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**EDUCATION POLICY ON ROMANIAN NATIONALITIES IN THE HUNGARIAN
KINGDOM AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY**

The precedents, debate and consequences of the Lex Apponyi in Transylvania and in the
Partium

Theses of the PhD study

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I. Definition of Research Aims Based on Review on Historiography

In 2009, I started my research on Lex Apponyi at the ELTE Faculty of Teacher Education with the encouragement and support of Dr. Péter Donáth. It was caused by the fact that I willingly and actively attended the seminars and lectures of Mr. Donát, who spoke at length about the history and past of teacher training in Hungary, including teacher training for nationalities. From the very beginning of the research, it became clear that studying the effects of the bill on all the nationalities of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is a man-trying undertaking, almost impossible. So, the task was to narrow down the research to one specific nationality. Since I was born in Transylvania and I completed my primary schools there, I quickly decided to study the impact of the Lex Apponyi (Article XXVII of Law No. 1907) on the Romanian population in Transylvania. It turned out to be a fortunate situation that, as a Transylvanian Hungarian, I had experienced for several years what it was like to be a schoolboy in a minority line and to be obliged to learn a state language that was foreign to me. All this helped me to process the sources in a way that empathy shall compensate for the possible bias that naturally goes with my being Hungarian.

At the very beginning of the research, I was confronted by the fact that no major monograph had been written on my chosen topic and I could rely on only short monographs, studies and shorter analyses focusing on a particular nationality written by the contemporaries and the posterity. The majority of works on the Lex Apponyi have focused on the Slovak and the Romanian minorities. After the change of regime, the majority of historians working on nationality problems in the dualist era have striven for objectivity (e.g. László Anka, László Orosz). But we cannot ignore the fact that the position of Hungarian historians on the Romanian national question have been influenced by the study of the Marxist historian István Dolmányos published in *Századok* in 1968. Dolmányos's findings are echoed in the Hungarian and international academic literature after the fall of communism, which is unfortunate because the historian took a very simplistic approach to Albert Apponyi's ministry of culture and the education law package that was linked to his name seeing and presenting only the "repressive nationality policy" of the Hungarian government. All this misleads when examining the educational policy of the Hungarian Kingdom's nationalities in the early 20th century.

The source materials of the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, which were kept in the National Archives of the Hungarian National Archives and were related to the ministry of Count Albert Apponyi in the early 20th century, were destroyed in the fires of 1944–45 and

1956. This in itself means that my research will have to provide known, less known and mostly previously unknown additions.

Almost without exception, works written by Romanian authors are characterised by bias and lack of objectivity, so I considered it particularly important to use as many primary sources as possible during writing this dissertation. I was aware that the research and processing of Romanian primary documents, school notices, newspapers, diaries, letters, memoirs, etc. could help me to get a much more realistic and balanced picture on the subjects I was studying. I also wondered, given the critics and evaluations of contemporaries and later Romanian historiography towards the Hungarian government, how Romania, as a neighbouring country of the Kingdom of Hungary and also a multi-ethnic country, provided education for its minorities at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. What rights did she give them? This is interesting because there were also a significant number of Hungarian minorities living in the Kingdom of Romania at the time.

Albert Apponyi, as Minister of Culture, emphasised the “Hungarian national direction, the theory of the unified Hungarian state spirit” in all sectors of education, and tried to enforce this. The same concept, however, had already characterised the ministerial work of his predecessors (Lóránd Eötvös, Gyula Walassics, Albert Berzeviczy, György Lukács, Gyula Tost). Such a way, that Albert Berzevicz’s (who held the post of Minister of Religion and Culture in 1905–1906) bill to amend the 1868 People's Education Act served as a model for Apponyi's 1907 Education Bill, partly because of its Magyarising aspirations.

Taking all this into account, the first research question arose: why was it in 1907, during Apponyi’s ministry of religion and public education, that the legislation aimed at improving education and in line with the general Hungarian political will of the public came into force? I supposed that specific events happened that motivated the Hungarian political leadership to start changes in the education policy of the Hungarian Kingdom. But what were these events?

In his work published in 1995, Stelian Mândruț presented the parliamentary activities of the MPs of the Romanian National Party between 1905 and 1910. About the bill introduced on 21 February 1907 by the Minister of Culture Count Albert Apponyi, the author explains that the Romanian deputies were engaged in their “fiercest parliamentary struggles” and that the nationalist deputies were “courageous”. It is essential to study, analyse and evaluate the debates and speeches on the proposed laws. The importance of this became evident when I was confronted by the fact that one of the parliamentary debates on the bills introduced by Apponyi presented the greatest scandals of Hungarian parliamentarianism (the Vaida-Voevod affair, April 1907).

The mapping of the protests of the Romanian national representatives and the Romanian church leaders raised new research questions. What were the forms of the protest of the Romanian population if there was any? Who were those who could be mobilised? Who undertook the task of organisation? Can we speak only of a wave of protests organised by a group or were there also private actions? The Romanian general assembly in Gyulafehérvár on 1 December 1918, where the Romanian people declared the annexation of Transylvania to Romania, was a successful mass event. Considering their options, the participants arrived quickly and in large numbers. Thus, it is worth looking at every Romanian mass movement at the beginning of the century as a possible “exercise” or “rehearsal”.

