

The Vanishing Hectare Property And Value In Postsocialist Transylvania Culture And Society After Socialism

As the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011–2020 comes to a close and countries prepare to adopt a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, this edition of *The State of the World's Forests (SOFO)* examines the contributions of forests, and of the people who use and manage them, to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Forests cover just over 30 percent of the global land area, yet they provide habitat for the vast majority of the terrestrial plant and animal species known to science. Unfortunately, forests and the biodiversity they contain continue to be under threat from actions to convert the land to agriculture or unsustainable levels of exploitation, much of it illegal. *The State of the World's Forests 2020* assesses progress to date in meeting global targets and goals related to forest biodiversity and examines the effectiveness of policies, actions and approaches, in terms of both conservation and sustainable development outcomes. A series of case studies provide examples of innovative practices that combine conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity to create balanced solutions for both people and the planet.

Land is a significant and controversial topic in South Africa. Addressing the land

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claims of those dispossessed in the past has proved to be a demanding, multidimensional process. In many respects the land restitution program that was launched as part of the county's transition to democracy in 1994 has failed to meet expectations, with ordinary citizens, policymakers, and analysts questioning not only its progress but also its outcomes and parameters. *Land, Memory, Reconstruction, and Justice* brings together a wealth of topical material and case studies by leading experts in the field who present a rich mix of perspectives from politics, sociology, geography, social anthropology, law, history, and agricultural economics. The collection addresses both the material and the symbolic dimensions of land claims, in rural and urban contexts, and explores the complex intersection of issues confronting the restitution program, from the promotion of livelihoods to questions of rights, identity, and transitional justice. A valuable contribution to the field of land and agrarian studies, both in South Africa and internationally, it is undoubtedly the most comprehensive treatment to date of South Africa's postapartheid land claims process and will be essential reading for scholars and students of land reform for years to come.

Examines the transformation of the Russian electricity system during post-Soviet marketization, arguing for a view of economic and political development as mutually constitutive.

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In the wake of the Great Recession, housing and its financing suddenly re-emerged as questions of significant public concern. Yet both public and academic debates about housing have remained constricted, tending not to explore how the evolution of housing simultaneously entails basic forms of socio-spatial reproduction and underlying tensions in the political order. Drawing on cutting edge perspectives from urban studies, this book grants renewed, interdisciplinary energy to the housing question. It explores how housing raises a series of vexing issues surrounding rights, identity, and justice in the modern city. Through finely detailed studies that illuminate national and regional particularities- ranging from analyses of urban planning in the Soviet Union, the post-Katrina reconstruction of New Orleans, to squatting in contemporary Lima - the volume underscores how housing questions matter in a wide range of contexts. It draws attention to ruptures and continuities between high modernist and neoliberal forms of urbanism, demonstrating how housing and the dilemmas surrounding it are central to governance and the production of space in a rapidly urbanizing world.

Negotiating Rural Land Ownership in Southwest China offers the first comprehensive analysis of how China's current system of land ownership has evolved over the past six decades. Based on extended fieldwork in Yunnan

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Province, the author explores how the three major rural actors—local governments, village communities, and rural households—have contested and negotiated land rights at the grassroots level, thereby transforming the structure of rural land ownership in the People’s Republic of China. At least two million rural settlements (or “natural villages”) are estimated to exist in China today. Formed spontaneously out of settlement choices over extended periods of time, these rural settlements are fundamentally different from the present-day administrative villages imposed by the government from above. Yi Wu’s historical ethnography sheds light on such “natural villages” and their role in shaping the current land ownership system. Drawing on local land disputes, archival documents, and rich local histories, the author unveils their enduring social identities in both the Maoist and reform eras. She pioneers the concept of “bounded collectivism” to describe what resulted from struggles between the Chinese state trying to establish collective land ownership, and rural settlements seeking exclusive control over land resources within their traditional borders. A particular contribution of this book is that it provides a nuanced understanding of how and why China’s rural land ownership is changing in post-Mao China. Yi Wu uses village-level data to show how local governments, rural communities, and rural households compete for use, income, and transfer rights in both agricultural

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production and the land market. She demonstrates that the current rural land ownership system in China is not a static system imposed by the state from above, but a constantly changing hybrid.

