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Ideology and Rationality in Romanian Development Strategies

Steven L. Sampson

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by

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Introduction

An essential aspect of Romania's drive for "multilateral development" is the spatial reorganization of the countryside called sistematizare ("systematization"). Codified by law and augmented by directives, systematization encompasses several programs, one being the conversion over the next decade of 300 villages into small urban centers. My research in Romania focused on the planned urbanization of one such village, called Feldioara (pronounced Fel-dee-WAH-ra), and the relation between the national planning structure, the regional planners and the local social organization.

As I analyzed my field data from Feldioara, I noticed that, as in most instances of social change, dysfunctions existed between the planning timetable and formal ideology and the realities of local social processes. The plan seemed to have been formulated chiefly to serve immigrant industrial workers, while undercutting or ignoring the locally born villagers; there were problems in communicating the plan to the local residents; changes occurred that had not been anticipated by the planners. I endeavored to show that the local leaders were in some ways unrepresentative of the total population, lacking both sources of local information and legitimacy in local eyes. Their difficulties in mobilizing the population to execute the plan drew the ire of regional authorities. Finally, the village appeared fragmented by its demographic and occupational composition, ethnic groups, and household and individual mobility strategies.

The explanations I developed to account for the realities of urbanization in Feldioara all had one point of departure: the village itself. That is, the dysfunctions reflected a clash of interests between the plan and the village, caused by the planners' not having taken account of the realities of local social structure. I dichotomized the situation into "what the state wants" versus "what the village wants." Thus, on certain occasions, I postulated that there would be congruent interests which would result in the success of the plan; on others contradictory interests would result in delays, apathy, resistance, or outright failure. The clash between plan and village was caused by inflexibility at higher levels. Had the planners considered specific local factors, I thought, the unanticipated, unexpected or unwanted changes might have been mitigated, if not checked.

On further consideration, however, I was forced to revise this rather straightforward explanation. Rather than treating the village as an entity within the state, I had been treating village and state as two separate and distinct structures. Although I had described the interaction between the planning institution and the village community, I had not linked them together systematically. I had been holding the plan outside the explanatory framework, treating it as a given rather than incorporating it as a variable within the structure. Thus, I could account for the plan's manifestations, but not for the structural causes underlying these manifestations. These causes lay as much in the nature of the supralocal planning structure and the planners' ideologies as in the vagaries of local social organization.

Stated more simply, I discovered that planning activities and the articulation of the plan by the planners demanded social and ideological analysis in their own right. Just as Gluckman (1964) had criticized British anthropologists for artificially closing their systems when they reached the level of district officer, and just as Schapera (1938) had noted our neglect of "missionary, administrator, trader and labor recruiter as factors in tribal life equally important as the chief and the magician" (p. 315), so also had I closed off my analysis of Feldioara by not analyzing the planners and the planning process. I had mentioned them, described the plan, and taken note of their roles, but I had not incorporated them into the explanation of what actually took place in Feldioara.

As the reader has no doubt gathered by now, this paper seeks to redress this shortcoming by making the planners and plan just as important a part of local social process as household cycles and ethnic composition. Feldioara was not just confronted by a hard and fast plan, but by a plan which had been subjected to higher level constraints and ideological "filters" of national and regional planners, party officials and activists, local elites and citizens. Although the plan was to produce social transformation at the village level, it was itself being transformed by supralocal structures and local elites.

Shifting my focus from the community's reaction to planning to analysis of the plan as technical, social and ideological activity meant that the significance of village level factors in explaining locally observed phenomena gave way to more important supralocal structures (in both their institutionalized and noninstitutionalized forms). More specifically, I became concerned with the various constraints and ideologies which transformed the plan before it reached the village.

The following analysis will elaborate this hierarchy of structural constraints and ideologies into a model of socialist planning. Examples from Romania's systematization policy and from Feldioara's urbanization will serve to depict how these constraints operate in real communities. Thus, rather than closing off the analysis at the socialist equivalent of the district officer, I will try to follow Gluckman's and Schapera's

advice. Building on recent trends in European anthropology, I will try not only to bridge the artificially created gap between the local community and the wider society, but as Vincent (1977) suggests, attempt to do away with it altogether.

A Model for Socialist Regional Planning in Romania

The regional planning process in Romania consists of a hierarchical arrangement of structural constraints, each of which transforms the plan as it proceeds to the next lower level. At the level of the state there are three types of constraints:

1) those common to planning in general;

2) those produced by "socialist" elements in planning, where "socialism" is defined, after Bahro (1978) as "socialism as it actually exists;" and

3) specifically "Romanian" constraints which reflect national priorities.

These three aspects--the "general," the "socialist," and the "Romanian"--comprise the highest level of the plan, but they also manifest themselves in regional and local level processes. The plan is further transformed by the planners' own "ideologies" or "cultures;" planners, representatives of various interest groups (economic, regional, professional or ethnic), impose their own role perceptions, personal strategies and attitudes upon the plan in both its formulation and execution.

At the regional level the plan is influenced by factors specific to that region's position in the national polity and economy: historical relations between the region and central authority, existing economic development, geographic factors, ethnic composition and the region's future role as seen by central authorities. The regional level planners and county officials modify the plan as they implement it, transmitting it downward and feeding results back up to the capital.

At the village level the planners must deal with the community's idiosyncratic "history." To succeed, the county planners and regional and local elites must adjust the plan to the characteristics of local social organization. The plan is both mediated and manipulated by local elites and party activists according to their own ideologies and interests.

The plan reaches its public already manifesting these prior constraints; the public must then be mobilized to perform voluntary labor, hold meetings, and contract for services. Since the villagers are not a homogeneous mass but a diverse agglomeration of households, social and occupational groups (which may not merit the designation "community"), they

too will seek to transform the plan either by ignoring it, resisting it, accepting it enthusiastically or actively molding it to their own ends. Planning activities at the local level can thus range from complete success to total failure.

The above model, which will now be detailed, infers that the village does not react to the original plan as such, but rather to the plan as altered by the transformations. Not realizing this, officials at higher levels may be dismayed by what they see as chaos, indiscipline or poor leadership at local levels. In actuality, this is the logical result of the interaction between the transformed plan, the ideologies of planners, officials, activists and local elites, and the local social structure. Before describing in detail the various structures involved, I will give some additional background information on Romania's territorial planning.

Territorial Planning in Romania

Systematization is the spatial component of Romania's economic development policy; it is distinct from the purely economic prognostications which Romanians call planificare, though in English the two words would both be called "planning." Systematization is one of the physical manifestations of socialist development, the "harmonious and judicious distribution of productive forces over the entire territory of the country" (Blaga, 1974:34). It is both an objective necessity and a prerequisite for future economic growth in Romania.

Systematization seeks to develop backward areas, to establish new rural/urban hierarchies, and to transform individual localities either by expanding them or in some cases eliminating them altogether. As formulated in the early 1970's, the systematization law (Law no. 5/1974), stipulates a spatial and economic plan for each locality in the country. Under the plan, Bucharest and the largest cities will exhibit controlled population growth, so as to avoid the overcrowding of Third World cities. The middle rank of urban settlements will be upgraded to "optimal" populations of between 50,000 and 200,000 persons. In the rural areas, 300 of Romania's 13,000 villages will be turned into towns during the next decade (for more detail on selection criteria see Miftode, 1978 and Sampson, 1980, Ch. 5). Another 150 villages will be turned into showcase "model villages" with new social, educational and medical facilities, utilities and tourist facilities. For thousands of other villages, improvements will be only gradual, with greater reliance placed on local initiative rather than state investment. Finally, at the lowest level of the settlement hierarchy, between 3,000 and 6,000 villages will be consolidated or phased out over time (Lazarescu, 1978, Gheorghe and Gheorghe, 1978). The latter action, involving about 15 percent of the rural population, will affect those villages in the path of hydroelectric projects, those too close to polluting factories, and hundreds of small, isolated, dispersed mountain hamlets judged to be "without perspectives for development."

