



MGRDICH BODURIAN'S RED MOON: A TRANSYLVANIAN NARRATIVE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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In Csíkszépvíz (Frumoasa, Romania), on Templom utca (Church Street) an Armenian House, where a small exhibition displays the history of the local Armenian community, was recently established. One can find there a photo of a long-bearded priest titled “The Last Armenian Priest” of the town – Mgrdich Bodurian. Although he was not a Transylvanian Armenian, many people know him as Bodurján János; he was the parson of the town’s Armenian Catholic parish between 1929 and 1958. Bodurian was the last pastor of the small Armenian Catholic community, which today (summer of 2016) consists of only six people. In the 1920s he wrote a book on the Armenian Genocide titled *Red Moon*, or Հարսիք Լուսինը.¹ The book was published in Hungarian (with the title “Vörös Hold”) three times – in 1931, 1932 and 2013, the first two in Csíkszépvíz, the last one in Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc, RO). This article is about the book, its author, and the Armenians of Csíkszépvíz.

ARMENIAN CSÍKSZÉPVÍZ

The first Armenian settlement in Hungary, Terra Armenorum (or Örményfalva), was founded before the reign of King Béla IV (1235-1270) on the territory of modern Esztergom, Northern Hungary, and was destroyed by the Tatar invasion in 1241-1242.² Although Armenian merchants operated in the Kingdom in the following centuries, the first major wave of Armenian settlement in the country commenced in the 17th century. Led by Bishop Minas Zilifdarean T'oxat'ec'i, from 1668 onwards, Armenians settled in the mountainous region of Transylvania. Pope Alexander VIII (1689-1691) appointed Oxendio Virziresco (1654-1715) as Armenian Catholic bishop of Transylvania in 1690.³ From the 18th century on, Transylvanian Armenians were baptized as Armenian-rite Catholics and established four parishes in Szamosújvár (Gherla, Romania, in Armenian: Հայաքաղաք), Erzsébetváros (Dumbraveni, Romania), Gyergyószentmiklós (Gheorgheni, RO) and Csíkszépvíz. Transylvanian Armenians swiftly integrated into the local society

by the end of the 18th century, the majority spoke Hungarian as their vernacular, and many families (51 prior to 1780 and 33 more by 1840) received noble titles.⁴

In Csíkszépvíz, building of the Armenian Catholic church (on the grounds of a smaller stone church erected in 1701) commenced in 1762 and lasted until 1785.⁵ Here, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe and Transylvania, Armenians earned their living by engaging in regional commerce and handicrafts. Many families gained considerable wealth thanks to these occupations and, by the second half of the 19th century, entered the social elite. Between 1848 and 1918 not fewer than 68 members of the Hungarian parliament had Armenian origins, among others, from Csíkszépvíz.⁶ For example, Antal Fejér (1854–1915) studied law in Kolozsvár and practiced as a lawyer from 1882 onwards in Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc, RO). He was Csík County's attorney and editor of its official journal titled *Csík Lapok*. He was a knight of the Order of Saint Sylvester and a member of the Hungarian parliament between 1901 and 1905.⁷

Around 1750, some 890 Armenian families (approximately 3500–4500 people) lived in Transylvania, and their number grew rapidly in the second half of the century. In Szamosújvár, between 1751 and 1771, 3366 baptisms were held, an average of 160.3 per year. During the 19th century, however, migration to bigger cities such as Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) and a natural population decline commenced. In Szamosújvár, from 1866 onwards, more funerals were held than baptisms – for example, between the years 1877 and 1897 there were 630 baptisms (an average of 30/year) and 828 funerals (an average of 39.4/year); thus, absolute natural population decline during the 21 years was 198.⁸ As for Csíkszépvíz, the smallest of the four Transylvanian Armenian settlements, in 1715 fifteen Armenian families lived there but in 1776 only 176 people.⁹ While in 1882 there were 202 Armenian Catholic inhabitants in the town, by 1949 only 65 Armenians remained.¹⁰

During WWI, on account of the Romanian military advance in the region, inhabitants of Csíkszépvíz fled their homes. They were relocated on August 28, 1916 to other parts of Transylvania. The Armenian Catholic parson of the city, József Vákár, took refuge in Hajdúhadháza and acted as assistant minister there till April 27, 1917. The rest of the Armenian population of the town took shelter in cities such as Budapest or Erzsébetváros. In early 1917 only four Armenian Catholics remained in the town,¹¹ and the war damages at the local Armenian Catholic church amounted to 5997 Hungarian Crowns.¹² In the following years, many citizens moved back to Csíkszépvíz, but a considerable number remained where they had fled.