Right at the creation (Szerdahely,1869) of the Romanian National Party, there was a serious debate within whether to participate in the elections and in the work of the Hungarian parliament or not, so to follow an active or a passive policy. By the beginning of the 1900s the generation fighting for and being successful in following passive policy ceased to exist and a new, active generation of young Romanian intellectuals acquired leadership in the party. The change of the situation was represented by the election of Gheorghe Pop de Băsești (chairman) and Vasile Lucaciut (chief secretary) on the party congress in Nagyszeben in January 1905. In addition, they decided to keep the program points of 1881, but they also would be politically active at countrywide level. The leaders of the party were already those who knew the methods how to persuade specific persons in Europe and make them believe that the persecution of Hungarian nationalities was at its height.

The Romanian politicians took the protest against the Lex Apponyi to international grounds beside their propaganda activities within the framework of the Hungarian and the Romanian Kingdom. In academic literature, two famous names of those supporting the cause of nationalities appear: Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson Norwegian Nobel-prize author, the father of the Norwegian national anthem and Lev Tolstoy, one of the most famous authors of Russian and international literature. Therefore, I also analysed how the two celebrities evaluated the educational law of 1907.

Octavian Căpățină, in his book titled “Transylvania, the Tisza Plain and Pannonia” (2014) examining the cultural, religious and ethnic past of the Kingdom of Hungary makes the same observation as most of the Romanian historians: during the course of history, the Kingdom of Hungary intended to reduce the number of the “Romanian race”, using four means: magyarisation, genocide, territorial acquisition and persecution. In addition to the destruction of identity in the army, one of the means of “Magyarisation” is considered to be the public

education, which from the point of view of Hungarian aspirations, had already achieved considerable results by the end of the 19th century. It culminated in the law on the national schools of Apponyi in 1907 and in the subsequent years (in the spirit of the implementation of the Lex Apponyi). The author cites data from the works of Hungarian authors to support his claims. One of them is the book written by Ferenc Halász, entitled *State Popular Education* (1902). Taking the data from Halász's book, Căpățînă claims that 30–40,000 Romanians lost their identity and assimilated in the Sebes-Kőrös region thanks to the state-run folk schools. And in Nagy-Küküllő county, the population started to use the Hungarian language as a result of the work of the public schools opened in 1879. The Romanian author claims, again based on the facts described by Halász that the children of the coal miners of Vajdahunyad 80% of whom being of Romanian nationality considered themselves to be Hungarians due to the state folk schools, and the state achieved this in a generation. According to Căpățînă, between 1907 and 1911, the school inspector in the Vajdahunyad school district closed 125 Romanian denominational schools and replaced them with 80 state schools, while in the Zemplén school district, 127 Romanian-language schools were closed and replaced by exclusively Hungarian-language schools in ten years. Similar to the above-mentioned book published by Halász, Romanian historiography also sees evidence of the assimilation policy of the Hungarian state in the following works: Simon Telkes: *Hogyan magyarosítsuk a vezetéknéveket?*; Pál Balogh: *A népfajok Magyarországon*; Gusztáv Beksics: *A nemzeti politika programja Erdélyben és Székelyföldön*; Antal Huszár: *A magyarországi románok*. All this might lead one to believe that the number of Romanians in Transylvania declined at the turn of the century, many losing their Romanian identity and becoming Hungarians embarking on a path of assimilation.

But the problem is more complex than that. Therefore, I have extended the research to the following areas: firstly, I describe all the state measures concerning public education, which were intended to raise the quality of public education and simultaneously to assimilate the nationalities at the end of the 1800s. Secondly, I try to answer the question why all these attempts on assimilation were unsuccessful. Thirdly, I analyse the astonishing statistics of Ioan Russu-Șirianu showing how the population of the Romanian population in Transylvania changed during the period of the dualism, including the last decade of the 19th century. Ioan Russu-Șirianu was a Romanian intellectual who lived at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and who is rarely cited by Romanian historians.

Before, during and after the birth of Lex Apponyi causing upheaval in other nationalities of the Hungarian Kingdom, there was only a few prominent Hungarian politicians who could have interpreted the Hungarian-Romanian question without the Hungarian supremacy theory.

One of them was the extraordinary politician István Tisza. He was motivated to negotiate with the Romanians because of other problems that were vital for the Hungarian Kingdom to be solved. After the electoral victory in 1910, when he was not a PM, asked the Romanian high clergy in a manifesto for cooperation. Minister of Culture count János Zichy Jr. called the school-inspectors to take leniently decrees forcing the usage of Hungarian language and to be gentle with the Romanian clerical and school authorities. Minister of Justice Ferenc Székely also instructed prosecutors not to promote legal actions on agitations.

The fact that the National Labour Party considerably handled the Lex Apponyi as a part of the intention to cooperate with the Romanians shows subtle the educational law created in 1907 was in the Hungarian-Romanian relationship. It offers the opportunity to analyse whether the Hungarian government was willing to change the criticised points of the Lex Apponyi from 1907 to the beginning of WW I. If the answer is yes, then the Romanian national leaders did not seek the way of solution of the problem of Magyarisation in the public education but tried to maintain the situation to strengthen the pejorative opinions (e. g. the prison of peoples) on the Habsburg-Hungarian Monarchy in Europe. Or was the government willing to modify the law of 1907 but the leaders of the counties and the schools-inspectors did not apply these measures properly? In this latter case, it is understandable that the leaders of the Romanian nationality were unable to believe in the re-formation of the Lex Apponyi and they tried stalling. The correspondence of István Tisza representing the Hungarian government and the clerical and worldly representatives of the Romanian nationalities has to be analysed in this aspect.

