscriere in CAP Ieud." Many people volunteered that when certain individuals, former chiaburi of high ethical standing, finally signed, they followed suit.

⁸³ Memoir, B.S. This memoir was hand-written over the years. When the CAP was formed, one of the first presidents of the GAC left Ieud. He said he could not support his family of 8 on his earnings from the GAC!

⁸⁴ It is beyond the scope of this paper to develop this theme. See also Gail Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceausescu's Romania*. (Berkeley: University of California Press 1998).

⁸⁵ In a remarkable letter written by him and another brother, D.S. an army general, to a third brother, D. V., in Ieud, a chiabur, they emphasized that they were not clairvoyants, but rather, knew what would happen "because we are in contact with the realities of daily life, always studying and aware of the laws according to which society and the style of life is developing and must develop." The letter is a fine example of communist "political correctness." See CNSAS FP 248, v. 2/1950, f. 23-25.

⁸⁶ One person showed me years of contracts, all for naught. In his old age, he does not have "even a small pension ..." Interview, B.G., summer 2002, Ieud.

⁸⁷ Interview, C.G., summer 2002, Ieud.

⁸⁸ Space does not allow full discussion of this fascinating interview with D. V. in September 2000, c. Giulvaz, j. Timis. By contrast, he praised the collectives in Banat.

⁸⁹ On Ieudeni during the Ceausescu era, see Gail Kligman, *The Wedding of the Dead: Ritual, Poetics and Popular Culture in Transylvania* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Paradoxically, today, those who prospered locally during the regime are seemingly less well-off in material terms. Less accustomed to migrant labor for longer periods of time, they have not taken advantage of opportunities abroad as readily as have those who worked elsewhere in Romania during the regime. The visible effects of such differences are manifest in the construction of new villa-like homes in the areas where migrant laborers return to invest their hard-earned cash, to then leave again in what is cyclical economic migration.

⁹⁰ The CNSAS archives have been especially important in understanding the inter-relationships between resistance and collectivization. I am presently trying to determine, with assistance from colleagues in Maramures, the order of collectivization throughout the region. No systematic list has come to light, hence we have to reconstruct this. However, my initial supposition regarding collectivization and Uniate resistance, despite variation, seems to be on track: see, for example, the communities of Calinesti, Rozavlea, Dragomiresti, Hoteni, Berbesti. I am grateful to Grigore Balea for assistance in reviewing in what communities Uniate priests resisted, changed, etc.

Archives

Arhiva Primarie Ieud
Arhiva Primarie Viseu de Sus

Consiului National pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securitatii

--Fond Informativ 3185

--Fond Documentar 7, 42.

-- Fond Penal 61, 84, 160, 248

Directia Judeteana Baie Mare a Arhivelor Nationale

--Fond 10: Comitetul Raional al PRM Viseu

--Fond 53: Oficiul Economic al jud. Maramures, Anii extremi: 1945-1949

--Fond 58: Camera Agricola a jud. Maramures--Consiliu Popular Sighet, Anii extremi:
1945-49

--Fond 274: Comitetul

--Fond 335: URCAP Viseu, 1959-1968

Directia Judeteana Bistrita-Nasaud a Arhivelor (CNSAS), the Directia Judeteana

--Fond 38: Sfatul Popular al Regiunii Rodna, Sectia Agricola

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APPENDIX: Popular Poetry

The following are translations of rhymed verses. (The translations are not, however, in rhyme.) The first four are composed by peasants. "Persuasion work" is the only one of these that was written (in a notebook); the others were recorded and transcribed. The last are "official" pro-collectivization examples.

1) A chiabura's song:

- For as long as I lived with my mother
- I was a young girl (then)
- Like a swallow's chick
- And dear to everyone.
- As long as I was (young and unmarried)
- I was very pampered
- And all the boys were after me
- Because in our (yard)
- There used to be horses and there used to be oxen
- And lots of sheep.
- There used to be cows
- And we were all healthy
- We didn't know any harm
- God had given us plenty
- There was a mill and a timber cutter
- A thresher
- My father was secretary to the village council,
- My uncles, all (gentle)men with education,
- My mother, the village midwife.
- My father brought (electrical) light
- For the first time to our village.
- He set up the plant,
- And bought oil for it.
- Nowhere was there electricity
- Like we had in our village.
- Only in the city
- Was the light bulb as bright as in my home.
- And when I got married
- I chose a young man from our village
- Handsome and wealthy
- Young and pleasant
- Handsome and pleasing
- And as tall as a fir tree;
- There was no other like him in the village.
- And filled with goodness
- I hadn't seen another like him in the villages
- And so good-hearted
- I don't know anyone like him.
- But the world changed
- And we came in harm's way a lot.
- It changed so that
- The last became the first [refers to social status]
- The last came to rule
- The first suffered
- Cel d-intai intemnitat
- The first (deserving) in jail
- The last, head of the village.
- Since the world changed,
- They took all of ours
- And put them in jail