After WWI, by force of the Treaty of Trianon, Transylvania was attached to Romania. Rebuilding and development of the parishes commenced right after the war. The interior of the Armenian Church of Csíkszépvíz was renovated and decorated by painting in oil in 1925, while the outside was renovated in 1923, with two new crosses being added, and in 1926 a small construction was erected and the interior was enriched with new statues and windows from Tirol – the statue and window depict Saint Gregory the Illuminator.¹³ By virtue of the education reform of 1923, numerous schools had been closed in Transylvania and teachers

ordered to transfer to other parts of the country – for example, the Armenian Catholic teacher of Csíkszépvíz, Rózsika Nagy, and cantor Kálmán Büky.¹⁴ The laws on education of 1923-1925 prevented young people from attending denominational schools of any other denomination than their own; however, by that time, no Armenian Catholic school operated in the city and Armenian youths attended Catholic schools of the Latin rite. Parson József Vákár stated his objections, highlighting the complexity of the state of affairs as follows: “We Transylvanian Armenians speak Hungarian – that is our mother tongue. Thus, we assert our centuries-old rights for Hungarian language schooling. We do not speak Armenian; we don’t have such schools either. Due to our small proportion of the population, we could not sustain such a school; thus, we demand that the ministry stop obstructing our [...] right for schooling – at least in elementary schools – [educate] our children in our mother tongue.”¹⁵

Population decline among the Armenians of Csíkszépvíz continued in the interwar period. Between 1931 and 1939 a total of 15 Armenian-rite baptisms (an average of 1.6/year) and 22 funerals (an average of 2.4/year) were held.¹⁶ During the Second World War, between 1940 and 1944, eight baptisms (an average of 1.6/year) and three funerals (an average of 0.6/year) were held. During the decade that followed WWII, between 1945 and 1955, a total of eight baptisms (an average of 0.7/year) were held, while between 1945 and 1950 nine Armenian-rite funerals (an average of 1.5/year) were held there.

It was in these harsh times that Joachim Görög, Armenian Catholic parson of Gyergyószentmiklós, passed away in 1928 and József Vákár, parson of Csíkszépvíz, was invited to serve as his successor. Over the next six months,



for the first (but not the last) time, Latin-rite priests held Holy Masses in the Armenian Catholic church of Csíkszépvíz.¹⁷

FATHER MGRDICH BODURIAN

Mgrdich Bodurian was born in the Ottoman Empire, in the city of Bardizag on October 8, 1881. From 1897 he studied at the Mekhitarist monastery on the island of San Lazzaro, Venice – later in Rome too –, and entered the congregation in 1901. He was ordained in Venice in 1902.¹⁸ After his studies, he moved back to his hometown, where he taught in the local Armenian school until 1909, when he went back to the Mekhitarists in Venice to publish his book titled *Armenian Press in [the past] Fifteen Years (1894-1909)*, (*Հայ Մամուլը Տասնհինգ Տարին Այլ 1894-1909*)¹⁹. It was from here in Venice that he was sent to the Transylvanian city of Erzsébetváros and was appointed to serve as the superior of the Mekhitarist church of the city in 1913, a position that he held for the next seven years. Little did he know that these years would eventually become the most defining years of his life.

When he arrived in Erzsébetváros, Bodurian started working on a twelve-volume Armenian Encyclopedia, *Hanrakidag* (*Հանրագիտակ*),²⁰ a work he considered his oeuvre, but could never finish. He spent his days working in the church and the local library, from time to time visiting local Armenian doctor, Simon Zakariás, with whom he became close friends.²¹ Zakariás spoke Armenian – an ability only a handful of people in the whole country had.²²

Bodourian developed mixed feelings towards Transylvanian Armenians. He believed that they were truly the descendants of the Armenians of Ani, a mighty people, but, as they had integrated deeper and deeper into Hungarian society, they had lost the essence of being Armenian. “I am sure that this new generation remain good Armenians in their heart and soul, but as they don’t speak their mother tongue, I see them as machines that don’t work” – he wrote. Bodurian believed that the reason why there were so many mixed Armenian-Hungarian marriages was that Armenian women are more traditional and capable of maintaining a decent household. He also stated that the Armenian “racial character” was stronger in the children of these mixed couples than the Hungarian. He was embittered by the thought of Transylvanian Armenians assimilating into Hungarian society: “Unfortunately, I am sure that this 250-year-old Armenian community will eventually melt into