György Petrusán (Gheorghe Petrușan) professor emeritus and Romanian native speaker living at Szeged published a writing titled “The Romanians living in Hungary and the Union in 1918” in the centenary publication of a Romanian weekly journal published in Hungary, entitled Foaia Românească. He drafted the precedents of the 20th century-turn mentioning the atrocities against the language and culture of nationalities in the dualist era which are visible in the laws on public education according to him. The expert of the Transylvanian Roman literature writes in his treatise that the laws on the Magyarisation of the education were continuously drafted and they tested the loyalty of the Romanians living in Hungary toward the Hungarian state. The intentions of policy on education of that era was topped by the law of 1907 by Albert Apponyi being the example of Hungarian inhumanity and despotism according to Petrusán and Piroška Magyarai (cited by Petrusán). The professor emeritus claims that the law by Apponyi was the *casus belli* between the Hungarians and the Romanians and alienated the latter from the common homeland, Hungary. Romanian minister of Education Mihail Golu referred to the Lex of 1907, when he explained in 1992 why the Hungarian students in

Transylvania were forbidden to study history and geography in their native language in certain classes. The bill of Albert Apponyi was not even passed, already the home and foreign media launched a massive attack against it partly due to the help of Romanian politicians. The assimilation intention of the Hungarian policy on education is without question but calling the article XXVII of 1907 the symbol of Hungarian inhumanity and despotism is vastly exaggerating. How is it possible that after the change of regime the Romanian minister of education can refer to the Lex Apponyi and the international and Romanian public opinion accepts it?

II. Progress of the Research: Processing Primary and Secondary

The research started by the processing of the basic monographs. The selected list is the following:

- ✓ Száz Zoltán (1976): A brassói román iskolák ügye a századvég nemzetiségi politikájában. Külön lenyomat a Történelmi Szemle 1976/1-2. számából
- ✓ Köpeczi Béla főszerk. (1989): Erdély rövid története. Akadémia Kiadó. Budapest.
- ✓ Raffay Ernő: Balkáni birodalom. Nagy-Románia megteremtés 1866–1920. Budapest (Kárpátia Stúdió), 2010.;
- ✓ Pölöskei Ferenc: Tisza István és kora. Budapest (Éghajlat Könyvkiadó), 2014.;
- ✓ Gheorghe Platon (coord.): Istoria românilor vol. VII. Tom II. De la independență la marea unire (1878–1918). [A románok történelme. VII. kötet, II. rész. A függetlenségtől a nagy egyesülésig (1878–1918)] București (Editura Enciclopedică), 2003.;
- ✓ Stelian Mândruț: Mișcarea națională și activitatea parlamentară a deputaților Partii Național Române din Transilvania între anii 1905–1910. [A nemzetiségi mozgalom és a Román Nemzeti Párt erdélyi képviselőinek parlamenti ténykedése 1905 és 1910 között.] Oradea (Editura Culturală Cele Trei Crișuri), 1995.;
- ✓ Liviu Maior: Alexandru Vaida Voevod. Putere și defăimare (Studii). [Alexandru Vaida Voevod. Hatalom és rágalmozás (Tanulmányok).] București (Editura RAO), 2010.

At the end of this stage of my research I decided to find academic literature which is rarely or not at all cited. I often visited the Library of the Hungarian Parliament and I also travelled to Kolozsvár in the hope of achieving my goal. Finally, I could find and read rarely quoted but important works concerning the Lex Apponyi. The selected list is the following:

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- ✓ Teodor V. Păcățian: Cartea de aur sau luptele politice naționale ale românilor de sub coroana ungară. [Aranykönyvek, avagy a magyar korona alatt élő románok politikai küzdelmei.] Sibiu (Tiparul tipografiei arhidiecezane), 1910.;
- ✓ Flaminia Faur: Manifestările românilor din Bihor împotriva proiectului de lege școlară din 1907. [A bihari románok megnyilvánulásai az 1907-es iskolatörvény tervezete ellen.] Oradea (Fundăția culturală „cele trei Crișuri”), 1994.;
- ✓ Octavian Căpășină: Cultură, confesiune, etnie, și rasă în Transilvania, Câmpia Tisei și Panonia. [Kultúra, vallás, etnikumok és rasszok Erdélyben, a Tisza Alföldjén és Pannóniában] Cluj-Napoca (Casa Cărții de Științe), 2014.;
- ✓ Barabás Endre: A román kormány miként tette hírhedtté a magyar (Apponyi-féle) törvényeket a román parlamentben a román közvélemény és a Népszövetség előtt. Budapest (Népies Irodalmi Társaság), 1931.;
- ✓ Onisifor Ghibu: Viața și organizația bisericească și școlară în Transilvania și Ungaria. [Egyházi és iskolai élet szervezése Erdélyben és Magyarországon.] București (Institutul de Arte Grafice „Nicolae Storilă”), 1915.;
- ✓ Huszár Antal: A magyarországi románok. Budapest (Magyar Királyi Állami Nyomda), 1907.

In the National Educational Library and Museum, I read notifications published at the beginning of the 20th century by schools in which there were Romanian nationality students. These documents expressed the opinions of contemporary teachers on Lex Apponyi.

As I have mentioned, the materials of the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, which were kept in the National Archives of the Hungarian National Archives and were related to the ministry of Count Albert Apponyi in the early 20th century, were destroyed in the fires of 1944–45 and 1956. Although, I tried to find important sources among the remaining documents as well.

First, I studied the followings: documents of the Ministry of Education and Culture, of the Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister, of the Ministry near His Majesty and of the Parliament. I also studied the records of István Tisza in the Synodal Archive of the Reformed Church in Hungary. As PM István Tisza also negotiated with the Romanian nationality leaders on the revision of the Lex Apponyi. I started to examine the content of the *ladulus* (boxes of documents) giving priority to the educational parts of the Convention.

