

## **EXPROPRIATION OF FEUDAL PROPERTY IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD – EXAMPLES OF FREE AND ROYAL TOWN OF VARAŽDIN AND *STARI GRAD* SENIORITY POSSESSION BELONGING TO COUNTS OF ERDÖDY\***

Vladimir HUZJAN\*\*

Prior to the agricultural reform, the free and royal town of Varaždin owned 1.228 jutros of arable land. The agricultural reform divided 1.038 jutros, the army claimed 100 jutros for its needs, whereas only 90 jutros were left under the ownership of the Town. Previous to the agricultural reform, in the war year of 1917, money received from the lease of the land made up more than 5 percent of the town income. However, having entered the new state union and due to the introduction of the agricultural reform as well as new and higher taxes in 1923, the land lease revenue made up barely 0,2 percent of the town budget. A buyer could enter expropriated land of the Town of Varaždin into the land register only when reimbursement had been paid off, and he also had to build a house there within the next three years. Farmers obtained the land on a temporary one-year lease. Having taken everything into consideration, the agricultural reform failed to increase prosperity, on the contrary, it brought along direct financial losses for the Town of Varaždin. Namely, in March 1939, during a Municipal Council sitting members commented that the Town of Varaždin ceased to be the administration centre of the northern Croatia due to the loss of financial directive and county jurisdiction, whereas it also lost significant financial in-

\* The article was translated into the English language by professor Sanja Županić.

\*\* Vladimir Huzjan, Ph. D., Croatian Academy of Arts and Science - Institute for Scientific Research Work in Varaždin, Varaždin, Croatia.

come due to the seizure of large amounts of land for the agricultural reform. For the purpose of illustration, it would be interesting to see where the properties owned by the Town of Varaždin were located; however, due to the large number of cadastral parcels, its drawing is beyond the scope of this paper.

Regarding the seniorate possession of the *Stari grad*, Rudolf II Habsburg gave it to count Toma Erdödy and his heirs who managed the property up to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As opposed to the property belonging to the Town of Varaždin, in this case, the number of cadastral parcels is smaller and therefore it was possible to make an illustration depicting the surface it occupied in the area of the Town of Varaždin. The seniorate possession belonging to the counts of Erdödy was smaller than the then Town of Varaždin and consisted of 1.091 jutros of land. After the agrarian reform had been conducted, 825 cadastral jutros remained. Moreover, the process caused conflicts within the Erdödy family and short time after they vanished from Varaždin.

**Keywords:** Expropriation, *Stari grad* [Old Town], Varaždin, Erdödy.

## Introduction

Pursuant to a document named *Preliminary directive for the preparation of agrarian reform*, dating from 25 February 1919, all the serfdom and farming relations were abolished in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, whereas all large properties were expropriated, whereas only the citizens of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes received compensations for the seized land. The reform included only the territory which, prior to 1919, was a part of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in order to eliminate all the remains of feudal relations and liquidate properties belonging to the aristocracy and the church. The centre of the agrarian reform was in northwest Croatia and not even one property, with the exception of the one belonging to the Drašković family of counts, was spared. The properties of foreigners were included in the agrarian reform with no reimbursement; however, later on the owners got the money back at the international court in Den Haag. On the other hand, housing facilities, gardens and some sections of woods were left to domestic landowners, but their best land was included in the agrarian reform. Pursuant to the *Regulations on optional land lease* from 1925, a committee decided what precisely belonged to the owners and what could be sold. Due to considerable decrease in income, many aristocrats liquidised their properties, while others joined the *Union of houseowners and landowners* in order to obtain better conditions. The Belgrade National Committee passed the *Law on liquidation of the agrarian reform on large properties* in order to ensure the market value for large estates

which *survived* the agrarian reform. However, in north-west Croatia there were no large estates left, except the one in Bukovec belonging to the Drašković family, whereas in Slavonia only few remained.<sup>1</sup>

In her first study on agrarian reform in Croatia after the World War I Mira Kolar Dimitrijević stressed that: “Many people without land and farmers living next to large estates did not receive any land, whereas the best land was given to foreigners – Thessalonian volunteers and farmers from passive regions of Yugoslav Monarchy”.<sup>2</sup> In this way, Croatian aristocrats were intentionally debilitated financially which prevented any serious attempts to rebel against the political system of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/ Yugoslavia. As the agrarian reform was only partially conducted, it did not reach its aim and therefore two more reforms followed after 1941.<sup>3</sup> This work is neither going to analyse extensive legal regulations which attempted to regulate the agrarian reform throughout the interwar period nor deal with irregularities, corruption, court trials and the manner in which the procedure was carried out in the broader area of northwest Croatia. This paper looks into one aspect of the complex process of the agrarian reform in connection to the expropriation of feudal properties on the examples of the free and royal town of Varaždin and seniorate possession of *Stari grad* [the Old Town] belonging to the counts of Erdödy.