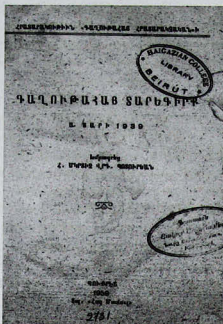


the majority [...] The Armenian bells will sooner or later weep this sorrowful fact..."²³

As WWI broke out, Bodurian followed the news about Ottoman Armenians constantly; he subscribed to the Bulgarian-Armenian paper, Հայաստան (Armenia)²⁴. Later he remembered these times as follows: "The worst news arrives from Turkey in the papers every day. The Armenians are forced to flee from there. [...] Armenians from Mush, Erzerum, Zeitun and Sasun are hounded out of their homes and end their martyred lives forsaken by all in miserable agony on the Arabic lowlands."²⁵ He was carried away by rage and sorrow; day-by-day he grew to be more and more cynical and miserable. When encountering mourning Hungarians, he asked himself, "Why should I care? We Armenians have suffered enough; they should try for themselves what harsh torments we had to undergo!"²⁶ He had similar feeling towards Transylvanian Armenians: "You happy women, I say to myself, you buy all things here [on the market], while far away, your Armenian compatriots die of hunger on the plains of Arabia!"²⁷

In 1916, as the Romanian army entered Transylvania, many fled Erzsébetváros and took shelter in Budapest. Bodurian joined the flight of local Armenians and resided in the capital for a while. In Budapest he visited several Catholic churches (in Krisztinaváros and in Váci utca) and held Armenian-rite High Masses, the first ones ever to be held in the Hungarian capital.²⁸ After the war, in early 1921, he moved to Bucharest, Romania's capital, to serve as a teacher in the newly established Armenian school and the editor of a local Armenian paper, *Masis*. Here, he met survivors of the genocide from his hometown and elsewhere and started collecting their stories. In 1922, he traveled to Constantinople, where he lived in the Pangalti district and continued documenting the stories of abductions, deportations and massacres – the Armenian genocide. Shortly after he started working on his book, the *Red Moon*.²⁹

As Joachim Görög, Armenian Catholic parson of Gyergyószentmiklós passed away in 1928 and József Vákár took his place, the seat of Csíkszépvíz's parson fell vacant, and although he had been removed from the Mekhitarist Congregation in 1922, Bodurian was invited to serve as the new parson of the



small Armenian Catholic community. He was installed in the Armenian Catholic parish of Csíkszépvíz on January 22, 1929.³⁰

At this point, the *Historia Domus*³¹ of Csíkszépvíz was discontinued. Bodurian did not continue the long tradition (the first entry dates to 1860) of documenting the developments of the parish. When curate Zoltán Lengyel, future Apostolic Governor of the Armenian Catholic Governorate of Romania, visited the parish in 1931, he felt it his obligation to briefly comment on the volume for the years 1929-1931.³²

Bodurian neglected his parish. He spent his days on typographic works and establishing a pressroom in the building of the parish and a publishing house called Frumoasa that operated between 1929 and 1944.³³ He would often disappear for days or weeks (usually he went to Bucharest), residing in Csíkszépvíz sometimes only for 4-5 days a month. The days he spent in the town, he spent with Armenian friends he invited from Bucharest. Not once did he issue any reports on the financial conditions of the parish or the activities of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council or other local Armenian Catholic associations.³⁴ The members of the parish started writing letters of complaint soon after Bodurian's instalment, due to which the vicarage affirmed his title as a parson only on October 14, 1930.³⁵

The tension escalated considerably after WWII –letters of complaint from Csíkszépvíz multiplied. Even the Apostolic Nunciature to Romania sent complaint letters to the Armenian Catholic Apostolic Governor, Zoltán Lengyel, about Bodurian's behavior. According to these, Bodurian was concerned with trade (he was buying butter and eggs and selling different products in Csíkszépvíz), which was strictly against canonic law (CIC.can.142). He invited a certain Ferenc (?) Diarian to the parish, to take care of his parsonic activities while he was away, disregarding the fact that Diarian, due to his medical conditions and lack of knowledge of the Hungarian language, could not fulfill this commitment.³⁶