Focusing upon a region in Southern Bulgaria, a region that has been the crossroads between Europe and Asia for many centuries, this book describes how former Ottoman Empire Muslims were transformed into citizens of Balkan nation-states. This is a region marked by shifting borders, competing Turkish and Bulgarian sovereignties, rival nationalisms, and migration. Problems such as these were ultimately responsible for the disintegration of the dynastic empires into nation-states. Land that had traditionally belonged to Muslims—individually or communally—became a symbolic and material resource for Bulgarian state building and was the terrain upon which rival Bulgarian and Turkish nationalisms developed in the wake of the dissolution of the late Ottoman Empire and the birth of early republican Turkey and the introduction of capitalism. By the outbreak of World War II, Turkish Muslims had become a polarized national minority. Their conflicting efforts to adapt to post-Ottoman Bulgaria brought attention to the increasingly limited availability of citizenship rights, not only to Turkish Muslims, but to Bulgarian Christians as well. ⁵

As an important contribution to debates on property theory and the role of law in

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creating, disputing, defining and refining property rights, this volume provides new theoretical material on property systems, as well as new empirically grounded case studies of the dynamics of property transformations. The property claimants discussed in these

'Rent from the Land' examines the effects of the massive political and economic changes of postsocialism on rural society and environment in Albania. Stahl argues that the area's postsocialist transformations led to changes in the creation and distribution of resource rent, which shifted land users' incentives and productive decision-making and ultimately led to environmental change. 'Rent from the Land' brings together five years of research on Albanian transformation, and breaks new ground by discussing postsocialist transformation from a political ecology perspective.

This book offers a unique and thought provoking exploration of how property concepts can be substantially reshaped to meet ecological challenges. It takes the discussion beyond its traditional parameters and offers new insights into conceptualizing and justifying property systems, in an age of ecological consequences.

Since 1989, scores of bodies across Eastern Europe have been exhumed and brought to rest in new gravesites. Katherine Verdery investigates why certain corpses—the

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bodies of revolutionary leaders, heroes, artists, and other luminaries, as well as more humble folk—have taken on a political life in the turbulent times following the end of Communist Party rule, and what roles they play in revising the past and reorienting the present. Enlivening and invigorating the dialogue on postsocialist politics, this imaginative study helps us understand the dynamic and deeply symbolic nature of politics—and how it can breathe new life into old bones.

A sophisticated comparative analysis of the doctrine of unjust enrichment.

Densification has been a central method of achieving smart, sustainable cities across the world. This book explores international examples of the property rights tensions involved in attempting to develop denser, more sustainable cities through compulsory acquisition of property. The case studies from Europe, North America, eastern Asia and Australia show how well, or not, property rights have been recognised in each country. Chapters explore the significance of local legal frameworks and institutions in accommodating property rights in the densification process. In particular, the case studies address the following issues and more: Whether compulsory acquisition to increase densification is justified in practice and in theory The specific public benefits given for compulsory acquisition The role the development industry plays in facilitating, encouraging or promoting compulsory acquisition What compensation or offsets are offered for acquisition, and how are they funded? Is there a local or national history of compulsory property acquisition by government for a range of purposes? Is compulsory

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acquisition restricted to certain types or locations of densification? Where existing housing is acquired, are there obligations to provide alternative housing arrangements? The central aim of the book is to summarize international experiences of the extent to which property rights have or have not been protected in the use of compulsory property acquisition to achieve sustainable cities via urban densification. It is essential reading for all those interested in planning law, property rights, environmental law, urban studies, sustainable urban development and land use policy.