I also tried to include documents of the archives of Transylvania and Partium as well. So, I selected the archival documents of county Fehér (Gyulafehérvár), county Arad (Arad), county

Bihar (Nagyvárad) and county Kolozs (Kolozsvár) of the Romanian National Archive and the public educational records of the Archive of the National Historical Centre in Bucharest.

Processing the above-mentioned archives, the source basis of the dissertation significantly expanded.

Beside the rules of the Hungarian Parliament, Hungarian Regulations and Dietal Reports I also read those collections of regulations and laws of the Romanian Kingdom, debates of senators and members of the parliament of Bucharest where the Lex Apponyi appeared.

Works of media also supported my research. Apart from Hungarian journals (e. g. Az Újság, Budapesti Hírlap, Budapesti Napló, Népszava, Néptanítók Lapja) I also analysed articles of more than 15 Romanian journals (e. g. Adevărul, Foia Românească, Gazeta Transilvaniei, Neamul Românesc etc.) to get more information on the education policy on the Romanian nationalities at the beginning of the 20th century.

III. Results

A long monograph on the Lex Apponyi has still not been written. There are also few published works where the author examined not only sources in Hungarian, but also relied on documents in Romanian, Slovak, Serbian, etc. I think that the research I have carried out, even if it does not aim at completeness, but only at providing important supplements, and, by the fact that a large number of Romanian-language sources have been processed, is a valuable contribution.

It is also important to examine the ethnic education policy of the Kingdom of Hungary at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century because, as we have shown in details in the dissertation, the historiography of the successor states, and even some Hungarian historians of the period of socialism (see István Dolmányos), have presented a very simplistic description of Hungary at the turn of the century as a state that oppressed her ethnic minorities and forcibly assimilated them by means of public education.

Relying on Romanian-language sources, my research proves that the assimilationist intention through education at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries was not a specifically Hungarian characteristic. The state concept that linked the raising of educational standards with the vision of the creation of a unified nation-state was not only characteristic of the Kingdom of Hungary at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, but also of the neighbouring Kingdom of Romania. During the ministership of Spiru Haret (minister of culture, 1897–1899, 1901–1904 and 1907–1910), Romanian education underwent a huge development, one of the proofs of which was the increase in the number of elementary schools and the number of literate people.

It is indeed true that, thanks to the Minister, Romanian teachers became “the first and independent man of the village”, whose “task was not to develop an ideal village, but to gradually and year by year develop the actual moral, cultural, social and economic state of the village of the teacher under control”. At the same time, the development of education, schools and the number of literate citizens was linked to an assimilationist drive which, together with many other factors, led to a rapid decline in the number of minorities in Romania ten years after the turn of the century.

Part of the research plan was to find out what events may have contributed to the fact that it was in 1907, during Apponyi's ministry of religion and public education, that the legislation aimed at improving education was enacted in line with the general Hungarian political will. One such event was the 1906 Bucharest Exhibition, where the attitude of Romanian teachers in Transylvania played a major role in the adoption of the legislative package known as the “Lex Apponyi” a year later. Relying on Romanian and Hungarian sources, the dissertation shows that the teachers who participated in the exhibition, through their statements, the content and appearance of their pavilion and their actions, expressed the view that the future of Transylvanian Romanians was only secure if Transylvania was united with Romania. Both the interior and exterior of the exhibition hall of the Transylvanian Romanians were decorated in red, yellow and blue, and this defiance of the Hungarian authorities was reinforced by the speeches made by Romanian politicians and Hungarian organisers. The Romanian speakers spoke of their brothers and sisters across the border as “heroes of the cause of the whole Romanian race” and fighters for a “unified Romanian national culture”, and in view of this they could count on the help of their Romanian brothers and sisters. The Romanian teachers from Transylvania emotionally affectedly accepted the Romanian national flag they had received, and promised that when they returned home, they would “raise enthusiastic sons for the national ideal”. All these events deeply outraged not only leading Hungarian politicians, but also the entire Hungarian public opinion, and supported the arguments of those Hungarian political tendencies who had blamed the liberalism of the Hungarian government's nationality policy for years. The experience of the Bucharest exhibition had shown – to quote Endre Barna Középjártai – that “in order to consolidate the country's internal peace, it is imperative that Hungarian politics should launch a new strike”, and one of the conditions for this was the “reconsideration” of Act XLIV of 1868, which was the “greatest obstacle to the development of the country's internal peace”.

At the turn of the century, the political behaviour of the Romanian teachers and pastors within the walls of the school and church may have been as much an incentive for Count

Apponyi to propose and adopt the XXVII Law of 1907 as it had been in the Romanian capital. The dissertation presents cases based on archival records that have not yet been discovered (e.g. the disciplinary case of Lukrécia Gotheás, a teacher at the Greek Catholic and Romanian-language elementary school in Zsilymacesdparoseny), which prove that the political behaviour of priests and teachers in Romanian churches at the beginning of the century - directed against the Hungarian state – led to the initiation and conduct of disciplinary proceedings even more than before. However, these incidents also show that, contrary to the accusations levelled against them, the Transylvanian school inspectors did not want to close schools or make Romanian teachers impossible to teach, but were fighting to end the proceedings against teachers who had committed disciplinary offences, often without respecting the law.