On March 3, 1947, Zoltán Lengyel called upon Bodurian to "1/. cease completely [any] mercantile activities and the travels they entail, 2/. not to leave your parish /municipality of Szépvíz/ at all on Sundays and holidays without my prior written permission..."³⁷ However, complaints continued to be raised. László Fejér, caretaker of the parish, on April 29, 1947 wrote to Zoltán Lengyel that "not only does his [Bodurian's] behavior fall short of the benchmarks of a priest, but even as a civilian he can not be counted as a serious person. [...] He rattles off even the most important seasonal orisons as a mere necessity..."³⁸ In June twelve members of the parish issued a petition to Zoltán Lengyel to remove Diarian from the parish.³⁹

Bodurian remained the (last) Armenian Catholic parson of Csíkszépvíz until 1958. Over these three decades he continued working on his Armenian

Encyclopedia, publishing four volumes – out of the planned twelve – in Bucharest and Csíkszék between 1938 and 1940.⁴⁰ Vazgen I, Catholicos of the Armenian Apostolic Church – with whom Bodurian met in Romania – invited him to Armenia to finish his Encyclopedia in the Mesrop Mashtots Institute, Matenadaran. However, his luggage, together with all his research materials and manuscripts, was impounded by the Romanian authorities during his journey. He died in Armenia on December 9, 1959, and was buried in the garden of Echmiadzin's Saint Gayane church.⁴¹

RED MOON

The title of this article suggests that his book, *Red Moon* was a Transylvanian narrative of the Armenian genocide. Bodurian was not a Transylvanian Armenian; neither did he identify himself as one during the decades he spent among them between 1913 and 1958. The book, however, was published in Hungarian three times, and during the interwar period, was the sole (lengthy) exposition available for Transylvanian Armenians to become informed on the events of the genocide. It seems well grounded to assume, Bodurian published it *for* them.⁴²

The genre of the volume was given by Bodurian simply as “narratives” (elbeszélések), as it documents the lives of five Armenian families from Bardizag, Rodosto (Terkidag) and Armedan, and their plight during the genocide. Although Bodurian noted that these narratives were the descriptions of real events, it is clear that to a large extent he let his imagination fill in the gaps of the stories he documented, making the volume rather novelistic.⁴³

The title (*Red Moon*) is reflected in the foreword of the volume: “The silent moon that rose at the side of Mount Ararat was a witness to the torment of the Armenian nation [...]. And I, my dear reader, will unfold some real occurrences of the Great War, to which the red moon was witness.”⁴⁴ The color red dominates throughout the whole book; time and again it indicates the bloodshed of the genocide.

The stories unfold a clear picture of the intentional nature of the genocide, its phases, characteristics and outcomes. The former was described by Bodurian as follows:

Talaat and Enver Pasha continued their planned efforts in order to eradicate the Armenians from the face of the Earth, regardless of whether he or she was a priest, writer, teacher or politician. [...] Everyone was sentenced to death.⁴⁵

As we can see, the description clearly outlines the intentional nature of the deportations and massacres of the genocide, the intention being the

annihilation of the Armenian people. It also points out the *architects* of the Armenian genocide, Talaat and Enver, and its planned nature.

The phases of the genocide are well shown in these stories. First they depict the conscription of the male population for military service "by Enver Pasha [...] to prohibit the Armenians from helping out the Entente."⁴⁶ Following this, according to Bodurian, local intellectuals (*intelligencia*) were relocated (*internálták*). As for Rodosto, Bodurian depicts the first phases as follows: "In Rodosto some famous people were called and transferred to unknown destinations. [...] Two weeks later all the Armenians from the town were deported in the direction of Konya."⁴⁷ The deportations (or as they are frequently referred to by Bodurian, the Golgotha) and massacres are described in a physical and detailed way, similar to other contemporary accounts on the genocide – for example, Johannes Lepsius's writings.⁴⁸