During more than a century of colonial rule over Algeria, the French state shaped and reshaped the meaning and practice of Muslim law by regulating it and circumscribing it to the domain of family law, while applying the French Civil Code to appropriate the property of Algerians. In *Sex, Law, and Sovereignty in French Algeria, 1830–1930*, Judith Surkis traces how colonial authorities constructed Muslim legal difference and used it to deny Algerian Muslims full citizenship. In disconnecting Muslim law from property rights, French officials increasingly attached it to the bodies, beliefs, and personhood. Surkis argues that powerful affective attachments to the intimate life of the family and fantasies about Algerian women and the sexual prerogatives of Muslim men, supposedly codified in the practices of polygamy and child marriage, shaped French theories and regulatory practices of Muslim law in fundamental and lasting ways. Women's legal status in particular came to represent the dense relationship between sex and sovereignty in the colony. This book also highlights the ways in which

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Algerians interacted with and responded to colonial law. Ultimately, this sweeping legal genealogy of French Algeria elucidates how "the Muslim question" in France became—and remains—a question of sex.

Presents the political, social, and cultural context behind Ottoman charity.

Katherine Verdery analyzes the 2,781 page surveillance file the Romanian secret police compiled on her during her research trips to Transylvania in the 1970s and 1980s.

Reading it led her to question her identity and also revealed how deeply the secret police was embedded in everyday life.

Eastern European societies underwent large-scale deprivations of property by the authoritarian regimes, beginning after World War II, largely ending with the last waves of the kolkhoz movement in the early 1960s. Kuti examines property reparations that took place after 1989, from the perspective of constitutional justice, the rule of law, but also from the point of view of identity politics.

In this volume, ownership is defined as the simple fact of being able to describe something as 'mine' or 'yours', and property is distinguished as the discursive field which allows the articulation of attendant rights, relationships, and obligations. Property is often articulated through legalism as a way of thinking that appeals to rules and to generalizing concepts as a way of understanding, responding to, and managing the world around one. An Aristotelian perspective suggests that ownership is the natural state of things and a prerequisite of a true sense of self. An alternative perspective from

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legal theory puts law at the heart of the origins of property. However, both these points of view are problematic in a wider context, the latter because it rests heavily on Roman law. Anthropological and historical studies enable us to interrogate these assumptions. The articles here, ranging from Roman provinces to modern-day piracy in Somalia, address questions such as: How are legal property regimes intertwined with economic, moral-ethical, and political prerogatives? How far do the assumptions of the western philosophical tradition explain property and ownership in other societies? Is the 'bundle of rights' a useful way to think about property? How does legalism negotiate property relationships and interests between communities and individuals? How does the legalism of property respond to the temporalities and materialities of the objects owned? How are property regimes managed by states, and what kinds of conflicts are thus generated? Property and ownership cannot be reduced to natural rights, nor do they straightforwardly reflect power relations: the rules through which property is articulated tend to be conceptually subtle. As the fourth volume in the Legalism series, this collection draws on common themes that run throughout the first three volumes: Legalism: Anthropology and History, Legalism: Community and Justice, and Legalism: Rules and Categories consolidating them in a framework that suggests a new approach to legal concepts.

In 1949, Romania's fledgling communist regime unleashed a radical and brutal campaign to collectivize agriculture in this largely agrarian country, following the Soviet

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model. *Peasants under Siege* provides the first comprehensive look at the far-reaching social engineering process that ensued. Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery examine how collectivization assaulted the very foundations of rural life, transforming village communities that were organized around kinship and status hierarchies into segments of large bureaucratic organizations, forged by the language of "class warfare" yet saturated with vindictive personal struggles. Collectivization not only overturned property relations, the authors argue, but was crucial in creating the Party-state that emerged, its mechanisms of rule, and the "new persons" that were its subjects. The book explores how ill-prepared cadres, themselves unconvinced of collectivization's promises, implemented technologies and pedagogies imported from the Soviet Union through actions that contributed to the excessive use of force, which Party leaders were often unable to control. In addition, the authors show how local responses to the Party's initiatives compelled the regime to modify its plans and negotiate outcomes. Drawing on archival documents, oral histories, and ethnographic data, *Peasants under Siege* sheds new light on collectivization in the Soviet era and on the complex tensions underlying and constraining political authority.