- They took everything in our home
- They swept my attic clean
- They left no wheat, nor straw,
- No sheep in the sheepfold
- No oxen left, no horses,
- Not even a mug of cornmeal.
- They didn't take them all at once
- Today a horse, tomorrow a cow,
- Today 40 sheep,
- The day after tomorrow a pair of oxen.
- Until there was nothing left.
- They took everything to IRIC.
- We kept hearing rumors
- That it will soon be over,
- That in a month
- The Americans will come to our country.
- In a month, in a year,
- They will come across the ocean
- They will come and save us
- Make it as it used to be.
- But years and years passed
- And we ended up poor
- Without cows and oxen,
- Nothing but troubles.
- We lived to see a time
- When we had nothing to eat.
- Quotas and taxes kept growing,
- No one cared
- That you didn't have anything to eat
- And you couldn't pay.
- They kept coming,
- Coming to force you
- To give them your share.
- But, God, how can you give them
- When you don't have anything?
- Stables, barns, and attic, empty
- And in the house not even a blanket
- No cover/spread on the bed
- Oh God, what am I to do?
- Cause my husband's in jail,
- My children ask me for food
- And you dn't have anything to give them
- There's no corn flower left
- There's no milk 'cause there are no cows
- 'Cause they took everything from us
- Wheat, potatoes they took away,
- They swept my attic clean
- I ran through the village
- And I got all sorts of things
- From people in the village
- Who didn't have heavy taxes
- And who had paid already.
- I fed my children,
- I didn't let them starve.
- But when it was the hardest
- I didn't know what to do

- But it was God's almighty will
- That evil Stalin
- Evil and cursed
- The devil came and took him.
- I think he threw him in hell.
- He took him and he died.
- Stefan came home.
- The evil grew lesser
- He went to Butin and worked,
- We bought a cow again,
- We worked really hard
- Day and night, always
- We brought down the old house.
- We raised a new one in its place.
- We had two cows again,
- We made blankets
- We had horses again in our stable,
- We wanted to have all we needed
- But, see, it wasn't possible
- For people to accomplish what they wanted.
- I wanted to be gazde again
- To have two plows in the field,
- To have horses and to have oxen,
- And the sheepfold full of sheep again.
- But God made it so
- That my plan didn't work
- Because they came and forced us
- And we joined the collective,
- God, how upset I was.
- 'Cause I found myself poor again,
- Without horses and with one cow in the stable
- Poor me, I have no wealth
- No land and no power
- To turn the tables again
- To make the world as it used to be.
- But I see there is no power
- And there is no where to go
- Cause the village is in need
- And everywhere in the country is the same.
- Everywhere there's poverty,
- I don't know what comes next.
- I don't know what their going to achieve
- Because they're predators like wolves.
- Those who are now the leaders
- Didn't even make good shepherds
- You couldn't trust them
- They'd take care of pigs.
- Cause they didn't learn how to work
- They learned only to steal.
- They didn't learn to read
- They learned only to lie.
- They don't know how to make, how to give,
- They only want to take everything away from you.
- They're not good people
- They're first-class thieves
- They have no honor, no word

- They're (like) chaff in the wind.
- They feed on lies
- They drink and party
- They drink plum brandy, they drink beer,
- They drink the village wealth.
- All they do is lie and drink
- And take everything from people.
- They boast in the assembly
- And shout it out loud
- That ever since the world exists
- There haven't been such achievements as now.
- And they don't see, damn them,
- How hard life is now

2) P.A. lament

The year (19)49
 Broke our hearts in two
 The whole year long
 We didn't see the sun
 When they put us in jail
 In Oradea Mare (of all places)
 We were not (just) one or two
 There were five of us from our household
 Three women and two men
 They took all five of us, all bound
 Bound hands and feet
 As if we were animals
 They even covered our eyes
 Until we were out of the village
 We didn't (work the land)
 All we did was sit and eat
 The new bread from the state
 Measured precisely to the last gram
 Just enough not to starve
 Bits and crumbs
 Swallowed with tears
 When we came back home
 We didn't find a thing
 Our communists from the village
 Had confiscated everything we had
 In the house and in the stables
 Nothing was left
 Let God not help them
 They did us a lot of harm
 Let God settle with them
 For all the harm, they did to us...

