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Property is a complex phenomenon comprising cultural, social, and legal rules. During the twentieth century, property rights in land suffered massive interference in Central and Eastern Europe. The promise of universal and formally equal rights of land ownership, ensuring predictability of social processes and individual autonomy, was largely not fulfilled. The national appropriation of property in the interwar period and the communist era represent an onerous legacy for the postcommunist (re)construction of a liberal-individualist property regime. However, as the scholars in this collection show, after the demise of communism in Eastern Europe property is again a major factor in shaping individual identity and in providing the political order and culture with a foundational institution. This volume analyzes both historical and contemporary forms of land ownership in Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia in a multidisciplinary framework including economic history, legal and political studies, and social anthropology.

(From the publisher's website)