In this brief volume, Stephen C. Russell introduces biblical scholars to the interdisciplinary study of space and its related concepts, including land and territory. He summarizes several approaches to the study of space, focussing especially on the work of Henri Lefebvre. Lively debates around property, access to resources, legal rights, and the protection of

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livelihoods have unfolded in Vietnam since the economic reforms of 1986. Known as Doi Moi (changing to the new), these have gradually transformed the country from a socialist state to a society in which a communist party presides over a neoliberal economy. By exploring the complex relationship between property, the state, society, and the market, this book demonstrates how both developmental issues and state-society relations in Vietnam can be explored through the prism of property relations and property rights. The essays in this collection demonstrate how negotiations over property are deeply enmeshed with dynamics of state formation, and covers debates over the role of the state and its relationship to various levels of society, the intrusion of global forces into the lives of marginalized communities and individuals, and how community norms and standards shape and reshape national policy and laws. With contributors from around the world, this book will be of great interest to students and scholars of East and Southeast Asian studies, including politics, culture, society, and law, as well as those interested in the role of the state and property relations more generally.

How has it come about that indigenous cultures, body parts, and sequences of musical notes are considered property? How has the movement from collective to privatized systems affected notions of property? At what point in transaction chains do native cultures, indigenous medicines, or cyberdata become objects and therefore propertized, and what are the social, economic, and ethical considerations for such transformations? Addressing these hotly contested issues and many more, *Property in Question* interrogates the very concept of property and what is happening to it in the contemporary world, in case studies ranging from Romania to Kazakhstan, Africa to North America. The book examines not only the changing character of the property concept, but also its ideological foundations and political usages.

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Authors address bio-transactions, music copyright, cyberspace, oil prospecting, debates over privatization of land and factories, and dilemmas arising with new forms of ownership of businesses. Offering a fresh perspective on contemporary economic transformation, this volume is a long overdue investigation of the power of the private property concept, as well as an exploration of how the global economy may be subtly, even invisibly, changing what property means and how we relate to it.

This edited collection illustrates contestations over land and political authority in South Africa's rural areas, focusing on threats to popular rights and how they are being supported.

The Rights and Wrongs of Land Restitution: 'Restoring What Was Ours' offers a critical, comparative ethnographic, examination of land restitution programs. Drawing on memories and histories of past dispossession, governments, NGOs, informal movements and individual claimants worldwide have attempted to restore and reclaim rights in land. Land restitution programs link the past and the present, and may allow former landholders to reclaim lands which provided the basis of earlier identities and livelihoods. Restitution also has a moral weight that holds broad appeal; it is represented as righting injustice and healing the injuries of colonialism. Restitution may have unofficial purposes, like establishing the legitimacy of a new regime, quelling popular discontent, or attracting donor funds. It may produce unintended consequences, transforming notions of property and ownership, entrenching local bureaucracies, or replicating segregated patterns of land use. It may also constitute new relations between states and their subjects. Land-claiming communities may make new claims on the state, but they may also find the state making unexpected claims on their land and livelihoods. Restitution may be a route to citizenship, but it may engender new or neo-

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traditional forms of subjection. This volume explores these possibilities and pitfalls by examining cases from the Americas, Eastern Europe, Australia and South Africa. Addressing the practical and theoretical questions that arise, *The Rights and Wrongs of Land Restitution* thereby offers a critical rethinking of the links between land restitution and property, social transition, injustice, citizenship, the state and the market.