3) "Persuasion work"

Why are you hesitating, Comrade?
 Whether you want it or not there's no way out of it
 Don't you know the whole country's
 For collectivization?

You'd better do it sooner
Join the collective with your family
Turn in the application, it costs
Twenty-five lei.

So that you gain your happiness
You only need to sign your name
Do it while it's possible
Right now, what are you waiting for?

You'll see how good it feels/is
To work in the collective
When from your own interests
You're for ever relieved.

(Go) ask Valenariu
And Stafanu-I Marie
How happy they are
To work in the collective.

I've been deluded
Believing anyone
Of those whose propaganda
Says wrong is right.

Worries that used to plague me
In the old days, day and night
Today I'm free of worries
They're someone else's now.

Those who lie in the shade all summer
Like dogs around the (shepherd's house)
Those who don't do any work
But push and shove you around.

And by signing my name
I became from ("gazda") a servant
With a fixed pay
Seven lei a day's work.

They took away my cart and wagon
They took my plow, they took my harrow
And everything I had/owed
And they gave me a spade

A heavy spade and a big spade
For me to dig that much every day
So I don't have/earn more than others
So we're all the same.

And to share our work's worth
With those who waste their summers
So they can live in laziness
After all, that's the way now in the whole country.

By Gavrilă Ples-Chindriș, in his personal memoir, "Colectivizare la Ieud: Marturisiri din celea petrecute"

4) C.G. 1988 Ieud

I was an only daughter
Like the sun and the moon
I was an only daughter
Like a moon among saints

Yes, only me and my brother
And we had everything aplenty
'Cause we had carts and oxen
And we had many sheep

And now, poor me
I only have my stomach and a dog
And my stomach yells it's hungry
'Cause today I haven't given it a thing

My dogs waits for me eagerly
When he sees me coming in
And I give him a piece of bread
'Cause I didn't have anything else

'Cause I have no one to take care of me
I have no one to earn for me
But I live with my spinning fork
And enjoy it.

And my relatives and my neighbors
'Cause we all got along well
One asks me over for a meal
Another one sees me home

I'm not going to work
Since I didn't have any land
Let them work
I gave the land to all three of them

I gave the land to the president
When he was in the council
They called on me all night

Only to make me sign
I didn't – I do what I think best
'Cause I have a soul to myself
And I want to make things good for myself

Their women let them,
They just walked all over the village
To other people's women
Because they liked everyone.

.....

Never mind, they're going to pay
For how they harassed people
They took away our flour
They confiscated our corn flour

5) Pro-Collective Song, GAC Scanteia, Ieud, 1950

The Party raised us
And sent us to school
Young men and women
So they know how to write letters
To write without a sigh
To Comrade Stalin
An so my man wrote to me
While he's in the army
To comfort me with his letter

The young collectivists cry out:
You, chiabure (rich peasant), and you, dog
I want to see you my servant
I'd push and shove you but wouldn't give you food

Whoever doesn't like our will
Can go hang themselves on the side of the hill.
Whoever doesn't like it willingly
Can go sit in jail

He who works in the collective
Doesn't have a problem
Because he has wheat and rye and he has things to take to the mill
He doesn't go abroad

On the collective:

I'm not a party member
But I work in the collective
I work and enjoy myself
Sas Maria is my name
And I tell you truthfully
That I spent years in vain
Crying and sighing
Because I had no land

I had no bread to eat
No clothes
My hair turned white
Always working for the (chiaburi/rich)

On March the fifth
I signed a contract
And we wrote ourselves down on paper
That we're going to work in the collective

We all got together
To achieve the state plan
The party helped us
With potatoes and with tractors
And all sorts of cereals
When we set to work
We sing and we enjoy ourselves

The plowmen with the plows
The drivers with the tractors
The women with the spades
So we (break the land?)
Behind the (something)
For the tractors to pass.
I tell you the truth
I love it in our village
I see the land is sown
On the hill and by the river
I see wheat fields everywhere
Everywhere spring cereals
According to the country's plan

I'm sorry I've grown old
And worked for strangers
I'm sorry I have no strength
And I can't go to work
Because I'm weak and have grown old
I'm not good for work anymore
They spiteful and angry
That we made the collective
And they judged us in the village
That we will die and go to hell
Let them judge us, never mind
'Cause we will die and go to heaven

Z, Suliteanu, "Viata Cantecului popular in c. Ieud," *Revista uniunii compozitorilor din RPR*. 1952, 44-56