In addition, systematization mandates strict guidelines for land use, housing construction and population control. Zoning specifications establish urban-style "civic centers" in each village and demand consolidation of housing within a strictly defined village perimeter. All new housing construction must be at least two stories in villages, and four stories in village civic centers and in all cities; housing lots are restricted to 250 m^2 in villages, 150 m^2 in future new towns, and 100 m^2 in cities.

Other directives stipulate rural-urban commuting (for rurally based workers living within 30 km of their urban jobs) as opposed to urban migration. Under systematization each locality will have its particular place in Romania's socialist settlement network. This is assured by investment priorities which earmark funds for specific localities, where cities and future urban centers are the preferred settlement units.

One of these future towns is Feldioara, located 22 km north of Braşov, and situated along main road and rail lines. Feldioara was selected for urbanization for several reasons: its geographic proximity to Braşov has led it to become a dormitory settlement for workers unable to find housing in the city; the northern Braşov zone needed a minor central place for administrative and service functions; and most importantly, a large mineral extraction plant was under construction just outside the village, with the workers to be housed in Feldioara. Under the plan the population will increase from 3,000 to 7,000 by 1990. Several hundred apartments have been built and more are under construction. A polyclinic, new elementary school, reprofiled high school, new culture house, sports complex and new stores and services will eventually come to the new town.

Since 1970, when national directives were issued to assess development possibilities for each rural locality, Feldioara has been in continuous contact with state and regional level planners. Its status as future town is known to virtually all villagers. With this background information, we can now examine the constraints to planning in general, to socialist planning, and to specifically Romanian planning, which have helped shape Feldioara's plan, both in its formation and in its execution.

The Systematization Law and the Constraints of Planning in General

Regional planning is performed by human beings working under conscious and unconscious constraints; it is not just a technical activity but assumes sociological and ideological aspects as well. Planners' ideologies and planning policies are products of their professional expertise, political beliefs, the institutions they work for, their views about how plans should be formed and their experience in implementing them. Like all plans, systematization expresses the ideology of "interventionism": through direct purposeful endeavor human beings can control or steer the forces of change, creating a world in their own image. The planners' training and expertise give them both access to and control over information. And

because the plans themselves are an ideological expression of the future, the planners control and manipulate these symbols.

Spatial planners are often beset with "architectural determinism" or "physical planning bias," in that they view physical change in the environment as the prime factor in determining the social and economic destinies of those who live in that environment. Architectural determinism is particularly prevalent where planners control only that domain of activity, being without voice in deciding allocations of land, labor, and capital (Bailey, 1975).

Planners everywhere work from the ideology of the "public interest." Usually, this is expressed as a single public interest, ignoring the reality of conflicting interests present in society (Bailey, 1975). That these conflicts also occur in socialist systems has been shown by Konrad and Szelenyi's (1976) work on underurbanization in Hungary and by Taubman's description of struggles between the urban service and industrial production sectors of the USSR, a conflict he describes as a case of "the public interest versus the public interest" (1974:176).

Citizen participation is essential to any kind of planning, even if it involves but nominal consultation with those affected, or a partial monitoring of the plan's progress through citizens' reactions. As Arnstein (1969) has pointed out, there are many degrees of "citizen participation;" it often happens that while citizens are talking about self-determination, the planners may understand participation solely as their obligation to inform citizens of decisions already made.

Planners working in rural areas are subject to other types of constraints, which Cohen (1977) has called "social distance" and "administrative distance." Social distance stems from the cultural attitudes of urban-trained, urban-dwelling, metropolitan planners and their lack of sensitivity in dealing with the needs of rural dwellers. Planners see the countryside as serving the city rather than the reverse. Village planning schemes reflect planners' stereotyped conceptions of rural life as either romanticized agrarian community or cultural backwater. In either case, the complexities of 20th century industrialization (where a majority of villagers may not even be working in agriculture) are lost in the stereotypes.

Administrative distance arises out of the physical distance or limited access between planners' offices and the rural locality. Planners may be responsible for several localities at a time and may be imposing standardized models on them. Visits to the rural areas may be too short or viewed as bothersome. Contrast this with the city planners' opportunity to casually examine or monitor their work even after formal responsibility for it has ended. Because planners often mistake <u>small</u> communities for socially <u>homogeneous</u> ones, short meetings with the mayor or local leaders may not reveal the genuine diversities within the population. Rural minority interests may in fact be less articulated and less noticeable than

minority interests in urban localities where discontent is expected and various outlets for it are provided.

When we examine Feldioara's plan specifically with relation to these general planning constraints, we can easily recognize the ideological and symbolic value of the plan itself. While virtually all villagers know that one day Feldioara will be made into a city (in the sense that it will be officially declared one), their detailed understanding of the plan is limited. Whereas planners held community wide meetings in 1972, arriving with maps, charts, graphs and three dimensional models showing Feldioara's ostensible appearance as far as the year 2000, there have since been so many changes in the plan that most of these models are obsolete, and most up-to-date information is not available to the villagers. The technological elitism of the planners and the Romanian penchant for keeping undecided policies "secret" contribute to the planners' virtual monopoly over information. There <u>is</u> village participation in the plan, but this is limited to reacting to planners' proposals and helping in plan execution, rather than contributing to long term goal determination. I see no conspiracy here; the sheer ambitiousness of the plan discourages local participation in its formulation.

The regional planners, based in Braşov and largely unknown in the village, are responsible for several communities at a time, thus adding to the social and administrative distance of the planners from the rural community of Feldioara. Standardized construction plans, established by Bucharest, limit variety in the planners' solutions. Feldioara is an example of a community with tremendous social diversity of which the planners are only partially aware. Over three-fourths of the work force are in nonagricultural occupations. Hundreds of migrants have settled in the village to commute to Braşov or work in the new factory. In the meantime locally born residents of Saxon-German descent have been emigrating to West Germany. Thus there is not only population growth but population <u>replacement</u>. The immigrant segment is heavily represented at the level of local leadership. Planner consultations with village leaders often overlook the interests of local household agricultural producers, ignoring local villagers' desires to see infrastructural improvements spread throughout the village rather than being provided only for the immigrants.

Planning documents for Feldioara reveal a striking lack of concern with the social consequences of urbanization on the community. While villagers recognize the tensions generated by expropriations, rebuilding and the immigration of hundreds of new families, the planning documents offer only vague suggestions, such as to establish a light industry plant to employ the wives of the incoming (male) factory workers. One can conclude that the plan for Feldioara is really only a physical plan. Because of this shortcoming, certain alterations or dysfunctions in the plan become inevitable.

Socialist societies like to distinguish themselves as "planned economies" where rational, consciously made decisions are the guiding ideology for state activity. From an examination of the experiences of several East European countries (see Pioro, 1965; Fisher, 1962, 1965, 1967; Sawers, 1977; Konrád and Szelényi, 1976) we can isolate a core of features common to socialist societies' planning schemes. It could be argued that distinctly "socialist" planning does not exist, since any of the following characteristics are found in capitalist countries too. What justifies the "socialist" designation, however, is the configuration of these features, their scope, their intensity, and the dominance of a planning ideology throughout society.

Periodic crises under capitalism are attributed largely to vagaries in the system; they are an acceptable byproduct which the state can try to ameliorate but which just have to be lived with. In socialist societies, where the planning ideology is dominant, the crises or dysfunctions are attributed to specific causes: they can be due to poor prognosis (inadequate planner expertise), inadequate implementation ("poor leadership", "bad organization"), or resistance/apathy on the part of the target population ("retrograde mentality," "private interest," "survivals").

