

THE EVOLUTION OF ROMANIAN VILLAGE THROUGH COOPERATION

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Abstract: *Romanian village was found in a continuous transformation process, fact which has led to the transformation of the rural localities specific and both of the demographic, occupational and values coordinates of the population. The cooperation movement from Romania has an old tradition, the first forms of association in rural area being born in Transylvania in 1851. The Romanian agricultural cooperative has continuously grown in the years of the Great Depression from 1929-1933, being recommended the involvement of the cooperatives in grain trade in order to eliminate the intermediaries and adopting a more efficient production structure. The cooperation in communist Romania (1948-1989) is characterized by the existence of the Agricultural Production Cooperatives, which had a benefic effect on the development of Romanian agriculture in general and especially on the Romanian village, but they reached the upper limit of the progressive potential long before the 1989 and did not have too much common elements with the principles of Western cooperation. Currently the Romanian village is a semi-abandoned place, the appreciation being the number one priority for its reconstruction. It is the only solution in order to development the agriculture and crafts circles. Romanian Agriculture after 1989 and Romanian villages such as had some changes less spectacular as in other fields of activity. The changes of the ownership regime and the redefinition of the economic life coordinates registered in Romania after 1989 have led to the appearance of a new social economic reality in rural area.*

Key words: *cooperation, agricultural cooperation, forms of association, cooperative property, rural area*

INTRODUCTION

The traditional Romanian village has suffer the first significant structural changes once with the establishment of the communist regime, after 1989 the Romanian rural entering a new phase of evolution characterized through economic difficulties and through increasing of the rural heterogeneity.

Cooperatist ideas penetrate in Romania under the influence of the West even since the first half of the nineteenth century, developing continuously until the communist period. After 1989 Romanian agriculture and Romanian village goes through a stage of profound structural crisis in which the main element is represented through the predominance of traditional agriculture in small traditional peasant households focused on self-consumption.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this article the subject addressed represents a topical issue, and the research methods and procedures used were the traditional ones, such as: the analysis, the synthesis, the comparison, the direct and indirect observation, the description, the evaluation and the interpretation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Under the influence of Western world the cooperative ideas penetrate in Romania through the first half of the nineteenth century.

Romania started the cooperative movement in the city as savings banks, of the associations with private character of cooperative credit.

In rural area the promoters of cooperative movement were Ion Ionescu from Brad, agronomist important, representative of Romanian agricultural sciences and Spiru Haret, sociologist, politician, who is considered the founder of the popular cooperative banks.

In 1870 were founded the basis of economy and credit society "the Economy". In the period 1891-1902 appear many cooperative credit societies called "popular peasant banks" that marks the affirmation of cooperative movement from Romania and the development of Romanian village on this basis.

In 1898, Spiru Haret becomes the main supporter of the organization and expansion of the cooperative movement and the initiator of the first law of cooperation.

At the creation of the International Cooperative Alliance from 1895, Romania is a founding member, the deputy Dimitrie C. Butculescu being a part from its management.[1]

Between the years 1920-1922 in Romania were organized 296 cooperatives with a capital of 1318 million lei, and between the years 1925-1928 there is registered a strong development of cooperative movement, registering over 11000 cooperatives of all types.[2]

During the communist period, after the Second World War, specifically during 1949-1962, in Romania is carried out the so-called process of agriculture collectivization which consist in the confiscation of almost all private agricultural properties from the country and their merging in agricultural farms managed by the state. [4]

After December 1989, in Romanian agriculture were taken place changes less structural and by volume of production, but major in terms of structure, ownership, employment and export-import relations. [5]

The transition to a market economy has brought major changes in terms of consume, credit cooperation, that has not corresponded to the requirements of the transition period.[6]

The privatization of Romanian agriculture is completed since 2004 when the private sector already accounted 97,3% from the value of production.

In last years farmers across the whole world are faced with a fundamental strategic decision, namely choosing a favorable action in unsafe conditions to create viable agricultural holdings, profitable, resistant to competition with outlet markets and accessing financial funds.

To develop these holdings and development of the Romanian village, in generally, it is necessary to realize different forms of association, such as agricultural production cooperatives, producer groups and producer organizations.

In Romania, about 37% from the population working in agricultural activity having about 3 million hectares with an average area of 1,5 hectares, being required the organization of farmers in associative forms. [3]

Cooperatives of agricultural production must work in the following fields of activity: provision of services, purchases and sales, processing of agricultural products, operation and management of agricultural land, forestry, fisheries, financing, mutual assistance, agricultural insurance and agricultural production cooperative must carry out priority commercial assistance.