## **Expropriation of the Feudal Property of the free and Royal Town of Varaždin**

In the beginning the agrarian reform was conducted by the Ministry of Social Policies through the internal Department for Agrarian Reform; however, due to increased activities, a special Ministry for Agrarian Reform was founded in February 1920. In the region of north-west Croatia it was conducted by the County Agrarian Office in Zagreb and continued by the County Agrarian Office for Varaždin County and Međimurje situated in Varaždin (with the exception of districts of Donja Stubica, Đurđevac and Koprivnica). The Ministry for Agrarian Reform was abolished in 1929 and all the activities were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture which was in charge of the process until the fall of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, “Agrarna reforma u Hrvatskoj nakon Prvog svjetskog rata” [“Agrarian Reform in Croatia after the World War I”], *Hrvatska revija*, (2014), no. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Not much has been written on this complex theme; however, a detailed text on agrarian reform in the area of northwest Croatia was written by Zdenka Šimončić-Bobetko. In her paper she deals with the political situation in north-west Croatia prior to the introduction of the agrarian reform referring to legal regulations, aims and enforcers in detail as well as describing particular examples of expropriation (*case study*). See: Zdenka Šimončić-Bobetko, “Agrar-

Prior to the agricultural reform, the free and royal town of Varaždin owned 1.228 jutros of arable land.<sup>5</sup> The agricultural reform seized 1.038 jutros, the army claimed/ (ravished?) 100 jutros for its own needs so only around 90 jutros were left under the ownership of the Town.<sup>6</sup> Previous to the agrarian reform, the Town received 16.400 dinars for the seized land from the annual lease. Until 1922 the Town payed 5.120 dinars in tax and surtax and was 7.130 dinars in the black. As the tax was increased in 1923, the Town paid 15.360 dinars in tax in the first half of the year. This means that in 1923 everything the Town made from the lease in two years was spent on tax and that just in the first half of the year. Town clerks worked out that due to the agrarian reform the Town of Varaždin was deprived of 329.150 dinars in annual income.<sup>7</sup>

From the last years of the existence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to the time of the agrarian reform the income sources of the Town of Varaždin did not change except the kruna and dinar exchange rate. For instance, in 1917 the town received 47.535,93 krunas from land lease. That year the total budget of the Town was 921.963 krunas. Thus, the revenue from the land lease for that year made up more than 5 percent of the town income. From 1921 to 1923 the

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na reforma na području Hrvatskog zagorja, Međimurja i Podravine u međuratnom razdoblju (1918.-1941.)” [“Agrarian reform in the Region of Hrvatsko Zagorje, Međimurje and Podravina in the Interwar Period (1918-1941)”], *Povijesni prilozi*, vol. 7, (1988), no. 7: 33-76. See also: Zvonimir Kulundžić, *Politika i korupcija u kraljevskoj Jugoslaviji* [*Politics and Corruption in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia*], (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1968).

<sup>5</sup> The entire property of the Town of Varaždin was considerably larger in size. Generally, according to a document from 21 September 1933, the Town of Varaždin was entered in the land register as the owner of 5.120 jutros and 1.214 square hvats; according to cadastre it had 5.176 jutros and 303 square hvats, and based on the state of affairs in the nature it owned 5.122 jutros and 396 square hvats. The difference arises due to the fact that some parcels were entered as town land, whereas in the reality it did not belong to the Town. Remark: the paper includes authentic measures of area which are converted as follows: 1 square hvat (hereafter abbreviated čv. hv.) equals to 3,6 m<sup>2</sup>; cadastre jutro (hereafter abbreviated kj) equals to 1.600 čv. hv. or 5.754,64 m<sup>2</sup>, 1 ral equals to 1.600 čv. hv. or 5.754,64 m<sup>2</sup>. The State Archive of Varaždin (hereafter abbreviated DAVŽ), Varaždin Town Government (hereafter abbreviated GPV), Parcellation of town land – documents 1936; Plans and documents on parcellation 1908-1931; Lease contracts 1940.-1944., a document dated 21 September 1933, no. 44107/III-6/1933.

<sup>6</sup> The Town of Varaždin was a landowner so at the beginning of 1932 the Ministry of Agriculture left it the so called super-maximum area of 81 jutros and 342 čv. hv of land as it kept stud bulls, stallions and stud hogs as well as ornamental plant nurseries. DAVŽ, Minutes of the Varaždin Town Government (hereafter abbreviated ZGPV), a sitting held on 29 February 1932., act. 9., no. 654/1932.

<sup>7</sup> Remark: in order to understand the then value of a dinar, the value of an ounce of gold (31,1035 gram) is given here. The value of an ounce of gold is provided for March when it could be bought for 299,32 US dollars and March 1935 when it was worth 637,56 US dollars. In March 1925, one US dollar bought 56,85 dinars of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and in March 1935 one got 50,30 dinars of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia for one US dollar. Hence, in 1925 one ounce of gold was worth 17.016,34 dinars, and in March 1935, 32.069,26 dinars.

revenue from the lease decreased to just 0,2 percent of the town income.<sup>8</sup> One of major income sources should have been the lease of the town military quarters but as the army failed to pay on time or at all, the income was fictively included in the town budget.<sup>9</sup> At the beginning of 1926 the army owed the Town of Varaždin 372.041,99 dinars: "(...) of which not even a dime was received".<sup>10</sup> Moreover, this substantial impoverishment of the town budget affected public activities of the Town of Varaždin.

With regard to the properties, the expropriated town land could be entered into the land register by the buyer only when the reimbursement had been paid and every purchaser was obliged to build a house there within three years.<sup>11</sup> Farmers got land on a temporary one-year lease which was prolonged every year until the *Law on liquidation of the agrarian reform on large properties* was passed on 19 June 1931.<sup>12</sup> On that occasion, a committee was formed which estimated the value of the parcel/ building site.<sup>13</sup> Due to faults, the first demand for the audit of the agrarian reform was submitted at the beginning of 1926 and therefore the local surveyor had to identify and conduct cadastral survey of all parcels.<sup>14</sup>

When the entire procedure in the Town of Varaždin is taken into consideration, it can be said that: "By seizing the town property for the aims of the agrarian reform and as the Town of Varaždin, after having lost the county jurisdiction and financial directive, ceased to be the administrative center of a significant area, the town's economy suffered a great loss – it was deprived of all its significant income sources".<sup>15</sup>

## Expropriation of the *Stari Grad* Property Belonging to Counts of Erdödy

On 15 June 1920 Varaždin Town Government passed a decision on the expropriation of the *Stari grad* [the Old Town] seniorate possession and other

<sup>8</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 15 January 1926, act. 3.

<sup>9</sup> For more information see: Vladimir Huzjan, *Varaždin i vojska u međuratnom razdoblju (1918.-1941.)* [*Varaždin and the Army in the Interwar Period (1918-1941)*], (Zagreb-Varaždin: Zavod za znanstveni rad HAZU u Varaždinu, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 15 January 1926, act. 3.

<sup>11</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 18 June 1926, act. 2, no. 4507/1926.

<sup>12</sup> Šimončić-Bobetko, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Elected committee members were: Andrija Dvorščak, Nikola Borović, Josip Košić, Josip Miščin, Hinko Moses and Antun Lazar. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 18 January 1926, act. 2, no. 4507/1926.

<sup>14</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 18 January 1926, act. 21, br. 5084/1926.

<sup>15</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 7 March 1930, no. 3500/1930.

property belonging to the Erdödy family in order to build houses there.<sup>16</sup> Seniorate possession included 1.080 jutros of land in the municipalities of Varaždin, Varaždinbreg, Trnovec and Šandrovec. This property was given to count Toma Erdödy (1558-1624) and his son Sigismund (1596-1639) by Rudolph II Habsburg (1552-1612) on 24 March 1607 when the seniorate, i.e., the ownership right of the eldest male descendant was established.<sup>17</sup> This family *fideikomis* [fideicommissum] was generally abolished in 1921 with the introduction of Vidovdanski ustav [the Vidovdan Constitution] when the property belonged to count Đuro Erdödy who, being a Hungarian citizen, lived in Kohfidisch in Austria.<sup>18</sup> In March 1922 the Town Government demanded additional expropriation of cadastral parcels,<sup>19</sup> for the purpose of: "(...) maintenance and preservation of the decaying historical town".<sup>20</sup> The local County Agrarian Office issued a study on evaluation of the value of the buildings belonging to *Stari grad* seniorate possession on 30 May 1922.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, count Đ. Erdödy was asked to set the price for the expropriated immovables. A writing by the Regional Administration for Croatia and Slavonia from 5 August 1922 approved the expropriation of the land and facilities of the seniorate *Stari grad*, having total surface of 27 acres and 84 square *hvats*, in favor of the Town of Varaždin.<sup>22</sup> The decision on the expropriation by the Agrarian Directive in Zagreb from 29 November 1924 was confirmed by the order of the Ministry for Agrarian Reform on 27 January 1925, thus, expropriating *Stari grad*, with the exception of a few cadastral parcels, in favor of the Town of Varaždin which was entered as its owner on 18 February 1925.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>16</sup> It refers to cadastral parcels no. 1492, 1495, 1496, 4931-4933, 4935 in *Optujska ulica* and no. 202-204 near *Stari grad*. DAVŽ, ZGPV, a sitting held on 21 November 1921, no. 8857/1921.

<sup>17</sup> Rudolf Horvat, *Povijest grada Varaždina*, [History of the Town of Varaždin], (Zagreb-Varaždin: Zavod za znanstveni rad HAZU u Varaždinu, 1993), p. 144.

<sup>18</sup> When the *fideikomis* was formally abolished on 6 July 1928, immovables were entered as co-ownership of legitimate heirs. Zdenka Šimončić-Bobetko, p. 57. See also: Varaždin Land Register, Historical land register excerpt for parcel no. 4931, which was entered into land register of cadastral municipality of Varaždin, no. 7002.

<sup>19</sup> It refers to cadastral parcels no. 201, 205-210. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 3 March 1922, no. 761/1922.

<sup>20</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 3 March 1922, no. 761/1922.

<sup>21</sup> Experts were Viktor Plazzeriano, later to become s town mayor, and Mijo Žlezak, who demanded 11.200 for their services. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 14 January 1922, no. 4527/1922.

<sup>22</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 15 September 1922, no. 6793/1922.

<sup>23</sup> It refers to cadastral parcels no. 203, 241 čv. hv. in size and 205, 7 čv. hv. in size, which were bought in 1911 by Oskar Lypolt. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 15 February 1926, act. 33, no. 1152/1926. It is stated in a document by Town Government that the Town was entered as the owner on 13 April 1925 when the expropriation had been conducted in the land register. DAVŽ, Regular documents (hereafter abbreviated RS), 1933, no. 5900/1933.

When the Town of Varaždin became the owner of *Stari grad*, there were people living in it. Teacher Fabijan Šadek got a flat in the infirmary on 31 August 1925 and his two rooms and a utility room on the first floor of the *Stari grad's* tower were given to the Museum Society. Moreover, the Town contributed to the Museum Society by not charging the rent for the rooms. Franjica Kovačić also rented an apartment in *Stari grad* (two rooms and a utility room) from where she moved in 1928.<sup>24</sup> In one of the sittings of the Town Government it was arranged that one room of *Stari grad* is to be rented out as a refrigerating chamber; however, the licensee had to pay for potential damage caused by handling the ice.<sup>25</sup> In July, 1926, an auction was held for the business quarters located in the building on the right front side of *Stari grad*. The best offer was given by Jakob Štern who wanted to store flour, petroleum and gasoline there. The Town Government allowed only the storage of the flour.<sup>26</sup> In the spring of 1930 other tenants/ licensees in *Stari grad* were: Ilija Kovačević, who had a warehouse for hay there and promised to leave, carpenter Vilim Drach,<sup>27</sup> who wanted the tower with the chain bridge to be arranged as a place where he could live and have his workshop, the Hoffman and Vanek Company demanded to stay until the end of the lease contract, whereas turner Stjepan Ipša was willing to leave *Stari grad* but wanted the refund of the money spent on renovation.<sup>28</sup> The Town dismissed the renovation propositions and after the end of the lease contract the others also left *Stari grad*.

Moreover, the expropriation process led to conflicts within the Erdödy family. Count Đuro demanded all other possessions to be entered under his name in the cadastral records which was rejected by count Leon living in Varaždin as a citizen of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. The case was taken to court but during the process count Đuro died and the estate was inherited by counts of Koloman (from Graz), Leon (from Varaždin) and Marija Tezija Erdödy (from Vienna) on 20 July 1929. Each inherited 3/10, whereas count Eugen Erdödy,<sup>29</sup> who was living in Czechoslovakia, got 1/10.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 15 January 1926., act. 7, no. 942/1926.; sitting held on 16 August 1928, act. 9, no. 3426/1928.

<sup>25</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 26 November 1925, act. 8, no. 7039.

<sup>26</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 19 July 1926, act. 21, no. 4373/1926.

<sup>27</sup> One of the suggestions was to adapt the apartment of V. Drach for the needs of the ethnographic collection. DAVŽ-7, Building documents of Varaždin and surrounding area, Expropriation of *Stari grad*, a letter by Krešimir Filić dated 3 May 1934.

<sup>28</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 20 June 1930., act. 19, no. 8527/1930.

<sup>29</sup> Vjekoslav Klarić bought 1/10 out of 3/10 of the land owned by count Eugen Erdödy. DAVŽ, GPV, Parcellation of town land – documents 1936; Plans and documents on parcellation 1908-1931; Lease contracts 1940-1944, a document dated 7 July 1930., no. 5169/Agr. 1930, p. 12.

<sup>30</sup> Seniorate possession belonging to the counts of Erdödy comprised 1.091 jutros of land and 247 kv. hv. In Varaždin Tax Office register the property comprised 227 jutros and 748 kv. hv; in Varaždinske Toplice Tax Office register 19 jutros and 1.275 kv. hv; then in Šandorovec Tax Office

Until 1933 the Town invested 250.000 dinars in the renovation of *Stari grad* for repairs made to the roof and spouts including the renewal of the rooms for the needs of the museum and the archives. “If the town municipality had not taken over the historical facility it would have undoubtedly (...) been ruined as all the family members, with the exception of mentally ill Dr Leon Erdödy, stayed mostly abroad demanding a few millions reimbursement for the decaying *Stari grad*. (...) Dr Erdödy, on the other hand, keeps on dreaming of feudal economy and countship – hoping that he would revive the entire property and do business (...)”<sup>31</sup> The document also states that he had travelled throughout America wanting to find a rich spouse, but had not succeeded so he lived in the house next to the tower with the chain bridge and did not pay rent.<sup>32</sup> In 1933 Koloman and Marija Terezija demanded for their share in *Stari grad* one million dinars each. The Town rejected their proposal and added that further communication is possible only if they offer a sensible suggestion. *Stari grad* [the Old Town] in Čakovec was sold for 350.000 dinars which was taken as a reliable point of reference: “(...) it is also in a good condition, whereas *Stari grad* of Varaždin has only arid ditches and would have turned into ruins if the town municipality had not repaired it and invested 250.000 dinars in it”<sup>33</sup> In April 1934, the *Committee of Savska Banovina for the liquidation of agrarian reform on large estates in Varaždin*<sup>34</sup> estimated *Stari grad* to be worth 552.356,36 dinars which referred only to the castle, not including the surro-

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register 208 jutros and 66 kv. hv; and in Trnovec Bartolovečki Tax Office register 635 jutros and 1.358 kv. hv. Arable land of the seniorate possession of the Erdödy family consisted of 386 jutros and 246 kv. hv., out of which 300 jutros and 740 kv. hv were ploughs; 74 jutros and 1.381 kv. hv meadows; 3 jutros and 1.145 kv. hv. gardens; and 7 jutros and 1.180 kv. hv. vineyards. Uncultivated property area comprised 704 jutros and 601 kv. hv., out of which 569 jutros and 394 kv. hv. of woods; 43 jutros and 63 kv. hv. of grassland and 92 jutros and 144 kv. hv. of barren land. Due to the size of the previously mentioned area, the property was considered to be large. In the domain of Varaždin Tax Office, including *Stari grad*, 23 jutros and 276 kv. hv. of land belonging to the Erdödy family were expropriated for communal public needs and the building of houses, then 1.323 kv. hv in the domain of Šandrovec Tax Office and 16 jutros and 47 kv. hv in the domain of Trnovec Bartolovečki Tax Office. Altogether, 40 jutros and 46 kv. hv. were expropriated. DAVŽ, GPV, Parcellation of town land – documents 1936; Plans and documents on parcellation 1908 -1931; Lease contracts 1940-1944, a document dated 7 January 1930, no. 5169/Agr. 1930.