If these explanations are insufficent, one can always cite "historical necessity." The wealth-redistributing functions originally conceived for socialist planning have largely been replaced by a more important objective: the necessity for economic development. Because socialism has emerged in countries which are relatively backward economically, socialist planning has become a development strategy which allocates resources on the basis of anticipated rather than existing needs. Socialist planning is future-oriented, active planning; it relies on total mobilization of domestic resources in order to achieve rapid accumulation and economic growth.

To this end, there is a priority of economic (sectoral) interests over territorial (i.e. regional) interests. The idea that, despite centuries of continuous settlement, humans have somehow arranged themselves irrationally permeates the regional planning strategies of socialist countries. Regions, cities, villages are but epiphenomena of the productive forces, changeable and expendable, as illustrated not just by Romanian systematization but by Soviet plans to phase out 300,000 villages. Examples from other socialist systems include Hungary's underurbanization, Tanzania's Ujaama village program, Chinese rustification efforts, and the infamous emptying of Phnom Penh by the Khmer Rouge (Palliot, 1977; Szelényi, 1976; Zastavskaya, 1978). Furthermore, residents can also be required to remain in their settlements via internal passport systems and migration restrictions. The future of settlements is placed under conscious administrative control.

Socialist planning articulates an ideology of regional balance as an expression of class equality. Homogenization (seen by westerners as dullness) is exhibited by standardized urban apartment neighborhoods, policies of eliminating town/country differences, and programs to industrialize backward regions. Nevertheless, the ideology of regional equality conflicts with the demand for rapid accumulation. High cost enterprises placed in backward areas may become "enterprises parasitic to the economy," while their villages become "irrational settlements without perspectives for development" (Blaga, 1974:197). Conflict between regional interests, which can develop into regional movements, lies below the surface, all the more volatile because it is unrecognized.

The rationality of socialist planning is not only technical. Economic decisions assume a political character and disagreements about plan priorities become more than just technical debates. Challenging planner competency on technical grounds is one thing, but challenging planning goals can be a threat to socialist development itself. Planners can react to challenges from below by (1) invoking the ideology of public or national interest, or by (2) using their technical expertise and monopoly over information to dismiss local objections as uninformed or narrowminded.

Since socialist planning is decided at the level of the state, in reality there are no local plans. There are only national plans, portions of which are executed in various localities. This explains why planners can so confidently invoke the "national interest" at any sign of local dissatisfaction, equating planners' interest with the national interest.

Citizen participation under socialism is more than just the mass ritual we westerners have been led to believe. I would argue that for success, local participation is a necessity because the low level of economic development in most socialist countries necessitates extra contributions by the public. With local participation a duty and a necessity, dissatisfaction with the plan may cause it to go unfullfilled. It should also be noted that helping in the execution of a plan should be distinguished from helping to determine planning goals; the latter is a function of experts. In the same manner we should distinguish technical modifications in planning (decentralization) from genuine self-determinism by local groups. The latter is considered to be in opposition to the national interest and is rarely seen.

Socialist planning depends upon a certain type of special individual to help implement the plans. This individual, the party activist, has duties which include mobilization, control, and linkage between the locality and higher level planning bodies. Activists are appointed for their political qualifications rather than their technical expertise. Thus, they are easily rotated from job to job depending on circumstances. The plan is implemented with the help of activists, but it is also mediated and transformed by the activists' own personal and political goals.

When we examine the particular instance of Feldioara with regard to socialist constraints, we find that the national priorities for socialist planning can be seen in the history of Feldioara's plan. Feldioara's urbanization is far from a local matter. As one of 300 future towns, Feldioara was to be developed in consort with its counterparts; the national scheme specified that the village would be developed during the first phase (to 1980). The national plan set upper limits on Feldioara's growth, specifying that it must not compete with other settlements. These upper limits became evident when local villagers requested that a small meat processing plant be attached to a nearby pig raising complex in order to siphon off some of the pork before it was transported to Braşov and to assure local consumption. This proposal was rejected by Braşov's planners on the grounds that the Feldioara butchering facility would take away capacity from Braşov's plant, thus making it irrational. This being the case, the pigs would continue to be shipped to Braşov, slaughtered there, and shipped back to the village for sale.

The original plan contained two variants: one built new constructions on new lands, the other placed new buildings where housing already existed, thus necessitating demolition; one called for a larger number of apartments to be built and a greater number of services to be added in the initial (to 1980) phase, while in the other, the number of apartments was fewer and the services were to be added later.

It turned out that these choices were resolved not by local initiative but by directive. In 1974 a third variant, combining the first two, was suggested by a visiting regional party leader from Braşov. The eventual plan "chosen" in late 1975 (i.e., approved by the local Peoples' Council) was much like this third variant, except that the national systematization law had specified even further centralization (and thus some more demolition). In addition, a ministry decision to augment the factory work force necessitated more apartment construction. This decision was out of the locals' hands and even out of the hands of Braşov County's planners. Finally, the emphasis on productive over nonproductive investments (i.e., services) led to a postponement of some services until the later phases of the plan. Though officially approved, the plan was altered yet again, in 1977, when President Ceausescu called for revision of new town plans to make them more grandiose. As planners had to act quickly, there was little time for renewed consultations. Many key decisions were made to expropriate houses and build apartments, allowing for little discussion by local elites, or information to affected villagers. This generated a rumor mill which was quite active on my return to Feldioara during summer of 1977.

The priority of industrial investment over settlement improvement is illustrated by the continuous struggle between local officials and factory leaders over contributions to community work brigades. The village leaders would complain that the factory was not sending enough workers to help build the local culture house, the factory would respond that if they gave up more laborers they would not be able to achieve their own plan. The

factory's power in the community was demonstrated by an incident in which several apartment dwellers were disappointed with the meat supplies available from the local butcher. Citing the limited hours, lack of stock and suspicion that the butcher was dealing under the counter to locals, the head of the apartment committee (i.e., the worker families at the new factory) went directly to the factory director bypassing the local consumers' cooperative. In a short time, the factory director arranged with authorities in Braşov for the apartment dwellers to receive standard pre-packaged meat allotments. With each name written down on a list, there was no possibility of corruption, and no standing in line. The meat was of such high quality that the locals actually complained that the immigrant workers were getting preferential treatment.

Urbanization under socialism is not intended to mean just physical construction, but must involve political decisions. In several local meetings, villagers and leaders were criticized by regional party activists for not showing enough discipline or leadership in achieving the plans on time. The distinction of being designated a town was not to be awarded automatically while citizens sat back and watched the state do everything. Feldioara's citizens would have to earn it by contributing voluntary labor, self-taxation and Sunday clean-up details, by making extra donations, by taking part in meetings, and by maintaining agricultural production.

The Systematization Law and the "Romanian" Constraint

Systematization plans are indicative of Romania's commitment to rapid, self-reliant, all-around development. Exhortations to augment or finish the plan early, to produce more, export more, consume less; the constant revisions in the plan and pleas to citizens to tighten their belts for the future; the intervention by President Ceauşescu in even the most minute affairs of lower level units ("getting in touch with the masses") all contribute to the centralization, the air of uncertainty, and the stop-and-go character of Romania's planning process. Surprises come often, and they can be drastic.

Had the Ceauşescu style of leadership been different, the underlying structure of planning in Romania might have remained the same, since the hectic pace of development forces lagging sectors and regions to keep up, if only to save face. In such cases, Ceauşescu's excursions to factories, collectives, and provincial towns serve more to build morale than to collect on-the-spot information. This is not to deny any of Romania's genuine economic achievements, but where the industrial growth rate has been one of the highest in the world, with a rate of accumulation of over 30%, and where all national development policies are articulated within an ideology of national independence, numerous pressures build up. The planners, to their credit, recognize the consequent problems and accept the burdens in good spirit.

