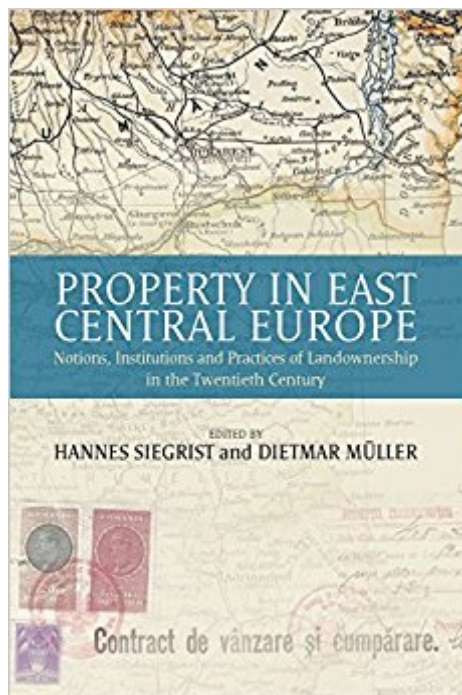




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Property In East Central Europe: Notions, Institutions, And Practices Of Landownership In The Twentieth Century



Synopsis

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 including economic history, legal and political studies, and social anthropology.

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"Especially now that Neoliberalism remains without any recognizable alternative model, it is a valuable task for historians not to accept concepts of ownership as given but to describe them in their historical variability. Here the volume evokes contradiction, but also shows just how varied the rural ownership relations were, to what degree they served political ends and how creatively the affected population handled the frequently changing legal propositions. For this reason, it offers manifold ideas and inspirations for future work dealing with rural property." *H-Soz-Kult* "...will prove significant in the field, and the focus of debate and controversy. The content is wide-ranging,

cogent and coherent... The contributors are also the foremost experts in their fields... The geographical coverage of the book as a whole is admirably wide... [it] evinces a good balance between theory and methodology, and 'thick description'." – David Sugarman, Lancaster University "The major contribution of this volume is the comparative perspective on several different regions and countries and the significant differences in their experiences of property systems and of land policy transformations over the course of the 20th century... Other works exist on the post socialist transformations in Eastern Europe, but most lack the historical perspective on land policy change over the longer time frame that this volume addresses." – Melanie G. Wiber, University of New Brunswick

Hannes Siegrist is Professor for social and cultural history of modern and contemporary Europe at the University of Leipzig. He is the co-editor of *Comparativ. Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und Vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* and the book-series "Moderne europäische Geschichte" with Wallstein Verlag, Göttingen. His publications include *Intellectual Property Rights and Globalization* (special issue of *Comparativ*, 2011), *Eigentum im internationalen Vergleich: 18.-20. Jahrhundert* (with David Sugarman, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1999). Dietmar Mäler has conducted and coordinated research projects on land ownership and legal culture in East Central Europe at the University of Leipzig and at the Centre for the History and Culture of East Central Europe at the same university. In 2012/13 he was Fellow at the Imre Kertész Kolleg in Jena. Among his property-related publications are the co-edited volume *Transforming Rural Societies* (with Angela Harre, StudienVerlag 2010) and *Institutionen und Kultur in Südosteuropa* (with Wim van Meurs, Otto Sagner 2013).

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