The current transformation of many Eastern European societies is impossible to understand without comprehending the intellectual struggles surrounding nationalism in the region. Anthropologist Katherine Verdery shows how the example of Romania suggests that current ethnic tensions come not from a resurrection of pre-Communist Nationalism but from the strengthening of national ideologies under Communist Party rule.

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Among the first anthropologists to work in Eastern Europe, Katherine Verdery had built up a significant base of ethnographic and historical expertise when the major political transformations in the region began to take place. In this collection of essays dealing with the aftermath of Soviet-style socialism and the different forms that may replace it, she explores the nature of socialism in order to understand more fully its consequences. By analyzing her primary data from Romania and Transylvania and synthesizing information from other sources, Verdery lends a distinctive anthropological perspective to a variety of themes common to political and economic studies on the end of socialism: themes such as "civil society," the creation of market economies, privatization, national and ethnic conflict, and changing gender relations. Under Verdery's examination, privatization and civil society appear not only as social

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processes, for example, but as symbols in political rhetoric. The classic pyramid scheme is not just a means of enrichment but a site for reconceptualizing the meaning of money and an unusual form of post-Marxist millenarianism. Land being redistributed as private property stretches and shrinks, as in the imaginings of the farmers struggling to tame it. Infused by this kind of ethnographic sensibility, the essays reject the assumption of a transition to capitalism in favor of investigating local processes in their own terms.

What makes private property valuable, desirable or workable? This book focuses on social and economic dimensions of private property after the agrarian reforms of 1996 in Azerbaijan. It looks at the kinds of land and cultivation strategies emerging in the decades after the fall of the Soviet Union and asks why rural households were often unwilling to cultivate the privatized land shares they received for free, despite the threat and existence of rural poverty.

Consideration is given both to households which were engaging in cultivation and those which were not. This includes internally displaced persons who were formally excluded from the privatization process but were nevertheless successful and eager cultivators. How and why were they keen on using land? How far does private property thrive on its own, without the support of lucrative markets or without the implementation of state sponsored economic policies? Through the lens and insights provided by economic anthropology, this study chronicles the historical legacy of authoritarian state structures, as well as the contemporary micro- and macro-economic struggles that mark a politics of property after socialism.

Winner of the 2017 James M. Blaut Award from the Cultural and Political Ecology Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers
Honorable Mention for the 2016 Book Prize from the Association for Political and Legal Anthropology Since the

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1960s, when Brazil first encouraged large-scale Amazonian colonization, violence and confusion have often accompanied national policies concerning land reform, corporate colonization, indigenous land rights, environmental protection, and private homesteading. *Conjuring Property* shows how, in a region that many perceive to be stateless, colonists - from highly capitalized ranchers to landless workers - adopt anticipatory stances while they await future governance intervention regarding land tenure. For Amazonian colonists, property is a dynamic category that becomes salient in the making: it is conjured through papers, appeals to state officials, and the manipulation of landscapes and memories of occupation. This timely study will be of interest to development studies scholars and practitioners, conservation ecologists, geographers, and anthropologists.

This ambitious work is the definitive account of Russia's land reform initiatives from the late 1980s to today. In Russia, a country controlling more land than any other nation, land ownership is central to structures of power, class division, and agricultural production. The aim of Russian land reform for the past thirty years--to undo the collectivization of the Soviet era and encourage public ownership--has been largely unsuccessful. To understand this failure, Stephen Wegren examines contemporary land reform policies in terms of legislation, institutional structure, and human behavior. Using extensive survey data, he analyzes household behaviors in regard to land ownership and usage based on socioeconomic status, family size, demographic distribution, and

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regional differences. Wegren's study is important and timely, as Russian land reform will have a profound effect on Russia's ability to compete in an era of globalization. This book explains the origins of Chinese land politics and explores how property rights and urban growth strategies differ among Chinese cities.