Apart from these political considerations, which should not be underestimated, territorial planning in Romania is characterized by four ideological structures:

1. promotion of regional equality;
2. concepts of rational and irrational settlements;
3. emphasis on general over particular (private) interest; and
4. necessity for voluntaristic participation in plan execution.

In one of the most explicit statements of systematization policy, Ion Blaga (1974) subsumes regional development problems completely under national development priorities. In fact, according to Blaga there are no regional problems:

> Inequality of [regional] economic development, including industrial development...must be considered only as a partial aspect of the problem, an indication of insufficient national economic development...The essence of the problem [of regional inequality] must be put in terms of the general economic optimalization. They are problems of the entire national economy as a totality and only secondarily of geographic zones (1974:38).

In speaking of homogenization between rich and poor counties, Blaga states categorically that "harmonious and judicious" development will not lead to full regional equality.

> Different possibilities determine not only different solutions, but in the last analysis different levels of industrialization in different zones and localities (1974:162).

The emphasis on economic development over regional equality is manifest in Romania's systematization praxis. Thus,

> The county or locality offering the highest efficiency will be preferred even if it is already developed (1974:192).

New industries will be placed in underdeveloped zones "only if the efficiency they offer is greater or at least equal to the more developed zones" (ibid). The "inevitable outcome" of this policy, says Blaga, is the development of extractive industry, forestry, and tourism in underdeveloped zones, migration of unskilled workers into advanced areas, and immigration of skilled cadres (intelligentsia, engineers, teachers, etc.) into backward zones.

Romania's systematization policy denies recognition of any genuine regional interests. Regional dissatisfaction must be subordinated to the general interest. Lower levels must "harmonize" with higher levels; they can never be allowed to slow down the national growth. There is "a

priority of the interest of all members of society rather than the interest of certain groups--counties, geographic zones" (Blaga, 1974:39). And, since there is never any clear definition of what the general interest is, a concept which is in turn subject to political fluctuations, any dissatisfaction becomes a manifestation against this interest.

Judgements about a settlement's rationality determine whether localities will be maintained, expanded, or abolished. While several "objective" criteria have been mentioned (e.g. Miftode, 1974; or Sampson, 1980, Ch. 5), I see these criteria as reflecting two principal planning ideologies. The first is an extreme emphasis on centralization and concentration. Spatial centralization must reflect the political centralization of the state, the leading role of the Party, and the administrative dominance of Bucharest. Each locality must fit into the hierarchical spatial and social structure of Romanian society. No settlement can compete with another. Villages lacking the requisite centralization are judged unsuitable for future development. This applies particularly to highland "tentacle" villages which line roads and river valleys. Optimum population for centralized villages is 3,000 (though the median size for Romania's villages is about 1,000). The emphasis is on the separation and distinctiveness of each locality. The irrational running together of villages and the intermeshing of town and country (what we call sprawl) is anathema to Romania's planners. The centralization-concentration ideology blends well with the bigger-is-better mentality found in socialist planning, perhaps reflecting profound desires to achieve control over the population through limiting the number of settlement units.

Urban orientation is the second theme which dominates planners' rationality criteria. The countryside is seen as the seat of backwardness; the socialist city, the home of modernity, progress and civilization. Preference for state investment is given to urban localities, while state support in the rural sector is limited to loans to aid citizens in building homes. Urbanization also functions as a reward: it is hardly coincidental that President Ceausescu's home village of Scornicesti has been designated one of the 300 new towns. In special cases, the technical criteria can be waived altogether. This occurred in 1977, when the anniversary of Romania's 1907 peasant uprising was celebrated by honoring the nine Moldovian villages where the revolt first began. In honor of their historic role, these nine localities were added to the list of future towns.

In the domain of village planning, the detached one-family house, the large land area of peasant homesteads, and the dual functions of the home as residence and workplace are all seen as incompatible with the concentration and urbanization ideologies. Localities will progress only if converted into miniature cities with civic centers, functional zoning, vertical construction, high density buildings, and clearly marked recreational zones placed at the village periphery or roped off in a central square.

The apartment actually becomes the ideal residential unit because it is only with apartments that the state chooses to provide the hot running water, central heating, toilets, sewage, asphalting, and other amenities which all villagers desire. The rows of apartment houses indicating progress and modernization--which appear in so many Romanian newspapers or television shows--are indeed "beautiful," but their aesthetic is social rather than physical. It is in the apartments where one finds those amenities that the state will not provide to rural homes because of their "irrationally" large court-yards and extended construction. Bold, Matei, and Sabadeanu (1974) have justly criticized the planners' view of village homes as irrationally constructed. They give additional evidence for the social distance between planners and peasants.

Romanian planners and officials justify their rationality criteria by showing the economies of scale obtained by installing a given utility in a given settlement of a given size. Nevertheless, a rationality ideology lies behind this apparently technical valuation. For comparison's sake we can look at East Germany where, like Romania, agriculture is almost completely collectivized, but where half of all rural settlements have under 350 persons (Krambach and Müller, 1978). In Romania, villages of this size would be candidates for regrouping, but the East Germans have no such intention, planning in fact to develop further small settlements. To take a second example, we can note the planning ideology of British new towns where planners have most often sought to recreate a village in the city through family houses with garden plots (Foley, 1960). This strategy is the exact opposite of the Romanian ideology of converting villages into miniature cities. Although some of the technical arguments for concentration and urban orientation are generally valid, we must realize that these are grounded in ideological premises particularly germane to the Romanian planning conception (as opposed to planning in general or socialist planning).

Citizen Participation in Romania is not just a right but a duty for each citizen. Participation consists of 4-6 days per year of voluntary work for which a cash payment can also be substituted. There can also be additional voluntary labor contributions or self-taxation for special projects, helping out during the collective farm's harvest, clerical work in the town hall, service on the local judicial commission, taking on animal contracting or working a lot on the collective farm.

While some localities have higher priority for planners than others, all citizens must participate in implementing the plans for their localities, even if dissatisfied with them. The contradictions that arise are evident, and can be particularly acute for communities whcih are being phased out (see Gheorghe and Gheorghe, 1978; Dumitru, 1977; Matei and Matei, 1977).

The development of Feldioara's plan shows constant expansion in line with the ambitious pace of Romanian development. Where previous statements emphasized retaining traditional architecture, in President Ceausescu's

call for new and revised plans in 1977, these sentiments were subordinated to the need for transforming the village center by constructing a central boulevard of four story apartments. This would mean more expropriations. The new plans also called for the replacement of the town hall with a grand administrative complex which would house all the village political and economic institutions, dominating it both spatially and politically. The existing main street would even have to circle around it instead of passing straight by.

Particularly indicative of the planners' urban bias is the absence of state investment in local infrastructural improvements unconnected to apartments. Central heating, sewage, hot running water, asphalting, and telephones are available for the apartment dwellers in the center. The planners support this policy by saying that natural gas is too expensive and that the dispersed housing pattern of Feldioara makes installation of thermocentral and heating ducts "uneconomical." Thus, village houses will continue to be heated with wood, at least through 1990. The planners' conception of "economical" seems unduly rigid. Feldioara is, in fact, a highly nucleated village. This is one of the reasons it was selected for urbanization in the first place. Most houses are built adjacent to each other, literally wall to wall. If the installation of heating for villagers living in one-family houses would be rational anywhere, it would be rational in Feldioara. Despite this, and despite the desire of locals for central heating and their seeming ability to pay for it if the state would only make the initial infrastructure investments, there are no plans whatsoever to modernize the existing system of wood-heated tile ovens. The "general interest," no doubt, is served by providing the factory workers' apartments with the best possible facilities, but the planners' dogmatic ideology about what constitutes rational investment, a reflection of their social distance from local concerns, hardly aids in getting locals to see any tangible benefits in the urbanization plan for their community.