The book also draws the readers' attention to other aspects of genocide: abduction, sexual violence and destruction of cultural heritage. One of the main characters of the first story depicting the fate of an Armenian family of Bardizag is Noyemi (Noémi), the beautiful daughter of Garabed agha. During their deportation, in the city of Konya, a local official warned the family as follows: "Soon the gendarmerie will expel you from here. The wild hordes will take this beautiful young maiden, so if you want to save her honor and life, let me marry her!"⁴⁹ Eventually the official married Noyemi and settled in Constantinople. The fourth chapter, titled New Moses (Új Mózes), tells the dreadful story of the caravan from Armean, the famine and massacres that the deportees suffered. One of the main characters, Tatul, when he realized that his sister had been abducted and taken to a harem said: "It would have been better if she had perished in the Euphrates, than to be doomed to this fate!"⁵⁰ Time and again, in Bodurian's book, *honor* plays a significant role in establishing the martyrdom of the Armenian people during the genocide. In the fourth chapter, for example, many people from the Armean caravan were massacred due to the fact that their priest called upon them not to abandon their beliefs and honor – in effect, not to let their women "sacrifice their honor" to the Muslim gendarmes.

Other than the abduction of Armenian women and girls, the forced assimilation of Armenian children, boys and girls alike, are also depicted. Noyemi's brother, Bedros (Péterke) was first abducted by an Arab family, where he was persecuted by his stepbrothers, and later put into an orphanage in Aleppo. By this time, he had forgotten his family name and town of birth. The fourth chapter also tells the story of an eight-year-old Armenian orphan boy who travelled from city to city pretending to be a Turkish orphan begging on the streets.⁵¹

Destruction of cultural heritage is also depicted. What was left behind by Armenians and demolished by the perpetrators, symbolizes the destruction of the Armenian people themselves: "I wonder to whom they have left those centuries-old and enthusiastically visited places of pilgrimage, beautiful old churches, monasteries, valuable and thaumaturgic Gospels written on old parchments – and finally, what is the most precious for them: their dear deceased ones."⁵² The destruction of the community and its cultural and spiritual sights and objects, in the eyes of Bodurian, left poor prospects for the continuity of the cultural life of the survivors in the diaspora. Before the genocide "Armenians in Bardizag lived their traditional everyday lives happily, which, unfortunately, will never return on foreign lands."⁵³

CONCLUSIONS

The Armenians of Csíkszépvlz experienced a long process of decline in Transylvania demographically, culturally and even in terms of minority rights in the first half of the 20th century. Bodurian saw this and was appalled by the growing distance of local Catholic Armenians from Western (and Eastern) Armenians remaining on (and fleeing) Armenian lands. He could never reconcile himself to the fact that Transylvanian Armenians did not speak Armenian, so he published an Armenian grammar book with the hope that this situation might change. The assimilation of the Armenian community into the Hungarian one was a "sorrowful fact" for him.

During the genocide, he resided in Transylvania. There he first learnt about the horrors from newspapers, then in Bucharest and in Constantinople from survivors. Bodurian felt great disappointment about the fact that Transylvanian Armenians did not get involved with the fate of Ottoman Armenians – this was the reason for him publishing *Red Moon*, his collection on the Armenian genocide, in Hungarian. In a novelistic way, he informed the Transylvanian Armenian and Hungarian public about the intentional and planned nature of the annihilation of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, and raised awareness of other aspects of the genocide: abduction, sexual violence and the destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage. He feared that the fate of Armenian refugees spreading throughout the globe would be similar to that of the Transylvanian Armenians: assimilation, which, for him, was equal to annihilation.

Red Moon was a Transylvanian narrative of the Armenian genocide. Not Transylvanian Armenian, but Armenian and Transylvanian. Bodurian was Ottoman Armenian, but did not experience the genocide himself; he pulled through (and survived) it in Transylvania. He published the book for Transylvanian Armenians, in Transylvania, but in Hungarian. It was one of his last attempts to get them involved with the "global Armenian transnation" – as