The religious and political leaders of the Romanians – almost without exception – protested the Apponyi bill in the spring of 1907, using every possible means and every possible forum. One of the most vehement protesters was the Romanian nationality deputy Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, about whom several gap filling works were written after the change of regime by Béni L. Balogh on the Hungarian side and Maior Liviu on the Romanian side. One of the results of my research work is that I have managed to reconstruct everything about Vaida-Voevod that was only partially discussed in the previous works. On April 8 1907, during one of the debates on the Apponyi bill, the protesting Romanian nationalist deputy caused one of the biggest scandals of Hungarian parliamentarianism by reading a poem that disgraced Hungarians. Voevod, seeing the extent of his fellow MPs’ indignation, either stayed in the parliament building for only a short time the next day or did not go inside at all. It was only on 10 April that he tried to explain to the House why he had read the poem, which had caused national outrage, but the Romanian MP was reprimanded by Parliament. After the incident, the Romanian national minority MPs decided that their work would be more effective in the near future if their compromised colleague did not show himself in the parliament building. The second “Voevod case”, which has not even been mentioned in the works published so far but will be presented in detail in the dissertation. Voevod only reappeared in parliament at the beginning of June, but contrary to what was hoped when he left in April – that tempers would calm as the weeks passed – his return was accompanied by memorable events. The Romanian MP was forced to leave the parliament building by several of his Hungarian colleagues, using verbal and physical violence. Exactly what motivated the Romanian National Party to put Voevod back into the “battle line” at the beginning of June is difficult to reconstruct. It cannot be excluded that the decision was taken because of Franz Joseph’s stay in Budapest (the jubilee celebrations of the King's coronation were taking place there). A possible scandal in front of

the king – which did happen – would have improved the chances of the Romanian political groups, which were doing a lot of lobbying work in Vienna.

I thought it to be worthwhile not only to examine the actions of the leading Romanian nationalist politicians, but also to study the protests that took place among the Romanian population of the eastern part of Hungary (excluding Transylvania). The series of protests in county Bihar was also important to me because of the high level of activity of the Romanians living there in defence of their nationality rights, compared to the situation in the eastern part of the country. There is evidence that Romanian national minority leaders and the Romanian media in Transylvania had a significant influence on their ethnic Romanian fellows and sisters living here, so it is no coincidence that several protests took place. The Romanian churches in Bihar took a stand in organised meetings, as did the Romanian teachers, who held a professional conference to decide on their views on the bill. There were many Romanian congregations who felt it was important to convene the faithful and protest at local levels. There were private actions, but perhaps the most “popular” were the mass demonstrations organised from Oradea by the political leaders of the Romanians in the Romanian-populated municipalities of the county.

The majority of these demonstrations were peaceful, but there were some - for example the demonstration in Belényes - which was violently interrupted. In Belényes, mistakes were made both by the Romanian organisers and by the Hungarian authorities. In addition, ethnic politicians took advantage of the situation to create an image of the event in the national and European public opinion that would lead people to believe that all demonstrations in Bihar county were held under such circumstances. It can be observed that there were some persons (e.g. politician Dumitru Lascu, director of the credit institution Vasile Babi) who were present as speakers at most of the organised demonstrations. Presumably, this was not a coincidence. Lascu's presence and his speeches were a guarantee not only of agitating local Romanians, but also of familiarising them with the Romanian National Party's programme. Although the demonstrations organised may seem ineffective, it should be noted that they were a perfect opportunity for the Romanian national leaders to get an idea of the mobilisation capacity of the Romanian population in the countryside and to gain experience in mobilising them. Without this "practice", I am convinced that the Romanian General Assembly in Gyulafehervár on 1 December 1918 could not have been as successful as it turned out to be.

Romanian politicians took the protest against the Lex Apponyi to international levels. Among the “convinced persons” of the nationalist cause was the Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Bjørnson undoubtedly played an important

role in discrediting the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy's nationality policy abroad, but there were other celebrities who protested against Apponyi's education laws. In 1910, Theodore Roosevelt (President of the United States from 1901 to 1909), on a European tour, visited Apponyi's estate in Eberhard after a visit to Franz Joseph in Vienna. During their private conversation, Roosevelt asked the count the following question: why are others angry with you abroad? When Apponyi replied that only some, not all, are angry with the Hungarians, Roosevelt mentioned several names of prominent people who had been angry with Hungary. Lueger, Bjørnson, Clemenceau, Tolstoy, he listed.

From October 1907, Tolstoy's name was regularly mentioned alongside that of Bjørnson as another prominent literary figure who spoke out on behalf of the 'oppressed' nationalities of Hungary. Excerpts of Tolstoy's condemnation of Hungary were published in the 4 October 1907 in issues of the Budapest Gazette (Budapesti Hírlap) and the Independent Hungary (Független Magyarország). On the same day, Endre Ady published an article in the Budapesti Napló saying that "beside Bjørnson, count Leo Tolstoy also says that humanism and progress can find little joy in a man like Apponyi". In his speech to the Austrian House of Representatives on 30 October, Masaryk said that "politicians everywhere understood what Bjørnson and Tolstoy had written on behalf of the Slovaks". The Hungarian Parliament also repeatedly mentioned the name and the standpoint of the Russian writer, which was made known throughout Europe by an announcement in Le Courrier Européen of 11 October 1907. Only this particular standpoint was manipulated and was also called by Tolstoy himself as a "fraud". In my dissertation, I will present the facts that prove why the claims said about the Russian literary genius's opinion on Lex Apponyi by not only contemporaries, but by also later Hungarian and Romanian historiography are deceptive.