The cooperative international principles must stand also at the base of functioning of agricultural production cooperatives from Romania. For cooperative property the private character should be enshrined through a normative in order to eliminate the trends from the past regime, present today in some communes in witch their management believe that they have the right to dispose by the cooperative property.

Historical, economic, social and cultural development of the Romanian village underlines the fact that it is a specific social entity having a productive function and economic one.

Appears the necessity to better know the real capacity, natural and human for all activities from rural areas.

The development of Romanian village, its modernization has both a social, urban justification but also social and economic regarding the living standards and the needs of individuals, but also the level of production, ways of its enhancing and the forms that agricultural holding takes.

So, in the traditional Romanian village must be conducted also the complementary activities and collateral to agriculture.

The restructuring of the Romanian economy in the last 25 years has led to the fact that agriculture has become the main source of income for an important segment of the rural population dismissed or who have not found a job. In this way, the employment in agriculture has adopted the categories of the population most vulnerable to changes that occurred after 1989. So rural from today are faced with a new social and economic reality.

Low productivity of agricultural holdings is given by the large number of holdings with small areas and the use at small-scale of modern technologies and over employment in agriculture of the rural population.

The critical point of the Romanian village is given by the specific of subsistence or semi subsistence farming activities or carried out by the population that is situated in different stages of economic underdevelopment.

At the level of 2015 and the beginning of 2016, even if the pressure of reorganization and efficiency of agricultural system is growing, the traditional forms of work organization prevail. At more than 25 years since the end of communist period, Romania imports a large part of the agro-food products necessary to internal market, while its agricultural potential remains not capitalized.

The profitability of agriculture sector and Romanian village development is related to solving the excessive fragmentation of agricultural holdings, so land consolidation, encouraging the association and cooperation between small producers and also orientation of the production through the market represent the main steps to be realized in the future.

Romanian cooperation from interwar period could be a model to follow also in the current period, of course adapted to Romania's concrete conditions of the year 2016 and ahead to the years 2020-2025.

Interwar cooperation from Romania recognized the ownership right, those who associate themselves working for them putting in common the resources, but that does not mean that they actually have everything and nothing, specific to communist period. In the interwar period 1,5 million Romanians worked in cooperation. There were in addition to cooperatives of work in common of the land also the cooperative of marketing the agricultural products, and cooperatives of electrical energy distribution, the stores of the cooperation, popular banks built in the same cooperative system.

In the interwar cooperatives, model for follow for the contemporary cooperatives from Romania there were two principles, namely: the social principle and economic principle that are always in balance. So, do not dominate neither the economic, meaning the maximization of profit with any price, neither the social side at the expense of profit.

The actual Romanian village, at 25 years after the revolution, goes through a stage of redefinition determined by a series of economic processes, as will be: refreshing, restructuring of the economy, the urban-rural migration, abroad migration, intensive development of localities near the large cities, depopulation of isolated rural localities. The unequal development of Romanian villages is a strong reality in current Romanian society. Investments that benefited rural localities near the urban area were reflected also into the living standard of the population.

The current development of all Romanian villages depends by the economic progress of the society, any sectorial approach should take into account by the general economic

context. For example it can not be spoken by the overcoming of practicing the subsistence agriculture without cooperation, both upstream and downstream of agriculture. We can not speak by the Romanian village development through cooperation activity, both in the sphere of supply with production means, but also in the sphere of marketing agricultural products.

Agricultural cooperation can lead in the future to capitalization of relevant indicators that describe the living conditions, such as life expectancy, income, access to education, health services and public utilities witch in actual rural areas presents an acute deficit of development.

CONCLUSIONS

Following the results obtained in the paper, come off the following conclusions:

- The ideas of cooperation penetrate in Romania in the first half of the nineteenth century;
- The interwar period was the most prolific period from Romania's history, regarding the cooperation, both the agricultural one and non-agricultural one, being established over 11,000 cooperatives of all categories;
- The collectivization of agriculture in the communist period lead to the confiscation of all private agricultural properties from the country and their merging in agricultural farms managed by the state;
- After December 1989 in the Romanian agriculture there have been major changes in the ownership structure and the agricultural population;
- The principles of international cooperation must stand at the base of functioning of agricultural production cooperatives from Romania;
- Romanian cooperation from interwar period, adapted to the current conditions could be a model to follow through reviving of the Romanian village;
- In the current development of Romanian villages it can not be spoken by the overcoming of practicing the subsistence agriculture without cooperation, both upstream and downstream of agriculture.

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