Tölölyan phrased it – to raise awareness of the tragedy of the Armenian nation in the Ottoman Empire, a state allied to Austria-Hungary.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ The first edition was published in Armenian in Bucharest in 1927 and later in 1933: Հ. Մկրտիչ Պոստոլեան, *Կարմիր Լուսին (Դրոպներ Ազգային Կեանքի)*, Ռումանիա, Տպ. Ֆրումոասա, 1933:
- ² Antal Por, "Az Örmények Falvának Újabb Megnépesítése Az Esztergomi Káptalan Által" [Rehabitation of the village of Armenians by the Chapter of Esztergom], *Magyar Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle* 11, no. 2, 1904, pp. 155-158.
- ³ Cf. Kornél Nagy, *Az Erdélyi Örmények Katolizációja (1685-1715)*, Budapest, MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2012.
- ⁴ Judit Pál, "Az Örmények Integrálódása És Az Örménységkép Változásai Erdélyben A 18-19 Században" [Integration of Armenians in Transylvania and changes in their identification in the 18-19th centuries], *Örmény Diaszpóra A Kárpát-Medencében II*, ed. by Bálint Kovács and Sándor Öse, Piliscsaba, Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsészettudományi Kar, 2007, pp. 77-94.
- ⁵ Emese Pál, "A Szépvízi Örmény Katolikus Templom" [The Armenian Catholic church of Csíkszépvíz], *A Szépvízi Örmény Katolikus Templom*, ed. by Mária Bogos, Csíkszereda, 2013, pp. 5-6.
- ⁶ Iván Bertényi Jr., "Hungarian Politicians of Armenian Descent in the Dual Monarchy Period," in Kovács & Pál, 2013, pp. 86-88.
- ⁷ "Fejér Antal" [Antal Fejér], *Vasárnapi Újság* 48, no. 49, 1901, p. 787.
- ⁸ Armenian Catholic Collective Archive in Armenopolis/Gherla (ACCAA): 339/f, 5, box. Mixed volume of parish priest Ferenc Alexa (economic matters, inventories, census) 1934-1944; ACCAA: 345, 2, box. Nr. 75/946. *Matricula Baptisatorum Ecclesiae parochialis arm.cath. Szamosújvárienis ab anno 1930 I/I – usque ad annum 1945 XII/31.*, Nr. 77/946; *Matricula Defunctorum Ecclesiae arm. cath. Armenopoleos a 1. Jan. 1930 usque ad diem 31. Dec. 1945.* ex vol. V. pp. 62-89.
- ⁹ Cf. Pál, 2013.
- ¹⁰ ACCAA, 584/a.
- ¹¹ Armenians took shelter and remained in other cities such as Kolozsvár, Míképércs, Hajdúböszörmény, Hajdúnánási, Nagyvárád, Szentmihály, Szamosújvár, Csongrád and Medgyes; however, most of them dwelled in Budapest or Erzsébetváros. The sexton of the parish, István Mánya became a prisoner of war and managed to get back to the town in 1921, only to find his mother and wife to be buried in the Armenian Catholic cemetery (Cf. ACCAA: 584/d. *Historia Domus – Frumoasa-Csíkszépvíz*).
- ¹² ACCAA: 548/d, 3, box; Minutes of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council of Frumoasa. 1888-1924.
- ¹³ In 1923 a new refectory table was installed, in 1924 a new communion chalice was bought, in 1925 four new podiums, in 1926 new drop-lamps were installed and the clergy house was also renovated. In 1928 the organ of the Church was tuned and polished (Cf. ACCAA: 345, 8. box. Leltár [Inventory], July 30, 1928).