Octavian Căpățînă, in his above mentioned book (published in 2014), stated education to be one of the tools of Magyarisation, which according to him, had already achieved significant results at the end of the 19th century, culminating in the Apponyi law (1907) on the people's schools and in the subsequent years (in the spirit of the implementation of the Lex Apponyi). All this is contradicted by the data in Ioan Russu-Șirianu's book published in 1907. In his book titled Români de peste Carpați (Romanians from beyond the Carpathians), the author analyses the number of Romanians living under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Hungary from "Brasov to Tisza", using authentic statistical data. According to the 1900 census, there were 2,799,479 Romanians living in Hungary, representing 16.7% of the population of the country. They formed a majority in nine of the Transylvanian counties and in three of the counties outside Transylvania. All this means, the Romanian writer points out, that the

Romanians were the largest ethnic group in the Kingdom of Hungary after the Hungarians, and they lived in a coherent block. Although the proportion of Hungarians increased the most in the country, according to the statistics, the Romanians were in second place. Between 1890 and 1900, the number of Romanians increased significantly in Transylvania, in the counties of Lower Transylvania, Banská Štiavnica, Banská Štiavnica, Banská Bystrica-Nasov, Fogaras, Cluj, Greater Cluj, Lesser Cluj, Tricino, Torda-Aranyos. They also increased in number, although not as much as in the latter, in the counties of Chisinau, Hunyad, Mures-Torda, Sibiu, and Szolnok-Doboka. Russu-Şirianu noted with regret that “in the real” Hungary “things are less good”. Although the number of Romanians had increased in the counties of Arad, Bihar, Csanád, Krassó-Szörény, Szatmár, Szilágy, Temes, Torontál, Ugocsa, the increase was lower than the increase in the number of Hungarians. Their percentage remained unchanged in Máramaros, and they decreased both in percentage and in number of inhabitants in the counties of Udvarhely and Szabolcs. Between 1890 and 1900, the number of Romanians increased by 205,603 in 14 Transylvanian and 11 “Hungarian” counties and by 210,413 in the whole kingdom. This represents an increase of 8.12%.

All these figures show that the Romanians in Transylvania not only resisted attempts of assimilation, but in many cases, in addition to natural reproduction, assimilated themselves. They did not lose their identity and become Hungarians, but Hungarians, Germans and other peoples became Romanians. As a result, they became the second fastest growing ethnic group in the country by the early 20th century. The author has devoted a separate chapter to “Magyarization”. Despite the fact that the Hungarian state administration has turned two thirds of the schools in the ethnic regions into state institutions, with four times as many Romanian children as Hungarian, the 'result' for the Romanians is zero, he wrote. Teachers sent to the villages with the intention of Magyarisation had learned Romanian, but there were no Romanian villages that had become Hungarian thanks to the school. What the Romanians are angry about is that the cultural development of the children is stagnating, because instead of learning useful things, they have to learn a language which, when they finish school, they will never use, because they have no one to speak Hungarian with. Why should Hungarian be taught in schools when it can be learnt without state schools, just as Hungarians learn Romanian? – asks Ioan Russu-Şirianu. The willingness of Romanians to learn Hungarian is shown by the table in the book, which shows that on average 69 out of 1,000 Romanians speak it. By contrast, out of the 383,000 Hungarians living among Romanians in Transylvania, 21,000 have learned Romanian. In the chapter entitled “Conquests and losses”, Russu-Şirianu also shows how many specific municipalities in Transylvanian counties have been “conquered” by the Romanians from the

Hungarians and which ones have seen a recent change in the ethnic composition in favour of the Hungarians.

Although the Romanian nationalist politicians, through skilful diplomacy in Western Europe, succeeded in creating an image of the Kingdom of Hungary as a place where nationalities that did not wish to assimilate were persecuted by the harshest means, we must see – and I give several concrete examples in the dissertation – that the laws on the teaching and learning of the state language existed officially, but were either not put into practice or, in most cases, were not enforced, and that there were no penalties for non-compliance. Of course, I am not saying that the state would have been “successful” in assimilating the Roma by strictly enforcing the laws, but the fact is that it would have had no chance of achieving its goal. There are many cases in the files of the Ministry of Religion and Education that bear this out. For example, just one case shall stand here. On 26 March 1905, the archbishop of Arad County Iván Urbán, wrote a confidential letter to the Minister of Culture, Albert Berzeviczy. The subject of his letter was: “Unpatriotic actions of Romanian clergymen and teachers employed in the county, etc.” On the basis of the reports of the district chief bailiffs in the county, the chief bailiff informed the Minister for Religion and Education that the Romanian priests and teachers, with the knowledge of their church leaders, were “not engaged in party politics but in unconditional anti-national activities” and that their activities were characterised by incitement against everything that is Hungarian, even the state authorities. In his letter, Urbán complained that the “Wallachian peasants” refused to reveal the names of the agitators and that the county had no people to investigate them. In his desperation, he asked the Ministry to send him a list of names of Romanian priests and teachers in his county who were receiving state aid, so that if the names of the agitators were discovered and included in the list, at least these persons could be deprived of the state’s financial aid as a punishment. Having received no reply from the Ministry, the Archbishop of Arad repeated his request in May, and was subsequently informed that the register of teachers receiving supplementary pay was kept by the Hungarian Royal Inspector of Education, together with the amount of state aid received, and the Archbishop was asked to request this information from him. In all likelihood, the requested list eventually reached Urbán, but as we have seen, the county did not have sufficient staff to monitor the political conduct and work of the Romanian teachers and the Ministry did not consider such matters to be of ‘urgent’ importance, judging from the date of the letter of reply, to be settled, and even if the archbishop had wanted to punish the priest or teacher in possession of the list, it is difficult to imagine that he would have had to expect ‘more serious’ consequences than the withdrawal of the subsidy. The fact that the archbishop did not know who was in charge of

compiling the list of Romanian priests and teachers receiving state financial aid is also revealing.