Capitalist private property in land and buildings – real estate – is the ground of modern cities, materially, politically, and economically. It is foundational to their development and core to much theoretical work on the urban environment. It is also a central, pressing matter of political contestation in contemporary cities. Yet it remains largely without a history. This Element examines the modern city as a propertied space, defining real estate as a technology of (dis)possession and using it to move across scales of analysis, from the local spatiality of particular built spaces to the networks of legal, political, and economic imperatives that constitute property and operate at national and international levels. This combination of territorial embeddedness with more wide-ranging institutional relationships charts a route to an urban history that allows the city to speak as a global agent and artefact without dispensing with the role of states and local circumstance.

Governments own a vast array of real property--from large stretches of land to public housing projects, from water distribution systems and roads to office buildings. Typically, management of public property is highly fragmented, with responsibility for each type of asset falling within a different agency or bureaucracy. In almost all

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countries, different classes of property are managed according to their own rules, often following traditional practices rather than any assessment of what type of management is appropriate. Over the past decade, however, a new discipline has emerged that examines this important component of public wealth and seeks to apply standards of economic efficiency and effective organizational management. *Managing Government Property Assets* reviews and analyzes this recent wave of activity. The authors draw upon a wide variety of national and local practices, both in countries that have been leaders in management reforms and in countries just beginning to wrestle with the problem. This comparison reveals that the issues of public property management are surprisingly similar in different countries, despite striking differences in institutional contexts and policy solutions.

In most countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the fall of communism opened up the possibility for individuals to acquire land. Based on Katherine Verdery's extensive fieldwork between 1990 and 2001, *The Vanishing Hectare* explores the importance of land and land ownership to the people of one Transylvanian community, Aurel Vlaicu. Verdery traces how collectivized land was transformed into private property, how land was valued, what the new owners were able to do with it, and what it signified to each of the different groups vying for land rights. Verdery tells this story about transforming socialist property forms in a global context, showing the fruitfulness of conceptualizing property as a political symbol, as a

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complex of social relations among people and things, and as a process of assigning value. This book is a window on rural life after socialism but it also provides a framework for assessing the neo-liberal economic policies that have prevailed elsewhere, such as in Latin America. Verdery shows how the trajectory of property after socialism was deeply conditioned by the forms property took in socialism itself; this is in contrast to the image of a "tabula rasa" that governed much thinking about post-socialist property reform.

This is the first detailed "grass roots" account of Uzbekistan's protracted decollectivisation process. It explores continuity and the change in relations between rural communities, agricultural producers, and the local state authorities in the cotton-growing region of Khorezm. Built up during the Soviet period, the cotton sector has maintained its importance for the state and for rural communities in the years following independence, although economic parameters and social conditions have worsened significantly. Uzbekistan's agricultural reform path does not follow that of most post-socialist scenarios and continuity with the past remains strong. Despite seeming immobility, the local view on rural society presented in this book unveils an unexpectedly dynamic situation, characterized by shifts in patronage relations, struggles over legitimacy, and transformations in family structure and community life. Poised between the state, their communities, and an emerging stratum of absentee farm "sponsors," the focus is on the new farmers ("fermer") and their struggles for a

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place in rural society. What emerges from decollectivisation is a complexly articulated new agrarian concern: its new inequalities are rooted in the political economy of cotton. (Series: Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia - Vol. 23)

Scientists predict that the environment over the next 100 years will be threatened by severe challenges--the loss of biodiversity, expected changes in world-wide climate, and decreasing amounts of arable land and potable water for an exploding human population. All of these will greatly impact how the earth will be able to support life in the future. And at the center of these global environmental changes are developments in land use. Over the last 300 years, and in particular the last 50 years, the earth's land has been altered drastically as a result of increasing industrialization and urbanization worldwide, as well as by changes in agricultural techniques in lands under cultivation. These developments raise troubling questions about our future: How will these changes affect the sustainability of certain types of land use? How will they impinge upon critical regions, like rainforests and deserts? Will the earth be able to provide for the basic human needs of food, shelter, and water?