Urban orientation and concentration ideology also underlie the "economically rational" plans for expropriation. As in renewal schemes everywhere, an individual cannot stand in the path of progress. However, often it is not just a house but a peasant household productive unit that is being destroyed. As a consequence a family of agricultural producers is turned into a family of consumers, thus increasing demands on local provisioning.

General Constraints Upon National Planners' Ideologies

National level planners, having already formulated and received a plan which reflects the constraints mentioned above, now introduce their own assumptions into its implementation. Especially important is the degree to which they adhere to the centralization and urban orientation ideologies in their decisions about settlement rationality. National level planners interpret the many directives differently. On the basis of identical

objective criteria, two similar villages may be determined to have different potential. Planners might favor economic criteria which demand rapid financial benefits over political criteria, sanctioning investment in backward areas. Planners with architectural backgrounds might dream of building private villas while those trained as engineers might stress more mundane, infrastructural improvement. Planners will have diverse or personal allegiances and values which they bring to the plan's formulation and eventual implementation.

Three examples of planner ideology serve to illustrate how these constraints work in Feldioara's case. The first deals with the systematization law itself. Two of Braşov's highest ranking planners had diametrically opposed views of the systematization law. One planner thought the law, with its stipulation about zoning controls, mandatory vertical construction, and land use recommendations to be much too restrictive. The law limited innovation, avoided considering local variations, and tended to undervalue the real differences between settlements. This planner believed that the uniformity of the law would lead to inefficiency. Meanwhile, a close colleague thought the exact opposite. He saw the law as a guiding force designed to "provide flexibility of action while assuring control over errors." Both these individuals held high ranking positions in the Braşov County planning offices, but the first was voicing his opinion as an architect, while the second was more a political leader who happened to be an architect. For planners working on the same project (as these two were), their differing perceptions of the law found expression during the extended debates over expropriation and reconstruction in Feldioara. Those planners with more confidence in the law's flexibility tended to advocate more ambitious proposals.

A second example concerns planners' conceptions of the "socialist city." One planner insisted that the true socialist city was a city of apartments, collective residences that expressed socialist equality. The one-family house was a survival from the past, and it would be systematically expropriated, to be relegated eventually to the periphery of cities. In contrast, his colleague supported the validity of the one-family house as a residence type. Detached houses were ideal for young families with children, while apartments were best for housing childless families, pensioners, or single adults. One family houses should be retained, and one day, when the necessity of building apartments had passed, the state would begin to build villas too. These two views of the socialist city came into conflict when Feldioara's plan was revised in 1977. Apparently, the former view won out, so that the new socialist Feldioara will contain a civic center of apartments. One-family houses often containing families who wish to maintain agrarian household economies will remain only at the edge of the village.

A final example shows differing perceptions of urbanization on the part of planners and villagers. Villagers knew very little about the technical details of the plan. When asked about what was going to happen

in the future, they almost universally responded with "se face blocuri" (they'll build apartments). Planners, on the other hand, with complete knowledge of the plan, also responded in a very simple manner: "se face industrie." For planners, the building of a factory was primary, while all else was secondary. For the villagers, urbanization meant apartments, and perhaps more services. These contrasting perceptions of urbanization affected the willingness of local Feldioarans to participate in the formation or execution of the plan.

Regional Constraints on Planning Transformations

In describing Romania's national planning policy we have already touched on the problem of regional competition. Despite Romania's attempts to alleviate regional disparities, differences between developed and underdeveloped regions remain high (Hoffman, 1967; Turnock, 1977). Planners from poor counties may agitate for extra investment from Bucharest using the political line of regional equality. Those from highly developed counties, meanwhile, may seek to retain their county's preferred position by invoking purely economic arguments of increased productivity and economies of scale. Under conditions of competition for investment, some counties are bound to feel cheated, thus, planners will be susceptible to charges of catering to regional interests, though "rotation of cadres" seeks to prevent the development of such allegiances. Systematization policy generates competition between individual localities, too, and it is the regional offices which must mediate this competition for scarce resources.

Two other variables that affect the structure of the plan at regional levels are ethnicity and ecological diversity. Ethnic minorities in Romania are disproportionately distributed with regard to region and settlement type. The predominantly Hungarian counties of Covasna and Harghita, relatively backward though often mentioned as examples of progress in Romania's nationality policy, will receive new investments in extractive industry, infrastructure, forestry and tourism. The state fosters the idea that regional development policies reflect ethnic policies. This is a double-edged sword, however, because when regional needs are subordinated to overall national priorities, the competition between developed and underdeveloped regions takes on ethnic overtones.

The same ambiguity holds true for localities possessing German-speaking populations, most of which are located in the industrialized counties of Timişoara, Sibiu and Braşov. Historically German settlements in Transylvania have been large, nucleated, multifunctional villages. These are now viewed by planners as ideally suited for development into small towns (if they have not already been declared towns). I would expect that the total number of Saxon villages to be urbanized would be considerably higher than the proportion of Saxon villages in the total rural network.

On the other hand, the reverse holds true for Gypsy villages, which are often small, dispersed, isolated, and neglected, a reflection of their pariah status in pre-war Romania. Existing concepts of planner rationality in Romania mean that these villages are prime candidates to be phased out. Though these decisions may be based on concrete economic, geographic or demographic criteria, this does not prevent them from being perceived by those affected in ethnic terms.

Local planning schemes will also yield differential results because of ecological variation. The vast majority of villages to be phased out are in highland zones. These mountain hamlets differ from lowland villages not only in their geographic isolation and spatial dispersion but in their historical autonomy and noncollectivized household economies (Tufesco, 1978). Though peopled largely by ethnic Romanians, the specified historical, ecological, and economic distinctions of mountain folk lend them a sort of ethnic consciousness much like that of genuine ethnic groups. Since several thousand mountain villages are to be phased out, with their residents moved to other locations (especially to new towns), we can expect unforeseen social ramifications in these technical plans, especially if the more autonomous mountain populations misinterpret ultimately beneficial state policies as attacks on their traditional existence (Gheorghe and Gheorghe, 1978).

County planners, officials, and party activists have important roles in formulating, revising, executing, and monitoring the plan in the local community. Still, they usually have little attachment to the immediate region in which they work, having been assigned to their areas on the basis of national priorities, often shifted in their jobs at state initiative or on the basis of their own desire for more lucrative posts elsewhere. Being responsible for several communities at once, they have little time to develop ties with specific localities and they depend on local leaders for their information. Regional planners can also be short tempered in dealing with local villagers who may possess less expertise or less education, or who may just be difficult to work with.

As Romania's most urbanized and industrialized region, Braşov County (where Feldioara is located), presents a fine example of how regional constraints operate to transform the planning process. With developed infrastructure and heavy industry present even before the Communist Party took power, Braşov benefitted further from extensive state investment throughout the post-war period. This has led to an urban proportion of the county of over 70%, which is nearly twice the national average, and a 60% rise in the population of the capital, Braşov City, over the last ten years, to nearly 300,000.

With this development have come noticeable side effects: pollution from factories located in the city area (which is constricted due to being surrounded on three sides by mountains); immigration of young industrial workers who live in singles' dormitories; a press on available housing and services not just by residents but also by temporary undocumented migrants,

and by commuters who seek a home in the city where they work (Sampson, 1979).