- ¹⁴ ACCAA: 584/d; *Historia Domus* – Frumoasa-Csíkszépvíz.
- ¹⁵ ACCAA: 548/d, 3, Box: Minutes of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council of Frumoasa. 1924-1981. [All translations made by myself.]
- ¹⁶ In 1924, a total of four Armenian Catholic marriages were held in Csíkszépvíz, which was considered to be such a high number that parson József Vákár noted in the *Historia Domus* the following lines: "This year, that was so rich and colorful in events, favored the intentions of Amor, thus, and it is truly unique, we held four marriages" (Cf. ACCAA: 584/d. *Historia Domus* – Frumoasa-Csíkszépvíz).
- ¹⁷ The parish was consigned to parson Mihály Kovács on September 6, 1928. József Vákár was installed as Armenian Catholic parson of Gyergyószentmiklós on 23 September, 1928 (Cf. ACCAA: 548/d, 3, box; Minutes of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council of Frumoasa, 1924-1981, and 612/d, 3 box; Minutes of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council of Gherogheni-Gyergyószentmiklós, 1927).
- ¹⁸ Cf. György Jakubinyi, *Ordinariatus Pro Armenis Catholicis in Romania Armenopolis*, Gherla, 2001, pp. 45-46.
- ¹⁹ Հ. Մկրտիչ Պոստոլեան, *Հայ Մամուլը Տասնեփինգ Տարուն Մէջ, 1894-1908*, Վենետիկ, Սուրբ Ղազար, 1909:
- ²⁰ *Հայ Հանրագիտակ, Գիրք Ա., Թիւ 1, խմբ.* Հ. Մկրտիչ Վարդ. Պոստոլեան Պարտիզակցի, Ռումանիա, Տպ. Պոստէշ, 1938:
- ²¹ He studied medicine in Pest, graduated in the year 1876/77 (Károly Kapronczay, "Adatok A Magyarörmény Orvosok És Gyógyszerészek Történetéhez" (Some data on the history of Hungarian-Armenian doctors and pharmacists), Budaörs, Magyar-Örmény Könyvtár, 2002, p. 28.
- ²² When Apostolic Governor Sahag Kogian, visited Armenian Catholic families dwelling on the territory of the deanery of Csíkszépvíz in May 1931, he met not more than four elderly members of the church who could speak Armenian: one in Csíkszépvíz and three in Gyimes.
- ²³ János Bodurján, *Vörös Hold – Elbeszélések* [Red moon – Narratives], Csíkszépvíz, 1932, pp. 32-34.
- ²⁴ *Hayasdan* was published in Sofia in 1915 and again in 1919-1920. It was relocated to Filippe in 1920 and was issued till 1925. It was a semi-weekly paper and the mouthpiece of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party.
- ²⁵ Bodurján, *Vörös Hold*..., 22.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Ibid., p. 26.
- ²⁸ Due to the considerable number of Armenian Catholics living in Budapest, several Armenian-rite masses had been held before – by Gergely Govrik and Joachim Görög – but only silent Holy Masses (Cf. "Örmény Istentisztelet Budapesten" [Armenian Holy Mass in Budapest], *Pesti Hírlap* 38, no. 307, 1916, p. 6; "Örmény Énekes Mise" [Armenian High Mass], *Pesti Hírlap* 38, no. 307, 1916, p. 16.
- ²⁹ According to Pál Szalmási, he wrote it in 1923; however, the Hungarian editions of 1931 and 1932 include memoirs of the years 1925, 1927 and 1928 as well (Pál Szalmási, "Bodurján, Megerdics," *Világirodalmi Lexikon*, Vol I., A-Cal. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970, p. 998).

