Rent from the Land

A Political Ecology of Postsocialist Rural Transformation

Johannes Stahl



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Glossary | vii |
|---|------|
| List of Abbreviations and Acronyms | ix |
| List of Illustrations | xi |
| Acknowledgements | xiii |
| Chapter 1. Introduction | 1 |
| The Political Economy of Postsocialist Transformation | 4 |
| Political Ecology and Rent | 5 |
| Access and Access Control | 7 |
| Access Mechanisms in Postsocialism | 8 |
| The Transformation of Value | 10 |
| A Political Ecology Theory of Postsocialist Land Use Change | 11 |
| The Plan of the Book | 12 |
| Chapter 2. Albanian Socialism | 15 |
| Isolation, Poverty, Repression and Ideology | 16 |
| Socialist Land Use | 18 |
| From Resistance to Breakdown | 22 |
| Kodra, Bagëtia and Dardha in Late Socialism | 24 |
| Chapter 3. Patterns of Land Use Change | 29 |
| The Fragmentation of Land Use | 29 |
| Inter-Village Intensification and Extensification | 34 |
| Intra-Village Intensification and Extensification | 39 |
| Forest Degradation | 44 |

| Chapter 4. Unmaking Socialist Agriculture: The Dissolution of Collective Structures | 47 |
|---|-----|
| The Fragmentation of the Plot Structure | 47 |
| Impediments to Land Consolidation | 54 |
| Changes in Collective Action | 62 |
| Chapter 5. Unraveling the Socialist Countryside: Differentiation among Villages and its Effects on Land Use | 65 |
| The Political Ecology of Land Use in Kodra, Bagëtia and Dardha | 66 |
| Factors Differentiating Land Use among Villages | 73 |
| Broader Socioeconomic Differentiation among Villages | 76 |
| Chapter 6. The Crisis of Capital and Labor: Effects on Land Use within Villages | 81 |
| _ | - |
| The Dependence on Land, Capital and Labor in | 81 |
| Agricultural Production The Mechanisms of Access to Land, Capital and Labor | 83 |
| Access to Capital and Labor and Land Use Outputs | 87 |
| Access Differences among Households | 88 |
| Spatial Patterns of Land Use within Villages | 93 |
| Chapter 7. The Fate of the Postsocialist Forest | 97 |
| Albanian Forests after Socialism | 99 |
| Peasant Resistance and Custom in Kodra's Chestnut Forests | 101 |
| Anarchy and Communal Management of Forest in Dardha | 103 |
| Massive Logging and State Corruption in Forests Around Bagëtia | 109 |
| Chapter 8. Rent from the Land | 117 |
| Shifting Rent Dynamics and Land Use Change | 117 |
| Rural Transformation and Albania's Accession | |
| to the European Union | 119 |
| Notes | 121 |
| Bibliography | 129 |
| Index | 135 |