

## THE AGRARIAN REFORM IN THE FORMER LUDUȘ SETTLEMENT OF THE TURDA DISTRICT

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*Abstract. During the interwar period the agriculture was the main economical activity in the villages that together constituted the Luduș settlement in the Turda district. According to the Administrative Law of March 27th 1936 and the Implementation Regulations of February 18th 1937, Luduș was a village, a settlement centre and belonged to the district of Turda until the year 1950. After August 23rd 1944 the main economical concern of the newly-installed leader of the government, general Nicolae Rădescu (6th December 1944-28th February 1945) was agriculture. Agriculture also became the main objective of the next government which was led by Petru Groza and which was installed on 6th March 1945. The implementation of the agrarian reform in Romania started with the Law issue nr 187/24 of March 1945. This practice lasted for two years (1945-1947). Such documents as „The agrarian reform in the former Luduș settlement” found in the district of Mureș Archives or The Comission settlement for the Agrarian Reform in Luduș offer relevant information as to the land expropriations, disagreements, correspondence as to expropriated goods, entitlements to various paintings, clarifying paperwork etc. Alongside the Agrarian Reform Acts, some files include C.A.S.B.I. (Surveillance and Administration of Enemy Goods Bureau) worksheets. In order for a better division among the entitled farmers within the Luduș settlement, the lands and properties of those who collaborated with Hitler s Germany, those who were declared war criminals or those who were declared absent were taken by the State. Thus, in the Luduș area many landowners were expropriated, the main beneficiaries of this reform being the war veterans, their heirs and the war widows as well as farmers who did not own any land.*

*Keywords: Communism, reform, agriculture, expropriation, allotment*

### **Introduction**

During the interwar period, agriculture represented the main economic activity in the communes that formed the Luduș land (plasa), Turda County. According to the Administrative Law of 27 March 1936 and its Implementing Regulations of 18 February 1937, Luduș was a commune, center of the region and belonged to the Turda County until 1950.

After August 23, 1944, the main economic concern of the newly installed government led by General Nicolae Rădescu (Dec. 6, 1944-28 Feb. 1945) was agriculture. When the Soviets occupied Eastern Europe, they had prepared the strategy of applying the Soviet model in the states under the influence of the U.S.S.R. through the communist parties<sup>1</sup>. On March 12, 1945, the draft Agrarian Law was submitted to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. With slight changes, after the debates of March 13, 19 and 20 the law entered into force on March 24 1945. By the Decree-Law no.187 / March 24 1945 commenced the enforcement of the agrarian reform in Romania. For its implementation, local committees, land (plasă) commissions and councils were constituted at the county level. The tasks of the land commissions were to maintain the expropriated agricultural machinery and equipment operational, until the organization of centers to manage them, to verify and complete the land reform panels drafted by the local committees, to elaborate final decisions on law implementation.

The objectives of the agrarian reform were: increasing the arable areas of existing agricultural peasant households, creation of new individual peasant farms for landless farmers,

<sup>1</sup>Dan Cătănuș, Octavian Roske, *Colectivizarea agriculturii în România. Dimensiunea politică*, vol.I 1949-1953, Institutul Național pentru Studiul Totalitarismului, București, 2000, p.12

foundation, in the proximity of towns and industrial localities, of vegetable gardens for the supply of workers, and assignment of land for agricultural schools and experimental model farms, which were to be administered by the state, for the development of agriculture.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the country, 918,000 peasants were appropriated on approximately 1,109,000 hectares.<sup>3</sup> The main beneficiaries were poor peasants and agricultural workers because 400,000 new households were created throughout the country, and 500,000 small properties have received extra land.<sup>4</sup> By Law No 23 of 8 March 1947, local committees and region commissions for agrarian reform were officially dissolved. To that effect, the finalization of the agrarian reform has been assigned to the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains, which was carried out through the Agricultural Chambers.

The land commission for agrarian reform in Luduș carried out its activity according to the aforementioned law during 1945-1947.<sup>5</sup> Documents originating from *The land Commission for the Luduș agrarian reform* Fund refers to: domains expropriations, disputes against expropriations, correspondence concerning the expropriation of expropriated properties, some panels for the rightful apportionments of property, works for the clarification and finalization of expropriation, etc.<sup>6</sup> No stubs of apportionments have been preserved than for two localities neighboring Luduș: Bogata of Mureș and Sâniacob. In addition to the agrarian reform commission's papers, some files also contain C.A.S.B.I. sheets (House of Administration and Surveillance of Enemy Assets).<sup>7</sup> Part of this commission's archive is, according to the information provided by the National Archives of Cluj, at the Turda storage of the National Archives of Cluj. The chairman of the land Commission was Nicolae Bărluțiu (clerk of the Romanian Railway), and the committee was consisting of 8 members.<sup>8</sup> On February 24, 1946, the members and chairmen of the local agrarian reform committees were elected for Luduș and Gheja. At the level of Luduș commune, the commission was conducted by Nicolae Rachita<sup>9</sup> and in Gheja, a village belonging to Luduș, by Tănăsie Nicoară. These local commissions have been chosen by ploughmen, landless or having properties with less than 5 ha of land. In order to be distributed to farmers who were entitled by the law, they passed over the state: the land and the agrarian properties of any kind belonging to the German and Romanian citizens, natural and legal persons who collaborated with Hitler's Germany; the lands and property of persons proclaimed war criminals; the lands of those who have fled to the countries with which Romania was in a state of war or have fled abroad after August 23, 1944; land and all the assets of the absentees;<sup>10</sup> the lands of those who for the last seven consecutive years have not cultivated their land by oneself, except batches up to 10 hectares; any kind of agricultural goods of Romanian citizens who have volunteered to fight against the United Nations; the bona vacantia<sup>11</sup>, the surplus of agricultural land constituting properties of natural persons exceeding 50 ha (arable

<sup>2</sup> Article 2 of Law 187/23.03.1945, published in the Official Gazette no. 68/23.03.1945

<sup>3</sup> Iosif Andreica, et. alii, *Monografia orașului Luduș*, Ed. Nico, Tîrgu-Mureș, 2008, p.125

<sup>4</sup> Keith Hitchins, *Romania 1866-1947*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2013, p.607

<sup>5</sup> National Archives of Romania, Mureș County Directorate (ANR-DJM), Land Commission for Luduș Agrarian Reform Fund, Inventory, f.1

<sup>6</sup> The documents used in this paper were taken over by the National Archives of Romania, the Mureș County Directorate, from the People's Council of Luduș, on December 27, 1978, not being separated by the documents of the Luduș *Pretura of Plasa*. Following the verification of the Luduș Pretura fund by the ANR-DJM (National Archives of Romania-Mureș County Directorate) personnel, the documents of the commission were identified and registered as a separate fund under the name „*Land Commission for Luduș Agrarian Reform*”.

<sup>7</sup> House of Administration and Surveillance of the Enemy Assets (C.A.S.B.I.) was established on the basis of Law no. 91 / 10.02.1945. The provisions of this Law were put into practice by Instruction 3822 and by several Ministerial Decrees. Following Decree No.228 of September 4, 1948, C.A.S.B.I. was dissolved.

<sup>8</sup> National Archive of Romania, Mureș County Directorate (ANR-DJM), Land Commission for Luduș Agrarian Reform, File 2/1945, f.2

<sup>9</sup> Iosif Andreica, op.cit., p.125

<sup>10</sup> Were considered Absentees, the persons to have been living abroad and who have managed their assets through intermediaries.

<sup>11</sup> Bona vacantia (literally - dead hand goods) - an expression that indicates the property belonging to legal entities (named this way because they cannot pass from hand to hand such as those belonging to natural persons).

land, orchards, meadows, ponds, swamps and non-floodable land). Buildings, mansions, threshing-floors, roads, orchards and any territorial improvement works were included in the 50ha share, the owner having the right to choose the quota reserved for him from where he wanted, but in single place.<sup>12</sup> As a precautionary measure, in order to avoid fragmentation of the areas received according to the law, the lands given in ownership could not be leased, alienated or mortgaged.