- ³⁰ ACCAA: 548/d, 3, Box; Minutes of the General Assembly of the Pastoral Council of Frumoasa, 1924-1981.
- ³¹ Written by the parsons of Catholic parishes, *Historia Domus* document the history of developments in the parish on a regular (daily, monthly or yearly) basis.
- ³² ACCAA: 584/d. *Historia Domus* – Frumoasa-Csíkszépvíz.
- ³³ The establishment of the publishing house was carried out by Bodurian and by an Armenian teacher from Bucharest, Artin Athanasian. Three books were published there. One was *Red Moon*. The second, written by Athanasian, was named "Armenian Language Guide" in Hungarian (*Az Örmény Nyelv-Kalauz*) and was published in 1932 for Transylvanian Armenians to learn Armenian (although many Armenian grammar books and dictionaries had been written and published in Transylvania in the 19th century). The third was a collection of liturgical songs by Zsigmond Sándor (Cf. Mára Bogos, "A Szépvízi Örmény Pélbánia" [The Armenian parish of Csíkszépvíz], *A Szépvízi Örmény Katolikus Templom*, ed. by Mária Bogos, Csíkszereda, 2013, p. 45).
- ³⁴ ACCAA: 345/8. box. Zoltán Lengyel to János Bodurján, June 28, 1947.
- ³⁵ ACCAA: 584/d. No. 4-1930, *Historia Domus* – Frumoasa-Csíkszépvíz.
- ³⁶ ACCAA: 345/8. box. No. 36/1947; Correspondence of Zoltán Lengyel and János Bodurian.
- ³⁷ ACCAA: 345/8. box. Zoltán Lengyel to János Bodurján. Szamosújvár, March 3, 1947.
- ³⁸ ACCAA: 345/8. box. László Fejér to Zoltán Lengyel. April 29, 1947.
- ³⁹ ACCAA: 345/4. box. No. 153. Kérvény [Petition], June 18, 1947.
- ⁴⁰ Mgrdich Bodurian, *Hay Hanrakidag*, Bucharest, 1938-1940.
- ⁴¹ Jakubinyi, 2001, p. 46.
- ⁴² As Lóránd Poósz has demonstrated, the Transylvanian press during WWI was silent on the dreadful events of the Armenian Genocide. The situation was similar in the whole country as well (Péter Pál Kránitz, "The Armenian Genocide in Interwar Hungarian Political Discourse," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 5, no. 2, 2015, pp. 147-162; Lóránd Poósz, *Az Örmény Népiártás Visszhangja Az Erdélyi Magyar Sajtóban* [Reflections of the Armenian genocide in the Transylvanian Hungarian press], *Tanulmányok Az Örmény Népiártás Támakörében*, ed. by Piroška Krajcsr and Gagik Dzsotján, Dorog, Ararát Kulturális Egyesület, 2008.
- ⁴³ János Bodurján, *Vörös Hold – Elbeszélések* [Red Moon – Narratives], Csíkszépvíz, 1932. p. 137. It is composed of six chapters: *Vörös Hold* [Red Moon] p. 5; *Hárszénmádnág éneke* [The song of Harsenmadnag] pp. 7-18; *Összetört harangok* [Broken bells] pp. 21-52; *A rózsák ...!* [The roses ...!] pp. 55- 74; *Az új Mózes* [The new Moses] pp. 77-103; *„Uram irgalmazz!”* ["Lord, have mercy!"] pp. 105-124; *Elválaszthatatlan szívek* [Inseparable hearts] pp. 125-136; *Tartalom* [Contents] p. 137.
- ⁴⁴ Bodurján, *Vörös Hold...*, p. 5.
- ⁴⁵ He gave another revealing description as follows: "The plan of Talaat and Enver Pasha was to annihilate the Armenians, but they grudging even the bullets for that aim. What a sweet death shooting would have been, as they would have been spared from the long and grievous agony" (Bodurján, *Vörös Hold...*, pp. 25, 118).
- ⁴⁶ Bodurján, *Vörös Hold...*, p. 109.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 125-127.

⁴⁸ Stefan Ihrig described these kinds of accounts as “atrocities pornography,” as they “featured such vivid descriptions” of torture and massacre. Bodurian also included these kinds of descriptions: “Armenian heads fell to the ground, heads of elders, virgins, children. The blood flowing in streams painted the waves of the Euphrates red” (Stefan Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2016; Bodurján, *Vörös Hold...*, p. 85).

⁴⁹ Bodurján, *Vörös Hold...*, p. 10.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 11-13, 99-100.

⁵² Ibid., p. 24.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 9.

ՀԱՅՈՑ ՅԵՂԱՍՊԱՆՈՒԹԵԱՆ ԹՐԱՍԻԼՎԱՆԵԱՆ ՊԱՏՈՒՄ ՄԸ. ՀԱՅՐ
ՄԿՐՏԻՉ ՊՈՏՈՒՐԵԱՆԻ RED MOON
(Ամփոփում)

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Մխիթարեան Միաբանութեան անդամ, Հայր Մկրտիչ Պոտուրեան (Պարտիզակ, 1881–Էջմիածին, 1959) 1913-1958 շրջանին ապրած եւ կենսագործած է Թրանսիլվանիոյ հայութեան մէջ: 1929-1958՝ ան եղած է հոգեւոր հովիւ Ռումանիոյ Ֆրոնտուզայի հայոց: Իր հովտութեան շրջանին Պոտուրեան կատարած է գիտահետազոտական աշխատանք, հրատարակած նաեւ Հայոց Յեղասպանութեան նուիրուած հատոր մը, զոր յատկապէս պատրաստած է տեղի հայութեան համար:

Յօդուածը կը ներկայացնէ շրջանի հայութեան պատմականը, Հայր Պոտուրեանի կենսագրութեան տեղիքը եւ կը ծանրանայ անոր Յեղասպանութեան նուիրուած *Կարմիր Լուսին* հատորին, որ հումգրքերէն տպուած է 1931, 1932ին եւ 2013ին:

Գիրքը ինեզ հայ ընտանիքներու Յեղասպանութեան պատմաներն են: Այդ ընտանիքները կու գան Պարտիզակէն, Ռոտոսթո-Թեքիրտաղէն եւ Արմտանէն:

