

EAST EUROPEAN PEASANTRIES:  
Social Relations: An Annotated  
Bibliography of Periodical Articles

*Compiled by*

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## Introduction

Between the two World Wars the countries of Eastern Europe were often described as a "peasant belt" which stretched from the Baltic to the Aegean. In all of them except Czechoslovakia the rural population represented a decided majority. Today, all of the countries except Greece are under the leadership of a Communist Party which has ushered in many changes designed to bring about economic development and to change the prewar class structure in keeping with socialist principles. Collectivization of agriculture was begun in these countries but was set aside in Poland and Yugoslavia while being vigorously pursued in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. One way of tracing social change in each of these countries is to note what has happened to the "peasantries." Today new terms describe various types of rural people, such as agricultural cooperators, peasant-workers, and leaders of some countries maintain that they no longer have a peasantry. For our purposes, however, the focus upon peasantries is a useful way of organizing a wide variety of articles dealing with rural life both before and after World War II in Eastern Europe.

The titles included in this bibliography refer to periodical articles collected and bound in thirty volumes by countries. They are available in the Reference Room of the Mugar Library at Boston University. It is important to stress that this bibliographical volume is Part I, indicating that the first thirty volumes are just the first phase in the collecting and making available in one place of articles in any language which relate to East European peasantries. Even though this project is incomplete, it seemed useful to share with the scholarly community the titles with annotation of the articles already located. This makes it possible for those whose works are not represented to call them to the attention of the compilers so that a more complete collection will result.

Because of the broad panorama of rural life in eight countries, some principles have to guide the selection. The central interest is the social relations among the rural people and between them and other segments of the society. Since social relations do not exist in a vacuum, a number of articles which describe the setting for and factors which influence these relations are included: demographic, eco-



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nomic, cultural. Technical articles which shed little light on social life are omitted as are those which deal solely with material culture traits. Nor are newspaper articles ordinarily included. All historical periods are eligible as well as articles representing various ideological perspectives. Books and monographs are not listed since the purpose of the collection is limited to that of bringing together widely scattered periodical materials not always readily available even in the libraries with very large holdings.

The collection being described is one of the results of a three-year (1972-1974) Symposium on East European Peasantries sponsored by the Inter-university Consortium for East European Studies (Boston, Brown and Harvard universities). Ten seminars were held under the leadership of Professors Albert Lord of Harvard, Thomas Winner of Brown, and Irwin Sanders of Boston University. Each was attended by scholars from East European countries as well as by representatives of the three sponsoring universities. A grant from the Ford Foundation underwrote the Symposium.

Special recognition is due to those who gave freely of their time to annotate the articles included here. Andrew Lass (University of Massachusetts at Amherst) assisted with the articles in Czech, Marida Hollos of Brown University with those in Hungarian, Tom Cheatham (Brown University) and John Moge (Boston University) with the Romanian articles, while the compilers listed here dealt with the rest. The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, through its Institute of Sociology, drew up a very helpful bibliography whose titles are included but many of whose items are not annotated because of insufficient time to locate the sources and prepare the summary comments. A special effort is being made to collect articles on Albania, not included in the present work.

Even though we present here what is obviously the first part of a more extensive project, we believe that this list of articles will be useful not only to specialists on Eastern Europe seeking more references about rural life there, but also to those not specializing in this area. The latter will find a wealth of material for the comparative studies in sociology, political science, economics, geography, anthropology and history. In fact, many of the articles are of interest to more than one discipline because they are problem-focused. They also provide a general background for the specialist seeking a better understanding of statistical series with which he may be dealing or of agrarian reforms, local governmental structures, regional plans, the effect of migration upon family and community life, or the role of mass organizations in rural areas. For those unfamiliar with studies on Eastern Europe we hope that this volume will prove a discovery in that it opens up new sources of data all of which are now located in one collection.

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