István Tisza was one of the few leading Hungarian politicians who realised that the preservation of the country's territorial integrity and the favourable development of the Kingdom of Hungary's position in a turbulent Europe also depended on the success of the Hungarian government in winning over the Transylvanian Romanians and their representatives. With these in mind, he began to negotiate with the political and religious leaders of the Romanians. Thus, Hungarian governments existed after 1910 showed a willingness to amend laws that affected the Romanians, including the "Lex Apponyi". Based on archival documents, it can be concluded that the number and extent of requests of the Romanians (including those related to the 1907 law on public education) increased over the years. But this was by no means the only reason for the failure of the negotiations. The fact that the second Tisza-government had taken some serious measures, including in the field of education, which showed a willingness to have a closer cooperation, but not in such a convincing number as to dispel the Romanians' doubts about the seriousness of it, also played a major role in the failure. In many cases, too, measures that proved to be of little use to the Romanians existed only at the level of laws and regulations and were not implemented in practice. The "waves" of governmental attempts had broken on the "rocks" of the county authorities and the system of school inspectorates, so that the Romanians had absolutely no faith that the laws which offended them would be seriously reviewed and amended. Complaints in a 1911 newspaper article entitled "Church and School" (Biserica și școală) say that the lives of Romanian teachers in Fogaras were being made miserable by the meddling of the Hungarian administrative authorities remained a topical issue in 1913. For example, although the Romanian inhabitants of the village of Lower Porumba decided in 1911 to ask for a state subsidy of 1,000 crowns to raise the salaries of their school teachers, the county administration refused their request, and Ioan Șenchea representing the Romanian population, still spoke out against the harassment of their teachers at the county assembly in 1912. According to Șenchea, events reminiscent of earlier years were again taking place, but like him, the church leader in Fogaras, Nicolae Borza, also highlighted the abuses of the local Hungarian administration at the county assembly. In 1913, the county received a series of complaints from the representatives of the inhabitants of the Romanian villages, which were neglected to the extent that by the end of the year the Romanian schools in the villages of Râușor, Dridif, Luța and Breaza were deemed unfit for teaching by the inspector and were closed. In addition, Hungarian-language municipal schools were established at the expense of the village. A striking example of the county administration's reckless and

insensitive actions was the action of the chief bailiff of Versec on 27 January 1912, when he ordered – and the Timis County Administrative Committee approved – that two Romanian teachers in Timisoara should be paid according to the Gregorian calendar, while he was aware that the “calendar issue” was a national issue for the Romanians, a sensitive matter for the Church Congress.

Nevertheless, out of the four points considered most important for the political future of the Romanian people from the Romanian National Party’s point of view (the free functioning of their party, the abolition of the “Lex Apponyi”, the mass employment of Romanian officials in Romanian-inhabited areas and the “acquisition” of as many constituencies as possible), only one was agreed upon, and that was the legal existence of the party. In case of the 1907 law on public education, a “half-solution” was reached. The Hungarian government was not prepared to abolish the law, but it was prepared to apply it “benignly”, which it was unable to enforce in practice.

The dissertation points out that, in addition to a press campaign, Albert Apponyi’s education laws were also discredited by a deliberate misinterpretation of the text of the law. In 1924, the Romanian Minister of Culture, Constantin Angelescu, submitted to the Romanian Legislative Chamber a bill on state elementary education for the people, accompanied by an explanatory memorandum. In it, he mentions the “forcibly Magyarising Hungarian laws”, including a reference to the measure in Article XXVII of Law No. 1907 which, according to the Minister, ordered the teaching not only of the Hungarian language, history, geography, constitutional law but even arithmetic in Hungarian language in Romanian-language elementary schools. To prove his claim, he referred to “an absolutely competent Romanian source of information”, a book by Dr. Onisifor Ghibu (published in Bucharest in 1915), the Romanian Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Transylvania, who was the inspector of education between 1910 and 1914. In it, the author described the organisation and daily life of churches and schools in Transylvania and in Hungary. But Ghibu wrote in his work something completely different from what Angelescu said. According to the Minister of Public Education, the inspector’s book says: “The denominational schools receiving state aid had to introduce five subjects (Hungarian language, history, geography, constitutional studies and arithmetic) in Hungarian”, whereas in fact Ghibu had written: “The state will provide aid to denominational schools if they meet the conditions it requires, but in this case the curriculum of five subjects (Hungarian language, history, geography, constitutional studies and arithmetic) will be determined by the state.”. Teaching the five subjects mentioned above in Hungarian is quite different from teaching these five subjects according to the state curriculum. There is no way that the native Romanian-

speaking Angelescu could not have accurately interpreted Ghibu's lines, unless he had deliberately intended to misunderstand them.

The latter is supported by the fact that a similar incident occurred in 1925. The Minister of Public Education Angelescu, submitted his so-called private education bill, also with an annex containing a hefty explanatory memorandum. Much of the explanatory memorandum again stressed the "barbaric and dehumanising" nature of Hungarian cultural policy, and quoted Article 20 of the Lex Apponyi from a work written in 1907 by Lazăr Triteanu, the schools rapporteur of the Romanian Orthodox Archbishop-Consistory of Transylvania. "The law describes the salaries and promotion grades of denominational teachers and specifies that only those denominational teachers teaching in a non-Hungarian language »who teach the Hungarian language, arithmetic, history, geography and the domestic constitution in Hungarian in the school, according to the number of lessons and the curriculum approved by the Ministry, and who use only the textbooks and teaching materials approved by the Ministry« may receive state aid. Similarly, »only those teachers who use reading books with patriotic content in their schools (§ 20) may receive state aid«, reads the explanatory memorandum submitted to the Parliament by Angelescu. Triteanu's work, however, published the Romanian text of § 20 of the Apponyi law in the following form: "Only teachers employed in Hungarian-language schools may receive state aid in addition to their salary or five-year supplementary allowance who, in addition to the conditions laid down in § 16, also meet the following conditions: 1. If in these schools the Hungarian language, arithmetic, domestic geography and history, and even domestic constitutional law (...) are taught in denominational schools according to the curriculum approved by the Ministry of Religious Affairs; in the event that the curriculum proposed by the school maintainer does not receive the approval of the Minister, in that case teaching shall be according to the curriculum established by the Minister, using only the textbooks and teaching aids approved by the Minister. 2. if the school in question uses reading books and teaching aids with a patriotic content also approved by the Minister of Religion and Public Education." Presumably Angelescu was acting consciously here too; it is inconceivable that he could not have made a distinction between teaching certain subjects in Hungarian and teaching the same subjects according to a curriculum. In order to make the measures in his proposed law, which adversely affected minorities, appear less drastic, the Romanian Minister of Education tried to ride the waves induced by the already notorious 1907 education laws, which he further enlarged by his slips of the tongue. He did so while being aware of the implementing instructions of the "Holy See" of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Transylvania, which had issued instructions on the implementation of Article 20, which stated

