

THE ORIGIN OF THE LEGIONNAIRE MOVEMENT IN THE LUDUȘ AREA

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Abstract. The Legionnaire movement undoubtedly influenced the events in the interwar period. The Far Right current became very popular in the Luduș area for several reasons. This area had consisted mainly of Romanian inhabitants along history. Luduș, a place which emerged in the Middle Ages, underwent important changes starting with the second half of the 19th century. The modernizing of transport with the emergence of the train as means of transport, prompted social, political and economic changes. However the most significant aspect of the change was seen in the alteration of the ethnical structure of the population at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The Great Union of 1918 did not succeed in confirming the expectations of the Romanian. The economical evolution of the town in the 1920s and 1930s meant lots of hardships for the inhabitants whose main occupation was agriculture. That is the reason why many started to toy with the Far Right movement. The leader of the party, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, also played an important role because of his repeated presence in the area together with other legionnaire leaders. They managed to attract a great deal of the Romanian descent population. The followers of the Legionnaire movement in the Luduș area had an intense activity which culminated with the 21-24th January 1941 Legionnaire Rebellion.

Keywords: Luduș, legionnaires, Far Right, Codreanu, rebellion.

Introduction. Elements Leading to the Legionary Phenomenon in the Luduș area

The Legionary Movement, a specific Romanian phenomenon, was born and developed in the interwar period under the historical conditions created around here right after the accomplishment of the Great Union. Although it had a number of significant peculiarities, has shown many features which resemble the main fascist movements of Europe during the same period.¹ Right-wing political formations were relatively insignificant in the early 1920s. There have been attempts to launch a fascist Romanian movement shaped after the Italian model, but have gathered only a handful of followers. However, an issue which fed right-wing extremism was anti-Semitism.²

The Legionary Movement is undoubtedly linked to the life of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu. His debut in political life has taken place since the time of the studenthood, when the young student joined the “*The National Awareness Guard*” (Garda Conștiinței Naționale), later standing out as an organizer and coordinator of the nationalist student movement of 1922 as the head of youth wing in the National-Christian Defense League (Liga Apărării Național Creștine), led by AC Cuza.³ After the division of the National-Christian Defense League, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu decided to establish the Legionary Movement. The movement was not the concept of a single man but was born out of “*the profound anxieties that have disturbed all the classes of our nation.*”⁴ After the constitution of Great Romania, the Romanians were hoping for a better and fairer life. They wanted structural reforms in all areas of activity. Zelea-Codreanu, defined the purpose of the Legion more clearly, namely to encourage and direct youth “*to a new, Christian, Romanian and disciplined*

¹ Alexandru Florian et alii, *Ideea care ucide. Dimensiunile ideologiei legionare*, Ed. Noua Alternativă, București, 1994, p.125

² Keith Hitchins, *Scurtă istorie a României*, Ed. Polirom, București, 2015, p.194

³ Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, *Doctrina Mișcării Legionare*, Ed. Lucman, București, 2014, p.11

⁴ Horia Sima, *Istoria Mișcării Legionare*, Ed. Gordian, Timișoara, 1994, p.29

life”⁵. The Legion would include Orthodox, Greek-Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Protestant. For the Legion, “the newly-confessed man is the Christian man, updated within the Romanian history. He was vested to the world 2000 years ago by the Son of God himself.”⁶The Legionnaires also had a Gazette, *Pământ strămoșesc (Ancestral Land)* which appeared in Orăștie, where the father of Ionel Moța (one of the co-founders of the Legionary Movement) also edited *Libertatea*⁷ (*Liberty*)gazette.

Apparently an insignificant place, the territory that includes the town of Luduș and the neighboring localities hosted numerous historical events that more or less marked the history of Romanians from ancient times until today. One aspect that I want to highlight is the evolution of the Legionary phenomenon, of the right-wing extremist movement that developed in the interwar period in the Luduș area, in line with the trends of those times. The Legionary activity in the Luduș area (Turda County during the interwar period) represented a relatively well-timed phenomenon. The Legionarism of Luduș represented an important piece in the mechanism called the Legionary Movement at the level our country, thus marking an important moment of our contemporary history. Furthermore, the magnitude of the legionary phenomenon in the Luduș area "was a thorny issue" for the employees of the Siguranța (Safety) and later to the Securitate (Security) of Luduș more than 50 years. Former legionaries, over 70 years old in 1989, were, together with their children, kept under the surveillance by the “Evidence files on the Legionary issue”⁸.