The commencement of the commission works of the Land Commission for the enforcement of the agrarian reform in the Luduş land,<sup>13</sup> also led to the dissatisfaction of the persons affected by the provisions of the law (people who were expropriated of lands or assets), materialized through appeals addressed to the Commission. Most of them were of Magyar ethnicity. Thus, in order to defend the rights of the Magyars, in April 1946 the M.P.U.<sup>14</sup> National Executive Committee created an electoral and rights protection fund and in September a legal commission<sup>15</sup> was set up. In a letter from the M.P.U. organization of Luduş addressed to the County Center dated 1946, was reported „*In the name of our communal section and through the General Assembly, I, respectfully request to the National Assembly of M.P.U. that, in the interest of the impoverished Magyars down to the level of the existential minimum, to urgently obtain from the government provisions that, in order to calm the spirits, will clarify the notion of absenteeism and irrevocably stop the outrageous injustices of the Magyars.*”<sup>16</sup> But these claims did not materialize, standing as evidenced the multitude of trials from expatriates of Magyar descent. Only a small percentage had won the case, the vast majority being expropriated.<sup>17</sup>

In the village of Gheja, Luduş commune, among those who did not find themselves on the apportionments of property lists but wanted to be apportioned according to the Law, there were citizens who had children on the front, missing dead, temporarily hired to Romanian Railway, those who have married from other localities and who have not been appropriated in the locality of origin, those who considered that there were mistakes made at the level of the commission regarding owned land lots, people who were mobilized at the front and were injured, with little land and who had their household destroyed during the war, those who married people coming from families that had more land but having children missing on the front, non-commissioned officers who renounced to their military career. They brought before the committee documents to demonstrate that they were entitled to ask to be included in the list of beneficiaries of the agrarian law (certificates issued by R.R., certificates issued by I.O.W.W.<sup>18</sup>, witness statements, etc.). The people of Gheja were complaining that the chairman of the land commission, Nicolae Bârluțiu, was „*coming from nowhere-actually not being a local, so he does not know our situation.*”<sup>19</sup>

#### **The case of the Academician Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády<sup>20</sup>**

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<sup>12</sup> Article 3 of Law 187/23.03.1945, published in the Official Gazette no. 68/23.03.1945

<sup>13</sup> The land commission for enforcing the agrarian reform in Luduş land, appears in documents also under the name of the Land Commission for Agrarian Reform.

<sup>14</sup> The Magyar People's Union (M.P.U.) was been the continuer of the Union of Magyar Workers in Romania. In October 1944 adhered to the Platform of the National Democratic Front and was in close contact with Romanian Communist Party (R.C.P.)

<sup>15</sup> Olti Agoston, Attila Gido, *Minoritatea maghiară în perioada comunistă*, Ed. Institutul pentru Studiarea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale, Kriterion, Cluj-Napoca, 2009, p.149

<sup>16</sup> National Archives of Romania, Cluj County Directorate, Fondul UPM Turda, Dosar 3/1946, f.204

<sup>17</sup> The Land Commission for Luduş Agrarian Reform (1945-1947) Fond is kept at the National Archives of Romania, Mureş County Directorate (RNA-MCD) and contains 31 archive units (files).

<sup>18</sup> Invalids, orphans and war widows (I.O.W.W.)

<sup>19</sup> Petition by Lazar Romul from Gheja, addressed to the County Commission for Agrarian Reform in Turda, RMA-MCD, *Land Commission for Agrarian Reform, Luduş Fund*, File 2/1945, f.47

<sup>20</sup> Academician's given name appears differently in papers or studies: Erasmus Iuliu, Erazmus Juliu or Erazmus Gyula. Erasmus, Latin given name, in in common parlance it was pronounced Erazmus, and Iuliu, in Hungarian translation is Gyula. In the documents signed by him, in RMA-MCD *the Land Commission for Agrarian Reform Luduş Fund*, File 2/1945 and Luduş Land Commission for Agrarian Reform, File 2/1945 he signed *Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády*. See also the work Váczy Kálman, Bartha Sándor, *Nyárády Erazmus Gyula. A természettudós*, Kriterion Könyvkiadó, Bukarest, 1988.

Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády was born on April 7, 1881 in Ungheni, Mures County, in a modest family and died on June 10, 1966 in Budapest. He graduated the Pedagogical Institute of Budapest in 1904. During 1904-1911, he worked as a teacher at a gymnasium in Kežmarok locality, at the feet of the Tatra Mountains, during which he elaborated 15 scientific papers. Having missed his native places, he asked to be transferred to the boys' school in Târgu-Mureş. Here he continued the series of floristry research. In 1914 he published the book „*The spring-summer flora from the surroundings of Tîrgu-Mureş*”. In 1922 he published a high school botanical manual, highly appreciated at that time, and made the most accurate embossed Romanian mural map. At the request of Alexandru Borza, in 1922 he was invited to Cluj to serve as the custodian of botanical collections within the Botanical Institute. He traveled all over Romania gathering a valuable material to enrich the herbarium of the Cluj University and studied the flora from different regions of the country. He has had a vast research activity, materialized by the issuance of numerous studies and scientific works in the field of botany.<sup>21</sup>

He was married to Paraschiva and had five children: Juliu, Paraschiva, Clara, Anica and Anton, the latter becoming also a renowned professor in the same field.<sup>22</sup> On July 30, 1932, a building with lands on the name of Anton Nyárády, father of the academician, was registered with the Land Registry in Luduş. According to the academician's statement given to the Luduş Land Commission on May 22, 1945, in the outskirts of the village, the family's estate amounted 35.5 hectares of arable land.<sup>23</sup> In 1941 Anton Nyárády died in Luduş, the estate being inherited by his son, Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády, who at that time lived in Cluj, but who came to Luduş every time was needed to help his father at work.<sup>24</sup>

In June 1945, the Land Commission for Agrarian Reform decided to expropriate the estate, up to that date belonging to academician Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády, and on September 23<sup>rd</sup> of the same year, sent him in writing the decision to expropriate the estate, which contained the following motivations: his property was cultivated in the lease; the landlord would never have worked his estate and was absentee, living in the territory he was given.

As the academician lived in Cluj, temporarily granted to Hungary, according to the Second Vienna Award of August 30, 1940, the authorities of Luduş considered him absentee and therefore expropriated the entire estate. Besides this, it was claimed the fact that the property was leased, which the academician denied, saying that since his childhood, his estate was worked by his father and in old age „splited in half”, his father bearing the expenses with agricultural works. By a petition addressed to the Luduş Land Commission for Agrarian Reform, the academician sorrowfully wrote the following: „*After the Vienna Award in 1940, a provisional frontier was established between Luduş and Cluj, so after my father's death, I myself could not receive, care and cultivate this estate, due to me. He wished to take care of the estate and cultivate the estate as administrator and intendent, general inspector of the Cluj education, recognized in this capacity of administrator also by the Turda Law court.*”<sup>25</sup> At the end of 1944, removing the border between Luduş and Cluj, it was natural for me to take over my estate”(…) *The title on which the real estates in Luduş were expropriated cannot be legal and just because I was not on the territory of the enemy, because Northern Transylvania was not in a state of war with Romania, and since the end of the armistice, Northern Transylvania - where I lived - was therefore the territory of Romania.*”<sup>26</sup> Besides these aspects, the academician also mentions that in 1922 the University of Cluj called him from Târgu Mureş to Cluj, to occupy the position of conservator of botanical collections at the University. Since the University could not move the collections in Southern

<sup>21</sup> Ana Todea, et. alii, *Oameni de ştiinţă mureşeni. Dicţionar biobibliografic*, Tîrgu-Mureş, 2004

<sup>22</sup> Extract from the Romanian nationality lists of the city of Cluj, no.33664 / 1945, RMA-MCD, *the Luduş Land Commission for Agrarian Reform*, File 2/1945, File 2, f.93

<sup>23</sup> Memorandum addressed to the Luduş Land Commission for the Agrarian Reform, May 22, 1945, *ibidem*, f.70

<sup>24</sup> Addition to the memorandum of May 22, 1945, drafted on July 16, 1945, *ibidem*, f.72

<sup>25</sup> The estate of Luduş, belonging to the academician, was administered in the period 1940-1944 by Laurentiu Şuşman, who became after 1945 General Inspector of Education in Cluj County.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, f.70-71

Transylvania after 1940, he remained the conservator of this collection that he had enriched. After the cession of NV Transylvania, at the departure of the director, Borza, he addressed the following words „*Mr. Nyárády, everything to remain the same in their place, for we will return!*” Regarding his activity, in the same petition, Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády wrote the following: „*My case is nothing but the natural course of life ... I was meant to keep my place in Cluj, taking care of the cultural and national values, which have an extraordinary value ...*”. He considered that it would be a very bizarre thing if, on the one hand, he receives a regular income from the Romanian state, he is valued and honored as the tireless worker of the culture starting with His Majesty the King, and on the other hand he is punished by seizure of properties as a country traitor. Another petition addressing the same issue was addressed by the academician to the Central Commission for Expropriation of Bucharest. He also reported with the same bitterness that his estate was unjustly expropriated: „... *Please, , Mister Minister, put yourself in my place, what ambition could I preserve for the future, and what energy could I offer with an injured soul, if the ground is pulled off under the sole for no serious reason, on which soil the parents fought for life, country and where they died. After an expropriation, I have to bear the feeling that because of others, I have lost the parental estate, and I have no place to retire in old age.*”<sup>27</sup> These actions, by which the academician tried to stop the expropriation of his private estate, had no success. For this reason, Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády further appealed to the Turda County Commission against a new expropriation decision of the Luduş Land Commission for Agrarian Reform in dated February 18, 1946. According to the Commission, it was a total area of 30,869ha out of which 24,869 arable and meadows, 6ha orchards, grazing, riverside coppice.<sup>28</sup> This area was considered erroneous by an academician who had noted as observations that the estate consisted of 35.5 jugerums (20.37ha and not 30.869 jugerums).

The memorandums of the academician continued, with petitions addressed to the Central Agrarian Reform Commission of Bucharest. At the meeting of April 4, 1947, the Central Agrarian Reform Commission discussed the expropriation cause regarding the property of Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády and ruled that it was not a case of property expropriation, restating the notice of the Turda County Commission<sup>29</sup> on 23 October 1946. This was a happy case, the academician being a well-known person in the country, he was supported in his undertaking by personalities of those times, such as: Alexandru Borza, Al. Buia, Iuliu Prodan, Traian Săvulescu and other prestigious professors from the Universities of Bucharest, Iaşi and Cluj-Napoca.

The political changes that followed in the years following the completion of the agrarian reform of 1945-1947 made these agricultural areas either owned by the state either by the landowners who later entered with these areas in the collective agricultural households.

### **Expropriation of the Estate of Baron Bánffy in Gheja**

The name of Baron Bánffy in Gheja was and is well known in the Luduş area. His estate was positioned in Gheja where he also resided. Bánffy Castle was, is and remains an important architectural landmark for the locality. In the 19th century, alongside the Bánffy Castle, there were two other mansions, one belonging to Count Toldi, and another belonging to Baron Splényi. They both had two levels and castles-like interiors.<sup>30</sup> Bánffy Castle was built by Gyorffy de Losád around 1868 (the year when he married in Gheja and later had two sons). It then was transferred into Sethon Bethlen of Bethlen's property around 1881 (two sons were born at Gheja during this period). Starting with 1890, the castle became the possession of János Bánffy of Losoncz, although there

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum addressed to the Commission for the Judgment of Appeals against Expropriations of 25.11.1945. In this process, academician Erasmus Iuliu Nyárády was supported by great personalities of science in our country: Prof. Acad. Traian Săvulescu (Academy of Agriculture), Prof. C.C. Georgescu (Polytechnic School), Prof. M. Guşuleac (University of Bucharest), Prof. Dr. C-tin. Papp, (University of Iasi), Prof. Al. Borza, and Prof. Dr. Emil Pop (University of Cluj), etc., *ibidem*, p. 81

<sup>28</sup> Memorandum addressed to the Ministry of Agriculture and Domains, Central Expropriations Commission Bucharest, *ibidem*, f. 103

<sup>29</sup> Letter no. 296/1947 from the County Commission for Agrarian Reform to the Land Commission for Luduş Agrarian Reform, *ibidem*, File 14/1946, f.163

<sup>30</sup> Keresztes Gyula, *Maros megyei kastélyok es udvarházak*, SC Impress SRL, Tg. Mureş, 1995, p.91

seems to be an overlap with the period in which the castle belonged to the Bethlen family. The history of the two families reminds us that this castle became the property of Bánffy a few years after it was built. It is possible for the castle to have been used jointly by the Bethlen and Bánffy families for a decade.<sup>31</sup>

On March 22, the Local Committee of the Gheja commune for the implementation of the agrarian reform, consisting of seven members, got together to discuss the situation of Gheja's properties belonging to Ioan Bánffy and his wife. According to the report drafted by the committee, the lands belonging to the Bánffy estate were the following: *grapevine including the coastline* 18 jugerums and 330 fathoms; *garden* - 39 jug; *forest located in the village of Gabud* - 100 jug, *arable land worked by oneself* - 254 jug.<sup>32</sup> (470 jugs, according to the land registry)<sup>33</sup>. In the same report, it was stated that the owner Ioan Bánffy and his wife were absentees, who left the country in 1920, and the estate was administered by their son Ladislau Bánffy until 1940. It passed in 1940 in the ceded territory where he would never return. According to the commission, this estate falls under art.3 par. d. The owner being declared „absentee”, the estate was subjected to expropriation. The Commission decided that all of the previously mentioned area (441 jug. and 330 fathoms.) to be expropriated. The properties belonging to Bánffy Ioan, other than land (buildings and dwellings<sup>34</sup>), which the same committee decided to expropriate, were: the Gheja Farm and the Luduş railway station Farm.<sup>35</sup>

In connection with the expropriation decision, Ioan Bánffy and his wife Rozalia, born Ugron, filed a complaint, considering that they were not absentees because they settled in Cluj, as early as 1920, and Cluj was Romanian soil, including during the period 1940-1944, because "Romania did not recognize the Vienna Award".<sup>36</sup>

In a statement signed on September 22, 1944, a group of inhabitants of Gheja mentioned the following: „*We, inhabitants of Luduş-Gheja commune in Turda County, prove that Ugron Rozalia, the wife of former Baron Bánffy John, has left the commune since 1918, leaving the entire estate to the son Bánffy Ladislau, who, during the cession, went to Hungary, where he returned with the Hungarian army in Hungarian military uniform with the rank of lieutenant commanding the Hungarian troops during the military operations. At his presentation in the commune he had with him an automatic gun, hand grenades and was followed by the Hungarian army.*” The declaration was signed by Mayor Iacob Blaga and 26 local residents. The mansion was nationalized in 1948 and was taken over by the Collective Agricultural Household (C.A.H.), which installed offices here using the cellar, storehouses and stables. In 1955, C.A.H. moved its headquarters, and in 1960 the building was taken over by the Ministry of Health.<sup>37</sup>

There have been several cases in which the Agrarian Reform Commission made erroneous decisions by unfairly expropriating properties. Such a case is that of the teacher Coloman Nagy, the headmaster of the Reformed School of Luduş and his wife, Ecaterina Nagy, having the same profession. It was a family of honest teachers who did not do politics. They did not have a hostile attitude towards the Romanians, as stated by the teacher Athanasie Botezan, a supervision school assistant inspector of Luduş. In the connection to the autumn 1944 refuge, when the Hungarian troops reached the territory of Luduş commune, the Nagy family remained in the locality. In the first instance, the Nagy family was expropriated the 3-jugerums<sup>38</sup> surface. The fact that the family

<sup>31</sup> Adrian Olaru, *Luduş, o istorie neterminată*, Ed. Sf. Ierarh Nicolae, Brăila, 2016, pag.240

<sup>32</sup> According to the Report drafted by the Local Committee of Gheja commune, 22.03.1945, ANR-DJM, *Land Commission for Luduş Agrarian Reform Fund*, File 8/1945, f.194

<sup>33</sup> Letter sent by the Turda Agricultural Chamber to the County Commission for Guiding the Agrarian Reform, *ibidem*, f.259

<sup>34</sup> Pursuant to Article 8 of Truce Convention signed between Romania and the UN, buildings and dwellings were considered as enemy estate and were managed by C.A.S.B.I.

<sup>35</sup> Report drafted by the Local Committee of Gheja commune, 22.03.1945, *ibidem*, f.195

<sup>36</sup> ANR-DJM, *Land Commission for Luduş Agrarian Reform Fund*, File 8/1945, f.267

<sup>37</sup> Adrian Olaru, *op.cit.*, p.240

<sup>38</sup> ANR-DJM, *Land Commission for Luduş Agrarian Reform Fund*, File 8, f.244

left Luduș on September 11, 1944<sup>39</sup>, was taken into account when Coloman Nagy appealed against the expropriation decision. On July 27, 1946, the Local Committee decided to cancel the expropriation decision, handing over the real estate family and the 4 jugerums of land.

### **Situation of Apportionments in Luduș and Gheja**

Following the enforcement of the Law for the Agrarian Reform in Luduș and Gheja they received land: farmers mobilized and concentrated in the anti-Hitler war (39 people in Luduș, and 102 persons in Gheja, the peasants with little land (6 persons in Luduș and 40 persons in Gheja), orphans, invalids and widows of war, landless peasants (32 persons from Luduș, 16 persons from Gheja)<sup>40</sup> A total of 261 people were apportioned to Luduș, 89 in Luduș and 178 in Gheja.

These tables with appropriated Luduș residents were drafted on February 8, 1946. They were verified by Tănasie Fanea, agricultural technician at the Agricultural District of Luduș Land, who also participated in vesting in possession of those apportioned, as a delegate from the Agricultural Chamber of Turda County.

### **Conclusions**

Unlike the 1921 reform, in 1945 the big landowners were also disposed of by agricultural machinery and equipment. The types of expropriations and private cases were not clearly specified in the law, which is why many of the expropriated sued the agrarian reform commissions. The area of land received by each peasant following the implementation of the agrarian reform was so small that it failed to improve its economic and social status.<sup>41</sup> Luduș Land households have remained as fragmented as before; the authorities have shown no interest in merging the scattered land strips. It has increased cereal production to the detriment of other crops. Due to the fragmentation of the estates, the livestock also decreased. The government has not been concerned about the promotion of agricultural associations or the cooperative movement. In the early postwar years, in this regard the government had a policy of waiting, and major changes in the organization of agriculture would only come after the Communist Party managed to completely eliminate the opposition since 1948.

In the years following the vesting in possession of those apportioned by the 1945 Agrarian Reform in Luduș, Gheja and Roșiori teams of welders and mechanical locksmiths from Turda and Câmpia Turzii have arrived to repair the chariots, wagons and agricultural tools free of charge.<sup>42</sup> It was a new sign of applying the policy of the Romanian Communist Party to strengthen the alliance between the working class (the industrial proletariat) and the working peasantry, to approach the mid-peasant peasantry and to isolate the wealthy peasantry. For all, the years of drought and famine in 1946 and 1947 arrived very soon, the galloping inflation, the compulsory quota of all vegetable and animal products to the state, some of which were sent to the Soviet Union as compensation for war. The years that followed, well-known in history as the years of Stalinist terror, meant sadness and suffering for most of the apportioned. This agrarian reform was „*the prelude to collectivization*.” Plows could not enjoy too much the land they received, being forced to work in congregations or in Collective Agricultural Holdings (future C.A.P.). Some of them have engaged in the next decade in newly established factories in the locality or in other localities, some have remained working in the C.A.H.s and others have suffered the persecution of the communist regime, specific to the 50s, being considered by the Communist authorities „kulaks”. The simple or the kulak peasant, landlord, or exploiter<sup>43</sup> were the target of communist politics that sought to transform him into a dependent, maneuverable person unable to manage, to drive him out of his village, set to stumbled upon all that he thought was more holy, faith and humanity.

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<sup>39</sup> On September 11, 1944, Luduș was evacuated by local authorities due to the war zone. Enemy armies left Luduș area, retreating on October 12, 1944.

<sup>40</sup> Personal archives of agricultural technician Tănasie Fanea and prof. Mircea Gheborean.

<sup>41</sup> Keith Hitchins, op.cit., p.608

<sup>42</sup> Iosif Andreica et alii. *Op. cit.*, pag.129

<sup>43</sup> CNSAS Archive, Documentary Fund *Objective Evidence Files on Ex-Landlords, Exploiters, Kulaks and Ex-Political Prisoners*, D003397, ff. 1-2

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