Seeing this, some county planners have complained that Braşov's preferred status is slipping and they are calling for renewed inputs. Others, citing the side effects and social consequences, feel that further industrialization should be halted. These planners want more investment in consumer goods, services, and housing for the expanded population. While the county will indeed receive very little new investment in the coming Five Year Plan, this is overshadowed by the expansion of already developed enterprises; for example, the Red Flag truck factory will be augmented by 6,000 workers to 26,000. Because investment decisions are made at national ministry levels, Braşov County planners are at a disadvantage. While they can contest such decisions, as when they pleaded successfully for additional service investments during President Ceauşescu's visit to the city in the summer of 1977, they themselves cannot make these decisions. To actively protest further investment would be a manifestation of the particular (regional) interest over the general (national) interest. Here planners would be entering sensitive political territory.

The urbanization plans for Braşov County also reveal instances of local competition, especially true when the 7 future towns were being selected from among the county's 150 villages. To take one example, residents of village J. protest when they found out that nearby L. had been designated a future urban center and thus would receive new investments in infrastructure, services, and housing. Whenever planners visited J., the villagers would plead with them to change their decision. The villagers maintained that since J. was already the commune center (a "commune" being a group of 1-7 villages with one village--usually the largest--designated a "commune center"), and L. only an adjoining village, that J. had prior claim to new town status. Eventually, the decision was changed, although rumors in the County Planning Office circulated that one particular staff member, having been born in village J., had used additional influence. While this is only a single example, I suspect that such local competition and jealousy prevails generally, especially in view of the focused investments that the preferred localities receive. In Braşov County, for example, just three new towns being developed for the 1976-1980 plan receive 30% of all rural investments in the county.

Local competition also manifests itself in the timetable for Braşov County's development. Initial plans gave priority to the development of the more backward regions in the west and northwest. In these zones, the new towns would function as administrative and service centers for surrounding villages. Subsequently, however, the ordering was reversed, and development of the more service-center villages was postponed to the post-1980 or post-1985 period. By early 1979, new directives from Bucharest stated that only those villages with genuine economic potential should be developed. The list of new towns was changed again; the village of J., mentioned above, was dropped, as were two other villages in the underdeveloped western zone, thus maintaining, if not increasing, the

regional inequalities between the area around Braşov City (where four new towns are to be developed) and the outlying hinterlands. At the county level, we see that national priority is given to growth and accumulation over regional equality and nonproductive investment. Again, either investment decision (hinterland versus already developed) could have been justified on economic grounds. The fact was that these decisions reflected political and ideological priorities as well.

Aside from the 7 future towns, Braşov County also has 10 villages which will be regrouped or phased out; each has a population of about 250 persons. County planners realize the sensitivity of these actions, and they are basically pursuing a policy of "benign neglect," approaching inertia, hoping to let the process proceed through natural outmigration and depopulation, rather than through administrative action.

The "ethnic factor" is also reflected in the urbanization plans for Braşov County. Two of the three new towns scheduled for 1980 are former Saxon villages, as are two other villages scheduled for development in the post-1980 phase. On more than one occasion, regional officials have mentioned to me that Saxon villages are well-suited for development because of the Saxons' historical propensity for hard work and community endeavor, which is necessary when state policies need citizens' participation in plan execution.

Of the ten villages to be phased out, four are Gypsy settlements. One of these is Cutus, whose residents will probably be moved into Feldioara. It is regrettable that Feldioara's plan mentions no special measures to be taken in this matter, though friction is bound to arise as several hundred Gypsies are moved into an overcrowded village-town.

In one respect, however, the county planners have paid special attention to the Gypsies. In 1976, the Gypsies were exempted from the law requiring them to build houses of two stories. Planners in Braşov even designed special house plans, euphemistically called casa simplu, which were actually meant for Gypsies. Unfortunately, subsequent calls to expand planning activities and increase vigilance in adhering to the systematization law led to a voiding of the dispensation. No matter, the Gypsies had never asked for the plans anyway.

After having been filtered through the constraints of general planning, socialist planning, specific Romanian features, and after having been subjected to the ideologies of both national planners and their counterparts at regional levels, the plan now passes to the locality. The village elites--those heading political, economic and cultural institutions--transmit the plan from above, mobilize the population to achieve it, monitor its progress and feed information back to higher bureaucratic levels.

The local elite is first and foremost the local-level representative of state power and only secondarily the locality's representative to the

state. Thus, the principal duty of local elites is not to articulate citizen discontent but to alleviate it, by mobilizing the population to achieve goals predetermined by the "general interest." Local elites act as brokers between village and state; they control access to resources, information, and regional networks, sometimes trying to foster the impression that they control more than they actually do (Cole, 1979). Seen from above, the elites are judged on how successfully they mobilize citizens to achieve the plan.

The success of elites in mobilizing citizens is greatly dependent on the degree to which they are integrated into the community. Factors inhibiting integration are well known both to Romanian social scientists and to villagers. Romania's technical, administrative, and intellectual cadres are distributed around the countryside according to nationally determined priorities. Inevitably, most are sent to localities where they are unknown, to underdeveloped zones when they would rather be in metropolitan areas, to villages when they would rather be in towns. Government efforts to aid in integrating local elites into the communities have been only partially successful because certain regions contribute disproportionately to the number of educated cadres. As it stands today, many local elites assigned to rural localities intend to move away when they can. Others refuse to actually move to the village to which they have been assigned, preferring to remain in the nearest town and commute. Even collective farm engineers and village mayors, two posts which demand intimate knowledge of local conditions, have been known to commute to rural jobs from the city, much to the dismay of county newspapers and local villagers. V. Miftode's study of Iaşi County (1978), for example, reports that more than two-thirds of the rural cadres are immigrants or commuters. In one commune (Letca), the villagers complained that all the intelligentsia returned to Iasi at night. Miftode understates the problem when he cites the "dysfunctions" in carrying out political, social, and cultural activities in such communities (p. 163).

Of course, not all local elites come from outside. Locally born and respected individuals are either voted or drafted into responsible positions with the intention that their multiplex social ties will help mobilize the population and thus fulfill state programs. Yet there are special constraints on locally born elites, too. Their combined local legitimacy and state authority leads villagers to expect more of them than they can possibly deliver. If local elites treat everyone equally, in bureaucratic fashion, they risk alienating the primary social networks on whom they depend. Conversely, an overindulgence with respect to these kin networks can lead to factionalism, corruption or general suspicion. Unlike elites who are not actually living in the village, locally born cadres will be affected in the plan directly; thus, like other villagers, they will do what they can to mold the plan in ways beneficial to themselves and their immediate households. From the planners' point of view, however, locally born elites may be less educated, more difficult to deal with, perhaps too provincial. Still, as long as locally born elites feel that they themselves and their constituents are being served by the plan, their

mobilization ability will be more effective, their access to information better, and their feedback of higher quality than that provided by commuting elites.

An examination of Feldioara's local elites shows their mobilization ability to be limited by their lack of integration into the community. This is complicated by the continuous immigration of industrial workers so that not just elites, but entire segements of the population are more or less strangers to one another. The immigrant stream in Feldioara began soon after the war, with the coming of refugees and mountain colonists who took over lands of expropriated Saxon-German households. As Braşov city industrialized, Feldioara became a way-station for workers unable to get housing in the city but who still commuted there daily. In the meantime, Feldioara's German residents, who could have served as transitional elites in the new order, were shipped to labor camps in the USSR in 1945. While many eventually returned, in the mid-1960's they began to emigrate to West Germany. Thus, Feldioara's absolute population has not just grown by about 1500 individuals, but there has been a further population replacement of another 500 people. In 1976, at least one-third of the adult population were immigrants, and this proportion has grown since then. In one-fourth of Feldioara's families, both spouses were immigrants.