The subject matter of the volume is part of larger research agenda on the process of land collectivization in the former communist camp, focusing on state, identity and property. The main innovation of the volume is to apply recent interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the collectivization process, asking what types of new peasant-state relations it formed and how it transformed notions of self, persons, and

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things (such as land). The project conceived of changes in the system of ownership as causing changes in the identity and attitude of people; similarly, it regarded the study of personal identities as essential for understanding changes in the system of ownership. This perspective is rare in the area-studies approaches to the topic.

Comparative Property Law provides a comprehensive treatment of property law from a comparative and global perspective. The contributors, who are leading experts in their fields, cover both classical and new subjects, including the transfer of property, the public-private divide in property law, water and forest laws, and the property rights of aboriginal peoples. This Handbook maps the structure and the dynamics of property law in the contemporary world and will be an invaluable reference for researchers working in all domains of property law.

Recent decades have witnessed the transition from the government of rural areas towards processes of governance in which the boundaries between the state and civil society are blurred. As a result, governance is commonly linked to 'bottom-up' or community-based approaches to planning and development, which are said to 'empower' rural citizens and liberate them from the disabling structures of top-down government control. At the same time, however, a range of other actors beyond the local level have also become increasingly influential in determining the future of rural spaces, thereby embedding rural citizens within new configurations of power relations. This book critically explores the social causes and consequences of these emerging

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governance arrangements. In particular, the book seeks to move beyond questions of empowerment in governance debates and to consider how new kinds of power relations arise between the various actors involved. The book addresses questions concerning the nature of power relations in contemporary forms of rural governance, including: how community participation is negotiated and achieved; the effects of such participation upon the formulation and delivery of rural policies; the kinds of conflicts that arise between various stakeholder groups and the capacity of each group to promote its interests; and the prospects of this new approach for enhanced democratic governance in rural areas.

Property is a complex phenomenon comprising cultural, social, and legal rules. During the twentieth century, property rights in land suffered massive interference in Central and Eastern Europe. The promise of universal and formally equal rights of land ownership, ensuring predictability of social processes and individual autonomy, was largely not fulfilled. The national appropriation of property in the interwar period and the communist era represent an onerous legacy for the postcommunist (re)construction of a liberal-individualist property regime. However, as the scholars in this collection show, after the demise of communism in Eastern Europe property is again a major factor in shaping individual identity and in providing the political order and culture with a foundational institution. This volume analyzes both historical and contemporary forms of land ownership in Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia in a multidisciplinary framework

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including economic history, legal and political studies, and social anthropology. Between the early seventeenth century and the early twentieth, nearly all the land in the United States was transferred from American Indians to whites. How did Indians actually lose their land? Stuart Banner argues that neither simple coercion nor simple consent reflects the complicated legal history of land transfers. Instead, time, place, and the balance of power between Indians and settlers decided the outcome of land struggles.

As Katherine Verdery observes, "There's nothing like reading your secret police file to make you wonder who you really are." In 1973 Verdery began her doctoral fieldwork in the Transylvanian region of Romania, ruled at the time by communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. She returned several times over the next twenty-five years, during which time the secret police—the Securitate—compiled a massive surveillance file on her. Reading through its 2,781 pages, she learned that she was "actually" a spy, a CIA agent, a Hungarian agitator, and a friend of dissidents: in short, an enemy of Romania. In *My Life as a Spy* she analyzes her file alongside her original field notes and conversations with Securitate officers. Verdery also talks with some of the informers who were close friends, learning the complex circumstances that led them to report on her, and considers how fieldwork and spying can be easily confused. Part memoir, part detective story, part anthropological analysis, *My Life as a Spy* offers a personal account of how government surveillance worked during the Cold War and how Verdery

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experienced living under it.

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