that “In all religious schools, whether state-subsidised or not, all subjects shall be taught exclusively in Romanian, except the Hungarian language, in the context of which certain subjects of arithmetic, history, constitutional law and geography shall be included. All that of these subjects which is taught in Hungarian may be taught only after having first been taught in Romanian in the relevant lessons and may not be taught in arithmetic, history and constitutional and geographical lessons, which must be in Romanian (...).”

The “discrediting campaign” of Greater Romania against the Lex Apponyi did not end in the mid-1920s, and in 1930 it attacked it again. The immediate instigator was an article by Dutch League of Nations delegate Christine Bakker van Bosse in the January 1930 issue of *Les Minorités Nationales*, entitled “Voyage dans les Balkans”, in which she gave a detailed account of her experiences in Italy, Yugoslavia and Romania. Mrs. Bakker van Bosse wrote about the situation in Romania, which caused an outcry among the League of Nations' Little Entente delegates. The head of the Romanian delegation, Senator Pancrati, was unable to attend in person due to eye problems but wrote a letter to all members of the delegation via the League's General Secretary's office, questioning Bakker van Bosse's credibility and objectivity. He attempted to ridicule the part of the Dutch delegate's article concerning Romania and made comparisons between the Hungarian minority policy of the Dualism period and that of Romania in the 1920s.

Among other things, he wrote: “The complaints against our school legislation remind us of the notorious educational law of Count Apponyi, whose strictness towards minorities is generally known and in no way stands comparison with any Romanian law.” Ernő Zichy, as Hungary's representative on the Committee for the Protection of Minorities of the Union of League of Nations, was unable to respond immediately to Pancrati's accusations for lack of precise data and was forced to confine himself to three points. Firstly, he stated that he would present to the League at the next session a parallel compilation of the minority-related sections of the Apponyi and Angelescu schooling laws, so that everyone would have a true picture. Secondly, he quoted a statement made by Count Apponyi on 26 July 1929 to the effect that Hungary would be very satisfied if the successor states would treat their minorities, especially the Hungarians, according to the principles of the Apponyi law, which was harshly criticised. Thirdly, in response to the accusation that minorities were not “loyal” to their new state and that the Romanian governments were therefore obliged to act strictly and to make any revisionist and irredentist movements impossible, he expressed the view that the “loyalty” demanded of minorities could not be a condition for fair treatment, but only a consequence. This is particularly true of minorities who “have been masters for a millennium of a territory

which is now ruled by others and whose history and culture are substantially different from those of the people under whose rule they have been brought, without their consent and against their will, by unjust peace treaties”.

IV. Publications Based on the PhD studies

Köő Artúr: A Bihar vármegyei román tiltakozása az 1907. évi iskolaügyi törvények ellen. In: *Jogtörténeti Szemle*. 18. 3. (2020). 8-16.

Köő Artúr: Aggályos szellemiségű erdélyi román iskolák és magyar oktatáspolitikai válaszok a 20. század elején. In: *Polymatheia*. 17. 3-4. (2020). 107-120.

Köő Artúr: A Magyar Királyság XX. század eleji oktatáspolitikájának szerepe a Trianonhoz vezető útban. In: *Történelemtanítás, Online történelemdidaktikai folyóirat*. 11. 3-4. (2020). <https://www.folyoirat.tortenelemtanitas.hu/2020/11/torteneszek-trianonrol-11-03-02/> (letöltés: 2022. 08. 09.)

Köő Artúr: Apponyi Albert oktatásügyi törvényeinek külföldi lejáratása Trianon után. Constantin Angelescu és a Lex Apponyi. In: *Hitel*. 33. 11. (2020). 91-105.

Köő Artúr: A bukaresti kiállítás, ahogy egy karánsebesi román tanítójelölt látta: Pavel Jumanca visszaemlékezése az 1906-os rendezvényre. In: Berta Péter–Vizi László szerk.: *A Magyarságkutató Intézet évkönyve 2019*. Budapest, Magyarságkutató Intézet (2020). 343-364.

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Köő Artúr: Utolsó esély (A Lex Apponyi a Tisza István-féle magyar román közeledési kísérlet tükrében). In: *Hitel*. 33. 1. (2020). 79-107.

Kőő Artúr: Az 1906. évi bukaresti jubileumi kiállítás és a „Lex Apponyi”: Adalék a nemzetkarakter és az állami reprezentáció viszonyának történetéhez. In: *Hitel*. 32. 6. (2019). 94-114.

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Kőő Artúr: *Erdélyi adalékok a Lex Apponyihoz*. Budapest, Underground Kiadó (2014).