Immigration has had its effect on the cadres of local elites. Virtually all of them are migrants or commuters: mayor, vice mayor, head of the consumers' cooperative, cooperative farm engineer (head of the collective farm until 1976), school principal, police chief, party youth leader, priest, and doctor. While locals have recently gotten jobs as school vice principal, held the vice mayorship for a few years, or become head of the collective farm, these individuals were overshadowed by the continuing stream of new cadres, skilled engineers, and factory personnel whose needs had high priority. Regional planners in Braşov began to have special problems with Feldioara when the highly skilled factory engineers, intelligentsia, technicians, and clerical staff refused to move there, preferring to commute from Braşov. These people were protesting the low quality of services, poor provisioning, and inadequate educational opportunities for their children.

The lack of social integration between elites and citizens was one cause for nonfulfillment of village plans. In 1975, for example, the village leaders were castigated by the county First Secretary for not having completed the culture house on time. The leaders were simply unable to get out the requisite voluntary labor or to collect enough donations; it would be another two and a half years before the culture house was finally finished.

Political shifts have been the rule in Feldioara. From 1972 to 1979 the office of mayor changed hands no less than five times, with one man having held the office twice. None of the four mayors was locally born, and only one had lived in the village before he was appointed (and eventually nominated and elected; four of the five changes took place

between elections). Elites were not so often demoted as they were shifted around. A former head of the collective farm was previously a mayor. Another former mayor currently heads the consumers' cooperative, though he lacks any commercial experience. Two recently deposed mayors received jobs in Braşov enterprises. Unsubstantiated rumor has it that the most recently deposed mayor had actually been sent to Feldioara as punishment for similar malfeasance in another town. The current mayor of Feldioara had lived all his life in Braşov City, but is married to the daughter of a local citizen. He has since moved into the village. The marriage link was one factor influencing locals in proposing this individual to be mayor and was cited by county officials when he was officially appointed.

Of Feldioara's nine village deputies, five are immigrants. Feldioara has had several party activists over the years each of whom was rotated after between 6 to 9 months. All came from Braşov and commuted to the village. In 1977, Feldioara obtained its own post of "local party activist responsible for ideological and propoganda activities." This individual is an unmarried immigrant woman and has few social links she can count on for support.

Regional party activists have had conflicts with local elites because of the special demands placed on the latter. A case study of an expropriation illustrates the conflicts involved among the various kinds of leaders:

> An old widow was refusing to relinquish her garden for the construction of a veterinary clinic in the village. She was so adamant about not giving up her garden that she threatened to lie down in front of the bulldozer if it came into her courtyard. The mayor, an immigrant who had lived in the village for some years, discussed the case with the party activist from Braşov, who usually spent 2 or 3 days a week in Feldioara, especially during harvest time. The mayor outlined the case to the activist, explaining that they had called the woman's family into the town hall to have them convince her to move but she still refused. The activist saw no real problem. 'The law is the law,' he said, 'and we can't let this old woman stand in the way of progress. She will have to move and that's that.' The mayor was rather hesitant. 'What are people going to say about a mayor who lets a woman lie down in front of a bulldozer?' The activist insisted that there was no choice but to remove the woman physically. The mayor, not knowing what to do, delegated this task to the vice-mayor, a well known and well-respected native of Feldioara. The vice-mayor, after considerable wrangling, was able to convince the woman's family to get her to give up her plot. In return she received a garden double the previous size.

A second example of the local elites' dilemma deals with the situation of private homes in Feldioara. As stated above, modernized heating facilities are to be provided in all the apartments, which mostly house workers for the new factory, as well as some village administrative personnel. However, a few houses lying nearest the apartment complex have been granted the right to connect to the heating system if they defray the costs for the connection. These individuals, all occupying new homes on land given them by the local peoples' council, happen to include the vice mayor, the school vice principal, doctors, a policeman and a restaurant manager. These individuals have benefitted directly from the plan without contesting it. Though all respected families, they are now the focus of rumors about how they were able to manipulate the plan. There is no indication of wrong doing, but the envy of the other villagers has been felt, and the mobilization potential of these individuals has been reduced.

In addition, a change in the placement of apartments has meant that some individuals whose vegetable gardens would have been expropriated are now exempt, whereas others were abruptly told that next week construction would be starting in their back yards. It appears once again that one of the lucky persons whose garden was exempted was a high local official. This caused some bad feeling from those whose gardens were added to the expropriation list.

Local Level Constraints

It is important to stress that the plan does not affect "the village" as a whole, but rather affects different individuals and their families in different ways. Those subject to expropriation and those whose physical environment undergoes rapid change express one response, while those at the village periphery, those moving in as temporary residents, or those in elite positions will have other responses. These range from enthusiasm to apathy to resistance. Response to the plan can be measured through an individual's record of meeting attendance, voluntary labor contributions or involvement in controversies over expropriation and contracting.

The chief constraint on the locals' ability to transform the plan is the planners' initial decision about the locality's future. Is the community irrational and therefore doomed to benign neglect? Is it to be maintained provisionally at the existing level? Or is it one of the lucky 150 model villages or 300 future towns which receive state investment? The incident of villages J. and L. in Braşov County, described above, shows that a village's future can be changed given sufficient community solidarity and (perhaps) a link to the regional structure. Similarly, the village's historical relation to central authority will also constrain the plan's implementation. At one extreme is the autonomous, economically distinct mountain village; at the other, the suburban village with a long history of urban social and economic ties. In any case, relations between communities depend a great deal on the planners' initial decisions. What were once

egalitarian relations between villages dissolve if one of them is chosen as a future central place.

Taking the internal social structure (and forgetting momentarily about the local elites), local class composition will reveal the categories of people who stand to benefit most by the plan. One could expect that families who are still carrying out some household domestic agriculture will be threatened by future urbanization, whereas worker families might stand to benefit. Those residing in the community temporarily, e.g., those waiting to migrate to the city with no long term interest in settling there, would very likely be indifferent to the plan. Local ethnic differences and ethnic perceptions also structure how the plan is received, especially if it appears to be affecting one group more adversely than another.

In Feldioara, the history of plan formulation--the lack of information and the stop-and-go nature of the planning process--and the activities of the planners all led to a dampening of local enthusiasm for the plan. Apartment houses and their many immigrant occupants have generated mixed emotions among the other villagers, who see little immediate gain from the coming of urbanization. Immigrants are unified only in the sense that they are not locals. They have not arrived en masse from a particular locality and know each other only through their work and the common loneliness they face in the apartments. Many will eventually leave Feldioara, feeling the villagers to have been unduly hostile to them, while others will settle in the village provisionally if they can buy a house.

The actors at the village level are households and individuals. They pursue their various "strategies," both short term and long term, economic and social, personal and familial. However, these strategies are flexible and need not conflict directly with the plan. Ideally, from the planners' point of view, the individual's short term strategies "harmonize" with the state's general interests as, for example, when high state buying prices stimulate peasants to produce. The problem is that the constraints of planning, as it passes down from one structure to another, generate contradictory goals and opposing strategies, appealing to diverse ideologies.

The Village and the Plan

The implementation of the plan seems capricious at times to the local villagers. Some of the expropriations have been handled in a heavy handed manner, where citizens got only very short notice that their gardens or lands would be taken and received unclear information on how much of their plots they could retain. With the constant revision of the plan, and with a discontinuous cadre of individuals in the highest offices, there is a problem of information even for the leaders. When abrupt changes come, as they did in 1977, no one had a sound base of information on which to judge the changes except the mayor, who has subsequently been replaced.

Feldioara's population has grown by more than a thousand in the past years, while the number of stores and services has remained constant. This has produced more pressure on individuals to obtain resources such as food (meat, eggs, chickens, milk for children), while simultaneously some traditional food producing homesteads have been expropriated. The immigrants, meanwhile, are totally dependent on buying consumer goods and have no local kin networks to fall back on. The factory director becomes their patron and their advocate.

