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Abstract

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.