<sup>31</sup> DAVŽ, RS 1933., no. 5900/1933.

<sup>32</sup> The Town of Varaždin offered count Leon Erdödy in a sitting held on 15 April 1930 permanent and free accommodation in *Stari grad* (four rooms and utility rooms), but he had to give up reimbursement and therefore he refused the offer. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 14. May 1930., act. 7, no. 6602/1930.

<sup>33</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 6 October 1933, act. 29, no. 11155/ 13647/ 1933; sitting held on 19. January 1934, act. 9, no. 21858/1933.

<sup>34</sup> DAVŽ-7, Building documents of Varaždin and surrounding area, Expropriation of *Stari grad*, no. 6513/1934.



unding parcel - town walls and ditches.<sup>35</sup> In comparison to the year of 1922, when it was estimated to be worth 125.000 krunas, this was a higher price so the town suggested the authorized Committee should decide whether this is a positive or negative outcome. If the offer should be accepted, the reimbursement would be paid within the next 30 years at a 4 percent annual interest rate belonging to the state.<sup>36</sup> Koloman Erdödy was the first to accept the settlement offer and received a payment of 95.000 dinars for his share of 3/10 due in the next five years. This amount was also recommended to other co-owners<sup>37</sup> and the (illegitimate) son of Leon Erdödy – Franjo Jurša,<sup>38</sup> who also accepted the settlement offer. Marija Terezija refused to accept the offer so the *Committee of Savska Banovina for the liquidation of agrarian reform on large estates* passed a decision that in the next couple of years she is to receive 177.662,20 dinars.<sup>39</sup> Zdenka Šimončić Bobetko quotes in her conclusion: “In favour of agricultural subjects, 234 cadastral jutros of land were expropriated until June 1941. 340 interested farmers obtained the land, whereas 6 cadastral jutros were expropriated for public benefit. Thirty-eight farmers bought 14 jutros of land from landowners. (...) After the introduction of the agricultural reform, 825 cadastral jutros of land were still left to the landowner”<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusion

Prior to the agricultural reform, the free and royal town of Varaždin owned 1.228 jutros of arable land. The agricultural reform divided 1.038 jutros, the army claimed 100 jutros for its needs, whereas only 90 jutros were left under the ownership of the Town. Previous to the agricultural reform, in the war year of 1917, money received from the lease of the land made up more than 5 percent of the town income. However, having entered the new state union and due to the introduction of the agricultural reform as well as new and higher taxes

<sup>35</sup> In a sitting held on 30 November 1934 the Town Council passed a decision that, in accordance with the recommendation by the Museum Society, the environment around *Stari grad* is to be decorated. For this reason, experts Gjuro Szabo (1875-1943), Branko Šenoa (1879-1939), Martin Pilar (1861-1942) and Ivan Meštrović (1883-1962) would be employed as advisers. As a couple of months before King Alexander was killed in Marseille, the newly decorated promenade around *Stari grad* was named: “Benign Knight’s King Alexander I the Unifier”. DAVŽ-7, Building documents of Varaždin and surrounding area, Expropriation of *Stari grad*, a decision by regular public Town Council meeting on 30 November 1934, art. 107, act. 3, no. 17906/1934.

<sup>36</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 25 May 1934, act. 14, no. 7909/1934.; DAVŽ, RS 1935., no. 2180/1935.

<sup>37</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 30 November, act. 105.

<sup>38</sup> Count Leon Erdödy died in February 1935. DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 2 August 1935, act. 3, no. 12067/1935.

<sup>39</sup> DAVŽ, ZGPV, sitting held on 2 August 1935 act. 4, no. 12067/1935.

<sup>40</sup> Šimončić-Bobetko, p. 58.

in 1923, the land lease revenue made up barely 0,2 percent of the town budget. A buyer could enter expropriated land of the Town of Varaždin into the land register only when reimbursement had been payed off, and he was also due to build a house there within the next three years. Farmers obtained the land on a temporary one-year lease. Having taken everything into consideration, the agricultural reform failed to increase prosperity, on the contrary, it brought along direct financial losses for the Town of Varaždin. Namely, in March 1939, in a Municipal Council sitting a comment was made that the Town of Varaždin ceased to be the administration centre of northern Croatia due to the loss of financial directive and county jurisdiction, whereas it also lost significant financial income due to the seizure of large amounts of land for the agricultural reform. For the purpose of illustration, it would be interesting to see where the properties owned by the Town of Varaždin were located; however, due to the large number of cadastral parcels, its drawing is beyond the scope of this paper.