As in most of Romania's ethnically mixed villages, the Saxon minority occupies the original center with Romanians and Gypsies on the edges. Saxons are being inordinately affected by the plan, both positively and negatively. They are affected positively in that the changes are more visible to them and more available; they will be the first to receive piped-in water, sewage and heating ducts, and asphalted streets, all because they live in the center; they are affected negatively in that they are subject to expropriation since their large houses cannot compete with the rationality of an apartment building that can hold 30 families on the same size lot. Saxons perceive the plan as yet another attempt by Romanians to gain the upper hand, by literally wiping out their homes, one by one. This is regrettable because local participation is still a key factor in implementing the plan and in creating a positive atmosphere for future changes. Saxon traditions of hard work and community activity have always played an important role in village cooperative efforts. For example, if one examines the records for voluntary contributions which adult villagers are liable for, 4-6 days' work per year, or a payment of 125-200 lei, it appears that Saxons have had a much higher tendency to work off their time in labor, while Romanians and Gypsies generally choose to pay the cash fine. The poor mobilization for the construction of Feldioara's culture house and several other projects (accomplished only after local officials went from house to house) shows the urgency of the problem and the contradictions generated by the need for participation when the participants are skeptical of the activity's final goal.

Villagers express considerable pessimism about the existing state of affairs in Feldioara. They realize that this is a period of transition from a large village to a small town. Still, they complain of overcrowding, standing in line, inadequate services, lack of politeness, "crime in the streets," thievery, vagabonds, and so on. The unmarried construction workers at the factory have at times been on a warlike footing with village youths over local women. Migrants complain that village agrarian households won't sell them food products even for hard cash. Though many of these skilled technicians, sub-engineers and functionaries are highly qualified, the locals refer to them as "gypsies" or as irresponsibles who live in the misery of the still unfinished apartments. The atmosphere is one of mutual suspicion rather than mere curiosity. It is hardly conducive to community endeavor. Stereotypes between the long-time locals and young immigrants abound. The immigrants know little about the village; they have hardly been off the main street. Some believe Feldioara to be largely Saxon, whereas Saxons do not make up even 20% of

the population. The planners' "factory-first" policy and the unstable composition of the local leadership keeps the community off balance.

How does one explain the poor leadership, weak mobilization, indiscipline and skepticism that are cited so often by local leaders and citizens, and in newspaper articles? As I have tried to indicate, I do not think this is purely a matter of Feldioara's local history or sheer bad luck. Nor do I think that "good leadership" is the result of a unified cadre of skilled, highly motivated leaders in a setting which welcomes newcomers of all kinds. Instead, I believe that the general case of Feldioara, together with the other examples cited, illustrates how the structural aspects of planning and the interaction between planning processes and local social processes tell us more about the community than if we concentrated purely on its idiosyncratic "history." Thus, the incidents of poor leadership, indiscipline, and inadquate mobilization must be explained as much by the nature of socialist planning in Romania and the actions of the planners, as by activities in the local setting.

Conclusion

My comparison of Romania's planning ideology with the realities of its execution should in no way be interpreted as condemnation of Romanian socialism or socialist planning. On the contrary, one would be hard-pressed to find ANY development strategy--socialist or otherwise--whose high-sounding pronouncements had not been deflated by cold, hard facts.

In attempting to show that planning "dysfunctions" originate not so much from local causes but from constraints in the planning structure, transformations in planning ideology and contradictions in the plan's execution, I have implied that what goes on in the village of Feldioara goes on in other villages as well. In this sense, I have constructed a rather determinist argument. This naturally leads to questions such as, "Could it have happened any other way?", "Is there no room for choice?", or "Can politicians, planners or citizens ever act to consciously prevent inherent contradictions from arising?"

To all these questions my answer is a <u>conditional</u> "yes," depending upon the degree to which we accept the planning structure <u>as a given</u>. This paper, focusing synchronically on planning policy and its execution, has done just that. I avoided an explicitly political discussion of just how specific options came to dominate the planning structure in the first place. I did not examine the question of who determines the top priorities, who sets the long and short-term goals, and who has the last word on what means will be employed to achieve these goals. Had I included such an overtly political analysis of national decision-making, however, my ostensibly determinist conclusions about Romanian planning would have revealed that political and ideological choices are constantly being made--choices about priorities, ends, means and timetables. Exercising specific choices can help ease the constraints on planning structure, foresee the

transformations in this structure, prevent or alleviate the inevitable "dysfunctions." That Romanian planning is, by and large, moving forward indicates that many correct choices are indeed being made!

To those who would insist that Romania's plans (or socialist planning in general) are formulated by "rational" consideration of "objective needs" and "historical necessities," I can only point to the concrete realities of "das real existierenden Socialismus" (after Bahro, 1977). No matter where we look, we find that every "historical necessity" began as a political line, and that policies invoked in the name of "objective needs" have been abruptly reversed, and in some cases denounced as "voluntarist deviations."

By analyzing the overt politics of plan formulation and combining this with empirical study of planning structure, ideologies, transformations and execution, we can generate concrete suggestions (choices) to help Romania's planners achieve their goals of increased material and social welfare for the entire population. Using the urbanization of Feldioara as an example, let me list some of the possible choices:

> Had planners been able to alleviate the problem of social and administrative distance and make more information available to the citizens, local leaders would have been better able to inform and consult with their constituents.
>
> Had the policy favoring industrial over "nonproductive" investment been reversed, Feldioara might have been able to demand and receive more services and utilities so that the locals could see tangible benefits from urbanization instead of viewing it as apartment construction.
>
> Had Romanian conceptions of settlement rationality not been so strictly applied, the peasants could have been supported in building their traditional one-family homes instead of being forced to build two-story giants or receiving notice of expropriation.
>
> Had the amorphous "general interest" been moderated so as to allow for genuine regional competition, to recognize the politics of unproductive investment in backward regions and to accept the social limits on industrialization in advanced regions, regional balance would not be such a volatile issue. The same could be said about reducing the hectic pace of Romania's development.
>
> Had regional competition and interests been institutionalized as part of the planning process instead of having been condemned as retrograde "particular interest," more enlightened decisions could have been made to resolve the contradictions between rapid accumulation and regional inequality.

Had the plan allowed more regional and local self-determination in planning execution, perhaps the regional, ethnic and ecological variability could have been dealt with in a more creative manner, and national-level planners could have spent more time on truly national-level concerns.

Had infrastructural improvements been made in the village, they might have become more attractive to the intelligentsia who are assigned there, so that instead of doing all they could to leave the village, they would have used their abilities to better social links with the residents and foster citizen mobilization.

Had state policy recognized local competition between individual settlements and viewed local leaders as spokesmen for local interests rather than as executors of state power, i.e., had their plans been truly local plans, the local leaders would have retained more legitimacy and better mobilization abilities, and their flexibility would have been hailed instead of condemned as "poor leadership."

And, finally, had planners been cognizant of the social structural ramifications of urbanization policies, they would have foreseen some of the undesirable consequences of urbanization in Feldioara and could have increased efforts to generate a degree of community spirit.

Thus, the essential question is not whether or not the plan was fulfilled. Rather, we must ask, "For whom was it fulfilled," and even more importantly, "Why this plan and not another?" There is no overriding "objective force" in this process; we can pinpoint no clear determinants. Instead, this paper has tried to reveal the constraints structuring the range of action. Without knowledge of these constraints, it is impossible to construct a theory of social change or social process. Reiterating Joan Vincent's plea, we must not just bridge the gap between local and supralocal processes, but show why this gap is nonexistent.

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