The evolution of the localities in Luduș area has been, over time, as interesting as possible. The town of Luduș along with neighboring villages dawned in the Middle Ages.⁹ Among the major historical events the activity of the Legionary Movement in this part of the country is distinguishing. In order to understand the aspects that favored the development of the extreme right movement in the Luduș area, we considered: elements related to the natural environment (favourable to the development of human communities and the practice of agriculture from the oldest times), the evolution of the human community in the area (ethnic structure, population dynamics, religious structure, population migrations, historical events that have influenced the number of the population, basic occupations of the inhabitants), state policies (in this case the Magyarization policy, colonization with ethnic Magyars)¹⁰, the economic, social, cultural context, the political life of the interwar period, as well as the actions undertaken under the direct coordination of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu.

Evolution of the Population. Colonization with Ethnic Magyars

There are a number of factors that have made the Legionary Movement very well represented in the area of Luduș during the interwar period. These causes have their roots long before the interwar period. We speak of a mostly Romanian population, having agriculture as its basic occupation, due to physical, geographic and also historical conditions. The evolution of this population has been closely related to the policies of the previous centuries governors who, by various means, have been contributory on what would mean the extreme right movement in the area. In 1850 Luduș was a locality with a Romanian population in the absolute majority¹¹ (91.33%). The Magyars represented 2.91% and other nationalities 5.74% of which Gypsies 4.03%. The current Gheja neighborhood, formerly commune, had a similar situation, with 84.39% Romanians, 5.43% Magyars, 10.17% other nationalities of which Gypsies 8.9%. The data on Luduș are undoubtedly correct, as confirmed by the 1750 conscription indicating 645 Greek-Catholic inhabitants and the census of 1786 indicating 920 inhabitants, compared to 1,166 inhabitants in

⁵ Tatiana Niculescu, *Mistica rugăciunii și a revolverului. Viața lui Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu*”, Ed. Humanitas, 2017, p.118

⁶ Horia Sima, *Doctrina Legionară*, Ed. Majadahonda, București, 1995, p.16

⁷ Zigu Ornea, *Anii treizeci. Extrema dreaptă românească*, Cartea Românească, București, 2015, p.231

⁸ Antoniu-Ioan Berar, *Serviciile de informații din România și problema legionară în localitatea Luduș (1929-1990)*, 2010, manuscript, p.10

⁹ Iosif Andreica et alii, *Monografia orașului Luduș*, Ed. Nico, Tg. Mureș, 2008, p.90

¹⁰ *ibidem*, p.94

¹¹ Adrian Mihai Olaru, *Luduș, o istorie neterminată*, Ed. Sfântul Ierarh Nicolae, Brăila, 2016, pag.424

1850. The population evolution of Luduș between 1850 and 1900 is totally atypical: *during this timeframe, the Romanian population decreased by 0.1%, while the Magyar population grew by 1811.76%*.¹² During this time period, three events took place that influenced to a certain extent the dynamics of the population: the establishment of dualism in 1867, the construction of the Tîrgu Mureș-Războieni railway transom (inaugurated in 1871) and the administrative reform in 1876. The administrative reform meant for Luduș the transition to the status of commune and residence of the territorial division *Marosludas* called *Plasa Marosludas*, resulting in a much larger administrative apparatus, but also attracting business towards the locality. The construction and putting into operation of the railway has attracted a large number of workers, merchants, businessmen in the area, with a slightly more important contribution to population growth. Practically, under the conditions of rapid economic development, the number of Magyars increases from 34 (1850) to 650 (1880), while the number of Romanians decreases from 1065 (1850) to 1064 (1880). Possible explanations could be: some of the Romanian population was magyarized, the new Magyar administration facilitated only the establishment of ethnic Magyars in the locality, and the results of the census were distorted in favor of the Magyars or a combination of the above. Over the next two decades, the observed trend is maintained: the Romanian population has a relative increase of 12.59% in the first decade and 13.43% in the second one, while the Magyar population has a relative increase of 65.53 %, respectively 25.55%, well above the natural growth rate. In fact, in 1900 the two ethnicities had equal weight in Luduș: 1359 Romanians and 1351 Magyars. The first decade of the twentieth century brings the most radical changes in the ethnic structure of the locality, by massive colonization with Magyars in the inner colony of Luduș, as well as in *Andrássy-telep* (Roșiori), *Eckzen-telep* (Avrămești), *Mezőalbis-telep* and *Csorgó*.¹³ Thus, in this decade, the number of Romanians increased by 26 (representing 1.91%), while the number of Magyars increased by 1765 (an addition of 130.64%).¹⁴ Possible causes of stagnation of the Romanian population would be ethnic assimilation hereafter, but also external migration.

The second decade of the 20th century is marked by the First World War and the Union of Transylvania with Romania. Both events have influenced the number and ethnic structure of the population: by human losses from war and by the emigration of a number of Magyars, especially important businessmen, officials, intellectuals.¹⁵ The number of Romanians increased by 66 (an addition of 4.76%) and the number of Magyars decreased by 591 (a decrease of 18.97%). These results should be viewed with caution, since the set points for the year 1920 have been inventoried and not effectively censused.¹⁶

In the next two decades, the following evolution was recorded: the Romanian population increased by 21.84% in the first decade and by 58.62% in the second, while the Magyar population increased by 7.76% respectively 4.85%. Again, it is necessary to cautiously interpret these results: while the 1930 census values are considered to be correct, those of 1920 and 1941 have been altered for the mentioned reasons.

Regarding the population of Luduș of the year 1929, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu reported:

*“At 11 o'clock at night, on Christmas Eve, after more than 24 hours of walking, we arrived at Luduș of Mureș (...) Here also Juda, sitting at the fair, spread his web as a spider across the entire Romanian realm. In this web the poor peasants would be caught, spinned around and played and then stripped by all their possessions.”*¹⁷

The Legionary Movement had an anti-Semitic nature. This is mentioned in all the legionary themed writings. As stated in the autobiographical book *“Pentru Legionari”* (*For Legionnaires*), Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, decides to step into the crowd. It had been more than two years since the

¹² Iosif Andreica et alii, *Op. cit.*, p.95

¹³ *ibidem*, p. 426

¹⁴ Iosif Andreica și colab. *op. cit.*, p.27

¹⁵ Adrian Mihai Olaru, *op.cit.*, p.426

¹⁶ Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, vol.I, ed. a III-a, Editura Mișcării Legionare, București, 1940, p.345

¹⁷ *ibidem*, p.341

Legion was established and the nests had multiplied across the country. There was now a need to emphasize the beginning of the movement by using and stimulating these small forces. Under these circumstances, Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu decides, together with three comrades, to come to Luduș in December of 1929. For legionaries, “*the only legal way that could bring us to state measures for solving the Jewish problem, was the political path*”¹⁸. For about 100 years, the Jews represented an important presence in the life of the Luduș community. It is not known when the first Jews settled on these lands. Flora James, the niece of a store owner in the center of the early twentieth-century town, named Izidor Sternberg, states in her memoirs that her ancestors had emigrated to Luduș from Bohemia at the end of the seventeenth century¹⁹. But there are no documents supporting or denying this statement. According to the census of 1850, there are mentioned 6 Jews living in Gheja. In 1869 there are censused 88 Jews, and in the next half a century the number of Jews who choose to settle in Luduș, drawn by the economic development of the locality, grows exponentially. In this period, they buy property and lease land, open shops and set up small businesses. The Union of Transylvania with Romania did not lead to massive Jews departing, their number reaching 743 (the maximum recorded in the censuses). The Jewish Community of Transylvania in the 1920s to 1940s was in a different situation from the other Jewish communities in the country, thanks to a process of Magyarization which began at the end of the 18th century. This is the *Legea numelor seculare* (*The Law of Secular Names*). Under these conditions, the Jews of Hungary and Transylvania begin replacing Yiddish with Hungarian. They become citizens of the Magyar state, considering themselves as Magyars of Israelite religion. After creating dualism in 1867, the Jews were censused as Hungarians and were the only minority in which the authorities trusted because they had no national aspirations.²⁰ The period of 1867-1914, corresponding to the Austro-Hungarian dualism, is considered the best period of the Jews in Hungary. The union of 1 December 1918 meant for the Transylvanian Jews the cancellation of the right to hold the citizenship of the new state. It was only in 1924 that they received Romanian citizenship.

The situation of the simple Jews in Luduș is described in the memoirs of Flora James:

*„Under the new regime, the Jews of Transylvania found themselves among two conflicting cultural pressures, speaking Hungarian at home, but forced to run their businesses in Romanian. Education in Romanian schools was now compulsory. Ironically, though the Hungarians and Romanians hated each other, they were united in their antagonism toward the Jews.”*²¹

During the Second World War there were heavy times for the Jews of Luduș. Since 1940, anti-Jewish nature decrees have been issued and have started to be enforced. By applying the anti-Jewish legislation, the Jewish population was separated from the other Romanian citizens from a legal, political and social point of view. The Jews were drawn out from the protection of laws which guaranteed the security of everyday life for any citizen in a modern state. They were at the mercy of ad-hoc enacted administrative measures and abuses of the repressive apparatus without being able to defend themselves through the courts. With all legionary excesses, nonetheless, it cannot be said that in Romania the situation of the Jews was similar to the one of Germany or Hungary.

In the second half of the 19th century, many noble bankrupt Hungarians sell their lands, bought by the former serfs supported by the rising Romanian bourgeoisie. In this context, Barabás Endre said:

*“(...) if the Hungarian population (...) continues to not pay more attention to this part of the country, the Romanian mass superior by number, property and wealth will conquer the power; it is only a matter of time.”*²²

¹⁸ James, Flora, *Memoirs. A Jewish childhood in Transylvania*, 2005, p.5, source: http://florajames.co.uk/pdf/flora_memoris.pdf, accessed on 15 March 2017

¹⁹ *ibidem*

²⁰ Adrian Mihai Olaru, *op. cit.*, p.320

²¹ James, Flora, *op. cit.*, p.5

²² Adrian Mihai Olaru, *op.cit.*, p.272

In an identical way, a Turda newspaper wrote:

*“For years we have heard and it is heard again the claiming that the Saxon and Romanian financial institutions in Ardeal are buying land sold by landlords or auctions ... Thus the quantity of land property of the Magyars in Ardeal is decreasing continuously and the Magyar ethnic element decreases both in terms of both financially and in number”.*²³

The unofficial purpose of the colonization was the creation of Magyar „islands” in the compact Romanian areas, as well as the expansion of the Magyar communities found in minority. For this purpose it was desired the making of a corridor from Hungary to the territory inhabited by Szeklers, alongside the rivers and in the Transylvanian Plain. From this corridor, in time there would have been a spread of Magyarism in the adjacent areas. For example, in the contract concluded between Eczken Sándor, a local landowner and the Hungarian Royal Ministry of Agriculture, the political purpose of colonization is stated from its first line: „(...) filled by the feeling that on the Plain colonization promotes the cause of increasing the supportive elements of the state sells its estate (...)”.²⁴ This practice of colonization began after the institution of Austro-Hungarian dualism (1867). During 1902-1905, four colonies were formed in Luduș: Andrásy-Roșiori, Eczken-Avrămești, Albis-Fundătura and Belső-Telep, Colonia Interna (Internal Colony)–part of the old Luduș: the streets of Mărășești, Frăgărești, Dorului, part of 8 Martie and Viilor²⁵. The first three colonies were formed on the territory of Luduș, on properties purchased from Eczken Sándor and Count Andrásy Gyula. The Internal Colony was formed on 1835 cadastral jugerums (iugăre) and 1550 square fathoms (stânjeni) from the territory of Luduș, but administratively belonged to Bogata, and on 478 cadastral jugerums and 448 square fathoms from the border of Bogata. This colony, located on Count Andrásy's inner estate, set up to provide the basic needs for colonists and the development of the Magyar state elements, reaching to a total of 3722 cadastral jugerums and 1440 square fathoms.²⁶ The value of the households was to be paid in 50 years. In none of the colonies was the purchase extended for such a long period, the value of the households being paid until 1918. All the settlers committed themselves to live and manage the purchased properties and that they would not be able to alienate, without the approval of the Treasury, the household purchased except legal successors. Population of colonies took place during 1903-1905.

The Union of 1 December 1918

On November 6, 1918, it is constituted the Romanian National Committee and the Romanian National Guard of Gheja. In November 1918, over a 12-day interval, elections are held for the Great National Assembly of Romanians in Transylvania and Hungary organized according to the 1910 Election Law. The Romanian National Council of Luduș and the representatives of the Romanians in the Luduș electoral circle adopted in 24 November 1918 document:

Our judgment

*“The collectivity of the Romanian people in Luduș of Mureș, at their own exhortation and without any force or lure of any part, reveal the burning desire that enlivens the heart of every Romanian and declares that his unshakable will is: we want to be joined together with the Romanian territories from Ardeal, Banat, Hungary and Maramureș to the Kingdom of Romania, under the rule of his Majesty, King Ferdinand I. In this decision of ours, we lay out what our ancestors desired, everything that keeps us warm, the people present and everything that would enlighten our sons and grandchildren forever. So help us God.”*²⁷

On the same day, the five deputy delegates of the Luduș electoral circle for the Grand National Assembly of Alba Iulia. Among these, Dr. Ioan Oltean, attorney at law and, Vasile Morariu, a primary school teacher, both Luduș natives, are the most notable.

²³ Apud Adrian Mihai Olaru, *op.cit.* /Aranyosvidék, Torda, 8.05.1905

²⁴ Adrian Mihai Olaru, *op. cit.*, p.272

²⁵ Ioan Andreica et alii, *op. cit.*, p.94

²⁶ Lovas Sándor, *A legujabb állami telepítések Magyarországon, Budapest, 1908*, p.411

²⁷ *ibidem*

Political, Economic and Cultural Interwar Life of Luduș

At the level of Luduș there was an animated political life. In 1881, the year of the unification of the two Romanian parties in Transylvania, the National Party of Romanians from Transylvania, Banat and Hungary placed here the office of the electoral circle of Luduș of Mureș.

Anti-Semitic Reports in the Press

An important role in spreading the ideas promoted by the Legionary Movement in the Luduș area was also given by the press of those times. We are talking about the press articles with an obviously anti-Semitic shade, read by locals, many of whom were subscribed to the publications of that time.

In the *Enciclopedia Română (Romanian Encyclopaedia)* (1904), Ludușul is described as follows:

*Ludoș (magyar Ludas). 1) Ludoș of Mureș, magyar. Maros-Ludas, great commune in the county of Turda-Arieș; 2393 Romanian, Hungarian and Jew inhabitants. L. is located in the valley of Mureș and on the southern side of the Plain and is a commercial emporium of grain wood; has big cattle fairs. The trade is especially in the hands of the kikes, which enclasp more and more land. 2) [...]*²⁸

Anti-semitic language is also encountered in a description of the locality in the newspaper *Răvășul (The Scrawl)* (1907):

*“This fair in 1848 was a pure Romanian village like all the villages of the Plain. Today is a town full of Kikes and propped up with a new colony of Hungarians brought from the flat of Hungary. The Romanians withdrew from the Mureș flat on the hill and made two fortresses: A beautiful school, whose image I showed, and a more beautiful church, which we will show in future issue.”*²⁹

In the newspaper *Țara noastră (Our Country)* description is somewhat similar:

“On November 30, 1910, I was going on the road that leads from Ludosul of Mures from Turda-Arieș County to the heart of the Transylvanian Plain. I was leaving with great bitterness from Ludoș. Ludoș, once the entirely Romanian, today is a foreign center. The old people tell you that in the main streets and around the square, 70-80 years ago they were the houses of the Romanians and barely a few Hungarian houses. Now, all are in the hands of strangers, although the Ludoș has since become one of the most important commercial centers in Ardeal. But what benefit do we have from here? A few Hungarian firms and a lot of Jewish firms. Romanians ... Where are the Romanians?

*I was thinking about the sin committed by ours, who sold their homes from the center of the town to the strangers, and they retired to the small ranch at the border or got a small piece of land at the verge of the village. Today large and beautiful houses rise up next to the square, and on the main streets, with shops, magazines and spacious barrelhouse. That they belong to a strange nation, it can be seen because Saturday is everywhere locked ...”*³⁰

In *Românul (The Romanian)* (1911):

*“[...] Ludoș, this famous food fair of Ardeal, where weekly chariots, loaded with the burden of wheat like gold, of our tall and long-haired plainsman, come down.”*³¹

The economic, social and political situation of the 20s and 30s, as well as the press, directly influenced the opinion of the readers in this area, increasing the discontent, thus facilitating the propaganda of the extreme right on these lands.

²⁸ Corneliu Diaconovich, *Enciclopedia Română (Romanian Encyclopaedia). Volume 3: Kemet-Zymotic*, W. Krafft's Publishing House and Printing House, Sibiu, 1904. Published under the auspices of the Association for Romanian Literature and the Culture of Romanian People.

²⁹ *Răvășul*, anul V nr.5, Cluj, 2.02.1907.

³⁰ Octavian Popa, *Avrămuș*, in *Țara noastră*, anul IV, nr.32, 19.09.1923, p.11

³¹ *Românul*, anul I, nr. 149, Arad, 22.07.1911, p.2

Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu's Visit in the Luduș Area and the Beginning of the Extreme-Right Movement in the Area.

Amid intense propaganda, in 1929, a Legionary organization is established in Luduș, which quickly became one of the most important in the country. Important information about this period is found in the Luduș commune records operational file, which is in the archives of C.N.S.A.S. (National Council for the Study of Security Archives).³²

"(...) Legionary movement in the former Luduș division (plasă) belonging at the time to the former Turda county, today (in 1961) Luduș rayon, Cluj region, was founded in 1929 by the so-called Amos Horațiu Pop, a former liquor merchant, restaurant owner (the restaurant was located on Barițiu Street) from Luduș, now deceased, committed suicide by strangulation in 1944.

He, for the purpose of organizing the legionary movement, received help from the students from Iasi and from the center in Bucharest. The Assembly for organizing the Legionary Movement took place on 13 December 1929 in the village of Hădăreni, Chețani commune, in the presence of 30 inhabitants, on which occasion Amos Horațiu Pop slanders the historical parties. At the same time, he shows the Iron Guard program and appeals to the citizens to join Iron Guard and join him to fight against the Jews, because „they are the antichrists” and as soon as possible Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu will come to Luduș and altogether will start against the Jews. On the occasion of this meeting Professor Ioan Rusu from the former high school in Luduș and a student from Iasi, whose name is unknown took the floor.”

From several sources we get the information that Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu was several times in Luduș. A first source is the file in the CNSAS archive. Another source is the book „*For the Legionnaires*” which tells us the existence of two historical public meetings organized by the Captain at Luduș on 25-26 December 1929. Thus, on Friday, before Christmas, a group of 4 legionary leaders in the forefront with Corneliu-Zelea Codreanu left with a truck to Luduș, on a frosty weather. On the way, they suffered a terrible cold, even though they filled the truck with straws to make them feel less cold. Because of the frost, the trains did not circulate either. They followed the route Iași - Piatra Neamț-Valea Bistriței. At 4 o'clock in the morning they were already on the crests of the Carpathian Mountains. At 11 o'clock they arrived, on Christmas Eve, to destination in Luduș of Mureș. Here they were greeted by Amos Horatiu Pop in whose house they rested.

“The next day, we went to the church, and then visited the town. It's bigger than Tg. Berești and located some 40 km north of Turda, the capital of the county. And this too is full of kikes, but not reaching the percentage of Beresti (...) In this web the poor peasants would be caught, spinned around and played and then stripped by all their possessions. On the morning of Christmas Day, we set forth. First, the truck with 10 legionnaires, and afterwards I, with some 20 horsemen: Amos, Nichita, Colceriu, Professor Matei and others, all with turkey feathers on our hats. On the road we met the people, and not knowing what it was, they were looking at us wonderingly. But we were going as if vested with the strongest authority, because we felt that we were coming in the name of the Romanian people, according to his command and for him. (...) Neither for them did we bring any political programs. We only told them that we came from Moldova to call to resurrection the troubled soul of the Romanians; for a thousand years of bondage, injustice, and grave have been enough. Great Romania was made with a great deal of sacrifice, but it seems as though foreign domination and old injustice have been extended even further from the realisation of this Romania. Ten years of Romanian governments have failed to heal us from the wounds that ache and have not repaired secular injustices. They gave us a formal unity, but they broke the Romanian soul into so many pieces, how many parties there are ...”³³

³² ACNSAS, *Fond documentar*, D007400, *Problema legionară*, vol.10, f.7

³³ Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, *Pentru legionari*, Volumul I, Ediția-a IX-a, Editura Scara, București 1999, p. 283-284

Another source is the establishment of the Third Legionary Battalion on May 4, 1930 (the first two being in Iași and Câmpulung).

“Also Sunday 4 May this year. the first flag of the Legion of the Michael Archangel under the leadership of Mr. Corneliu Codreanu, namely the flag of the third Battalion of Turda county, headquartered in Luduș, was sanctified. The celebration, which was attended by a beautiful number of disciplined and hopeful legionaries, was in complete silence, proof of the seriousness of the Christian nationalist struggle. Honorable is the Orthodox Father of Luduș (Romul Popa), who pleased to perform sanctification (we are sorry to announce that the fellow priest of Luduș, Enea Pop Bota, refused to take part), then the authorities of the order who knew how to get involved in the best possible way, as well as to the school of accountants-cooperatives, who held up their duty to take part with their students. At the celebration, we witnessed a large audience, from the town and the province, among which multiple Lănciști and even members of various political parties.”³⁴

Conclusions

The legionary phenomenon by the extreme right movement entitled "The Legionary Movement" found in the Luduș area a favorable ground for the spread of ideas in the interwar period. This is demonstrated by the generous content of documents in the specialty archives, books written on this topic, and testimonies of those involved in this phenomenon. The legionarism has developed in the interwar period due to several factors. The propagandistic activity coordinated by Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu himself had a real success because the area was for a long time a space inhabited mostly by Romanians but under foreign domination. The construction of the road connecting Ludușul of Cuci commune, without passing through Bogata of Mureș made the town become a center of *Plasă*. This situation, to which we add the construction of the Războieni-Tîrgu Mureș railway and Luduș-Budești-Măgheru-Bistrița have favored the making of conditions for economic development. Due to this economic development which made no delays, the area has attracted numerous Jewish families that have developed their own businesses. Another cause that favored the spreading of the nationalist ideas specific to the extreme-right were also the anti-Romanian policies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, policies promoted by the Austro-Hungarian dualism. A consequence was the colonization with ethnic Hungarians coming from several regions of the Empire, radically changing the structure of the ethnic population in the area. We cannot leave out the Unification of 1918, by which the area becomes part of the Great Romania, and thus the Romanian extreme right-wing movement can easily penetrate the area, about a decade after the great event, amid the threats of the expansion of communism, but also due to the fact that the Jews were supporters of this political trend. For all these reasons we can add: the political, cultural and social evolution of the locality, the everyday life of the inhabitants of the area reflected in the press of those times in many articles with a nationalistic and anti-Semitic tinge, but also the difficult situation of the inhabitants, mostly ploughmen, dissatisfied with their economic and social state in relation with the Jewish minority. We are talking about a relatively well-defined phenomenon in time, with a special importance in the evolution of the Legionary Movement at the level of our country, representing a moment that marked our history.

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