Regarding the seniorate possession of *Stari grad* [the Old Town], Rudolf II Habsburg gave it to count Toma Erdödy and his heirs who managed the property up to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As opposed to the property belonging to the town of Varaždin, in this case, the number of cadastral parcels is smaller and it was be possible to make an illustration depicting the surface it occupied in the area of the Town of Varaždin. The seniorate possession belonging to the counts of Erdödy was smaller than the then Town of Varaždin and consisted of 1.091 jutros of land. After the agrarian reform had ben conducted, 825 cadastral jutros remained. This process caused conflicts within the Erdödy family and short time after they vanished from Varaždin.



Varaždin cadastral parcels owned by the Erdödy family<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> The numbers of cadastral parcels are: 202-210. Varaždin Land Register Department, Old land maps, no. 21



Varaždin cadastral parcels owned by the Erdödy family<sup>42</sup>

## **Die Enteignung von feudalen Besitztümern in der Zwischenkriegszeit – die Beispiele der königlichen Freistadt Varaždin und des Senioratgutes der Grafen Erdödy Stari grad**

### **Zusammenfassung**

Die königliche Freistadt Varaždin besaß vor der Agrarreform 1.228 Morgen Ackerland. Während der Agrarreform wurden 1.038 Morgen Land verteilt, das Heer nahm für seine Bedürfnisse etwa 100 Morgen und der Stadt blieb nur 90 Morgen übrig. Im Kriegsjahr 1917, vor der Agrarreform, machte das Pachtgeld mehr als fünf Prozent der städtischen Einnahmen aus. Aber mit dem Eintritt in eine neue staatliche Gemeinschaft und nach der durchgeführten Agrarreform sowie der Einführung neuer und höherer Steuern entfiel 1923

<sup>42</sup> Numbers of cadastral parcels are: 1492, 1495, 1496, 4932-4935, 5035. Varaždin Land Register Department, Old land maps, no. 15.

kaum 0,2 Prozent des städtischen Haushaltes auf die Einnahmen von der Verpachtung. Das enteignete Land der Stadt Varaždin konnte in den Grundbüchern auf den Käufer erst nach der Entrichtung einer Entschädigung übertragen werden. Der Käufer war auch verpflichtet binnen drei Jahre ein Haus zu erbauen. Landwirte konnten das Land zeitweilig auf ein Jahr in Pacht nehmen. Allgemein gesehen brachte die Agrarreform keinen Fortschritt und die Varaždiner Stadtkasse musste dabei einen direkten Verlust erleiden. Auf der Sitzung des Stadtmagistrats, die im März 1930 stattfand, kommentierten die Stadträte, dass die Stadt Varaždin durch den Verlust der Finanzdirektion und seines Komitatsbereichs aufhörte, das Verwaltungszentrum Nordkroatiens zu sein. Durch die Enteignung des Großgrundbesitzes während der Agrarreform erlitt die Stadt einen beträchtlichen Einnahmenverlust. Es wäre zur Illustration interessant zu sehen, wo die Stadt Varaždin ihre Besitztümer hatte. Da es sich um viele Parzellen handelt, geht ihre Darstellung über den Rahmen dieser Arbeit hinaus.

Das Senioratgut Stari grad wurde von Rudolf II. Habsburg 1607 dem Grafen Tamás Erdődy und seinen Nachfolgern geschenkt, die es bis hin in die erste Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts verwalteten. In diesem Fall war die Zahl der Parzellen, im Unterschied zu der der Stadt Varaždin, kleiner und so konnte eine Darstellung ihrer Oberfläche auf dem Gebiet der Stadt Varaždin erarbeitet werden. Das Senioratgut der Grafen Erdődy war kleiner als die Besitztümer der Stadt Varaždin und bestand aus 1.091 Morgen Land. Nach der durchgeführten Agrarreform blieben noch 825 Katastermorgen übrig. Dies sorgte für Streitigkeiten in der Familie Erdődy, die bald darauf aus Varaždin verschwand.

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